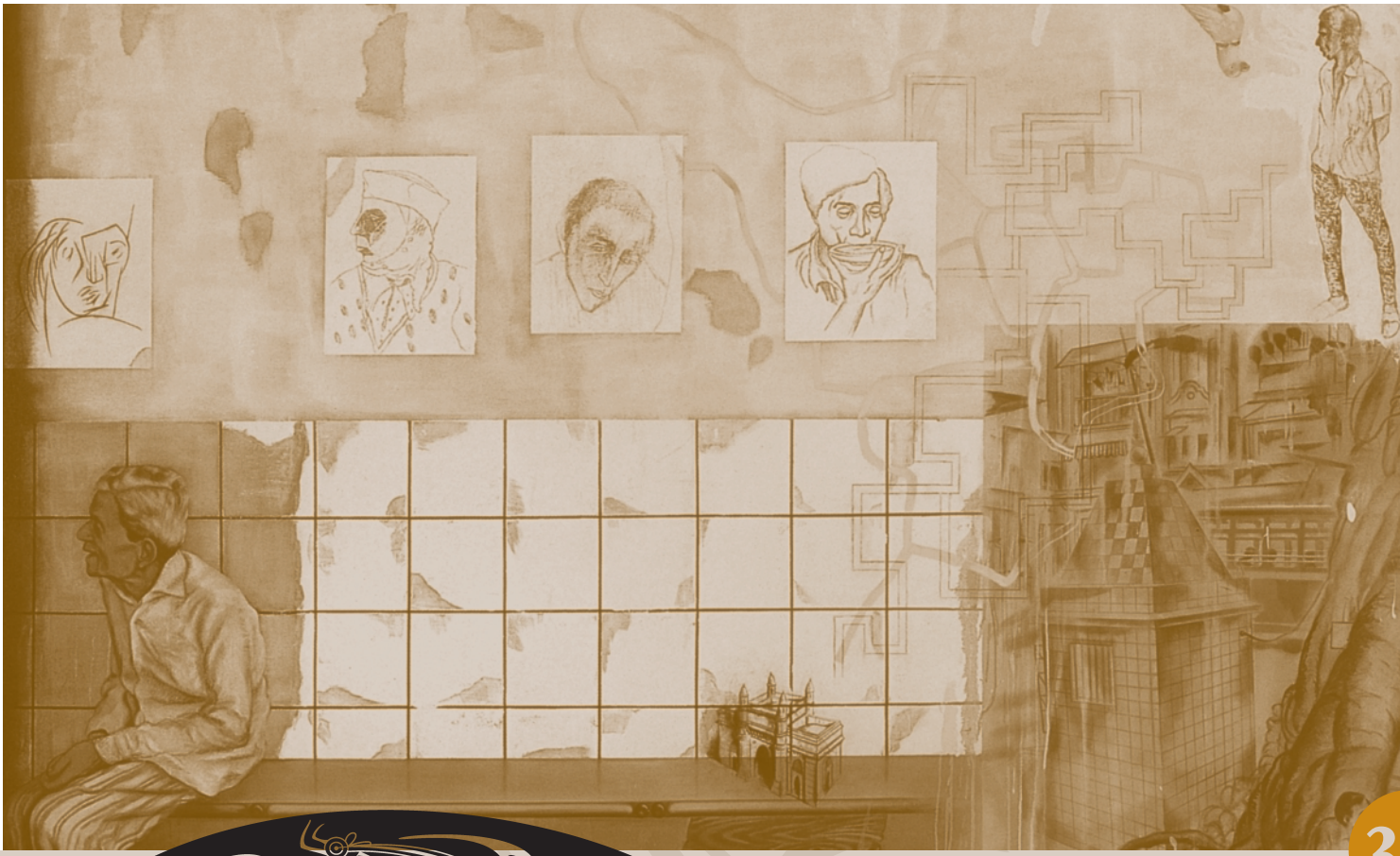


Atul Dodiya, Dr. Patel's Clinic-Lamington Road (1995), Harish Goenka, Bombay. (fragment)



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# NEWSLETTER

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Debra Diamond visited the traveling exhibition of Chola Bronzes [5] and places these statues in a tradition of worship and beauty. p. 41 | Nina Cichocki shows the connection between the work of Iran's leading sculptor, Parviz Tanavoli and traditional Persian writing. [6], p. 42 | Freek Colombijn and Peter Nas attend us to the intentions and planning beyond largely unchecked mega-urbanization [7], p. 49 |

# From Aristocrats to Primitives

## An Interview with Gananath Obeyesekere

Interview >  
South Asia

Gananath Obeyesekere lives on a mountaintop in Kandy. From his eyrie he has a sweeping panorama of the eastern hills of Sri Lanka, and it is in those hills where the wild Veddas were once supposed to have lived, according to Sri Lankan histories and stories. These Veddas are the focus of his present research.

By Han ten Brummelhuis

The genealogy of Obeyesekere's research project can be traced back to a classic work, *The Veddas*, written by Charles and Brenda Seligmann in 1911. The Veddas were first recognized in anthropological terms as a classic hunting and gathering society. Edward Tylor, in his textbook on anthropology (1881), refers to them as 'shy wild men', or primitives, living by hunting and gathering. The Seligmanns, however, pioneered with one of the first field studies of any group from the British side of our discipline. C.G. Seligmann and W.H.R. Rivers were the first systematic fieldworkers who, in turn, taught the two great anthropologists Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski, the founding fathers of British Social Anthropology.

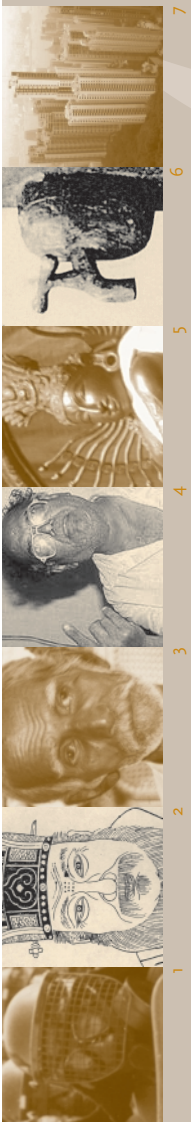
'What I found puzzling about the Seligmanns' study is that the Veddas were confined by them to a small area in the northern and eastern part of the country called Bintanna, 'the flat lands.' Unfortunately, given that their work was still rooted in the nineteenth-century preoccupation with the primitive, the two Seligmanns were out to find the 'pure' Veddas; and of course they didn't find any. This was a kind of futile quest, because ultimately only four families, who were living in utterly desperate economic and social conditions, were found to approximate their ideal. Looking from my balcony up on my hilltop, I know that the mountainous area north of the Seligmanns' field site was known in ancient Sinhala texts of nearly three hundred years ago as 'the Vedda country,' or as 'the great [maha] Vedda country', a huge expanse of well over a thousand square miles. But in my wanderings and meanderings in that latter region I found that there are no Veddas today; all who live there claim to be Sinhala Buddhists. So the question that posed itself to me was: whatever

happened to the Veddas who once lived in this part of the country?

'Then, as my fieldwork and thinking progressed, I asked myself: if the Veddas were in this vast region north of the area in which the Seligmanns did their fieldwork, let me figure out whether they existed in other parts of the country, too. So I probed the sixteenth-century classic literature and poetry written by Buddhist monks and other erudite scholars. And some of their texts refer to Veddas in other parts of the country, for example, roughly around Sri Pada – sometimes known as Adam's Peak – where the sacred footprint of the Buddha is embedded. Other texts speak of Veddas in the very south of Sri Lanka which is now entirely – and passionately – Sinhala Buddhist. Another text refers to Veddas living about twenty miles south of the main city of Colombo which is unthinkable as a Vedda habitat nowadays, except symbolically, I suppose, if one were to designate capitalism as a form of hunting and gathering.'

Obeyesekere also re-examined some of the ritual texts which he had worked on some twenty or thirty years ago. These texts also referred to Veddas as living in different parts of the country. In one fascinating post-harvest ritual the priest (never the monk) recites an invocation known as 'the roll-call of the Veddas' in which he lists about ninety Vedda villages in a fairly large area north and south of Kandy, and some settlements in the heart of the city of Kandy itself. Further enquiries led Obeyesekere to believe that when the city of Kandy was founded in the fifteenth century it was a Vedda village named Katupulle, the chief of that village being known as Katupulle Vedda. Very much later, Kandyan texts mention a group of police officers called *katupulle*; the same term.

continued on page 3 >



**Editorial** In the relationship between science and politics, in large parts of Europe, the former seems to have found a special niche, further and further away from its role as critical examiner of politics and power. To my mind a new scientific approach towards politics is urgently called for. Stating it simply, this lamentable development requires science – ranging from technical studies such as physics to social sciences, from urban studies, anthropology, and cultural or art history to classical literature or archaeology – to accept its responsibility towards society in the public sphere (political as well as cultural). Science's vital role in the political field is best determined as a means of informing the public and policy makers, while offering vociferous critique when it is called for.

By the time these words are published, we may well have been presented with yet another depreciation of the words 'compelling evidence', to be followed by a decrease of stock market prices. Current international affairs not only underline the responsibility of science towards society and thus politics, they even challenge the concept of 'evidence', the scientific concept *par excellence*. The existence of (outside) threats, whether valid or not, should push the scientific community to involve itself more in public discussion, surely not less. Current warmongering aside, the increased importance of Asia in the international field as well as the rapid and continuous increase of international relations in general, amongst which Asian-European connections feature prominently, make it more important than ever to be informed about Asia's past and present, its cultures, politics, economics, and societies. The necessity lies in closing the gap between international researchers, between researchers and students, and between academia and society, of which it is a vital part. In celebration of its tenth anniversary, the IIAS will hold a festival on 16–17 May this year, with which it hopes to interest prospective students in Asian Studies. In the long run the IIAS hopes to work towards increasing a general interest in Asia and perhaps close some of the above-mentioned gaps. Meanwhile, and regardless of what thirty signifies for many, reaching the thirtieth issue has done nothing to displace the newsletter from our open attitude towards new and uncharted topics of research. As the IIAS aims to operate at the interface of technical studies, life sciences, and social sciences, we hope that this issue's theme on 'Psychiatry in Asia', guest edited by Waltraud Ernst, will constitute a promising step towards such an approach. As always we warmly welcome your comments and suggestions.

Enjoy reading. < Maurice Sistermans

# Director's Note on ASEM

Director's note >

Since its inception in 1996 the Asia-Europe Meeting has made real progress. The main components of ASEM, which has thus far been organized on an informal basis, are economic cooperation, political dialogue, and education and culture (the so-called three pillars). Certain progress can be said to have been made in all three of these domains, in particular in the economic domain (on trade and investment issues) and in the cultural field, in which the Asia-Europe Foundation is very active. The political pillar, however, has delivered fewer results. The parties involved consider the ASEM process as a way to deepen relations between Asia and Europe and as such it is a time-consuming, sensitive exercise in building mutual confidence. Progress on second domain themes, such as good governance, human rights, sustainable environment, and the rule of law, can only be made on the basis of trust still today. Yet, there are undeniable signs indicating an increasing readiness, on both sides, to discuss these topics, thus I believe the investment in time to have been worthwhile.

By Wim Stokhof

The slowly growing process of rapprochement between Asia and Europe is, however, being endangered by recent developments. As we all know, the current fifteen EU member states have invited ten countries from Central and Eastern Europe to join the union. This EU enlargement will undoubtedly have far-reaching consequences for the ASEM process. It can be expected that these countries will, in due time, express their interest in participating in the Asia-Europe dialogue.

On several occasions and informally, the ASEAN members of ASEM have on their part indicated to expect that several new members, namely Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar/Burma, will eventually be given the green light to become ASEM members. Most likely, newly independent East Timor will soon also aspire to ASEAN and, consequently, ASEM membership. A deci-

sion will probably be taken at the sixth ASEM summit in Hanoi. Meanwhile, given the additional EC proposal to enlarge ASEM by accepting India, Australia, and New Zealand, we may wonder in all seriousness what kind of organization the EC and its partners have in mind.

Of course, such a proliferation of members will confront this relatively young configuration of countries with all sorts of practical problems. In fact, I fear that the often praised interactivity and informality of the ASEM process will eventually prove an obstacle to a clear and focused exchange of ideas.

Yet even much more crucial, to my mind, is the fact that the ASEM is still in need of a long-term internally driven strategic vision, which can be translated into clear and concrete objectives, and relevant effective instruments – such as a professional secretariat – to reach those objectives. As ASEM threatens to be overwhelmed by its all-



too reactive responses to external circumstances even in its present set up, the enlargement of ASEM seems to be pointless, if such a strategic vision is lacking. <

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## Letter to the Editor

Forum > General

It was interesting to read Shalini Sharma's report regarding 'The Life of Hindus in Britain' published in the *IIAS Newsletter* (IIASN 27, p. 23). Apart from its higher philosophies, there is not much interest in the West for Hinduism (cf. Buddhism). The important part of the article was the fact

that finally some kind of concern is raised for Britain's Hindu minority community – in a country where many different ethnicities or religious groups live. Seeking to identify long under-represented peoples through research, building temples, and more such things are indeed positive steps. Inter-

estingly though, Sharma does not mention the large numbers of Nepalese living in Britain. Her report gave the impression that she was emphasizing Hinduism more than the Hindu minority in Britain. If this is so, I am afraid the title does not fit the context. I would like to ask whether a simple interview research on Hindus (or any other minority group for that matter) can bring positive input to people's lives? Or is it just that studying minorities has become today an academic buzzword that has attracted research on Hindus? I believe for actual change there should be a grassroots awareness campaign that can influence the policy makers. Just building a gathering place or writing an academic report that no one sees, except those involved in the research, will not make a difference. Even though the existence of the class system is officially denied, it is clear that in practice British society is still divided into various social ladders. In this light, I find it highly remarkable that 'Westerners' view the 'caste system' in South Asia so negatively while class arrangements and discrimination often based on race are prevalent in their own society. I think the article would have been much more insightful if it had illustrated what the position of Hindus in British society is and showed whether the current research is aimed at finding a 'social space' for minorities rather than just a place for academic talk or community prayer. <

Birenda Raj Giri, MA (University of Amsterdam) [nepal@angelfire.com](mailto:nepal@angelfire.com)

## Reply from the Author

I welcome Mr Giri's response to my research report on 'The Life of Hindus in Britain' (IIASN 27, p.23) for a dual reason. Firstly the initial motive behind writing the report – to introduce the research to interested individuals and consequently encourage the generation of more contacts – could be better facilitated. Mr Giri is correct; I am yet to interview Nepalese Hindus. In this regard I hope he will be willing to introduce me to individuals he thinks should be interviewed. More generally, his reaction presents me with an opportunity to clarify aspects of the research that have perhaps been misunderstood.

The agenda of the research is not to 'bring positive input into people's lives' or to 'simply end up as another unread academic report' (Mr Giri's inferences). Neither is 'actual change for the Hindu community' a driving force behind this work. Such policy-driven agendas make too many assumptions about the existence of a homogeneous Hindu community and a distinct identity of interests amongst such a group.

The research is merely a first step in recording the life stories of first generation migrants who call themselves Hindu. The archive that will hold the interviews could be a database from which research, whether journalistic or academic, can spring. The archive will also be taken back into various community groups in order to teach the significance and practical application of oral history. The theoretical basis of oral history, of capturing the voices of 'ordinary' men and women as opposed to political or cultural 'representatives' is itself an attempt to counter charges of academicism. It is also an attempt to engage with the voices and thoughts of individuals about their faith and their notions of community rather than assuming their consciousness from their class, caste or social positions. While the agency of individuals is philosophically questionable, at least a few aging voices will be recorded and preserved for posterity; voices that quietly challenge sweeping generalizations.

So far, the interviews conducted indicate that there is no such thing as British Hinduism as an all-encompassing aegis. Rather, what is apparent is a very strong and vibrant, numerically dominant Gujarati community which generates much of the temple building and community activity in specific areas of Britain such as Leicester and Neasden. However, smaller centres of concentration constituting more recently immigrated groups such as the Sri Lankan Tamils have also developed in the inner cities. Each group, be it Bengali, West Indian or Swami Narayan, brings with it different practices of worship and religious spaces.

Organizations such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, and the more innocuous Council of Hindu Temples, have been attempting to draw the various Hindu communities together, but members of each organization complain of the disunity and diversity amongst practitioners of the religion. Thus the research extends our knowledge of the lack of homogeneity amongst Hindus in Britain but also draws out what Hinduism means for each disparate believer. The focal question is: What do these people mean when they call themselves Hindu? This is perhaps far more basic than the points raised by Mr Giri, and yet the responses so far have contributed to a more complicated and nuanced understanding of the practice of faith, and the richness of 'ordinary' life. <

Shalini Sharma, MA works as a Research Facilitator and is presently completing her doctoral thesis on the politics of pre-Partition Punjab at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. [shalinisharma@email.com](mailto:shalinisharma@email.com)

Editors' note >

The original article can be found on [www.iias.nl/iiasn/27/23\\_IIASNewsletter27.pdf](http://www.iias.nl/iiasn/27/23_IIASNewsletter27.pdf)

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# Settling the Past and the Distribution of Justice in Post-Authoritarian South Korea

Forum >  
Korea

More than just an academic endeavour, history in South Korea has been a contested territory where ideological battles were fought, and political legitimacy founded. Colonization, national division, and nearly four decades of authoritarian rule twisted the official historical narrative into explicit distortions, and odd silences.

By Koen De Ceuster

As part of the political struggle against the authoritarian state, some historians challenged the official narrative, constructing an alternative national history. The genealogy of the post-liberation power elites was traced back to pro-Japanese collaboration, leading to the conclusion that the nation's history had been kidnapped by a tainted elite. Accordingly, this alternative narrative credits the successful democratization movement with rendering the nation its history, and making Korean citizens, once again, its subject.

'Settling the past' (*kwagŏ ch'ŏngsan*) is one aspect of this effort at rewriting the nation's history, and an attempt at bringing some form of justice to the victims of the authoritarian state. A timely reminder of the complexity of the matter was the autumn 2002 theme number of *Korea Journal* (42:3), a publication of the Korean National Commission for UNESCO, dedicated to 'The Issue of Settling the Past in Modern Korean History'. Reactions to the journal's demand for help on translating the term '*kwagŏ ch'ŏngsan*' bear proof of the fact that 'settling the past' no ordinary academic venture. The question was addressed to the Korean Studies' List, an email discussion group, in September 2002, and triggered a lively debate on what '*kwagŏ ch'ŏngsan*' should amount to. The general trend of the argument, hardly surprising for an academic discussion list, was to question the feasibility of 'settling the past'. There is no such thing as 'a settled past', since history is always the subject of re-examination. New questions arise, bringing new answers. To settle the past would be tantamount to interdicting historical debate. However, missing from this academic debate, were the all too real social and political demands for 'settling the past'. What the *Korea Journal* theme number proved, and what most academics contributing to the discussion on the email list largely failed to see, was that much more than an abstract academic question, this issue is part of a multi-layered process of a nation coming to terms with traumatic events and episodes of its recent past. Coming to grips with that past through a grand, national cleansing of mutual distrust and built-up anger opens the way to a future of national reconciliation, both within South Korea and across the demilitarized zone with the North Korean brethren. Despite such lofty ideals, there are reservations in place as to the ulterior motives and the hidden agenda that motivate the different actors in this quest for 'liquidating the past' or 'rectifying the wrongs of the past,' as some alternative renderings of '*kwagŏ ch'ŏngsan*' read.

## A just settlement?

'Settling the past' is a belated answer to the expectation of justice voiced on various levels by various actors. Relatives of the victims of state terror, be it Kwangju citizens killed by South Korean troops during the suppression of the May 1980 Kwangju Uprising, students killed by South Korean police during the April 1960 Student Uprising that toppled the Syngman Rhee regime, civilians indiscriminately executed before and during the Korean War by South Korean or US/UN-troops, or 'suspicious deaths' of either soldiers during their term of duty in the South Korean Army, or of citizens in police custody, seem the obvious, but hardly the most vociferous seekers of retribution.

Under an authoritarian regime that strictly controlled the freedom of speech and exercised state power with great vigour, their pleas for some form of justice had hardly been heard, and were quickly suppressed. Not until the authoritarian regime of Chun Doo Hwan succumbed under the pressure of popular demonstrations in the summer of 1987, did these bereaved citizens raise their voices again. The Korean Association of Bereaved Families for Democracy, established in August 1986, opened the way for the administration of honorary justice after fourteen years of sustained efforts culminating in a 422-day sit-in in front of the National Assembly, when the democratically elected representatives of the people voted for a Special Act to Find the Truth on Suspicious Deaths (December 1999). This Special Act led to the establishment in October 2001 of a Korean version of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Unlike its South African counterpart, this Presidential Truth Commis-



A familiar sight during the late 1980s: South Korea's riot police in full combat gear, a faceless phalanx in defense of the authoritarian state.

sion on Suspicious Deaths was very limited in scope, taking on only eighty-five cases of suspicious deaths connected to the pro-democracy struggle since 1969, and lacked investigative powers. Limited as it may be, it represents a victory for South Korea's fledgling civil society over the institutional inertia of the state. Pressured by relatives, the state admitted unlawful behaviour and committed itself to make amends.

The pursuit of justice was not limited to attempts at restoring the honour of the victims of state injustice. Political responsibility for unjustified state violence was to be settled through calls for political and legal justice. However, as a consequence of the peaceful and gradual handover of power from an authoritarian regime to a truly democratic government from 1987 onwards, institutional and political constraints seriously hampered this effort. Korea never witnessed the climactic settling of old scores through some form of 'summary justice'.

Following direct presidential elections in 1987, ruling party candidate Roh Tae Woo succeeded Chun Doo Hwan as president of the Republic of Korea. Although these elections had been a formal victory for the democratization movement, they failed to dislodge the established political, military, and bureaucratic elites. Their hold on power prevented a clear-cut break with the authoritarian past and stymied the call for legal justice. When in 1993 Kim Young Sam became the first democratically elected president without a military background – the first 'civilian' president – he was bound hand and feet, having won the presidency as candidate of the revamped ruling party. Even the election in 1997 of opposition candidate Kim Dae Jung, earning him the sobriquet of 'the People's President,' failed to uproot all remnants of the old elites. Institutionally well entrenched, they prevented an over the board admission of state responsibility for the unlawful deaths of countless citizens. The state had tried to assuage the pain by offering compensation at various times, but failed to establish legal responsibility. Instead, in the process of democratization, and ushered on by a broad-based opposition movement, political accounts were settled through successive National Assembly special parliamentary investigations.

No incident has left such a deep and festering wound in Korean society as the suppression of the 1988 Kwangju Uprising. With a National Assembly controlled by the opposition parties, Roh Tae Woo's camp was unable to stop National Assembly hearings into the Kwangju Uprising and the 12 December coup d'état that preceded it. These hearings resulted in the public disgrace of former President Chun Doo Hwan, who in December 1988 was forced to publicly ask the Korean people for forgiveness for the pain he had caused. Following this confession, he retired to a remote Buddhist temple for a period of repentance and contemplation.

Despite shaming a former president into a public confession of remorse, public calls for legal justice continued until 1995, ultimately forcing President Kim Young Sam to have both Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo stand trial for their involvement in the 12 December 1979 coup d'état and the suppression of the subsequent Kwangju Uprising. In a world premiere, two former presidents were sentenced in April 1997, only to be followed by a grand gesture of national reconciliation by outgoing President Kim Young Sam and President-Elect Kim Dae Jung, who pardoned them in December 1997.

By inviting both disgraced former presidents to his inauguration, Kim Dae Jung, himself a former victim of state violence, showed a remarkable commitment to personal and political reconciliation in an attempt to wipe South Korea's political slate clean, and put the endless cycle of recriminations to rest. With a token of political and legal justice achieved, and with a commitment to have the state make amends for individual cases of blatant injustice, Kim Dae Jung hoped for a new era of national harmony.

The magnanimity of the president may have succeeded in removing the past from the political agenda; it is beyond his power to impose a settlement to the smouldering feeling of injustice in some affected quarters of Korean society. The administration and acceptance of justice is too tightly interwoven with the politics of memory.

Raison d'état inevitably fails to administer sufficient legal, political, or social justice. It is then up to historians to help society come to grips with an unsavoury past by addressing these remnant feelings of injustice. However, when history is moralized, and historians, under the guise of administering 'historical' justice, mount 'a struggle over memory,' more disharmony results.

Despite paying lip service to the importance of national reconciliation, the contributors to the *Korea Journal* volume follow a confrontational agenda of moral righteousness. Concerned with the future course of Korea's history, they proclaim that 'the future starts with correct memories' (p.189). As activist historians rooted in the democratization movement, they 'correct' national history by imposing a different ideological reading based on a 'people's' point of view. Linking the failure of the legal justice system to thoroughly prosecute pro-Japanese collaborators to the excesses of the post-liberation authoritarian regimes, they expose the old ruling elites as anti-national, ostracizing them from the mainstream of the nation's history. Strongly nationalistic, even nativistic, they conceive national reconciliation and harmony on the implicit condition that these tainted elites are removed not only from the nation's history, but also from any future role in society (pp.15-6). For a political struggle this may be a worthwhile cause; in terms of historiography it is hardly innovative. To replace one exclusive nationalist reading of Korea's modern history with another unqualified nationalist reading stifles debate and is hardly helpful to the democratic development of Korean society. More importantly, it dehumanizes national history. As an abstract concept, 'the people' become willing clay in the moulding hands of historians. These historians mistake themselves for judges taking the moral high ground on behalf of the people, forsaking their social duty of critically analyzing and demystifying the past. Rather than bringing historical justice, they are administering moral justice. Instead of turning over a page, and moving on, they keep on returning to the past to fight future political struggles.

Korea has admittedly known a very bitter and bloody modern history. Korean citizens deserve to know their history, and historians have a duty to help their fellow citizens know and understand. To bring light where darkness was, is a worthy cause, but are the historians in the forefront of 'settling the past' really bringing light, or merely adding to the confusion? <

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*Dr Koen De Ceuster is assistant professor at the Centre for Korean Studies, Leiden University, and Korea editor of the IIAS Newsletter. On the same subject he wrote 'The Nation Exorcised: The Historiography of Collaboration in South Korea' (in Korean Studies, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2001), pp. 207-42).*

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### Boundary books

'Now what we have at this point, is a very intriguing proposition; Veddas were not just confined to Kandy and its outlying regions but they were also, at least three hundred years ago, living in every part of the nation. Though their numbers are indeterminate their physical presence is extremely significant. Thus I became very much excited in the possibilities of the project, both from an historical and also from an ethnographic point of view. I put several research assistants to tackle certain kinds of texts which were different from the ones that Sri Lankan historians normally look at, that is Buddhist and 'canonical' literary texts. In the University of Peradeniya there is a cupboard containing virtually unread palm leaf manuscripts; not monks' writings, but that of ordinary people, some of them local elites, scribes, and village leaders. These texts provide a fabulous source of information on contemporary Kandyan social organization, including the position of the Veddas.'

One genre among these multiple texts is called 'boundary books'. One particular type gives the boundaries for all of Sri Lanka, the main provinces demarcated by named rivers, well known landmarks, or, even, rocks and trees. Often, carved stone boundary markers are used.

'One nice example of such a boundary book is the 'Matale boundary book' (Matale being a district north of Kandy). In this text the local king Vijayapala summons a chief and asks: who are the respectable families in this vast region of Matale? The chief then recounts and says that there are such and such named aristocrats and then proceeds to say there are also such and such Vedda chiefs guarding such and such named villages. And there is another Vedda leader a little bit further, guarding such and such a village. And the king asks: beyond that territory who are the residents? And the chief names a list of about fifteen Vedda chiefs guarding various parts of the remoter frontier. Interestingly, these chiefs have a multiplicity of names; some of them have Sinhala ones, while others possess aristocratic names and titles, indicating that they have been 'knighted' by the Kandyan kings. And what is especially fascinating is the reference to five women chiefs also guarding the frontiers. Vedda women in the Seligmanns' account and in other accounts by colonial authorities were sort of shy creatures, hiding from the foreign gaze and refusing to emerge when people came to visit their communities. By contrast a different type of Vedda female erupts from our texts.'

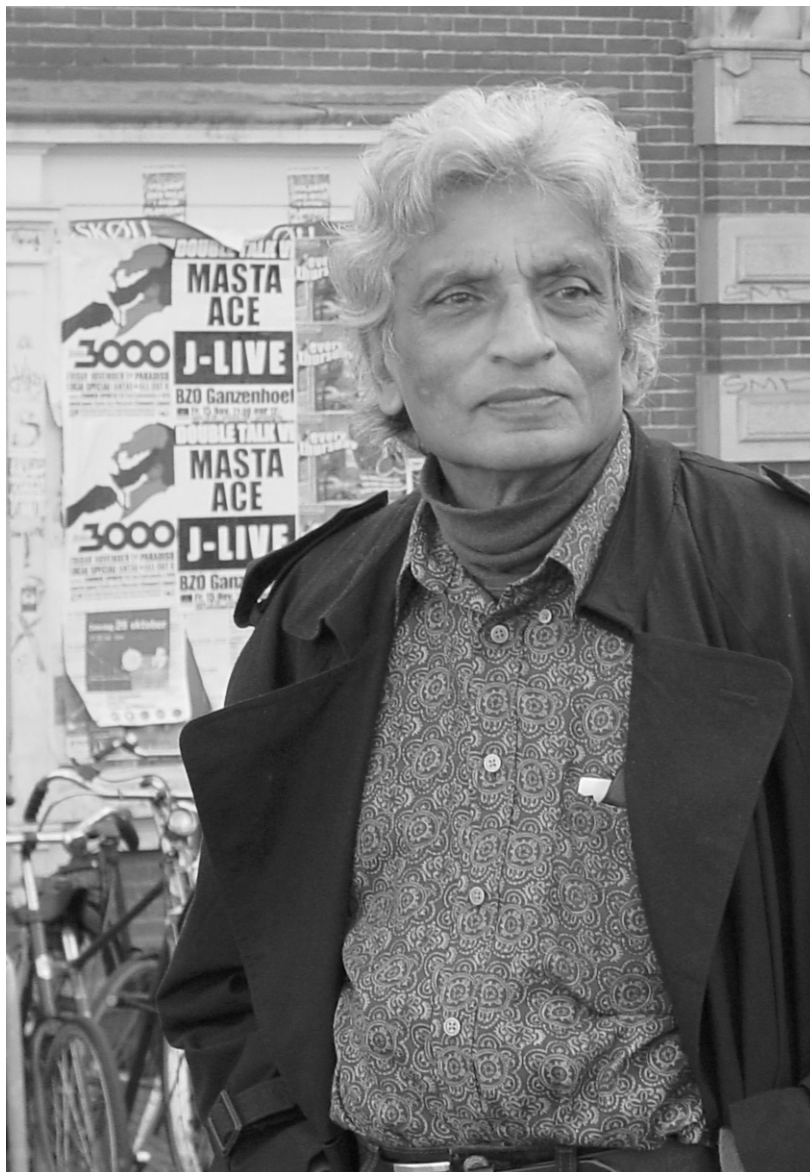
The confrontation with such texts spurred Obeyesekere to want to understand the historical complexity of these people, the so-called primitives. Now it becomes clear that they were not only scattered everywhere in the country, but there were also different kinds of Veddas.

'There are aristocratic Veddas who were given the prefix *bandara* which is how Kandyan aristocrats were designated. One was called *kadukara*, meaning 'swordman', a military role. One was called *raja* (petty king) and their descendants intermarried with Buddhist *rajas*. It is therefore not surprising that they were employed by the Kandyan kings to guard the frontiers, leading from Kandy into Matale, thence into Bintanna (or Mahiyangana as it is now popularly called), and from there, I suspect, into the east coast ports in Trincomalee and Batticaloa. We are beginning to understand that Veddas were as internally differentiated as the Sinhalas, though without their loose and un-Indian caste system. And far from being nude or wearing leaves, branches, and so forth, which is the colonial view of the Veddas, some of these people were well-dressed bodyguards of the king.'

### A Buddhist nation?

Independent European sources can also enhance our understanding of the Veddas. A Dutch account of 1602 by Joris van Spilbergen and others describes the same place, Bintanna, as Bintanna-Alutnuvara, meaning 'new city'. When the main city, the *old* city of Kandy, was abandoned temporarily during times of war the kings used to send their families to this 'new city' in the charge of the Veddas. The Dutch accounts say Bintanna-Alutnuvara was one of the most prosperous towns in the nation, a bustling metropolis. Something happened to bring it into ruin, a course of events which requires further investigation. In the light of this data the common prejudice that Sri Lanka has always been a Buddhist nation has also to be revised. As people subscribing to an 'ancestor cult', the Veddas were also non-Buddhist for the most part.

'In my current fieldwork I am studying shrines in different parts of the former Vedda country to show how Vedda ideation of dead ancestors and so forth still exists in some way, but has been given Buddhist meaning and significance.



Han ten Brummelhuis

Thus, when we examine current beliefs among Buddhists in my region of fieldwork and elsewhere, one can 'excavate' prior beliefs, using the wonderful accounts of Vedda ancestor worship provided by the Seligmanns, and data from the shrines which are permeated with Vedda ideation.

In 1815, the British captured the Kandyan kingdom and the Kandyan chiefs made a treaty with the British, the so-called Kandyan Convention. But in 1818 the first rebellion against the British commenced. When, in 1818, a claimant to the throne came forward and declared himself a relation of the last king of Kandy, he and his entourage went to the great shrine of the Murugan, (who is a Hindu god, a Buddhist god, and a Vedda god) at Kataragama, in the south of Sri Lanka.

'The priest of the shrine gave the claimant a sword and other paraphernalia of the god. There he was met by one of the aristocratic Bandara Veddas, whose name was Kivulegedera Mohottala, the latter term indicating a distinguished Kandyan chief. He, with two hundred other Veddas, led the resistance. And the claimant to the throne hid in the Vedda country and was guarded by Veddas. When the claimant was formally crowned as king, it was, again, the Veddas who participated in the rituals of kingship along with some Buddhist Kandyan chiefs. This event is pretty much forgotten in "normal" history except by one important historian, Paul E. Pieris, who, in 1950, wrote a fine account of the resistance in his *Sinhale and the Patriots*. Of course both Veddas and Sinhalas were totally crushed in an extremely brutal reaction on the

Gananath Obeyesekere, November 2002

## Professor Gananath Obeyesekere

Professor Gananath Obeyesekere is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Princeton University. From 1 July – 30 November 2002 he was a senior visiting fellow at the IIAS. He is the author of, among other works, *Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience* (1984), *The Cult of the Goddess Pattini* (1984), and *The Work of Culture: Symbolic Transformation in Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (1990) – three studies remarkable for their attention to both psychological and cultural reality. His *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (1992) led to a polemical controversy with Marshall Sahlins about the Western representation of 'primitive thinking'. At present he seems more productive than ever. He has almost finished a first draft of a book tentatively entitled *Cannibal Talk: Dialogical Misunderstandings in the South Seas*, contents of which he expounded in a seminar at the University of Amsterdam. His comparative study *Imagining Karma: Ethical Transformation in Amerindian, Buddhist, and Greek Rebirth* has just arrived in the bookshops. In this book Gananath Obeyesekere shows the wide dispersal of rebirth theories outside the orbit of Indic religions. He demonstrates how the kind of 'rebirth eschatology' found in small-scale societies developed into the more complex forms associated, in India, with its karma doctrine and, in ancient Greece, without karma. We asked him about his present fieldwork in Sri Lanka, which connects reflections on the beginning of anthropology, historical research, the Western concept of the 'wild man', and contemporary global activism.

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part of the British. I think the dispersal of populations during this period resulted in large parts of the "Vedda country" being converted into tea plantations. Whatever happened to the Veddas who lived there is anyone's guess.'

### Wild man

The first part of the book Obeyesekere has in mind would deal with the colonial representation of the Vedda. This has some similarity to the argument in his *Captain Cook* book about European myth-making regarding Hawaii.

'There is no question that the first step towards this form of colonial representation was taken by the famous British prisoner held in the kingdom of Kandy, Robert Knox, who wrote his book *The Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon* in 1681. Knox, and others in his ship, were captured and taken to Kandy with several other European prisoners. They married, they produced children, they traded, hunted, did all sorts of things, except that Knox, a good Scottish Calvinist, resisted most of that. He stayed for about twenty years, went back to England and wrote this wonderful book, one of the most interesting early ethnographies ever written. Like everything else he sees Sri Lanka through the prism of his Calvinist persona. Knox was one of the first Europeans to mention the Veddas and in his book he has a section describing what he calls the 'wild men' and making the conventional European distinction between nature and culture. He said that just as you have wild and tame animals, so you have wild and

[ advertisement ]

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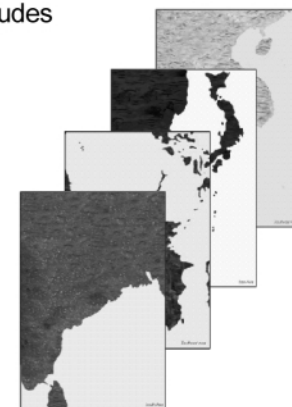
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tame human beings. Tame Veddas are fairly civilized and are mostly farmers; they are the Veddas Knox was familiar with. He admits he never saw the wild ones but says that they live in the area known as Bintanna, which he could see from the hill country, just as I can from my own perch in Kandy. Nevertheless, Knox provides a detailed account of these wild Veddas through hearsay.'

Knox, and those who followed him, incorporated those wild Veddas into the medieval European frame of the 'wild man'. That image of the Veddas was later absorbed into Portuguese and Dutch accounts. Colonial writers of the time totally ignored the multiplicity and complexity of Vedda society. When the Seligmanns arrived, most of the Veddas had been assimilated or dispersed. The Europeans, however, had a fascination for the primitive. In this conception the Australian aborigines were the ideal type. The Veddas, along with some of the hill-tribes in South India, were seen as part of a large diaspora of primitive people who once had an affinity with those aborigines.

'So what is happening, then, is a European obsession with 'primitive watching'; though it was difficult to watch the Australian aborigine in desert habitats, you could see their cousins, the Veddas, from the convenience of the government rest house in Bintanna-Alutnuvara.'

### Self-primitivization

Both colonial officers and visitors arriving by ship came in person to see the Veddas living in primitive conditions. The Sinhala village headmen of the area would dress these people up in a wild garb and present them to the curious (in more than one sense) Europeans.

'The Seligmanns have a very insightful description of what they labelled "show-Veddas". Gradually, the "show-Veddas" became the dominant image of the Veddas both for Europeans and, later on, the Sinhals. Thus, even when I was doing fieldwork in this area in the late 1950s and I drove towards Mahiyangana where the Buddha shrine is located, I could see Veddas lining the roads dressed as primitives with an axe on their bare shoulders, some with antediluvian bows and arrows (which, in reality, they had long given up for shot guns).'

Here Obeyesekere observes an interesting phenomenon. It is not just a matter of 'show-Veddas'; what is happening here is what he calls 'self-primitivization'. To this very day such self-primitivization takes place when former primitives put on shows for the benefit of foreigners and wealthy local tourists. But self-primitivization is not necessarily to be deprecated, because it gave people a sense of dignity and a cash income even though they went along, sometimes with self-deprecatory cynicism, with the European idea that they were aborigines and therefore the original inhabitants of the land.

'In the case of the Veddas, they can say "we are the *adivasi*, or ancient residents", and I will admit that this historical fiction does give them some dignity and a sense of self-worth. This newer notion of *adivasi* has, in turn, been taken over by European liberals and romantic primitivists searching for the noble savage and hell bent on wanting to liberate the Veddas from Sinhala-Buddhist hegemony (which, historically speaking, hardly occurred), highlighting their current plight (which no one denies because the whole nation is in a frightful plight). But this means that the Veddas have become an endangered community and an "indigenous people", though their endangerment was a product of the colonial enterprise and they are no more "indigenous" than I am myself. Vedda chiefs have gone to Geneva to the UN conferences on indigenous and endangered peoples, something any jet-age traveller would surely applaud. The whole picture becomes completely fascinating from the "Captain Cook" angle, you might say, when colonial and post colonial definitions of "primitive", "aborigine", "native", "indigene", and other such terms have become reified, reformulated, and introjected as a new "truth" of an old past by the new *ancient residents*.' <

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# Asia and Europe Should Cooperate Anew

Report >  
General

14 November 2002  
Amsterdam,  
the Netherlands

There is an urgent need and a real opportunity for closer Asian-European cooperation in international affairs in the light of the Bush administration's aggressive unilateralism since the 11 September attacks. Yet, importantly, such cooperation must not be based on one-time colonialism but, rather, on its rejection. That was the timely and important message given by professor Jomo Kwame Sundaram from the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur at the recent IIAS public lecture 'Asian-European relations after September 11'.

By J. Thomas Lindblad

Jomo, arguably the foremost economist in Malaysia today, is an outspoken personality with a critical mind, which on more than one occasion has brought him into open conflict with the Mahathir government. A key theme in his Amsterdam lecture was the fate of the Asian values debate, which demonstrates how seemingly academic or intellectual arguments and concepts may – willingly or not – serve political agendas in a changing world. It is instructive to see how the very same Asian values, in particular the virtues of Confucianism, may be twisted around and used as explanations of widely different historical developments.

Slow economic growth in China was once attributed to Confucianism. The East Asian Miracle, so uncritically applauded by World Bank observers, was also ascribed to the unique Asian values of hard work and the prevalence of collective as opposed to individual interests. In the region itself, allegedly superior Asian values, as opposed to Western ones, were frequently applied to legitimize why democracy was lagging behind economic growth. Jomo wryly remarked that such reasoning is hardly convincing even when applied to relatively prosperous countries such as Singapore and Malaysia. Then came the Asian crisis. Asian values were then associated with corruption and cronyism and earmarked as the underlying cause of the collapse of several Southeast and East Asian economies.

The economic recovery was hardly underway in most crisis-hit countries when the wider context changed abruptly in the wake of the 11 September attacks. According to Jomo, Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis provides a useful antidote to the 'potentially complacent triumphalism' of Fukuyama's 'end of history'. However, the Huntington thesis has above all offered 'some intellectual pretence at sophistication' for Western mobilization against its enemies. Polarization is furthered by the implied coalition between political Islamism and an economically strong East Asia and it is precisely against that background that a closer and redefined cooperation between Asia and Europe is urgently needed. At this point, Jomo also mentioned the complicating factor of resurging racism in Europe in response to recent immigration.

The lecture and subsequent discussion covered a wide range of topics of

Professor Jomo Kwame Sundaram, 14 November 2002.



Photopoint

## Professor Jomo Kwame Sundaram

Professor Jomo Kwame Sundaram was born in Penang in 1952 and educated as a political scientist at Yale and Harvard. He received his PhD from Harvard University in 1978 and joined the staff of economists at the Universiti Kebangsaan in Kuala Lumpur. In 1982 he moved to the University of Malaya where he was appointed full professor twice, in 1986 in Human Development and in 1992 in the Faculty of Economics and Administration. He worked intermittently as an expert consultant for numerous international organizations, including the ILO and the World Bank. His list of publications embraces numerous monographs, including several Malay-language textbooks in economics, scores of edited works and countless academic articles.

A major monograph, first published in 1986, is entitled *A Question of Class: Capital, the State and Uneven Development in Malaya*, which encapsulates the juxtaposition of social history, economic growth and state policies that is characteristic of his academic work. The monograph *Growth and Structural Change in the Malaysian Economy*, dating from 1990, serves as the standard assessment of the New Economic Policy in Malaysia. A more recent monograph, *Malaysia's Political Economy: Politics, Patronage and Profits* (1997) offers a critical examination of the nexus between politics and economics in Mahathir's fast-growing Malaysia. In cooperation with colleagues in adjacent countries, Jomo has also contributed to strengthening a regional perspective on economic developments in Southeast Asia. The co-authored *Southeast Asia's Misunderstood Miracle: Industrial Policy and Economic Development in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia* (1997) is an especially important work in this vein. Another important edited volume is *Tigers in Trouble: Financial Governance, Liberalisation and Crises in East Asia*, which already appeared within one year after the eruption of the Asian crisis. Jomo's introduction to the volume anticipated much of the subsequent literature on the causes of the Asian crisis.  
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immediate interest to recent and current economic and political developments in Southeast and East Asia. Topics included the various explanations of the Asian crisis, IMF policies during the crisis, and even internal developments in Mahathir's Malaysia. Jomo's approach to these issues was one of political economy, and was not confined to the realms of political science or economics alone. This was, in particular, illustrated by his examples

of the use and abuse of a concept such as 'Asian values' for political purposes, and his emphasis on the interaction between politics and economics in understanding both the causes of the Asian crisis and the policies adopted to overcome it. <

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### Info >

The lecture by Jomo was organized by the IIAS at the International Institute for Social History (IISG) and chaired by Patricia Spyer, newly appointed Professor in the Anthropology of Indonesia at Leiden University. Two commentators, the financial journalist Tjabel Daling and economic historian J. Thomas Lindblad, sparked off the discussion.

# Psychiatry in Asia

Academic interest in the history of psychiatry and a general fascination with how 'madness' fared during the modern period were particularly prominent in Western countries during the 1970s and 1980s in the wake of Foucault's ground-breaking work on *Madness and Civilization* and the high-profile campaigns of the anti-psychiatry movement. More recently, problems arising from the de-institutionalization of the mentally ill and the search for safe and financially and socially viable community care options and preventative mental health care measures have rekindled this earlier interest.

suggested in the orthodox Western psychological tradition), than as part of normal life and manifestation of human suffering, requiring re-adjustment and re-direction.

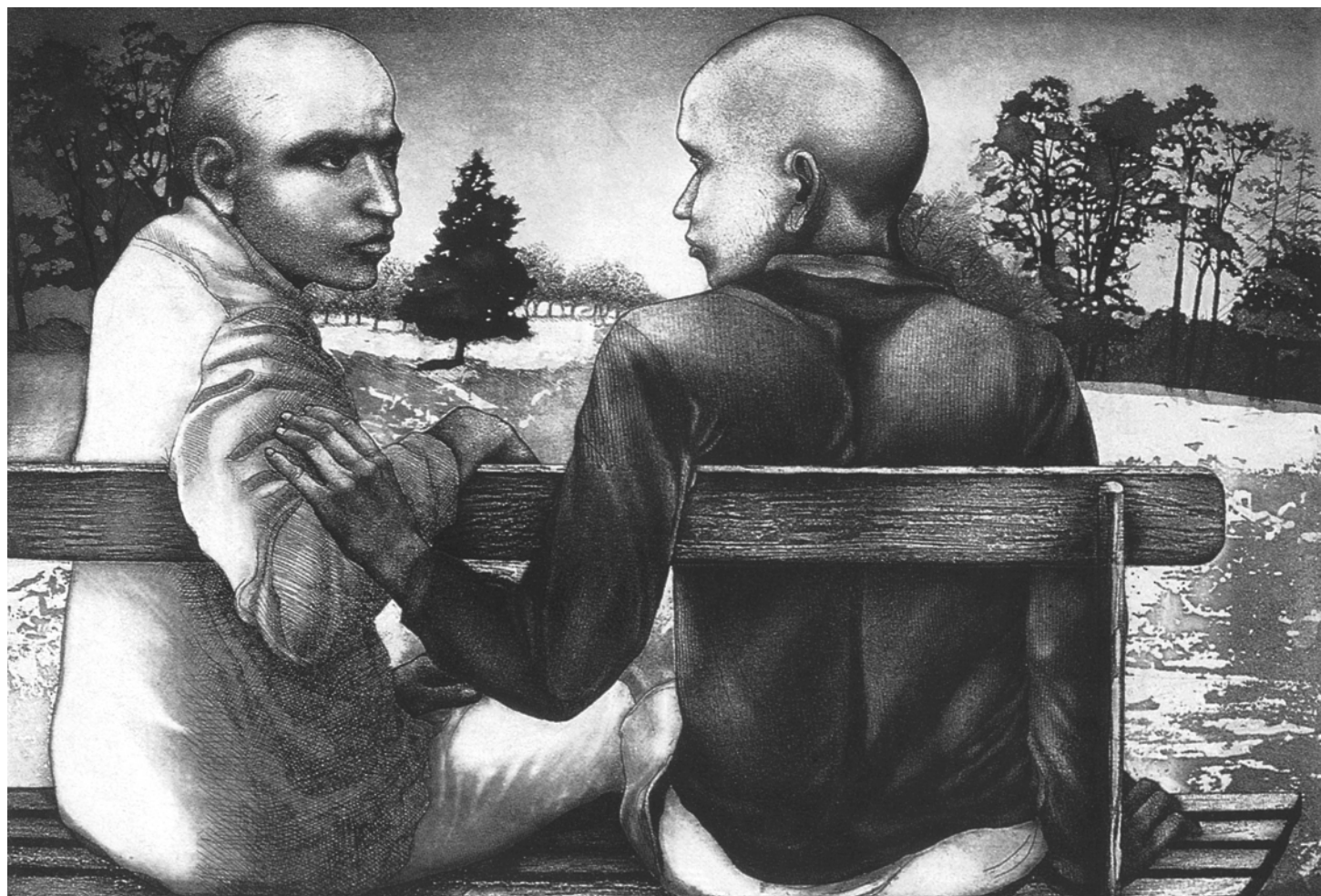
The potential for Western mental health professionals to gain from the practical insights and sophisticated conceptual models developed by their colleagues in the East is highlighted also in the articles on psychoanalysis in China, Japan, and British India (by Zhang, Alvis, and Hartnack respectively). Here we learn that Freudian psychoanalysis travelled easily to Asia at around the same time it became popular in Europe and the United States. However, it soon adopted local garbs and idioms. It was adapted by its Asia-based practitioners to their particular patient bases and the socio-cultural circumstances in the different countries, and was cleared of some of the ideological preconceptions of its traditionalist, fin-de-siècle European legacy. A number of highly sophisticated theoretical models that deviate from or even contradict Freud's original formulations have been developed and employed with great success, showing that Western orthodoxies are not always followed to the letter. Some of these models, like the mother-centred Ajase complex suggested by Kosawa Heisaku in Japan in the 1930s (in contrast to Freud's father/son-centred Oedipus complex), for example, could be employed well in discussing Freudian psychoanalysis' patriarchal blinkers and the questionable transcultural universality of some of its concepts.

As Hartnack shows in her article on the fate of psychoanalysis within the context of British India, judgement on the alleged validity of some Freudian models depended very much on which side of the colonial divide its practitioners were placed. For example, in the 1920s the renowned colonial psychiatrist Berkeley-Hill proclaimed, in the well-documented tradition of Western colonial arrogance, that Indians lacked a psychological disposition to leadership, implying that British rule was therefore justified. The eminent Indian psychiatrist Bose, in contrast, not only criticized Freud for his autocratic way of leading the International Psychoanalytical Movement, but also suggested that mental health was achieved when the father's authority was challenged, fought, and overcome, not by submitting to it.

In relation to the chequered career of psychoanalysis in China, Zhang too shows that national politics exerted an important influence. Prior to the Revolution Freud's ideas were received by the intelligentsia as a new liberating influence on traditional society, whilst afterwards they came to be exposed as a manifestation of bourgeois consciousness and decadence. Since the 1980s psychoanalysis has been incorporated into psychiatric practice as one alongside other methods in mainland China: if the trends emerging in Taiwan and Hong Kong give an indication of things to come in mainland China, here, too, culture-specific modifications like the ones that occurred earlier in Japan are likely to become more prominent.

The article by Speziale draws attention away from East-West and West-East interactions, emphasizing the pluralist nature of health care on the Indian Subcontinent. Although British colonial rule constituted a rupture and turning point in the modern history of India, setting the stage for westernization and globalization, it was not the first such rupture during the course of the last millennium, nor did it lead to the disappearance of the wide variety of traditional healing approaches that existed in South Asia. Contemporary Indian mental health care embraces a variety of provisions that are accessible to patients in different localities: Ayurveda (Hindu traditional medicine), Unani (Islamic medicine), Siddha (South Indian medicine), and a variety of 'folk' and local traditions, alongside biomedical Western psychiatry. As Speziale shows in regard to Islamic psychiatry, it is important to keep in mind that traditions don't remain static, but are subject to changes, some of which lead to further refinement (as in the case of Unani pharmaco-therapy) whilst others suffer from commercialization (as in the case of medicoreligious tourism). ◀

**Dr Waltraud Ernst** is a Reader at the Department of History at Southampton University. She is currently working on a comparative history of psychiatry, focusing on colonial South Asia and British settler colonies, and an edited collection on *The Normal and the Abnormal* (together with C. Sengoopta). She is author of *Mad Tales* from the Raj (1991), and editor of *Race, Science and Medicine* (1999, with B. Harris) and *Plural Medicine, Tradition and Modernity* (2002). She is President of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Asian Medicine (IASTAM).  
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Courtesy of Anupam Sud

## Introduction > General

'Dialogue', 1984.  
Etching by Anupam Sud. Part of a series of etchings defining subtle shades of communication between human beings.

By Waltraud Ernst

Research on the development of psychiatry and mental illness in non-Western countries has, with only a few exceptions, been less prodigious. After all, any engagement with psychiatry in Asia poses wide-ranging methodological and conceptual challenges. Not only should such research concern itself with the complex array of interactions and exchanges between Western science-based psychological medicine and Asian medical systems and community ('folk') care practices, it also requires an adequate understanding of the economics and cultural politics of colonialism and globalization.

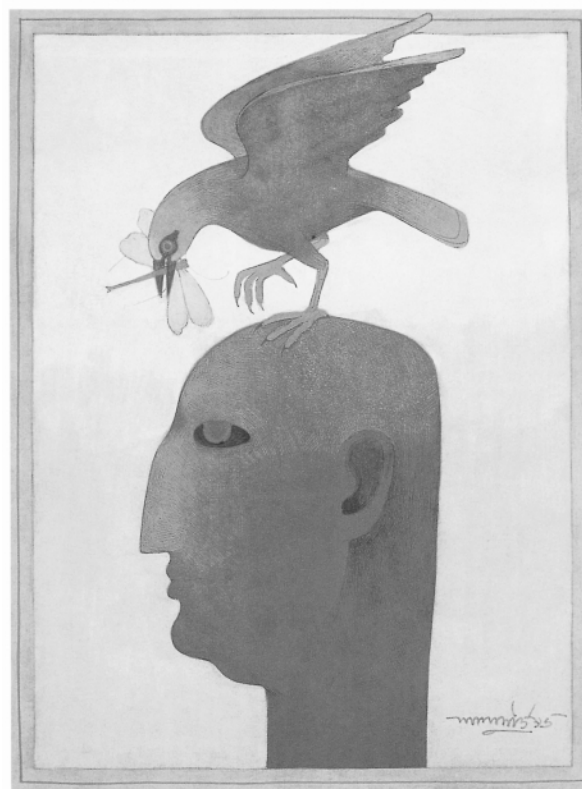
The articles presented here fill the existing gap. Importantly, their authors are cognisant of the specific political and cultural context of Western psychiatry as well as being attuned to the wider colonial and post-colonial political settings of specific indigenous modes of healing.

They have also steered clear of the legacy of high-profile yet unduly limiting and simplistic notions, such as Fanon's assumption of a 'colonial condition' and the hackneyed Foucaultian suggestion of an all-pervasive and subjugating Western psychiatric 'gaze'. Writing in the tradition of the latter tended to focus on Western hegemonic discourse and assumed that colonial subjects were at best able to 'respond to' and 'resist' Western discourses of colonial or medical power. Those treading in Fanon's footsteps emphasized that the colonized and their post-colonial brethren had so internalized their colonizers' derogatory perspective that they fell into a state of quasi-pathological, lethargic passivity. Both approaches led to all too sweeping generalizations and remained largely Eurocentric in orientation, implicitly taking Western colonial and post-colonial discourses as their major point of reference.

The articles presented here put emphasis on interactions and exchanges. They challenge preconceived notions, such as that the westernization of mental health services in the East need always be the first step towards cultural hegemony and is necessarily bad news for the mentally ill and their families. National political reform and ongoing market changes that have opened China to the West have recently led to accounts examining the abuse of psychiatric practice

as a means of social control, torture, and punishment in the style familiar from Nazi-Germany and the Soviet Gulag period. As Chen argues in her article on China, in regard to health care provision for the general public, patients and their families have benefited from the wider availability of services. Although Western biomedically-focused approaches have been introduced, these are set alongside traditional Chinese practices and have been adapted to the particular needs of Chinese communities by putting emphasis on family and community provision and outreach education programmes.

In contrast to Chen's account of the current expansive impact of Western-style mental health services on patients in China, Pickering explores how the benefits of an Eastern tradition can inform Western psychological models and practices. While being well aware of the Orientalist distortions of Eastern health practices in the West and their commercial exploitation – often referred to as the 'McDonaldization' of traditional Asian medicine – he focuses on the potential for fruitful and enriching cross-fertilization. Buddhism encourages the assessment of mental problems less as 'abnormalities' that need to be treated, cured, and done away with (as



Courtesy of Lulu Prasad Shaw

(Middle) Lulu Prasad Shaw 'Untitled', 1996.  
Tempora and wash. Private collection.

## Editors note >

The editors thank Waltraud Ernst for guest editing the articles in this issue's theme section 'Psychiatry in Asia'.

# Buddhism, Psychology, and Geopolitics

Asian traditions have too often been distorted by being caught up in Western debates over the supposedly necessary opposition of religion and science. Those who find the Western scientific worldview uncongenial treat Eastern philosophies with exaggerated reverence. Scientists with a distaste for New Age superficialities dismiss them as primitive superstitions. Neither position is helpful. A more informed engagement between Buddhism and Western psychology has emerged over recent decades. It indicates a more productive way forward, helped by recent changes in psychology.

Research >  
General

By John Pickering

Interaction between Asian and Western traditions reflects the geopolitical context. In modern times, this context was colonial expansion. For the colonizers, it meant discovery and esoteric encounters. For the colonized, it largely meant exploitation. As colonialism peaked, exploitation was disguised as 'bringing civilization'. Now, cyber-colonization does much the same thing. With the explosive growth of the Internet, texts, images, and sounds from any part of the global village may be discovered, blended, and marketed in a recombinant culture of global commodification.

Deconstruction, the postmodern insight into the discursive production of knowledge, demonstrates that what we know is more culture-bound than the rhetoric of modernity had led us to believe. It has produced the 'skepticism towards meta-narratives' identified by Lyotard as the essence of the postmodern condition. It means the end of scientific, religious, or political claims to predominance. This is not to retreat into relativism but to move towards pluralism and a more even-handed treatment of what different ways of encountering the world might have to offer, both alone and in combination. This is the postmodern condition. It is the geopolitical context in which interaction between Buddhism and Western psychology now proceeds.

Here we look briefly at the history of interaction, review

some changes in Western psychology, and conclude with a short comparison of Buddhist and Western attitudes to suffering. New meaning is synthesized from cultural forms that would previously have been considered too distant in time and space. Thus, the postmodern geopolitical context promotes a more productive and even-handed interaction between Buddhism and psychology.

## Changes in psychology

From the late 1950s until the early 1990s psychology's predominant paradigm was cognitivism, whose metaphor for mental life was information processing or, more formally, computation. Although richer than the behaviourism it displaced, it was just as scientific in its denial of subjectivity. Feelings, intentions, and experience, 'what it's like to be' a mental subject, were effectively excluded from the discipline. It was assumed that once sufficient data had been gathered, these would prove to be reducible to information processing, computation or even to physics.

This was a distant legacy of the Enlightenment: the belief that formal laws could be discovered beneath all aspects of reality, from the movements of the planets to the operations of the human mind. This belief influenced the nineteenth-century union of philosophy and experimental science that produced modern psychology. Then, as the scientific revolution seemed to be reaching some sort of culmination, it seemed possible that nature, including mental life and consciousness, might be completely reducible to physical laws. This enthusiasm touched the founders of modern psychology, who were confident that as the science of mental life progressed, pre-scientific traditions such as religions would be discarded as oppressive superstitions.

The twentieth century has brought such confidence to an end. Although science and technology have become more powerful than even the enthusiasts of the late nineteenth century could have imagined, the belief that the world might be reducible to physics has vanished. Ironically, this is due to scientific discoveries showing that given the right conditions, the material world self-organizes into complex systems that have emergent properties not pre-figured in any particular part of the system. Hence reductionism fails: no inventory of parts taken at a particular instant can predict how a system will behave as a whole.

Postmodernism is in part a response to discovering such limitations of the Enlightenment legacy. It has created a more eclectic cultural condition in which the scientism that has limited psychology is being overcome. The mechanistic worldview of nineteenth-century science is being replaced by an organic view of the mind's place in nature. Psychologists are re-discovering William James' insight that mental life cannot be reduced to physical laws or formal rules. Feeling, rather than information processing, is now taken as the primordial character of mental life. After decades of neglect, consciousness has regained its position as the most important topic in psychology. Experience is no longer approached as something to be explained away, but as something intrinsic to living systems.

In short, Western psychology is regaining consciousness. As it does so, it comes face to face with the facts of subjectivity and selfhood. But since science achieved its predominance by treating the world in strictly objective terms, this produces a creative tension. It exposes the need to broaden scientific methods.

Here, postmodernism helps; in its constructive form by promoting the synthesis of diverse traditions, in its deconstructive form by showing that scientific discoveries and methods are more historically contingent than had been supposed. Rather than dogmatically claiming that science finds out what is 'really real', it now takes its place among many modes of discourse through which people make a worldview. To paraphrase the contemporary philosopher Richard Rorty: 'Truth is made, not found.'

In psychology this means a return to including lived experience as primary data, as William James, Henri Bergson, and Edmund Husserl proposed. This opens the way to a deeper interaction with Buddhism which, from its inception, has done just that. Over two and a half thousand years of critical refinement and assimilation has made it one of the most enduring efforts to understand the human condition and its

difficulties. With the vigorous growth of Western psychology and with the more informed interactions with Buddhism of recent times, the synthesis of new meaning from the two traditions is well underway. The consequences are unpredictable, but they are likely to be useful and timely.

## Suffering

Part of the Enlightenment legacy was the belief and the expectation that life would be made better. Science and technology would replace religious dogma and lead society on to rational justice and plenty. In many respects this has proved to be true. In westernized cultures, disease, pain, and want are controllable as never before. The life span is increasing and there is an abundance of goods and pleasures.

Yet dissatisfaction and suffering are as much a part of life as ever they were. In some ways they are made worse by the media and advertising technology, perhaps the most significant technology of recent times, which manufactures desire by manipulating minds. It spreads images of rich lifestyles over the globe, increasing the desire to consume and to possess. But these lifestyles are unobtainable for the majority of the world's population and in any case they are unsustainable. The environmental and political costs of this situation are already producing violence and further suffering. A sense of unease is growing, but this gets little attention in most psychology. Computational models of consumer choice are more valued than examination of the consequences of consumerism.

The psychology of mental illness is perhaps an exception here. Over the past couple of decades a few psychiatrists and psychotherapists, advocates of what is called *ecopsychology*, have suggested that individual disorder may reflect a wider sense of a disordered world. Part of the suffering felt by the mentally ill may be an awareness that technology is running out of control and doing violent damage.

*Ecopsychology* aims at: 'Healing the mind, restoring the earth'. Its advocates know that this requires a deeper, internalized, appreciation of the interdependence of human mental life and the life of other beings. Here, there is a significant contrast between East and West. The modern Western image of the human condition is that it stands apart from a world, which thus becomes the object of manipulation. A contrasting Eastern image is that of Indira's net, from the *avatamsaka sutra*. It symbolizes a world of organic interconnectivity in which the life of every part, including that of human beings, reflects the life of every other.

Healers informed by these different images may approach suffering differently. Western medicine has had great success in identifying physical illness with single causes. Accordingly, suffering will tend to be treated as if it meant the presence of something alien. Buddhism, by contrast, takes suffering to be part of normal existence. Hence its treatment will tend to be sought in better adjustment to the conditions of life.

Cyber-colonization dominates contemporary geopolitics. In the short term, this may commodify Asian traditions into mere spiritual fashion accessories. But in the longer term, their depth and resilience will maintain their authenticity. The postmodern turn promotes a richer interaction, beyond the opposition of religion and science, in which no one way of encountering the world predominates. In this pluralist framework, new meaning is synthesized in constructive, informed discourse between traditions. Hence Buddhism and psychology can recognize each other as two of many approaches to the universal condition of exercising human consciousness within in a world not of our making. ◀

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Sheba Chhachhi  
'Raktpushp I'  
(detail), 1997 Poly-carbonsheet, black and white photos (bromides and film positives), text on acrylic, red cord, miscellaneous objects, light.



Courtesy of Sheba Chhachhi

# Why Psychiatry Matters in China

Research >  
China

The psychiatric profession in China has undergone vast changes over the past decade. Transformations in training, classifications, and institutional spaces characterize the post-Mao period and Deng reform era. Some longstanding issues, such as the stigma of mental illness and differences between rural and urban mental health care, remain. Yet, community programmes and ongoing professionalization and research have enabled practitioners to reach a broader constituency.

By Nancy N. Chen

This article addresses these shifts in the context of overall economic and social reform. How have people, places, and practices in the Chinese psychiatric community accommodated national reforms and global forms of care? While mainly addressing biomedical psychiatry rather than alternative or folk practices of psychiatry, I characterize general practices as opposed to the specialization of forensic psychiatry. Recent allegations concerning the abuse of criminals and political detainees in China within forensic psychiatry have raised the spectre of Soviet psychiatric abuse (Munro 2002). Such practices are currently being investigated by the World Psychiatry Association. My focus on general psychiatry offers a picture of contemporary programmes providing services to mentally ill clients and their families. It is crucial to examine the everyday experiences of those in this health care system in order to understand how the majority is treated and why it matters immensely to ordinary persons living in extraordinary times.

## People

During the early 1990s, I conducted ethnographic research on mental health care in Chinese psychiatric institutions. Visiting three urban hospitals, one rural hospital, and one industrial clinic, I was allowed to observe and interview practitioners, family members, and patients as they sought mental health care services.

Professionalization of practitioners was a key component of training at the urban research unit where I was affiliated. Staff meetings and lectures were

weekly events in which all doctors and nurses were required to participate; the medical library had subscriptions to Chinese and foreign journals specializing in psychiatry and mental health. In addition, psychiatrists from other countries frequently visited to observe and carry out joint research projects.

Today, early models of mental health care exist concurrently with recently imported models of biomedicine, in which scientific research and psychotropic drugs are increasingly emphasized in treatment. Post-Mao reforms allowed Chinese psychiatrists to participate in exchange programmes abroad. By the time I started field research the first wave of senior cadres had been visiting the US and Europe for over a decade; early on in their career, in the 1980s, the most recent generation of scholars had left China to receive graduate degrees and postdoctoral training abroad. International health organizations such as the WHO have also opened collaborative centres for joint research and training. Thus different training periods and philosophies of mental health have led to distinct generations of psychiatrists. The oldest group, now mostly retired, trained during the 1950s in the Soviet Union. The second group first trained as general medical doctors during the Cultural Revolution in the mid to late 1960s, and only later specialized in psychiatry, with exposure to Western theories at mid career. The youngest group has recently been trained under the auspices of WHO financing or in Western research universities.

## Places

The rural-urban difference in access to medical care, especially psychiatric

care, continues in the reform era. Larger research hospitals and the majority of professionals are mainly located in cities. It is important to note however that, by contrast to the early twentieth century when psychiatric hospitals were private, mental health wards are now public and state owned. The number of beds for mentally ill clients has also increased. In 1948 there were only 1,100 beds for 500 million people (a ratio of 0.22 beds per 10,000 people), with 50 to 70 trained physicians and even fewer nurses. By 1995 the number of beds significantly increased to 120,000-130,000 beds or about 1.1 beds per 10,000 people.

In larger psychiatric hospitals with several hundred inpatients, 80 to 90 per cent of the patient population consisted of chronic schizophrenic patients for whom family care was no longer viable. While the majority of patients were schizophrenic, there were also clinical cases of depression, neurological disorders, neurasthenia, and psychosomatic disorders. Regional differences in hospital stays between rural patients and urban patients also persist, due to work unit health packages and insurance in urban regions. To name an example, in terms of percentage there are more severe cases among mentally ill patients due to relatively late diagnosis in rural regions (Phillips, Lu, and Wang 1997). The number of beds is still quite low in comparison to other countries with smaller populations, and there is a heavy reliance on family and community managed care, especially for outpatient beds. Economic restructuring of hospital financing in the past decade has resulted in new structures being built in the urban areas.

## Practices

Chinese psychiatrists have adopted international diagnostic categories and classifications such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) of the American Psychiatric Association and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-9) of the World Health Organization. The Chinese professional community has also engaged in active translation of the latest Western psychiatric articles and international classification categories into Chinese, categories in the Chinese Classification of Mental Disorders (CCDM) being crucial sites of cultural translation (Lee 1996).

Parallel to psychiatry in Western, post-industrial nations, there is an increased usage of psychopharmacology. During the mid to late 1990s, the pharmaceutical industry introduced new drugs to the Chinese market, and multinational as well as local firms have been active in making psychotropic drugs available and an integral part of consumer life. Such practices raise key questions about the dark side of globalization, which enable swift introduction of material goods and symbolic meanings that undermine local and alternative healing systems.

In recent years other means for families to seek advice and help outside of the psychiatric unit, with regard to mental health, have arisen. One noteworthy trend has been hotlines, which people can call anonymously for help, and the Chinese popular press and magazines have, in recent years, taken on stories that deal with social issues such as mental illness. Besides seeking a range of clinical practitioners, such as Traditional Chinese Medicine or biomedical, family members can write to newspapers or journals seeking advice, and a number of private mental health clinics have opened. In addition, outreach education programmes in mental health have been introduced to the school curriculum.

In sum, research in China has been of interest for its emphasis on family and community programmes. In an era of de-institutionalization and managed care, which characterizes psychiatric care in most post-industrial nations, sustainable alternative forms of mental health care are of great significance. <

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# Psychoanalysis in the Chinese Context

Psychoanalysis is no stranger in contemporary China, though discussion and practice were suppressed during the first decades of the People's Republic. Today it is once again established, both as a therapeutic speciality and as an approach to human nature and culture. Although 'psychoanalysis' is often listed under 'abnormal psychology' in the Chinese library system, the concepts of the unconscious, infantile sexuality, libido, and ego have gradually become part of the interpretive vocabulary of the educated public.

By Jingyuan Zhang

Research >  
China

The rise and fall and rise of psychoanalysis in China have been closely tied to political events. Freudianism (*Fuluoyide zhuyi*) attracted attention in China at about the same time that it was becoming popular in Europe, hard on the heels of Darwinism and Marxism, as part of a general explosion of Western ideas in China at the end of the Imperial period and the beginning of the new Republic in the first decades of the twentieth century. Chinese intellectuals wrote many introductory books and essays on psychoanalysis and translated half a dozen of Freud's main works, one even into elegant classical Chinese.

Before the 1949 revolution, Chinese writers and thinkers puzzling over the weaknesses of traditional society and struggling to remake culture in new ways found many fertile ideas in Freud's work. But Freud's most widespread and conspicuous influence was in literary criticism and in literature itself, and especially the literature of individualism and romance. Several leading writers such as Shen Congwen and Qian Zhongshu have acknowledged their debt to Freud. Almost all the leading intellectuals of the day, most notably the Zhou brothers (Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren) and Guo Moruo, used

and discussed psychoanalytic concepts in their works. Application of Freud's ideas extended even to the critical examination of ancient Chinese texts, for example in Wen Yiduo's discussion of sexual symbolism in the *Shi Jing* (Book of Songs). But as understanding of psychoanalysis was maturing, the attention of the nation was drawn to more immediately pressing issues: the Japanese invasion and the civil war.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, psychoanalysis was criticized as an element of bourgeois ideology. It understood problems on an individual scale; it seemed to indulge petty weaknesses. The Soviet-approved Pavlovian experimental psychology was a better fit for the scientific tone of official social doctrine, and became the leading model for the discipline of psychology in China. Only with the intellectual re-opening in the 1980s did psychoanalysis begin its revival. Especially the young found Freudian theory an exciting alternative to stale Marxist orthodoxy, though its focus on sex made psychoanalysis an easy target for the occasional campaigns against Western 'spiritual pollution', by which the old guard attempted to reassert some control over culture and thought.

Interest in psychoanalysis had revived by the mid-1980s, and many more works have now been translated, represent-

ing Freudian and other schools. Compared to the Republican period, there is today a greater focus on therapeutic practice, partly due to the growing general interest in psychotherapy in a rapidly changing society that puts increasing strain on individuals, and to the now regular exchanges between Chinese and Western psychologists. Conferences, training workshops, and treatment clinics have flourished.

Medical schools regularly offer training classes and workshops on psychotherapy and psychiatry run by Westerners. All major universities now offer therapeutic services for students, and there are telephone helplines such as the 'Women's Hotline', with varying reliance on psychoanalytic approaches (Gerlach 1999).

In China, as elsewhere in today's intercultural world, it is hard to find 'strict' Freudian clinical practice: a patient lying on a couch and free-associating for a largely silent doctor. Psychoanalysis itself has grown and changed, branching into many schools and becoming less dogmatic. The 'talking cure' is indeed emphasized, but in the form of conversations in which psychological theories tend to suggest ideas rather than dictate procedures and conclusions. Qian Mingyi, Professor of Psychology at Beijing University, says that she looks to all theories and uses whatever works, when she sees patients in the school clinic. Wang Haowei, a well-known psychotherapist in Taipei, says that he usually tells his patients a little more than what they are ready to accept, but not so much that they do not return.

The psychoanalytic scene in Taiwan is even more vibrant



# Psychoanalysis in Japan

Research >  
Japan

As a psychoanalytically oriented critic in the field of Japanese literature, I find that my work often meets with resistance from other Asianists who view psychoanalysis as a fundamentally Western theory that cannot be 'applied' in an Asian context. Most of these sceptics are taken aback to discover that psychoanalysis has a venerable history in Japan and that Japanese analysts have presented a number of highly original theories to the international psychoanalytic community.

By Andra Alvis

In my own experience, it is these innovative models that attract the most interest from non-Japanese. Therefore, following a brief introduction to the history of psychoanalysis in Japan, the core of my article is devoted to three of the most interesting theories from Japanese analysts: Kosawa Heisaku's Ajase complex, Doi Takeo's ideas on *amae*, and Kitayama Osamu's study of the 'Don't Look' prohibition.

The mainstream Kosawa School and its members aside, there are many other prominent analysts in Japan, who – owing to their lack of a medical degree and/or classical Freudian orientation – have been excluded from the Japan branch of the International Psychoanalytical Association. Among these are Konda Akihisa, and Sorai Kenzō, who was a clinician who founded the eclectic, psychoanalytically oriented Sannō Institute in Tokyo.

The history of psychoanalysis proper in Japan began with psychiatrist Marui Kiyoyasu and the so-called Tōhoku School, which flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. Marui's early attraction to psychoanalysis is evident from a course on psychoanalytic psychiatry he taught at Tōhoku University, Sendai, in 1918. This interest deepened in the 1920s, during the course of several years of study with Adolf Meyer at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1933, as the head of a group of psychoanalytically oriented psychiatrists, Marui received approval from Freud to establish the first Japanese branch of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) in Sendai.

The 'Kosawa School', centred on stu-

dents trained by Kosawa Heisaku, became the core of psychoanalytic activity after World War II. A student of Marui, Kosawa left to study at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Institute from 1932–33, and established a psychoanalytic practice in Tokyo upon returning to Japan. In 1953, after Marui's death, Kosawa became head of the Japanese branch of the IPA and moved its headquarters to Tokyo. Students trained by Kosawa form the core of the present Japanese branch of the IPA, known familiarly as the 'Japan Psychoanalytical Association'. These psychoanalytically oriented psychiatrists include two theorists I will discuss below: Doi Takeo and Okonogi Keigo. As members of the Japan Psychoanalytical Association, students trained by Kosawa (and their own trainees) form the mainstream of psychoanalysis in Japan.

## Psychoanalytic theories from Japan

Three members of the Japan Psychoanalytic Association have presented original theories to the international psychoanalytic community: Kosawa Heisaku, Doi Takeo, and Kitayama Osamu (trained by Okonogi Keigo). Taking their cue from Kosawa, who formulated his model of a mother-centred Ajase complex in the 1930s, all three paradigms focus on the mother (rather than the Oedipal father) as the centre of psychic life. In the interest of thematic unity, I will discuss the three theories out of chronological order, beginning with Doi's validation of positive mother-child interaction and proceeding to Kosawa's and Kitayama's discussions of more ambivalent mother-child bonds.

than on the mainland, as the island has moved rapidly into the modern world of high-tech democracy, putting a strain on family and bringing new vulnerabilities to everyday life. Mental health jobs are on the rise, and there is more academic interest in psychoanalytic approaches across a range of disciplines, especially literary criticism and gender studies. Commercial bookstores are full of pop psychology books, many with an analytic slant. Crowds follow self-help gurus who ask people to seek answers in greater self-knowledge. During a recent trip to Taiwan, I was fortunate to meet some academicians interested in psychoanalysis, and psychotherapists from the Taiwan Institute of Psychotherapy ([www.tip.org.tw](http://www.tip.org.tw)) and the Sinin Center of Psychotherapy, two private non-profit organizations. I was deeply impressed by the energy and innovation with which the members are building up these organizations for research, training, and community service. Responding to charges that psychoanalysis may reflect psychological problems specific to the West or even to Freud's Vienna, some Taiwan professionals have begun research projects exploring the idea that there may be specifically Chinese or Taiwanese psychological patterns. The Department of Psychology of the National Taiwan University now has a programme on indigenous psychology and publishes a very valuable journal entitled *Bentu xinlixue yanjiu* (Indigenous Psychological Research in Chinese Societies, 1993–), exploring such cultural and psychological topics as 'face,' 'favour and reciprocity,' and 'filial piety' as demonstrated in clinical case studies.

Does psychoanalysis have a future in the Chinese environment? Psychoanalytic investigation of cultural differences is still in its earliest stages in the Mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, though such inquiries began almost as soon as Freud's ideas first reached China's shores. As Chinese family structures and support networks undergo increasing transformation, individuals feeling squeezed out are more likely to seek professional help for mental health. And psychoanalytic approaches will have to adapt as the social environment changes. Psychoanalysis is therefore likely to have a similar fate in China as in the West: it will be studied and practised, it will grow and divide, and it will find innovators. <

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## Amae

The most well-known theory of the Kosawa School is that of *amae*, formulated by Doi Takeo. Doi defines the concept of *amae* as 'the feelings that all normal infants at the breast harbour towards the mother – dependence, the desire to be passively loved, the unwillingness to be separated from the warm mother-child circle and cast into a world of objective "reality".' (1973:7). While recognizing similarities between the concept of *amae* and Michael Balint's ideas of 'passive object love', Doi's early work links the idea of *amae* to a number of other words/concepts in Japanese culture, such as *enryo* (restraint), and *giri* vs. *ninjō* (social obligation vs. human feeling).

Doi, as noted above, finds the prototype for *amae* in the nursing infant's relation to the mother and her breast. In this sense, *amae* could be viewed as an 'attempt to deny the fact of separation that is such an inseparable part of human existence and to obliterate the pain of separation.' However, as Doi goes on to say, '[A]mae plays an indispensable role in a healthy spiritual life. If it is unrealistic to close one's eyes completely to the fact of separation, it is equally unrealistic to be overwhelmed by it and isolate oneself in despair over the possibility of human relationships' (1973:75). Thus *amae* involves a constellation of feelings that emphasize a positive sense of connection to the mother over (a presumably painful) separation from her.

## The Ajase complex

By contrast, Kosawa's Ajase model, based on Buddhist legend, delineates a more ambivalent mother-child bond.

Kosawa derived his theory from two Buddhist sources: the *Daihatsu Nehangyō* (Nirvana Sutra) and the *Kanmuryōjūkyō* (Sutra of the Contemplation of Infinite Life). Both stories describe how the Prince Ajatasatru ('Ajase' in Japanese) seeks redemption from the Buddha for murderous impulses towards his parents: not only has he imprisoned his father Binbashara in order to accede to the throne, he has also drawn his sword on his mother, Idaike, when he discovered her secretly supplying Binbashara with food. However, the two sutras emphasize very different aspects of the legend. While the *Nehangyō* version centres on father-son hostility, the *Kanmuryōjūkyō* focuses on conflict in the mother-son bond. Kosawa's theory of the Ajase complex was inspired by the *Kanmuryōjūkyō*'s maternally focused storyline.

Kosawa's writings on the Ajase complex stress conflict deriving from a subject's primary endeavour to work through oral, ambivalent impulses in the context of the mother-child bond. Firstly, he underscores the non-genital nature of mother-child relationships – specifically, their oral aspects (Kosawa, similar to Melanie Klein, apparently interprets Ajase's sword as a tooth rather than a penis.) Secondly, he places strong emphasis on the ambivalence of the relationship with the mother, composed of both loving and hostile impulses. In the legend, it should be noted, Ajatasatru attempts to murder his mother, but is dissuaded by a minister. Thirdly, Kosawa views the (re-)establishing of a positive mother-child dyad as essential to psychic health.

Beginning in the 1970s, Kosawa's student Okonogi Keigo revised and developed the Ajase theory. Okonogi's writings on the Ajase complex also emphasize the subject's endeavour to work through ambivalent impulses in the mother-child bond; however, he locates the origin of mother-child conflict in maternal sexuality. For Okonogi, Ajase's matricidal rage stems from the discovery of Idaike's exclusive, and excluding relationship with Binbashara. Okonogi terms this anger at the child's discovery of his or her origin in the parent's sexual relationship *mishōon* or 'prenatal resentment.' In his most recent work, Okonogi discusses the Ajase complex as an intersubjective model for understanding not only children's ambivalence towards their mothers but also women's ambivalent experience of maternity.

## The 'pre-Oedipal' taboo

Kitayama's theory of the 'pre-Oedipal' taboo, like the Ajase complex, focuses on guilt and anxiety toward the mother. In this model, however, guilt concerns fears that reproductive functions such as birth and nursing have irreparably damaged the maternal body.

Kitayama draws on several Japanese folktales that portray relations between a human husband and non-human wife. These stories begin with an animal transforming itself into a woman and marrying a human male. The animal/wife proves to be a productive homemaker and loving spouse; however, she forbids her husband to watch her as she performs a specific task, such as nursing, giving birth or weav-

ing. When the hero eventually breaks this 'Don't look' prohibition (*miru na no kinshi*), he discovers his mate in her 'true' animal form. The animal/wife then departs, never to return.

Situating his ideas in an object-relations context of child development, Kitayama understands the 'Don't look' prohibition as a taboo that warns against the child's too-early discovery of maternal (re)productive functions – and their damaging capacity in relation to the mother's body. Several of the tales he examines show the non-human wife/mother wounded by the task she performs in secrecy. For example, in one story, a crane wife plucks feathers from her body to weave cloth for the hero. Kitayama argues that a child's recognition of the physical nature of his or her mother's nurturing capacities and their potential depleting of her body may give rise to fantasies of having harmed the mother through birth, nursing, etc. Whereas the Oedipal taboo against incest is, according to Kitayama, the 'taboo to be kept', the pre-Oedipal taboo against realizing the physicality of motherhood should be gradually broken over time (presumably, as the child develops the intellectual and emotional capacities to accept the physicality of maternal (re)productive functions).

Japan represents an unusual chapter in the transnational spread of psychoanalysis. Not only does psychoanalytic thinking in Japan have a nearly one-hundred year history; in addition, Japanese analysts have offered a number of innovative theories to the international community. Japan thus offers a unique contribution to the project of culturally inflecting psychoanalysis – one that should attract further attention as Asianists, and other non-Western scholars, continue the work of transforming psychoanalytic thought into a truly multicultural discipline. <

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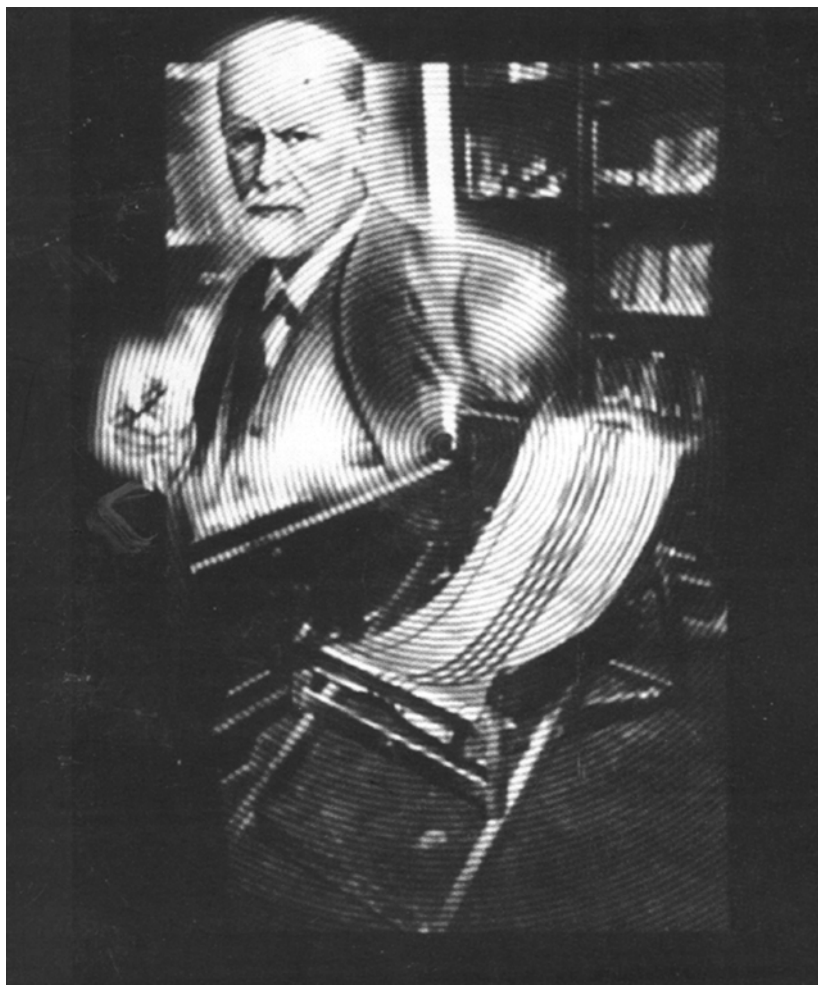
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# Freud on Garuda's Wings

## Psychoanalysis in Colonial India

The Indian Psychoanalytical Society was founded in 1921 by Girindrasekhar Bose, a Bengali Hindu physician. Bose and the other twelve Indian founding members of the Society belonged to the urbanized Western educated Bengali elite, the Bhadrakol. These men had access to the latest intellectual trends in Europe, but could at the same time draw on a rich fund of indigenous knowledge. The members of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society concurred with Freud's technique of free association and his notion of the unconscious. Like him, they were convinced of the importance of dreams and of traumatic events. They did, however, question several of Freud's core concepts and methods. This contribution presents some of the culture-specific elements of psychoanalysis that did not travel from Vienna to India, and those that were altered or were specific to conditions of colonialism.



Taken from: Hartnack, Christiane, *Psychoanalysis in Colonial India*

Research >  
South Asia

By Christiane Hartnack

Freud experienced life in two cultures: the one that he came from as a Moravian Jew, and the one into which he assimilated as an urban Viennese intellectual. Through his formulation of transculturally valid laws and universally applicable truths, Freud could, at least ideologically, overcome the feeling of belonging to a minority.

The Bhadrakol also lived under conditions of cultural hybridity. They functioned in a British colonial world during the workday, and were Bengali the rest of the time. Unlike Freud, they belonged to a majority. Bose never gave up wearing traditional Bengali clothes or following Hindu Bengali customs and proudly wrote in Bengali asserting that his British colleagues should learn Bengali if they were interested in these texts. In addition, he openly criticized Freud for running the International Psychoanalytical Movement 'like a church', and emphasized that his Bengali patients differed from Europeans.

Bose replaced Freud's emblematic couch with a deck chair. I assume that he did this because an upholstered chaise-longue would not have stood the humidity in Bengal. There is a certain irony in this choice though. By choosing a colonial piece of furniture, Bose 'went West'. By covering his couch with an oriental rug, Freud, on the other hand, 'went East'.

Shaped by the intellectual currents of the late nineteenth century, Freud – like Karl Marx and Charles Darwin – adhered to chronological-, causal-, and progress-oriented concepts. Freud emphasized the importance of individual history, and compared his psychoanalytic work with that of an archaeologist who uncovers hidden layers.

Bose, on the other hand, identified himself with an engineer who fixes circuits. His 'theory of opposite wishes' and the application of a 'see-saw-mechanism' reveal that his theoretical and practical work was based on the assumption of an essential bipolarity. However, in opposition to the subject-object dichotomies that play an important role in European cultures, his philosophical understanding was that of principal unity.

Both men realized that their philosophical views and psychoanalytic methods differed considerably, as is evident in

their correspondence, which spans the period from 1921 to 1937. In a letter dated 1 January 1933, Freud, for example, expressed his view on one of Bose's revisions: 'the theory of opposite wishes strikes me as something less dynamic than morphological.' ...". (Sinha 1966:431)

### 'The man Moses' facing Hindu gods and goddesses

Freud took an androcentric monotheism for granted. He was more than puzzled by the Hindu pantheon, and expressed openly how bored he was by Indian visitors, such as the author Rabindranath Tagore, the philosopher Surendranath Dasgupta, and the linguist Suniti Kumar Chatterji. In a letter to Romain Rolland, written in 1930, Freud commented on this writer's enchantment with Indian culture: 'I shall now try with your guidance to penetrate into the Indian jungle from which until now an uncertain blending of Hellenic love of proportion, Jewish sobriety, and philistine timidity have kept me away.' (Hartnack 2001:138)

In his correspondence with Freud, Bose explicitly pointed to the importance of the maternal deities in his culture. Other Indian psychoanalysts even criticized classical Freudian psychoanalysis for being a product of a 'Father religion or Son religion'. This is especially ironic, since Freud had deconstructed the role of religion, and was – unlike his Indian colleagues – rather secular.

Freud derived his insights primarily from his therapies with highly educated upper middle-class Viennese women patients who lived in patriarchally structured nuclear families. These women often envied their brothers and other men for being able to make use of their education and for enjoying social freedoms. Freud's notion of penis envy thus also reflects the social situation of his women patients in early twentieth century Vienna.

Bose, on the other hand, treated mostly upper-caste westernized Bengali Hindu men. Among them he had discovered 'a wish to be female'. He wrote to Freud in 1929: 'The desire to be a female is more easily unearthed in Indian male patients than in European.' (Sinha 1966:430) In analogy to Freud's women patients in Vienna, these Bengali men were also hindered in their development – in their case by the realities of colonialism. It is likely that they envied Bengali women who were only indirectly affected by British domination. Moreover, femininity was represented by powerful goddesses and therefore associated with desirable traits.

In Bengali joint families in the early part of the twentieth century, the biological father was only one of several patriarchal figures, and the biological mother just one of several maternal authorities, resulting in multiple sources of affections and emotional bonds as well as 'hydra-like' (Kakar 1982: 420) confrontations with authorities. The direction of aggression, too, differed in European and Indian texts and folkloric traditions. As A.K. Ramanujan (1983, p.252) pointed out, in Indian literature the aggressor is often the father and not the son, as in the classical Oedipus tale, because the father is jealous of his wife's devotion to her son.

It is therefore not surprising that Bose rejected Freud's view of the transcultural universality of the Oedipus complex. In 1929, he sent him thirteen of his psychoanalytical articles, noting: 'I would draw your particular attention to my paper on the Oedipus wish where I have ventured to differ from you in some respects.' Bose claimed, for example, that its resolution is achieved by fighting and overcoming the father's authority, and not by a submission to it: 'I do not agree with Freud when he says that the Oedipus wishes ultimately to succumb to the authority of the super-ego. Quite the reverse is the case. The super-ego must be conquered ...The Oedipus [conflict] is resolved not by the threat of castration, but by the ability to castrate.' (Hartnack 2001:148)

### The politics of psychoanalysis: imperial versus colonial conditions

Until 1947, India was a British colony. This implied that the Indian Psychoanalytical Society had not only Indian,

but also British members. For example, Lieutenant Owen Berkeley-Hill, a psychiatrist in the British army, used psychoanalysis to help British patients in the European Mental Hospital in Ranchi to adjust – or re-adjust – to life in a colony. In his cultural-theoretical writings, he also drew on psychoanalysis to legitimize British colonial rule. In an essay published in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* in 1921, he attributed to Hindus an anal-erotic personality structure, and ascribed highly positive characteristics to his English countrymen. Berkeley-Hill concluded that Hindus do not have a psychological disposition for leadership and thus need to be ruled. In addition to being obsessive-compulsive, they were also infantile, since 'their general level of thought partakes of the variety usually peculiar to children.' (Hartnack 2001: 52)

Another officer in the Indian army, Claud Dangar Daly, also left no doubt about his value judgements on Hindus. In an essay published in *Imago* in 1927, he asserts that the character traits of the Hindus 'are in many respects the same as we are accustomed to observe among European obsessive neurotics). Furthermore, in an article published in 1930 in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Daly wrote that 'the Hindu people would have to make an effort to overcome their infantile and feminine tendencies ... The role of the British Government should be that of wise parents'. (Hartnack 2001: 67)

Perhaps as a result of such writings by fellow members of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, Bose was critical of psychoanalytic generalizations. In his essay 'On the Reliability of Psychoanalytic Findings', for example, he cautioned against psychoanalysts who 'do not hesitate to dogmatise on their findings and regard them as "settled facts" even when the analysis has been of a very cursory nature.' (Hartnack 2001:149)

Bose and other Indian psychoanalysts had personal contact with members of the Indian independence movement, and several of their writings contain an explicitly anti-colonial stance. Bose's view of the resolution of the Oedipus complex indirectly indicates this, and his definition of mental disease specifically exempted martyrs and patriots: 'The sense of morality and duty often leads us to self-destructive actions, e.g. the feeling of the patriot or martyr.'

Freud's envisaged 'conquest' in India remained confined to his imagination. The psychoanalytical 'Internationale' of which he had dreamed was not realized, and the 'Freudian Orient', namely the wholesale reception of psychoanalysis in India, was not what Freud had thought it was. Not even in their public statements did the Indian members of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society turn out to be loyal to Freud.

Freud intuitively sensed all this. On the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday, the Indian Psychoanalytical Society had sent him a statuette of Vishnu. When the sandalwood stand and the ivory of his 'trophy of conquest', as he had called it in his letter of thanks to Bose, developed cracks, he made an entry in his diary: 'Can the god, being used to Calcutta, not stand the climate in Vienna?' (*The Diary of Sigmund Freud* 1992: 115) Perhaps Freud, in the privacy of his diary, expressed a premonition that, like the statuette of Vishnu, psychoanalysis would not travel easily. ◀

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# Tradition & Modernization of Islamic Psychiatric Care in the Subcontinent

Islamic medicine and psychiatric care were introduced to the Indian subcontinent in the twelfth and thirteenth century, during the Muslim invasion of the region. Today Muslim medicine offers a psychiatric care system alternative to that of biomedicine and is used by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The inclusion of the secular branch of Islamic medicine (see below) in the state public health systems of the region has led to increased modernization of the traditional and, consequently, to important changes in its scientific identity and to the decline of particular treatments.

Research > South Asia

By Fabrizio Speziale

In Muslim medical sciences the interpretation and treatment of psychiatric disorders is based on at least two different schools (although some scientific concepts are common to them both). A secular, and medically grounded, theory and clinical practice, based on Greek-Arab science (called *unani*, lit. Ionic or Greek, in India), can be differentiated from a religious-spiritual set of interpretations. The latter has been moulded by several roots: the *tibbi-nabawi* (prophetic medicine), that is the collections and commentaries of the sayings of the prophet Muhammad (d. 632) on hygiene and medicine, sufi rituals and the cult of sufi saints, and other elements derived from esoteric sciences and folk beliefs.

## Unani medicine and psychiatry

In *unani* theory the interpretation of psychiatric disorders is based on the doctrines of Galen (d. 200 ca.) and Avicenna (Ibn Sina, d. 1037), and the physiology of the four humours (blood, phlegm, yellow, and black bile) that circle the body. Humours are a combination of the four universal elements (fire, air, water, earth) and have four basic qualities (hot, cold, dry, and moist). Individual health is a state of relative equilibrium of the humours, characterized by the dominance of one humour, which determinates *mizaj*, the individual temperament (for example, the dominance of phlegm or black bile determines the phlegmatic or melancholic characters respectively). Alteration and excess of humours produces diseases, in particular black bile (cold and dry), which induces depres-

A complete medical system, based on Greek medical science and further developed in an Islamic context is contained in the *al-Qanun fil-Tibb*, by Ibn Sina (972-1036). The first book of these works, which came to be known in Europe as Avicenna's Canon, is shown here.



Yunani Tibb, lit. Greek medicine, is an old form of medicine that has combined Greek and Islamic elements and is still practised in India and Pakistan.

Exhibition poster designed by J.J. Witkam

sive disorders. Excess of yellow bile (hot and dry) leads to hysteria and maniacal disorders.

The aim of the physician is to restore the normal *mizaj* of the person, by different means. Pharmacotherapy is today the most common. University pharmaceutical laboratories (such as Hamdard in Delhi and the Tibbiya College of Aligarh), as well as private ones, offer traditional compound drugs and electuaries for disorders such as mania, hysteria, epilepsy, melancholia, and sleep and sexual disorders. In the past, treatments such as phlebotomy, cupping, Turkish baths, aroma-therapy, poetry reading, and music-therapy, were used, and clinical cases of Muslim physicians using suggestion and cognitive therapies are well documented in literature. Due to the impact of modernization, however, these are rarely practised today.

## Religious medicine

In religious medicine the interpretation of human suffering is part of a wider spiritual and ethical framework. According to Islamic psychology, human personality has two fundamental components, the *nafs* (pl. *nufus*) or individual ego, and the *ruh* (pl. *arwah*), or soul, conceived as aggregates of different *nufus* and *arwah*. On account of its relation to desires, sin, and the 'whispers' of Satan, the lower *nafs* is the origin of psychological suffering. Thus, the *nufus* are hierarchically ordered - from the lower *nafs* ('prone to evil'), to the 'perfect' or 'satisfied' *nafs*. Psychiatric disorders are commonly interpreted as possession by the *shaytan* (devil) and *jinn*s (spirits mentioned in the Quran as created from fire, who inhabit a subtle world in which mankind is immersed, as into a liquid).

Masters of the sufi orders are traditional religious healers who treat instances of possession and other ailments by recitations of the Quran, talismans, and prescription of behavioural and ritual instructions. A cardinal element of these healing rituals is the pilgrimage to shrines and tombs of sufi saints, where healers usually reside and where incubation of healing dreams is a common practice.

## Muslim medical institutions

A main contribution to Muslim medicine in India was the introduction of the Arab model of the hospital, where patients of all backgrounds (regardless of caste and religion) were treated free of charge. It facilitated the diffusion of Islamic medicine among non-Muslims. Hospitals were often provided with wards for the insane, where drugs, as well as music-therapy and Turkish baths, amongst other things, were applied. The first known psychiatric wards of Muslim India were founded in Delhi and Mandu, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the post-colonial epoch, surviving *unani* hospitals were incorporated into the state health system and new ones were created. The role of traditional asylum wings, however, was taken over by modern psychiatric hospitals.

Since medieval times some sufi shrines have specialized in the treatment of psychiatric disorders. These institutions, called *dargahs*, are architectural compounds which can include tombs, a monastery, houses, a mosque, and even rooms for patients. Traditionally, both *unani* hospitals and *dargahs* were endowed with donations and properties (*waqf*) by Muslim kings. Muslim saints could provide protection, quite specifically against illness and possession by devils, but also more

in general, during critical phases of life. Even today, sufi shrines working as psychiatric in- and out-patient centres are common in many urban and rural areas, and are visited by patients from all social classes and religious backgrounds.

Some *dargahs* provide tens of rooms, which are rented to patients and their relatives. Those possessed by dangerous devils are put in chains and some of them might reside in a *dargah* for months or years. Not uncommonly, most of the patients in *dargahs* in the cities have previously been treated unsuccessfully with drugs in a public psychiatric facility. With the help of donations from wealthy pilgrims, many *dargahs* also offer meals for the poor.

## Tradition and modernization

The two branches of Islamic psychiatry have responded in their own different ways to the colonial and post-colonial processes of globalization, and the confrontation with biomedicine. Both traditions have ably adapted their identity and role to accommodate contemporary social, political, and economical changes. The *unani* school and its hospitals have lost important traditional features, but have also retained a refined pharmaco-therapy that, through mass advertising in the cities, can today compete with modern drugs and has found a definite place in the Indian pluralist and globalized pharmaceutical market.

Conversely, the popularity of sufi shrines to treat psychiatric patients has not been affected by modern institutions. However, important aspects of the sufi tradition in particular have been subject to considerable change. While previously sufis were among the main practitioners of *unani* medicine, they lost their double role as doctor and instructor in the post-independence period, when the teaching of *unani* medicine (which had previously been based on family transmission) was institutionalized in universities. The large influx of pilgrims to many of the *dargahs* nowadays feeds a prolific market of medico-religious tourism that is profoundly changing the ethics of the profession. The result is that sufis, who traditionally did not accept money, are increasingly being replaced by a new type of smart and business-minded spiritual healer, who may not have any relation to sufi orders. <

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Al-Qanun fil-Tibb by Ibn Sina, Or.63, f.aa, Leiden University Library (UB), Legatum Warnerianum; Arabic writing, not dated.

# Bidesia: Migration, Change, and Folk Culture

Research >  
South Asia

The 'Bidesia: Migration, Change, and Folk Culture' project deals with the memory of migration, which flows in various cultural forms in the homeland as well as in destinations of migrants. The historical reality of international migration provides a basis of common cultural heritage for people of Indian descent in the various regions in the world, though each region has an interesting cultural story in itself. The joint experiences of these migrants, however, make it clear that common cultural heritage is not only fixed in places and things, like fortresses, shipwrecks, archives, and arts, but also travels around the world in the minds of men and women who, as migrants with their own culture as baggage, are either obliged, or choose, to face new futures in foreign countries.

By Badri Narayan Tiwari

In the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, as the abolition of slavery progressed around the world, European colonies found themselves in great need of manpower for their plantations. India, meanwhile, was suffering from an economic depression, due to both the decline of the weaving industry caused by the Industrial Revolution in England, and the extreme population pressure on agriculture and cultivable lands. This pressure on the resources of the country, combined with the colonial masters' demand for cheap and abundant labour, led to the migration of a large number of migrant labourers from the Bhojpuri region.

The Bhojpuri region is a cultural entity that transcends political borders. This area comprises the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh and the western part of Bihar in India. In the north, it reaches across the river Ganges and past the Nepal frontier, up to the lower ranges of the Himalayas, from Champaran to Basti. In the south, it crosses the Sone River and covers the great plateau of Chotanagpur, where it finds itself in contact with the Bengali of Manbhum, the Oriya of Singhbhum, and the scattered tribal languages of the Chotanagpur plateau. The area covered by Bhojpur is some fifty thousand square miles; more than 15 per cent of the total Indian population speaks Bhojpuri.

Bhojpuri culture can boast national and even international spread, due to the large-scale migration from this region. The descendants of those migrants, who have now integrated into the societies of the countries to which their ancestors were originally taken, also use this language. Bhojpuri is mainly spoken in Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, British Guyana, and Uganda, as well as in some parts of Burma and Nepal. The people of Indian descent in various regions across the world can thus claim a common cultural heritage based on the historical reality of the migration from the Bhojpuri region.

## Culture, change, and migration

Migration is usually considered an economic phenomenon, but it also creates a cultural phenomenon in both the homeland and the land of destination. For the Bhojpuri people, this migration was first and foremost a heavy emotional loss. Many relationships were torn apart – wives torn from husbands, sisters torn from brothers, fathers from their old-age support, and mothers from the 'apples of their eyes'. All were leaving for foreign shores and there was no way to hold them back. The social, economic, political, and historical manifestations of colonial imperialism were drawing them to this migration, which was more of a forced migration for the Bhojpuris. This economic compulsion is expressed in the folk tradition of the people of the Bhojpuri region of India, and the following folk song clearly expresses the pain and suffering that they feel:



Photograph taken from the exhibition *Van Vrouwenleven*. Collection of photos of women in Suri-name.

Both photos: Collection of the Royal Institute of the Tropics (KIT), Amsterdam

*Railiya na bairi se jaha jawa no bairi se paisawa bairi na mor saiyan ke bilmawe se paiswa bairi na*  
(It is neither the train nor the ship that is our enemy but rather the money that compels our husbands to migrate to other lands)

In spite of the best efforts of the Bhojpuri people, the migration did not stop. As a result, both externally and internally, the pain of loss and separation became an important aspect of Bhojpuri society. This pain gave birth to a distinct folklore, which emerged as an expression of the pain and anguish of the migrants' separation from their families.

## Bidesia folk tradition

*Bidesia* was the affectionate form of address given to the migrants by loved ones who were left behind in the homeland, and so lends its name to the new folk culture that emerged out of this migration, *bidesia* folk culture. This folk culture is represented in many forms, such as *nautanki* (musical theatre), dramas, folk songs, and folk paintings. It is a complete folk culture, or holistic folklore tradition, which developed as an outcome of the vacuum caused by the departure of the migrant Bhojpuris. In this project, the term *bidesia* will be studied, not only in its *nautanki* form only but also in its role as a metaphor for cultural tradition that emerged in and around the migration of Bhojpuri people.

In *bidesia* folk culture, the migrants are referred to as *bidesia*, *pardesi*, *batohia*, and other terms, which contain elements of both affection and complaint for leaving the loved ones behind. These three terms of address represent three different kinds of folk tradition: firstly, in *bidesia* culture, the chances of return of these migrants were slim. When leaving his *an muluk*, or native place, the migrant broke all ties with his loved ones. Secondly, in the *pardesi* culture, the migrant is forced to leave his native place in order to earn a living, but still maintains communication ties with his family. The pain of this semi-permanent migration still remains however, and comes through in the Bhojpuri folk songs. A *pardesi* may be called *bidesia* in complaining tones, but a *bidesia* is very seldom called *pardesi*. Finally, in *batohia* culture, the *bidesia* comes back as a traveller to his native place and resumes normal communication ties.

It seems that the use of the word *bidesia* for migrant labourers in Bhojpuri folk songs began after the year 1837, when migration from the region began. Since very little folk tradition was written or published, it is difficult to fix the exact time period. From what is documented, little as it may be, it can be said that in 1850 Kesodas, a Sadhu following Kabir's ideology in one of his *nirgun* compositions, used the term

*videsh* – referring to overseas migration – instead of *pardes* – referring to internal migration:

*Bhave naahin mohe bhavanvan*  
*Ho Ram, videsh gavanvan*  
(I don't care for palaces,  
Hey Ram, my beloved has gone to a foreign land)

In 1884, Pandit Beni Madhav Ram, a resident of Kashi, composed a folk song in which the word *bidesia* was used for the first time to address a person who had departed:

*Kahe mori sudhi bisaraye re bidesia*  
*Tarhpi tarhpi din rain gavayo re*  
*Kahe mose nehiya lagae re bidesia.*  
(Why did you make me lose my consciousness, O *bidesia*?  
I am suffering constantly day and night.  
Why did you lock your eyes with mine, O *bidesia*?)

The composition of *bidesia* folk songs also began in this time period, and later formed the basis for the *bidesia* folk culture. In these songs as well, as can be seen in the previous stanza, the word *bidesia* was used for the first time as a *tek*, or repetitive ending to a song line. Scholars believe that this was the special feature of *bidesia* folk tradition.

In this time period, a form of folk theatre also called *bidesia* emerged in the Bhojpuri region. *Bidesia* theatre drew huge audiences, especially when performed by Bhikhari Thakur and his acting troupe – Bhikhari Thakur himself composed many popular *bidesia* plays. Each play was filled with *bidesia* songs, which were based on such folk tunes as *lorikayan*, *jantsari*, *sorthi*, *birha*, *barahmasa*, *poorvi*, *alha*, *pachra*, *kunvar bijai*, *nirgun*, *chaupai*, *kavita*, *chaubisa*, and others. The popularity of the plays was due to their narrating common events and experiences related to the pain of migration, a theme that touched a common chord in the hearts of the Bhojpuri audience. The interspersions of comic relief and satire on the existing system also established *bidesia* theatre as an extremely popular form of folk art and culture. These plays were also a statement on the existing social dichotomies and the process of displacement of the Bhojpuri migrants.

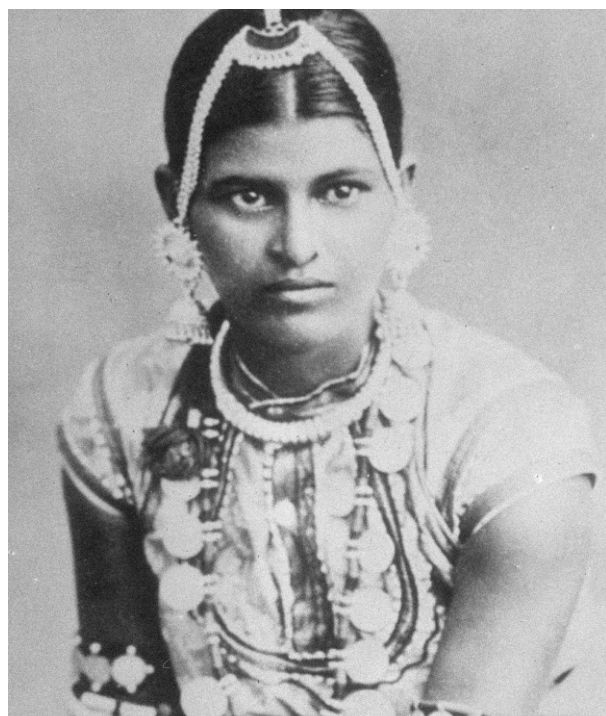
## Documenting oral memories of migration

Sadly, *bidesia* folk culture, which is mainly an oral tradition, is in danger of extinction today. It is thus of paramount importance to collect, document, and analyse these traditions, as one could then develop the story of Bhojpuri overseas migration by relating the traditions to other archival and secondary sources. Notably, this folk tradition is popular not only in the homeland of the migrants, but also in their destinations like Mauritius, Suriname, Trinidad, Fiji, and the Netherlands, where the present generations in search of their cultural identity are trying to reconstruct the history of their ancestors. These oral folk traditions were an important component of the cultural baggage of those ancestors, which helped them recover from the pain caused by the separation from loved ones in their homeland. A study of these cultural traditions will not only help present-day, non-resident Bhojpuris discover their roots, but it will also help them strengthen their common cultural heritage and folk traditions. The preservation of oral folk traditions in all cultures is important, as it preserves the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. <

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## Info >

Supported by the Gonda fund I researched and transcribed various Suriname Hindustani folk songs, bearing the memory of migration, collected and recorded by U. Arya and preserved in Kern Institute Library, Leiden University. This project is the outcome of the collaborative effort of the G.B. Pant Social Science Institute (Museum), Allahabad. For her extensive help, I am thankful to Susan Legène, head of the Curatorial Department of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam, who held the project's identification mission and with whom I will continue in a joint research project.



Portrait of a Hindu woman, Suri-name c. 1890

# A Thousand and One Identities

A Meeting with Shauna Singh Baldwin, Shashi Tharoor, and Krishna Baldev Vaid

Report >  
South Asia

26-27 November  
2002, Amsterdam  
and Leiden,  
the Netherlands

By Thomas de Bruijn

On 26 and 27 November last year, three Indian authors presented their work in sessions in Amsterdam and Leiden. These sessions were part of the annual French literary festival Les Belles Étrangères which invited twenty Indian authors to present their work in France. The festival organizer, the Centre National du Livre in Paris, gladly supported the IIAS initiative to invite three of their guests to the Netherlands.

All three authors – Shauna Singh Baldwin, Shashi Tharoor, and Krishna Baldev Vaid – acknowledge their shared Indian identity as part of, and not in exclusive opposition to, a complex of identities. Notwithstanding the authors' different backgrounds and the fact that their writing falls into separate categories, it proved worthwhile to bring them together to discuss their work and their opinions on the problems that arise with the political and cultural construction of identity in modern South Asian society. Identity is a prominent element in their work, but in many different forms and guises. The authors share the notion that social, cultural, or religious identities interfere and clash with the perception of individuality. In the case of Baldwin and Vaid, political events interrupt the trajectories of their protagonists and change the contours of their role in the social context. Vaid adds an existential aspect to this change by emphasizing the inherent fluidity of identity. In Tharoor's work, this conflict is partially the 'classical' post-colonial rift between westernized acculturation and traditional cultural identities, but also shows a deep involvement with Indian society.

The encounter with these authors provides an excellent opportunity to explore the presentation of identity in their work a little further and also to introduce their work to that part of the readership of the newsletter that is not acquainted with modern Indian writing.

Shauna Singh Baldwin lives and works in Canada and made a spectacular debut as a novelist with *What the Body Remembers* (1999). This novel describes the changes and personal growth of a Sikh woman against the backdrop of the horrors of the Partition of Pakistan and India. The Sikh community was more or less crushed between the interest of the Hindu and the Muslim communities. Many fled the Punjab or were killed in the violent aftermath of the Partition. Rup is a Punjabi girl from a village who is married to a wealthy Punjabi landowner so as to produce the offspring his first wife could not deliver. Her husband has been educated in England but is still wrapped up in the traditional responsibilities of Punjabi landownership. He attempts at all costs to establish a just

division of land for the Sikh villagers. His struggles are futile and when the riots start, he sends Rup and her children away to Delhi. He follows later on the infamous trains from Pakistan on which many refugees are killed.

The story of the novel follows Rup's childhood in the village, where she develops into a self-conscious and independent child, and her later life, as she learns to survive in the traditional world of her husband's household. Identity plays an important part in the story but is never depicted as a singular notion. The characters are developed from the point of view of their struggle to cope with different roles and identities which are cast upon them by tradition and modernity. Baldwin shows, in Rup, to what extent gender and economic dependency define identity in both the traditional village and in her husband's family. Although social constraints and the political situation determine the events in this novel, the author also suggests that there is a deeper sense of individual identity. It is expressed in the way Rup and her husband's first wife Satya deal with the role they are given. They develop a form of inner determination and will for freedom and survival that gives them the strength to endure all kinds of hardship. Again, identity appears as complex and with many dimensions. The same goes for the perspective from which the book was written; Baldwin was born in India but has lived in Canada almost her whole life. She paints a very detailed and historically accurate picture of the cultural traditions and modern history of the Sikh community. The historical detail enriches the novel, but it also adds to a dialogic quality to the representation, reflecting different aspects of the author's own identity.

Shashi Tharoor has published a substantial number of stories, novels, and essays in which he presents India's literary heritage and modern history from a critical, comical, but above all, personal perspective. He grew up in various places in India and Europe and presently lives and works as an UN official in New York. Although English became his first language through education and upbringing, he never lost contact with India and that is apparent in his work. In his essays he is very open about his own multiple cultural identities and analyses the complex new identities that arose with the formation of the nation state India, the political system, the positive discrimination of lower castes, and the diaspora of Indians to all regions of the world. His literary and essayistic works converge on this point, as they depict the conflicts between various cultural or social allegiances in the lives of contemporary Indians. His first success came with *The Great Indian Novel* (1989), a caricatured retelling of the

*Mahabharat*, followed by the novels *Show Business* (1992) and *Riot* (2001) and a volume of essays, *India, from Midnight to the Millennium* (1997). Tharoor believes in India's cultural diversity and its democratic rule, although both attributes put a heavy burden on Indian politics and society.

In the *Great Indian Novel*, the reader is immediately confronted with the issue of identity in an author's note at the beginning of the novel, in which the author wonders openly whether his tale is great and authentically Indian. The characters in his novels take this conundrum one step further as they depict the conflicts between various shades of cultural identity, tradition and modernity, westernization and 'Indianness'. It is characteristic of the novels that the characters are determined mainly by roles put upon them by the nation, caste, or family, but that this *dharma* is not enough to stay put in a confusing and tempting world. Identities, and the duties they impose, cannot fulfil the lives of the characters if they are not complemented by personal conviction and a place for the relishing of cultures other than that of the traditional world. Tharoor's most endearing characters

His work has developed over the course of the years as he explored the possibilities of various styles. Whereas Vaid's early work is highly realist, his later novels and stories explore the realm of magic realism. For the festival Les Belles Étrangères, the French Hindi specialist and translator Annie Montaut published a volume of Vaid's stories, translated into French with the Hindi text alongside the translations. The stories and Montaut's introduction offer a wonderful insight into Vaid's way of looking at India and the notions of identity one can find in his work.\*

Identity is a complex concept in Vaid's work and can only be summarized in this short space. The Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 and its violent aftermath are prominent in his work; Vaid was born in the Punjab, an area that was divided between the two nations and which saw the worst of the killings and a mass exodus of refugees from both sides. In two lengthy novels – *Uska Bacpan* (1958, translated by the author as *Steps in Darkness*) and *Guzara Hua Zamana* (*Times Gone By*, 1981) – he describes this period from the perspective of a young man who witnesses the rising tensions between the two

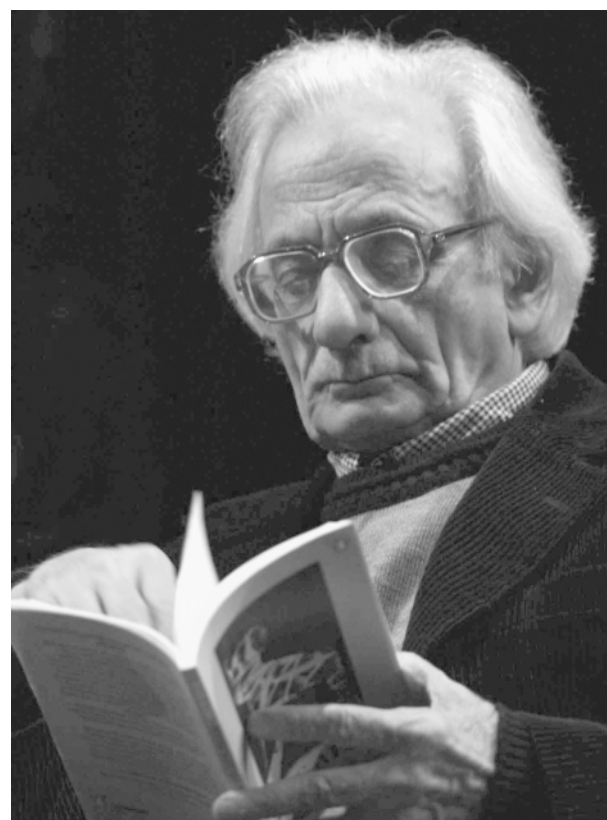
talist tone and turned into uncertainty with regards to cultural and personal identity. His later stories and novels, such as *Bimal Urf Jayē To Jayē Kahā* (1974, translated by the author as *Bimal in Bog*), *Mayalok* (*The World of Illusion*, 1999), or *Dusra na koi* (*There is no other*, 1978), express this breakdown of identity in a style in which the influence of Beckett and Joyce can be observed. This was a novel feature for Hindi writing and was discussed ardently by literary critics.

An intriguing feature of Vaid's work is the description of ubiquitous scenes of poverty, hunger, and misery in India's public life, which seem to remain outside the observer's identity as if they are not part of his reality. Vaid's literary work shows the many dimensions of modern Indian identity, combining an almost mystical urge for transcending definitions with a deep commitment to the reality of Indian society and culture.

It would not do justice to the richness of each authors' works to draw far-reaching conclusions from this very brief summary of their representation of identity. It seems, however, that the protagonists in the works have in common the fact that they progress on trajectories towards personal realization and growth that are influenced, if not defined, to a large extent by the social and cultural context. These trajectories originate in the preoccupation with inner conflict and subconscious trauma which is the stock element of psychological development in Western fiction. We have seen this in other postmodern and post-colonial authors who write in English, but the authors that are presented here seem to add something new to the familiar perspective. Baldwin places the growth towards identity of her protagonists against a historical background which enriches the description of the cultural and economic reality of their protagonists. Tharoor adds a carnivalesque tone to the development of identity, but also emphasizes involvement with Indian social and cultural plight. Vaid's approach is different; he adds much to Indian writing by exploring a post-modern perspective in Hindi writing and stretching the expressive possibilities of the language.

In this respect, the representation of identity in the work of the three authors opens up another layer of detail and diversity in the perception of identity in South Asian culture and society. ◀

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Krishna Baldev Vaid

have learned a different set of identities and new horizons in a westernized upbringing, but have to reconcile these with the confined situation of their traditional role. His novels view the dynamics of Indian society where roles and trajectories are constantly changing and new identities are created through a humorous optimism, playing with the semantics of the English language in the Indian context.

Krishna Baldev Vaid is a writer of Hindi and English fiction who has been publishing from the 1950s onwards and has produced an impressive oeuvre of short stories, novels, and theatre plays. He has spent a long time teaching English literature at universities in the United States and has also published English versions of his own work. The career of Vaid spans the entire period in which post-Independence Hindi writing came into its own.

communities in his own village. He gradually sees the old world, in which the division between religious identities was present in every day life in a fluid way, fall apart into one of rigid and opposing factions. The notion of the indefinite nature of identity is a central theme in Vaid's work. In his view, the realization of identity can never take the form of a rigid, separate religious conviction or cultural affiliation; true identity lies in remaining undefined, being all opposites, all identities at once. Descending into singularity is a loss; the loss which Vaid describes in the novels on the Partition period.

His later work continues this theme but, then, in an avant-garde, magic realist setting, exploring the boundaries of narrative style and language in a way that was unprecedented in Hindi fiction. The undefined nature of identity of his earlier work acquired an existen-

Note >

\* *Histoire de renaissances: Pichale janma ki bata hai* / Nouvelle présentation et traduction du hindi par Annie Montaut, Paris: Langues et Mondes (2002).

# A Martyr's Tale

## The Life, Death, and Posthumous Career of Yang Jisheng

Research >  
China

Yang Jisheng was beheaded in Beijing in 1555. His crime was criticizing the leading political figure of his day, Yan Song. But when Yan fell from power seven years later, Yang became a posthumous hero, a Confucian martyr. Over the ensuing 450 years his image has been used by emperors, members of the literati elite, and his own descendants to promote various interests and agendas. Today his memory is again being revived to serve new interests in post-communist China.

By Kenneth J. Hammond

Born in 1516 in a village about 120 km south of Beijing, Yang Jisheng led a hard life as a young man. He managed to acquire a Confucian education in the village school, passed the entry level Confucian examinations and attended the National University in the capital. In 1547 he passed the highest examination and began his official career. After a promising start at the secondary capital in Nanjing, he was called to Beijing in 1551. However, he then submitted a memorial criticizing the policy of trading with Mongol raiders on the northern frontier supported by the chief grand secretary Yan Song. Because of this he was arrested, beaten in prison, demoted, and banished to a remote posting on the frontier of the Ming empire, in what is today Gansu province. He served there for one year, during which time he became popular with both the local elite and the commoners. He founded a school for local children with funds raised by selling his horse and his wife's jewels.

By the beginning of 1552 the political tide in Beijing had turned against trade with the Mongols, and Yang's career got a fresh start. Yan Song sought to recruit Yang to his own ranks of followers. Yang received a series of promotions, and was finally recalled to the capital. But when he arrived in January 1553 he immediately submitted a new memorial, attacking Yan Song directly for ten crimes and five kinds of corruption. Three days later he was arrested again. This time he was beaten much more severely, and kept in prison for over two years. Finally, despite the efforts of friends like the rising scholar Wang Shizhen to aid him, he was executed in November 1555. Wang and other junior officials retrieved Yang's body from the execution ground and paid for his burial.

### A posthumous career

Yang's story might well have ended here, as just another casualty in the factional battles which plagued the imperial political system. But in 1562 Yan Song fell from power, and officials like Xu Jie, who took over dominance at the Ming court, called for the rehabilitation of Yan's political victims. Yang Jisheng was posthumously restored to office, promoted, given honorary titles, and in 1567 the new Longqing emperor ordered shrines to be built to praise his loyalty.

By this time Wang Shizhen had become one of the most influential literary and cultural figures in China. He wrote a biography of Yang which drew the portrait of a righteous martyr, a Confucian hero who sacrificed his life to oppose Yan Song's corruption and abuse of power. The new chief grand secretary, Xu Jie, wrote a funeral epitaph for Yang praising his righteous spirit, artfully neglecting to note his own failure to defend Yang while serving as Yan Song's subordinate. Even the often iconoclastic writer Li Zhi articulated the story of Yang Jisheng in its essential heroic dimensions. Yang's former residence in Beijing had a small shrine built in his honour, and his memory came to be associated with the City God's cult. In the late eighteenth century his memory was revived when his home became a focal point for literati activism, with a series of political groups using the space for gatherings. Qing reformers from Zeng Guofan to Kang Youwei invoked Yang's name in their own causes.

While these major literati figures established the orthodox treatment of Yang as martyr, his family was using his fame to build their own prestige in rural Hebei province. When the Longqing emperor granted funds for shrines in Yang's honour, the family undertook to build one in the village of Beihezhaoh, with a copy of the imperial rescript carved on a stele for all to see. This shrine was carefully maintained and repeatedly restored, as was one in the county seat of Rongcheng, and the district capital in Baoding. Yang's grave was in another village, about 25 km away and here, too, a shrine was built and sacrifices to his spirit were maintained. Yang's family endured, and kept the memory of their heroic ancestor alive through the end of the Ming, throughout the Qing dynasty, and into the tumultuous years of the twentieth century.

Meanwhile in Lintao, in Gansu province, the school Yang had established flourished. He had bought land to sustain

the school, and the local gazetteers record the continuing flow of revenues from these fields for its support. Local men who were educated there wrote poems and essays about it, and about their martyred patron Yang, which both glorified his memory and enhanced their own cultural status by association with so noble a figure. This school, the Chaoran Terrace Academy, also survived into the twentieth century.

Another way in which Yang's image was deployed was through drama. In the 1570s a play called *The Cry of the Phoenix* appeared which dealt with the rise and fall of Yan Song. The story of Yang Jisheng filled three of the forty-two scenes in the play, and provided the moral pivot for the critique of Yan as an evil official. The play was attributed to Wang Shizhen, but in fact was written by one of his followers, with Wang lending his name to enhance sales and promote interest. Clearly the portrayal of Yan and Yang in the play accords with Wang's political and cultural views. This play became quite popular, and gave rise to others, such as Ding Yaokang's *The Python's Gall* which appeared in the 1650s.



Photo by Ken Hammond

Woodblock print of Yang Jisheng.



Taken from 'Yang Jiaoshan gong wenji', 1896.

at his grave. One of his seventeenth generation grandsons is the village Party chief. A new county gazetteer published in 1999 gives extensive coverage to Yang's biography, and reproduces the imperial edicts of 1567 bestowing posthumous honours on him. The family hopes to expand the shrine in the years ahead, and to attract tourists as a way of boosting their local economy.

In Lintao Yang Jisheng has something of a modern fan club. Local history enthusiasts gather to visit the site of his school, and a pagoda with some of his calligraphy inscribed was rebuilt in the late 1990s. A modern, simplified character version of his collected writings was published in 1999. And in June 2002, to honour the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the school, local Party and government representatives convened an official commemorative gathering to honour Yang, which ended with a groundbreaking ceremony for the restoration of the Chaoran Terrace Academy.

In Beijing Yang's former home continues to languish, marked by a plaque from the Cultural Relics Bureau, but in sad repair. From time to time reports appear in the Beijing Evening News lamenting this state of affairs, but nothing yet seems to have resulted from this.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of this current phase in Yang's posthumous career can be seen in the preface to the new edition of his writings. There he is portrayed as a fighter against official corruption. And his spirit is invoked with the explicit end of contributing to the building today of a new China of law, order, and public morality. ◀

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Through the late Ming and on through the Qing dynasty, then, Yang's legacy was developed, appropriated, and deployed by diverse interest groups within Chinese society and political culture to promote a range of agendas. Emperors praised his loyalty and devotion to the throne. Literati held him up as a hero of Confucian morality, and a model for emulation. By extension they sought to enhance their own moral status by a process of 'virtue by association'. His family built on his fame as a fund of cultural capital in their rural society. In Lintao the local elite kept his educational foundation alive as a means of disseminating Confucian values and of promoting their own virtuous reputations.

### Yang in the twentieth century

The twentieth century saw the collapse of the Confucian system in China, and in the course of revolution Yang Jisheng was consigned, temporarily it now appears, to the dustbin of history. By the 1960s his home in Beijing was subdivided for urban housing, his shrines were dismantled, even in his natal village, and the Chaoran Terrace Academy became a 'People's Cultural Palace'. Confucian political martyrs were no longer desirable figures for emulation in the age of Lei Feng.

But that age has passed. In the years since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, China has turned away from the path of socialist revolution and embraced a new quest for wealth and power. In the process the ideals of Marxism and Maoism have faded away. China today is in search of new ways to understand the world, and new moral guidelines for living in it. One place in which at least some are searching for guidance is in the legacy of Confucianism. It is in this context that we can understand the current revival of the cult of Yang Jisheng. This revival is taking place in at least two of the traditional venues associated with his life, and may eventually involve the third as well.

In his native village his descendants, who now account for some 75 per cent of the local population, rebuilt his shrine in 1997. They have resumed the annual Qingming sacrifices

Descendants of Yang Jisheng, Beihezhaoh, Hebei, 1999.

Statue of Yang Jisheng in his shrine in Beihezhaoh, Hebei, 1999.



Photo by Ken Hammond

# Artificial Languages: Asian Backgrounds or Influences?

Research >  
General

20-21 September  
2002  
Leiden,  
the Netherlands

By Frits Staal

The growth of European science in the Renaissance and afterwards was influenced by contributions from the Islamic world and from India and China. This well established fact refutes three common prejudices: (1) Modern science originated from ancient Greece with the Arabs acting as translators; (2) Arabs, Chinese, Euro-Americans, and Indians inhabit separate cognitive worlds; and (3), the most preposterous: Science is 'Western'. The first prejudice is held by those whose history of science is outdated. The second is based upon an idea of political correctness, not upon facts. The third is the favourite of groups with a special agenda, sometimes hidden, for example, the superiority of 'Occidental Reason' or 'Oriental Spirituality'.

Participants in the workshop on 'Asian contributions to the formation of modern science: the emergence of artificial languages' did not take any of these prejudices as their vantage point. As specialists in the history of ancient and medieval science, they knew that this crucial period of human history can only be adequately understood if the Eurasian continent is treated as an undivided unit. That insight evolved over more than half a century, roughly speaking from Otto Neugebauer to Joseph Needham (who died in 1995), and is based upon the textual and historical study of source materials in the classical languages of science that include Arabic, Old-Babylonian, Chinese, Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit.

Much scientific content in these sources remains undiscovered but a few generalities appear to be valid. Mesopotamian science is earlier than any other and influenced China, Greece, and India, especially in astronomy. Chinese science reflects an organic philosophy of nature which manifests itself in her chemistry and life sciences. India's strength lies in abstract theory, as is evident from her mathematics and linguistics, and the Arabs stand at the geographical and historical centre of pre-modern science. Modern science developed when the classical languages were replaced by modern languages and the artificial language of algebra (Arabic *al-jabr*). The workshop looked for Asian backgrounds and influences with regard to the latter development.

Among the key speakers, Jens Høyrup (Roskilde) showed that Old-Babylonian ideograms do not constitute an algebraic symbolism (as had been suggested, with reservations, by Neugebauer), but are mnemonic abbreviations of geometric operations. Michio Yano (Kyoto) studied oral and written methods of transmission of expressions for numerals and numerical tables in Sanskrit. Kim Plofker (Providence) analysed al-Biruni's comparison of Indian and Islamic mathematical techniques and notations. Karine Chemla (Paris) demonstrated how permutations of characters in a Chinese mathematical text of the thirteenth century performed the function of brackets as used in modern notations. Charles Burnett (London) described the slow penetration of Indian numerals into Arabic, Greek, and Latin, which, by the time of Fibonacci in the thirteenth century, had led to a new way of using numerals. Frits Staal (Berkeley), convener of the workshop, argued that modern science is not a product of Europe or world history but the result of a major advance in human cognition through language. This topic – more speculative than any of the others – sheds light on the background of the workshop and I shall return to it.

The presentations were followed by lively discussions in which a crucial role was played by the chairs of the sessions; Kamaleswar Bhattacharya (Paris), Christoph Harbsmeier (Oslo and Peking), Jan P. Hogendijk (Utrecht), and Dominik Wujastyk (London).

The workshop was a resounding success with its high level of discussion and a fruitful exchange of ideas on fundamental issues. The proceedings will be edited by Staal and Yano and published in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* and, perhaps, a volume of the *Synthese Library*.

## Background of the workshop I: The history of artificial language

I have been asked why I should have convened such a workshop with specialists in the history of ancient and medieval science. Its ultimate source lies in my interest in the origin of language and in its natural and artificial forms, perhaps the defining feature of human animals. Compared to natural language, the artificial variety is recent; its origins lie in antiquity. Is the artificial a mere extension of (part of) the natural? Or is it something entirely different? Natural language is constrained by the mouth and ears we share with other animals, and a computational system in the brain that

may be uniquely human. The apparent paradox about artificial languages is that they are, in their ideal form, independent of natural language; but their origins and historical development have been inspired by it. Linguistics, logic, and mathematics provide examples.

The earliest known artificial language is the *metalanguage* of Panini's grammar of Sanskrit (fifth century BCE). A metalanguage is a language in which an object language is described and analysed. A grammar of Sanskrit – the object language – may be composed in English, French or Japanese – the metalanguages. Panini's metalanguage makes technical use of the sounds and case endings of Sanskrit. It results in artificial expressions such as: // *na lingi // indre ca // aatah // iko yan aci // a a //*. These formulas are not intelligible to Sanskrit speakers or scholars unless they are Panini specialists. Their explanation would fill a good part of an *IIAS Newsletter*.

*'It took a century before  
Newton's work was made fully  
intelligible and others could do  
science without being a genius.'*

Formalized logic and mathematics use variables (such as  $x, y$ ), similar to pronouns which enable us to say: 'If anyone wants food, *he* should go to the kitchen; if *he* wants a drink, *he* should ask Johnny.' Christoph Harbsmeier observed that, neither Plato, nor early Sanskrit or Chinese knew variables. They may use 'such-and-such' for an unnamed entity, but if they use it twice, it may refer to different entities. Aristotle discovered variables a little later and they occur in a roughly contemporary Chinese legal text: 'X (*chia*) and Y (*i*) do not originally know each other. X goes on to rob Z (*ping*). As *he* arrives, Y also goes along to rob Z, speaks with X', etc.

Aristotle and the Indian philosophers of the Nyaya-Vaishika evolved a logic of subject and predicate, based upon natural language and artificial in its European forms. Both erected on that slender foundation a metaphysics of substance and quality which is totally inappropriate to the study of the universe (*horse* or *water* are not substances and neither are *white* or *weight* qualities). It shows that artificial expressions may be as misleading as the natural.

When negative numbers were discovered (by Babylonians, Chinese, Indians, ...), there was fierce opposition. Even in the seventeenth century, John Wallis declared that it is impossible for a quantity to be less than nothing or a number less than zero. But we got used to them. Imaginary numbers are still puzzling. If we multiply any number by itself, the result is a positive number: 2 times 2 is 4 but so is -2 times -2. We may accordingly extract the roots of positive numbers only. However, an enterprising mathematician proposed to give a name to the impossible  $\sqrt{-1}$  and call it *i*. We now know  $i^2 = -1$ , but do we understand it?

## Background of the workshop II: The power of artificial language

Historians of science agree that Newton's Latin was often unclear. All the formulas that are referred to as 'Newton's equations' were introduced later by Euler, Daniel Bernoulli and other mathematicians. C. Truesdell wrote in 1968: 'It is true that we, today, can easily read them into Newton's words, but we do so by hindsight.' David Park added in 1988: 'It took

a century before Newton's work was made fully intelligible and others could do science without being a genius.' Formulas could trigger a scientific revolution because they were easy to understand and soon became intelligible to large numbers of people all over the world. But that simple hypothesis seems to have drowned in a flood of historical, economical, sociological, and political explanations that rarely touch the heart of science, which is knowledge.

India provides a telling contrast: infinite power series that are expansions of  $\pi$  and the trigonometric functions of sine, cosine, and so forth were discovered by Madhava in the late fourteenth century, almost three centuries before they were discovered in Europe by Gregory, Newton, and Leibniz. In Europe, infinite series were a powerful ingredient of the scientific revolution. Indian mathematics was equally strong in this respect and strong enough in any case to have similar consequences. But it was formulated in a complex form of Sanskrit, more obscure than Newton's Latin, and so nothing happened. I concluded in a 1995 article that the Sanskrit of science was formal, but not formal enough to trigger a revolution. It adds fuel to the idea that the so-called scientific revolution was really a mathematical revolution; and that mathematical revolution was really a revolution in language. Galileo had an inkling of it when he said that mathematics is the language of the universe.

The workshop confirmed that similar developments may have taken place elsewhere in Asia though there is no textual evidence for historical connections. However, at least since the Bronze Age, the traditional knowledge of practical professionals such as surveyors or 'reckoners', spread orally over wide areas, not unlike languages. Ibn Sina (Avicenna) learned Indian numerals not from books but from his grocer. Such facts strengthen the idea of the Eurasian continent as an undivided unit as well as the hypothesis that formalization is an advance in cognition, rooted in human nature, shown haltingly by the classical languages of science and, more fully, by artificial languages.

Let us return to imaginary numbers which illustrate the most mysterious power of artificial language; its inherent *knowledge*. Imaginary numbers are puzzling not just because we cannot understand them, but because they solve problems in mathematics and physics. It holds for other artificial expressions and seems to show that we are increasingly unable to understand the universe (which includes human language and the brain; in short, ourselves). It led to a slogan; our goal is intelligibility not of the world, but of *theories*. Quantum theory put an end to even that. Heisenberg had already written that we should free ourselves from 'intuitive pictures'. Richard Feynman declared: 'Nobody understands quantum theory.' Understanding seems to be a feeling generated by visual associations and/or natural language. Equations may convey knowledge and, as Stephen Hawking put it, 'Even if there is only one possible unified theory, it is just a set of rules and equations.'

Artificial language has been slow in freeing itself from its natural language background. It seems likely that it still has a long way to go. ◀

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# Colonial and Post-Colonial Hybridities: Eurasians in India

Research >  
South Asia

Among the enduring legacies of the colonial encounter are any number of contemporary 'mixed-race' populations, descendants of the offspring of sexual unions involving European men (colonial officials, soldiers, traders, and so forth) and local women. This research concerns one such group, the Eurasians, or Anglo-Indians. Despite the withdrawal of the British from India, the community has persisted, shaped indelibly by its colonial heritage, yet also transformed by post-colonial circumstances.

By Lionel Caplan

During the centuries of Britain's imperial rule a substantial number of officers, soldiers, and civilians served the East India Company and, later, the Government of India. Men of diverse European nationalities – mainly British, but others as well – also came to trade or seek employment in various sectors of the colonial economy. Many established domestic relationships with Indian women, resulting in the birth of children and the emergence of a 'mixed-race' or 'hybrid' population. Eurasians, or Anglo-Indians as they were subsequently to be designated, settled mostly in and around urban centres like Madras (recently renamed Chennai), the locus of the present research. While we know that they descended from a medley of different national groups on the paternal side, it is virtually impossible to say more about the initial maternal progenitors other than that they were of disparate caste and religious origins. In time, their progeny intermarried and became aware of themselves as distinct from the surrounding Indian population, with a common language (English) and religion (Christianity), as well as other shared cultural attributes. The colonial government's fluctuating policies towards this group contributed to the economic distress of the majority, while recent developments have driven many further into poverty; only some have benefited from new opportunities in the post-colonial economy. Since India's independence, a significant proportion of Anglo-Indians – as many as half – have left India to settle in the West, chiefly Britain and Australia. Today, the Anglo-Indian population in India totals approximately 125,000,

with perhaps 10-15,000 resident in Madras. As in the past, they tend to be concentrated in particular neighbourhoods, generally in central areas of the city where their churches and schools are to be found. Recently, however, rising land costs and house rentals have propelled many into outlying suburbs, and led to greater dispersal of the community.

'Hybrid' groups, however demographically insignificant, invite serious scholarly attention because, among other things, they blur the divide between colonizer and colonized, questioning the very efficacy of these labels (Stoler 1989). Moreover, they not only underline the impossibility of viewing rulers and ruled as universal and undifferentiated categories, but question the analyst's treatment of Europeans and colonizers as synonymous. Such populations also beg a host of queries about continuities and transformations in the post-colonial world. How does a 'hybrid' community imagine and describe itself to others and to itself? How does it understand its past, contemplate its future, and live in the present? What practices does it posit as marking its 'culture' and so, its distinctiveness? What are the ingredients of this culture given the diverse origins of its population, and what changes in these cultural habits have occurred with the withdrawal of the colonial power? We cannot hope to attend to all of these questions here, although I have tried to do so elsewhere (see Caplan 2001). For the present it is important to inquire about the attitudes of the British to this 'mixed-race' population.

## Colonial attitudes

Like similar 'mixed-race' groups in the colonized world, Anglo-Indians

were seen by their British rulers, at times, as potential enemies and, at others, as allies in their imperial adventure, alternately preferred and promoted or thwarted and victimized. This kind of oscillation was especially evident in the occupational realm; in the 'early' colonial period, Anglo-Indian males were relatively free to follow a range of activities. For a time from the end of the eighteenth century they were excluded from many civil and most military services under the government, but by the middle of the nineteenth century they were allowed favoured if restricted access to positions of intermediate responsibility in central government sectors (railways, telegraphs, customs, etc.) and, from the early years of the twentieth century, in the wake of nationalist pressures, they were increasingly exposed to competition from members of the wider society in virtually all areas of their 'traditional' employment spheres. These last developments exacerbated the extent of poverty within the Anglo-Indian fold but, at the same time, as women increasingly entered the workplace, this hardship was somewhat mitigated; for some decades now many households at the lower end of the class hierarchy have relied on women as the main providers, a factor which has profound implications for gender roles and relations within the community.

Thus, in the post-independence period Anglo-Indians have gradually lost the protected status they enjoyed in certain occupational niches, and have had to survive in an unsteady economic climate, increasingly subject to global influences which have, if anything, adversely affected those least educated and skilled. Without the protection afforded to 'scheduled castes' or 'backward classes' – who comprise the bulk of the disadvantaged in contemporary Indian society – the Anglo-Indian poor feel themselves to be suffering disproportionately. At the same time, the colonial ceiling which confined Anglo-Indians within certain work spaces lifted with the withdrawal of the British, and today there is a small but growing elite – highly educated, cosmopolitan, professional, and comfortably-off – which has become part of the larger upper middle class in India, and benefited from new liberalization and structural adjustment policies.

There is a wide consensus among scholars of colonialism in India that, from the end of the eighteenth century, a transformation occurred in the relationship between British rulers and those over whom they exercised dominion. The growth of 'scientific racism' in early nineteenth-century Europe saw the 'hybrid' become a trope for moral failure and degeneration, and led to the increasingly negative evaluation and status abasement of Anglo-Indians by British elites in India. Branded with a number of degrading epithets, they became figures of contempt and

Eurasians, or Anglo-Indians as they were subsequently to be designated, settled mostly in and around urban centres like Madras.



ridicule, and were seen as combining the worst qualities of both 'founding races'. These attitudes were reflected in English-language fiction about India, much of it written by colonial Europeans (Nabar and Bharucha 1994). In both life and fiction they were frequently portrayed in disparaging stereotypes, many of which focused on women, who were regarded as the principal mimics of European mores and seducers of their men.

## Self-identification

Notwithstanding the Euro-colonial social practices and attitudes which distanced and demeaned this 'mixed-race'



population, those who spoke for and about Anglo-India – with only some exceptions – insisted, until very near the end of the colonial period, on unequivocal association with the dominant European group. Encouraged, no doubt, by their special privileges in employment and education (in comparison to other Indians), their common language of English and adherence to the Christian faith, and their inadvertent alignment with the political project of colonial rule, they identified themselves – in the idioms of blood and culture – to themselves and to others as unequivocally British, employing essentialist discourses which denied hybridity and proclaimed purity. At the same time, alongside colonial discourses associating themselves with their British rulers, Anglo-Indians paradoxically exhibited – a result of both external compulsion and internal

dynamic – a remarkable degree of self-awareness and group consciousness from at least the early nineteenth century. In spite of their disparate origins they came to regard themselves as possessing a distinct identity of their own (Hawes 1996).

From the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, however, when it became apparent that British rule in India was drawing to a close, increasingly voices were heard within the community urging alliance with the nationalist project. In the contemporary setting, Anglo-Indian elites, who share the multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and cosmopolitan ambience of India's affluent, insist on a strong local connection. At the other end of the spectrum, among the most disadvantaged, enveloped in the surroundings of the poor, a variety of credentials are enunciated, as alternative forms of association become possible. It is principally within the middle ranks of Anglo-India, where economic uncertainties and 'downward mobility' have been most acutely felt, that claims to a European pedigree continue to be declared in contemporary Madras. These claims, however, either meet derision or fall on deaf ears both within the now dominant groups in Indian society, including the elites of their own community, and outside it, where they are meant to be heard by governments in the 'first world' assumed to be in search of culturally westernized immigrant populations.

## Boundaries, identities, cultures

The post-colonial condition is frequently represented by its theorists as being characterized by, among other things, fluid boundaries, multiple identities, and creolized cultures. The implication is that contemporary ambiguities contrast with the clear-cut identities of the colonial period. This research questions the validity of such a distinction, insisting that these ambiguities have been a part of the colonial past as well. The efforts of European colonizers to demarcate subject populations were frequently undermined by the very people on whom they sought to impose their classifications, giving rise to porous boundaries and permeable groupings. For one thing, British census officials and the Anglo-Indian lead-



All photos by Lionel Caplan

Two portraits of Anglo-Indians.



# When It Is Good To Be Bad

## Medieval Indo-Tibetan Tantric Buddhist Apologetics

Research >  
South Asia

When do you think it could be good to be bad? Had you met Hitler in a dark alley in Vienna in the 1920's, and been armed with infallible foresight, would it have been good to kill him, even though killing is otherwise bad?

By Isabelle Onians

This question is as apposite today as ever. By the time these words are published the concept of a pre-emptive strike may well have been pushed to its illogical limit as justification for invasion of a country which happens to encompass Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization. Not to mention that launching such an attack must rank highly as a cause for being attacked oneself.

Perhaps violence, for example, is more normal or normalized in some traditions than others. Yet to call an act normal is different from formulating the paradox that the abnormal is normal. Discussing various aspects of rules is not the same as envisaging a system which makes it the rule to break the rules: antinomianism as a norm.

Antinomianism comes in at least two forms: strong or weak. Weak antinomianism is permissive: one may do what is bad and nevertheless somehow remain not guilty. Strong antinomianism is normative: one is compelled to commit an offence, with the same impunity. Antinomianism as a norm is strong antinomianism: one is obliged to transgress.

From the beginnings of Buddhism, action has famously been defined as intention. It is not what you do, but the way that you do it, or why. That sounds like weak antinomianism. Provided one has the correct intention, slapping a child or ostracising an adult may be the best medicine. The corollary and, perhaps, the point is that coveting one's brother's wife is a crime, whether or not the seduction succeeds. When one has no choice but to be cruel, for someone's own good and that of others, then that is strong antinomianism.

For a Buddhist monk or a nun, however, rules and regulations are non-provisory. Their five fundamental precepts are equally binding for the laity: to refrain absolutely from killing, theft, sexual misbehaviour, lying, and intoxication by liquor. The single amendment for a monastic individual, or, temporarily, for a householder, is that the third is, effectively, the vow of sexual abstinence, *brahmacharya*.

Such are the rules which it must be the rule to break for us to have found our paradox. Logically impossible maybe, but that is precisely what Tantric Buddhism uses as self-definition. One scriptural verse is quoted countless times: what is a bond for fools – non-Tantrics – is the means to freedom from bondage for the wise – Tantric adepts.

Tantric Buddhism is notorious for this claim. The shock of first acquaintance with its practices has repeatedly discouraged modern inquirers, while the lure of forbidden pleasures has led many contemporary seekers to the religion, albeit in its radically bowdlerized present forms.

However, in medieval India and Tibet, between the eighth and eleventh centuries, when the ideas under consideration were undeniably gaining

institutional acceptance, who was shocked? What were the mores of Buddhists? Were they different from the ethics of proponents of other religions, and those in the secular world?

Before revealing one or two explicit examples of the normalized antinomianism we have so far only alluded to, the counter-intuitive data should be noted: the sheer volume of Victorian and modern vilification swamps the scarce evidence for attacks found in contemporary medieval sources.

Besides this remarkable imbalance, the tradition itself offers few deliberately theoretical apologetics. Given that Tantric Buddhists presented their system in powerfully paradoxical terms, this implies that they were conscious of the apparently bizarre nature of their practices. Were they not driven to make a reasoned defence against charges of moral delinquency, from within their own religion and without?

Tantric Buddhist authors were not overly concerned with apologetics, neither in the sense of regretfully excusing an offence or failure (to apologize), nor even in the paradigmatic sense of European texts offering ideological justification (apologias). Perhaps what was later labelled disgusting did not arouse such emotions at that time. Or, was the silence due to the absolute esotericism of the system?

Moreover, the obscure nature of this religion is, it should be noted, a real obstacle to any enquiry, including this. I have been threatened with what one might call the Valley of the Kings syndrome. In parallel to the torments explorers of Egyptian monumental tombs suffered last century, the study of Tantric texts is said to be potentially fatal, or lead, at the very least, to madness.

That is because their medicine is strong stuff, strong enough to be able to swiftly heal the entrenched ailment which is human suffering. Without the personality to withstand the treatment, disaster is inevitable. Only a teacher's consummate professional judgement can determine one's suitability. Without the guidance of a teacher, even reading the texts is firmly disallowed.

Accordingly, we will start where an aspirant to the religion would begin, with initiation, the point of transformation from being an outsider to belonging. The paradoxical employment of the afflictions (*klesas*) is ritualized in the second and third of the developed set of four initiations (*abhiṣekas*), found first in the eighth-century Guhyasamāja Yoga Tantra and then in all the Yoginī Tantras (Hevajratra et al.). The first initiation is a group of innocuous rites of preparation.

The second of the four is called the secret initiation (*guhyābhiṣeka*). This involves the teacher having sexual intercourse with a female consort. He places some of his semen on the student's tongue. The sources agree that the purification of speech is brought about by this act, the previous preliminary

package, with its provision of physical accoutrements, having purified the body.

The third is the wisdom-knowledge initiation (*prajñājnānābhiṣeka*). In it the student himself has intercourse with the consort. It is said in turn to purify the mind. The fourth is different, simply called the fourth (*catūrtha-*), and consists of an explanation by the teacher of the nature of reality (*tattva*).

Evidently these two erotic events would be out of bounds for a monk, whether as candidate for initiation or teacher. One can cast monastics in these roles because of the second sense in which this antinomianism is as a norm.

Early Tantric practitioners appear to have rejected general morality. However, the method definitely became institutionalized. By the tenth and eleventh centuries eminent abbots of great monastic universities in India and Tibet were high-ranked proponents of the Tantric Buddhist way. Ratnākaraśānti, Abhayākara Gupta, and Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna are well-known exponents of this phenomenon of the normalization of antinomianism, and sophisticated advocates for, even, the contravention of the rules of monastic discipline.

In the writings of these men are answers to our flurry of questions: what happens when candidate or initiating master is a monk? From where did the female partners come, and could they be initiated on their own behalves? And, perhaps most crucial of all, what earthly function are these sensual relations supposed to serve on the path to enlightenment? What kind of causal relationship can one imagine between oral insemination and sexual intercourse on the one hand, and transcendent liberation on the other?

While illicit pleasures need not be sufficient conditions for spiritual release, if they are not necessary conditions then why ever take the risk of indulging them? Some claimed that this was a specialised strategy for pulling the attainment of enlightenment into the time-frame of one's present life, for instance, instead of leaving *nirvāṇa*, the remote if not unattainable goal on offer in many traditions.

This is not the place to analyse the apologetic details found in the writings of establishment commentators: namely, whether the initiations are sine qua non for a Tantric enlightenment; if so, whether monks can properly enact them with a substitute mind-made, virtual, and hence virtuous, consort, rather than with an incriminating woman of flesh and blood; how exactly, in that case, it is that the initiations are necessary; the connection between ontology and ethics such that if the phenomenal world is the illusion Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy demonstrates it to be, then no harm is really done; but then again, if so, why perform the passionate charade in the first place; and so on.

Sex is not the only or main manifestation of the religion's antinomianism.

It happens to be in immediate conflict with monastic celibacy as well as, in the component of oral insemination, with wider Indian norms of purity. The fact that it figures at such an early stage in initiation is unlikely to be pure chance.

Abhayākara Gupta explains the importance of the union when he asserts that the third initiation must be taken for full entitlement to higher Tantric practice. He appeals to the standard authorities, scripture and reason, to prove that without having experienced the innate reality which is the bliss of non-duality one cannot go on to discuss it in the fourth initiation. If we were to follow through his unspoken argument, it would thus be impossible to direct post-initiatory practice towards the goal of realizing that reality.

However, in Tantric Buddhism we find that a whole plethora of antisocial practices, including killing and violence, are the natural complement to sex.

Already in Mahāyāna Buddhism, in the centuries before the rise of Tantric Buddhism, such activities were, in certain circumstances, permitted for the bodhisattva, because he was a new type whose motivation was broadened to include the spiritual well-being of everyone alive. If we meditate again on a hypothetical meeting with a young Hitler, the threefold question is whether a bodhisattva: 1) could get away with murder; 2) would carry out the deed, because that is the kind of man he is; or finally 3) should do so since to do otherwise would be wrong. This last is our strong antinomianism: not only is it good to be bad; it would be bad to be good.

In Tantric Buddhism a different, homeopathic principle is at stake. Homeopathy refers to a treatment of disease which should produce the disease's symptoms. However, unlike the twentieth century medical tradition, Tantric Buddhism does not distil its drugs until there is nothing but shadows remaining in the medicine.

The disease in Buddhism is 'ignorance without beginning', in tandem with the other afflictions, passion and aversion, and their subsidiaries, pride and jealousy. The central triad can be reformulated as 'yes, no, and don't know'. The overwhelming symptom of the sickness is suffering (*duḥkha*). Dissatisfaction may be a better translation, because it is caused by our 'ignorance without beginning' of the one inescapable fact of life: impermanence.

Scriptural verses from the Hevajratra insist that fitting similes for the mysterious workings of Tantric Buddhism are that it is like someone with flatulence eating beans, or the fuller who uses clay ('dirt') to clean cloth. Thus, passion, aversion, and ignorance have become their own antidote. <

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ership were equally perplexed not only by the tendency for Anglo-Indians to declare themselves Europeans, but by the significant numbers of those apparently not deserving of an Anglo-Indian label who proclaimed themselves as such to the census takers. For another, marriage outside the group, especially at both extremes of the class spectrum, led to 'evaporation' out of and 'infiltration' into its ranks, resulting in extremely porous boundaries and fluid identities. The greater frequency of these external unions since independence has undoubtedly created new hybridities, increased the complexity of identity claims, and enhanced the possibilities for and range of such choices. Anglo-Indian women – mainly but not exclusively from better-off families – have continued to make marriages outside the Anglo-Indian fold, while many males from the least well-off families, denied connubium within the community, have been compelled to seek partners among the poor outside it.

Such fluidity is echoed in the cultural domain. Most Anglo-Indians insist that certain cultural habits – related especially to their kinship, religion, language, dress, food, and marriage regimes – are distinctive of their way of life, and differentiate them from other groups in the society. However, as we might expect, class location has an important impact on the practice of culture; people in the middle ranks clothe and feed themselves and celebrate their marriages in somewhat different ways from those at either end of the social order. Further, though widely perceived and even celebrated as unfailingly – and stereotypically – Western, Anglo-Indian ways of life have clearly been much influenced by cultural practices in their local surroundings, and increasingly so since India's independence, notwithstanding the impacts of westernization and globalization. The urban cultural milieu in which Anglo-Indians were and continue to be situated is therefore best viewed as creolized. Such an approach stresses the notion of a continuum, thereby acknowledging not only diversity within the group, but mutual influence and overlap between cultural groups, and hence Anglo-India's constant negotiation with 'mainstream' society and culture. In this sense, Anglo-Indians serve as both a factor in and a potent reminder of the fluidity of the urban social environment during the colonial no less than the post-colonial periods. <

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# Sanskrit Manuals on Dance

Research >  
South Asia

‘These days, the dancers are stupid, and the scholars are not practitioners’  
(Vācanācārya Sudhākalaśā)

It is amazing how some performers in India believe that Bharatanatyam and other styles of modern classical dance are several thousands years old and have been described in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. This opinion is usually based on a vague reference to ‘some old texts’. Historical documents aside, even a comparative study of the Sanskrit manuals on dance reveals great differences between the performing traditions of various times. One of the most interesting aspects of such a study is tracing back the development of technical terminology used by the dance practitioners to codify the nuances of their art.

By Marina V. Orelskaya

Very few Sanskrit works on dance are extant today. The main textual material comes from medieval treatises on dramatic art and musicology, which occasionally provide a separate chapter on dance technique. As a rule, those chapters on dance are dealt with by the scholars with another main field of research. Indeed, there was hardly any demand for a detailed investigation of long lost visual art forms. A detailed catalogue of Sanskrit works describing dance has never been compiled. Few such treatises have ever been published or translated.

The current situation exists for several reasons. The Sanskrit terminology used in the dance manuals is extremely complicated and was not taken into consideration at the time of preparation of the Sanskrit dictionaries in use. It often happens that the terminology found in different manuals from the same region and time period will differ significantly in their usage, due to the multiplicity of contemporary dance schools in existence, even within a single dance tradition. Moreover, those very terms can have one meaning in the context of drama or music and a completely different meaning in the context of dance. As a result, it is quite difficult to interpret the technical nuances of a dance chapter in a treatise on music or dramatic art. Most of the modern classical Indian dance styles are simplified and modified versions of territorially limited schools and are not of much help in the study of codification systems of Sanskrit works on dance.

Much information has also disappeared with the loss of numerous texts due to suppression of this art in certain periods of Indian history; on the other hand, several spurs for temporal flourishing of dance had caused a number of medieval authors to produce manuals that were influenced by short-lived local traditions. Ultimately, the remains of once rich literary sources are slowly disintegrating in present-day manuscript collections, with almost nothing being done to improve the situation.

Professional dancers today usually lack sufficient knowledge of Sanskrit and are not required to analyse the manuals that they learn by heart during their dance training. The secrets of the performing arts in India have always been conveyed personally from teacher to pupil, and questions arising during the learning process were answered in accordance with the competence of the teacher. Quite often, the old manuals were altered to fit a later, more familiar dance tradition. In this way, the original concepts were misinterpreted and occasionally changed. As a result, any attempt to work with Sanskrit manuals on dance technique becomes a difficult task, which is further impeded by innumerable textual interpolations, substitutions, and anonymous quotations. Authors and compilers of manuals have tended to include large textual portions of previous major works into their own, without naming the original sources. This leads to further confusion amongst scholars, wrong interpretations, and even to

mistaking such compilations for original sources. The laconic references to various historical and mythological characters and events in these treatises added even more complications. Should we be able to trace back these textual portions, however, such borrowings could play an important role in the reconstruction of actual texts as well as the paths of development of dance theory and practice.

Having studied technical Sanskrit works on Indian dance for over a decade, and being familiar with the practical dancing, I have come to realize that, in contemporary Indological and cultural studies, there is a considerable lacuna caused by the absence of a complete etymological and encyclopaedic dictionary of the authentic terminology used by the ancient dance experts.

Although there are some special glossaries of the Indian performing arts, including modern classical dance, none of those works provides either the etymology or the history of development of the terms. Moreover, most of these works are written in Indian languages, and that considerably narrows the availability of information.

The original Sanskrit sources allow for tracing back the development of some dance terminology to the Vedic times. Dance is mentioned in the *Rgveda*, and although there are no special terms found in this text, investigation of later literary sources reflects the existence and development of a dance-related vocabulary with a considerably narrowed sphere of usage. Some of the words had been later dropped, while others were fixed into terminological groups used by professional dance instructors. Sometimes, with the rise of new performing traditions and the fall of old ones, the original meaning and etymology of such terms were lost and later on substituted by medieval authors and commentators on the Sanskrit treatises. Also, a number of terms were replaced by equivalents from the Dravidian languages. With the course of time, the dance manuals were becoming more and more intricate, because almost every author tended to complicate the subject by cramming all possible information known to him under a single title.

The special works on histrionics had already existed at the time of Panini (fifth or fourth century BC), who calls them *naṭasūtra-s*, and were apparently quite common by the time of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (circa 200 BC to AD 200). Although this treatise is regarded as the oldest available manual in the field of Indian histrionics, there could be a number of fragments of older works kept in the manuscript collections of South India. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* demonstrates, apart from other things, the existence of fairly developed forms of canonical (classical) dance, which are distinguished from the regional (popular) dances. Being constantly in progress, the ancient canonical choreography was gradually blending with various aspects of the regional dances, thus producing various dance styles that began to prevail in certain geographical areas. In time, the innovations were regarded as the ones canonized by some competent preceptors and were gradually noted

down as inseparable parts of ‘classical dance’ in Sanskrit manuals on performing arts. Nearly one hundred Sanskrit texts dealing with dance technique, in at least one chapter, have been discovered either as (in)complete manuscripts or as being mentioned or quoted in subsequent works. Unfortunately, most of them have been irretrievable until now.

The technical vocabulary of instructors and performers of modern classical Indian dance contains a comparatively small part of the terminology used in old Sanskrit manuals. Even then, the interpretation of many terms varies significantly from school to school and very often is far from correct. The lack of collaboration between practising dancers and scholars of Sanskrit does not help the situation. In fact, major establishments of classical dance training in India do not seem to encourage dancers to study Sanskrit treatises on the technique of their art, giving the reason that young dancers ‘become confused’ over the discrepancies between many theories and the practice they learn. The vast gap between scholars and dancers had already been registered in the middle of the fourteenth century AD, when Vācanācārya Sudhākalaśā wrote in his *Sanḡitopaniṣatsaroddhāra* (VI.129): ‘These days, the dancers are stupid, and the scholars are not practitioners. There is no practice without dancers, there is no success through theory without this [practice].’ Apparently, the complex and highly codified system in which the dance technique has gradually developed was not easily understood by the practical dancers even at that time. Generally speaking, their reluctance to go through the additional burden of learning the extensive collection of various terms and their interpretations in Sanskrit, on one side, and the impossibility or unwillingness of the competent Sanskrit scholars to undergo the actual training in dance, on the other, unmistakably resulted in a gradual division of the dance experts into theoreticians, who described the dance technique in their scholarly treatises on performing arts, and practitioners, who preserved the knowledge of dance by passing it in oral and visual forms to the next generation of professional performers. The scarcity of the original texts being edited and translated, the absence of dictionaries of ancient Indian dance terminology, and the aversion of the majority of modern practical dancers to study the past of their art have all combined, in the end, to restrict the number of competent specialists in the field. The situation can be clearly observed even at the present time.

In view of these circumstances, I have undertaken the project of compiling an encyclopaedic dictionary of the technical terms used in the original Sanskrit texts on dance technique, with the etymological references whenever possible. The data is being collected from all the available manuals, starting with the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and including those of the eighteenth century AD. The passages of some lost works, quoted in later treatises and commentaries, are also being taken into account.

Preparation of the dictionary is proceeding in consecutive steps. Various editions and the available manuscripts of the Sanskrit texts are being compared word by word. The terms, their definitions, and usage are analysed to trace back their origin and the possible ways of development. Often, references to non-technical sources of Sanskrit literature are required in order to determine the meaning of certain dance terms in various periods of time. One of the significant features of the dictionary is that the extensive lists of the uses prescribed for postures and movements of bodily limbs in dance and drama (*viniyoga*) are being included and compared as well.

I sincerely believe that, upon completion, the dictionary will be able to be used by scholars from various fields, as well as by the practising dancers of various styles. The comparative methods developed in the course of my research can be employed to study other manuals on Indian performing arts, including their popular forms. The dictionary will be of great help in the preparation of translations and critical editions of unpublished Sanskrit treatises on dance and, perhaps, even in reconstructing the actual technique of old Indian dances. ◀

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# Global Performances in Jaipur

Report >  
South Asia

4-9 January 2003  
Jaipur, Rajasthan,  
India

The International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) held its annual conference in Jaipur under the joint sponsorship of the Jawahar Kala Kendra and the University of Rajasthan, with the theme 'Ethnicity and identity: global performance'. This was the first time that the IFTR (founded in 1955) has held its annual conference in an Asian nation, signalling a new recognition for the importance of Asian theatre scholarship and practice in the field of world theatre.

Hobby-horse dancing in the inner courtyard of the Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur.



All photos: Matthew Cohen

By Matthew Isaac Cohen

Theatre studies is, in many European and non-European countries, a subsidiary field of literature and, consequently, is oriented toward the study of dramatic texts. Theatre studies in Britain, for example, emerged in the 1950s from the field of English literature, and the concerns of scholars were largely historical and textual well into the 1980s. Theatrical practitioners in European nations have in contrast been fascinated with the traditional theatres of Japan, China, India, and Indonesia since the eighteenth century. The influence of Asian theatres on playwrights as diverse as Goethe, Brecht, and Yeats, and most of the major directors of the past century, is undeniable. The aca-

ademic Ravi Chaturvedi managed to attract the IFTR's annual conference to the pink city of Jaipur.

## Asian theatre and the IFTR

The IFTR, despite its 'international' nomenclature, has been in historical practice centred on Europe. African conference delegates are predominantly white South Africans, Latin Americans are few and far between, and North Americans participate preferentially at the annual Association for Theatre in Higher Education conferences. The organization has recognized Asia, and has had Asian members since its inception, but it was only in the last years that a significant concentration of delegates coalesced to rally for an Asian conference.

duction of Jean Genet's *The Maids* in Manila that he rehearsed in September 2001. Christina Nygren sited itinerant commercial theatres in Japan, China, India, and Bangladesh, sketching portraits of numerous popular theatres and their audiences. Tim Prentki related his version of *Theatre for Development*, arguing for the necessity of community-oriented art as an antidote to the monoculture of McDonald's and Microsoft. Jung Soon Shim discussed the purging of Han historical trauma in Park Jo-yol's *The Toenails of General Oh*, while Ranbir Singh related the significance of Parsi theatre in India's nationalist movement.

A definite highpoint of the conference was a plenary panel of three British scholars discussing the current West End musical hit, *Bombay Dreams*. This rags-to-riches tale of a child of the Mumbai slums who makes good in the Bombay film world is essentially a stage version of a Bollywood movie. This panel discussion of a recycled version of an Asian cinematic form tailored for a South Asian diasporic audience and the globalized cultural market garnered considerable attention from the local media. The musical's commercial trajectory was described as disrupting national dichotomies, offering multiculturalism as consumer brand.

Most of the panels featured Indian scholars of theatre, history, political science, literature, and folklore speaking about a large range of Indian and non-Indian theatres. Such was the degree that Asian performance was embraced in the conference that a newly established working group in Asian and Pacific Theatre that was scheduled to meet parallel to the papers failed to garner sufficient interest as the papers in the general conference were of so much relevance to Asian theatre scholars.

Evening performances also gave insights into Indian theatre forms and processes. The conference organizers had programmed a series of art theatre, including adaptations of *Medea* and Goethe's *Iphigenie in Tauris*. These productions, though well-intended, were of uneven quality, and did not by-and-large excite the imagination of interna-

tional delegates. The same could not have been said of two impromptu performances, organized at the last minute at the craft village adjoining the Jawahar Kala Kendra. Rajasthan folk performance is renowned for its variety and vitality and it was a great treat to see these performances enacted in a more-or-less appropriate context, with the conference's student volunteers response-singing. A Shekhawati Khayal group performed a folk version of *The Killing of Kichaka*, in a style clearly influenced by Parsi theatre, and a Kathputli group presented a new play with string puppets and music entitled *Bhutraj*, which I devised together with the Jaipur-based puppeteer-musician Gajadhar Bharat. At the same time that the conference was taking place in the Jawahar Kala Kendra, this same arts centre was being used to audition and rehearse a troupe of Rajasthani folk performers for a tour of the Middle East. Partially as a result of this, other performances and workshops (including hobby-horse dancing and social dancing) blended into the conference in less formal modalities and spaces.

Many scholars attending the IFTR had never previously been to India and gained for the first time an in-depth exposure and appreciation of Asia's rich theatrical past and present. Robyn Marie Campbell, a young dance scholar, came to the IFTR to speak of her research on Ballet Frankfurt at the New Researcher's Forum, but left with a fascination for Korean dance. Numerous contacts were established between scholars based in Europe, the United States, Israel, and Australia with academics from India and elsewhere in Asia. This fruitful interchange allowed many of us to recognize the existence

of historical links and contemporary commonalities across Asian theatre and shared methodological issues that engage scholars of all 'ethnic' and non-Western performance. Many questions emerge in such encounters. How does one introduce a complex theatre of an ethnic other to a 'lay audience' while attending to both artistic richness and socio-cultural location? What is the responsibility of the scholar to explicate non-local influences and origins, and if one does study such matters does this then deprive a theatre of its appearance of originality? Does any academic study of an unfamiliar theatre run the risk of being appropriated by agents of a state or cultural actors as a validation or celebration of their activities, even if not intended by the author? Does a scholar have the moral ground to stand on to be critical of a non-Western theatre in the same sense that one can be critical of one's own theatre? All of these questions (and more) could be engaged among the very special confluence of scholars gathered in Jaipur.

At the conference's closing session, a number of possibilities were discussed for channelling the energy and inertia generated in this Asian theatre focussed conference. The IFTR conference, as well as the international conference on 'Audiences, patrons and performers in the performing arts of Asia' held in Leiden in 2000, demonstrated that scholars of Asian theatre and performance have special concerns and interests that are not addressed in existing organizations. Asian theatre has its own internal dynamics that do not have precise equivalents in the theatres of Europe or other continents. In Europe and North America, Asian performance is too often relegated to a cabinet of curiosities. Rather than taking Asian performance on its own terms, Asian scholarship is judged in terms of what it can contribute to understanding the West's own history of interculturalism. This in effect condemns scholars of Asian performance to the status of clerks and documentalists in the service of imperialism. It is to be hoped that there will be more opportunities where scholars of Asian and non-Western performance can meet for discussion and investigation of our mutual interests. <

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'Backstage' at a Shekhawati Khayal folk drama performance at the craft village adjoining the Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur. The play performed was an episode from the Mahabharata, 'The Killing of Kichaka'.

democratic discipline of theatre studies has been slower than practitioners to recognize the significance of the theatrical practices of Asia, and other parts of the world, in its disciplinary organization. Few European-language academic programmes or research clusters currently address non-European theatrical practise as a central focus. (The University of Hawaii's Asian performance master's programme is a rare exception.) The *Asian Theatre Journal*, published by the University of Hawaii Press, remains the sole English-language journal devoted exclusively to Asian theatre. Academic positions in non-Western theatre in the United States, Australia, Europe, and New Zealand have increased over the last decade, but there is also a tendency for these same positions to be defined in terms of minority and immigrant groups. A faculty member appointment in Asian theatre in the United States, for example, will typically be expected to teach Asian-American theatre, and reverse discrimination policy often pressures universities to appoint ethnic minority representatives to fill such slots over non-minority candidates more qualified to teach about theatres outside the West. The IFTR has reflected these general tendencies in the field: despite its 'international' designation, it has been slow to recognize the importance of Asian theatre scholarship. Until this year, when the endlessly ener-

getic concerns about health and safety in India were manifest at the 2003 IFTR meeting in Jaipur. Numerous delegates (including many American scholars) elected not to attend in response to the threatening war between India and Pakistan. Yet this did not prevent this conference from being a highly memorable event, and a watershed in the academic study of theatre.

IFTR conferences are organized to accommodate a combination of panels for the presentation of academic papers, working groups and plenary addresses. Working groups at this year's conference remained European-focused, but the predominance of papers presented elsewhere focussed on types of theatre rarely mentioned in mainstream academia. The daily plenary addresses are a good index of the catholic and eclectic approach to world theatre that the conference as a whole embraced. Mrinalini Sarabhai presented a personal account of her post-Partition innovations in the classical Indian dance field, dwelling fondly on her bharatanatyam-based social dance-dramas and her studies with Yogyakarta dance-master Teja Kusuma. David Roman analysed a one-man Broadway show written and performed by the comedian John Leguizamo as a celebration of Latino identity. Rustam Bharucha described his intracultural interventions in Indian theatre, and reflected on terrorism through a pro-



Musical prelude to a kathputli (string puppet) performance by Gajadhar Bharat and company at the craft village adjoining the Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur.

# Exoticism and Nostalgia

## Consuming Southeast Asian Handicrafts in Japan

Textiles and other handmade items from Southeast Asia, have gained unprecedented popularity in recent years. The Japanese consumers, predominantly women, crave stories and 'biographical' details about these goods; they then turn them into their personalized possessions and display them in an effort to express their individuality. The following article explores the language used in Japanese women's magazines depicting these items.

Research >  
Japan

By Ayami Nakatani

One of the latest consumer trends in Japan can be glossed as the 'Asian boom' (*ajia-boom*): a social phenomenon in which the consumption of various material objects, mostly textiles and other craft items from 'Asia', has become a craze. Japan is indeed known for its excessive consumerism, yet this latest trend offers a prime example of 'cross-cultural consumption' – a phenomenon that has been subject to increasing analysis in consumer culture studies.

Towards the end of the 1990s, glossy magazines directed at middle-aged, married women started featuring a variety of textiles, basketry, furniture, and tableware from various countries in Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Other magazines, targeting a younger readership, soon followed this trend. Such editorial trends correspond to a more general tendency in which increasing attention is paid to various goods from these countries.

While a number of shops offering so-called 'ethnic' merchandize (meaning the cheap range of garments and accessories directly imported from India, Indonesia, or China) already existed, a large number of retail shops, trade fairs, and websites have started to deal in furniture and miscellaneous household goods made of natural materials, such as rattan, bamboo, or teak, since the mid-1990s.



An example of a display of Indonesian handicrafts, Tenmaya Department Store, Okayama, Japan

Given the segmented market structure, both the style and content of women's magazines generally vary according to their narrowly defined readership. Nevertheless, they prove to be somewhat similar in their feature articles related to this 'Asian boom'. The language of the articles is highly eloquent, even verbose. The captions for graphic images also contain a certain set of key terms that appear over and over again. Typical terms for representing Asian-made textiles and handicrafts are 'warmth' (*nukumori*), 'calmness' (*yasuragi*), 'simplicity' (*soboku-sa*), and 'nostalgia' (*natsukashisa*). An uncritical juxtaposition of seemingly incompatible adjectives also prevails: 'Simple, generous, and elegant cloths of Asia'; 'We feel nostalgia though we see them for the first time; above all, they are refreshing'.

The special qualities of these handicrafts are strongly associated with their being the product of attentive and devoted handwork. In other words, it is the time and labour invested that make them special. Most often, therefore, what inspires and attracts consumers are not simply the patterns, colours, or texture of the given items, but the 'context' of their making.

### Cravings for narratives

The general wish of prospective buyers to have detailed knowledge of the sites of production or even of the personal circumstances of producers is clearly voiced in the pages of these magazines. Obviously, however, it is unrealistic for most consumers to have a direct encounter with producers from other cultures. Unlike 'art' objects, even acquiring knowledge of the exact maker of an item of their interest may prove impossible. To compensate for this, the magazine arti-

cles and shop owners are willing to provide some ideas about the context of production in highly romanticized tones.

In many cases, the actual situation surrounding the producers does not correspond with the idyllic description of artisans as appears in commercial discourse, as partially exemplified in my earlier research on Balinese hand-weavers (Nakatani 1999).

From the viewpoint of Japanese consumers, however, such background knowledge of particular objects matters, because 'the imagination works on objects to turn commodities ... into sometimes very significant possessions, which draw their power from biographical experiences and the stories [about them]' (Hoskins 1998:196). Their differentiated and personalized possessions will, in turn, be incorporated into their own stories. The narratives are generally expressed by means of a tasteful display of carefully selected objects on one's central stage: the home.

### Home as feminized space

One of the major characteristics of the recent Asian boom in Japan is its emphasis on the effective use of goods of various origins in home furnishing. In this vein, the lifestyle magazines and books specializing in interior decoration bring two inter-related themes to the fore: the significance of individuality, and the crucial role of one's taste in expressing individuality.

The magazines contain reports of model cases, taken from the homes of selected readers as well as some celebrities. The reports include a summary of the essential traits of a given room/house, detailed depictions of the individual items on display, and the owner's comments. Interestingly, many individuals (predominantly women) stress the fact that their home should be the medium of expressing their sense of style and, by extension, individuality (*watashi-rashisa*).

For example, a woman who skilfully coordinates furniture and decorative items of varied style and origin declares: 'The entire interior of my house is an aggregate of the things that have attracted me'. Her successful arrangement is attributed to her 'discerning eye', selecting only high-quality items (*Plus One Living* 2000:35). Another woman describes her home as 'a stage for my favourite things': the space that 'becomes more and more like herself as she decorates it' (*Plus One Living* 2000:33).

In the words of Featherstone (1987, p.59), these people seem to represent 'the new heroes of consumer culture', who 'make lifestyle a life project and display their individuality and sense of style in the particularity of the assemblage of goods'. As a number of critics of contemporary consumer culture have pointed out, individuality, self-expression, lifestyle, and choice are all essential key terms in understanding the consumers in the postmodern era. And perfect expression of individuality can only be achieved by a discerning judgement – which, in itself, is an important cultural construction.

By feeling somehow connected with unknown producers through social imagery, and by successfully incorporating their products into their own lifestyle, Japanese consumers try to demonstrate their integrated, not fragmented, self and individuality. But it should also be noted that this space for the display of individuality is gendered: the home, in this sense, represents the lone, if not empty, self of women.

In an analysis of new marketing strategies, it is said that the Japanese home has lost its centrality as a symbol of family bonding. Now the home is just a container in which the family members, who lack united concerns, remain, expressing 'their individuated selves' (HILL 1985:64–65). At the same time, the home has been increasingly deemed a women's (that is, wife's) space, as men's absence from it has become the norm, owing to the long hours of work involved in the process of post-Second World War industrialization. We also find popular novels or TV dramas characterizing the young, faithful wife who gradually overshadows her husband by decorating their home entirely to her own taste. There are other begging questions to be raised: Why should these women desire the objects of cultural others? Do they want to compensate for the lack of unselfish, unlimited motherly love in their own lives, as expressed through the painstaking labour of producing intricate handwork? Do they mourn the

loss of tradition, the past times when their own daily life was filled with such handmade crafts? It is here that the rhetoric of nostalgia, one of the most frequently used terms to characterize Asian crafts, comes into play.

### Ambivalent positioning of 'Asia'

'The term "Oriental" (*orientaru*) somehow sounds formal or distant. How about "Asia" (*ajia*), then? Instantly the latter gives a sense of comfort, for perhaps our instinct tells us it is the place where Japan is included, where we belong' (*Belle Maison* mail-order catalogue, Spring 2001).

'European tableware, imbued with Orientalism, renews our appreciation of Eastern aesthetics. "Japanese" materials, including lacquer, fit well with that kind of Western tableware. Let's try a sophisticated coordination with an image of "the East viewed from the West"' (*Fujin Gaho*, June 2000).

These two quotations illustrate particular formulations surrounding the tripartite relationship of Japan, Asia, and the West. Both of them, in fact, express some uneasiness towards the term 'Oriental' or 'Orientalism', for it is essentially the Western view of Asia, not theirs.

The first passage in particular stresses the 'Asianess' of Japan – Japan as firmly merged with Asia, though geographical specificity is never given. According to *Belle Maison*, the sense of nostalgia evoked by Asian handicrafts can be justified by the existence of an ancestral connection. Thus the shared memory is there, and is only waiting to be called back. It is equally noted that Asia, including Japan, is the 'other' to the West.

Yet the Japanese tend to appreciate such an Orientalist gaze; they internalize the West's exotic image of themselves. The second quotation comes from an article on table-setting entitled 'A Table of Asian Taste', which depicts Western tableware using Oriental motifs and bamboo trays or Japanese lacquer ware. As the text affirms, an Orientalist view of Asia, Japan included, is seen as providing a refreshing appreciation of their own culture and tradition.

However, the Japanese would be equally ready to distance themselves from the category of Asia and, thus, objectify it. The otherness of Asia comes from the difference in ways of life, and its exotic attractiveness as tourist destination; Asia is distanced from Japan both temporally and culturally. From the consumer's perspective, therefore, the Japanese cast the same gaze upon Asia as their Western counterparts.

In this light, a peculiar juxtaposition of seemingly conflicting sentiments such as nostalgia and exoticism in the magazine's texts can be explained by Japan's ambivalent position vis-à-vis the rest of the Asian region and the West. Either including or excluding Japan, 'Asia' is a cultural as well as historical construct, largely informed by the Western view that, subsequently, has been internalized by the Japanese consumers. They exoticize themselves as Asian/Oriental, in which case they are merged with the rest of Asia but, at the same time, they objectify and present the latter as their cultural other. <

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# Burma-Myanma(r) Research and Its Future

## Implications for Scholars and Policymakers

Report >  
Southeast Asia

21-25 September  
2002  
Gothenburg, Sweden

By Donald M. Seekins

Within Asian Studies, Burma/Myanmar Studies has occupied a somewhat marginal position since 1962, when General Ne Win established his 'Burmese Road to Socialism'. Fearful of foreign influences, the government denied overseas-based scholars opportunities to conduct fieldwork, or in-country archival research. With few exceptions, indigenous scholarship was neglected, or even systematically repressed. Once a flourishing field, Burma Studies languished, despite the efforts of an older generation of specialists who had worked in the country before 1962 and continued to make important contributions.

The end of Ne Win socialism and the emergence of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as the leader of the democratic movement in 1988 attracted a younger generation of researchers. However, an atmosphere of crisis and uncertainty continues to afflict Burma today. Among scholars, controversies over whether or not to engage academically with the military regime (now known as the State Peace and Development Council, or SPDC) have become intense and often bitter. Thus, Burma Studies faces serious obstacles compared with other country-specific fields, such as Thai or Indonesian Studies.

Its non-mainstream and highly contested nature is not without advantages. Old and young, Burma scholars tend to be hardy survivors who have a strong personal commitment to their subject area. Many are 'renaissance people' and independent scholars whose interests are strongly interdisciplinary. Outside of major academic or metropolitan cen-

tres, however, they are usually isolated, with few opportunities (apart from online communications) to exchange ideas or collaborate on research projects. Burma scholars in Europe or the United States often have little idea of the work done by their counterparts in Southeast Asia, Japan, or China. Also, the contributions of a post-1988 generation of overseas Burmese scholars are often unappreciated.

Given this background, the conference on 'Burma-Myanma(r) research and its future: implications for scholars and policymakers' represents an important turning point. Held at the Great Hall of Gothenburg University in Gothenburg, Sweden over a period of four days, it drew some 200 participants, representing both older and younger generations of Burma experts. There were twenty subject-specific panels, dealing with a wide range of areas: librarians and library resources, education, human resource management, sustainable development, law and the constitution, state and society, Burmese migrants abroad, ethnic

diversity, health and HIV, economic transitions, Buddhism, *nat* cults, pictorial art, nineteenth- and twentieth-century history, and Burma-China relations, among others. There were also 'open panels' for papers that were high quality, but not easily categorized. Some papers were given in a confidential context, with most papers accessible online to participants.

Among the many highlights were: a discussion panel led by representatives of the pre-1962 generation of scholars; a keynote discussion panel featuring Chao-Tzang Yawngwe and F.K. Lehman on the connection between scholarship and activism; the screening of a recent Burmese film on the Anglo-Burmese Wars, *Never we shall be enslaved*, and excerpts of two Thai films, *Bang Rajan* and *Suriyothai*, showing popular Thai perceptions of Thai-Burma relations; and an address by Thet Tun, former Burmese ambassador to France and a United Nations' official, on 'economic lessons from the past'. James C. Scott spoke on the formation of highland communities as 'non-state spaces' in South-

east Asia. And finally at the close of the conference, a discussion panel on 'Diplomacy: The nature of dialogue and reconciliation', chaired by David Steinberg, was especially interesting in light of the May 2002 release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest and hopes that she and the SPDC can begin negotiations to achieve political transition.

The Gothenburg conference brought together a larger and more diverse group of people than had attended previous Burma Studies events. They included not only academics and independent scholars but also non-government organization representatives, many with extensive experience on the ground in Burma, journalists, and researchers based at governmental and non-governmental think tanks. Attendees represented practically every region of Asia, Europe, and North America. Asian participants presented sixty-two papers, almost half the total, and the younger generation of overseas Burmese scholars was particularly well represented.

The conference organizers, based at Gothenburg University, worked hard to promote an atmosphere of inclusiveness and political neutrality, where all kinds of opinions could be represented. The lively and sometimes contentious atmosphere provided ample evidence that they succeeded. The 2002 meeting should serve as a model for future

Burma Studies events in at least four ways. Firstly, rather than being centred at a single location, different venues should be sought for the biannual Burma Studies Group meetings, chosen on the basis of their overall attractiveness and accessibility to the widest range of participants. Secondly, people with diverse Burma-related interests and experiences should be proactively included, not only academics. Thirdly, the four-day format should be maintained, so that participants can get to know each other and their viewpoints. Finally, political neutrality should be preserved and financial support thus accepted from reputable sources only. Gothenburg was an excellent venue, a city with a pleasant physical environment and a truly 'civil' society. <

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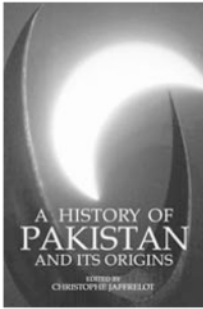
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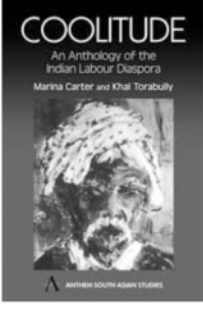
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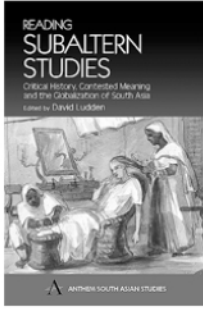
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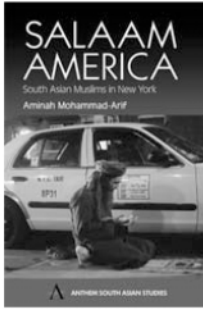
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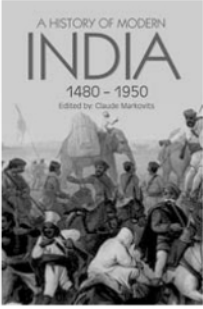


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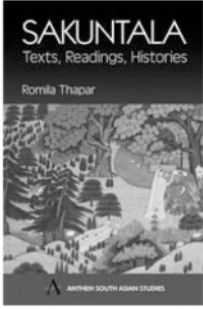
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# Ethnic Nationalism in Nepal

Research >  
South Asia

Ethnic nationalism is on the rise in Nepal. With only 23.2 million inhabitants and measuring only 147,181 square kilometres, Nepal is host to 62 'nationalities' (*janajati*). None of these nationalities, including the predominant Khas population – consisting of Brahmin-Ksetri castes, speaking Nepali (Khas) and practising Hinduism – can be considered a single majority group. The Khas, however, remain determined to propagate their language, culture, and religion through their control of state institutions. While ethnic mobilization in Nepal has largely, to date, avoided bloodshed, the frustration of minority nationalities, ethnicities, castes, and tribes (*janajati*) is an important factor behind the growing popularity of the Maoists' 'people's war'.

By Bal Gopal Shrestha

In the wake of political reforms instituted in 1990, non-Khas nationalities began asserting their own national identities within the boundaries of the current state. A new constitution was introduced that year, confirming Nepal as a multinational (*bahujati*) and even multilingual (*bahubhasika*) country. The constitution, however, retained the Nepali (Khas) language as the official 'national language' and Hinduism as the sole 'state religion'. Although the constitution provides liberty for ethnic non-Khas and non-Hindu religious communities to express themselves – against the domination of the 'one nation, one language, and one religion' policy of the government – minority languages and religions remain without legal protection.

The major demands of the non-Khas nationalities in Nepal are: the right to autonomy; political representation in the central government; equal rights for their languages in the courts, in education, and in local and central administration; and an end to the domination of Hindu religion and culture. The 'All Nepal Nationalities' Organisation' (Akhil Nepal Janajati Samgha), a Maoist sister organization to the Communist Party of Nepal, has presented the most radical demands, including the right of secession for all nationalities in Nepal. The influence of the Maoist Party, engaged in a violent 'people's war' for more than six years, is increasing throughout the country and threatening its stability.

As the ruling class manipulating state institutions, Brahmin-Kshetris are the target of other nationalities' criticism. The latter find it insulting to be categorized alongside low-caste Hindus. Mainstream scholars also define these groups as 'tribes'. Most groups in Nepal including the Newars, Tamangs, Magars, Gurung, Sherpa, Limbu, Rai, and Tharu, do not accept the labels 'ethnic groups' or 'minorities'. They prefer to be called 'nations' and believe they fulfil all the criteria of nationhood: language, religion, culture, territory and a history of independent statehood, which would be achieved again if rights to secession were granted. All these groups now accept the Nepali word *janajati*, translated as 'nationality' in English. In 1990, when eighteen of these groups gathered to create a forum called Nepal Janajati Mahasamgha, they translated it as the 'Nepal Federation of Nationalities'.

The search for 'national identities' in Nepal may be a recent phenomenon, but has deep roots in the past. Until 1769, present-day Nepal was composed of small independent states and principalities of different 'nationalities'. The Gorkhali king Prithivi Naryanan Shah, forefather of the present ruling dynasty in Nepal, embarked on an expansionist campaign, bringing several small states and principalities under the control of Gorkha. His successors continued the



Fierce ethnic agitations in the capital Kathmandu against the 1999 decision of the Supreme Court of Nepal, which prohibited the use of local languages in municipalities and District Development Committees. (left and below)

Courtesy for both photos: Malla K. Sundar

expansionary policy, which came to an end only after their defeat in a war with the British East India Company (1814-1816). It was only in the 1930s that the Nepalese government began to adopt the name 'Nepal' in an attempt to make it a modern nation state (Burghart 1996: 255). In general, people of different origins within the country's borders continued to live together in peace over the centuries. However, this ended when groups began to feel discriminated against by the state.

Soon after the Gorkha conquest of 1769, the Gorkhali king Prithivinarayan Shah proclaimed his country to be the 'True Land of Hindus' (Asali Hindustan). In 1854, Jangabhadur, the first Rana prime minister, introduced written laws based on Hinduism, dividing the country hierarchically and subordinating all other nationalities to the Brahmin and Ksetris (Khas) ruling class. In 1960, King Mahendra, the father of the present king, introduced the party-less political system called 'Panchayat', which proclaimed Nepal the only 'Hindu Kingdom' and 'Nepali or Khas the only official language', thus ignoring its multi-religious, multinational, multicultural, and multilingual character.

The ruling Hindu population of Nepal articulates its nationalism by imitating Indian Hindu nationalists, whose vivid forms have been discussed by several scholars (Van der Veer 1994; Jaffrelet 1996). Thirty years of Panchayat politics (1960-90) channelled support to Hindu religious organisations such as the 'World Hindu Council' (Visva Hindu Parisad) while ignoring the issues of minorities and their rights. Encouraged by Hindu fundamentalists in India, Nepalese Hindu extremists are gaining momentum. They have taken inspiration from Indian organizations like the 'Hindu god Siva's Army' (Siva Sena) to form groups like the 'Cows Welfare Association, Nepal'. It is notable that, even today, a person found guilty of killing a cow is condemned to capital punishment by

Nepalese law. Few were surprised when Hindu fundamentalists announced substantial cash rewards to anyone cutting off the head of Padma Ratna Tuladhar, then Minister of Health and a champion for human rights, when he spoke on behalf of the beef-eating communities of Nepal.

## Undercurrents of insurgency

With the downfall of the former Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, many small nations have emerged, while others remain incipient. Tamil insurgents in Sri Lanka can be seen as one of the most destructive examples of national uprisings in the South Asian region. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia is experiencing equally violent uprisings. For decades, India has been witness to Assamese, Naga, Jharkhand, and Gorkhaland national movements, whose grievances remain unresolved. In many respects, present-day ethnic nationalist movements in Nepal are heavily influenced by events elsewhere, though they are unusual in their, by-and-large, non-violent record.

The Nepalese government has taken few steps to fulfil ethnic demands. The news is now broadcast in several languages, but the Supreme Court of

Nepal infuriated non-Nepali speakers with its 1999 decision prohibiting the use of local languages in municipalities and District Development Committees. At present, all ethnic groups in Nepal feel they are overshadowed by Khas linguistic and cultural chauvinism. This situation can only lead to undesirable hostilities. A number of bloody incidents have recently taken place in eastern Nepal, in which local people killed Brahmins, burnt down their houses, and chased them away from their villages. Up until now, however, ethnic uprisings in Nepal have been peaceful in nature and, except in a few cases, violence has been avoided. The most interesting aspect of the present ethnic mobilization is that the nationalities are united through the Nepal Federation of Nationalities in their fight against the ruling Khas.

The failure of parliamentary parties in Nepal to address the grievances of these nationalities has caused the latter to turn towards the Maoists for support. It has been noted that the Maoists receive active support from non-Hindu ethnic groups and oppressed low castes (*dalit*) (Bhattachan 2000:146-50). The majority of people killed by the police, on the suspicion of Maoist activity, come from ethnic nationalities and oppressed castes. Yet Nepal's ethnic nationalities are aware of the reality across their northern border, where the Tibetan minority population has been subjected to great distress under the rule of Maoist China. Bhattachan speculates that the Maoists' war has played a crucial role in preventing ethnic insurgency in Nepal.

To develop mutual understanding among the different groups in a multi-ethnic country like Nepal is a difficult task. Until recently, the king has served as the 'unifying symbol' of all nationalities in Nepal, even as the political reforms of 1990 curtailed the king's power by introducing parliamentary democracy. Over the last decade, King Birendra regained considerable popularity, largely as a result of the political



instability caused by the corrupt leadership of constitutional parties. The 'palace massacre' of 1 June 2001, in which practically the entire royal family was murdered, has exacerbated tensions and instability in the country. The only surviving brother of the slain king, Gyanendra, has now become king. Unfortunately, in contrast to the great respect shown to his slain brother and his family, people do not trust the present king. Images of deified kings of the past have been destroyed. The Maoists, forming the most powerful extra-constitutional political party, represent recent developments as the 'death of monarchy' in Nepal and urge the country to declare itself a republic. This is an unprecedented situation for the entire nation. While nationalities remain suspicious of the present developments, they are speculating about possibilities for favourable change.

The most recent trend in Nepalese ethnic mobilization is the active involvement of Maoists; their populist appeals are attracting adherents. The majority of ethnic nationalities, including a large section of Magars, Tamangs, and Newars in Kathmandu Valley, are sympathetic towards the Maoists. Despite its cultural richness, Nepal is one of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries of South Asia. Its people are facing various problems, including ethnic nationalism and a violent Maoist people's war. A small country with many nationalities, the government is unable to effectively address ethnic conflict. If ethnic uprisings are not handled with great care, Nepal may face trouble in the near future, as has been experienced by the Balkan states, by Southeast Asian countries, or by neighbouring India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. As indicated above, ethnic insurgency in Nepal has been prevented thus far because of the people's war launched by the Maoists. The involvement of ethnic nationalities in this bloody war, however, has become painfully apparent. ◀

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# Cultural Landscape in Change

Research >  
Southeast Asia

During the last one hundred years, the region around Lore Lindu National Park in Central Sulawesi has represented an area in slow transition. A couple of years ago this development changed significantly. Thus, the Park offers an interesting field for scientific research on stability and destabilisation of the margins of one of the few remaining tropical primary forests in Indonesia. As presented below, one field of study which is important for the understanding of present dynamics in the region is the reconstruction of the historical development of cultural landscape since the beginning of the twentieth century.

By Robert Weber

During fifteen months of fieldwork, I used mainly qualitative research methods such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews with families and key persons in nine selected villages. These villages are located in four different valleys surrounding Lore Lindu National Park (LLNP) (see map). The villages were selected by a stratified random sampling, including the following three characteristics; population density, ethnic composition, and distance to the national park. The results of the interviews will provide information on the village history, migration patterns, historical, spatial, and functional development of the settlement, internal and external influences and their impacts on settlement and population structure, as well as on land use. Further information gathered at the sub-district, district and province level will allow us to connect the data on the micro (village) level with developments on the macro level, and thus lead to a differentiation of endogenous and exogenous processes that shaped the villages' status quo.

## The fieldwork in Lore Lindu region

The Lore Lindu region consists of a national park area of around 231 km<sup>2</sup> that provides habitat for a wide range of endemic flora and fauna. The national park is surrounded by five valleys. The most densely populated Palu valley offers the best infrastructure of the region and was frequented by Arab and Chinese traders long before the Dutch conquest in the early twentieth century. The other valleys, Kulawi, Palolo, Napu, and Bada, remained relatively untouched by external influences and thus were able to conserve their traditional beliefs, customs, and lifestyle to a certain extent. Up until today, their population has been diverse in terms of local languages.

A first breaking point of the development of cultural landscape was the Dutch incursion into various upland valleys between 1905 and 1908. The colonial rulers introduced main changes in terms of settlement structures, beliefs and economy. However, the Ethical Policy that influenced Dutch colonial policy since 1900 led to a more considerate implementation of colonial changes. People were resettled from the mountains down to the valleys, where new settlements with village structures were established. After the area was 'pacified', missionaries of the Salvation Army respective of the Dutch protestant church entered the valleys and tried to convert the people from their animist beliefs to Christian religion. In terms of economy, the Dutch influenced local agriculture less intensively than in Java or Sumatra. Large-scale plantations and compulsory labour in agriculture, two attributes of the so-called *Cultuurstelsel*, were not practiced in Central Sulawesi. In fact, the Lore Lindu region has remained an economic smallholder system up to the present day. The

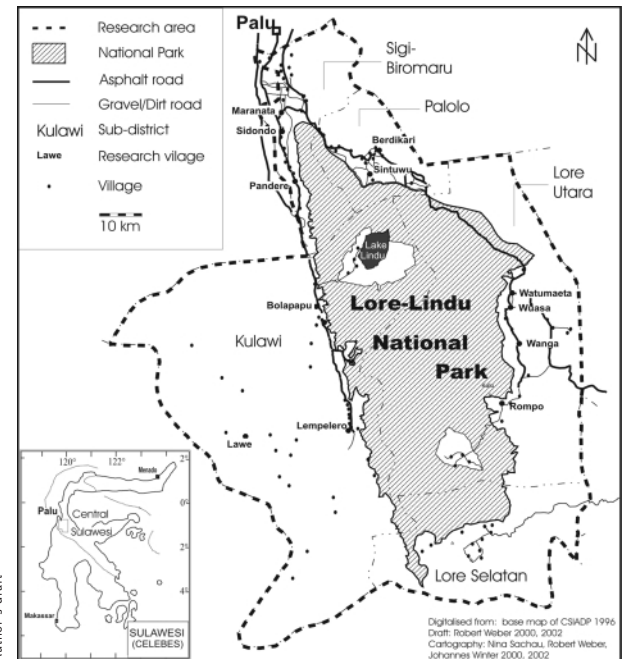
Dutch, however, promoted the cultivation of paddy rice instead of the dry land rice that was traditionally planted in slash-and-burn shifting cultivation. For that reason, a huge irrigation project was established that still guarantees sufficient paddy rice production in the naturally dry Palu valley. In upland areas like the Kulawi valley coffee was introduced to the locals and created the base for cash-crop economy in the area. Following the Dutch, Arab, Chinese, and Bugis (South Sulawesi) traders entered the remote upland valleys and supported the development of a more vital market structure. Road construction programmes to connect the hinterland with Palu were realized using compulsory local labour.

The short period of Japanese rule (1942-45) burdened the local population more than the Dutch influence had. Cotton production and longer working hours on the fields became obligatory for every household. Action against the will of the Japanese was quickly answered with physical punishment.

During the first two decades since the independence of Indonesia, the Lore Lindu area remained in a relatively static situation. However, the rebellion of Kahar Muzakar in South Sulawesi and the Permesta rebellion in North Sulawesi in the 1950s led to changes in terms of migration when refugees of the rebellions moved to Central Sulawesi. This time can be regarded as the first period of a greater immigration from other parts of the island. As land was still abundant at that time, these people could easily settle and there were no problems with land distribution.

With the change to Suharto's New Order era, the economic production of food and cash crops was enforced and new local resettlement programmes from remote hillside locations to the plains were implemented. While Napu valley in the East was still lacking sufficient transport infrastructure and thus remained quite scarcely populated, starting in the 1960s Palolo valley was the main area of local immigration, mainly from Kulawi and overpopulated areas along the Palu bay. None of the five valleys surrounding the today's national park developed as fast as Palolo valley where more than half of the villages were founded between 1960 and 1980.

The most far-reaching changes to the cultural landscape took place during the last decade of the twentieth century. Immigration from South Sulawesi, where land scarcity became a major problem, had already begun on a considerable scale during the 1980s. The main impact of this immigration was the introduction of cacao and the beginning of land sales from locals to the mostly financially better-off Bugis migrants. Due to the boom of cacao prices during the 1990s, immigration from the south of Sulawesi reached a peak. This was mainly the case in Palolo and Napu valley where settlement, population, and climatic conditions offered better opportunities for cacao farmers than in other areas of the region. Besides, inter-island transmigration programmes



Our research area

from Java and Bali raised the number of population, mostly in Napu valley. Land sales led to new forms of economic relationships like wage-labour. Furthermore, locals started to encroach on the national park area in order to substitute the land that they had sold before.

The Lore Lindu region still can be regarded as an area in fast transition. The present results of the research on cultural landscape and the projections for future development (e.g. effects of modernization, revitalization of a conservative regionalism, local conflicts in neighbouring Poso district) of this region serve as a base for further research in cultural and social geography. <

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Adat dress of Kulawi nobles



Robert Weber

## Info >

My fieldwork is part of the Indonesian-German interdisciplinary research programme STORMA (Stability Of Rainforest Margin Areas). For detailed information on our sub-project A1, supervised by Prof. Werner Kreisel and Dr Heiko Faust visit [www.geogr.uni-goettingen.de/kus/sfb552/A1.htm](http://www.geogr.uni-goettingen.de/kus/sfb552/A1.htm)

# The Seven-Word Controversy

Research >  
Southeast Asia

Amendments to several crucial articles of the 1945 constitution topped the agenda at the most recent session of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly (MPR, *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*). Following upon lesser amendments (in 1999, 2000, and 2001), the 2002 annual session, held 1-10 August, tackled such vital issues as the authority of the MPR and the president; education; and religion. Particularly sensitive were proposals to amend Article 29, which would redefine the relationship between religion and state. Controversy raged over inclusion of the so-called 'seven words' of the 1945 Jakarta Charter ('*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syari'at Islam bagi pemeluknya*' [with the obligation for adherents of the faith to carry out Islamic sharia]), advocated by some Islamic parties, organizations and movements.<sup>1</sup>

By Moch Nur Ichwan

Three Islamic political factions<sup>2</sup> and one ultra-reformist Islamic organization<sup>3</sup> alone advocated the enshrinement of Islamic sharia in the constitution. In this they were opposed by the 'secular' factions.<sup>4</sup> Rejection of the 'seven words' also came from the largest Islamic organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Former President Abdurrahman Wahid opposed altering

Article 29 on the grounds that it was the creation of the founding fathers of the Indonesian nation state. Echoing the 1945 statement of his father Wahid Hasyim, he argued that the most important question was not 'what ... shall be the place of Islam [in the state]', but rather, 'By what means shall we assure the place of all religions in independent Indonesia? What we need most of all at this time is the indissoluble unity of the nation.'<sup>5</sup> Later, Amien Rais suggested

that the religion article should not be amended. A poll by *Tempo Interaktif*, conducted 17-24 May 2002, found 52 per cent of respondents opposed to any amendments to the religion article. While 44 per cent were found to be in favour, they were divided as to its formulation.

## Debating the religion article

Anticipating deadlock, meetings to discuss 'crucial articles' of the constitu-

tion were held before the annual session of the MPR. Initiated by Islamic parties, participants at these meetings were accused of creating an 'Islamic caucus', a charge they denied. Participants supported amending Article 29 but did not agree on a formulation. The PPP, PBB, PNU (Nahdatul Ummah Party), and PK (Justice Party) proposed the inclusion of the seven words of the Jakarta Charter, while the PAN and PKB had their own versions (later, the PKB changed its posi-

tion to defend the original text). The participation of the PKB in the meetings illustrated the split of the 'old friendship' between the 'traditional' Muslims (NU-PKB) and the nationalists (PDIP), due to the latter's participation in the impeachment of Abdurrahman Wahid from the presidency. Anticipating the deterioration of relations, Megawati's husband, Taufik Kiemas, visited Wahid, the head of the consultative body of the PKB, stressing the compatibility of 'nationalism and Islam'.

Meetings were then widened to include non-Islamic parties, such as PDIP and Golkar, defusing the issue of the so-called 'Islamic caucus'. As in the earlier meetings, the parties discussed

continued on page 24 >

continued from page 23 >

the crucial articles, including, of course, the religion article. No agreement was reached except that, as far as possible, deadlock should be avoided at the annual session. Both Islamic and secular parties formulated alternative amendments to the religion article before the annual session.

**Article 29: 1**

Alternative one: The state is based upon the belief in one God (original text).

Alternative two: The state is based upon the belief in one God with the obligation to implement Islamic sharia for the adherents of the religion.

Alternative three: The state is based upon the belief in one God with the obligation to implement religious teachings for the adherents of each religion.

The proponents of the Jakarta Charter supported the second alternative. The reformation faction supported the third alternative. Along with PDIP and Golkar, the PKB supported the original version. In the midst of the annual session, anti- and pro-amendment movements emerged inside and outside the MPR. Anti-amendment forces outside the MPR were spearheaded by retired military elites and PDIP members; inside the MPR, by PDIP legislators. It appeared that the PDIP was conducting a 'politics of double faces' with official statements supporting amendment alongside unofficial pronouncements suggesting otherwise.

Outside the MPR, supporters of the amendment demanded the inclusion of the seven words of the Jakarta Charter. Opposition to the idea also came from moderate Muslims, nationalists, and adherents of other religions. The latter argued that the religion article is a national consensus that should not be dominated by any particular religion. Nurcholish Madjid, a prominent Muslim thinker, said the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter would allow the state to intervene into religious space. For the same reason, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah demanded the original version of the religion article be maintained.

Support for the amendment of Article 29 inside the MPR weakened before its discussion in Commission A, which was responsible for the amendment of this article. The head of the MPR, Amien Rais, advocated 'going back to the original text'. The PPP, moreover, began to waver in its support. This weakening was condemned by proponents of Islamic sharia inside and outside the MPR. Strong support came, in the end, only from the PBB and PDU factions. When Commission A failed to reach agreement on amending the religion article, the issue was brought into the plenary session on 10 August,

resulting in the preservation of the original Article 29. The PBB and PDU factions and some Islamic parties and movements vowed to continue their struggle into the future.

This was not the first taste of failure for the proponents of Islamic sharia in Indonesia. The seven words of the Jakarta Charter, issued on 22 June 1945, were then 'amended' because of the protest of the 'people of the Eastern Part of Indonesia'. In the Constituent Assembly between 1956 and 1959, the debate about Islamic sharia reoccurred. Sukarno, however, issued a presidential decree in 1959 declaring, *inter alia*, the re-establishment of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. The discussion on Islamic sharia and the Jakarta Charter was then officially closed. Finally, during the New Order, Suharto issued Law No. 8 of 1985 on mass organizations, disallowing Islamic sharia and other non-Pancasila ideologies.



The Jakarta Post, 7 August 2002

'Rejecting the amendment = traitor of the nation.' The pro-amendment movements outside the MPR building.

The 2002 annual session of the MPR, which, it is expected, witnessed the last of the constitutional amendments, showed the religion article to be the most controversial and sensitive in the Indonesian constitution. Any effort at Islamization (or 'religionization') of Article 29 would affect relations between religion and state, and between religions in the country. The adoption of the article would be deadly expensive, as the plurality of Indonesian society and of Muslims themselves, many of whom rejected sectarianism and anti-pluralism, would be at stake. The maintenance of the religion article is, indeed, not the failure of Muslims in the country, but rather their great success in maintaining their identity as adherents of a moderate, tolerant Islam. <

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# Power, Religion and Terror in Indonesia

Research >  
Southeast Asia

Why has there been so much conflict and violence in Indonesia over the past few years? A deceptively simple answer is that Indonesia has been experiencing intense power struggles since the demise of former President Suharto. Conflict in Indonesia is often related to power. Just as conflict is extremely diverse, power, too, has many meanings and many manifestations in Indonesian society. Conflict over power does not necessarily result in violence, let alone in an epidemic of bloodshed. Moreover, power conflicts are not the cause of all violence. However, this study explores the hypothesis that particular conceptions, symbols, institutionalizations, and concrete practices of power, play a major role in the generation and suppression of violence in Indonesia.

By Bernard Adeney-Risakotta

Since the Bali terrorist bombs of 12 October 2002, a great deal of attention has been focused on the connection between religion and violence. Religion is a powerful force in Indonesia and has played a part in much of the violence, as well as in attempts to stop it. Over the past four years, terror has become ubiquitous in Indonesian society and frequently linked to religious communities. However, religion is never an autonomous force that acts independently from other factors. Religion is integral to power in Indonesia, both in its positive and negative manifestations. Violent conflict in Indonesia is usually precipitated by political, economic, and social changes that are influenced by volatile tensions between traditional power structures, religious world views, and modern institutions. Since virtually all Indonesians are religious, violence often appeals to religion for justification. However, violence also includes profound cultural elements that are embedded in the traditions, stories, rituals, and *adat* (traditional law) institutions that are part of the identity of the people.

In so far as violence is connected with power (as opposed to psychosis, rage, frustration, hatred, ideology, misunderstanding, principles, or more generalized social pathologies) this study is motivated by the desire to understand how power is generated and utilized in Indonesia. My theory suggests that a fundamental form of power lies within the people, as distinct from the elite. Recent events demonstrate that great creative and destructive potential is located within the people, whereas their leaders are generally impotent. Violence destroys power. 'Violence can always destroy power; out of the barrel of a gun grows the most effective command, resulting in the most instant and perfect obedience. What never can grow out of it is power' (Arendt 1970:53). State use of violence in certain areas of Indonesia is always both an indication and cause of the weakness of the government in those same areas. The more the state uses violence, the weaker the government.

State violence may also destroy the power that lies in the people, especially if they respond with violence, as in Aceh, and for many years in East Timor. Yet, state violence can also galvanize the people's power, especially if the people are unified in non-violent resistance, as finally occurred in many parts of Indonesia, including East Timor. Governmental power is dependent on the power that lies within the people. This approach distinguishes power from domination. I understand power as the ability of the people to achieve their own goals (for better or worse). Government is a powerful modern institution through which the people hope to achieve their goals. However, power in Indonesian society is also generated and channelled by other modern, religious, and cultural practices and institutions.

My research explores the thesis that we need a new theoretical framework for understanding power and violence in Indonesia that moves beyond simple categories of antagonistic groups. Different patterns of meaning, practice, and discourse provide a more useful analytic tool for understanding power and violence than the now classic tradition of dividing Indonesia (or Java) into religious, social, or political groupings. Power and violence in Indonesia cannot be understood within a Weberian framework of social evolution from traditional to modern, nor through an ideal-type dichotomy between Java and the West.

There are three major sets of symbol systems, institutions, and practices in Indonesia that interpenetrate each other and form the conscious and unconscious identity of all Indonesians. All three are so powerful and all-pervasive that none of them can overthrow the other two or claim the exclusive allegiance of any particular group. These three networks of meaning are not necessarily incompatible with each other, but they contain many elements of incommensurability such as to generate distinctive and competing worlds of discourse. Virtually all Indonesians live, think, feel, and participate in three different conceptual worlds, which are often synthesized or integrated with each other, but just as often separated and dichotomized. Each of these frameworks of meaning has generated their own institutions, practices, and structures of power. These three Indonesian worlds can be

defined as: modernity, religion, and the culture of the ancestors. Through my work I investigate how each of these symbol systems generates or controls power, and how they become enmeshed in violence.

Indonesians cannot be divided into three groups: those who are modern, religious, or traditional. All Indonesians are modern in the sense that they are shaped by modern institutions, ideas, and practices. The remotest farmer knows the exchange rate of the dollar and depends on globally determined prices, modern transportation, and modern ideals of progress, education, and rights. Similarly, all Indonesians are religious. Religious institutions, ideas, and practices shape the identities and practices of all, not least of which includes those who resist the dominant trends in religion. Equally, all Indonesians are shaped by the culture of their ancestors. Culture is not a static, ancient set of ideas, practices, and institutions, but rather an evolving, dynamic power that determines the life style and perspective of all Indonesians. For example, of the three main institutions of law in Indonesia, secular, religious, and *adat*, the most powerful of the three is *adat*. I explore the thesis that the relationship between these three distinct webs of meaning is a useful key for understanding how power operates in the society and how violence is generated out of the tensions between all three. Violence is not primarily caused by evil people, but rather by conflict within and between three different kinds of structures of power.

During my past eleven years of teaching and research in Indonesia, I have also been formed by these three worlds of discourse. Most social scientific studies of Indonesian society assume a fundamentally modern, Western epistemology in which the cultures, religions, politics, and history of Indonesia are viewed as objects to be studied that are fundamentally different, or even alien from the researcher. Anthropologists try to see the world 'from the native's point of view', but that world remains eternally distant (Geertz 1976). Social science assumes a modern understanding of scientific knowledge, which takes culture and religion as objects of research. Even Indonesians are taught to radically separate their culture and religion from modern modes of scientific investigation.

In contrast, this research project is written from within the epistemological assumptions and perspectives of all three of these different worlds of discourse. It is a modern analysis of Indonesian identity, power, and violence, which adopts many Indonesian, religious, and cultural assumptions about the nature of reality. I argue for a new theory of power, which operates within these three different worlds of Indonesian discourse. Perhaps as many as 100,000 people have died during the past four years through violence related to ethnic, religious, economic, and political conflicts in Indonesia. In a country known for its gentle culture, high level of tolerance, and warm hospitality, what triggered such an orgy of death? <

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**Note >**

I wish to thank IIAS for providing the facilities, space and time which enabled me to work for almost a year in Amsterdam, without which this research would not have been possible.

**Notes >**

- 1 The present article is based on the observations of a number of newspapers, magazines, and online media, particularly *Kompas*, *Republika*, *Media Indonesia*, *The Jakarta Post*, *Tempo*, *Tempo Interaktif*, and *Gatra*, published between 20 May and 20 August 2002.
- 2 The United Development Party (PPP), the Crescent Star Party (PBB), and the Daulatul Ummah faction (PDU)
- 3 The Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII).
- 4 The Golkar Party (PG), Indonesian Democratic Struggle Party (PDIP), National Awakening Party (PKB), Loving Nation Democratic Party (PDKP), Indonesian Nationhood Coalition faction (FKKI), Regional Representatives (FUD), and the Military-Police faction (FTNI/Polri)
- 5 Cited in Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation*, The Hague: Van Hoeve [etc.] (1958), p. 189.



# Describing Kekerasan

## Reconciling the Local and the National

Research >  
Southeast Asia

Since the fall of the Suharto government in May 1998, Indonesia has experienced an increase in the frequency and intensity of violence. This has included communal violence, terrorism, lynchings, criminal violence, and state terrorism. The increase in both gruesome violence and everyday instances of deadly criminal violence has made many Indonesians feel increasingly unsafe in their own nation. Some have even begun to reflect on the 'good old days' of the New Order when violence, although pervasive, was controlled.

By Jemma Purdey

Numerous scholars, historians, social scientists, and anthropologists, from Gellner to Pandey and Friedlander, have contemplated the question of how exactly we can write about violence, particularly mass violence. It is a highly contested discursive space: How do you locate the truth about an event which, in its re-telling by perpetrators, victims, and bystanders, defies a single narrative? In post-New Order Indonesia do we need an understanding of violence that is less focused on the centre?

Scholars of recent violence in Indonesia have constructed narratives and histories of violent events by stepping back and observing the ways in which Indonesian society responds to violence, and have closely examined political and military contexts and structures to understand how they contribute to violence. The sheer number of articles and papers written by Indonesianists from all disciplines on this subject reflects the range of violence in Indonesia but, also, our fascination with it. This interest is particularly remarkable when compared to the still relatively small amount of research and writing about the killings in 1965-1966, in which it is estimated up to 500,000 people died: why this 'sudden' interest in violence? Furthermore, what approaches are scholars taking towards this subject?

In his volume *The Indonesian Killings, 1965-1966*, published in 1990, Robert Cribb concludes his introduction by reflecting on what had, at that time, been written about the killings. Cribb found that, on the one hand, analysis lacked understanding of the pervasive structural nature of the 'national', that is, the political, in relation to the killings and, on the other, that 'local', that is to say personal or cultural, explanations were also absent or overlooked. This difficulty in reconciling the national and the local persists in writing about violence, in all its forms, in Indonesia today. The difference today is that the area of analysis focused on the struc-

tural dimensions of violence is now vast. In most recent writing about violence in Indonesia, sources of conflict are sought in the processes of the state and its Jakarta-centred authority. This is the predominant form of analysis, regardless of whether it is led by a belief that the prevalence of New Order structures supported conflict after 1998, or by a profounder historical analysis looking back to colonial or pre-colonial times. Yet questions still remain about the agency and responsibility of individuals or members of the crowd involved in carrying out violence in Indonesia. Together with the historical and political context, local sources of agency for violence need to become part of the explanation. Paul Brass put it simply, 'If the state is responsible for riots and pogroms then the people are relieved of responsibility...But the state does not operate independently of its citizens and subjects, who are themselves implicated in these conflict-generating processes...'.<sup>1</sup> We need to know more about the perpetrators of violence: as Veena Das suggests, we need to understand 'the moral and ethical processes and judgments of those who participated'.<sup>2</sup> But how do we get at the world view of perpetrators of violence, especially mass violence, given the anonymity and impunity accorded to so much violence in Indonesia?

### The problem of describing violence as cultural

Some scholars, although their numbers remain limited, have brought us closer to understanding violence in Indonesia. One of the reasons for a lack of significant research focused on local, and personal, sources for violence is the reluctance among scholars to enter into a discourse which labels violence as cultural, arguing that to do so would further absolve the agents, individuals, and groups of responsibility. However, the fact in Indonesia is that the cycle of impunity for violence is made possible by the existence of the opportunity to blame the state, the colonial powers, and the social structures they put in place. The consequence of this view is that responsibility is rarely taken by anyone. However, if we understand 'culture', with respect to violence, not as being primitive or primordial but, rather, a way of feeling and acting which is historically and socially constituted and constantly reinvented and learned, our understanding of it demands consideration of both the local conditions and the conditions at the centre which facilitate violence.

The prominent discourse within Indonesia about violence, however, continues to exclude the agency of the individual or community member. Following the bomb attacks in Bali on a busy tourist-strip in October 2002, which killed up to 185 people, mostly foreigners, prominent Indonesian commentators described these acts as sympto-

matic of the sickness within Indonesian society, and its moral depravity and lack of humanity as the consequence of an oppressive past.<sup>3</sup> In an interview with *The Jakarta Post* at around that time Franz Magnis Suseno, a professor at Jakarta's Driyarkara School of Philosophy, described the current state of the 'body of the nation' as being scarred by its past. 'The people are sick. They are confused and lack vision after years of having been oppressed. There are no exemplary figures who are able to help them escape this problem.' The view presented is of a nation or a people, which, not unlike Pandey's 'passive victim(s)',<sup>4</sup> is a product of colonialism or some other system of institutional oppression and therefore takes no responsibility for the violence it now inflicts upon itself. The source of the violence is external. At a point in time when many scholars within and outside Indonesia are working to rediscover its histories of violence and Indonesia's institutions of transitional democracy are barely standing, comments like these from Suseno, and others, are disturbing. Quoted in another recent news article, Azyumardi Azra, Rector of the Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta [the State Islamic University], asked himself the question, 'A man suspected of stealing a chicken is set ablaze. How can that be?' His response was, 'Our society is suffering schizophrenia and hypocrisy.'<sup>5</sup> This comment was made alongside those of others that Indonesia was mentally ill. Such a dialogue is disturbing in the context of reading Pandey's critique of approaches to remembering the Partition in India, which censor the recovery of memory. The descriptions used by scholars of Partition, and those cited above which refer to Indonesia, hark back to the past. The 'people' or, alternatively, the *massa*, are portrayed once more as 'innocent masses' who, Pandey comments, 'have no will of their own' and 'who must be allowed to

forget so that they can return to their normal, everyday lives.'

This urges us to ponder, then, what precisely is 'normal, everyday life' in Indonesia today and at the time of the violent events we record. An article by Ariel Heryanto, written in response to the statements of outrage from experts in Indonesia and the international media about the way in which one of the suspects in the Bali bombing, Amrozi, was interviewed by police, addresses this issue directly. The smiles of both the Bali police and Amrozi, displayed before the world's media, were interpreted by many, particularly in Australia, as being insensitive. Heryanto, on the other hand, remarked 'what most angry commentators...have failed to understand is the extent to which similar gestures, and smiling in particular, has been embedded in social lives of most Indonesians with diverse meanings'.<sup>6</sup> He describes this gesture as cultural, as something done unconsciously and without political motive. Like Pandey's insistence of acknowledging the work of 'regular citizens' in the violence of Partition, in its new version the history of violence in Indonesia needs to incorporate the local, individual, and cultural when analysing the political conditions leading to violence.

Explanations of the pervasive violence in Indonesia as an illness experienced by the nation as a whole presents a normative and generalized view which excludes, once again, the individual from this history. Victim, perpetrator, bystander are rolled into one. The assessment of individuals and their actions is medical rather than political, judicial, or social. Therefore, instead of seeking a solution through the law or through social policy, a medical solution is sought. Thus, language used to refer to violence has major implications for the manner in which it is resolved, and for the level of responsibility taken by the perpetrators. Narratives of the victim and perpetrator are essential in any process which attempts to block the notion of violence – in whatever form – becoming 'normal' or everyday in Indonesian society. By adding humanity and the individual to this story it necessarily denies normalization.

Writers on violence in Indonesia

face multiple dilemmas when confronting their subject. Like historians and social scientists in any field, theirs is a responsibility to weigh the evidence and produce that version of 'history' which they see as best. More than that though, when writing about violence morality, emotion, and notions of responsibility and seeking justice weigh just as heavily as the pursuit for factual truth. Scholars writing about violence in Indonesia, a nation state in transition to democracy, do their work within circumstances in which the search for truth about violence as a means to justice is an elusive one for victims and their supporters. This is perhaps a heavy burden for scholars to bear but, nonetheless, it is one they must take on in the absence of state institutions and international regimes willing to carry it out. ◀

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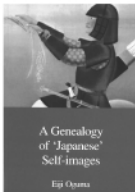

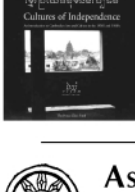
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# Infrastructure of the Imagination

Patrica Spyer Examines Rumours, Graffiti, and Banners in the Ambonese Conflict

Interview >  
Southeast Asia

Muslims and Christians on Ambon refer to the dividing line between them as the 'Gaza Strip', analogous to the disputed lands in the Middle East. Ordinary people under exceptional circumstances often place their own situation in a much wider context, says Patrica Spyer, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology of Contemporary Indonesia at Leiden University since February 2001.

By Jasper van de Kerkhof

Patrica Spyer challenges what she calls 'the taken-for-granted but hopelessly impoverished' anthropological notion of 'ethnographic context'. 'Anthropologists construct a close-up of a community; it's what they are good at. But because of that they often lose sight of the entire picture. I want to know how people experience situations, precisely by placing them in a broader framework. Context is the thread of my work.'

Last November Spyer held her inaugural lecture at Leiden University. In cooperation with the faculty of arts, she is cur-

rently working on the project 'Indonesian Mediations', which examines the role of the media in the final years of the Suharto regime and the subsequent period of Reformasi. 'The media form a well-researched topic', she says. 'But most scholars focus exclusively on the Internet, while it is particularly "small media" like illegal radio, banners, and graffiti which are important in conflict situations.'

Spyer explores these issues in the conflict-ridden Moluccan Islands in Indonesia, specifically in the province's capital. Communal violence broke out in Ambon city in January 1999 and lasted until a fragile peace agreement was signed in February 2002. Over time, the conflict consolidated two polarized religious groups – one Christian and one Muslim – which the outside world came to see as the war's main opponents. At least five thousand and possibly as many as ten thousand people were killed during the three years of hostilities, and an estimated 700,000 people fled from their homes.

'I was troubled by the sense that something was missing in the accepted explanations of the conflict'. Spyer does not dismiss the view that the Asian financial crisis, the step-down of Suharto, and the subsequent period of Reformasi, as well as the intrigues of Jakarta's political elite and the military, all played an important role. 'But some of these analyses are just too abstract, too far removed from the everyday lives of ordinary people.'

Too little attention is given to the work of the imagination and the construction of knowledge in all of this and, specifically, how imagination propels particular actions and shapes those who carry them out. In conflict situations, the boundaries blur between fact and fiction, fear and fantasy, knowledge and suspicion. Spyer: 'This, I believe, is what is meant by climate, which is no mere backdrop.'

Spyer cites the examples of *Voice of the Heart – Acang and Obet*, a public service announcement broadcast on national TV and several commercial channels some months after the break-out of violence. The spot was meant to foster peace among the

combatant religious groups in Ambon. It featured two young boys, the Muslim Acang and his Christian bosom friend Obet, who are discussing the tense situation in their city.

Trying to understand why Ambon fell apart like this, they come to the conclusion that they do not understand. 'It is a problem of adults, and we kids are the victims', Acang says. The camera zooms in on the two friends, who are posed with their arms around each other, while they voice the hope and mutual promise that 'even if Ambon is destroyed like this, our bond of brotherhood should not be broken'.

Spyer: 'All the Ambonese took from the spot was a name and a face for the enemy'. The many interviews she held with refugees are replete with phrases like 'Acang attacked' or 'Obet's territory' and so on. 'Inversely, the local population actively borrowed examples from other places held close to their own fraught world. For example, Ambon city's main dividing line between its Muslim and Christian parts has been known colloquially as the Gaza Strip.'

Comparisons with the Middle East have also been made by the people in conflict-ridden Venezuela, Spyer knows. 'But in the Indonesian case, where the conflict is often simplified as one between Christians and Muslims, people attach even more weight to the analogy. The people of Ambon and the Gaza Strip have never met, so Ambon's Gaza Strip is only possible when substantial groups of Ambonese were thinking of themselves as living lives parallel to those of substantial groups of people in the Middle East.'

Her interviews with Ambonese refugees showed her that the local population feels neglected by the political elites in Jakarta. She thinks that the borrowing of names and terms from other conflict grounds may thus serve a specific purpose. 'Twinning these war-torn places may be one way of lending local suffering in Ambon larger than local meaning.'

Jasper van de Kerkhof, MA is junior research fellow at the IIAS and freelance journalist. Together with Dr Thomas Lindblad he is working on the joint NIOD/IIAS research programme 'Indonesianisation and Nationalisation: The Emancipation and Reorientation of the Economy and the World of Industry and Commerce'.  
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Biography >

Prof. Patrica Spyer (b. 1957), daughter of a Dutch father and an American mother, was born and raised in New York. Early in the 1970s, she and her parents moved to Amsterdam, where she attended secondary education. She returned to the United States, where she double-majored in history and anthropology at Tufts University, near Boston, Massachusetts. In 1992, after a period of intensive field research, she obtained her PhD from the University of Chicago on trade networks in remote areas of Indonesia (*The memory of trade: circulation, autochthony, and the past in the Aru Islands*). After completion of her dissertation, she worked for several years at the University of Amsterdam. Currently, she is Professor of Anthropology and Sociology of Contemporary Indonesia at Leiden University (the Netherlands).  
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## Publication Trends in International Indonesian Studies: The Asia-Pacific Region as New Gravitation Centre

Research >  
Southeast Asia

It is the fate of almost every Indonesianist who carries out historical research that he or she must possess some modicum of skill in reading Dutch-language material. The reason is simple: until the 1940s/1950s, almost all publications concerning the former Dutch colony were published in the language of the colonizer. It may even be said that the Netherlands enjoyed a factual research monopoly in Indonesian Studies. Such power over the production of knowledge and 'knowing the world', as postcolonial studies has witnessed, enabled and, in many ways, determined the colonial endeavour. It is, therefore, not surprising that foreign research concerning Indonesia has always been a matter of strategic importance, not only for Indonesian scholars, but also for the political elite of the Republic of Indonesia. Over the last fifty years, how has the situation changed? Does the Netherlands (here read, intellectualism and academic institutions) still dominate in the field of research on Indonesia? Or has their position shifted from centre?

By Arndt Graf

This analysis surveys some basic quantitative trends in international Indonesian Studies in the 1990s. The source material is taken from *Excerpta Indonesica*, the bibliographical periodical published twice a year at the KITLV in Leiden (the Netherlands). *Excerpta Indonesica* provides a unique source in that it renders annotated citations of

'almost all'\* research contributions (mostly articles) in journals and readers published on Indonesia. The disciplines covered are mainly from the humanities and social sciences, although certain other disciplines also appear (geography, medicine, etc.). The claimed scope is worldwide, although certain countries and journals are more favoured than are others. This is traditionally true for articles published in the Netherlands,

since they naturally find their way more easily into the holdings of the KITLV library, which constitutes the material basis for *Excerpta Indonesica*. The inclusion/exclusion policy of *Excerpta Indonesica* is often problematized in the field, since this bibliographical journal exerts an important gatekeeping function in the dissemination and, hence, the production of knowledge in Indonesian Studies. This makes it all the more interesting to look at the representation of international Indonesian Studies in this influential journal.

*Excerpta Indonesica* has rendered an additional service, important for the purpose of the present study, in every edition since the early 1990s: the

introduction typically includes general statistics indicating the numbers of contributions on Indonesia listed according to country of publication. Such a helpful indication suggests what the net balance of publications in journals, readers, and so on, would be. Since the production of these publications is usually linked to centres of Indonesian Studies, this also tells us something about the international drawing power and importance of the various national centres of Indonesian Studies. On the other hand, it also betrays a certain bias, disfavouring small countries with few researchers as well as less publicized publication opportunities for an international audience.

The analysis of the aggregate numbers of the 1990s shows in which regions and countries the most publications on Indonesia appeared. Some interesting results should be highlighted. The ranking of Indonesia in first place (representing about a third of world publications) demonstrates that the enormous investments in the education sector since independence (1945) have drastically shifted the balance in the production of knowledge concerning Indonesia to the former Dutch colo-

onial power itself. In other words, increasingly more Indonesians are writing their own story, on their own terms, thus forcing the international community of scholars to shift not only their assumptions concerning what is or is not a viable 'primary source', but also its requirements concerning language acquisition. It is no longer possible to carry out viable research concerning Indonesia without possessing the ability to read, write, and speak in Bahasa Indonesia.

In this context, it is interesting to see that the Netherlands, as the former colonial power, has lost most of its overwhelming global predominance in Indonesian Studies that lasted at least up until the 1950s. If we only count the statistics available for the 1990's via *Excerpta Indonesica*, less than 20 per cent of all published articles now appear in the Netherlands. Given the ongoing cuts in Indonesian Studies in the Netherlands, this percentage will probably further shrink. On the other hand, the Netherlands is still the most important place for Indonesianist publications in Europe (about 50 per cent). This regional prominence might continue for quite some time, even if other less well-represented European coun-

Note >

\* For a more detailed discussion cf. A. Graf, 'Der deutsche Beitrag zur internationalen Indonesistik in den 1990er Jahren: ein Blick auf die Repräsentation in Excerpta Indonesica', *Asien*, January 2003.

# The Collection of Ceramics Excavated by Olov Janse

Research >  
Southeast Asia

During his work in Vietnam, the Swedish archaeologist Olov Janse excavated numerous brick-built Han-style tombs and kilns in Thanh Hoa province, and the remains of the Dong Son settlement in North Vietnam. With the support of the *École Française d'Extrême Orient* in Hanoi, Janse carried out three series of excavations in Vietnam between 1934 and 1939. During his third expedition he also excavated at the Sa Huynh sites in the province of Quang Nai, central Vietnam. The ceramics he excavated were deposited in numerous museums throughout the world, one of these being the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (MFEA) in Stockholm, Sweden.

By Ruth Prior

The purpose of my visit to the MFEA was to study a largely ignored collection of ceramics from the province of Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam, which Olov Janse had excavated. Originally all of the ceramics from Janse's excavations were deposited either in the Musée Guimet, Paris, or in the Peabody Museum in Boston, USA. However, in recognition of King Gustavus Adolphus' interest in archaeology, and perhaps as a gesture of patriotism, Janse arranged for a selection of objects to be given to King Gustavus Adolphus. Later, these same artefacts were transferred to the MFEA. Since then the vessels have largely remained unstudied and un-displayed.

The original aims of my research were to establish a chronology of the vessels found in the tombs and at the kilns of Thanh Hoa, examine methods used in their production, study the distribution of the vessels made at the Tam Tho kilns, and if possible, sample material for petrographic analysis.

However, during the early stages of my research it became apparent that some of the aims would have to be modified. This was due to the fact that when I began examining the objects there was no catalogue of them, nor was there data available on their provenance or date. Obviously, these facts needed to be established through careful research.

Janse published detailed volumes, each reporting on one of the three periods during which he undertook excavation in Vietnam (Janse 1947, 1951, 1958). It turned out that the materials which had been stored in the Musée Guimet, and thus the MFEA, were the result of his first two excavations.

The majority of the vessels at the MFEA were marked with a code – usually on the bottom of the vessel base – which appeared to be a site code, for example 'LTII'. I believed this could be interpreted as Lach Truong, tomb two. Upon testing this hypothesis by examining the photographs in Janse's volumes, I found one of the vessels in the MFEA collection illustrated, with its site code visible. This code related exactly to the name of the site and the tomb number, confirming the belief that the markings represented site codes.

Using this, in conjunction with the list of objects sent by the Musée Guimet and the tomb plans, I was then able to proceed through the Stockholm collection identifying each object, the site it was from, and the tomb, if from a tomb. This knowledge enabled me to set up a catalogue that detailed all of the vessels in the collection. This catalogue contains an individual record for each vessel, including: measurements, surface decoration and glazing, the method of production, references, and a photograph. It also includes the estimated date based on associated grave goods within the tomb.

The Janse collection in the MFEA includes thirty-five individual ceramic vessels as well as over fifty broken potsherds, glass beads, and bronzes. The ceramic vessels include a range of jars, basins, dishes, cups, and vases. These were primarily undecorated, though some were glazed, and some were covered with stamped motifs. Of particular interest were two tripod vessels in the form of birds, which Janse suggested to represent either cockerels or pheasants. The majority of the vessels can be dated to between the first and third centuries AD, corresponding to the period of Han occupation in North Vietnam.

The vessels in the Stockholm collection demonstrate that there were two distinct production traditions used in the forming of the vessels found deposited in the tombs. These two traditions possibly co-existed at the kilns

of Tam Tho or, as I suspect, are indicative of vessels being imported from outside Tam Tho. Firstly there is a group of high-fired cream wares, frequently glazed, often well formed, and evenly fired. Some of these wares have Chinese characters on their bases. It would seem unlikely that these inscriptions were made by Vietnamese potters, who were most probably illiterate and who would not have been familiar with the Chinese script. Such inscriptions are often interpreted as 'makers' marks' and would have to be made on the unfired vessel, suggesting that they were produced by Chinese potters.

The vessels appear to be made from kaolin-based clays, deposits of which can be found in the Ma and Red River valleys, but not within the vicinity of the Tam Tho kilns. Therefore this group of wares may have been brought into the area for depositing within the tombs.

The second group of vessels are much lower fired earthenwares. They are commonly unglazed but with stamped decoration, often using some wheel technology. Their uneven

colouration indicates irregular firing. The fabrics compare well to the ones I analysed from the Tam Tho kilns, marking them as products of Tam Tho. They seem to suggest vessels made either by careless potters, or more likely, potters who were beginning to adapt to a new technology and new vessel forms. These potters were eager to imitate Chinese forms and motifs but were as yet unable to obtain the greater degree of skill in their production, as shown by the cream wares. ◀

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tries expand Indonesian Studies in the future.

Europe in general has lost its former central position in Indonesian Studies. Enjoying, today, about 38 per cent of global publication, its share might continue to shrink in the future, eventually reaching a third or less. This development might lead to a new wave of international cooperation between Europe and the other centres of Indonesian Studies in Asia-Pacific and North America.

The leading market for Indonesian Studies is now in the Asia-Pacific countries, including Australia. This country alone, which has about the population size of the metropolitan area of Jakarta, is producing as much Indonesianist output as the entire US. An interesting result, on the other hand, is the low turn out of ASEAN countries. If this reflects not just *Excerpta Indonesica's* bias, but, rather, a lack of Indonesianist centres in, say, Thailand or the Philippines, one could expect to see more efforts put into Indonesian Studies in these countries in the future.

The United States, despite their role as the only remaining superpower in many other fields, do not play a central role in publications on Indonesia, the world's most populous Islamic country.

In fact, American contributions constituted less than 10 per cent of the world output in the 1990s. The question is whether these numbers reflect a general lack of interest in Indonesia and Indonesian Studies in the USA and whether this, if unchanged, might have serious long-term consequences for American-Indonesian relations. ◀

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# Politics of Culture in China

Report >  
China

The emergence of a transnational management culture in China is a very recent phenomenon. There have, of course, been precedents, which may be traced back to the early twentieth century or even earlier. But what we see happening in China today in Sino-foreign joint ventures has basically emerged during the 1990s. Small wonder that the study of transnational management is still taking its first steps, and that a broadly oriented approach in this research field is lacking. Last year, a workshop entitled 'Politics of culture in transnational management: China during the twentieth century' was convened by the authors in order to develop such an approach.

By Leo Douw & Chan Kwok Bun

The study of transnational management has been dominated by the concept of cultural difference ever since Geert Hofstede published his classical research on IBM and its branches over the world (1980). Hofstede suggested that the existence of cultural differences among the personnel of multinational firms offers a substantial explanation of the problems with which corporations such as IBM are confronted in their foreign branches; he also offered an apparently sophisticated methodology for the research of those differences, because his project provided a convenient outline of the components of culture and enabled students to efficiently interview the employees in those firms, measuring their proclaimed cultural luggage along sliding scales. In many departments of business economics and organ-

ization studies at universities, and in professional schools, the work by Hofstede and his followers is still the standard reference. As for China, Hofstede has provided the obvious starting point for a large number of research projects.

Undeniably, the Hofstede school has engendered a vast amount of useful information on work relations in foreign-invested firms, including those in China. There is no doubt about the existence of cultural differences nor about their being a real and often formidable obstacle to be overcome when doing business across national borders. Nevertheless, over the past decades the theory's limitations have also become clear. For one thing, the argument of cultural difference can be manipulated to the purpose of maintaining existing power structures. Research on gender relations in Sino-German enterprises indicates that whereas German expa-

triate managers usually value women higher as to their work performance than men, they are nevertheless sensitive to the argument of their Chinese counterparts, that most Chinese employees would not accept a woman as their boss. In that way, career opportunities for women are being overlooked on a grand scale. Also, the argument of cultural difference may self-reinforce and perpetuate existing mutual stereotypes and thus hinder changes in work relations. In contrast with the Hofstede approach, the acknowledgement that employees of different cultural backgrounds also share many cultural features is obviously much more conducive to cultural change.

An even more challenging problem is that undue emphasis on cultural differences may block out a realistic view of structural factors, which determine much of the problems encountered by foreign firms in China. Foreign enterprises usually serve different purposes for the Chinese than for their foreign partners; they also, often unawares, serve quite diverse and sometime conflicting interests among their Chinese counterparts. A more realistic under-

standing of these interests on the Chinese side seems to be much more helpful in conducting business than any perception of cultural differences, however useful that may be. It would be better, too, if our rapidly increasing understanding of the workings of Chinese business networks could be extended to the analysis of transnational management, as a method of getting to grips with the question of where foreign firms in China are heading in the longer term, and which side controls that process. The past achievements of such business networks in accommodating the needs of Western enterprises in China would particularly merit such analysis.

What applies to claims that cultural differences really matter, applies equally to claims of cultural affinity. Research reveals that managers of a bicultural background are often perplexed by the conflicts which result from that situation: prospective Australian-Chinese business people for example, who try and enter the Chinese market, have often shrunk back from their initiative when realizing that they were considered as Chinese rather than as Australians, and were not prepared to live


up to the resulting expectations. The claim that their shared culture provides Chinese descendents with a big advantage over other foreigners in doing business in China is equally deceptive. For example, research into the Suzhou Industrial Park shows how a joint undertaking between the China and Singapore governments ended in failure because, amongst other things, claims of cultural affinity from both sides blinded the participants to objections against a local administrative project.

It is perhaps high time to transcend the Hofstede approach by examining what is behind the cultural divide rather than its alleged features and, also, by looking upon the newly emerged transnational management culture in China as a totally new phenomenon. To mention some final examples: German and Chinese female managers in transnational enterprises in Hong Kong have demonstrated a remarkable ability to create career opportunities for themselves, which is quite contrary to Chinese common practice. Also, there is now sufficient research showing that remuneration systems in transnational firms in China have their own specific features and can no longer be called either 'Chinese' or 'Western'. The new transnational management culture in China can be said to be composed of very different elements, but is more than the sum of its parts, and

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The workshop 'Politics of culture in transnational management' was held at Hong Kong Baptist University on 23-24 May 2002, as a part of the international conference on 'China in the world in the twenty-first century: hot development issues in contemporary China'.

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is closely related to the power structures which gave birth to it and keep changing it. <

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The Wellcome Trust, the well-known British educational charity, has played a sterling role in encouraging the development of research and teaching expertise in the history of medicine in the United Kingdom. At the moment the Trust funds three different units at the universities of Oxford, Manchester, and East Anglia (Norwich), and one major centre in London.

**News >**  
**General**

By Sanjoy Bhattacharya

The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at University College London, now directed by professor Harold Cook, has recently strengthened its Asian Studies component with two lecturers and a fellow in addition to the two lecturers already working there. Dealing with the history of South Asia, Sanjoy Bhattacharya mainly works on the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries, while Vivienne Lo concentrates on the ancient and medieval periods in China.

Dominik Wujastyk has recently been appointed as a senior research fellow and is now working on medical trends in India on the eve of colonialism. The centre's new specialist on Central Asia, research fellow Hormoz Ebrahimnejad, researches the introduction of Western medical practices in nineteenth-century Iran, which he describes in this issue of the *IIAS Newsletter*, but is also interested in Afghanistan's history. Alex McKay, who joined us on 1 October 2002 with a three-year fellowship, is working on the transmission of Western medicine in Himalayan South Asia between 1900 and 1947.

The centre's Asian Studies component will be enhanced through the development of large projects in collaboration with international research organizations. Such collaborative work could be developed with the help of a

range of funds and be deployed to examine a variety of important issues. Medical ethics in Asian contexts has recently become the focus of discussions between the Wellcome Trust Centre and the IIAS, and will hopefully lead to a collaborative research programme in the near future. It is to be hoped that the examination of this significant topic will encompass a transnational and multi-disciplinary perspective. A similar approach could also, of course, be used in a broad study of the attitudes held by Asian minority and migrant communities in Europe towards state-sponsored healthcare provisions – another important theme that has received far less attention than it deserves. Hopefully, the start that the Wellcome Trust Centre and the IIAS made in this regard will lead to a series of productive international partnerships. <

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**Info >**

For fellowship applications, you may contact professor Cook with a copy of your CV and a two- or three- page research proposal, to be considered by the Centre's Research Committee before selected names are forwarded to the Trust for its fellowship competition.

Doctoral candidates (with their own funding) may contact Dr Michael Neve: [m.neve@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:m.neve@ucl.ac.uk)  
Details are available from the centre's website: [www.ucl.ac.uk/histmed](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/histmed)

# What Is Bon Medicine?

## Analysing Narratives of Illness and Healing

Tibetan medicine is recognized today as one of the world's most complex and sophisticated systems of medicine. Over the last 1300 years, Tibetan medical traditions have produced a vast corpus of literature analogous in complexity to the medical scholasticism of India, China, or Greece. Tibetan medical systems are practised widely today in the countries of Nepal, Bhutan, and Mongolia; in Tibetan populated areas of the People's Republic of China; in parts of Russia (Kalmykia, Buryatia); and throughout India (Ladakh, Sikkim, and in Tibetan refugee settlements). The popularity and use of Tibetan medicine is growing in Europe, North America, and the Pacific Rim as well.

**Research >**  
**Central Asia**

By Mona Schrempf and Frances Garrett

Studies on Tibetan medicine generally refer to the 'classical' medical system, which is largely influenced by Buddhist notions of the body and the human condition. With an emphasis on medical theory, existing historical research on Tibetan medicine stresses the influence of the Indian Ayurvedic humoral system and Chinese pulse diagnosis, and focuses on the institutionally codified body of Tibetan medical literature comprised by the *Four Tantras (rGyud bzhi)* and its commentaries. Many studies of Tibetan medicine are limited by a scientifically oriented epistemology that places value in the study of medical systems only in the search for effective healing techniques. Medical anthropologists, in turn, have concentrated mostly on the impact of modernity and socio-political change among Tibetan patients on the public health system and on the institutionalization and professionalization of traditional Tibetan medicine, as exemplified in the largest Tibetan medical institutions, the *sMan rtsis khang* in Lhasa (Tibet Autonomous Region) and in Dharamsala (Indian exile).

Despite a growing interest in Tibetan medicine, the pluralistic diversity of Tibetan medical systems, that is their textual, institutional, and localized practical forms, has received little scholarly research attention outside Tibet. By examining modern-day Bon narratives of illness and healing and the historical development of such narratives in ninth- to fifteenth-century Tibetan literature, this project aims to articulate the boundaries of a distinctive tradition of Bon medi-

cine. Associated with the Bon religion, and claiming origins dating back to centuries before Tibetan Buddhism, Bon medicine is an ancient medical tradition. Taught in Bon monasteries, specific medical schools, or through oral transmission by hereditary lineages of Bon doctors, it is still practised today by Bon medical practitioners in the People's Republic of China, and in indigenous and exile Tibetan communities in Nepal and India. Historical and anthropological research on Bon medicine will facilitate a scholarly analysis of the complexities of local medical practice and of indigenous understandings of health and illness in everyday life in Tibetan communities. In the effort to understand how Bon medicine is defined as a tradition distinct from other forms of Tibetan medicine, this project will also contribute to the larger question of how medical and religious disciplinary boundaries are drawn in Tibet both historically and today.

### Narratives of illness and healing

Drawing on methodologies of history of medicine and medical anthropology, this project will analyse 'story-like' narrative descriptions of individual experiences of illness and relief from illness in Tibetan Bon literature and practice. In such narratives, notions of self, society, and culture are negotiated and made meaningful. These narratives – crucial components of medical education, medical theory and practice, and the healing process – will support an analysis of cultural constructions of illness and healing in Bon literature and practice; their analysis will help clarify the relationship between centralized and localized medical practices, written and oral histories, and text and performance. There are compelling reasons to use narrative as an organizational rubric for the study of medicine. In the last few decades, many sociologists and philosophers of science have challenged the approach of logical empiricism, its ontological privileging of scientific knowledge, and the adequacy of logico-scientific rationality. In its place some have embraced an understanding of the social and historical contingency of all types of knowledge, including scientific knowledge. The ontological concept of disease, for example, based most centrally on a cataloguing of symptoms, was an historical development in seventeenth-century European medicine that revolutionized diagnosis and treatment. It is not necessarily, however, a well-suited model for the analysis of early systems of medicine, even within European intellectual history, let alone for the analysis of Tibetan medical systems. The present project will therefore involve the careful development of a theory of the role of medical narrative in

Tibetan literature that takes into account conventions of history and fiction specific to Tibetan contexts.

Medical narratives found in the earliest extant Tibetan texts from Dunhuang (ninth century AD) present 'Bon' priests healing sick patients and clearly contain non-Buddhist ideas and practices. Tibetological scholarship has demonstrated that some of these early narratives are thematically related to later Tibetan healing practices. Our project will compare healing narratives in these early medical texts and in later eleventh- to fifteenth-century Bon literature with those known and used by Bon medical practitioners and their patients today. The research results will contribute to our knowledge of early Tibetan medicine and to defining a distinctive tradition of Bon medicine. Additional comparisons of Bon narratives with contemporaneous Buddhist narratives will contribute to discussions about theoretical confluences and distinctions of both traditions.

Historical and ethnographic research will aim to show that, in contrast to the way Tibetan medicine is presented by most scholarship today, Tibetan medical systems are not only empirically founded explications of natural phenomena, but also ideological and cultural narratives greatly influenced by changes in religious and social concepts, local and historical contexts, and other forms of culture. This approach identifies medicine as a player in a far larger discourse than simply that of medicinal healing. It exposes broad hermeneutic issues that shape the relationship of medicine and culture in world societies, questioning the validity of superimposing our own epistemological taxonomies on classical Asian thought. <

**Frances Garrett, MA** is a scholar of classical Tibetan medical, religious, and historical literature and the developer of *Tibetan Medicine Learning Resources*. She has performed preliminary research on healing narratives in Tibetan texts and done fieldwork on Tibetan medicine in India and Tibet.

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**Dr Mona Schrempf** has worked on cultural-religious revivals among Tibetan Bon communities in both China and India with recent fieldwork on Bon medical practice. Specializing in oral history and medical anthropology, she holds a PhD in social anthropology from the Free University Berlin, and is currently affiliated with the Department of Anthropology, South Asia Institute, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg.

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**Note >**

The authors express gratitude to Henk Blezer ([h.w.a.blezer@let.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:h.w.a.blezer@let.leidenuniv.nl)) for his earlier comments on this article.

# Contemporary Korean Cinema

Over the last two decades the South Korean film industry has spectacularly increased its status both domestically and abroad. At present, Korean films do not only repeatedly occupy the number one spot at the domestic box office, but many have even come to be included in the stock of video stores around the world, sometimes after winning several prizes at international film festivals. The success is, however, less remarkable in terms of figures than it is in terms of its likelihood. Taking into account the Japanese colonization of Korea that lasted almost half a century, the devastation caused by the Korean War, the vast constraints imposed by post-war military dictatorships, as well as the virtual absence of any form of state funding, it is close to a miracle that already at the outset of the current administration, Korean films represented a socio-political force to be reckoned with. Until then an institution of rigorous censorship and propaganda, as well as unfair competition from Western cinema, marred the development of an independent Korean cinema.

Review >  
Korea

By Roald H. Maliangkay

Hyangjin Lee's *Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics* explores how the socio-political status quo has influenced the work of directors and filmmakers in both North and South Korea over the years. Contrary to what the title suggests, it constitutes a history of the socio-political conditions, ideologies, and struggles regarding Korean cinema in both North and South Korea throughout the twentieth century. Lee analyses seventeen films from both sides of the thirty-eighth parallel and shows how they represent the disparate personal and state ideologies regarding nationalism, class, and gender, while at the same time conveying the Korean people's shared loyalty towards cultural traditions. Rather than building primarily on a chronological structure, she divides her studies of the issues of gender, nationalism, and class consciousness into four chapters that each deal with cinema on each side of the divided nation. At the end of the book a lengthy chronological filmography (pp.194–221) is included that summarizes the people and companies responsible for the films mentioned in the book, followed by a bibliography and index.

In her introduction (pp.1–15), Lee explains that the purpose of her study is to show that the way in which filmmakers have related past experiences often express ideological attitudes relevant to present-day society. Ideology, she notes, underlies all films in so far as that they are not reliable mirrors of actual reality but coloured reconstructions of it. Her focus on the aspect of ideology in the interpretations of North and South Korean films will, she predicts, demonstrate that while both nations claim a historical legitimacy over the other, they have also maintained the idea of a cultural and ethnical homogeneity. Following a summary of the discourse on ideology in film studies in general, Lee recounts the Marxist approach toward the expression of ideology in film, as well as that of post-structuralists and postmodernists, and ties this into a brief but sharp assessment of the relevance of the work of Foucault, Said, Geertz, and Barthes.

In the first chapter Lee relates the development of Korea's film industry vis-à-vis political oppression from the very outset. Within years after the introduction of the technology, film became a booming industry and it did not take long for the Japanese to realize the medium's potential as a powerful tool for propaganda. The severe competition from foreign films forced Korean filmmakers to work with Japanese distributors and investors, but they often did so unsuccessfully. The difficulties they faced in making independent Korean films was exacerbated following the establishment of a system of censorship in 1922. From then onwards, opportunities to express Korean nationalism became risky. By the 1940s, the Japanese had effectively abolished Korean cinema and turned it into an essential part of their propaganda system. In her account of the colonial history of Korean film and the Japanese efforts to exercise control over the work of subversive filmmakers such as Na Un'gyu and those associated with the proletarian KAPF (Korean Art Proletarian Federation), Lee regrettably omits an analysis of the phenomena of 'silent' films. Although she notes the nationalist importance of the 1926 film *Arirang*, for example, she fails to mention that this film too was silent and that Korean narrators (*pyŏnsa*) may have played an important role in the projection of its patriotic message.

The synopsis of the history of North and South Korean cinema continues with a description of how Kim Jong Il has applied his father's ideas of self-reliance and independence, *juche*, to film. Through his famous love for film,

he has personally seen to it that the medium of film has become no more than another revolutionary instrument through which the masses can free themselves from feudal oppression. Lee explores how and to what extent cinema has constituted a means to propagate nationalism and the ideals of the working class. In outlining the most important socio-political themes in North Korean cinema (pp.34–44), she makes important observations, such as the exclusion of the colonial period in North Korean history, how the emphasis that films made between 1945 and 1950 lay on the historical legitimacy of North Korea as opposed to that of the South, and the paradoxical use of scenes of capitalist luxury in films from the 1990s to meet audiences' increased curiosity about them. In her assessment of South Korean cinema, Lee points out how important socio-political events and, in particular, regulations have influenced film themes over the years. In doing so, the industry's necessity to comply with state ideology comes across as far more threatening than the mandatory adoption of the official doctrine in the North. This may be the inevitable result of the abundance of documentation regarding the violent measures exercised by the South Korean administration towards filmmakers who failed to comply, but I would have liked to see some words on the difficulty of assessing the risk run by 'irresponsible' filmmakers in North Korea.

In chapters two to four, Lee concentrates on films made between 1960 and 1999. She examines the various cinematic representations of the folk tale of *Ch'unhyangjŏn*, a story that centres on issues of gender and class, and demonstrates how the separate ideologies are reflected. North Korean renditions, she argues, lay emphasis on the issue of class, while South Korean versions focus on gender issues. In comparing, among other things, camera positions, the lines of the actors, and stage props, she makes a number of fascinating observations. One of these is the depiction of *Ch'unhyang* in a North Korean film as a provider to equate the monopoly of the filial virtue (p.84), another the surprising predominance of the girl's – Confucian – self-sacrifice in a version made by director Shin Sangok's after he was abducted to North Korea compared to an earlier version he made in the South (p.89).

Lee then turns to the representation of nationhood and the notion of class. The narratives of North and South Korean films, she finds, do not only express a strong faith in the Korean people's common cultural traits, and in the traditional Confucian family values and structure, but they also reflect a shared conviction that reunification is inevitable (p.141). She argues that although the socio-political discourse in North Korean films consistently emphasizes a classless society, class issues continue to arise out of a dualistic attitude towards social hierarchy inherited from the

past (p.180). The ways in which these issues are dealt with sometimes reflect a curious discontent with the absence of class. South Korean films have effectively reflected a similarly ambiguous concern over the inadequacy of status based on wealth, this time on the part of the new middle classes, who are depicted as cunning and blindly materialist. Lee's analysis shows us that although state ideologies are clearly represented in both North and South Korean films, the ways in which films deal with them is rarely one-dimensional.

The combination of chronology with issues of gender, class, and nationhood is useful in that it provides more than one excellent framework for future studies of Korean cinema. It is also because of the structure, however, that Lee is forced to recapitulate historic events a few times, which in a few cases leads to observations that I would have liked to see earlier in the text. The very important comment that in North Korean films South Koreans are not portrayed 'in depth because they do not represent a separate political entity that deserves meaningful attention' (p.140), for example, merits inclusion in the subchapter 'socio-political characteristics of North Korean film' (p.34). Due to Lee's historical approach, moreover, descriptions of, for example, the effects of specific films on various audiences, or detailed motivations for adopting specific ideas, are not given. Lee's inspiring study does hint at, for example, the one-dimensionality of the semantic narrative of contemporary North Korean films, which I have personally found to be one of their distinguishing features, but she does not further explore it. This leaves her account somewhat lacking in involvement, which personal experiences or the odd use of anthropological data may have prevented. The black-and-white pictures, meanwhile, never help to stir any enthusiasm either, as most of them are too dark and out of focus.

*Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics* is a wonderful addition to the dire volume of English-language sources on Korean cinema. Although I would have personally liked to read a little bit more about viewing experiences, as one of the first English-language works entirely dedicated to Korean film, its historical approach is certainly very welcome. Not only does Lee do a brilliant job recounting practically the entire history of Korean cinema from the first films shown in Korea up to Im Kwŏn-Taek's 2000 *Ch'unhyangjŏn*, but she also offers many novel insights and sharp observations. Since Lee has also scrupulously followed the McCune-Reischauer system – which is, ironically, misspelled (p.13) – this allows easy access to Korean materials. The majority of the films from before 1945, and of South Korean films up to the 1970s, however, had Sino-Korean titles, so I hope that future editions of this book will not only contain better pictures, but also a glossary. It is definitely worth it. ◀

Lee, Hyangjin, *Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press (2000), pp. 244, ISBN 0-7190-6007-9 (paperback)

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## Nursing Ethics in Modern China Conflicting Values and Competing Role Requirements

New Title

By Samantha Mei-che Pang

Amsterdam/New York, NY 2003. XIII,265 pp. (Value Inquiry Book Series 140)  
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This book follows two lines of inquiry in understanding nursing ethics in the historical-cultural context of modern China. Firstly, it scrutinizes the prescribed set of moral virtues for nurses in fulfilling their role requirements during different periods of nursing development over the past century. Based on empirical studies, the book, secondly, explores the nurses' evaluations of their ethical responsibilities in current practice. It carefully examines the particular viewpoints of nurses in their ethical appraisal of nursing practice and patient care situations. Drawing upon traditional ethical outlooks, international norms, and the experiences of nurses as they face difficult care situations, this book concludes with recommendations for improving the quality of nursing in contemporary China.



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# State Formation in Korea

Review >  
Korea

Controversy surrounds the formation process of the Kaya Federation and the Three Kingdoms (Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla) on the Korean peninsula, which took place at around the beginning of the Christian era. In essence, two main approaches oppose each other; the historical approach, which relies on Chinese and Korean historical sources, and the archaeological approach, which relies on excavation data. The former dates the foundation of the Three Kingdoms to the first century BC, while the latter, based on archaeological evidence of social stratification in the form of sumptuously furnished mounded tombs, asserts that the Three Kingdoms did not emerge before the fourth century AD.

By Elisabeth Chabanol

In *State Formation in Korea*, Gina Barnes discusses the complex subject of the transition period from the proto-history to the history of the peninsula against the background of these two historical approaches. It is a complex subject on which few books have been published, this being the first ever book in a Western language to deal with it. Her application of a Western state formation studies framework to the subject, which has not previously been attempted, allows her to make the Korean question more easily comparable at a global level.

This collection of eight essays deals with specific questions that arose during Barnes' research into the 'background to the complex social development on the Japanese islands', but does not attempt to give a comprehensive answer to the various questions peculiar to the peninsula. We are left not with a book but, rather, with a collection of papers and articles, originally written between 1983 and 2000. Due to a lack of editing, the data are sometimes redundant, and have not always been brought up to date. The author has missed the opportunity to draw diverse results into a real, new, and

informative synthesis. An example is the theoretical second chapter, which observes that the 'problem of state formation in the southern Korean peninsula hinges on the integration of so-called Bronze Age and Iron Age data, and their integration requires the use of a settlement pattern concept which focuses on actual communities and their relation to each other in a broader political and social network' (p.89). It would have been much better had it been incorporated into the first chapter. There, the author reappraises the study of seven states (from Old Chosŏn to Silla) as they are accepted in Korean historical literature through the framework of the Western anthropological theory on the transformation of chiefdom-states, thus providing the book with a proper introduction.

The lack of integration of new data is particularly noticeable in the bibliography of the sixth chapter, not containing a single excavation report more recent than 1987. This is all the more regrettable because it presents a very interesting discussion of the different possible functions of the walled sites from the third century AD, and deals with an area of research which has recently undergone important developments, particu-

larly in the case of the Paekche Kingdom. For example, sites such as P'ungnap t'osŏng in southern Seoul, which addresses the question of the location of Paekche's first capital, should have been mentioned.

It is equally unfortunate that the question of the origin of some distinctive tombs from the south-west of the peninsula, which relate to both the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, has not been examined. Barnes poses piquant questions relating to state formation in the peninsula, covering the different views of Korean and Japanese academic worlds. It is puzzling why she did not endeavour to express more frankly her own answers to these questions. While early on she asks the fundamental question whether '... the centralized entities of the Proto-Three Kingdoms period ... [were] organizationally continuous with or even related to the large states of the Three Kingdoms period' (p. 46), she does not treat this point regarding Paekche and Silla.

Moreover, despite her detailed study of armour, the author does not take a stance on the issue of the Horse-rider Theory and the Yamato/Wa aggression in Korea. When it comes to the origins

of Silla, she gives the impression to accept the theory that cultured horse-riders migrated to Kyŏngju without backing up her view with factual data.

The same is true for the seventh chapter, for Western readers the most useful part of this book, which looks at the debate between Korean and Japanese specialists about the entity known as Kaya. Unfortunately, Gina Barnes does not take a stance on the question of the existence of the Yamato/Wa outpost Minama.

The final chapter refers to the late development of the Silla kingdom. Here Barnes states that 'Silla's material cultural roots are indistinguishable from Kaya, arising from the early stoneware and tombs traditions of the Yŏngnam region' (p.201), presenting the difficult debate on ceramics and tomb typology. Again, it would have been interesting to know her own position on the evolution of the different structures of tombs and on the burials' dating; topics which are subject to very varied interpretations. Given the extent of her knowledge and comprehension of both Korean and Japanese archaeology and her own perspective, it would also have been fascinating had Barnes adopted her own definite position regarding all these matters.

Having said that, throughout the essays Barnes does give detailed explanations of the problems of concepts and terminology, such as tribal state, tribal league, chiefdom, tribal society, *guo*, kingdom, or walled-state. Furthermore, she reminds us that it is impossible to

assess the process of Korean state formation without a precise ceramic chronology. Several theories clash in the Korean academic world, and here we see Barnes use her expertise to analyse different ceramic technologies.

In view of the number of recent excavations relating to the period of state formation on the Korean peninsula, there is no doubt it would take a full team to arrive at a good synthesis on the matter of this critical transition from the proto-historical period to the historical period. Meanwhile, Barnes' book should not be neglected: it provides a wealth of information and is the pioneer publication in a Western language on some important questions related to this period. It will serve as a necessary tool for students who do not have direct access to the Korean sources and wish to specialize in ancient periods of North-East Asia, and to proto-historians working on other geographic areas who wish to learn about the peninsula. <

Barnes, Gina, *State Formation in Korea: Historical and Archaeological Perspectives*. (Durham East Asia Studies), Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press (2001), pp. 245, ISBN 0-7007-1323-9

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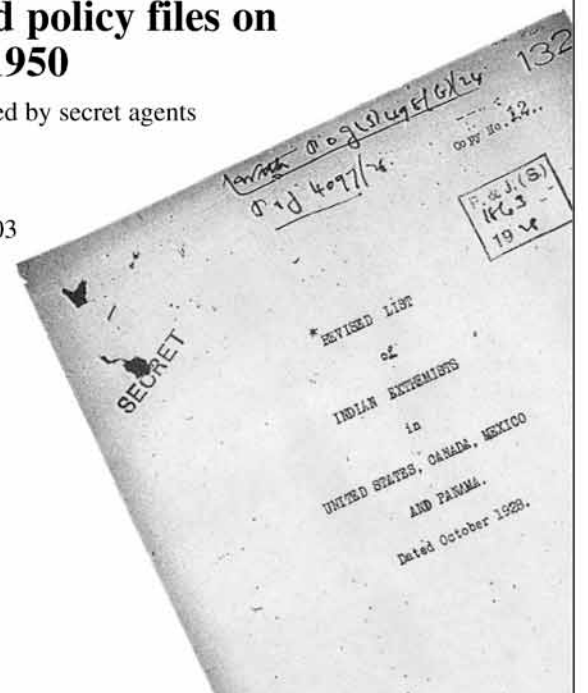
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# A Korean View of Korean Literature

Due to political circumstances, Korean Studies has had a late start compared with the study of Japan and China and, consequently, in many fields there still is a scarcity of authoritative standard works and handbooks in Western languages. For the study of Korean literature the publication of *Histoire de la littérature coréenne* is a milestone, similar to that of the *Sourcebooks of Korean Civilization* for the study of Korean culture some years ago. It is the fruit of a collaborative effort by Cho Dong-il and Daniel Bouchez, both scholars who, in their own way, have played an important role in their field.

Review >  
Korea

By Boudewijn Walraven

Cho Dong-il, who belongs to the generation of students which toppled the regime of Syngman Rhee in 1960, has not only published studies of various aspects of Korean literature and a comprehensive five-volume history of the subject (of which this book is an abridgement), but in his numerous books also has devoted a great deal of attention to comparative and theoretical issues. Originally a student of French language and literature, from the outset and with unrivalled energy he has attempted to develop a perspective that could overcome the limitations of the Eurocentric views that also dominated Korean academia. Daniel Bouchez first went to Korea to teach philosophy to Korean Catholic priests (in Latin!), but turned out to be one of the most prominent European scholars of classical Korean literature. Through his ground-breaking work on the seventeenth-century author Kim Man-jung he became one of the central figures in a fierce debate in Korea concerning the language in which Kim wrote his novels. Bouchez has not only translated and abridged the first four volumes of Cho's history (leaving the truly modern literature of the twentieth century for a future publication), but also adapted the text for non-Korean readers, thus becoming the co-author of this volume. The result is excellent. Cho's original work is so long that most readers will only consult it piecemeal, whenever they need information on

A Virtuous Woman protects her husband against Japanese soldiers. Taken from the 1617 *Tonghae shinsok Samgang haengsilto* (Korean Examples of the Display of Confucian Virtues: New, illustrated edition), which for each entry gives the text in Chinese as well as Korean, with a picture for the illiterate.

a specific topic. The French version, too, may be used in this way (it contains a 34-page index and a detailed table of contents), but also is a pleasure to read from beginning to end. In fact, it provides one of the most attractive and most stimulating introductions to Korean cultural history I know, not least because of the attention paid to intellectual developments in general.

To avoid misunderstandings, it should be emphasized that in this book 'Korean literature' does not only stand for literature in the Korean language. Koreans have from very early in their history made ample use of Chinese characters and the Chinese language to express themselves in writing, and to write in Korean was difficult before the Korean alphabet was invented in 1443. Cho Dong-il has firmly broken with the tendency of some narrowly nationalistic historians of Korean literature, after liberation from Japanese colonialism in 1945, to focus exclusively on writings in the vernacular. Consequently discussion of writings in Chinese takes up at least as much space as that of literature in Korean, and probably more. One of the most prominent and most fascinating themes in the book is the situation of bilingualism (diglossia) in which the Koreans (some of whom continued to write in Chinese until the twentieth century) found themselves during most of their history. The relationship between the two languages was extremely complex. One of the two languages had a certain affinity with a specific gender and class (for example women and commoners were largely excluded from literature in Chinese), but this was not exclusive. Frequently there was interaction. Thus the vernacular lyrics called *sijo* often were translated into Chinese, while some *sijo* were originally Koreanized versions of lines of Chinese poetry. Many late Chosŏn novels exist in Korean and Chinese versions. A representative case is *Kuunmong* (A Nine Cloud Dream) by Kim Man-jung (1637–1692), widely regarded as the best specimen of its kind. There has been disagreement about the language in which it was originally written and the last word has not been spoken, but it is not unlikely that it was first written in Korean, then translated into Chinese, and subsequently retranslated into Korean. Chinese was used for all kinds of purposes and not, as one might be tempted to think, always associated with conservatism and a lack of respect for Korea's own culture. In many cases Chinese served to record native traditions and Korean self-esteem and it could be the vehicle for trenchant social criticism, as the cutting irony of the short stories of Pak Chi-wŏn (1737–1805) attests.

## National identity and tradition

Two other prominent themes reflect basic concerns of intellectuals of the generation to which Cho Dong-il belongs. Using the Korean terminology these may be summarized as *minjok* and *minjung*: the nation and (the masses of) the

people. In other words, much attention is paid to the relationship of literature with national identity, national consciousness, and national destiny, and with the fate of the ordinary people, those who were dominated and exploited. The preoccupation with the nation, a natural consequence of Korea's confrontation with colonization and modernization, does not, however, imply a mindless essentialism. National consciousness is not assumed from the outset, but its emergence is carefully traced. In a different context, writing about the oral literature of Cheju Island, which he regards as that of a minority people, Cho has demonstrated that he is not blind to the dangers and limitations of the nationalistic perspective and has even issued a call to transcend it. The interest in literature that directly, or more often indirectly, represents the views of the lower strata of society may be seen as a reflection of the drive for democratization that has characterized contemporary South-Korean history while one repressive government after another assumed power.

The admiration Cho expresses for an author like Yi Kyubo (1168–1241) is typical of his views and values. Although Yi exclusively wrote in Chinese, he exhibited a clear consciousness of Korean tradition, recording, for instance, an orally transmitted story about the founder of the ancient Korean state of Koguryŏ in a long narrative poem, *The Lay of King Tongmyŏng*. He also was of the opinion that a Korean writer should write about Korean conditions, putting this into practice himself by composing poems in which he expressed indignation about the terrible plight of the peasants, who were caught between the exactions of their own government and the Mongol armies that invaded Korea in the thirteenth century.

One of the most interesting parts of the book is the last chapter, dealing with the years 1860–1919, which is seen as the final transition to the age of modern literature. This is a period which, so far, has been somewhat neglected in the West, being neither truly 'classical' nor fully modern. It is the period in which the Korean alphabet and the Korean language finally gain the upper hand, although even then Chinese remained one of the languages of Korean literature. Thus the patriot An Chung-gŭn, who in 1909 killed the Japanese Resident-General Itō Hirobumi, expressed his nationalistic emotions in Chinese verse.

This adaptation of Cho Dong-il's *General History of Korean Literature* proves the added value of cooperation between Korean and Western scholars. I look forward to a companion volume on modern Korean literature (and a similar adaptation of the *History* in English for the non-francophone world). <

Cho, Dong-il, and Daniel Bouchez, *Histoire de la littérature coréenne, des origines à 1919*, Paris: Fayard, (2002), pp. 424, ISBN 2-213-61235-8

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From the 1617 *Tonghae shinsok Samgang haengsilto* (Korean Examples of the Display of Confucian Virtues: New, illustrated edition)

# House of Glass: Culture, Modernity, and the State in Southeast Asia

Review >  
Southeast Asia

*House of Glass* evokes the condition of the prison: the policing and surveillance of inmates, and visibility and transparency versus hidden power struggles, secrets and whispers. Where Pramodya Ananta Toer's *House of Glass*, written in prison, was an act of resistance against the colonial state of the Dutch East Indies, the contributors to this volume wish to reveal what is hidden behind the discursive practices and representational realms of the contemporary state in different Southeast Asian countries.

By Heidi Dahles

This book examines the relationship between discursive practices, modernity, and state power in Southeast Asia. Moving away from political economy, the authors – representing diverse academic disciplines such as cultural studies, anthropology, political science, sociology, art criticism, and literary studies – analyse state narratives in the public media from a postmodern

and post-structuralist perspective. The eloquence and obtrusiveness with which Southeast Asian states plead their cause is the common concern of the authors. 'If cultural meaning is, in the final analysis, political meaning, then struggle in the field of text becomes highly significant', argues the editor (p.4).

The contributions are arranged into four sections, which may be labelled as follows: (1) the power of the nation state in a globalizing world; (2) nego-

tiating national identity; (3) dealing with heterogeneity; and (4) coming to terms with popular culture.

The omnipresence of the state in Southeast Asia and its permeation of the social, economic, and cultural life in the region raise the question of how the state comes to terms with processes of globalization. As the contributions to the first section show, a complex ideological framework and effective enforcement supports and ensures the state's continuance.

Southeast Asian states are strengthened, not weakened, by rapid capitalist development. As both Ien Ang and Yao Souchou argue, this entanglement with the West also generates attempts by Southeast Asian governments to seal off their societies from what they see as evil influences of Western media and Western consumer culture. Unavoidably, the embrace of Western industrial modernity brings about conflicts of control, as is forcefully illustrated by the state of Singapore. The chapters by Ray Langenbach and Lee Weng Choy show that Singapore has created a 'McNation', unable to deal with the ambivalences and contradictions of modernity.

In an increasing pace of global exchanges, the engagement with the

Western 'other' is rather prominent in political discourses in Southeast Asia, generating partly converging and partly conflicting processes of identification. Anti-Western discourses in contemporary Southeast Asian societies focus on cultural purity and pollution in an attempt to renegotiate national identity in a globalizing world. What emerges is an Occidentalizer paradigm that reverses the Orientalist idiom. In this context, the nationalist identification of Vietnamese diaspora communities in the United States (Ashley Caruthers) and the commodification of Thai culture (Kasian Tejapira) represent challenging domains for research as the second section in this volume illustrates.



# Moral Fictions: Tamil Folktales in Oral Tradition

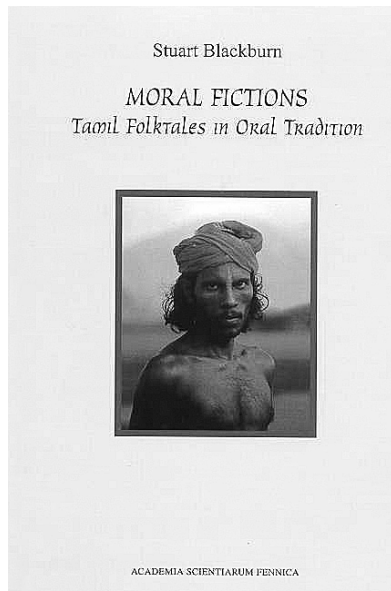
India represents a special conundrum for scholars working with folktales. Such early tale collections as the *Panchatantra*, the Buddhist *jataka* legends, and the fables of the Jain elders point to the existence of a long-standing and diverse body of tale-telling traditions, giving the folklorist a feel for historical continuity and change that is often absent among traditions of tale-telling in non-literate environments. Yet, at the same time, the literary nature of such collections presents problems of its own. The same is true for Indian folktales collected by European folklorists.

Review >  
South Asia

By Nile Green

The relatively widespread presence of Europeans in nineteenth-century India resulted in the publication of a number of collections of folktales from different regions of India, including the famous collections of William Crooke from across northern India, Richard Carnac Temple and Flora Steele from Punjab, and Mary Frere from the Deccan.<sup>1</sup> However, with the increasing sophistication of folklore studies in the second half of the twentieth century, the use of such collections as primary material has become increasingly difficult. Contemporary perceptions often lead us to problematize their colonial context no less than the methodological lack of sophistication with which they were sometimes collected.

The publication of Thompson and Balys's index of Indian tale-types in the late 1950s represented a watershed in such studies.<sup>2</sup> In its wake, a number of important studies of folklore traditions in India have been methodologically circumspect enough to satisfy the specialist and include the important contributions of Indian scholars. However, as in so many other academic fields, a paradox remains between a *richesse* of primary source material and its frequently relegated position in publication. Given the temptations and rewards of the analysis of folktales,



Stuart Blackburn is therefore to be applauded for his efforts in the painstaking and time-consuming work of translating a large number of tales from a single regional tradition.

*Moral Fictions* brings together translations of one hundred folktales that Blackburn collected in different regions of Tamil Nadu during the mid-1990s. Treading carefully the path between the too widespread and the too specific that can easily characterize such enterprises, the collection is significant in the context of Indian folklore studies in providing a broad selection of tale-types told by no fewer than forty-one tellers that allow an overview of one particular cultural/linguistic folklore tradition at a given point in space and time. As a methodological exercise in the writing of folktales, the volume is also of interest for its attempt to make the construction of the text as close and simple as possible a mirror of the ethnographic experience, while not allowing details of recording to interfere with the tales themselves. The volume is organized by story-telling 'sessions', keeping tales together by author, time, and loca-

tion of their telling. As well as the clarity this allows into the contexts of the tales, as Blackburn himself remarks this approach also reveals something of the 'narrative logic' through which different tales relate to one another within a given session.

There is a minimum of authorial comment on the tales outside of the 'Introduction' and 'Afterword'. However, in these two short pieces that frame the collection, Blackburn is careful to draw our attention to the moral dimension of the tales. He comments that the weight of opinion among folklorists is to view fantasy as the main characteristic of the folktale and the topic of morality as only a peripheral theme. Yet, for Blackburn, the most striking characteristic of the Tamil folktale is its emphasis on crime and punishment. Citing Maria Tatar's argument that violence and sex represent the 'hard facts' of folklore,<sup>3</sup> Blackburn offers what he sees as the unifying characteristic of the folklore tradition he is presenting in the claim that '[T]hese Tamil folktales are moral fictions.' Thus in one story from Panaiyakkottai, a female practitioner of 'country medicine' steals fingers from corpses for her cures and so becomes involved with a group of thieves who try to burgle her house and kidnap her. In the denouement, we find the woman suitably admonished through a short jail term and the thieves who molested her condemned to death. In another tale from Tanjavur, a cruel mother-in-law is tricked by a young bride's faked return from the dead into arranging her own death and funeral. With its mixture of helplessness and the catharsis of revenge, the story of the young bride is one with resonance for any patrilocal society based around the extended household.

Such recurring societal references suggest that Blackburn is right to take issue with aesthetic arguments about the intrinsic narrative freedom of the folktale, since such a perspective takes shape only by comparison to (and so very much in the presence of) writing. Like the genesis of folklore studies itself, however useful such aesthetic approaches are, they are very often the product of a literate sensibility and can

do much to ignore more societal and even functional dimensions of given folklore traditions.

The tales are translated into a highly readable style and present much that will be enjoyable to specialists and non-specialists alike. The tales present insights into the religion and social structure of their tellers' communities no less than the particular modalities of the Tamil folktale to which Blackburn draws our attention. However, perhaps the most lasting contribution of the volume is its ability to draw the reader into the dazzling parallel universe of the tales themselves and in doing so communicate something of the peculiar narrative magic that sustains successful story-telling traditions, wherever they are found. <

- Blackburn, Stuart, *Moral Fictions: Tamil Folktales in Oral Tradition*, FF Communications No. 278, Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica (2001), pp. 338, ISBN 951-41-0898-1

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Storyteller Ettirajalu inside his house in Karaiyamputtur, 14 November 1995.



Taken from the book under review.

## Notes >

- 1 See: Crooke, W., *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (1926); Frere, M., *Old Deccan Days: or, Hindoo Fairy Legends Current in Southern India*, London: J. Murray (1870); Steel, F.A., *Tales of the Punjab Told by the People*, with notes by R.C. Temple, London: Macmillan (1894).
- 2 Thompson, S., and J. Balys, *The Oral Tales of India*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press (1958).
- 3 Tatar, M., *The Hard Facts of Grimms' Fairy Tales*, Princeton: Princeton University Press (1987).

A third issue addressed is the relationship between integrative forces of colonial heritage versus cultural heterogeneity of the region. While most of the nation states in Southeast Asia inherited from colonialism a political system that is conducive to national unity based on equal rights for all citizens, few governments are able or willing to carry this principle to the full. Governance in almost all states is characterized by strategies of 'ethnicization', discriminating more or less explicitly among their ethnically diverse populations. The Malaysian state, for example, actively enacts 'forms of resistance against a universal inscription of international rules of conduct', as Loong Wong argues (p.185). By proclaiming to be an 'Asian

democracy' Malaysia makes revisions to its colonial past and negotiates a position between the East and the West in a global society. In a similar vein, the strength and weakness of the New Order has been its pursuit of economic development enforced by a patrimonial state and legitimized by discourses of national unity and harmony, glossing over major ethnic and religious cleavages, as Mark T. Berger shows (p.192). The political use of communication technologies and media censorship, which is widely used by Southeast Asian governments to enforce their discourses and exclude multi-vocality, is not an invention of contemporary states, Tim Harper points out. It is a legacy of the post-colonial regimes' project of nation-building.

In the final section, the struggle of Southeast Asian states to come to terms with popular culture is highlighted. While states are eager to develop the notion of Asian 'uniqueness' based on an Occidental paradigm, popular culture more easily acknowledges the modern Asian experience 'betwixt and between' a colonial past, Western modernity, and Asian values. Whether it is a Singaporean pop artist's repertoire (Wee), a museum exhibition featuring the Philippine sugar industry (Marian Pastor Poces), images of Vietnamese celebrities (Mandy Thomas and Russell Heng), or a lower class protest movement in Thailand (James Ockey), the discursive efforts in these instances are carried out against the

state's powerful directives. Ironically, the energy that the state in Southeast Asia invests in the orchestration and control of discourses reveals a deep-seated ambivalence and vulnerability 'as a result of the very conditions that contribute to its potency, wealth, and political legitimacy' (p.21).

*House of Glass* is an exciting book that will not only appeal to scholars but also to a wider audience interested in the politics of culture in Southeast Asia under globalization. The appeal is in the interpretive approach to widely publicized media events and the exposure of their manifold aspects within a kaleidoscopic perspective. However, lacking a thorough analysis in terms of the political economy of the region, only a readership well

versed in post-colonial history and regional power relations may avoid losing track. <

- Yao Souchou (ed.), *House of Glass. Culture, Modernity, and the State in Southeast Asia*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (2001), pp. 342, ISBN 981-230-074-0.

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# Bali: Living in Two Worlds

Review >  
Southeast Asia

How enduring can paradise be? Although it was published in 2001, the socio-cultural problems discussed in *Bali: Living in Two Worlds*, seem all the more poignant and burdened with implications since the devastating bombing in Kuta-Legian on 12 October 2002. The immediate impact of the attack far surpasses these problems, but this (still) timely compilation of essays, compositions, poetry, and photographs nonetheless offers a very contemporary 'critical self-portrait in order to bring up questions about present-day and future cultural, social and ecological developments of Bali' (p.10). The 'two worlds' of the title refers, on this level, to the negotiating point between Bali's often romanticized past and its possible futures.

By Laura Noszlopy

This book can best be appreciated as a response to the issues raised in two earlier publications: Michel Picard's *Bali: Cultural tourism and touristic culture* (1996) and Adrian Vickers' *Bali: A paradise created* (1990). Most of the essays in the new book simultaneously celebrate and commiserate the results of that creation and seek to further challenge the residue of 'paradise' mythology while proffering diverse views on Bali's possible futures. With its multiple voices, (there are fourteen contributors, including several of Bali's most prominent intellectuals and social commentators), there emerges a selective, but interdisciplinary, account of the debates and discourses that are

of current concern on the island and which are relevant to both academics and the more general reader. The contributions and, in particular, Rama Surya's photographs, portray an exceptionally 'traditional', though thoroughly 'globalized' society, undergoing rapid transformation; this is proposed as the meeting or collision of 'two worlds'. The articles display a tough realism borne of intimate knowledge combined with academic distance, thus acknowledging the bittersweet contradictions that are so apparent and disturbing in contemporary Bali. The main premise that runs throughout the collection is that Bali is no longer the paradise it was once perceived and represented to be and that various forces, especially tourism development, are threatening

the Balinese quality of life. All maintain, in their own ways, that there is 'a shocking discrepancy between the exotic Bali image of glossy tourist brochures and a more than unpleasant reality of the present-day life in Bali' (p.10).

This 'unpleasant reality' is highlighted in a series of essays on little-discussed, and occasionally taboo, topics such as prostitution and drug abuse (Sugi B. Lanus) and the widespread misappropriation of land for 'development' (Putu Suasta). Degung Santikarma discusses the way that an inflated and obscured sense of 'Balinese culture' can be used as an excuse for xenophobic violence and as 'a system of control and exclusion' (p.35). IGR Panji Tisna comments upon the increasing havoc wrought by environmental pollution and the tourist industry, while I Ketut Sumarta discusses the Balinese language as a central, but seriously threatened, aspect of local culture. I Gde Pitana provides an incisive analysis of the increasing tensions between competing factions of the PHDI, the Indonesian Hindu Council (Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia), while Cok Sawitri discusses changing gender roles in the performing arts, to mention but a few. The anthology also includes poems by Cok Sawitri, Oka Rusmini, and Alit S. Rini, which offer alternative perspectives on being 'a woman of Bali' (p.139).

Rama Surya's photographs complement the text and portray a similarly ambivalent view of urban Balinese adaptations to Indonesian, transnational, and cosmopolitan modernity. In particular, the portrait of a young Balinese couple in full garb, 'The dream of



the golden age. Balinese couple' (p.71), both 'traditional' (*pakaian adat*) and global fashion MTV-style (sunglasses and nose-stud) effectively captures that tension and just avoids the dichotomizing that is typical of overt 'tradition' versus 'modernity' imagery. Similarly, Coca-Cola and holy water are juxtaposed in what appears to be a fairly functional and comfortable coupling, despite the implicit critique of consumerism and globalization in what, perhaps, 'should be' a more 'spiritual' place (see photo). For me, one of the most powerful images is of the provincial capital's busiest crossroad junction, on the way to Kuta, where a signpost, funded by the *Bali Post* newspaper and perched between advertisements and Hindu shrines, impotently reads 'Jaga Bali' ('Protect/guard Bali') as the traffic hurtles past 'Between Coca-Cola, religion and neurology, Denpasar' (pp.92-93).

While the anthology explicitly seeks to challenge the enduring, but stale, stereotype of Bali as paradise, many of the contributions, perhaps understandably, still read like a lament to paradise lost, despite their claim that paradise was never really there to begin with. It is, in the words of Urs Ramseyer, 'an admonishing book' (p.13). This critical rewriting of the tourist mirage is not, however, without precedent. Very little scholarship of the past two decades, at least, has unquestioningly romanticized the state of affairs in Bali. That there are contrasts and

contradictions, tensions, and repercussions, emerging from uneven commercial growth and socio-political change, is little surprise and, to an informed audience, not all that controversial.

The real quality of this book is the diversity of the contributions and, indeed, the editors' achievement in bringing them together in this fresh format. Although, in recent years, Indonesian writers have been more widely published in translation, this book will be of real benefit to international scholars and students, as well as to the lay-reader, because it offers unique perspectives that can only derive from an everyday, personal engagement with the subjects discussed, both as familiar relatives and anthropological 'others'. It is a pity that some minor English translation errors occasionally distract from the otherwise excellent overall quality of the contents and presentation. It might also be appropriate to consider translating and publishing it in Indonesian, thus making it more accessible to local readers. Such comments aside, this particular venture towards 'living in two worlds' has, I think, been a success. <

- Ramseyer, Urs and I Gusti Raka Panji Tisna (eds.), *Bali: Living in Two Worlds*, Basel: Museum der Kulturen (2001), pp.194, ISBN 3-7965-1873-7, ill.

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Coke bottle as holy water receptacle. Sanur. (p.68)

# The Politics of Multiculturalism

Review >  
Southeast Asia

Pluralism means a belief in more than one entity or a tendency to be, hold, or do more than one thing. This literal meaning is common to all the political and social applications of the concept of pluralism but has been applied in contexts so varied that, in practice, pluralism can be seen as having a multitude of separate meanings. Nonetheless, each of these ways of interpreting pluralism has had at least some influence on its primary contemporary meaning: that the pluralist model of society is one in which the presence of groups is of the political essence.

By Marie-Aimée Tourres

There are perhaps no better examples than Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore to illustrate this concept of pluralism and open the debate. However, despite this, most writers take Western industrialized societies as the exclusive point of departure for their discussion. Thus by compiling the work of fourteen specialists, all Asian and based in Asia, Robert Hefner has attempted to challenge this approach in his book, entitled *The politics of multiculturalism. Pluralism and citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia*,

which results from study conducted in the region between 1998 and 2000. The book aims to answer the question of how to achieve civility and inclusive citizenship in deeply plural societies. In examining the discourse and practice of pluralism across different spheres, and by trying to understand the conditions that facilitate its resolution, Hefner (both editor and contributor) hopes to address the serious shortcomings in current literature on citizenship and civic participation. The issue tackled is not an easy one and the concepts discussed far from static. Using a comparative knowledge approach, the new faces of pluralism

are examined from the point of view of politics, gender, markets, and religion. Most of the contributors base their analysis on J.S. Furnivall's general approach and works. This British administrator and political writer introduced Western readers to the idea of plural society, which he describes as a society that comprises 'two or more elements or social orders which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit'. Certain distinctive characteristics in the political and economic spheres of life in plural societies distinguish them from more homogeneous societies. The most fundamental difference is 'the lack of common social

will', which has two far-reaching consequences: it leads to an emphasis on economic production, and to a fragmentation of social demand (the rationale for organizing consumption). According to Furnivall, the ethnic and religious 'sections' making up society are so different from one another that they have little in common apart from their market exchange. Consequently, he could not envisage a political structure capable of ensuring stability within a plural society because he regarded the constituent societies as being, by their very nature, unable to cope with the problem of piecing their societal puzzle into a unified whole.

Against this background, the various contributors help to demonstrate why today's Indonesia, Malaysia, and even more Singapore would, unquestionably, have stunned Furnivall. Analysed from a historical-structural perspective, and theory led, the book has a predominantly academic approach, which may

discourage some readers. Nevertheless, the fact that the contextualized approach is complemented by longitudinal perspective works in the book's favour. As an ancient Asian proverb says, 'to understand the present, one should scrutinize the past; without the past, the present would not be what it is'.

Indeed, the impact of European colonialism on Southeast Asian heritage was the exacerbation and consolidation of ethno-religious differences. With influx of Chinese and Indian migrants into the Malay peninsula, during the nineteenth century, at a time when Britain was consolidating its colonial rule, administrative apparatus was introduced to facilitate socio-political rationalization and segregation of what was, and still is, a highly heterogeneous and polyglot population. Different groups were formally categorized according to ethnicity; a classification that post-colonial Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore have retained. The con-

# Preservation of Archives in Tropical Climates

Both bibliography and manual, *Preservation of Archives in Tropical Climates* deserves a wide readership among all who recognize the importance of preserving the cultural heritage in the tropics. This first-class reference work treats the reality of Asian electricity bills and why Quito is the place to be for a piece of paper...

Review >  
General

By Roger Tol

What makes life difficult in the tropics is first and foremost the hot and humid climate, with its destructive effects on humans and archives alike. But apart from and due to the heat and moisture high quantities of gases, pollutants, sunlight, dust, sand, fungi, bacteria, insects, and rodents also pose threats. It has been argued that every 10-degree Celsius rise in temperature cuts the life of a book in half. However, these are not the only problems encountered in tropical areas, which are situated mostly in so-called developing countries. In most cases there is also political instability, unrest, or even war; preservation and conservation of the cultural heritage are not placed high on the government's priority list; technical facilities are limited; and the necessary training opportunities are not always available. Problems in the tropics abound and are varied. Indeed, it is necessary to set apart the issue of preservation in the tropics by devoting a specific study to it.

Usually reading a bibliography is not a very exciting undertaking. There are, however, some pleasant exceptions, and the bibliography compiled by René Teygeler certainly falls into this category. It was a very astute choice of the compiler to present the work in two parts.

Part two consists of a 'traditional' bibliography and contains lists of relevant titles arranged according to seven main topics, each constituting a chapter: 'basic concepts', 'preservation and conservation', 'books and writing materials', 'building', 'storage', 'disaster preparedness', and 'integrated pest management'. Part one, annotating and discussing the publications listed in part two, makes excellent and informative reading. It has the same division into chapters as the second part with the notion that each chapter is subdivided into several sections. For example, the chapter on storage is subdivided into eight sections (introduction, internal climate control, sunlight, dust, shelving, handling, packaging, and good housekeeping), while some sections are again subdivided into smaller sections, for example in this case 'internal climate control' is subdivided into air-conditioning, simple mechanical provisions, and air pollution. In this way each topic – large or minute – is dealt with in a narrative fashion, with summaries and quotes from the listed texts and with comments and remarks by René Teygeler.

Personally, I really appreciate this approach, which is of immediate use to librarians working in the tropics. There is

a wealth of practical tips, thoughts, guidelines, projects and initiatives, and just plain facts. Who knew that Quito in Ecuador seems to have the well-nigh perfect climate for preservation purposes? Although located near the equator, its high altitude provides the city with a dry and cool climate and low atmospheric pressure. As is mentioned in the book (p.98), this is the place where masses of documents collected by religious orders and the Spanish colonial administration remained for a long time in good condition. More importantly, some sections of the book can almost be read and used as a manual with immediate benefit in the field. Librarians in the tropics will undoubtedly find much to their advantage among all kinds of subjects raised in the chapters. Generally, the book has a sympathetic flavour in that it does not try to impose solutions that are suitable for Western countries upon non-Western countries. This pragmatic attitude becomes evident in, for example, the chapter on building and the section on air-conditioning. Regarding the latter, the compiler states realistically that 'air-conditioning is very often not an option for archives in developing countries. That's why passive climate control becomes a more attractive way to control the physical environment. Air-conditioning could be an answer to control excessive heat and relative humidity, but not one that many can afford. It is not just the cost of installation; there is the need to maintain the system and the running costs, i.e. the electricity bill. [...] Often archivists hold the mistaken belief that if a comprehensive air-conditioning system is installed all would be well. It is now understood that this view is entirely erroneous' (pp.89–90). The appendix, mentioning around a hundred addresses of contacts and institutes involved in preservation activities in the tropics, comes in very handy.

Evidently the compiler has opted for a discussion of preservation of traditional media such as palm-leaf, bark, and of course paper, paying no attention to other media such as microfilm (already in use for more than half a century), tape, disk, CD-ROM, or other electronic media. Because of the rapid expansion of these media in the libraries and archives in developing countries, the preservation of microfilm, for example, is currently becoming an extremely urgent matter in the tropics. Microfilm and probably other modern media as well are in far more immediate danger of destruction as a result of the fatal combination of high temperature and high humidity than are the traditional media. Indeed, destruction of films is taking place at a much higher pace than that of

paper. Thus the very results of huge microfilming projects, set up in order to save the contents of deteriorating manuscripts, are endangered. Ironically, the films have in some cases become unusable whereas the manuscripts are still readable.

Some other relevant 'digital' issues are not dealt with in the book. For example, there is the encouraging initiative from Southeast Asian professionals to set up a Southeast Asian Consortium for Access and Preservation (SEACAP). This consortium, which was set up in 2000, has already succeeded in publishing a collection of conference papers and maintains a website. To my mind real omissions in the bibliography are the two authoritative, free online databases for conservation professionals. These are AATA Online, a comprehensive database of more than 100,000 abstracts of literature related to the preservation and conservation of material cultural heritage, and the BCIN database, which is managed by the Canadian Heritage Information Network and brings together bibliographic holdings and abstracts produced by several of the world's major conservation centres. Both databases are accessible through the Getty Conservation Institute. It is to be hoped that a future edition of this bibliography will take these matters into account. <

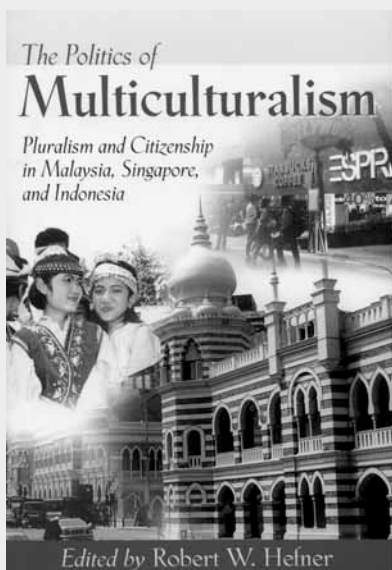
– Teygeler, René, et al., *Preservation of Archives in Tropical Climates: An Annotated Bibliography*, Paris: International Council on Archives; The Hague: National Archives of the Netherlands; Jakarta: National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (2001), pp. 328, ISBN 90-74920-14-4.

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## Info >

**Southeast Asian Consortium for Access and Preservation (SEACAP)**  
[www.seacap.chiangmai.ac.th](http://www.seacap.chiangmai.ac.th)

**Getty Conservation Institute**  
[www.getty.edu/conservation](http://www.getty.edu/conservation)



centration of ethnic labour in varying niches in the economy and/or politics served to fragment the national labour force along ethnic lines. Although ethnocentrism may have existed before colonialism, the ethnic division of the economic sphere by the British encouraged further friction between ethnic groups. Following Furnivall's argu-

mentation on the issue, the underlying reason is that the rigidly oppositional identities along ethnic lines, characteristic of plural societies and, in this particular case, created by the Europeans were left intact. As the lack of common ground and will among the different groups served the political and economic interests of the European colonizers, nothing was done to encourage the abolishment of this man-made rigidity.

The notion of citizenship, which usually refers to a status conferred by law, came to be of vital importance in a context in which ethnicity differentiated citizenship. There may be an ambiguous relationship between the idea of ethnic membership and that of citizenship, but Malaysia and Singapore's history shows how membership of a community can be advanced as a qualification for citizenship.

Although religion never acts purely as a substitute for economic forces, the

upsurge of Islamic consciousness at the end of the twentieth century has acquired a momentum of its own, promoting a rise in national sentiments and forcing serious contemplation of some identity-politics, resulting in the progress achieved in the socio-economic field being compromised. Hefner mentions recent examples illustrating this phenomenon: 'At the beginning of the Asian economic crisis in 1997-1998, Mahathir appealed to Malaysian Chinese to purchase shares in Malay-owned business threatened with bankruptcy.' The contrast with Suharto of Indonesia could not be more striking. In the final months of 1997 and early 1998, Suharto and his children responded to the growing economic crisis by accusing Chinese Indonesians of having masterminded the economic crisis so as to bring Suharto down. They did so, this propaganda claimed, because Suharto is a Muslim and because "these enemies

of Islam" do not want a majority-Muslim country to become strong' (p.33).

But Hefner remains optimistic. As economies grow and societies differentiate, there follows a proliferation of new societal organizations and relationships. Rather than opposing civil forces in society, the state must work with them. It is on this last point that Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore have the most to teach us.

Does the book have shortcomings? The excellent editor's introduction is the longest essay in the book, running to no less than fifty-seven pages. The reader would have benefited from an introduction simply explaining the organization of the book and the logic of its presentation. As it is now, it is not easy for the reader to see what links individual chapters, despite the umbrella-theme of multiculturalism. Essentially this volume offers a compilation of good academic contributions, but one which lacks a coherent voice. <

– Hefner, Robert W. (ed.), *The Politics of Multiculturalism, Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press (2001), pp. 312, ISBN 0 8248 2487 3

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– Furnivall, J.S., *Netherlands India: A study of plural economy*, New York: Macmillan (1944).  
– Furnivall, J.S., *Colonial policy and practice: a comparative study of Burma and Netherlands India*, New York: New York University Press (1948).

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# Tourism, Anthropology and China

Review >  
China

*Tourism, Anthropology and China* links a variety of perspectives on tourism and anthropological approaches in a colourful constellation of views on in-outsider relations with regards to culture. This highly readable collection of papers is based on the proceedings of a conference on 'Anthropology, Tourism, and Chinese Society' held at Yunnan University in the autumn of 1999 in Kunming, Yunnan Province (South-West China).

ious state agents intentionally create a particular sense of perceiving history, ethnic diversity, and nationhood. The last three papers deal with the possibilities of preserving culture by using income generated by tourism. The papers of Ian Chaplin on Macanese culture in post-Portuguese Macau, and Johan Nilsson and Tan Ying on Quanzhou (Fujian Province) show that tourism and economic development promote heritage preservation, while Heather Peters discusses ways of raising money, exemplified by her case study of the Naxi in Lijiang.

The purpose of the book, according to its editor Tan Chee-Beng, is to show how tourism brings about a reconstruction of local culture. These representations, according to Bruner, rely on credibility, rather than on authenticity, while fixing those images in the past. The editor points out the need for paying more attention to the study of tourism and ethnic expression, rather than just concentrating on the effects of tourism on ethnic groups (p. 18). In other words, the culture of ethnic minorities is not to be regarded as a static object, something to be revered, but as part and parcel of an economy in high need of development. Therefore the editor encourages observers of tourism and ethnic minorities in China to carefully weigh preservation and ethnicity against development and tourism (p. 19).

Nevertheless, throughout the book I was disturbed by the idea that a large gap exists between the anthropological views of the editor and those of some of the main authors of the book. The highly critical descriptions (by authors in parts one and two) of the process of reconstruction and representation of local culture, and the role played in it by the state, seem to be regarded by Tan Chee-Beng, Yang Hui, and Bai Lian as a recipe for the enterprise of trading local culture. This is probably due to a combination of an evolutionary perspective, which regards the coming of a Chinese version of modernity as inevitable and – what I call – a postmodern instrumentalism. Here the postmodern notion of the 'active local agent' is equated with its political and economic role of ethnic minorities in state planning. The book, therefore, could be improved by the addition of a theoretical framework in which the clash of interests of ethnic minorities and the state can be understood.

The book's main merit lies in its diversity, covering general notions such as the representation of human groups, authenticity, nostalgia, modernity, and development, and more problem-related topics such as the effects of tourism on ethnic minorities, the exoticism of ethnicity generated by tourism, and the need for heritage preservation. ◀

– Tan Chee-Beng, Sidney C.H. Cheung, and Yang Hui (eds.), *Tourism, Anthropology and China*, Studies in Asian Tourism, No. 1, Bangkok: White Lotus Press (2001), pp. 334, ISBN 974-7534-62-2.

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Zhonghua Ethnic Park (*Zhonghua Minzuyuan*) in the north of Beijing. It displays '40 ethnic landscapes, 100 scenic views, 200 ethnic buildings, 100,000 pieces of historic and cultural relics, 300 special theme exhibitions, 1,000 kinds of ethnic commodities, 200 kinds of ethnic delicacies, and 800 staff members of national minority groups.'

By Margaret Sleeboom

Next to *Tourism in China: Geographic, Political and Economic Perspectives* (1995), (edited by Alan Lew and Lawrence Yu), *Tourism and Cultural Development in East Asia and Oceania* (1997) (edited by Shinji Yamashita, Kadir Din, and J.S. Eades), and *Tourism and Modernity in China* (1998) (by Tim Oakes), it is valuable as a rare study of tourism in China in English. Whereas China forms the location of research for the majority of papers, aspects of tourism in Kenya, Southeast Asia, and Japan are also dealt with. Treating society- and culture-related topics this book is interesting to both students of the social sciences and Asian Studies.

The book is divided into four parts. In the first – theoretical – part, Edward M. Bruner discusses the issue of representation, showing how different agencies, ranging from state to private enterprises and indigenous communities, may be involved in representing particular kinds of exhibits (cultures, ethnic minorities, historical sites) to different categories of tourists, notably domestic and foreign tourists. Eric Cohen urges a comparative approach, exemplified by his study of the politics of representation by the state and by Nelson Graham's discussion of nostalgia for tradition and nature in China and Japan. Graham emphasizes that nostalgia does not necessarily indicate a desire to return to the past, but may be a wish to re-experience certain aspects of the past. Han Min's conception of tourist nostalgia for Mao Zedong presents people's feelings for a specific time as meaningful to their present life.

Among the articles, Eileen Walsh's fieldwork-based article on the myth of matriarchy among the Mosuo is outstanding.

Its criticism of representations of the Mosuo as a model matriarchy is a timely warning against naïve interpretations of ethnic culture in Yunnan, used by, for instance, the international symposium on 'Female anthropology and matriarchal culture in the women-dominating kingdom around the Lugu Lake' (8–12 March 2003, see [www.Lugu-Lake.com](http://www.Lugu-Lake.com)).

Part two deals with business and tourism. The chapter on the myth of matriarchy among the Mosuo and the legend of Ashima, by Eileen Rose Walsh, and the one on the legendary Sani woman portrayed in the Stone Forest, by Margaret Byrne Swain, show how myth is good for business, while Jean A. Berlie points out some negative effects of ethnic tourism on the local Dai culture in Dehong, namely the destruction

of local culture. Rather cynically, Charles F. McKhanns points out that those who lament the loss of Naxi culture are the same ones that encourage their children to speak Chinese at home and regard their *dongba* rituals as backward.

The role of the state in encouraging tourism as a tool of local economic development is the focus of part three. According to Xu Xinjian's study of the Chuanqing people of Guizhou, officially listed as an 'undefined ethnic group', the state is very much involved in identifying ethnic culture for promotion, encouraging the use of ethnic identity as an instrument of attaining economic progress. In this sense minority peoples have become active subjects, capable of exploiting both tourism and ethnic identity to their own ends. Yang Hui and colleagues show how opening up Dai villages inevitably leads to 'modernizing' influences such as karaoke, the reconstruction of Dai dances, and the sale of fake works, while Bai Lian shows how Manchu associations in Shenyang capitalize on tourism to project their 'discovered' identity.

How can tourism go hand in hand with heritage preservation and development? This question is dealt with in part four. C.H. Cheung's study of Hong Kong tourism shows how var-

Studies in Asian Tourism No. 1  
**Tourism, Anthropology and China**

Edited by

Tan Chee-Beng, Sidney C. H. Cheung and Yang Hui



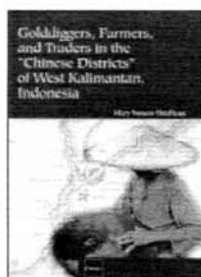
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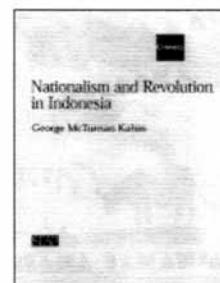
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*George McT. Kahin*

Meet author *Olga Dror*  
at the AAS Conference in New York,  
Booth 3043-45, Friday, March 28, 5-6pm



Opusculum de Sectis Apud Sinenses et Tunkinenses (A Small Tractate on the Sects among the Chinese and Tonkinese)  
*Fr. Adriano de St. Thecla*  
Edited and Translated by *Olga Dror*

# Of Moon and Man A Close Look at Chinese Landscape Painting

Review >  
China

Since antiquity the moon has been considered one of the most attractive elements of nature, and men have often been depicted pondering its light. In China, the 'literati viewing the moon' is an often-cited stereotype in works of art. Jeonghee Lee-Kalisch, an expert in East Asian art history, discusses this specific genre of poetry and landscape painting.

By Ricarda Daberkow

The moon has long held special significance in Chinese popular mythology, and as such has been depicted in numerous works of literature and art. Its smooth, reflective surface was said to be the home of animals like the rabbit and the toad. It was also considered an island paradise floating in the skies – a dreamland. In the eighth century the imagery of the moon changed, becoming a residence of the legendary Queen Mother of the West, perhaps under the influence of Western ideas that came to China by way of Buddhism.

Based on an investigation of poetry, and ninety landscapes from the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, Jeonghee Lee-Kalisch's *Das Licht der Edlen* (*junzi zhi guang*); (English: Light of Nobles) gives an insight into the relationship between the illuminated celestial body and its male observers. The primary aim of this study is to pursue this relationship, and as a result the author deals with questions that revolve around men. What were the noblemen pondering on, or dreaming of, while gazing upon the moon? What kind of associations with the moon did they have? Lee-Kalisch also examines the stage names



Taken from the book under review.

Ill. 13 from Sun Kehong (1532-1610). *Yueshang* (Rising moon). Section of a hanging scroll 'Delectations for leisure hours'. Ink and colour on paper. 28 cm. Gugong Bowuyuan, Taipei.

(bi) of individual painters and literati, in order to communicate an idea of their relationship with the moon.

Through an investigation of literary patterns, mainly from Tang period poetry, the author shows that the purity of the moon is associated with the pure and chaste heart of the noble. Du Fu, Li Bai, and Tang Taizong describe typical situations whereby literati gather together on a terrace near the water, watching the moon, drinking wine, and playing the flute or zither. They describe solitary men viewing the moon, sitting in a boat floating on the river. These people are portrayed dreaming of leaving society and its rigid structure behind, searching for freedom of spirit and body, and even immortality.

The second part of this study accentuates the formal composition, and focuses on the characteristics of moonlit landscapes, with and without men viewing the moon. Lee-Kalisch concentrates on the compositional element of an invisible line between the person and the moon. By using schematic drawings the author is able to show the clear preference of painters, up to the Ming period, for a diagonal line between the viewer and the moon. This stereoscopic effect enables art works to become more vivid. A vertical line between the moon and its viewer is often used to intensify the distancing effect of the composition. Frequently, depictions of literati, the moon and a third element, such as flying birds or another person, form a triangle.

How the moon and its emitted light are represented in the paintings is another important part of this research. Is there reflection of the moonlight? How are shadows dealt with? The author points out that questions such as these, that European painters stress, are neglected by Chinese artists. They emphasize, not a naturalistic representation of a moonlit landscape, but rather the manifestation of the essential, the *qi*, of the moon. In comparison with Western realism with its representations of changing light, Chinese artists use synaesthesia: In Chinese art, inscriptions on the painting or the title are used to highlight the intention of the painter. A circle in a fair sky will evoke the perception of a moonlit landscape at nighttime. The means of representation – be it colour, ink or lapis – is secondary. Nonetheless, the publication would have been more complete if it had provided the reader with colour, and not only black-and-white illustrations.

As a whole this work, although interesting, unfortunately is too narrow. The whole complex of animals, plants, and beautiful women in moonlight, as well as representations of the moon in religious paintings is omitted in this study. This is unfortunate but understandable considering the enormous range of material researched in undertaking this analysis. As such this text can only be intended as an overview or an introduction to the topic. It provides the reader

with a wide range of material and is a solid basis for further research. ◀

Lee-Kalisch, Jeonghee, *Das Licht der Edlen* (*junzi zhi guang*). *Der Mond in der chinesischen Landschaftsmalerei*, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XLVIII, Sankt Augustin, Nettetal: Institut Monumenta Serica (2001), pp. 266, ISBN 3-8050-0457-5, German.

Dr Ricarda Daberkow studied sinology, history of art, and ethnology at the Ludwig-Maximilian-University, Munich. Focussing on man's role as a philosophical being in literature and art, her research area comprises China and Taiwan. She is currently working as an author for an East Asian art magazine.

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# Differentiation and Integration in Daoism

A member of the Ba minority in South-West China in the second century CE, a female poet of the Tang dynasty, an elite scholar-official of the Ming, and a priest in present-day Taiwan – what do these people have in common? One commonality between the four is that they are 'Daoists', either self-styled or labelled so by others. But what is 'Daoist' about all these people of different times, places, professions, sexes, and cultures? What defines their 'Daoist identity'?

Review >  
China

By Paul van Els

Previous studies into Daoist identity have often departed from the dated definition of 'identity'. The identity of a religious tradition, according to this definition, is its essence, or those essential features that remain unchanged throughout its different manifestations. As Christian identity can be accordingly characterized as the belief in one God and in Jesus as his this-worldly representative, Daoism may be explained as the belief in the Dao and the worship of Laozi, the Old Master, as its founder. However, this definition fails to explain the plurality of identities under the Daoist umbrella.

Inspired by the theories of the theologian and anthropologist Hans Mol, the editors of and contributors to this work interpret identity not as a static entity but as a dynamic process. Rather than focusing on the 'permanence and solidity in the tradition', they emphasize the 'continuous interaction of the two forces of differentiation and integration' (pp.7–8): in other words, the process of how identity, on the one hand, changes through political and economical developments and through adoption of elements from other traditions (*differentiation*) and, on the other, aspires for stability and continuity (*integration*). Stability and continuity are achieved by setting up – what Mol distinguishes as – belief systems, lineage lines, rituals, and myths.

Part I, 'Early Formations', of this volume on Daoist identity discusses Great Peace and Celestial Masters, two movements that have been crucial in the creation of a Daoist identity. Parts II to IV deal with the first three aspects distinguished by Mol; part II, 'Texts and Symbols', contains articles on the formation of Daoist belief systems; part III, 'Lineages and Local Culture', studies Daoist

lineages vis-à-vis local and popular cults; and part IV, 'Ritual Boundaries', concentrates on the formation and reinforcement of Daoist identity through ritual. Contributions to this volume vary in degree of specialization and relevance to the topic at issue. Particularly relevant and enlightening articles include the following.

Kleeman (ch. 1) focuses on the interaction between ethnic identity and Daoist identity in traditional China. He shows how the Daoist tradition has absorbed elements of religious belief systems of minorities; how, conversely, ethnic groups have embraced Daoism; and how, interestingly, a number of traditional expressions of Daoist identity, such as priesthood and certain religious institutions, have survived only in minority belief systems and not in those of ethnic Chinese Daoists.

Yu Xuanji, the Tang dynasty poetess, courtesan, and Daoist nun, is the focus of Cahill's contribution (ch. 5). Yu, executed at age 25 for murdering her maid, is a controversial figure in Chinese history; up until the present day she has served as a bad example of feminine misbehaviour. Cahill ignores stories about Yu's life and lets her poetry speak of her identity. Three images that repeatedly appear in Yu's poems are clothing, boats, and zithers. The second image most clearly reveals her Daoist identity. The boat – that is, the poet herself – takes Yu 'from one place to another, one state of consciousness to another, and one condition of existence to another. She moves from city to country, public to private, courtesan to recluse. She floats along through life and change, entrusting herself to the Dao.' (p. 116).

Mabuchi (ch. 6) discusses the Daoist identity of Wang Dao, an elite scholar-official of the Ming dynasty (generally known as a Confucian era) and a student of Wang Yangming (the eminent neo-Confucian thinker). Operating in Confucian surroundings, Wang Dao maintains that Confucius and Laozi express the same ideas and differ only in wording. Wang regards Daoist notions such as *dao* (the Way) and *de* (virtue) as roots, and Confucian terms such as *ren* (benevolence) and *yi* (righteousness) as branches. He criticizes the way that people focus on branches instead of on roots and advocates the Dao as a source of a deeper goodness. Despite his undeniable sympathy

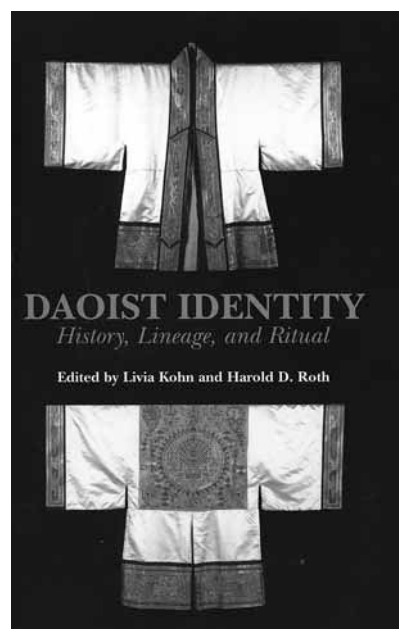
for Buddhist and Confucian thought, his ideas and his commentary on the *Laozi* disclose his Daoist identity and make him 'a relevant voice in the history of Daoist thought.' (p. 144).

Both Maruyama (ch. 12) and Asano (ch. 13) call into focus Daoist rituals in present-day Taiwan, the former discussing legal documents used in Daoist rituals of merit. The use of such documents distinguishes these rituals from Buddhist, Confucian, and popular rites, which lack such a textual practice. Asano discusses offerings in Daoist ritual, likewise by distinguishing it from other rites. The two forces of differentiation and integration are clearly visible in his example of meat-offering in Daoism. Though officially proscribed by the Daoist tradition, meat-offerings practiced in folk religion and in Confucian rites made their way into Daoism by popular demand. Nonetheless, Daoists deliberately keep meat-offerings in the periphery and assign it far less importance than other components of offering – such as incense, flowers, tea, or fruit – thus reassuring stability and continuity.

In the end, what is 'Daoist identity'? The tenor of this book is that no univocal answer to this question exists. Each Daoist interprets and manifests his or her Daoist identity in a unique way. As Shiga concludes, they identify themselves as 'Daoist' based on their own idea about what Daoism is (p. 206). The book thus deconstructs the idea of the Daoist identity and proposes a Daoist identity that accommodates innumerable individual identities. This novel approach surely is an asset, but also raises questions. For example, such terms as 'Daoism' or 'the Daoist religion' seem to suggest that there exists a 'core' identity with various manifestations. But how to determine this core if practitioners are free to establish their identity through differentiation and integration (leading, in one case, to abstinence of meat, to performance of meat-offerings in another)? Nonetheless, *Daoist Identity* is a refreshing and interesting read that stimulates further discussion. ◀

Kohn, Livia and Harold D. Roth, (eds.), *Daoist Identity: History, Lineage, and Ritual*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press (2002), pp. x+333, ISBN 0-8248-2504-7.

Paul van Els, MA is affiliated with the Research School CNWS at Leiden University. His PhD project involves the study and translation of the Daoist text *Wenzi* (*Writings of Master Wen*). p.van.els@let.leidenuniv.nl



# Comintern Eastern Policy and Iran

With the fall of the Soviet Union and the accessibility of former Soviet archives, rewriting the history of the Soviet Union continues to be of scholarly interest. Of the different political institutions facilitating Soviet expansionism, as well as enlarging its domain of political influence in the international arena, the Communist International (Comintern) was undoubtedly the most influential. Originally set up as a 'universal world revolutionary party' in 1919, both its strategy and its tactics were guided by the principle of 'world socialist revolution'. However, not long following its formation the Comintern metamorphosed into an institution defending the Stalinist policy of socialism in one country, only protecting the interests of the Soviet Union.

Review >  
Central Asia

By Touraj Atabaki

In *Comintern Eastern Policy and Iran (1919-1943)* Solmaz Rustamova-Tohidi successfully endeavours to shed light on the more general issue of the organization's Eastern policy, by focusing on its policy towards Iran during 1920s and 1930s. During the twenty-four years of its life, the Comintern went through different political phases, adopting some zigzag type policies. From a radical stance promoting a proletarian socialist revolution, even for

agrarian, nomadic societies in Asia, it developed into a more retained policy of cooperation and collaboration with other social classes and groups within these same societies. Rustamova-Tohidi not only examines these phases and changing policies in detail, but also considers their political implications for Soviet internal and external affairs.

The *Comintern Eastern Policy and Iran (1919-1943)* is a well-written and thoroughly researched work. It is based on original materials obtained from archives in Russia, Georgia, and Azer-

baijan. Moreover, the author's acquaintance with a variety of languages enables her to utilize the pertinent sources in Persian, Turkish, and Russian as well as those in some Western European languages. This book can be highly recommended for students of Soviet history and those seeking a broader understanding of the complexities that burdened the Bolsheviks in sustaining the first socialist state in history.

Solmaz Rustamova-Tohidi is a historian specializing in Iranian modern

history at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences. Her interests include the comparative analysis of twentieth-century political and social movements in Turkey and Iran as well the former Soviet republics of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. <

- Rustamova-Tohidi, Solmaz, *Comintern Eastern Policy and Iran (1919-1943)*, Baku: Khazar University Press (2002), pp. 507, ISBN 9952-20-010-2

Prof. Touraj Atabaki is president of the European Society for Central Asian Studies, professor of Modern History of the Middle East and Central Asia at the University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University, and Central Asia editor for the IIAS Newsletter. atabaki@let.uu.nl

# Women's Images, Men's Imagination

Review >  
South Asia

The world of Indian women witnessed significant changes in the course of the nineteenth century. Patriarchal notions about lifelong protection and seclusion of women came under fire then and abolition of suttee, the pleas for widow remarriage, and the demands for female education were major issues that engaged public opinion. The position of Indian women also prominently figured in the novels of the period. In her study, Banani Mukhia explores the construction of female characters in fiction written by males.

By Victor A. van Bijlert

This perspective offers interesting new insights in different gender relations, such as between: father and daughter, husband and wife, young wife and male in-laws, and the relations between women themselves: mother and daughter, wife and mother-in-law, and female friends. Banani does this by analysing various social roles played by the heroines in the novels of three great Bengali writers whose careers span more than half a century: Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore, and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay.

Among the earliest novels analysed in this study are Bankim's *Indira* and *Bishabriksha*, both from 1873; the latest ones are Rabindranath's *Jogajog* (1929) and Sarat Chandra's *Shrikanta* (1917-1933). This broad time-span enables Banani to sketch developments and important changes.

As these novels reflect only to some extent the social realities of their times, Banani adds observations derived from her own historical and sociological research on the period. Yet the novels themselves remain the central focus of this study, as 'these were essentially women-centred stories in which women had been imagined from a great diversity of

backgrounds, characters, moods as well as patterns of behaviour, so as to defy the stereotypical woman' (p.9). The main theme is approached from different disciplines. For this reason the study offers interesting insights for disciplines such as women's studies, history of private life, sociology, pedagogy, and psychology. It may also serve as a model for similar ventures in the novels of the same period written in other Indian languages. The book has an appendix with summaries of all the novels discussed in the main text, an extensive bibliography, and an index. <

- Mukhia, Banani, *Women's Images Men's Imagination: Female characters in Bengali fiction in late nineteenth and early twentieth century*, New Delhi: Manohar (2002), pp.167, ISBN 81-7304-410-4

Victor A. van Bijlert

# The Prelude to Empire

*The Prelude to Empire: Plassey Revolution of 1757* is a follow up of *From Prosperity to Decline: Eighteenth-Century Bengal* (1995), in which Chaudhury challenged the 'conventional wisdom' that the conquest of Bengal by the English was almost 'accidental' and that there were no 'calculated plottings' on behalf of the English behind the conquest. In this respect the author criticizes the position of scholars like S.C. Hill, B.K. Gupta, C.A. Bayly, and R.K. Roy, who all argued that the Plassey conspiracy was the handiwork of Indians and that political and economic crisis clouding over Bengal in the mid-eighteenth century brought in the British interference.

Review >  
South Asia

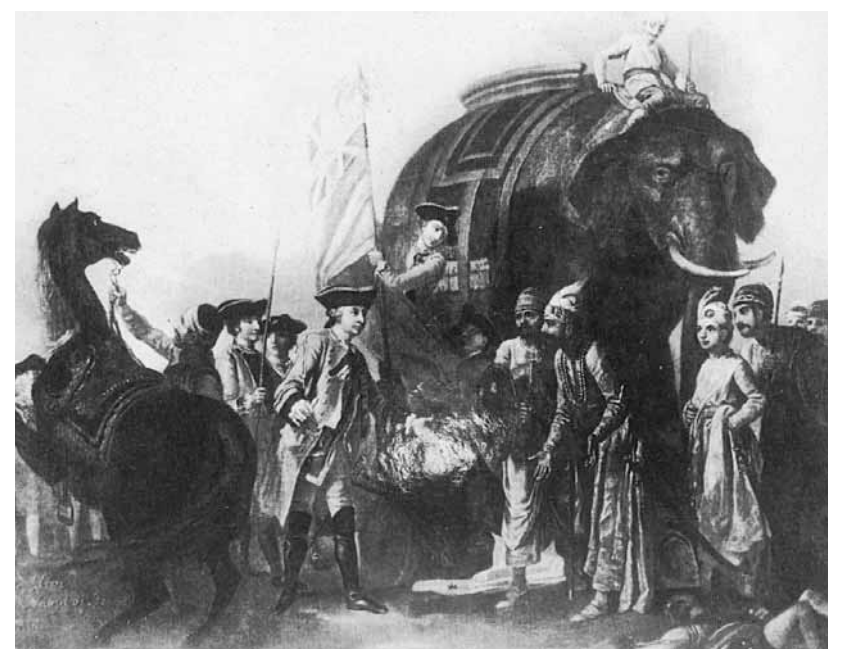
By Bhaswati Bhattacharya

This book, the second by Chaudhury to explore the Plassey conspiracy, presents more evidence in support of his thesis that it was engineered and encouraged by the British, who were able to persuade the discontented courtiers of the Bengal nawab to stick to their 'project' of revolution (p.9).

As a result of the successive strong and stable regimes in the region, Bengal in the early eighteenth century was a land of plenty. While Bengal became the dominant partner in the European companies' Asiatic and European trade,

the major share in the export from the region and the import of bullion still belonged to Asian merchants (p.23-25). The author dismisses the claim that it was Siraj's antagonism towards the English and his intention to drive them out of Bengal that were responsible for the commencement of hostilities between the nawab and the English. It was the attitude of the English, especially the rigidity and belligerence of Drake, the English governor of Calcutta, which caused of the outbreak of war against Siraj. Chaudhury asserts that there had not been an internal crisis - neither in the form of schism in the society nor in terms of economic decline - which would have caused and arguably legitimized British interference.

'Given the rivalry between the Asian merchants and their European counterpart, and the privileged position enjoyed by the former, there could be no question of collaboration between the two.' The English wanted to replace Siraj in the interest of their private trade.



There was a long but calculated transition period between the late 1660s and 1670s when, for the first time, the necessity of a shift from peaceful trade to armed trade in India was first suggested, and the 1750s, when the servants of the English East India Company became set on conquering territories in India. Indeed, the Plassey Revolution was not a mere coincidence (chapter 5). The role of the Indian conspirators in the 'drama' of Plassey was passive; they only joined the British when the latter took the initiative and provided leadership (p.113-114).

The book is interesting not only because it offers 'a completely new expla-

nation' for the Plassey revolution, but also because it shows that the historian does not necessarily have to play the role of judge when approaching sources. It is possible for the historian to assume, instead, the role of advocate of the cause of one of the partisans, in this case, the rulers and merchants of Bengal. <

- Chaudhury, Sushil, *The Prelude to Empire: Plassey Revolution of 1757*, Delhi: Manohar (2000), pp. 192, ISBN 81-7304-301-9.

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Bengal Studies

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Contributions and suggestions including the name and the address of the contributor can be sent to:

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# Southern Exposure:

## Modern Japanese Literature from Okinawa

The first thing that needs to be said about *Southern Exposure* is that it is a publication of some significance. Okinawan writers have, in recent years, demonstrated their brilliance by winning a variety of Japanese literary awards, notably the Akutagawa Prize. Few contemporary Japanese readers harbour any doubts about the quality of the literature being produced in Okinawa – here meaning the island chain south of Kyushu that has had such an unhappy history over the course of the previous century or two.

Review >  
Japan

By Leith Morton

After losing its independence in the seventeenth century due to the forced annexation of the kingdom of the Ryukyus into the Japanese province of Satsuma, often referred to by Okinawans as the Satsuma invasion, from 1879 Okinawa became part of the Japanese Empire. The fact that many Okinawans eventually became fiercely patriotic can be gauged from the huge number of casualties in the Battle of Okinawa, the only land campaign during the Second World War fought on the

homeland Japanese islands. During this campaign, nearly a quarter of the population of the main island of Okinawa died, approximately a quarter of a million deaths. As a result of the war, Okinawa was severed from Japanese control and ruled directly by the US until its reversion back to Japan in 1972.

Today, as the editors point out in their introduction (pp.1–36), Okinawa is still seen as a ‘marginal’ prefecture, with the lowest living standard of any of Japan’s prefectures. Prejudice still exists on the mainland against Okinawans, with their distinctive dialects and ethnicity. Okinawa cherishes its differences, not merely in language, but also in customs, food, and religion, from mainland Japan – although with the spread of mainland cultural influence through the mass

media, such differences are becoming more diffuse and less distinctive. Thus, the appearance of an anthology such as this of translations of modern Okinawan literature is a rare and welcome event. Translations of Okinawan literature – whether classical or modern – are very few in number, and this volume undoubtedly represents the largest single such collection to appear in English to date.

The anthology is divided into two parts: translations of modern poetry and fiction. However, poetry is treated very badly, with only seven poems totalling a mere ten or so pages. If we compare this meagre total to the twelve stories (which make up well over 90 per cent of the 359 pages of translations) then it is disappointing indeed. The book does not at all represent the mass of poetry (in traditional and modern forms) produced in Okinawa over the past century. It is noteworthy that one of the leading authorities on Okinawan literature, Okamoto Keitoku, in his 1996 piece on modern Okinawan literature, included in the recent seventeen-volume history of Japanese literature produced by Iwanami, begins his essay by stating that, in Okinawa, modern fiction took shape much later than the modern poetry produced in large quantities from early in the modern era (Okamoto 1997: 177).

However, despite this major shortcoming, this is nevertheless a historic and welcome beginning to what I hope will be many volumes of translation and exegesis on Okinawan writing. The translations read well in English, and the few pages that I checked against the originals revealed no errors. The translations themselves, done by a team of American and Japanese scholars, must have presented a number of severe linguistic challenges, as several of the stories utilize a number of the many dialects for which Okinawa is famous.

The few poems are by four Okinawan poets, including the most famous Okinawan author of all – Yamanokuchi Baku. The stories, save the first two, are all written in the post-war era, with the bulk of the fiction dating from the 1960s. Thus, many of the stories are reflections on the war and the American occupation. The stories also reveal an overwhelming concern with ethnic identity, which is hardly surprising given the modern history of Okinawa.

Yamanokuchi Baku is represented by a charming, ironic tale dating from 1938 about a pre-war Korean businessman in Japan who passes himself off as Japanese in order to avoid racial discrimination. The businessman finds himself observed by the narrator, who is no other than the Okinawan poet Baku; a twist that adds to the gentle irony and charm.

A number of tales are about prostitution, specifically the Okinawan prostitutes who service the needs of the vast number of US servicemen who live on the military bases which occupy much of the territory of contemporary Okinawa.

Kishaba Jun’s 1955 story ‘Dark Flowers’ relates the sad chronicle of Nobuko and her African-American paramour. The identification of Okinawans as the blacks of Japan works as both metaphor and theme, but the tale is told with little subtlety. The leading contemporary Okinawan novelist Oshiro Tatsuhiro is represented by a long and powerful story called ‘Turtleback Tombs’ dating from 1966. This tale is set in wartime and is a complex meditation upon religion, heredity, and ethnicity; themes that occur in other of the author’s works.

‘Love Letter from IA’ (1978) has the distinction of being translated into English by its author, Shimokawa Hiroshi, who lectures in English. Comparing the English version to the original, it is fascinating how the tempo and timing of the prose in the two languages is so different yet the story reads just as easily in translation. This is a tale about casual cruelty, the cruelty of Tomiko towards her old classmate, Sueko, who is separated from her American husband.

A better story, in my view, is Yoshida Sueko’s ‘Love Suicide at Kamaara’ (1984) about the relationship between an ageing Okinawan prostitute and an African-American deserter, their relationship demonstrating the difficult and obscure nature of love.

The two final stories by Medoruma Shun and Matoyoshi Eiki respectively (the two young lions of contemporary Okinawan writing) are excellent examples of the art of fiction. Both use narrative voices that are tentative and shifting – although not exactly the ghostly narrators that we have grown used to in much post-modernist fiction – to portray the complexities of contemporary Okinawan life in language that is both poetic and haunting.

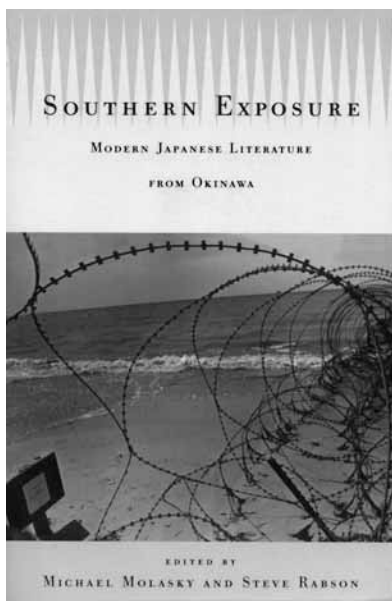
The volume, then, is worth reading, and certainly worth purchasing, not merely for its intrinsic scholarly and literary values, but also because it reveals an area of Japanese literature hitherto little exposed to non-Japanese readers. All in all this is a handsome volume that contains various delights. <

- Molasky, Michael and Steve Rabson (eds.), *Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature from Okinawa*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press (2000), pp.362, ISBN 0-8248-2300-1 (pb).

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*Professor Leith Morton has published widely on Japanese literature. He is Professor of Japanese and holder of the Foundation Chair in Japanese at the University of Newcastle, Australia. lmorton@mail.newcastle.edu.au*



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# Exhibiting Chola Bronzes

Asian Art >  
South Asia

10 November 2002 –  
9 March 2003  
Washington D.C., USA

By Debra Diamond

A magnificent group of temple bronzes brought together from public and private collections in Europe and the United States forms the core of *The Sensuous and the Sacred: Chola Bronzes from South India*, which seeks to broaden our understanding and appreciation of Chola bronzes by productively contrasting these arenas of perception. This exhibition expands upon traditional museum practice by addressing the ritual adornment and sacred resonance of bronzes and by incorporating historical and contemporary Hindu voices into its curatorial framing.

Most of the bronzes date from the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries CE, the apex of Chola dynastic strength and the height of the sculptural tradition. The Chola aesthetic of fluid movement, supple flesh contrasted with delicately carved ornament, elegant proportion, and serene expression is evident in an astonishing array of divine forms ranging from a seated Narasimha with ferocious but contained power (Cleveland Museum of Art) to an elegantly composed wedding group of Krishna, his wives and attendant Garuda (Los Angeles County Museum of Art). The bronzes are spotlit, displayed upon pedestals, and accompanied by curatorial labels.

While the exhibition situates many of the bronzes in this aestheticizing fashion, it also seeks to address the meanings that these bronzes have had for historical and contemporary Hindu audiences. In choosing bronzes for the exhibition, curator Dr Vidya Dehejia was guided not only by exogenously derived aesthetic considerations, but also by the character, number, and size of sacred bronzes maintained within Chola shrines to Shiva and Vishnu, the main deities of Chola temples. Two sets of ancient inscriptions, one at the modestly sized Shiva temple at Tiruvaduturai and the other from the great royal temple of Shiva at Tanjavur, form the basis for the Shaiva selection. Although no comparable Chola inscription has been located for a Vaishnava temple, current groupings in Shaiva temples indicate continuity from medieval to present-day practice, and the grouping of Vaishnava bronzes are plausibly based on festival images found in contemporary temples.

A Shiva Nataraja (figure 1) and a standing Vishnu in the introductory gallery introduce visitors to the bipartite organization of the exhibition. The two bronzes are visible from a lobby space decorated with a repeating pattern of the exhibition title written in Tamil script. The script evokes the inscriptions carved into Chola temple walls and situates Tamil language and culture as primary. This strategy also locates English as the language of translation for a Western museum audience. Further on, the bronzes are grouped thematically by divine personality, an ordering that is derived from the requirements of the ritual cycle, and one that also serves to manage the complexities of iconography and myth for the non-Hindu visitor. In the Shaiva section, galleries are devoted to Shiva Nataraja, the Shaiva poet saints who lived between the sixth and the ninth centuries, Shiva in various manifestations as 'divine hero', Shiva as 'family man', and goddesses associated with Shiva. The Vaishnava galleries are distinguished by a monumental doorway that recalls South Indian temple architecture. The doorway frames a Vishnu flanked by his consorts Bhu and Lakshmi. Subsequent sections are devoted to Vishnu's avatars: Varaha, Narasimha, Rama, and Krishna.

In recreating groupings for this exhibition, the repetition of images within Chola temples is evoked through the inclusion of multiple bronzes of popular forms, although other gods important within the Chola ritual cycle, such as Shiva Bhikshatana ('enchanting mendicant'), are absent from the

Among the most renowned works of Indian sculptural art are the temple bronzes cast a thousand years ago during the Chola dynasty in the Tamil-speaking region of South India. Today, museum visitors encounter spotlit Chola sculptures within the hushed spaces of galleries. But in Chola times, the bronzes were consecrated as deities, adorned in silks, and encountered, amidst the chants and music of lively temple processions, as gods. Richard Davis, in his seminal work, *The Lives of Indian Images*, first elucidated the dichotomous perceptions and practices surrounding the reception of Chola bronzes by devotional and museum audiences.

exhibition because no Chola period bronzes of these manifestations exist outside of India. An ancillary gallery displays a bronze Buddha and two Jinas (literally, victor; enlightened beings of the Jain tradition) that illustrate the extension of Chola patronage and aesthetics to other religious communities within the region.

Various textual and presentation strategies are employed to evoke the meaning and reception of festival bronzes within a Hindu context. A video documents the 'lives' of sacred bronzes from creation in wax and casting in bronze to ritual enlivenment by temple priests in a procession through the streets of a South Indian city during a temple festival. Temple chants and South Indian classical music playing throughout the exhibition evoke the aural environment of the temple. Spotlit and unadorned 'masterpieces' paired with contemporary photographs of similar sacred bronzes in procession or worship allow visitors to compare the aesthetics of the museum with the aesthetics of Hindu worship – and to ponder the cultural contexts that alternately expose or adorn bronze sculptures. An eighteenth-century bronze Nataraja from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, ritually garbed by a Hindu priest for the exhibition, is the centre of an installation designed to suggest the colourful excitement of a temple festival (fig. 2). The bronze, flanked by donor-portrait lamps, stands upon a tall pedestal strewn with flowers in front of a long banner of mango-coloured silk. Displays of bejewelled gold ornaments, similar to those given to temples by devotees, provide further insights into the visual opulence of sacred bronzes in procession.

Curatorial labels address aesthetics, morphology, and chronology, but also relate the myths that underlie divine forms. The gallery devoted to Shaiva saints invites viewers to appreciate their sculpted forms and also to apprehend their importance within devotional practice. Dr Dehejia has noted that in South India, from around the sixth century and perhaps earlier, Hindu deities began to assume public personae similar to those of human monarchs. Deities were required to appear in person in public and preside over a number of festivities that became part of a temple's ritual cycle. Since the stone icons in the inner sancta of temples

[2] Shiva as Nataraja, Lord of Dance. Eighteenth century. Bronze, 103 cm.



Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Marianne Brimmer Fund

could not be easily carried, portable images of gods were produced that were able to leave temple premises, thus becoming accessible to even the most lowly of worshipers. In the same period (in a phenomenon that is surely connected but in ways not yet fully understood) the Tamil Vaishnava and Shaiva poet-saints sought to imbue sacred images with their distinctive theology of embodiment. In this theology, personal communion with the Lord – typically through sight – was paramount. Saint Appar wrote that beholding the visible beauty of God made even life on earth worthwhile\*:

*if you could see  
the arch of his brow,  
the budding smile  
on lips red as the kovvai fruit,  
cool matted hair,  
the milk-white ash on coral skin,  
and the sweet golden foot  
raised up in dance,  
then even human birth on this wide earth  
would become a thing worth having.*

Other poets, both Vaishnava and Shaiva, described the dazzling forms of deities in verses that led devotees towards an awareness of cosmic power or even the paradox of an accessible but transcendent divinity. To augment the curatorial voice, verses from the Tamil saints' poems, situated near appropriate bronzes throughout the galleries, allow contemporary viewers to appreciate how Chola audiences would have understood the consecrated and adorned bronzes. Finally, excerpts from interviews with contemporary Hindus, conducted by teenagers from the Sri Shiva Visnu Temple in Maryland (USA), suggest some of the meanings that the deities hold for worshipers today. The contemporary voices open up a refreshing variety of perceptions, memories, and experiences, from condemnation of the museum display of sacred art to recollections of favourite festivals and descriptions of beloved deities. <

Debra Diamond is Assistant Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art at the Freer and Sackler Galleries (Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.), which together constitute the National Museum of Asian Art.

debra.diamond@asia.si.edu

## Info >

### Exhibition itinerary

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery  
Smithsonian Institution,  
Washington D.C., USA  
10 November 2002 – 9 March 2003

Dallas Museum of Art  
Dallas, Texas, USA  
4 April – 15 June 2003

The Cleveland Museum of Art  
Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
6 July – 14 September 2003

Scheduled acquisition by the Freer Gallery of Art



## Note >

\* Dehejia, Vidya, Richard Davis, R. Nagaswamy, and Karen Pechilis Prentiss, *The Sensuous and the Sacred: Chola Bronzes from South India*, New York: American Federation of Arts in association with University of Washington Press (2002), p.66.

# Parviz Tanavoli: Sculpted Poetry

The recent retrospective exhibition of one of Iran's most famous sculptors has helped to broaden the scope of contemporary Iranian art for art historians around the world. In exploring the work of Parviz Tanavoli, I hope to illuminate his sculptural intersections of Persian tradition with contemporary form.

By Nina Cichocki

On 26 January 2003, the contemporary Iranian art world was enriched by a long-awaited event in the Tehran Museum of Modern Art: the opening of a retrospective exhibition of Parviz Tanavoli, modern Iran's leading sculptor. Although a world-class sculptor in the 1960s and 1970s, Tanavoli has remained lesser known to Western audiences and even art historians. There are a number of factors that account for his undeserved obscurity: scholars of modern art still concentrate mainly on developments within their own European or American cultural horizons and are seldom familiar with the ideas underlying Tanavoli's oeuvre, which is rooted in the cultural heritage of Islamic Persia. Scholars of Islamic art, on the other side, focus on the past rather than the present. Here, I will discuss the relationship of Tanavoli's oeuvre to Persian classical poetry, using as examples one early work as well as his most famous sculpture.

## Poet with the symbol of freedom, 1962

Although many of Tanavoli's bronzes depict humans, as we can gather from both their statuary forms and their titles, he obliterates distinct facial features, poses, or hand gestures, all of which carry the expression of sentiment. *The Poet with the Symbol of Freedom* sports a box-like shape with a perforated front where we would imagine the head to be. The perforated front, reminiscent of the grilles on the shrines Tanavoli has visited since his childhood, acts like a veil: it hides the poet's face, bans all details and specifics, and, therefore, renders the poet's feelings abstract and generalized. The cylindrical body is devoid of arms and hands or any bod-

ily feature, except for a generic faucet on the front (symbolizing the freedom that water in an arid country like Iran affords), and is, therefore, devoid of emotional gesture.

Lyric Persian poetry, and particularly the form of the *ghazal* (a short poem with a monorhyme, seven to twelve verses long, usually about worldly and divine love), features some general characteristics that also help to elucidate the qualities of this sculpture. According to Annemarie Schimmel, a noted scholar on mystical poetry, the *ghazal* is not 'meant to describe exactly this or that state of mind or to tell of the poet's personal situation in such a way that one can speak of a unique experience. [...] the *ghazal* is not meant to explain and illuminate the poet's feelings: on the contrary, it is meant to veil them' (Schimmel 1992: 3). This tendency to veil rather than to explain emotions can be found in the first two lines of the *ghazal* entitled Happiness, written by Hafiz (1330–1389):

The phoenix of felicity  
Shall fall into my net at last  
If e'er the blessed shade of thee  
Should rest upon me riding past

Like bubbles rising in a glass  
I'll throw my cap into the air  
If by my goblet thou dost pass  
And lettest fall thy image there  
(Arberry 1948: 131)

Hafiz does not expound on the immediate feeling of happiness, or closely describe the cause of it. Instead he hides behind metaphors ('the phoenix of felicity shall fall into my net') or makes a side step by describing the actions resulting from happiness ('like bubbles rising in a glass I'll throw my cap into the air'). This idea of simul-

taneously revealing and obscuring emerges not only in poetry, but also in other dimensions of Persian culture, most notably in the architecture of the ubiquitous shrines, the grilles of which obstruct view and access, but simultaneously render the grave inside visible. Both the shrine's grille and the poem draw an artful circle – consisting of metal rods and words, respectively – around their essential content, be it a grave or the feeling of happiness.

Along the same lines, Tanavoli reveals his emotions and ideas merely by creating his sculptures and exhibiting his inner world. Yet, at the same time he hides these revelations behind the veil of abstraction. He reduces possibly telling elements to simple geometric forms that give few clues to the viewer, just as Hafiz reduces his idea of happiness to an indefinite 'phoenix of felicity'.

## Heech and Chair II, 1973

*Heech and Chair II* operates as a visual pun. The word *heech* (nothing) appears here in the shape of a cat sitting huddled on the chair's surface. The cat's head consists of the letter *ha*. Two holes stand for two eyes, and the top part culminates in a little peak that can be seen as an ear. Calligraphers call the initial shape of the letter *ha*, as it appears here, *wajh al-hirr* (cat's face) in Arabic. Also, traditional calligraphic literature often plays with imagery of the *ha* as a weeping face. Therefore, Tanavoli's interpretation of the *heech* as a cat builds upon a traditional metaphor – and even elaborates it by giving the cat a body. The top of the letter *djeem* is fashioned to evoke a cat's back and thigh, while its down-stroke literally becomes a tail. The sadness that calligraphic literature and poetry attribute to the letter *ha* also finds expression: the

entire ensemble appears as a shy little creature, looking out into the world with sad eyes, as it huddles into the chair.

Another literary convention exemplified in *Heech and Chair II* is that of the metaphor. If viewed in the most superficial manner, the sculpture is a charming image of a cat sitting on a chair. In the same vein, a poem about the beauty of a beloved can be reduced to the evocation of a charming image, as in Hafiz's *ghazal Radiance*:

The radiance of thy body's gleam  
The moon doth far exceed;  
Before thy face the rose doth seem  
Lack-lustre as a weed

The corner of thy arched brow  
My spirit doth possess,  
And there is not a king, I vow,  
Dwells in such loveliness  
(Arberry 1948: 135)

Underneath all this charm, however, we can uncover a deeper meaning. Metaphors centring on the beloved or love are employed particularly in the poetry that grew out of the mystical branch of Islam, Sufism. In Sufi poetry – Tanavoli's favourite poet Rumi is its greatest exponent – the love for a human being stands for the love of God, the beloved is God himself, and the beloved's beauty is a reflection of the beauty of God. The word *heech* (nothing) in Tanavoli's sculpture works similarly, as attested by the sculptor himself: "Nothing" is an aspect of God. God is in all things and therefore in everything. The "nothing" is not God, but is a place where God could be in his purest state' (Morrison 1971: 10B). Thus, both the poem and the sculpture can express the presence of God through the same means, that is, the metaphor. In the case of the poem, it is the beloved that is a metaphor for God: in the case of the sculpture, it is the *heech*. ◀



Parviz Tanavoli, *Poet with the Symbol of Freedom*, 1962

Parviz Tanavoli

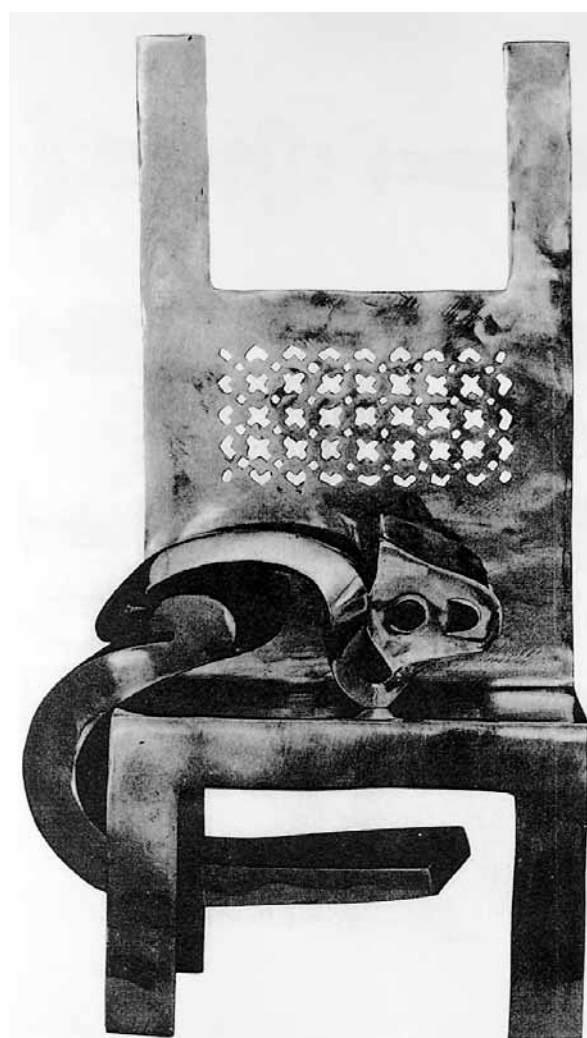
## Parviz Tanavoli

Born in Tehran in 1937, Tanavoli benefited from Reza Shah Pahlavi's quest for modernization/westernization. After Western-style art education had been introduced to Iran, Tanavoli graduated as the first student from the new sculpture programme at the Tehran School of Arts in 1956. Subsequently he went to Italy in order to study under the well-known sculptor Marino Marini (1901–1980). Marini's awareness of the past traditions of his native country, and their incorporation into his contemporary work, led Tanavoli to explore his own cultural heritage and to search for a style suitable to express Persia's past achievements in a modern way. However, due to religious prescriptions against the creation of images, Iranian sculptural production ceased with the advent of Islam in the eighth century. Thus, the only way to integrate Persia's Islamic heritage into his works was to look at arts other than sculpture, such as Persian classical poetry, considered to be the epitome of Iranian-Islamic cultural production.

After several successful years abroad, Tanavoli returned to Tehran to teach at the College of Decorative Arts. He also established his first studio, the Atelier Kaboud, a meeting place for artists. In 1962, Tanavoli was invited to the Minneapolis College of Art and Design as a visiting artist. During the early sixties, his pieces were exhibited at the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Walker Art Center, poets and prophets being his main subjects.

When Tanavoli returned to Iran in 1964, he helped with the establishment of the Sculpture Department at the University of Tehran. A major turning point in Tanavoli's career was a show at the Galerie Borghese in Tehran in 1965, where his works addressed the modernization of Iranian lifestyle and the combination of new technological phenomena with traditional culture. This exhibition marked the arrival of the *heech* (nothing) in Tanavoli's oeuvre, a theme that would occupy him for the following nine years and become his trademark.

The Revolution brought Tanavoli's career in Iran almost to an end, since he produced objects considered to contradict the precepts of Islam. Tanavoli retired from his position at the University of Tehran and is now an independent artist and author.



Parviz Tanavoli, *Heech and Chair II*, 1973

Parviz Tanavoli

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## Nina Cichocki, MA

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The Traditional Arts of South Asia

Asian Art >  
South Asia

# Past Practice, Living Traditions

25-26 June 2002  
Leicester,  
United Kingdom

How can a historical and theoretical understanding of traditional South Asian arts inform contemporary artistic and architectural projects both within and beyond South Asia? How can an understanding of contemporary practices and design issues inform the study of art and material culture of the past? And, how have changing conceptions of art and craft influenced the study, understanding, and practice of South Asian traditional arts?

By Crispin Branfoot

The conference on 'The traditional arts of South Asia: past practice, living traditions' aimed to address these questions and assess the role of the traditional arts of South Asia, both as a way to understand the past and its current practice. These very issues are central to the activities of De Montfort University's research centre PRASADA (Practice, Research and Advancement in South Asian Design and Architecture).<sup>2</sup> The speakers came from a variety of disciplines, and included both academics and practising artists and architects. The eleven presentations focused on a variety of media and contexts – including architecture, sculpture, painting, and textiles – from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and India.

Abigail McGowan (University of Pennsylvania) and Robin Jones (Southampton Institute) both addressed the colonial foundations of our knowledge and interpretation of South Asian traditional arts. In 'Indian crafts in colonial display and policy 1880-1920', Abigail McGowan argued that in comparison with the preceding decades, a recognition of artisans as creative individuals emerged in the

1880s in response to both the Arts and Crafts movement in Europe and growing nationalist claims concerning the destruction of Indian industries under colonial rule. This led to the idea that craft should be considered a specific art form, which had a decisive impact on contemporary crafts, policies, and interventions, but also shaped the way we perceive Indian crafts today.

In his paper, 'British interventions in the traditional crafts of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) c. 1850-1930', Robin Jones examined the British reappraisal of the material culture of Kandy in the late nineteenth century, including attitudes towards local arts, crafts, and architecture, in response to the rediscovery of Sri Lanka's ancient cities. From the 1850s to the 1930s the colonial government and missionary societies established industrial schools, for the local population that effected traditional arts. This influence has been examined, not least through Ananda Coomaraswamy's early twentieth-century writings.

Jyotindra Jain (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) and Sharada Srinivasan (National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore) explored the impact of colonialism and modernity on the production and reception of

Hindu images. In 'The Hindu icon: between the cultic and the exhibitory space', Jyotindra Jain examined mass-produced Hindu imagery of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. With the shift to mass-production and the use of print technology, a new generation of printed images of Hindu deities and mythological characters came into being.

Using new techniques, these printed pictures displayed an amalgamation of a whole range of pictorial elements, including the idioms of the colonial art schools, traditional fresco and manuscript painting, European prints, photography, Western and regional Indian theatre, and contemporary cinema. This fundamentally changed depictions of Hindu imagery and went alongside the rise of new exhibitory contexts, from the consecrated, sacred space of the Hindu shrine to the living rooms, restaurants, shops, trucks, and taxis of modern times.

In her paper 'From temple to mantelpiece: changing paradigms in the art and craft of South Indian metal icons', Sharada Srinivasan explored the ways in which current artistic practices help inform our understanding of past images and their production. South Indian metal images have also undergone various paradigm shifts, from objects of ritual veneration and processional worship to mantelpiece curios in the marketplace. These transformations are now shaping prevalent artistic trends.

Southern India remained the focus of both Anna Dallapiccola (PRASADA) and Samuel K. Parker (University of Washington, Tacoma). In 'A contemporary pantheon: popular religious imagery in South India', Anna Dallapiccola discussed the traditional temple arts of late twentieth-century Tamil Nadu. She demonstrated how modern imagery and aesthetics, such as those discussed by Jyotindra Jain, are influencing brick and plaster sculptures and temple murals, adding a wealth of new

elements to age-revered forms.

Dr Parker examined the construction, during the last century, of a granite Hindu temple, of the sort popularly associated in Tamil Nadu with claims to royal sovereignty, by the leaders of the Nadar community in Aruppukottai. It was designed to give, literally, 'hard' evidence for the Nadar's contested identity as a royal caste allegedly dispossessed of its true status. As such it emphasizes the contemporary importance of temple architecture and patronage as a means of expressing social and political identity.

Eiluned Edwards (PRASADA) and Ismail Mohammad Khatri (Dhamadka village, Kachchh) discussed the textiles of Kachchh in Gujarat. Ismail Mohammad Khatri, a ninth generation textile craftsman from the village of Dhamadka, gave an account of block-printing textiles from his perspective. His presentation of the Khatri community's regional history in Sindh and western India, including a range of material produced for the Hindu and Muslim herding communities of Kachchh, was complemented by a practical demonstration of the complicated process of making *ajrakh*, a block-printed cloth that is printed on one or both sides with natural dyes.

Eiluned Edwards discussed the resist-dyed and block-printed textiles produced by the Khatri for many castes in the region. Encoded in these textiles are a host of details about a person's caste, religious affiliation, gender, age, marital status, and economic standing. She examined the changes in the, essentially, local markets for these textiles and the emergence of new markets for the Khatri textiles as a result of post-independence industrialization, changes in traditional caste occupations and patterns of consumption, and advances in textile technology.

The architects Adam Hardy (PRASADA), Kamil Khan Mumtaz (Anjuman-I-Mimaran, Lahore), and Nimish Patel, together with Parul Zaveri (Abhikram, Ahmedabad), focussed on traditional

architecture. Hardy's paper 'Approaching design through history and history through design' used examples from Indian temple architecture to demonstrate that the study of architecture from a design perspective can lead to an understanding of the processes of its creation. Such an approach to architectural history is the basis for understanding the transformations of architectural traditions. It was argued that if these various traditions can be deduced, they could subsequently be learned and brought into practice. This might then lead to an architecture that draws from tradition in a more profound way than is the case with past revivals and historicisms. Similar approaches were expressed in the remaining two papers. Kamil Khan Mumtaz's background as a Western-trained architect practising in Pakistan, with a keen interest in traditional architecture, discussed two current projects for a mosque and a tomb in Pakistan. Nimish Patel and Parul Zaveri similarly discussed the characteristics of traditional architecture and the creative process, and how this understanding can be used in contemporary architectural practice and conservation, as illustrated by their work on a number of projects in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

At the start of the twenty-first century we are in the position of being able to better assess the legacies of colonialism and twentieth-century modernity in the representation and appropriation in present-day practice of the traditional arts of South Asia. This will lead to a greater appreciation of the vitality and variety of the region's traditional arts, both past and present. ◀

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Note >

- 1 Conference held at De Montfort University, Leicester, United Kingdom.
- 2 For PRASADA, please refer to [www.lsa.dmu.ac.uk/Research/prasada.html](http://www.lsa.dmu.ac.uk/Research/prasada.html)

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This exhibition is one of the most significant to leave China in over a decade. *Two Emperors* highlights the shortest and longest dynasties in China's history: the Qin and the Han. This stunning exhibition includes formidable life-sized warriors, exquisite gold, jade, and bronzes, and captivating farmyard animals, pigsties, and granaries.

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**Royal Ontario Museum**

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Over 50 of Naoko Matsubara's woodcuts will be on display in the Herman Herzog Levy Gallery. The works span the artist's entire career and show the development of her approach from the use of stark black to exuberant colours and from organic forms based in nature to geometric and abstract designs.

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**Courtyard Gallery**

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Courtesy of Mr. Shozaburo Masuda, the private collector, Japan.

**The Dutchman, the head of the Dutch Trading House in Dejima, Nagasaki, Japan. Light colour on paper, 1809. Signed Saio Socho. 29 x 63.8 cm.**

**3-9 April 2003**

*David Schorr – Paintings*

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*Paintings and sculptures by Rajesh Ambalkar, Vishaka Apte, Yusuf Anil Kumar, Shailendra Kumar, and Om Prakash Khare.*

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**27 March – 6 April 2003**

*Sanjib Saha – Oil on canvas*  
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*Kishor Wala – Drawings & paintings*

Indonesia

**Cemeti Art House**

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cemeti@indosat.net.id  
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**May 2003**

*'Reach Me': Christine Ay Tjoe*

This exhibition of graphics and drawings by Christine Ay Tjoe at Cemeti Art House promises to offer a respite from the bitter debate going on in the visual art world, both in Yogyakarta and throughout Java; the never-ending debate on social issues, from the most vain to the most unconscious, from power politics to the scramble for a slice of the lucrative market. The reflective quality implicit from the long evidence of Ay Tjoe's approach to the graphic medium is moving and forces us to think about universal values.

Japan

**Tokyo National Museum**

13-9 Ueno Park, Taito-ku, Tokyo  
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**3 July 2003 – 13 July 2003**

*Kamakura – The Art of Zen Buddhism*

In commemoration of the 750th anniversary of the founding of Kenchōji, the oldest Zen temple in Japan, this exhibition will display designated National Treasures and some objects never before seen outside of the temple walls. Objects will include sculptures, paintings, calligraphy and ceramics highlighting the complexity and wide-ranging aesthetics of Zen culture.

**Fukuoka Asian Art Museum**

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*Santo – Holy Sculptures from the Philippines*

Santos, religious images, were brought to the Philippines in the sixteenth century by Spanish missionaries and worked in churches, chapels, and household altars. This exhibition looks at the role of Santo images in the promulgation of Catholicism in the Philippines and at their continued appeal.

Korea

**National Museum of Contemporary Art**

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**17 December 2002 – 15 June 2003**

*Thirty-one works by Oh Chi-ho (1906-1982)*

Master artist of Western painting, Oh is credited with laying the roots of the Western impressionist painting style in Korea and, in particular, applying it to capture Korea's scenic beauty in a bright and clear manner. The exhibits are part of the collection of 34 paintings that Oh's family donated to the museum upon his death.

Netherlands

**Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde**

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**Until 31 August 2003**

*The Kamoro*

The Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde presents a wide-ranging picture of the Kamoro culture on the south-west coast of Papua (New Guinea). The life of the Kamoro is characterized by extensive cycles of feasts and rituals that mark important life phases. For these feasts the Kamoro make drums, masks, clothing, jewellery, finely carved wooden panels and statues. These are often of spectacular dimensions and are particularly beautiful and full of symbolism.

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Featuring some 70 gold and silver objects from the Laintang Collection including burial objects, silver and inlaid bronze vessels and clothing accoutrements from the Warring States Period (475-211 BCE), the Han Dynasty (206 BCE-221 CE) and the Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE).

**Until June 2003**

*Chinese Paintings from the Dr Tan Tsze Chor Collection*

Twenty-five paintings from the Ming dynasty to the early Republic Era comprise this collection, recently donated by one of Singapore's leading collectors of Chinese art. The work of several masters is on display, including paint-

ings by Ren Bonian, Xu Beihong, Pu Ru, Zhao Shao'ang, Oi Baishi, and Huang Binhong.

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**Taipei Fine Arts Museum**

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*Let's Make ART*

Web installation exhibition by Yu-Chuan Tseng

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**April – May 2003**

*Trinh Tuan – Lacquer Paintings*

Considered intuitive in their subtle expressions of emotion, Trinh Tuan's lacquer paintings often dwell on themes of solitariness, sadness, and melancholy.

**Until 27 April 2003**

*The New Art Gallery, Walsall*

United Kingdom

**Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology**

Beaumont Street  
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**Until 20 April 2003**

*Japanese Works of Art: Acquisitions from the Story Fund, 1985-2002*

Featuring a rarely seen mix of Japanese ceramics, paintings, metalwork, and lacquer usually held in the reserve or teaching collections of the museum.

**Until 25 May 2003**

*The Four Seasons: An Exhibition of Chinese Painting*

This exhibition explores traditional landscape painting by nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists. Highlighted here are some of the basic principles of landscape painting as determined by the four seasons in ancient China, related to the lunar calendar and to the cycle of life.

**Until 30 April 2003**

*Enamelled Wonders: Japanese Cloisonné from the Edwin and Susan Davies Collection*

### Toshiba Gallery of Japanese Art

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**The Unilever Series:** Anish Kapoor  
Marsyas, Anish Kapoor's sculpture for the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, comprises three massive steel rings joined together by flesh-like PVC membrane and seemingly wedged into the vast space, generating an undulating geometry of vertical and horizontal movement in the Hall. Kapoor's sculpture is the third in The Unilever Series of commissions for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern.



Photo by Marcus Leith and Andrew Dunkley, Copyright: Tate Photography

'Marsyas', 2002. Installation by Anish Kapoor, Tate Modern, The Unilever Series, 9 October 2002 - 6 April 2003

### United States

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**Palaces and Pavilions: Grand Architecture in Chinese Painting**

Exhibition featuring twenty-six paintings from the second to the nineteenth century which evolve around three broad themes: historical palaces and the daily

lives of women at the court, imaginary dwellings of deities and immortals, and private pavilions commissioned by public officials and the Chinese elite classes.

### 14 April - 4 May 2003

**Chinese Buddhist Images: New Perspectives on the Collection**  
Issues of authenticity and attribution are the focus of this exhibition that presents Buddhist sculptures and devotional objects within a critical framework. Recent analyses of these objects have led to refined explications of their original contexts and also raise awareness about the presence of fake Buddhist sculptures in Western collections.

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### The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street  
New York, 10028-0198  
T +1-212-535-7710  
www.metmuseum.org

### Until 13 July 2003

**Chinese Export Porcelain at The Metropolitan Museum of Art**

Presenting 65 objects from the Museum's collection of Chinese export art, this exposition primarily highlights porcelain made in China for American and European markets. Objects date from the early sixteenth century to the last quarter of the nineteenth century, including bowls and vases, services and

tureens, reverse glass paintings, and an ivory pagoda.

### Until 17 August 2003

**Great Waves: Chinese Themes in the Arts of Korea and Japan**

The exhibition explores how Chinese pictorial themes of Buddhist iconography, landscape imagery, flower and bird subjects, and figural narratives were selectively adopted and interpreted by native artists in Korea and Japan.

### Los Angeles County Museum of Art

5905 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90036  
T +1-323-857-6000  
www.lacma.org/lacma.asp

### 13 April 2003 - 27 July 2003

**The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courty Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353**

Illustrates the impact of Ilkhanid (Mongol) rule in West Asia on art and culture between the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth century. This exhibition features examples of the decorative arts and architectural decoration demonstrating the convergence of local artistic expression with Far Eastern art forms of the Yuan dynasty.

### Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Avenue of the Arts  
465 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts  
02115-5523  
T +1-617-267 9300  
www.mfa.org

### Until Spring 2003

**RSVP: Sarah Sze**

Installation artist Sarah Sze is working on-site at the gallery as part of the series RSVP mfa, in which artists are invited to respond to and work among the collections, architecture, and grounds of the Museum, creating art that extends beyond the traditional walls of a gallery.

### Seattle Asian Art Museum

Volunteer Park  
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Seattle, Washington 98112-3303  
T +1-204-654 3255  
www.seattleartmuseum.org

### Until 24 August 2003

**Korean Sensibilities: The Evolution of Form**

Featuring Korean ceramic, metalwork, painting, and calligraphy from the fourth century to the present, from the permanent and private collections. Including objects from the Three Kingdom, Unified Shilla, Koryŏ, and Chŏson dynasties.

### Until 19 October 2003

**Glaze, Pattern, and Image: Decoration in Chinese Ceramics**

This exhibition illustrates changes in Chinese aesthetic taste through ceramics, highlighting the development of techniques and styles from the third century BCE to the nineteenth century CE.

### Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

220 East Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
T +1-312 280 2660  
www.mcachicago.org

### Until 2 June 2003

**Architecture: Hiroshi Sugimoto**  
This series of photographs by Hiroshi Sugimoto includes landmark architectural structures of the twentieth century, ranging from the Eiffel Tower and the Empire State Building to buildings by Frank Gehry, Tadao Ando, and Frank Lloyd Wright, among others in Europe, North America, and Asia.

### P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center

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mail@ps1.org  
www.ps1.org

### Until 30 April 2003

**The First Steps: Emerging Artists from Japan**

*The First Steps* explores the work of ten emerging artists from Japan presenting two-dimensional, three-dimensional, installation art, video and film. An international jury of art curators and critics selected the artists through the Philip Morris K.K. Art Awards.

### Until May 2003

**Chen Zhen Tribute exhibition**  
This exhibition is a tribute to artist Chen Zhen, who died in 2001. Chen's installations draw on themes of illness and medicine as metaphors for human difference; they also address the concept of the organic whole and explore binaries such

as material/spiritual, social/individual, personal/clinical, interior/exterior and symmetrical/asymmetrical.

### Art Institute of Chicago

111 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois  
www.artic.edu

### 5 April 2003 - 27 July 2003

**Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure**  
Displaying mostly religious art objects between the fifth and nineteenth centuries, this exhibition traces the artistic achievement and history of the Himalayas together with its theological needs of Hinduism and Buddhism.

### Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

701 Mission St. at 3rd  
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comments@yerbabuenaarts.org  
www.yerbabuenaarts.org

### 26 April - 13 July 2003

**Time After Time: Asia and Our Moment**  
This exhibition presents contemporary art from Asia that addresses concepts of time and considers the public discourse about progress, memory and tradition, transitional spaces, and the coexistence of multiple systems of time. Featuring painting, photography, sculpture and video by emerging and mid-career artists.

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**Natural History**

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www.mnh.si.edu

### 22 January - 8 June 2003

**A Korean American Century**  
This exhibition presents some 50 photographs documenting the history and experiences of Korean immigrants to the USA from 1883 to 2001 to mark the centennial of Korean immigration to the United States. Included are historic photographs of the American-initiated diplomatic opening of Korea in the 1880s and the subsequent series of encounters that influenced Korean immigration to the United States beginning in 1903. Ground floor, Baird Gallery. Picture courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum Collection. <

### Japanese regional cultural centres

Provided by the Japan Cultural Center in New York, this link features a list of cultural offices of the Japan Foundation, including the headquarters in Tokyo, Japan and all of the twenty-nine regional cultural centres, which are located in five major regions in the world, namely North America, South America, Europe, Asia/Oceania, and the Middle East. The majority of these regional offices also have their own website, featuring information on language training, cultural activities, and information on grants for organizing cross-cultural exchange projects, featuring a wide range of activities in the field of Asian arts, including dance, film, theatre, and the visual arts. Of particular interest is the website of the regional office in Bangkok that contains up-to-date information on various art exhibitions held across Thailand, many of which receive some kind of support from the local Japan Cultural Centre. On the site of the local office in Bangkok, at [www.jfbkk.or.th](http://www.jfbkk.or.th) one can also find information on the 'Under Construction Project' that features seven young international curators who have been working together in creating a series of curatorial platforms in Japan, Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Thailand, and China, featuring contemporary art from the region.

[www.jfny.org/jfny/offices.html](http://www.jfny.org/jfny/offices.html)

### Open performance art platform

Amidst the many links and cross-links on the World Wide Web, it is often difficult to find a well composed website that features up-to-date information on local art events. One of the exceptions is the private run, 'unofficial' website of the Japanese performance artist Arai Shin-ichi, which features important documentation on the first and second 'Open Art Platform Performance Art Festival' that was organized in Beijing and Chengdu in August 2000 and August 2001. The festivals featured live performances by a large group of young and established performance artists from China and abroad. As these are experimental art events that have been placed on the absolute frontlines of art practice in China, visual documentation of these events is often hard to obtain, except through those who are in contact with the different performance artists. Luckily, Arai has now put photographs and captions on each of the performances at the two festivals on his website, presenting the visitor with a good overview on different performance art practices from around the world, which will hopefully foster a better understanding of this field of art practice through the Web.

[www.asahi-net.or.jp/~eets-ari/bipae.html](http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/~eets-ari/bipae.html)  
and: [www.asahi-net.or.jp/~eets-ari/sichuan.html](http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/~eets-ari/sichuan.html)

### Online bibliography

This link provides access to a comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography of modern and contemporary Asian art, mainly of works in European languages. This document, which has been organized predominantly by the art historian John Clark, from the Department of Art History & Theory, University of Sydney, is now available as a PDF-file, making it easy to browse and use the information for personal or institutional references, and furthermore making it easy to print out. Any notable omissions or additions are further welcome by providing a link to two email addresses that can be used for feedback purposes from users, or by filling out a template form provided on the website. <

[www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/arthistory/departments/general/jclark.html](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/arthistory/departments/general/jclark.html)  
and: [www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/arthistory/Courses%202002/](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/arthistory/Courses%202002/)

[ARHT2040ModernAsia.html](http://ARHT2040ModernAsia.html)

# Asian Space

Research >  
General

The space age began with the launch of the Russian artificial satellite Sputnik in 1957 and developed further with the race to the moon between the United States and Russia. This rivalry was characterized by advanced technology and huge budgets. In this process there were spectacular successes, some failures, but also many spin-offs. Europe, Japan, China, and India quickly joined this space club of the superpowers. With the advent of relatively low cost high performance mini-satellites and launchers, the acquisition of indigenous space capabilities by smaller nations in Asia has become possible. How, in what manner, and for what purpose will these capabilities be realized?

By David Soo

Rocket technology has progressed considerably since the days of 'fire arrows' (bamboo poles filled with gunpowder) first used in China around 500 BC, and, during the Sung Dynasty, to repel Mongol invaders at the battle of Kaifeng (Kai-fung fu) in AD 1232. These ancient rockets stand in stark contrast to the present-day Chinese rocket launch vehicles, called the 'Long March', intended to place a Chinese astronaut in space by 2005 and, perhaps, to achieve a Chinese moon-landing by the end of the decade.

In the last decade there has been a dramatic growth in space activities in Asia both in the utilization of space-based services and the production of satellites and launchers. This rapid expansion has led many commentators and analysts to predict that Asia will become a world space power.

The space age has had dramatic affects worldwide with direct developments in space technology influencing telecommunications, meteorological forecasting, earth resource and environmental monitoring, and disaster mitigation (flood, forest fires, and oil spills). Asian nations have been particularly eager to embrace these developments. New and innovative uses for satellites are constantly being explored with potential revolutionary effects, such as in the field of health and telemedicine,\* distance education, crime prevention (piracy on the high seas), food and agricultural planning and production (rice crop monitoring). Space in Asia is very much influenced by the competitive commercial space sector, the emergence of low cost mini-satellites, and the globalization of industrial and financial markets. It is not evident how Asian space will develop in the coming decades in the face of these trends. It is, however, important to understand and assess the factors and forces that shape Asian space activities and development in determining its possible consequences for the region.

*The laws of physics are the same in Tokyo as in Toulouse...*

At present, three Asian nations, Japan, China, and India, have comprehensive end-to-end space capabilities and possess a complete space infrastructure: space technology, satellite manufacturing, rockets, and spaceports.

Already self-sufficient in terms of satellite design and manufacturing, South Korea is currently attempting to join their ranks with its plans to develop a launch site and spaceport. Additionally, nations in Southeast Asia as well as those bordering the Indian subcontinent (Nepal, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) have, or are starting to develop, indigenous space programmes.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has, in varying degrees, embraced space applications using foreign technology and over the past five years or so its space activities have been expanding. Southeast Asia is predicted to become the largest and fastest growing market for commercial space products and applications, driven by telecommunications (mobile and fixed services), the Internet, and remote sensing applications. In the development of this technology, many non-technical factors, such as economics, politics, culture, and history, interact and play important roles.

## Satellite remote sensing – environmental and security issues

Asia, and Southeast Asia in particular, suffers from a long list of recurrent large-scale environmental problems including storms and flooding, forest fires and deforestation, and

crop failures. Thus the space application that has attracted the most attention in this region is remote sensing. Remote sensing satellites equipped with instruments to take photographs of the ground at different wavelengths provide essential information for natural resource accounting, environmental management, disaster prevention and monitoring, land-use mapping, and sustainable development planning. Progress in these applications has been rapid and impressive. ASEAN members, unlike Japan, China, and India, do not have their own remote sensing satellites, however most of its member nations have facilities to receive, process, and interpret such data from American and European satellites. In particular, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore have world-class remote sensing processing facilities and research programmes. ASEAN has plans to develop (and launch) its own satellites and in particular remote sensing satellites.

Obviously, space technologies can also be used for non-peaceful and military purposes (dual use technology). Earth resource satellites, with their high resolution imaging capabilities, can be used for reconnaissance and spying. This strategic use of satellites – of great value for national defence and foreign policy – is of great significance in Asia taking into account the region's potential hot spots: North and South Korea, India and Pakistan, the Spratly Islands, and Taiwan and China, amongst others.

## Zen and the art of satellite manufacturing

Japan is regarded as the dominant space power in Asia and its record of successes and quality of technologies are equal to those of the West. In view of the technological challenges and high risks involved in space activities, a very long, and expensive, learning curve has been followed to obtain those successes achieved. Japan's satellite manufacturing was based on the old and traditional defence and military procurement methodologies as practiced in the US and Europe.

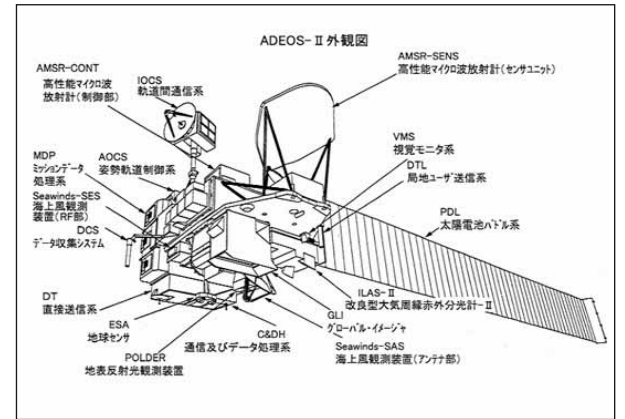
In recent years there have been fundamental changes in the way satellites are designed and built to drastically reduce costs. The emergence of 'small satellites' and their quick adoption by Asian countries as a way to develop low-cost satellite technology and rapidly establish a space capability has given these countries the possibility to shorten their learning curve by a decade or more. The global increase of technology transfer mechanisms and use of readily available commercial technology to replace costly space and military standard components may very well result in a highly competitive Asian satellite manufacturing industry.

The laws of physics are the same in Tokyo as in Toulouse, and the principles of electronics and mechanics know no political or cultural boundaries. However, no such immutability applies to engineering practices and management; they are very much influenced by education, culture, and history. These factors, in turn, have an affect on costs, lead times, product designs and, eventually, international sales. Many Asian nations are sending their engineers to be trained in the West. Highly experienced, they return to work in the growing Asian space industry. Will this acquisition of technical expertise, coupled perhaps with the world-renowned Japanese manufacturing and management techniques, be applied to build world-class satellites and reduce costs?

## Studies in Asian space

The study of Asian space can be based on mainly two perspectives. The first and most common perspective concerns space science and technology and in this field there are many active programmes of research and development. The second perspective could focus on the influence of space applications on society. The relationship between technology and society has been a constant theme in the social sciences and humanities. The impacts of science and technology on society have led to changes in education, cultural values, employment and work, as well as affecting national wealth and well-being. Space technologies and applications have shown to be instruments of change themselves and can thus have profound effects on Asian culture, commerce, and communities. These focuses on the development and influences of Asian space capabilities only touch on some of many potential topics for investigation in the field of Asian space. ◀

The ADEOS-2 satellite configuration showing the layout of satellite and its instruments. ADEOS-2 is the second of the Japanese 'Advanced Earth Observation Satellite' programme.



David Soo, C. Eng is currently an affiliated fellow at the IIAS investigating Asian space. He was staff member for many years at the European Space Agency (ESA) in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, working on the design and development of satellite guidance, navigation, and control systems.  
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**Note >**  
\*The use of real time broadband satellite telecommunications and video links for medical diagnosis and patient care to remote rural communities having no access to doctors and hospitals.

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# Globalizing Media and Local Society in Indonesia

Report >  
Southeast Asia

13-14 September  
2002  
Leiden,  
the Netherlands

Media can be defined as a meeting point of many conflicting forces in a modern society and is, therefore, a highly complex issue. The study of media has been conducted in a wide variety of disciplines, such as sociology, mass communication, cultural studies, political science, and anthropology. Although there have been numerous approaches and theories in media studies, we have not yet found any clear-cut satisfactory perspective. The workshop 'Globalizing media and local society in Indonesia' tried to grasp the complex and complicated mediascape in Indonesia, which has experienced drastic change in the last decade. The participants discussed various topics ranging from transnational Internet and national TV to local radio stations. Here we consider two of these topics, namely, the relationship between media and politics and the problem of globalization and localization, both of which are highly controversial in media studies in general.

By Makoto Koike

Some participants discussed the role of media in the collapse of the New Order in 1998. Based on interviews with television journalists, who had worked in the newsrooms, Ishadi SK convincingly described how they came to side with the people's Reformasi (reformation) movement against the owners of the TV stations, who were Suharto's children and cronies. The critical news these journalists broadcast hastened the collapse of the New Order, which had implemented the privatization of television. Merlyna Lim developed this theme, looking at how the newest technology, the Internet, played a crucial role in supporting the Reformasi and democratization movements. For example, the emails about Suharto's wealth, originally written by George Aditjondro, were published on a website launched by Indonesians in Germany. Some Indonesian students found Aditjondro's articles on the Internet and printed them for their friends and family. Finally, newspaper sellers got hold of them and sold photocopies of the articles on the street, and this controversial information spread widely in Indonesia. This is an interesting case in which a new medium and traditional medium were effectively combined. Merlyna Lim also considered the negative role of the Internet, and how it helped to fragment Indonesia into religious factions, focusing on the website of Laskar Jihad, an Islamic fundamentalist group.

This contradictory character of media dynamics in the post-Suharto era did not escape the participants' notice. From an optimistic point of view, the drastic political change brought about by the stepping down of Suharto paved the way for

more democratic and liberal media, which in turn led to the emergence of a 'public sphere' and 'civil society' in Indonesia. Edwin Jurriëns highlighted the role of private news radio in Java in representing the idea of civil society. On the other hand, Dedy N. Hidayat and Sasa Djuarsa Sendjaja showed vividly how the collapse of the New Order opened a Pandora's box of so-called hate media exploiting ethnic and religious conflicts in Ambon. Both speakers referred to mob attacks against media organizations. Veven Sp. Wardhana also discussed this problem, focusing on Islamic discourse on television programmes: it is very common for Muslim groups to rush to the television stations whose programmes they regard as unacceptable.

The actions of such Muslim movements are considered to be a response to the globalization of television contents. Though only a few participants overtly discussed media globalization, it is an undeniable element of the contemporary mediascape. Interestingly, the conference participants did not endorse the widely held belief that globalization is a recent phenomenon that creates uniformity, and one which is often seen to be conterminous with Americanization. On the contrary, media globalization and localization are concurrent phenomena. Amrih Widodo discussed the popularity of Indonesian *sinetron* (television drama) amongst the middle class, which is an example of the myriad localizing processes of global television. Latin American and Indian TV drama supplied the formula for *sinetron* as used by the most successful producer in Indonesia, Raam Punjabi, who is an Indonesian of Indian descent. His drama, *Tersanjung* ('Flattered'), has achieved nationwide popularity and is amazing-

ly popular with female audiences in the Javanese village where I carried out ethnographic fieldwork. In my own presentation, I explored the mixture of the global and local and the traditional and modern in rural Java today. Focusing on foreign television programmes from the perspective of a cultural anthropologist, Gareth Barkin analyzed the 'domestication' effect of subtitling and translation from English into Indonesian. The consumption of American dramas in Indonesia always entails this kind of localization process. For example, Trans Television broadcasts an American series, *Sex and the City*, which is well-known for its overt sexual themes and language. The translator re-wrote the text of the drama, guided by her understanding of national standards. Interestingly enough, this radical drama has so far escaped the wrath of Muslim groups.

In the province of Riau, which is very close to Malaysia and Singapore, local people watch foreign TV programmes and listen to radio from the neighbouring countries. Suryadi discussed how some private stations relay programmes from foreign radio stations even though the Indonesian government prohibits it. The relationship between this kind of transnational radio broadcast and the revitalization of the Malay ethnic identity is an interesting question which needs to be further researched.

We can, therefore, discern diverse global waves crossing Indonesia's national boundaries. Nevertheless, John Postill reminded us of the importance of nation states as cultural areas, based on his comparative study of popular media in Sarawak, Malaysia, and Bali, Indonesia. Essentially, we need more research into the dynamics of the global, national, and local in the wider Asian region, in which media and politics are increasingly intertwined. ◀

*Prof. Makoto Koike is Professor of Cultural Anthropology at St. Andrews University, Osaka, Japan. As an affiliate fellow at the IIAS (4 February 2002 until 26 September 2002) he researched both the Indian contribution to the Indonesian media, cinema, and television drama and the local reception of mass media in a Javanese village.*

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# Fatwas and Religious Authority in Indonesia

Report >  
Southeast Asia

31 October 2002  
Leiden,  
the Netherlands

May a woman serve in a position of authority over men? Is jihad licit in Maluku? Who are the upholders of orthodoxy? These questions have recently been put before Muslim scholars and institutions in Indonesia and have received answers in the form of fatwas. Fatwas are the pieces of advice from the perspective of Islamic law on topical issues affecting both individuals and society in general. Consequently they are important indicators within the discourse of religious authority. They were also the subject of last October's meeting of the Islam in Indonesia project, attended by some sixty participants, both from the Leiden scholarly community and beyond.<sup>1</sup>

By Nico Kaptein & Michael Laffan

Kees van Dijk's opening lecture introduced a variety of regional cases (Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia), highlighting the tension between religious authority as expressed in fatwas on the one hand and political authority on the other. It was shown that in some cases religious authority was invoked successfully to overcome political tensions, while in others it was not.

The following three papers addressed the question of why fatwas are requested. The first, delivered by Khalid Masud, was of a general theoretical nature and as such, illuminating for the broader theme. Masud discussed the Quranic origins of *istifta'* (the formal question posed in order to obtain a fatwa), its further development and institutionalization. Masud suggested that it is the *istifta'* rather than the resulting fatwa which reflects a community's political and social conditions.

Certainly this contribution meshed well with Jajat Burhanuddin's paper, which addressed the dialogue established between the Egyptian reformist

journal *al-Manar* (1898-1936) and the Malay-Indonesian *Archipelago*. By examining requests for fatwas addressed to *al-Manar*, Burhanuddin pointed out that there were three sorts of Southeast Asian petitioners: Malay-Indonesian students in the Middle East who seem to have formed the most important channels of transmission of 'Salafi' reformist thought<sup>2</sup> to their homeland; persons of Arab descent living in Southeast Asia; and finally, Muslims indigenous to the region.

In the following paper, read by Martin van Bruinessen, Noorhaidi Hasan gave a contemporary account of how an Indonesian organization for Islamic propagation has used its links with conservatives in Saudi Arabia and Yemen to justify the formation of a paramilitary force. This force, Laskar Jihad, was dispatched to the Moluccas to wage jihad in 2000. The main crux of the paper did not revolve around jihad itself but interrogated the penetration of Salafi discourse in Indonesia and the networks of authority it has established. According to Noorhaidi, most Salafi groups had remained essentially apolitical until the crisis. He therefore

analysed the changes in this discourse and the role fatwas issued in Arabia have played in the process.

The three remaining papers each discussed influential bodies in present-day Indonesia that employ fatwas as part of their arsenal of authority. Nur Ichwan examined how the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) has attempted to play a proactive role in politics since its inception under Suharto. Focusing on what he calls its 'discursive products' – ranging from silence to fatwas – Ichwan argued that the MUI has attempted to guide the reformation process in post-Suharto Indonesia. Nico Kaptein then presented Syamsul Anwar's paper on fatwas of the Muhammadiyah movement. The most interesting case presented was related to whether a woman could serve in a position of authority over men. The resulting fatwa reinterpreted Prophetic traditions and Quranic verses with modern sociological interpretations, declaring that a woman could indeed be appointed. In doing so, Anwar argued that the fatwa reflects Muhammadiyah's attempt to promote a more dynamic understanding of religion differing from the estab-

lished views within the books of Islamic substantive law.

Next Michael Laffan described his recent encounter with a traditionalist organization that does employ such books. In July 2002, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) held consultative sessions to formulate topical fatwas. Laffan described the debates before examining how they have affected the language and substance of fatwas on such topics as the role of the sharia, and the permissibility of suicide bombs. Laffan concluded that the methodologies adopted, as well as the results and justifications, were uneven and show that whilst the membership might apply pressure to discuss an issue or to call for a fatwa, the resulting declarations are largely shaped by the political concerns of the executive.

The final session of the workshop was intended to provide an overview of the meaning of fatwas in the Indonesian context; the results suggested a wider relevance. The discussants returned to ask questions about what a fatwa is, and indeed how Islamic authority is constructed. Of particular

interest was the choice of terminology in the opinion released, and just how enforceable it might be, whether as 'a piece of advice' or, perhaps, a 'ruling'. Although many of the debates were not resolved last October, the project is making good progress. A selection of the above papers is being considered for publication. ◀

*Dr Michael Laffan completed his PhD on the history of Islamic nationalism in colonial Indonesia. In January 2002, he joined the IIAS project on 'Islam in Indonesia', where he is concentrating on the competing discourses of traditionalism and modernism.*  
*m.laffan@let.leidenuniv.nl*

*Dr Nico Kaptein is research coordinator of the project 'Islam in Indonesia', coordinator of the Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies (INIS), and current secretary of the Islamic Studies Programme at Leiden University.*  
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## Notes >

- 1 The annual meeting of the KNAW/CNWS/ISIM-sponsored research programme 'Islam in Indonesia' took place in Leiden on 31 October 2002. For more information, see: [www.iias.nl/iias/agenda/archief/31102002.htm](http://www.iias.nl/iias/agenda/archief/31102002.htm)
- 2 The term 'Salafi' derives from the phrase *al-salaf al-salih*, lit. 'the pious generation'. Confusingly, this is used both by followers of the modernist movement, led in Cairo by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida, and the Wahabiyya movement of Arabia, which is now effectively the state doctrine of Saudi Arabia.

# > IAS Research Programmes

## Islam in Indonesia: the Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century

This 4-year cooperative research programme aims at studying and documenting important changes, which occurred in religious – especially Muslim – authority in Indonesia during the past century and which have contributed significantly to the shaping of the present nationhood. Its main donor is the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW); co-sponsors are: ISIM, CNWS, and the IIAS. The programme furthermore cooperates with several research institutions in Indonesia, such as the Islamic State Universities (IAIN).

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www.ias.nl/ias/research/dissemination/

## The Syntax of the Languages of Southern China

This research programme aims at describing and analyzing a number of syntactic phenomena in six languages spoken in Southern China comparing them in order to contribute to further

development of the theory of language and the human language capacity. The research focus is on classifiers, modifiers, and possessors in the nominal domain; and on aspectual particles, resultatives and sentence-final particles in the sentential/verbal domain.

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## ABIA South and Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology Index

The ABIA Index online database covers publications on prehistory, archaeology and art history, material culture, inscriptions, coins and seals of South and Southeast Asia. The IIAS is the centre for regions outside Asia, with support from the Gonda Foundation. Between 2002 and 2006 the project is coordinated by PGIAR, Colombo, with support from the Central Cultural Fund. Offices have also been opened at the IGNCA, New Delhi, and the Research Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences, Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta. ABIA Index volume 1 is available at the IIAS. Volume 2 is available at www.brill.nl

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## CLARA: Changing Labour Relations in Asia

This research programme aims to build a comparative and historical understanding of labour relations in different parts of Asia which are undergoing diverse historical processes and experiences in terms of their national economies, their links with international markets, and the nature of state intervention. Several types of activities, namely: coordination of workshops; research projects; short-term research fellowships; networking; publications; and the setting up of a databank are promoted. CLARA is supported by the IIAS and the International Institute of Social History (IISH).

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www.ias.nl/host/abia/index.html

## Genomics in Asia: Socio-Genetic Marginalization

This new research programme studies the socio-political implications and practices of the development and application of the new biomedical and genetic tech-



The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a post-doctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Its main objective is to encourage the study of Asia and to promote national and international cooperation in this field. The institute focuses on the humanities and social sciences and, where relevant, at the interface between these disciplines and sciences like medicine, economy, politics, technology, law, and environmental studies.

The institute endeavours to develop a dynamic and versatile approach in its research programmes. Research fellows at a post-PhD level are temporarily employed by or affiliated to the institute, either within the framework of a collaborative research programme, or on an individual basis. Always ready to anticipate new developments, the IIAS opts for the enhancement of a broad, high quality level of knowledge on Asia. The institute organizes seminars, workshops, and conferences, and publishes a newsletter with a circulation of approximately 21,500 copies. Moreover the IIAS has established a database for Asian Studies, which contains information on researchers and research related institutes worldwide.

The IIAS acts as an international mediator, bringing various parties together. In keeping with the Dutch tradition of transferring goods and ideas, the IIAS works as a clearinghouse of

knowledge and information. This entails activities such as providing information services, constructing international networks, and setting up international cooperative projects and research programmes. In this way, the IIAS functions as a window on Europe for non-European scholars and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Asia and Europe.

The IIAS maintains the daily secretariat of the European Alliance for Asian Studies (Asia-Alliance: www.asia-alliance.org) as well as the Secretariat General of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS: www.icassecretariat.org). Regular updates on Asia-Alliance and ICAS activities are provided in the IIAS Newsletter. <

www.ias.nl

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## New IIAS Publications

**Antons, Christoph (ed.)**  
**Law and Development in East and Southeast Asia**  
London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon/IIAS  
Asian Studies Series (2003), 387 pp.,  
ISBN 0-7007-1321-2 (hb)



**Benjamin, Geoffrey and Cynthia Chou (eds.)**  
**Tribal Communities in the Malay World: Historical, Cultural and Social Perspectives**  
Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies/IIAS (2002), 489 pp., ISBN 981-230-167-4 (hb)



**Chou, Cynthia**  
**Indonesian Sea Nomads: Money, Magic and Fear of the Orang Suku Laut**  
London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon/IIAS  
Asian Studies Series (2003), 222 pp.,  
ISBN 0-7007-1724-2 (hb)



**Douw, Leo, Cen Huang and David Ip (eds.)**  
**Rethinking Chinese Transnational Enterprises: Cultural affinity and business strategies**  
Richmond, Surrey: IIAS and Curzon Press (2001), 281 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1524-x (hb), illustrated



**Hockx, Michel and Ivo Smits (eds.)**  
**Reading East Asian Writing; The Limits of Literary Theory**  
London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon/IIAS  
Asian Studies Series (2003), 299 pp.,  
ISBN 0-7007-1760-9 (hb)



**Munshi, Shoma (ed.)**  
**Images of the 'Modern Woman' in Asia: Global Media, Local Meanings**  
Richmond, Surrey: IIAS and Curzon Press (2001), 211 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1343-3 (hb), 0-7007-1353-0 (pb), illustrated





15 March 2003 – 1 July 2003

The IIAS accommodates postdoctoral researchers in Asian Studies in a variety of categories. Sponsorship of these fellowships contributes to the institute's aim for augmenting expertise and bolstering the exploration of underdeveloped fields of Asian Studies in the Netherlands.

One of the most important goals of the IIAS is to share scholarly expertise by offering universities and other research institutes the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge of resident fellows. IIAS fellows are invited to lecture, participate

in seminars, cooperate on research projects etc. The IIAS is most willing to mediate in establishing contacts and considers both national and international integration of Asian Studies to be very important objectives.

The IIAS wants to stress the cooperation between foreign researchers and the Dutch field. With regard to the affiliated fellowships, the IIAS therefore offers to mediate in finding external Dutch funding, should the scholar have not yet found ways of financing his/her visit to the Netherlands. For more information, please refer to the IIAS fellowship application form, which can be obtained from the IIAS secretariat or can be found at: [www.iias.nl/iias/applform.html](http://www.iias.nl/iias/applform.html)

The IIAS distinguishes six categories of fellows:

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Affiliated fellow  
*Globalisation: an investigation into the emerging Asian space industry. A new force in space?*  
4 October 2002 – 4 October 2003

## Central Asia

**Dr Mehdi Parvizi Amineh** (the Netherlands)  
Stationed at Leiden and the Amsterdam Branch Office. Research fellow.  
*Conflict, security and development in the post-Soviet era: toward regional economic cooperation in the Central Asian region*  
1 July 2002 – 31 December 2003

**Tsewang Lama** (Nepal)  
Affiliated fellow  
*Antecedents of Bon Religion in Tibet*  
5 March 2003 - 1 April 2003

**Dr Alex McKay** (Australia)  
Affiliated fellow  
*The history of Tibet and the Indian Himalayas*  
1 October 2000 – 1 October 2005

**Dr Cecilia Odé** (the Netherlands)  
Research fellow  
*Voices from the tundra and taiga*  
1 July 2002 – 1 July 2003

## South Asia

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*The early and historical development of the medieval Indian astrology*  
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1 May 2003 – 31 July 2003

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*Capital punishment in Nepal: a historical perspective*  
1 May 2003 – 30 June 2003

**Ilona Manevskaia, MA** (Russia)  
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*Characteristics of the commentarial genre in the Mahayana Buddhism*  
1 April 2003 – 30 August 2003

**Dr Suhnu Ram Sharma** (India)  
Gonda fellow  
*Grammar of Manclad language*  
15 April 2003 – 15 July 2003  
**Dr Lidia Sudyka** (Poland)  
Gonda fellow  
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3 February 2003 – 4 April 2003

## Southeast Asia

**Dr Andi Faisal Bakti** (Canada)  
Research fellow within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia'  
*Majlis taklim, pengajian and civil society: how do Indonesian Majlis Taklim and Pengajian contribute to civil society in Indonesia?*  
15 May 2002 – 15 November 2003

**Jajat Burhanudin, MA** (Indonesia)  
PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia'  
*The making of Islamic modernism. The transmission of Islamic reformism from the Middle East to the Malay-Indonesian archipelago in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century*  
18 September 2001 – 18 September 2005

**Muhammad Dahlan, MA** (Indonesia)  
PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia'  
*The role of the Indonesian state institute for Islamic studies in the redistribution of Muslim authority*  
15 June 2001 – 15 June 2005

**Dr Peter van Eeuwijk** (Switzerland)  
Affiliated fellow  
*Growing old in the city: health transition among elderly in North Sulawesi, Indonesia*  
15 July 2003 – 30 October 2003

**Myrna Eindhoven, MA** (the Netherlands)  
Stationed at the ASSR. PhD student within the ASSR/IIAS/WOTRO programme 'Transnational Society, Media and Citizenship'.  
*Rays of new images: ICT's, state ethnopolitics and identity formation among the Mentawaians (West Sumatra)*  
1 November 2000 – 1 November 2004

**Dr Arndt Graf** (Germany)  
Affiliated fellow  
*Humor as a tool of political marketing in reformasi Indonesia*  
24 February 2003 – 31 March 2003

**Dr Brett Warren Hough** (Australia)  
Affiliated fellow  
*Performing arts in Bali  
Violence in Bali*  
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PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia'  
*The making and unmaking of statism. Islam: state production of Islamic discourse in New Order Indonesia and afterwards*  
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**Jasper van de Kerkhof, MA** (the Netherlands)  
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*Indonesianisasi and nationalism. The emancipation and reorientation of the economy and the world of industry and commerce*  
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**Dr Michael Laffan** (Australia)  
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1 October 2002 – 1 October 2006

**Dr Hotze Lont** (the Netherlands)  
Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office. Affiliated fellow within the KNAW programme: 'Indonesian Society in Transition'.  
*Coping with crises in Indonesia*  
5 November 2001 – December 2004

**Dr Johan Meuleman** (the Netherlands)  
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1 January 2001 – 31 December 2004

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*The jihad paramilitary force: Islam and identity in the era of transition in Indonesia*  
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*The changing role of the Indonesian Madrasah and the dissemination of Muslim authority*  
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IIAS Extraordinary Chair  
*Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia*  
In Leiden: 10 February 2003 – 30 February 2003

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Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office. Affiliated fellow, KNAW programme: 'Indonesian Society in Transition'.  
*Coping with crises in Indonesia*  
25 September 2001 – December 2004

**Prof. Md Salleh Yaapar** (Malaysia)  
Professorial fellow, holder of the European Chair of Malay Studies  
*Pantun and Pantourm: a study in Malay-European literary relations*  
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## East Asia

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*The life, death, and posthumous career of Yang Jisheng, 1516 – 1555*  
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*Law, foreign direct investment and economic development in Taiwan 1992-2002*  
18 December 2002 – 18 June 2003

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Affiliated fellow, sponsored by NUFFIC  
*China's industrial structure and sustainable development after entering WTO*  
1 September 2002 – 30 June 2003

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*The Syntax of the Languages of Southern China'*  
1 January 2001 – 31 December 2005

**Dr SADOI Yuri** (Japan)  
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by the Mitsubishi Motors Corporation  
*The problems of the Japanese automobile production system in the different cultural setting: the case of the Netherlands*  
1 September 1999 – 1 September 2003

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*'The Syntax of the Languages of Southern China'*  
1 January 2001 – 31 December 2005

## Asia Alliance

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The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a postdoctoral institute established in 1993 by Dutch universities and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, to encourage Asian Studies in the humanities and social sciences and to promote national and international scientific cooperation in these fields. The IIAS is mainly financed by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences.

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#### EIAS

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For more information also see:

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# Directors of Urban Change in Asia and Europe

Report >  
General

12-14 December  
2002  
Leiden,  
the Netherlands

As the absolute and relative numbers of Asians living in cities are ever increasing, the population of countless Asian cities has reached over a million residents and some cities already have more than ten million inhabitants, it was more than expedient to organize a workshop on the so-called 'directors of urban change'. These 'directors' may be defined as actors with clear ideas about urban development and who are in a position to formulate and influence future developments. Two major questions are, then, to be asked: (1) what do the directors of new urban developments envisage for the future; and (2) how do the directors manage to realize their ideas? In dealing with these questions at the workshop 'Directors of urban change', most participants chose to discuss the current development of one or two Asian cities.



Frank Weeber

Hong Kong as seen from Victoria Peak.

By Freek Colombijn & Peter J.M. Nas

Whereas, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Europe was the continent where most of the largest cities were to be found, today eight Asian locations figure prominently on the list of the fifteen largest cities in the world: Shanghai, Tokyo, Beijing, Bombay, Calcutta, Jakarta, Seoul, and Madras. Their unprecedented rate of population growth and absolute population figures, ranging from twelve to twenty-three million inhabitants, pose considerable problems for their directors of urban change, problems that the European cities were never forced to face.

In order to enrich the comparative perspective, the workshop also invited papers on the European cities of London, Rome, and Cologne and on medium-sized Asian cities, including some relatively small national capitals, such as Colombo and Kuala Lumpur. Small as they may be (Colombo having a population of less than a million inhabitants), the national governments are already interfering with urban management and have ambitions to attain global status for their capital. Other participants contributed papers on provincial capitals and the way their urban administrators aspire to the example of the larger, national capital. Some 'chains of aspirations' were discerned. For example, the Indonesian provincial capitals of Makassar, Surabaya, and Padang copy models derived from the national capital. Meanwhile, Jakarta looks for inspiration at Singapore: smaller but far more modern. Singapore, in turn, is envious of Tokyo: the only large and modern city in the Pacific region.

A directly tangible result of the workshop is the planned publication of most of the papers in a collective volume. Only when the final versions of the

papers have been submitted will the workshop organizers attempt to draw firm conclusions, but a few tentative general observations can already be made.

Directors of urban change are competing for (international) investors. One way to attract investors is by creating an imaginative, spectacular, yet functional cityscape. Upon joining the regional or global competition for investors, urban administrators must comply with international standards of what is supposedly an imaginative architecture; cityscapes thus tend to become uniform. Yet, ironically, for their city to be distinct from others, the urban administrators need to come up with something divergent from standard architecture. Local and provincial city administrators and national governments, making a showcase of their respective national capitals, are locked in this paradox. Also, real estate developers involved in housing projects face the same dilemma, torn between fulfilling universal requirements and the need to build something distinctive. It is a paradox that also lies at the root of the 'chains of aspiration' noted above.

Another issue is that directors of urban change of all sorts, including the urban administration, the national government, real estate developers, the

president's wife, and grassroots NGOs, show no intention of cooperation. Their clashing visions, or indeed complete lack of vision of how to develop a city, generally result in a rather disorderly end product. More than anywhere else, perhaps, this is the case in cities situated in countries going through a transition from a strict regime to a more liberal (capitalist) economy. Examples can be found in Tehran, Nanjing, the Pearl River Delta, and Hanoi.

Can the natural environment be considered a director of urban change? One author's case in point, though stretching the concept a little too far, was quite well made. Issues of wastewater and solid waste management, land subsidence due to over-extraction of ground water (leading to regular floods), and badly polluted air are important issues to be addressed, especially in mega-cities.

As a follow-up to the workshop, conveners Freek Colombijn and Peter Nas, in close cooperation with some of the participants, are trying to acquire funds to develop the workshop's theme into a research programme with junior scholars, with the hope that specific themes relating to the concept of directors of urban change may then be elaborated in subsequent workshops. <

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#### Editors' note >

This ASEF/Alliance workshop received grants from: ASEF-Asia Alliance; Leids Universiteits Fonds (LUF); Social Science Research Council of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO-MaGW); and Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies (CNWS). The workshop was convened by Freek Colombijn and Peter J.M. Nas with secretarial assistance from Marloes Rozing.

For agenda details of all

ASEF/Alliance workshops, please check this issue's Conference Agenda (p.54-55) or visit [www.asia-alliance.org/workshopseries](http://www.asia-alliance.org/workshopseries)

# After September 11: Islamism in Southeast Asia

Islamism, which is defined by some scholars as political discourse and action that attempts to centre Islam within the political order (Roy 1994; Sayyid 1997), has been a conspicuous phenomenon in different parts of the Muslim world, mainly since the eruption of the Iranian revolution in 1979. Southeast Asia has been no exception. This region has witnessed a proliferation of Islamist movements, which have been highly assertive in seeking the restoration of 'authenticity' and the implementation of Islamic visions in all aspects of life. During this period, Islamism has been involved in a contestation for the public sphere, although its challenges have never significantly threatened ruling regimes in the region. The proponents of Islamism have actively produced counter-hegemonic discourses by proposing Islam as an alternative to the existing political, social, economic, and cultural system. The panel 'After September 11: Islamism in Southeast Asia' aims to examine the impact of the present increase of Islamism in the region.

## Agenda > Southeast Asia

19-22 August 2003  
Singapore

By Noorhaidi Hasan

Since 11 September 2001, when American airliners hijacked by terrorists struck the twin towers of the World Trade Center and part of the Pentagon, the dynamics of Islamism in Southeast Asia has apparently undergone some significant changes. This tragedy and its repercussions have not only facilitated the move of Islamism into the centre of the discursive field, but also radicalized its discourses and actions. It appears that the hostility to the United States in particular and the West in general has become a dominant colour of Islamism in Southeast Asia after 11 September.

In Indonesia, for instance, the rhetoric of global holy war (jihad) against the so-called 'West-cum-Zionist conspiracy' has increasingly enjoyed wide currency in popular political discourse. Massive demonstrations exploded in several cities, demanding the implementation of the Islamic sharia, viewed as the only answer to challenge the hegemonic system imposed by the West. Similarly in Malaysia, placards and banners hoisted with slogans like 'we love jihad' could be found everywhere and Osama bin Laden appeared to be a hero for thousands of young people. In the Philippines, Abu Sayyaf's radical Islamist group intensified their terrorist actions by kidnapping hundreds of foreign tourists. The peak of radical expressions of Islamism occurred

when high explosive bombs exploded in Legian, Bali, on 22 October 2002, taking the lives of 185 foreign tourists.

It is of interest to note that, while the world's hegemonic powers have become more rigorous in presenting the negative image of Islamism associated with terrorist actions, Islamist media has flourished and attracted new audiences. At the same time clashes and tensions have increased among Muslims from different groups, as they increasingly dispute religious symbols and public spheres. The political dynamics of the region in general have changed, particularly where various governments have been urged to put political pressures on Islamist groups, the targets of the global anti-terrorist actions led by the United States.

### Objective of the panel

Our panel at ICAS 3 will focus on the issues around Muslim discursive disputes, demands for implementation of the sharia, shifting attitudes of the ruling regimes to Islamism, presentation of Islamism as projected in the media, and long-term impacts of the increasing Islamism on Islam in the region.

Focusing on the events that have followed in the wake of the 11 September tragedy, this panel will seek to answer several basic questions, which include: What are the dynamics of Islamism in Southeast Asia after 11 September? What is the significance of anti-Western sentiments for the groups or political parties bringing such discourse into the public sphere of various countries? To what extent will anti-Western sentiments influence the societal discursive formation of Southeast Asian Muslims? How is the future of 'peaceful Islam', which

still constitutes a dominant character of the majority of Muslims in Southeast Asia vis-à-vis 'radical Islam', associated with anti-Western sentiments?

The participants of this panel will comprise scholars of sociology, anthropology, political science, Islamic studies, and media studies, who have been particularly concerned with Southeast Asia. The panel will be addressed to scholars, observers, and those who are interested in the new political developments in Southeast Asia in relation to the issue of Islam.

We believe it to be of importance to analyse the changing trends in Islam in Southeast Asia in the wake of 11 September tragedy, and the subsequent excessive campaigns by the United States against 'Islamic terrorism'. Understanding the changing trends in Islam in Southeast Asia in relation to the 11 September issue will contribute to a more comprehensive study about Southeast Asia in particular and Asia in general, regions which are facing the challenges of rapid modernization and globalization in the twenty-first century. <

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## ICAS Secretariat

In June 1998 the first International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) materialized. The convention, which was organized by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, the Netherlands) and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS, USA), was brought into existence because European and American scholars felt a need for closer interaction. Although many individual contacts between researchers from both sides of the Atlantic had already been established, an open, loosely organized forum for discussion was still missing. This forum would allow specialists from all disciplines, regions and paradigms to informally meet, exchange ideas, and engage in new plans for joint research activities. At ICAS 2 in Berlin it was decided to establish a permanent ICAS Secretariat General, promoting and stimulating ICAS conventions, serving as its archival and information centre, safeguarding the expertise that has been gathered through ICAS, and instrumental in drawing up a regulatory framework for the ICAS activities. The secretariat actively pursues making ICAS visible through its presence at major meetings of Asia scholars and through regular reports both in the IIAS Newsletter and on the ICAS Secretariat website. The secretariat is stationed at the IIAS in the Netherlands. For more information please feel free to contact us. <

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### Note >

At ICAS 3, the IIAS will present several panels dealing with a large variety of topics. For more information, see the next issue of the *IIAS Newsletter*.

## ICAS 3 Singapore Update

The last months, the ICAS 3 organization committee has been working on the selection of papers and panels. As of January 2003, close to 900 paper proposals have been received. We are also happy to announce that professor Prasenjit Duara of the University of Chicago will deliver the ICAS keynote entitled *Crossing Boundaries: A personal journey in Asia research*.

Please visit the ICAS3 website for the abstract of Professor Duara's paper, the list of approved papers to date and general information on ICAS 3. A new 'forum page' has been added to the website to facilitate dialogue among the ICAS3 participants. As for the organizational aspects of the conference, please note that the deadline for early registration has been extended to 31 March 2003. <

ICAS 3 website  
[www.fas.nus.edu.sg/icas3](http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/icas3)

# Bangkok in the Age of Partnership

## Second TANAP Workshop

The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya are full of events such as ceremonies for the Supreme-Holy-Lord-Omnipotent, and the King's holy compassions and angers concerning his beloved Siam, especially in times of conspiracy. Westerners appear to have little significance for the Thai kingdom (for a rare appearance see the annals of the time of the famous king Narai, 1656-1688). The Dutch are only mentioned twice: when they transported holy Buddhist monks to Sri Lanka in 1744 and when their ships were destroyed in 1766. Were they that marginal? Young historians try to formulate new answers to old puzzles.

Report >  
General

24-26 October 2002  
Bangkok, Thailand

By Hendrik E. Niemeijer

The second TANAP workshop, 'Asia in the age of partnership', held in the shadow of the ruins of Ayutthaya in the cool conference room of Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, enjoyed support from the IIAS, the Netherlands Royal Embassy, and the Netherlands Unesco Committee. It was inaugurated by His Excellency Mr Gerard J.H.C. Kramer, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University (the host of the workshop), Dr M.R. Kalaya Tingasabadh. The opening speech was held by Prof. J.L. Blussé van Oud Albas, programme director.

In the presence of several foreign ambassadors the workshop opened with an interesting session on Thai-Dutch diplomatic and trade relations, 1604-1767. The Thai historian Dr Dhiravat na Pombejra held an opening speech on the nature of our historical knowledge of Thailand and the use of Thai and Dutch sources. After that, two Thai TANAP PhD students presented interesting papers: Bhawan Ruangsilp attempted to reconstruct a Portuguese diplomatic mission to the court of Ayutthaya in 1639, whereas Supaporn Ariyasajsiskul dealt with the VOC involvement in the tin trade in Ligor.

### New studies on intra-Asian trade

A group of twenty international scholars, acting as supervisors, had been invited to comment on the papers, so as to share their research experience with beginners in an open atmosphere, thus novice PhD students were exposed to a critical academic atmosphere as had been the case at the previous workshop in Singapore. The Japanese PhD students Ryuto Shimada and Atsushi Ota presented their respective

research results on the inter-Asian competition for Japanese copper and the rural society of Banten in the eighteenth century. In contrast, other debates concentrated on primary research orientations and methodological problems, such as the papers on South-African history, and those on diplomatic and political history.

Of particular interest were the papers offering new evidence on the complexities of the intra-Asian commodity trade and its economic basis. Anjana Singh focussed on how the Dutch-Indian port town Cochin functioned in the eighteenth century, while Hoang-Anh Tuan from Hanoi presented a paper on Dutch-Vietnamese trade relations, 1637-1700, with specific reference to Tonkin.

### Japan's copper exports

Shimada's paper on the inter-Asian economic competition for copper deserves further elaboration. When new Japanese copper mines, such as the Osarizawa Mines (1666) and the Besshi Mines (1691) came into operation, the export of copper became big business, first for Japan's domestic market, but also in terms of exports. After reaching its late seventeenth-century peak of some 90,000 piculs a year (1 picul equals 122 pounds), production slowly decreased in the course of the eighteenth century. To protect its domestic market, the Japanese even restricted the copper exports to 15,000 piculs a year in 1715.

Did the handful of VOC copper ships make a difference to Asian economies? Shimada argues that it did indeed. Outside Japan, in China, Vietnam, and, in particular, South Asia, for example, copper was widely used for the production of currency. Its regular supply may have boosted the regional and local economy. Made from a relatively cheap metal, copper coins were in wide use among the common people, such as textile producers. Shimada believes that serial data on the fluctuations in the export, re-export, and sales of copper may tell us more about the mechanisms and dynamics of both intra-Asian trade and how local and regional economies functioned.

As it already owned large ships suitable for long-distance deep-sea navigation and had access to the Japanese market, the VOC became heavily involved in the sale of copper in South Asia (Bengal, Coromandel, Malabar, Surat, and Ceylon), in Persia as well as in Mocha. From 1725 to 1760 the VOC made particularly good profits, selling some 60 per cent of its purchased Japanese copper on the South Asian markets. Is it possible to demonstrate that the yearly sale of some 300,000 pounds of copper in Bengal, in Coromandel, or on Ceylon really affected the regional economies? Without doubt the merchant communities of Masulipatnam, Nagapatnam, Hugly, Colombo, and other port towns profited from the imports.

### Ligor's tin trade

The Thai historian Supaporn Ariyasajsiskul looked at the tin trade in Ligor, the present southern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat. Ligor was a well-known port to Chinese and other traders, where black pepper was for sale as well as tin. Europeans had claimed their share of the black pepper market at the beginning of the seventeenth century, until pepper prices dropped sharply in Europe. In 1632 the VOC sided with Ayutthaya when the Siamese throne pressed its claims to Ligor. During a punishing expedition by Siamese forces, the rebellious Ligor King and his wife were blown up in the palace, which was full of ammunition. Ligor's pepper plantations were also completely destroyed. After the conquest of Malacca in 1641, the VOC developed a strategy to monopolize the tin trade on both sides of the Peninsula, with Kedah, Perak, and Ujung Salang (Phuket) on the one side and Patani and Ligor on the other. During the reign of King Naria, the VOC succeeded in securing exclusive contracts with Ayutthaya and purchased 140,000 to 300,000 pounds of tin per year. Thus Ariyasajsiskul argues that the VOC and Siam were 'unavoidable allies'. The VOC needed Siam to counter Portuguese and, later, English competitors, and Siam needed a strong European ally for military aid and overseas transportation services. But Ligor, after all, was on the very periphery of the Siamese court and sometimes the Council of Ligor simply ignored both Siamese demands and VOC threats. In the eighteenth century the Dutch hesitated more than once: should they leave Ayutthaya altogether and deal with local kings instead?

For Ariyasajsiskul, her research findings confirm that the pre-modern history of Asian trade is foremost the history of conflicting and competitive parties striving for their own short-term interests rather than for long-term trading contracts with large trading organizations focussed on long-distance trade. A strong European counterpart such as the VOC simply became progressively entrapped in a wasps' nest of political and economic struggles between the centre (Ayutthaya) and the periphery (Ligor). Support for the centre may have temporarily led to profits, but in the end trading privileges were lost to peripheral forces.

### Canton's tea trade

Liu Yong, a student from Xiamen, looked at direct Dutch-China trade under the so-called China Committee between 1757 and 1795. During the seventeenth century, Chinese merchants from Canton sold their tea in Batavia, where it would be discharged, purchased, and packed for VOC ships returning to Europe. To avoid these unnecessary logistics, the VOC decided to establish a special committee in the Dutch Republic that controlled direct trade between the Netherlands and China. Liu Yong now studies the records that this committee created. His studies will without doubt further complement Weng Eang Cheong's work on the Hong (*The Hong Merchants of Canton*, 1997), C.J.A. Jörg's on porcelain (*Porcelain and the Dutch China trade*, 1982), and earlier studies on English commercial ties with Canton by Hoh-cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui. Yong's study shows that the Dutch tea trade in Canton comprised 70 per cent of the total Dutch trade in that port, which also included porcelain, raw silk, and silk textiles. Yet, to place things in perspective, the Dutch were the second largest exporter after the British Company, which, due to Britain's stronger position and military supremacy (consider the Anglo-Dutch wars) far surpassed them. ◀

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Note >

A more detailed conference report plus a selection of the papers will be published in *Itinerario, European Journal of Overseas History*, 2003/1.

# Clerks' Jobs for 12 Historians

Since 2000 a group of twelve young historians has been ploughing through the records of the Dutch East India Company. They are quite determined to make this important series, consisting of hundreds of content lists of heavy, back-breaking volumes of the *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren (OBP, Incoming Documents from Asia)* of the Zeeland Chamber accessible via Internet, before the year draws to a close. In the very near future they intend to begin with the Amsterdam Chamber's OBP. Historians all over the world will thus soon be able to profit from their work.

Agenda >  
General

By Hendrik Niemeijer

'Describing historical sources is a very specialist work', says Mark de Lannoy, a specialist on Indian history and VOC sources who works at the National Archives in The Hague. 'The handwriting is often difficult to decipher. Registers are missing, and strange words, abbreviations, and misspellings occur frequently. Each volume may contain literally hundreds of documents.' According to De Lannoy the question is, 'should we describe every document, even the very short ones that were only sent for politeness sake?' Notwithstanding such practical problems, which often force archivists into debate with each other on what to do, thanks to the capable management of Pieter Koenders (TANAP programme coordinator for the National Archives), the archivists do not waste any time.

By adding codes to the text in XML, a platform-independent language for

publishing on the Internet, it will become possible to search the contents with all kinds of search options, including searches for year, ships' names, and location.

Further funds are necessary to digitize the existing inventories of the main series of the OBP's of the Amsterdam Chamber. When all these data have been placed in a single giant database, it will be possible to reconstruct virtually all the local and regional administrations of the former VOC.

Unfortunately for historians, the Incoming Documents from Asia of both the Zeeland and Amsterdam Chambers, vast as they may still be, are only a part of the original archives once kept in Middelburg and in the Oost-Indisch Huis in Amsterdam. When six thousand of Napoleon's troops retreated to Zeeland in the cold winter of 1814, they used the Oost-Indisch Huis in Middelburg as a hospital and sold a great deal of VOC books as wastepaper

to clear the rooms. People then also used the paper in their fireplaces. During the cold winter of 1821/22, some 28,920 kilos – approximately 10,000 volumes – of mostly seventeenth-century papers of the Amsterdam Chamber were also sold to the highest bidder. Ten years later, the rest of the Amsterdam archives were brought in great disorder to the empty West-Indies Slaughterhouse in Amsterdam. Another 5,000 volumes (such as materials ledgers, bankbooks, and commercial registers) were disposed of, and a total of only 3,160 volumes and 587 letter files from the pay office were preserved. It took only a few cold winters to destroy the patient work of hundreds of VOC clerks. This makes it all the more noteworthy that, today, it only takes a few years for a small group of archivists to make worldwide access to one of the most important historical collections on Asian history possible. ◀

*Dr Hendrik E. Niemeijer  
www.tanap.net*

# NIOD Fellowships in Southeast Asian Studies (1930s-1950s)

Agenda >  
Southeast Asia

With generous support from the Japanese embassy in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD) invites applicants for short-term research fellowships in Southeast Asian Studies, esp. Indonesia. NIOD is a research and documentation centre, and it is part of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. The institute is based in Amsterdam and its researchers study the history of the Netherlands and Southeast Asia in the twentieth century.

Recently NIOD launched a new documentation and research programme, entitled 'Lasting attachments: personal orientations and national perspectives

on colonialism and conflict in Indonesia, 1930s-1950s. Towards a multi-faceted interpretation of history'. The research programme consists of three projects:

- Changing roles and shifting loyalties: Indonesians, Japanese, and Dutch during the early Revolution;
- Gender and racial relations during the early Revolution;
- 'State of the Art' work on Indonesia in the Pacific War.

As part of these projects NIOD has initiated a short-term research fellowship programme (six weeks or three months) specifically meant for scholars from Asia working in one of these fields. For academic applicants, eligibility is limited to junior scholars holding an MA degree and senior scholars holding a PhD degree. For other applicants, an equivalent level of professional achievement is expected. All applicants should have a very good command of spoken and written English. The closing date for this year's application is 1 April 2003. <

More info >

Please send your applications to:

**Ms Kuniko Forrer, NIOD**

Herengracht 380, 1016 CJ Amsterdam, the Netherlands  
k.forrer@oorlogdoc.knaw.nl

For further enquiries please contact:

**Dr Peter Post, NIOD**

p.post@oorlogdoc.knaw.nl  
p.post@tip.nl

# Sri Lanka at the Crossroads

Agenda >  
South Asia

28-30 November 2003  
Matara, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has a geo-strategic location in the Indian Ocean. Traditionally famous for its serenity, nowadays it is characterised by its socio-economic development and a competitive democracy. During the post-colonial period, the island-nation has, by and large, successfully attained the objectives of a higher rate of literacy, economic growth, improved health and educational services, and a higher level of political participation.

Sri Lanka has been going through major changes and upheavals during the last several decades, including an ongoing ethnic war since 1972 (now under ceasefire), two armed revolts in the south and major changes in demography, social differentiation, and the economy. Furthermore, Sri Lanka is

subjected to gross changes in the socio-economic environment because of intensified globalization. All this has its repercussions in the socio-economic, political and cultural spheres. The Ninth ICSSL conference will explore this broad juncture in Sri Lankan society.

The ICSSL is a biannual meeting of scholars preoccupied with research on Sri Lankan history, society, ethnicity, demography, economy, education, polity, literature, foreign policy, international relations, diaspora, gender and other related issues. It provides an academic forum where scholars on Sri Lanka Studies, exchange their research findings and ideas in order to advance scholarly exchange and have more innovative research in future.

The conference aims to provide a forum for taking stock, rethinking, and making plans in the light of past experience. Scholars on Sri Lanka Studies from around the world are invited to contribute papers on their research in their respective fields, on a wide range of topics and from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives, with direct or indirect bearing on changes in Sri Lanka. Like in previous conferences, we aim for 'an exercise in conceptualization and theorization of Sri Lankan reality'. <

Contact >

The deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 June 2003. Please send abstracts and direct inquiries to:

**Professor Sarath Amarasinghe, Conference coordinator**

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sarath@soci.ruh.ac.lk  
sarathamarsinghe@hotmail.com

General information:

info@icssl.org  
www.icssl.org

# Religious Mobilization and Organized Violence in Contemporary South Asia

Agenda >  
South Asia

3-4 April 2003  
Roskilde, Denmark

Religious violence, also called communal violence, is often described as a ritual or a 'pact of violence between social groups' that keeps the community boundaries in place. At times the ritual turns from symbolism into organized pogrom. This is sometimes explained, for example by the police agencies, as the work of 'local criminal elements', or as the effects of deep religious passions and sentiments. These explanations not only provide convenient excuses, but also imply that religious violence be accepted as an inevitable feature of the South Asian social fabric.

Any meaningful legal enquiry into the development of religious violence, therefore, is made redundant because violence with religious overtones is considered outside the universe of criminal offences. This raises questions about the role of the state and institutions of law enforcement and policing. Do they hibernate at such critical times or do they actively engage themselves in violence? In Gujarat, the state's withdrawal, or its active complicity at times, has been clearly demonstrated where the state's Chief Minister followed the internecine violence with a *gaurav yatra*, the celebratory 'journey of pride' through Gujarat. The chosen strategy was indeed a far cry from a display of restraint and/or remorse that we tend to associate with state executives, in case of such turbulent events. Here we could witness a high official of the state justifying the killings as a Hindu reaction to repeated Muslim provocation and mischief. The pretence of neutrality and arbitration between communities has been replaced by a more openly partial and 'ethnicized' stance in favour of the majority community.

How can we understand the face of violence characterized by a lack of remorse combined with brash display of communal power? This question opens the domain of religious mobilization through sustained, long-term programmes organized by nationalist groups with religious overtones and

undeclared political ambitions. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, a national volunteer organization); Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, Global Hindu Organisation); Minhaj Ul Quran (MUQ, Path to Quran); and Markaz Dawa-Wal-Irshad, of the Wahabi sect; are some of the organizations in India and Pakistan that over some decades have successfully mobilized urban men and women to participate in new Holy Wars fought on both real and virtual turf. The impact of this mobilization can be seen for example in Gujarat where after the recent riots some VHP leaders congratulated themselves for having 'successfully raised the Hindu consciousness'. The significance of these riots lies not just in the brutality and the number of people killed but also in the systematic destruction of residential and commercial properties that belonged to Muslims. With the destruction of homes and sources of livelihood, the continuation of socio-economic exchanges between the communities in the post-riots situation has been rendered impossible. Like their Hindu opponents Islamic organizations, the ones stemming from the Wahabis in particular, seem to be engaged in militant activities, suicide attacks and other activities, that are col-

lectively dubbed as Islamic terror networks. With these transnational networks the issue ceases to be of mere national or even bilateral significance between India and Pakistan.

The third and last theme is the symbolism, scale, and nature of violence. The attacks on Hindu temples in Gujarat and Jammu in 2002 and the destruction of the Babri Masjid (mosque) in Ayodhya a decade ago, augured a new kind of highly charged symbolic politics. Violence is no longer represented as the mindless act of fringe elements of society but as an act with a well thought-out strategy and years of mobilization behind it, using to full effect the emotional power of TV media and a strongly communalized vernacular press. Government banning of electronic media from Gujarat in March 2002, for instance, stands in stark contrast to the highly charged news coverage in India of the attacks on temples, or incidents in Kashmir.

This two-day workshop attempts to cover the issues and questions opened by the recent events in South Asia through comparative or specific studies of religious violence, organizations and their (trans)national linkages both at empirical and conceptual levels. <

[ advertisement ]



LUND UNIVERSITY

## Masters Programme in Asian Studies 2003-2004

Lund University now offers a new challenging, interdisciplinary Masters Programme in Asian Studies that is open to students from all over the world. Students may choose one of two tracks: *East and South-East Asian Studies* or *South Asian Studies*. The programme focuses on social sciences and the humanities, and comprises 60 Swedish credit points (90 ECTS) over three semesters (16 months). The language of instruction is English.

The programme provides advanced knowledge about Asia with an emphasis on contemporary issues and concerns presently facing the region. The concluding semester includes a specialised course given at a leading university in the region, as well as a period of field study in Asia.

Application deadline: 15 April 2003  
[www.ace.lu.se/programmes/master](http://www.ace.lu.se/programmes/master)

Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies  
Lund University, Sweden

More info >

Organizers: **Ravinder Kaur and Christian Lund**

Graduate School of International Development Studies Roskilde University  
Centre, Roskilde, Denmark

Contact: **Inge Jensen**

inge@ruc.dk  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/roskgradsch.html](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/roskgradsch.html)

## MARCH 2003

**16-23 March 2003**  
**Kyoto, Japan**  
*Third World Water Forum*  
 Information: office@water-forum3.com  
 www.worldwaterforum.org

**19-21 March 2003**  
**Brighton, United Kingdom**  
*'Forest and environmental history of the British Empire and Commonwealth'*  
 International conference  
 Contact: Rosa Weeks, Conference Secretary  
 r.i.weeks@sussex.ac.uk

**20-22 March 2003**  
**Yogyakarta, Indonesia**  
*'The oral history of Indonesian subaltern groups: reviewing the results'*  
 Realino Research Institute  
 Contact person: Ratna Saptari  
 chlia@iisg.nl

**24 March 2003**  
**Amsterdam, the Netherlands**  
*'Pakistan update: Pakistan after 11 September'*  
 Organized by the IIAS Branch Office and ISIM  
 Convenor: Dr Oskar Verkaaik  
 Information: IIAS Branch Office  
 verkaaik@pscw.uva.nl  
 www.iias.nl

**24 March 2003**  
**Geneva, Switzerland**  
*'La question du Cachemire dans le nouveau contexte international'*  
 L'institut universitaire des hautes études internationales  
 Contact: Mariejo Duc-Reynaert  
 duc@hei.unige.ch  
 www.genasia.ch

**27-30 March 2003**  
**New York, USA**  
*AAS (Association for Asian Studies) annual meeting 2003*  
 Contact: Karen Fricke, Conference manager, Association for Asian Studies  
 kfricke@aasianst.org  
 www.aasianst.org/annmtg.htm

**31 March 2003**  
**Tübingen, Germany**  
*'Historical foundations and new ideas'*  
 Third international symposium on ancient Chinese books and records on science and technology  
 Seminar für Sinologie und Koreanistik,

University of London and Birkbeck College  
 Information: admin@aah.org.uk  
 www.aah.org.uk

**11-13 April 2003**  
**Boston, MA, USA**  
*'Blacks and Asians in the making of the modern world: a conversation across fields'*  
 Convenor: Ronald K. Richardson, Director, African American Studies, Boston University  
 Contact: Dr Christine Loken-Kim  
 lokenkim@bu.edu

**25-26 April 2003**  
**Los Angeles, United States**  
*'The encounter of Korean religions and Christianity'*  
 Information: Sung-Deuk Oak  
 sungoak@hotmail.com  
 www2.h-net.msu.edu/announce/show.cgi?ID=132073

**28 April - 4 May 2003**  
**Stanford, USA**  
*'On common ground 2003'*  
 Forum for American/Chinese exchange at Stanford  
 Contact: contactfaces@lists.stanford.edu  
 http://faces.stanford.edu

**30 April - 2 May 2003**  
**London, United Kingdom**  
*'The city and literature' workshop*  
 Information: ahrblit@soas.ac.uk  
 www.soas.ac.uk/literatures/

**MAY 2003**  
**May 2003**  
**Amsterdam, the Netherlands**  
*'Transborder exchanges: business, networks, and identity formation in Asia's and Europe's new economy'*  
 ASEE-Asia Alliance workshop  
 Convenors: Dr Heidi Dahles (Free University of Amsterdam) and Dr Loh Wei Leng (University of Malaya, Malaysia)  
 Information: H.Dahles@scw.vu.nl  
 www.asia-alliance.org/workshopseries

**2-4 May 2003**  
**Los Angeles, California**  
*'Focus on the learner in the LCTLs: profiles and prospects', sixth national conference*  
 Organizer: National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages  
 Contact: Scott McGinnis  
 smcginnis@nflc.org  
 www.international.ucla.edu/lrc/ncolct/index.html

**19-22 June 2003**  
**New Brunswick, USA**  
*'Continuities, discontinuities and contestations in Taiwanese society'*  
 Ninth Conference of the North American Taiwan Studies Association (NATSA)  
 Rutgers University  
 Information: www.natsc.org

**19-22 June 2003**  
**Honolulu, Hawaii, USA**  
*'Asian Studies in an Internet-connected world'*  
 University of Hawaii  
 Contact: William Vanderbok  
 Vanderbok@aspac.org  
 www.aspac.org

**24-26 June 2003**  
**Singapore**  
*The 17th Pacific Asia conference on language, information and computation*  
 Information: Associate Prof. Kim-Teng Lua  
 luakt@comp.nus.edu.sg  
 http://cslp.comp.nus.edu.sg/cgi-bin/journal/review1.exe

**27-28 June 2003**  
**Nijmegen, the Netherlands**  
*Seventh international symposium on Malay and Indonesian linguistics (7th ISMIL)*  
 IIAS workshop  
 Convenor: Prof. Hein Steinhauer (IIAS Extraordinary Chair)  
 Information: iias@let.leidenuniv.nl  
 http://email.eva.mpg.de/~gil/ismil/

**JULY 2003**  
**2 July 2003**  
**Brisbane, Australia**  
*'Innovation and resistance in Japan'*  
 Japanese Studies Association of Australia 2003 biennial conference  
 Queensland University of Technology  
 Panel proposals: Dr Christopher Pokarie  
 c.pokarier@qut.edu.au  
 Conference organization: Mr Jason Thomas  
 jw.thomas@qut.edu.au

**5-9 July 2003**  
**Moscow, Russian Federation**  
*International conference on South Asia literatures and languages (ICOSAL)*  
 Organizer: Institute of Asian and African Studies, Moscow State University  
 Contact: Dr Ludmila V. Khokhlova (languages)

Sheffield Hallam University  
 Information: Dr David Picard  
 slmdp@electra.shu.ac.uk  
 www.tourism-culture.com

**21-27 July 2003**  
**Leh and Kargil, India**  
*'Ladakh: art, culture and languages'*  
 11th IALS Colloquium  
 Contact: Nawang Tsering Shakspo  
 sntsering52@yahoo.co.uk

**24-27 July 2003**  
**Penang, Malaysia**  
*'Southeast Asia since 1945: reflections and visions'*  
 Organizer: Asia Pacific Research Unit (APRU), School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia  
 Contact: Dr Ooi Keat Gin  
 kgooi@hotmail.com  
 General Enquiries: Mrs Thilagavathi Vasudevan, Secretary, Organizing Committee  
 vthila@usm.my

**26 July - 7 August 2003**  
**Los Angeles, United States**  
*'The world of Asian literature', The Asia Institute's annual summer seminar for teachers*  
 Information: Clayton Dube  
 cdube@international.ucla.edu  
 http://international.ucla.edu/asia

**AUGUST 2003**  
**19-22 August 2003**  
**Singapore**  
*'Third International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS3)'*  
 Organizer: National University of Singapore  
 Information: icas3sec@nus.edu.sg  
 www.fas.nus.edu.sg/icas3  
 www.icassecretariat.org

**25-29 August 2003**  
**Dunhuang, Gansu Province, PR China**  
*'Conservation of ancient sites on the Silk Road'*

**24 September 2003**  
**Aalborg, Denmark**  
*'Internet, governance and democracy in Denmark and Asia. Democratic transitions? - Will the Internet bring about more democracy and better governance?'*  
 Contact: Lars Torpe  
 larsto@socsci.auc.dk

**26-27 September 2003**  
**Canberra, Australia**  
*'Indonesia update 2003: changes and challenges in business', Indonesia Project, Australian National University*  
 Convenor: Dr Pierre van der Eng  
 pierre.vandereng@anu.edu.au;  
 pvandereng@econ.seikei.ac.jp

**OCTOBER 2003**  
**2-5 October 2003**  
**Boston, USA**  
*CESS, fourth annual meeting*  
 Contact: John Schoeberlein  
 CESSconf@fas.harvard.edu  
 http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/

**9-11 October 2003**  
**Leiden, the Netherlands**  
*'Country trade and European empire in the Arabian seas in the seventeenth and eighteenth century'*  
 IIAS workshop  
 Convenor: Dr R.J. Barendse  
 Information: iias@let.leidenuniv.nl  
 r.barendse@worldonline.nl  
 www.iias.nl

**12-18 October 2003**  
**Leiden, the Netherlands**  
*'Law in Central Asia: an historical overview'*  
 Supported by the Humboldt-Stiftung Bonn  
 Convenors: Prof. Wallace Johnson, Prof. Herbert Franke, and Prof. Denis Sinor  
 Information: wjohnson@ukans.edu  
 iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

**24-26 October 2003**  
**Cairo, Egypt**  
*'Religious networks between the Middle East and Southeast Asia'*  
 IIAS/KNAW/CNWS/SIM workshop of the research programme 'Islam in Indonesia' in collaboration with the American University in Cairo and the Dutch Institute in Cairo  
 Convenors: Dr Mona Abaza en Dr Nico Kaptein  
 Information: iias@let.leidenuniv.nl  
 www.iias.nl

## FEBRUARY 2004

**13-14 February 2004**  
**Berkeley, United States**  
*19th annual South Asia conference*  
 Information: Elizabeth Inouye  
 csasasst@uclink.berkeley.edu  
 http://ias.berkeley.edu/southasia/conference.html

**MARCH 2004**  
**5-7 March 2004**  
**San Diego, CA, USA**  
*AAS (Association for Asian Studies) annual meeting 2004*  
 Information: www.aasianst.org/annmtg.htm

**APRIL 2004**  
**1-2 April 2004**  
**Cambridge, United Kingdom**  
*'Food and religion in traditional China'*  
 Information: Dr Roel Sterckx  
 Rst0009@cam.ac.uk  
 www.oriental.cam.ac.uk/~rst0009/foodconf\_.htm

**MAY 2004**  
**May 2004**  
**Copenhagen, Denmark**  
*'New Chinese migrants: globalisation of Chinese overseas migration'*  
 Fifth conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISCCO)  
 IAS sponsored conference  
 Organized by: University of Copenhagen/ NIAS  
 Contact: Mette Thunose  
 w.\_thunose@worldonline.dk

**JUNE 2004**  
**16-19 June 2004**  
**Leiden, the Netherlands**  
*'The Philippines: changing landscapes, manscapes and mindscapes in a globalizing world'*  
 Seventh International Philippine Studies Conference (ICOPHIL)  
 Convenor: Prof. Otto van den Muijzenberg  
 ovanndenm@uijzenberg@fmg.uva.nl  
 www.iias.nl

**JULY 2004**  
**6-9 July 2004**  
**Lund, Sweden**  
*18th European conference on Modern South Asian Studies*

Universität Tübingen  
Contact: Prof. Hans Ulrich Vogel  
sinologie@uni-tuebingen.de

**APRIL 2003**  
2-4 April 2003  
**London, United Kingdom**  
*'Gender and literature in cross-cultural contexts'*  
Contact: Dr Ross Forman  
rf9@soas.ac.uk  
www.soas.ac.uk/literatures

3-4 May 2003  
**Berkeley, United States**  
*'Muang Lao'*  
Symposium on Lao History  
Information: Kongkeo Saycocie  
lanxang@yahoo.com  
www.muanglao.com

2-4 June 2003  
**Singapore**  
*'Re-envisioning education: innovation and diversity'*  
Asia-Pacific conference on education  
National Institute of Education  
http://eduweb.nie.edu.sg/apace

7-8 July 2003  
**Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**  
*'International security and the Asian heartland'*  
International symposium organized by the School of Foreign Service of the National University of Mongolia, in cooperation with the IIAS and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'  
Convenors: Prof. Kh. Bayasakh (the School of Foreign Service of the National University of Mongolia) and Dr Paul Meerts (the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael')  
Information: bayasakh@hotmail.com  
pmeerts@clingendael.nl

27-30 August 2003  
**Warsaw, Poland**  
*European Association for Japanese Studies (EASJ), 10th international conference*  
Contact: Bernhard Scheid  
bernhard.scheid@oeaw.ac.at  
Birgit Staemmler  
birgit@staemmler.de  
www.eajs.org/whatsnew/warsaw.html

28-30 November 2003  
**Matara, Sri Lanka**  
*'Sri Lanka at the crossroads: continuity and change'*, Ninth International Conference on Sri Lanka Studies  
Coordinator for Conference:  
Professor Sarath Amarasinghe,  
University of Ruhuna,  
Contact:  
sarathamarsinghe@hotmail.com  
www.icsls.org  
Deadline for the submission of abstracts is 15 June 2003.

Organizers:  
SASNET and Lund University  
Information:  
www.sasnet.lu.se/research.html

3-4 April 2003  
**Roskilde, Denmark**  
*'Religious mobilisation and organised violence in contemporary South Asia'*  
Contact: Ravinder Kaur  
rka@cdr.dk  
www.sasnet.lu.se/roskgadsch.html

9 May 2003  
**Amsterdam, the Netherlands**  
*'Indonesia in transition'*  
Panels: 'Coping with crisis'; 'Media and public culture'; 'Civil society and regionalism'  
Workshop organized by the IIAS Branch Office  
Convenor: Dr Hotze Lont  
Information: iias@pscw.uva.nl  
www.iias.nl

6-8 June, 2003  
**Makassar, Indonesia**  
*'The Bugis diaspora and Islamic dissemination in the twentieth-century Malay-Indonesian archipelago'*  
IIAS workshop  
Organizer: Andi Faisal Bakti  
Information: a.bakti@let.leidenuniv.nl  
abakti@hotmail.com  
www.iias.nl/iias/agenda/bugs/

11-13 June 2003  
**London, United Kingdom**  
*'Narrating and imaging the nation'*  
Contact: Stephanie Jones  
sj22@soas.ac.uk  
www.soas.ac.uk/literatures

11-13 September 2003  
**United Kingdom**  
*'Interweaving medical traditions: Europe and Asia, 1600-2000'*  
ASEF-Asia Alliance workshop  
Convenors:  
Dr Sanjoy Bhattacharya (Welcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine, UK) and Dr R.K. Chem (National University of Singapore).  
Information:  
sanjoy.bhattacharya@ucl.ac.uk  
www.asia-alliance.org/workshopseries

16-19 June 2004  
**Leiden, the Netherlands**  
*7th International Conference on Philippine Studies (ICO-PHL)*  
*'The Philippines: Changing Landscapes, Manscapes, and Mindscapes in a Globalizing World'*  
Convenor:  
Prof. Ot van den Muijzenberg  
iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

23-27 August 2004  
**Moscow, Russia**  
*'Unity in Diversity'*  
ICANAS-37  
Organizers:  
Orientalist Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences  
Contact:  
Professor Dmitry D. Vasilyev  
ivran@orc.ru.

3-5 April 2003  
**New York, USA**  
*'History, national identity, and political order in the New Eastern Europe and Eurasia'*  
Eighth annual world convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN), Columbia University  
Contact: Troy McGrath, ASN Convention Program Chair  
asn@hartwick.edu

9 May 2003  
**Chicago, IL, USA**  
*'Middle East history and theory' 18th annual conference*  
Contact: Patrick Wing, MEHTC Coordinator, University of Chicago  
pgwing@midway.uchicago.edu

10-14 May  
**Copenhagen, Denmark**  
*'New Chinese Migrants - Globalization of Chinese overseas migration'*  
5th conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISCCO)  
Contact: Prof. Ling-chi Wang  
icwang@uclink4.berkeley.edu

11-12 July 2003  
**Bonn, Germany**  
*'The restructuring of old industrial areas in Europe and Asia'*  
ASEF-Asia Alliance workshop  
Convenors:  
Dr Karsten Krüger (Vice-Director)   
eaiavkk@public.km.yn.cn  
Andrea Stelzner (Managing Director)   
eaiavas@public.km.yn.cn  
www.eaiva.org

11-13 September 2003  
**United Kingdom**  
*'Interweaving medical traditions: Europe and Asia, 1600-2000'*  
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Convenors:  
Dr Sanjoy Bhattacharya (Welcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine, UK) and Dr R.K. Chem (National University of Singapore).  
Information:  
sanjoy.bhattacharya@ucl.ac.uk  
www.asia-alliance.org/workshopseries

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iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

23-27 August 2004  
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*'Unity in Diversity'*  
ICANAS-37  
Organizers:  
Orientalist Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences  
Contact:  
Professor Dmitry D. Vasilyev  
ivran@orc.ru.

4 April 2003  
**Baltimore, Maryland, USA**  
*'Music of Japan today 2003'*  
Organizers: Dr Kazuko Tanosaki and Prof. E. Michael Richards  
kazukotanosaki@netscape.net  
emrichards@umbc.edu  
http://home.sprintmail.com/~emrichard s/MFJ2003.html

10-13 July 2003  
**Norwich, United Kingdom**  
*'Conflict resolution and peace building in war-torn societies' course*  
University of East Anglia  
Contact: Sarah Scott  
sarah.scott@uea.ac.uk  
www.odg.uea.ac.uk/pages/training.html

11-13 June 2003  
**London, United Kingdom**  
*'Narrating and imaging the nation'*  
Contact: Stephanie Jones  
sj22@soas.ac.uk  
www.soas.ac.uk/literatures

11-13 September 2003  
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ICANAS-37  
Organizers:  
Orientalist Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences  
Contact:  
Professor Dmitry D. Vasilyev  
ivran@orc.ru.

9-13 April 2003  
**Rome, Italy**  
*2003 Biennial AKSE Conference*  
Contact: Prof. Antonetta Bruno, Secretary of AKSE  
Antonetta.Bruno@uniroma1.it  
www.akse.uni-kiel.de

12 May 2003  
**Baku, Azerbaijan**  
*'Caucasus and Central Asia in globalization'*  
Contact: Osman Nuri Aras, Qafqaz University  
aras@qafqaz.edu.az  
on\_aras@yahoo.com  
Vefa Abbasova  
vefanur@hotmail.com

17-19 June 2003  
**Oslo, Norway**  
*Nordic Association of Chinese Studies conference*  
Contact: Liu Baisha  
baisha.liu@east.uio.no

14-18 July 2003  
**Helsinki, Finland**  
*12th World Sanskrit conference*  
Contact: University of Helsinki, Institute for Asian and African Studies  
Contact: petteri.koskikallio@helsinki.fi  
www.helsinki.fi/hum/aakk/12wsc

19-20 September 2003  
**Cambridge, United Kingdom**  
*'Chinese commercial law'*  
Information: Patricia Mirrlees  
pw229@cam.ac.uk  
www.eai.cam.ac.uk/conferences/commlaw.html

16-19 June 2004  
**Leiden, the Netherlands**  
*7th International Conference on Philippine Studies (ICO-PHL)*  
*'The Philippines: Changing Landscapes, Manscapes, and Mindscapes in a Globalizing World'*  
Convenor:  
Prof. Ot van den Muijzenberg  
iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

10-13 April 2003  
**London, United Kingdom**  
*'ARTiculations'*  
29th Association of Art Historians (AAH) annual conference

19-20 June 2003  
**London, United Kingdom**  
*'Translations and translation theories East and West'*  
Contact: Dr Ross Forman  
rf9@soas.ac.uk  
www.soas.ac.uk/literatures

14-18 July 2003  
**Helsinki, Finland**  
*12th World Sanskrit conference*  
Contact: University of Helsinki, Institute for Asian and African Studies  
Contact: petteri.koskikallio@helsinki.fi  
www.helsinki.fi/hum/aakk/12wsc

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Information: Patricia Mirrlees  
pw229@cam.ac.uk  
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Organizers:  
Orientalist Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences  
Contact:  
Professor Dmitry D. Vasilyev  
ivran@orc.ru.

Conference Announcement and Call for Panel Proposals  
**7th International Conference on Philippine Studies**

**The Philippines: Changing Landscapes, Manscapes, and Mindscapes in a Globalizing World**

A list of possible topics is provided on the conference website.  
Deadline: October 2003.

For registration and information, please visit  
www.iias.nl/iias/agenda/icophill  
Panel proposals should be sent to IIAS:  
F +31-71-527 4162  
iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

In order to be able to increase public exposure to your conference listing, please refer to 'Agenda Asia' and insert your conference on:  
www.iias.nl/gateway/agasia  
If you like us to consider including your conference in the agenda in this newsletter, please submit the conference details at:  
www.iias.nl/forms/conference.html

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1 October 1999 – 1 October 2003

Prof. Hein Steinhauer (the Netherlands)  
Special Chair at Nijmegen University,  
'Ethnolinguistics with a focus on Southeast Asia'  
1 September 1998 – 1 September 2004

Prof. Barend Terwiel (the Netherlands/Germany)  
Special Chair at Leiden University,  
'Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia'  
1 September 1999 – 1 September 2004

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