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underworlds & borderlands



NEWSLETTER

Illegal but licit

SPECIAL ISSUE

Are you a criminal?
on the illegality of daily life, pp. 1 - 21

- > A personal account of what I did at IIAS, or why I remained a cultural anthropologist, pp. 24 - 25
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Itty Abraham

A housewife in Kolkata buys *bhindi* (okra) from her neighbourhood vegetable seller for her child's dinner. In doing so, she may have participated in an illegal activity. Depending on how far back we want to go, the chain of illegality can be said to have begun with the Bangladeshi farmer who planted the vegetable six months earlier. Or it may be more sensible to start with the social 'commodity chain' of women who transport bundles of vegetables by foot and ferry in the early hours of every morning across the hundreds of legal and unmarked border-crossing points from Bangladesh into India. Crossing without papers or passports, they sometimes bribe border guards to let them pass. This is when the first 'crime' takes place.

The 'criminals' include both the vegetable seller and the state border representative. Once in India, some women sell their produce to intermediaries in border villages and return to their homes in Bangladesh. Others board crowded passenger trains to Kolkata and sell their produce at the city's wholesale vegetable market. Then they return home, sometimes stopping to purchase goods with a high resale value in Bangladesh and other household items. They reach Bangladesh that evening, sometimes bribing border guards again, depending on the tacit, socially sanctioned norms that govern this illicit flow. Before they arrive home, they may have stopped in a border village to meet relatives, drink tea and chat with friends, and to help arrange marriages for young men and women.

From the city vegetable *mandi* (market), mini-wholesalers and retailers fan out into the city's neighbourhoods,

sometimes selling directly to consumers who may include undocumented Bangladeshi maids working in middle class households, who sometimes resell the produce at a slight mark-up to neighbourhood shops. This is where the second 'crime' takes place. Clearly no taxes are paid on Bangladeshi okra: the 'criminals' include the (Indian) vegetable sellers and her (possibly undocumented) consumers. This is micro-business, comparable to micro-credit in scale, and it is not without its dangers. Women, especially those travelling long distances alone, risk conducting business without guarantees of safety or reliability. Credit is rare, as this is almost entirely a cash business, making them vulnerable on their return: they may be caught up in random police sweeps or threatened by *goondas* (thugs). What protects them is the ubiquity of their behaviour and the well-known social rules that govern their international travel and transactions.

Illicit flows

Illicit movement across national borders takes place worldwide on a daily basis. Operating in the conceptual and empirical gap between these illicit activities and the means of describing and understanding them, the research project *Illegal but Licit* (see p.3) does not seek to condone or justify the undocumented crossing of national borders or the wilful breaking of municipal laws. Our aim, rather, is to understand and analyse the linked chain of social activities that violate one or another country's laws. Furthermore, we seek to do so without recourse to the state's languages of (il)legality or national

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Taking over...

Director's note

In my first director's note I think it appropriate to make some retrospective observations. I wish to use the opportunity to thank my predecessor Wim Stokhof for what he has achieved as founder/director of the International Institute for Asian Studies. I will keep this word of thanks brief, if only because Wim feels uneasy with personal praise and finds such expressions of appreciation a waste of time. After 13 years of directing the institute, Wim retired from office on 1 September of this year.

I have known Wim Stokhof since 1993, when I was setting up a European grant scheme for Asian Studies at the European Science Foundation in Strasbourg. With support from the governments of the Netherlands, France and the Nordic countries, the initiative developed into a major programme for the humanities and social sciences. The then newly established IIAS became the secretariat and its director Wim Stokhof the secretary to the ESF Asia Committee; Thommy Svenson, then at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies in Copenhagen, was chairman. Together we ran the Asia Committee, gathering scholars representing the major Asian Studies research institutes in Europe. From this experience we learnt how to navigate decision-making within complex fields of national interests and disciplinary traditions, experience which still informs decision-making within our present grant schemes of the European Alliance for Asian Studies/ASEF workshop series. After I left the European Science Foundation in 1996, I kept in touch with IIAS and became a member of the board.

Wim Stokhof founded IIAS in 1993 and managed to create an institute that has gained a worldwide reputation for its breadth of activities. With offices in Leiden and Amsterdam, and with a board hailing from universities across the Netherlands, the institute has a truly national character. With its fellows from around the world, and with its many linkages to other institutes, IIAS at the same time has a broad international character. This is reflected in its range of research programmes, workshops, conferences, lectures and masterclasses. Stokhof always emphasized the need to be outward-looking, to break through institutional and disciplinary boundaries, to collaborate and keep an open mind to what sometimes seemed risky endeavours. Typically, as one of my colleagues recently put it, where others would automatically say no to someone with a budding new research initiative, Stokhof would in principle say yes and inquire how a proposal could be improved to increase chances for funding. With his enthusiasm and constructive attitude, he helped many researchers on their way. He fully realized that an institute such as IIAS should be complementary to the university departments, that this offered opportunities for IIAS to do things the departments could not do. Un-bureaucratic and flexible, the institute has offered opportunities to scholars from around the world and created new momentum for Asian Studies in the Netherlands. This we owe largely to the vision and unconventional ideas of its founder. As far as I am concerned, the institute will continue to fulfil this pioneering function.

We are fortunate that Wim is not leaving IIAS for good. He will remain in charge of the organisation of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) under the wings of the institute. As for myself, I am proud to stand on Wim's shoulders and will do my best to keep up the good work. There will be new programmes, new forms of co-operation, many new fellows, and of course the good old newsletters. I am grateful to the IIAS board for confiding Wim's creation to me. ◀

Max Sparreboom
Director, IIAS



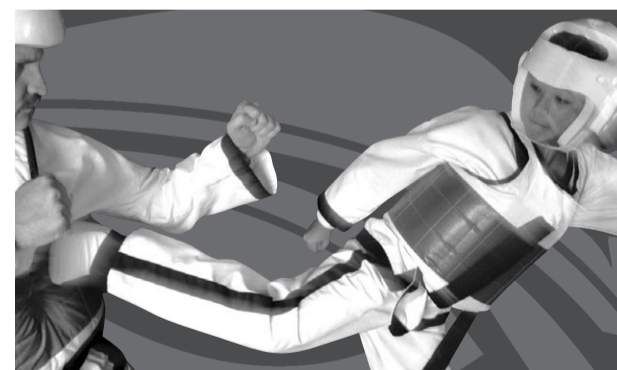
The International Institute for Asian Studies is a postdoctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Our main objective is to encourage the interdisciplinary and comparative study of Asia and to promote national and international cooperation in the field. The institute focuses on the humanities and social sciences and their interaction with other sciences.

IIAS values dynamism and versatility in its research programmes. Post-doctoral research fellows are temporarily employed by or affiliated to IIAS, either within a collaborative research programme or individually. In its aim to disseminate broad, in-depth knowledge of Asia, the institute organizes seminars, workshops and conferences, and publishes the *IIAS Newsletter* with a circulation of 26,000.

IIAS runs a database for Asian Studies with information on researchers and research-related institutes worldwide. As an international mediator and a clearing-house for knowledge and information, IIAS is active in creating international networks and launching international cooperative projects and research programmes. In this way, the institute functions as a window on Europe for non-European scholars and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Asia and Europe.

IIAS also administers the secretariat of the European Alliance for Asian Studies (Asia Alliance: www.asia-alliance.org) and the Secretariat General of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS: www.icassecretariat.org). Updates on the activities of the Asia Alliance and ICAS are published in this newsletter. ◀

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East Asia out of balance?

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THE BORDERLANDS OF LEGALITY

Theme intro

Willem van Schendel
Guest editor

As you are reading this newsletter, you may be indulging in illegal activity. Are you authorised to be in the place where you are reading this? If you are online, did you pay for the software you are using? Are you wearing fake designer clothes? Has that cigarette in your hand been smuggled into the country? And who is cleaning your house?

This special issue of *IIAS Newsletter* looks at practices that states prohibit, but are nevertheless widespread and often regarded as acceptable. Although such practices are in no way exclusively Asian, there are many ways in which examples from Asia can shed light on them. The authors assembled here share an interest in practices that are transnational, that is to say, involve movement across national borders.

Globalisation and transnationalism, though not new phenomena, have become more prominent over the past decades, resulting in worldwide movements of money, goods and people which have captured the imaginations of social scientists as never before. Most studies of transnational flows are framed in terms of the modern nation-state because most social scientists, consciously or unconsciously, take state territories as their starting point. Even international relations – a field that seeks to understand the world beyond the state – uses the state as its foundational unit of analysis. We thus rely on analytical categories that presuppose social immobility to understand mobile practices.

This issue explores the limitations of ‘seeing like a state’ and privileges the perspectives of participants in cross-border activities. This leads us to different understandings of processes of transnational movement, and to focus on a theme that is rarely highlighted in the study of transnational practices: the interface of legality and illegality. We do not start from the common image of societies as consisting of a moral core of upstanding citizens and a state guided by legal institutions to which criminals ‘out there’ lay siege, an approach that leads to thinking in terms of good guys and bad guys and the language of law enforcement. Key words reserved for bad guys and their organisations (syndicates, cartels, gangs, triads, secret societies, mafias, guerrilla outfits, traffickers and terrorist networks) all denote their special and separate status of being unauthorised, clandestine and underground. Such language constructs conceptual barriers between outlawed bad-guy activities (smuggling and trafficking) and state-approved good-guy activities (trade and migration) that obscure how these are often part of a single spectrum. It makes sense to break down such simple dichotomies and to accept that legality and illegality are interwoven in the lives of a great many people – and that most people who are involved in practices that are not (wholly) legal do not think of themselves, or of each other, as criminals. In other words, they may engage in illegal transnational practices, but do not represent global syndicates of ‘organised crime.’

Defining what is illegal is no easy task. No global legal authority exists to define it, so the law almost always refers to states. And what is legal in one state may be illegal in another, just as what a state considers illegal today may become legal tomorrow. It is therefore impossible to objectively distinguish between the illegal and the legal when it comes to flows of people and commodities crossing international borders. What makes matters more confusing is that those who violate laws are not necessarily outside state structures; state personnel regularly – some would argue structurally – engage in illegal practices. For example, ‘reasons of state’ may impel them to tap their fellow citizens’ phones, get rid of embarrassing documents, or undermine a neighbouring government. In addition, bent cops, corrupt officials, smuggling border guards and vote-selling parliamentarians are familiar characters who use their positions within states for personal gain. In short, what customarily passes for ‘international crime’ is a coherent whole whose parts are sometimes legal, sometimes illegal.

Discussions of ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ can be furthered by introducing the distinction between ‘licit’ and ‘illicit’.* These latter terms refer less to state law than to social perceptions of activities defined as right or wrong. Thus you may feel entitled to reside in a certain state’s territory, even though the laws of the land make you an unauthorised immigrant. You may have no qualms about using illegally copied software, wearing fake designer clothes or smoking that cheap smuggled cigarette. And you may happily employ a house cleaner who is an illegal resident. In all these cases you may know that you are doing something illegal, but you certainly would not consider yourself a criminal. On the contrary, you feel you are doing something acceptable, or licit, and are likely to be in continual dialogue about what is and what is not permissible. Some Japanese may freely use heroin while others will frown upon it; some Pakistanis will enjoy drinking illegally-imported whisky whereas others will condemn it as un-Islamic; you may take a dim view of informal money transfers known as *hawala* that your neighbour uses to send money back home. Discerning between what is licit and what is illicit is even harder than defining the legal and the illegal; the former concerns group norms that are not codified and are often difficult for outsiders to access.

What social groups define as licit behaviour may well coincide with the rules that states set down. In that case what is licit is also legal. In this issue, however, we look at cases where there is a poor match between the two points of view. These cases show that we need to consider multiple legal perspectives as well as perceptions of licitness if we are to find satisfactory explanations for transnational practices that cross the boundaries of what is legal and what is not. <

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* For detailed discussion and case studies, see Willem van Schendel and Itty Abraham, eds. 2005. *Illicit Flows and Criminal Things: States, Borders, and the Other Side of Globalization*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

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Takeo David Hymans & Natasja Kershof
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Powerplay at bay?

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(in)security. To attempt this is to encroach on the domains of a number of disciplines, including sociology, international relations, economics, geography, migration and border studies. All of these fields offer some insights, yet none is complete in itself. In other words, the subject of enquiry and our analytic approach lie at the margins of national boundaries and disciplinary fields. There are, we believe, considerable rewards for occupying this interstitial position, not least of them being a better understanding of some of the most commonplace human activities today.

What this imagined journey above describes when we consider the tens of thousands of people involved is the vast scale of the daily movement of goods and people, cash and commodities that the city of Kolkata barely acknowledges and yet could hardly do without. This combination of unwitting dependence and structured invisibility under conditions of transnational illegality is characteristic of what we have termed 'illicit flows'. Other examples that make the same point abound. The US Border Patrol, driving along the most militarised and high-tech-defended border in the world, must allow hundreds of undocumented Mexican and other migrants to enter the US every day – or else the price of daily wage labour rises and California's powerful farm lobby starts to complain. In Jakarta's enormous Pramuka bird and pet market, hundreds of illegally trapped birds and animals are openly on sale. And sales are brisk: according to one estimate the average trader sells their stock in two weeks, which would mean 40,000 wild birds are sold to local customers every month. The penalties for illegally capturing and trading in protected species are severe but are of little effect.

To point to these or other examples is not to argue that the world is full of criminals, but that we have not yet begun to appreciate the extent to which formal illegality surrounds us in the course of our daily lives. It should further be noted that people involved in criminality of this order do not consider themselves criminals. Of course it could be said, what criminal does? But the point here is that neither the 'criminal' nor the consumer of the illegal commodity acknowledges the stigma of criminality in their transactions; they are more likely to point to the difficulty of separating crime from licit activity, and, by extension, perpetrators from victims.

The more sophisticated among them will point to the existence of *legally sanctioned* spaces where what can only be called criminal behaviour flourishes: the tax havens of the Cayman Islands, Liechtenstein and the Channel Islands, or the maritime 'flags of convenience' offered by countries like Liberia and Panama, whose sole purpose is to give shipping companies a legal way of avoiding regulations. What makes those sites of non-'criminality' different from slipping across the border between Burma and Thailand to work below minimum wage or buying smuggled Bollywood DVDs in Karachi markets? What we are pointing to is more than a sharp contrast between social mores of acceptable behaviour and the state's own terms of defining the difference between

| FORM OF AUTHORITY | LEGAL | ILLEGAL |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| LICIT | Ideal state (A) | Underworld / borderland (B) |
| ILLICIT | Crony capitalism / failed state (C) | Anarchy (D) |

legitimate and illegitimate activity; it is also the difficulty of doing so consistently and without recourse to circular reasoning.

The underground and the borderland

A simple matrix (above) can go beyond the contrast between socially acceptable forms of criminality, or 'licit', and legally banned forms of activity, which the state calls 'illegal'. It is useful to think of the *social spaces* that emerge from this simple contrast of two idealised forms of authority, one emanating from the state, the other from society, producing the terms legal/illegal and licit/illicit, respectively.



A Bangladeshi border guard refuses entry to people rounded up in India and deported to the border on suspicion of being illegal immigrants.
Shibshankar Chatterjee

The left diagonal boxes (A) and (D) are end-points of a continuum, representing spaces privileged by liberal political theory. (D) represents a space where neither social nor political rules matter: it is nothing but a 'state of nature' where individual might and illegitimate force rules the day. For the original social contract theorists, and for contemporary writers like John Rawls, societies seek to move from such 'nasty and brutish' places to (A), which represents the ideal political space where social norms and political rules mesh seamlessly and are indistinguishable.

Far more interesting (and realistic), however, are the spaces represented by (B) and (C). Consider in particular (B), the 'underground' space produced by the intersection of 'illegal' and 'licit'. The underground represents social zones of

interaction that, though banned by formal political authority, are nonetheless sanctioned and supported by prevailing social mores. Among the many sites that can fit this description are physical locations such as gay bathhouses, brothels, gambling dens, pornographic video parlours, certain kinds of social clubs and coffee houses, and virtual locations such as chat-rooms and private list-servers. This space may also be represented by mobility, as in the chain of writers, translators, copiers and readers who circulated *samizdat* literature in the Soviet Union. What marks these spaces as distinct entities are the conditions of entry because, as Igor Kopytoff puts it, 'consumers...must first purchase access to the transaction.' In other words, these are spaces that may exist in plain view, but in order to get access to their offerings an additional resource, usually information, is needed. This resource may be coded in ethnic, political, religious, linguistic, social, sexual or class terms; the effect is to produce what we call the 'underground', a space that is set apart from everyday life by these socially produced and enforced barriers to entry, and where the writ of formal law is suspended.

Also typical of cell B is the 'borderland'. If the underground is characterised by a temporary dominance of private social orders over the legal order, the borderland is a zone where privately produced social order and formal political rules are in a constant state of uncertainty and conflict. As numerous studies of borderlands have shown, these regions are characterised by a complex interplay of power and authority. For those living in the borderland, it is a zone unto itself, neither wholly subject to the laws of states nor completely independent of them. Their autonomous practices make border residents and their cross-border cultures a zone of suspicion and surveillance; the visibility of the military and border forces an index of official anxiety. Yet the militarised border seeks not only to protect the nation from external forces, but to control those already 'inside'. What the Indian political scientist Ranabir Samaddar calls a 'nationalist lament' emanates among border security forces because, as they put it, 'people here do not have the feelings of nationalism so that they would point out or tell us who the outsiders are.' The difficulty of distinguishing insider from outsider produces confusion in the minds of state forces that can no longer tell where they themselves are located. This uncertainty is a product of the interplay of the licit and the illegal, an effect produced by the coincidence of the geographic and political limits of the state.

In summary, this project seeks to draw attention to the intertwined nature of the legal and the illegal – the illicit – in many cross-border activities, emphasising the conceptual and practical difficulty of establishing fixed criteria for identifying one or another activity as 'criminal'. Its ultimate goal is to help analyse the effects of illicit flows on spaces that are produced by the intersection of legitimate social and political authority, and to do so without (circular) recourse to the state's own categories of legitimate and legal. We developed this framework in order to help advance the study of the varieties of everyday social behaviour that break laws and cross national borders, but which in our view do not constitute 'criminal behaviour' as conventionally understood. Nowadays, when so much activity is described by the all-encompassing term of international terrorism, it is important that scholars do not unwittingly endorse and participate in the fulfilment of powerful state interests without due reflection and concern for human rights. <

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Border crossing at Tachilek, northern Thailand. Here, at the heart of the Golden Triangle, legal and illegal flows of goods and people intermingle with little regard for official state borders.

Willem van Schendel

Beyond hills and plains

rethinking trade, state and society in the upper Mekong borderlands

Borderlands are often described as 'frontier zones' characterised by 'rebelliousness, lawlessness and/or an absence of laws' (Kristof 1959: 281). Anecdotes resonate with popular images of a remote underworld (or perhaps 'outerworld') where state authority is weak and lawlessness prevails. In the upper Mekong borderlands of Thailand, Laos and Burma, the imagery of borderland illegality persists both as spectre and lure, but the substance of what happens there reveals a state and society in league.

Andrew Walker

Fragments of borderlands trade

In late 1994 a golden Buddha image appeared in the doorway of a main street warehouse in Chiang Khong, a busy Mekong River border town in northern Thailand and key trading point with northern Laos and beyond. Its long main street sprawls with shops, banks, restaurants and warehouses. The large Buddha image added colour to one of the more non-descript parts of town; a large banner above it invited participation in a major merit-making festival in a Luang Namtha temple 200 kilometres away in northern Laos. The Buddha image, and a major cash donation, would be presented to the temple following the procession that would set off from Chiang Khong's major river port at nine a.m. on 9 November. Merit-makers were advised to present three photographs and their identity cards so the official paperwork for travel to Laos could be prepared.

This auspicious display of trans-border merit was the initiative of the Budsapha Sawmilling Company run by a larger-than-life Thai businessman with a long history of timber export operations in northern Laos. Visit Wongprasert's most recent venture was a Luang Namtha sawmill originally built by Lao provincial authorities who, desperately short of capital, entered into a partnership with Visit. His investment transformed the mill into the most technologically advanced in the far northern provinces. On the information sheet distributed to merit makers Visit was listed as fundraising committee 'chairman'. Given his investment arrangement with the provincial authorities, it comes as no surprise that the governor and vice-governor of Luang Namtha province served as committee deputies.

Sourcing timber is a complex business in Laos. Government quotas place limits on how much timber can be harvested. In Luang Namtha the quota lay well below the production capacity of Visit's sawmill. In other words, the mill's economic viability depended on relationships with provincial regulators to facilitate the extraction of logs well in excess

of the quota (including logs from the fringes of the nearby biodiversity conservation area). The strategy appeared to work: in 1994 Thai customs (renowned for their under-reporting, given collaborative evasion of import duties) recorded that Visit exported sawn timber amounting to 4,000 cubic metres when that year's quota was only 1,000 cubic metres. Elaborate merit-making with senior members of the provincial government was a small price to pay for this convenient oversight.

Somjit was a Lao petty trader and cross-river boat operator. She was the only woman I met who regularly operated a boat between Chiang Khong and Houayxai on the far side of the Mekong border. Most mornings her long blue boat was a regular sight, cutting across the Mekong to Chiang Khong's muddy port, where she casually wandered the main street's wholesale shops, filling orders placed by customers in Houayxai. Having made her purchases, she usually waited among the riverside sheds and restaurants directly opposite the Thai customs house. Eventually, her tuk-tuk arrived and headed down the concrete ramp to the port below where her goods would be loaded into her boat. Nonchalantly, she finished her conversations or bowl of noodles, paid the tuk-tuk driver, poled her boat out into deeper water, started the engine and rounded one of the islands that marked the beginning of Lao territory.

The profitability of Somjit's petty trading depended heavily on the non-payment of border duties and fees. On the Thai side Somjit rarely paid the 50 baht immigration charge, the 'processing charges' or export taxes. She often avoided port fees collected by Thai boat-operators who controlled cross-border passage. When relations with customs officers were strained or the cross-river boat association was being particularly diligent in collecting fees, she moored her boat at the port's far end (only 50 metres downstream) and loaded her goods via a muddy lane that avoided the customs house but ran past a restaurant where customs officers often chatted and planned their evening badminton games. On the far side of the river, where Lao import duties on many

items were prohibitively high, Somjit rarely had to resort to the wads of Thai baht and Lao kip tucked in her fake leather handbag. She was friends with the customs officers, had known them for years and sometimes brought them treats like pornographic videos. More often they invited her to share a beer.

The state of illegality

Both accounts illustrate aspects of borderlands illegality: above-quota logging, smuggling, bribery, peddling pornography. Most interesting is that both accounts involve close collaboration with the state (for other accounts see Walker 1999). Somjit's success was not based on cross-border smuggling stereotypes: she did not slip across the Mekong at night to collect goods hidden in riverbank overgrowth. Her passage through official ports was highly visible and often noticed by border officials. Somjit was much admired amongst the male port fraternity. The petty officials and cargo-port notables seemed keen to engage her in the flirtatious and sexualised banter in which she excelled. Some may have entertained forlorn hopes of sexual access but for most her pale-skinned presence was an end in itself. One group of Thai immigration police seemed so captivated that they gave her small gifts, even asking her what brand of beer she preferred. No doubt the relationships Somjit cultivated on both sides of the border varied in their nature and intensity, but it is clear that her 'smuggling' was based on a personalised engagement with – rather than avoidance of – state border officials. Visit's case is similar: he did not seek to operate in a 'non-state' illegal timber economy but rather to forge new, more secure and profitable forms of regulatory collaboration.

It's tempting to suggest that these remote local officials are simply out of control, subverting central government regulations and in urgent need of what international development agencies call 'capacity building' or that the actions of Visit and Somjit typify the undermining of central state power as traditional boundaries are subverted by a proliferation of transnational flows. But both of these common responses are informed by an overly formal model of



Image of the Buddha en-route to Luang Namtha. courtesy of author

state authority that lays down a formal regulatory grid (such as the national border) and polices it for illegality (such as smuggling). By contrast, what these fragments of borderland trade suggest is that state power may be examined in terms of its genesis in local social relationships. State regulation is one aspect of sociality, constituted by the numerous cross-cutting allegiances in which state policymakers and officials find themselves. From this perspective definitions of illegality become problematic – not just because transnationalism introduces non-state frames of reference, but because diverse and hybrid forms of governmentality become apparent. The national border itself emerges as a site where various forms of power, agency and constraint creatively (and often unequally) interact, rather than as a place where state power stands opposed to local aspiration.

Beyond hills and plains

These insights encourage the rethinking of conventional models of social space in mainland Southeast Asia, which generally posit that frontiers are formed – and state power established – through a process of diffusion from powerful centres in the lowland plains to less powerful peripheries in the hills, where social life in the 'periphery' becomes a simple confrontation between the 'penetration' of pre-existing states and the 'resistance' of pre-existing local communities. While the symbolic division between hills and plains culturally

persists, we need to be aware of how the 'lived essentialism' (Scott 1999) of this simplifying narrative constrains scholarly analysis.

An alternative approach would be to explore processes of collaborative state and community formation that take place in frontier regions. For while the reality of unequal power relations cannot be denied, neither can the creative and unpredictable agency of people in frontier areas in forming these relations. The subtle interplay between the illegal and the licit provides one useful point of entry into the multi-faceted governmentality of Southeast Asia's seemingly peripheral regions. ◀

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To explore diverse forms of borderlands governmentality in other contexts, scholars at the Australian National University, The National University of Singapore and Yunnan University are developing a new project called 'Beyond Hills and Plains: Rethinking Economy, State and Society in the Southeast Asian Massif'. For further information contact the author.

Smuggling and states along a Southeast Asian frontier

What is the nature of commodities in transit as they move across unstable spaces like international boundaries? How do time, geography, and culture influence whether or not goods are considered to be contraband? Who gets involved in smuggling, and why? Is involvement influenced by ethnicity, language, and class? How do states 'see' – especially along their frontiers? And what strategies do smugglers use to outwit the state's normally superior resources?

Eric Tagliacozzo

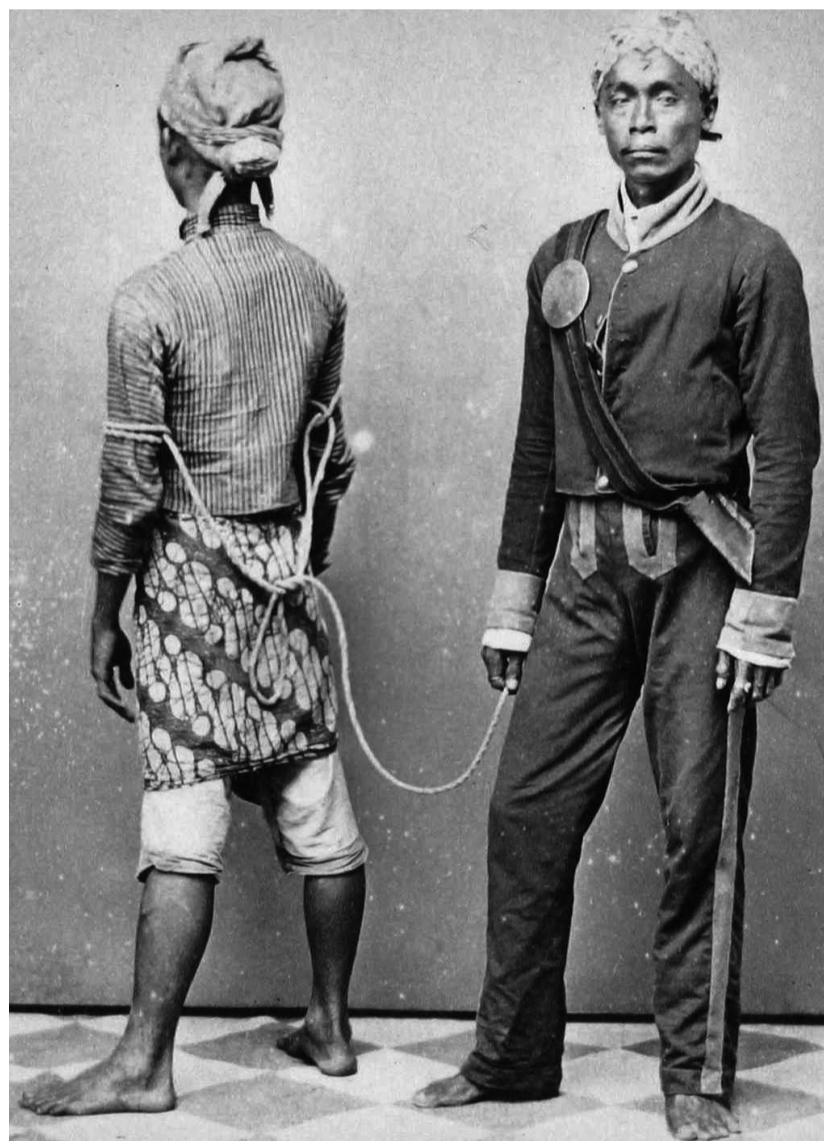
The development of a border between the British and Dutch colonial regimes in Southeast Asia was intimately linked with smuggling across their frontier. While advances in technology and organisation enhanced European abilities to create and maintain borders during the period 1865-1915, western, and particularly Dutch fears of the 'wild space' of frontier areas never really waned over the course of this period.

Smuggling in its many manifestations (of drugs, arms, people, and currency, for example) had much to do with this paradoxical dynamic. Though these states waged fairly successful wars against certain 'secret trades' (such as counterfeit currency), other goods such as narcotics were never controlled during these 50 years. Other contraband commodities including human beings, in the form of prostitutes, coolies, and slaves, metamorphosed over time and more or less went underground. The Anglo/Dutch border, created and strengthened by modernising colonial states, was rife with smuggling; stated another way, boundary-production and boundary-transgression were two sides of the same coin.

Evidence in fragments

The story of smuggling across the sensitive and evolving Anglo-Dutch border in Southeast Asia is complex, and available information is fragmentary at best. Grand economic and political narratives do not tell the full story. To get an idea of how borders and smuggling actually interacted on the ground, we need to look at individual people and specific places: testimonials of Chinese woodcutters who were trafficked to coastal Sumatra; witness statements of men whose ships were pirated off the shore of Aceh; data on morphine seizures in Penang in 1906; the waters around the island of Bangka, which reveal evolving imperial hydrographical abilities at the turn of the century. While the physical locus of smuggling along the Anglo/Dutch boundary was local, radials of this commerce penetrated to far away places – Java and Timor, and even China, Arabia and Japan. The Anglo-Dutch frontier in colonial Southeast Asia was a swirling maelstrom of people, landscapes and connections that bound the region into a new grid, and maintained links outside of it at the same time.

The entirety of this illicit commerce might be called 'undertrading': the passage of goods underneath – or at the legal and geographic interstices of – the majority of items traded in the area. Undertrading had a phased existence, with certain products and ports passing in and out of the 'undertrade' category. Items in these waters were not designated as contraband simply on ontological grounds. Rather, historical moments dictated to colonial governments whether it was in their interest to designate products as illegal. Thus guns, unfarmed opium and human beings (such as prostitutes and slaves) were often classified as contraband; other commodities, including pepper, porcelain, and even bulk shipments of rice, were only sometimes listed so. Specific ports could likewise be declared open to trade or strictly off-limits. Such decisions encouraged



a brisk flow of officially 'illicit' goods – either in newly illegal items or to newly illegal places.

Indies policeman and criminal, 1870
KITLV, Leiden

Spaces of dissent

Some spaces were judged to be better than others for smuggling, giving rise to a geography of contrabanding. Historically, undertrading has flourished in borderlands and peripheries; at natural choke points, such as mountain passes and narrow waterways; and in urban confusion, where the state has difficulty seeing through the frenzy of activity. Singapore – situated along the narrow waterway of the Straits and being a maritime border town – was a perfect focal point for smuggling. The city was also a crucial haven for smugglers because of its size and chaotic complexity. Here the vision and reach of the state, supposedly at its strongest at the seat of regional imperial power, was limited. There were never enough coast guard cutters and police; there were always too many sampans and dark alleys. When the coercive power of government caught up with local smugglers, the latter resisted by using small, fast sailing craft, false shipping papers, hidden cargo spaces and loopholes in the law.

Smuggling also took place in the networks of corruption and private interest that riddled the state in the form of its own civil servants. The collaboration of civil servants was often crucial to the success of contrabanding as they could ensure that the gaze of the state turned elsewhere at the appropriate time. This happened in both the British and Dutch spheres in 19th century Southeast Asia. Yet it is difficult to find records of these liaisons, as both colonial powers had much invested in their regimes' supposed moral superiority, at least in the face of their subject populations. Nevertheless, corruption on the part of civil servants was an important part of the history of contrabanding.

Who were the smugglers?

Who smuggled commodities in colonial Southeast Asia? It would not be an exaggeration to answer 'just about everyone': Chinese populations of various sub-groupings and linguistic affiliations, 'Malays', Bugis, Dayaks, Japanese, 'Sea Gypsies' and Europeans all took their turn. Re-distributing commodities to subordinates to ensure vassalage was common throughout the region. The stakes for trading or smuggling successfully were high: ensuring the flow of goods could mean the difference between maintaining one's power or losing it to rivals. Many could participate as the overhead needed for smuggling was often very low – a boat, some provisions, and local knowledge of tides, sandbars, and winds. With the imposition of powerful European states in the late 19th century, many local people did indeed try to make money in this way.

Such forms of state-designated criminality and resistance against ruling regimes have taken on many guises in human history. If James Scott is right in that the peasantry had everyday ways to resist state and elite exactions, how much more was this the case for merchants and long-distance traders? Possessing capital and distant contacts which peasants lacked – and a mobility that was part and parcel of their occupation – merchants (and the corrupt officials who were very often their allies) found many ways to resist the tightening strictures of government, especially by smuggling. Some traders were merely continuing age-old commodity lines that only now were designated as contrabanding by governments. Others saw the new imposition of borders and rigidified controls as an opportunity to make money. Many passed from being colonial compradors into outlaws, though some of the smartest seem to have been able to occupy both niches at once. ◀

For further reading

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DEEP POCKETS

notes on the Indonesian cockfight in a globalising world

When anthropologists Clifford and Hildred Geertz arrived in a small village on Bali in the late 1950s, they were outsiders. It was, Clifford Geertz wrote, 'as though we were not there. For them, and to a degree for ourselves, we were non-persons, specters, invisible men' (1973:412). Things changed ten days later when they visited their first cockfight.

Johan Lindquist

Despite being an essential part of the 'Balinese way of life', cockfighting was deemed backward by the Indonesian government and therefore illegal. On this occasion the police raided the event, suddenly and without warning. As everyone ran in different directions, Clifford and Hildred Geertz instinctively did the same. After the dust had settled and the police had left, both were accepted by the community. Running from the police together with the villagers was, it seems, a sure sign of solidarity and good intentions.

So begins one of the most famous arrival stories in anthropological lore. Geertz goes on to argue that it is possible to understand the cockfight as a microcosm of Balinese culture. Culture should be understood as a text and the anthropologist's task is to interpret it. As he puts it in one of his most famous lines: 'The culture of a people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong' (p.452). If one looks carefully, Balinese conceptions of self and society, status and hierarchy, are all found in and around the cockfight where the 'sentiments upon which...hierarchy rests [are] revealed in their natural colors' (p.447). This is the reason, Geertz claims, that men get involved in 'deep play' – games where the stakes, in money and status, are so high that it would appear irrational for anyone to take part.

'Deep play' became the defining article in Geertz's version of interpretive anthropology. In the 1980s and 90s, however, Geertz sustained increasing criticism from a wide range of scholars. The most powerful critique problematised his understanding of culture as a coherent whole (Clifford 1983). Not all Balinese, it was claimed, think in the same way and there is not just one bounded 'Balinese' culture. Geertz was not merely reading a text over the shoulders of his informants, his critics claimed, he was constructing one himself.

Forty years or so after Geertz left Bali, I witnessed my own cockfight near Tanjung Batu, a small port town on the Indonesian island of Kunder in the Riau Archipelago, located just off the coast of Singapore and the Malaysian Peninsula.

In 1824, five years after the founding of Singapore, the Anglo-Dutch Treaty made the Straits of Malacca the border between the English and Dutch colonial empires, dividing the Malay Peninsula from the Riau Archipelago and creating the geographical basis for what would become Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Until recently these borders were of limited importance. When Geertz was conducting fieldwork on Bali – Indonesia had become an independent nation only 15 years earlier – the whole Riau Archipelago was tied to the Singapore entrepôt economy. Since then regulation of the borderlands has intensified. With the transformation of Singapore into a financial hub in the 1980s, a transnational economic zone – the Growth Triangle – connects Riau, the Malaysian province of Johor and Singapore.

The still largely rural island of Kunder counts 50,000 inhabitants who have mainly subsisted on rubber planting and fishing. Kunder is nowhere to be found in tourist guidebooks. Like many other islands in the region, it has been affected by the Growth Triangle project, but remains on the periphery of formal economic development. Informal change has been more obvious. Most notably, Kunder has the dubious distinction of housing some 1,000 young women in the largest brothel village in the region. Batu 7 is located seven km from Tanjung Batu and caters mainly to Singaporean tourists.

Adi is waiting when I disembark from the ferry, one of the handful of taxi drivers on the island who make a killing shuttling Singaporeans between the port and Batu 7. We are in rural areas within minutes of getting on the main road that leads out of town and circles the island. Adi tells me that a new hotel has just opened next to the brothel com-

plex at Batu 7, while a big cockfighting ring is nearby. It turns out that most of the Singaporeans who go to Batu 7 are just as interested in gambling as in the young women.

As Adi drives past the guard post at the entrance to the brothel, he gestures with his hand towards the man sitting there, who barely lifts his head in recognition. The blue and white paint has not yet begun cracking on the wooden buildings and the large porches where the women hang out, most of them in their late teens and early 20s. I engage in a bit of idle conversation. All of them claim to be from West Java, a recognisable pattern in cheap brothels throughout Indonesia. Near the back of the complex is a small gate leading to the cockfighting ring and I decide to have a look.

As I approach, a young man sitting in a booth takes a break from smoking his clove cigarette and points to a sign that reads in English: 'Entrance 1,000 rupiah'. As I pay, I notice a uniformed police officer standing with another man a few meters away. Recalling Geertz's introduction to Balinese society, I smile to myself, certain that I will not be running away from the police today.

As in Bali in the 1950s, cockfighting is illegal in Indonesia. But at Batu 7 the cockfighting ring is a permanent structure with a solid wooden fence surrounding the dirt floor and a thatched roof covering most of the arena. It is still early in the afternoon but it is crowded. A fight is about to begin and two middle-aged men, both with cigarettes dangling from their mouths, are preparing the cocks. Most of the 50 or so people hanging on the fences do not seem particularly excited, but a group of six elderly ethnic Chinese men with blood-shot eyes certainly have something at stake. The fight itself doesn't last for more than 30 seconds: as the cocks are released, one is almost immediately mortally wounded.

I look at the Chinese men who are making all the noise. One bangs his head against the fence and walks towards the exit while two raise their arms in triumph. The others, neither excited nor

subdued, slowly make their way toward the brothel complex as everyone turns to watch them. When I ask the man standing next to me, he tells me they are from Singapore.

Attempting some salvage ethnography, I approach the two men counting their winnings, at least a dozen one-hundred Singaporean dollar notes. 'Do you come here often?' They stare at me. 'It seems pretty quiet', I add. One of the men seems to relax, and tells me they come here every other weekend or so. When I ask why, I receive an unsurprising answer: 'We can gamble and the women are cheap. In Singapore we could never do this.' One of the men finally smiles, and says, 'Now we are going to find some women.' Before I have a chance to respond they turn and leave.

I turn my attention to the two men in their mid-20s standing next to me, who are far more talkative when I address them in Indonesian. 'The Singaporeans make up the majority of the gamblers', they tell me, 'but sometimes people will come from Malaysia, Thailand, or Brunei.' Evidently, the only Indonesians who have enough money to compete in this context are the *tai kongs*, the men who smuggle Indonesians illegally from Kunder across the border to Malaysia.

The two men are from the island but have just been deported from Malaysia where they were working illegally for nearly two years. Most of the Indonesian men hanging out around the ring, it turns out, frequently travel to and from Malaysia looking for work, though not all of them are from Kunder. When I ask them about their future plans, they claim that 'It is only two hours across the Straits of Malacca, and there is no work to be found here anyway. Once they stop deporting people, we will go back.'

As I witnessed these events in an era and place very different from the one Geertz was a part of, I couldn't help but think the cockfight is still a helpful metaphor to understand the broader world of which it is a part. It was not, however, the particular 'culture' of Kunder that it helped me think about. What kind of

homogenous culture could I possibly find in a place where Singaporean gamblers, West Javanese prostitutes and itinerant men from Kunder assemble temporarily? The cockfight on Kunder brings together people who are not primarily bound together by a shared system of values, but rather engaged in an illicit economic system (cf. Roseberry 1982). We might therefore think of the cockfighting ring as a kind of 'contact zone' (Pratt 1992) where people who have been historically separated come together, usually in contexts of inequality and subordination.

The cockfight is therefore best understood, not as a story that reflects a relatively coherent system of meaning, which people tell themselves about themselves, but rather as an event in which strategies for survival and illicit desires converge in the shadows of economic globalisation. It is certainly a place where meaning is being produced (or at least communication is taking place) between individuals, but in a context structured by emergent forms of inequality, and facilitated by a transnational border regime that has no clear geographical boundaries. Despite these differences – between Kunder and Bali, and between my perspective and Geertz's – the illegality of the cockfight has remained constant. What an ethnography of the cockfight suggests is that opening the black box of illegality can reveal structures of meaning and power that lead us to critical perspectives on the contemporary world. <

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HAWALA

Roger Ballard

The earliest historical reference to hawala is in Egyptian records over a millennium old, where it signified an 'exchange of debt' between those providing financial services to long distance traders. These financial service providers, or 'hawaladars', formed a coalition of reciprocity that routinely honoured each other's 'hundi' – bills of exchange, using conventional banking terminology. To long distance traders, hawala were useful because a hundi could be cashed by a coalition hawaladar in any other market. The encashment of hundis generated a complex network of debt that was ultimately settled in a series of 'debt swaps' – 'hawala'. After European powers established hegemony over the Indian Ocean, western banking houses dominated and hawala were marginalised. They were rejuvenated after colonial power collapsed, migrant populations increased and communication technology evolved. Hawaladars found themselves perfectly suited to the logistical challenge of delivering 'migrant remittances': money sent by migrants to family members in their home countries.¹

A modernised version of hawala was playing a significant role in financial transactions throughout the Islamic world well before 9/11. Used by migrant workers of Muslim origin as a cheap and convenient means of sending savings to their families back home, 'hawaladars' are found at the heart of virtually every community established by Asian migrant workers in Europe, North America and the oil-rich Middle East. Equipped with little more than a telephone, computer and fax machine – often in the corner of an inner-city store selling anything from cheap tickets to groceries to a largely migrant clientele – hawaladars guarantee delivery to recipients within 48 hours, no matter how remote the destination, at a fraction of the cost charged by formally constituted agencies such as Western Union, and to a far wider range of destinations. Cash deliveries to remote valleys in the Pir Panjal, to the mountains of the North West Frontier Province, to war-torn Afghanistan and Somalia are all routine. A similar system used by Chinese migrants is called *fei-chien*, 'flying money' – an apt description of hawala's wonders.

Terrorist finance?

Hawala is big business: millions of dollars a day flow through the system globally. Prior to 9/11 few outsiders were aware of the system; after 9/11 suspicion of all things Islamic suddenly labelled hawala a form of 'underground banking'. But this is clearly banking with a difference. For those accustomed to the clerical procedures of formally constituted banks and their mounds of documentation – cheques, deposit receipts, account statements, transaction summaries – hawala operations appear to

Within days of the 9/11 attacks, American authorities prepared to wage war on terror on both financial and military fronts. As the Taliban fled Kabul in the face of advancing American forces, US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill announced he was forging a global alliance through which 'we are going to pursue the financiers of terrorism like they've never been pursued before.' His target, however, was as shadowy as al-Qaida itself: the informal system of international money transfer known as hawala.

operate on an impossibly casual basis open to exploitation by terrorists and other malefactors.

Hawala is indeed an 'informal' system by contemporary Euro-American standards. Relying wherever possible on trust rather than written contracts to guarantee the security of their transactions, and transmitting only the data necessary to complete them, hawaladars deploy conventional banking procedures of consolidation, settlement and deconsolidation, but reduce record-keeping to a bare minimum. This 'lean and mean' approach dramatically reduces overheads and cost per transaction. It also alarms regulators: such operations appear to be un-auditable by conventional standards. During the post-9/11 panic, hawala was routinely described as 'a system without records'.

Much of that was hype. Careful inspection reveals that hawaladars do keep essential records – amounts delivered, recipient names and addresses – without which they could not run their operations. But these front-office practices were not what stumped outside observers; it was their back-office procedures culminating in cash deliveries to remote locations that remained shrouded in mystery. Sending funds overseas by conventional means is normally complex, which is why banks charge substantial commissions. How could 'backstreet' hawaladars achieve the same end so much more cheaply? Many sceptical observers smelled a rat.

While the American military rounded up 'illegitimate combatants' the world over, the US Treasury Department took aim at illegitimate financial networks suspected of supporting terrorists. When the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam were bombed three years earlier, the US alleged that al-Qaida operatives had received funds through local hawaladars. On the grounds that those responsible for the 9/11 atrocities must have done the same, American authorities soon found a target: the al-Barakaat network, the principal means through which members of the Somali diaspora supported their kinsfolk back home. The network was promptly shut down and all its assets confiscated, despite vociferous protests that al-Barakaat had a legitimate function and that the cash remitted by émigrés had kept the entire Somali economy afloat for the past decade. Suggestions that al-

Barakaat was the underground banking arm of al-Qaida turned out to be largely specious. The 9/11 Commission concluded most funds used to finance the Twin Towers operation were channelled through the Suntrust Bank in Venice, Florida, where two of the perpetrators had opened a conventional account.²

Know your customer

In the heated post-9/11 political climate, lack of evidence did not preclude taking action. Within six months Congress passed the Patriot Act, fully entitled: *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism*. Among its draconian measures was requiring all US-based financial institutions to comply with the reinforced Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Terrorist Finance (AML/CFT) regulations promulgated by the US-sponsored Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. In addition to monitoring individual customer transactions, these regulations also required American financial institutions to ensure that the financial institutions with which the former did business – including those operating elsewhere in the world – complied with AML/CFT requirements.³ Thus American war-on-terror strategists aimed not only to detect and sweep up terrorists wherever they might be hiding, but to perform a similar operation with respect to suspect financial flows. Given the status of the dollar as the globally-preferred unit of exchange, no major financial institution in the world could afford to ignore the new provisions if they wanted to continue routing transactions through New York's markets – as they had to in order to stay in business.⁴ The American Treasury clearly felt it had the enemy cornered.

The Patriot Act also imposed 'Know Your Customer' (KYC) regulations, which required all financial institutions to perform criminal background checks of all customers and to ensure funds deposited were 'clean'. KYC non-compliance could lead to multi-million-dollar fines. The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network's main objective was to firewall the global financial system. If all institutions complied with its new requirements, of which KYC was the key, criminally acquired funds would be unable to penetrate the legitimate financial marketplace. 'Clean' money would circulate freely, while 'dirty' money generated by drug smugglers, crimi-

nals and terrorists would stagnate outside the firewall and, theoretically, get mopped up by authorities.⁵ In principle, the new regulations did not ban hawala networks. They simply demanded conformity to AML/CFT, KYC and other financial services industry regulations. Hence American authorities have had great success closing down 'terrorist' networks in breach of regulatory requirements. Many European governments took the same sceptical view of hawala networks.⁶

At first these initiatives appeared to have the desired effect. Faced with the possible seizure of informal sector transfers, many migrants switched to the more expensive services of formally constituted banks and Western Union to send money home. The results were spectacular: in Pakistan, for example, the formally recorded annual inflow of migrant remittances rose from US\$1.1 billion in 2001 to US\$4.2 billion in 2004.⁷ Since then, however, formal channel inflow has slackened and no evidence suggests the end of informal networks. The World Bank's 2005 estimates suggest the annual global flow of migrant remittances through formal channels exceeded \$233 billion worldwide, of which developing countries received \$167 billion. Unrecorded flows are conservatively estimated at 50% of worldwide recorded flows.⁸

Informal value transfer systems – of which hawala is one – are still very much in business. Wherever possible they adjust their practices (or how they represent them) to comply with AML/CFT regulations. They take advantage of local variations, given that countries interpret AML requirements differently. In Britain, for example, customs inspectors have confined their attention to front-office KYC compliance⁹ in keeping with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network's 'firewall' policy; inspectors rarely, if ever, consider the back-office procedures of those engaged in trans-national and trans-currency transmission and as a result most hawaladars have registered themselves as licensed Money Service Businesses. Meanwhile, in France, Germany and the Netherlands, those seeking to operate such businesses are required to register as banks, with all the associated regulatory consequences. Nevertheless, hawaladars have managed to keep their heads well below the parapet. The Patriot Act has not killed off hawala; adjust-

ing to local circumstances, the operation is thriving.

From swapping debts to swapping data

Post-9/11 paranoia spawned conspiracy theories about how hawala enables criminals, drug smugglers and terrorists to run wild. Before jumping to such conclusions, it is worth examining the evidence. Do the excellent terms hawaladars offer migrant workers really result from large premiums criminals and terrorists pay to get their hands on 'clean' dollars? Or have hawaladars simply devised a highly efficient means of long-distance value transfers with which formal institutions cannot compete? From their customers' perspective, the most attractive dimension of hawala-style delivery systems is their capacity to provide financial services swiftly and at a fraction of the cost charged by Western Union or Travelex. Customers depositing cash in any one country and currency can expect a sum of similar value in local currency to reach its destination in another country within 48 hours.

How do hawaladars do it? The efficiency of their back-office procedures incur overhead costs dramatically lower than those of formal sector rivals. These costs have two major components. The first is the cost of moving raw cash from place to place, which all financial operators, including hawaladars, seek to reduce by turning cash into value: financial instruments that can be consolidated, traded and de-consolidated at will. While information is transmitted far more cheaply than cash, information processing also costs money: this is the second source of overheads. Hawaladars, like banks, still sometimes find it necessary to physically transfer currency notes among themselves. But just as in the formal banking sector, the greater part of hawala is conducted at a more abstract level, since it involves the transfer of value rather than of cash from one location to another. The more efficiently these transfers can be implemented, the lower the overheads.

The implementation of value transmission is not a matter of physical logistics, but rather of the transmission and processing of information – which is one reason why recent developments in communications technology have had such far-reaching impact on the global financial services industry. In a comprehensively wired world, data can

be instantly transmitted to anyone with access to a telephone, whether a land-line, mobile phone or satellite link. Hawaladars owe their competitiveness to marrying their ancient commercial art with modern communications technology.

Most migrants rarely remit sums of more than a few hundred dollars at a time. They demand recipients receive cash deliveries swiftly and reliably, even if they live in remote villages. For formal sector banks, meeting the demands of such customers is extremely challenging. Their procedures are cumbersome and overheads substantial: their migrant customers frequently find that between 15 and 20% of their hard-earned cash disappears in transfer and delivery costs. While hawaladars use conventional consolidation, settlement and deconsolidation, they substitute mainstream banks' expensive formal procedures with 'informal' reciprocities of trust and by using a distributed system of information-exchange (rather than storing masses of data in expensive central registries) to implement long-distance value transfers. Because hawaladars fulfil migrants' financial services requirements far more cheaply, migrants flock to them.

Trust

Whilst hawala and other similarly constituted value transfer networks are commonly identified as 'informal', they are anything but small-scale. In Dubai, the hub of contemporary global hawala networks, multi-million-dollar transfer-settlements are brokered every day using IT facilities and financial methods no different from those deployed by formal rivals. What is different is the virtually cost-free coalition of trust binding all participating hawaladars together within an alliance that maintains system security¹⁰ and allows bewilderingly complex transactions. Dubai mega-deals can involve multiple tranches of £100,000 assembled by a 'consolidating hawaladar' operating at a national level. This is where the physical

dimensions of hawala – including the physical transfer of currency notes – are more easily grasped by the uninitiated. Consider the sketch below, a simplified illustration of how two parallel sets of consolidation and deconsolidation in Britain and Pakistan and a back-to-back swap of value between consolidating hawaladars can facilitate the transfer of funds from Pakistani settlers in Britain to their kinsfolk in Pakistan.

The core of the operation, executed on a daily basis, is an agreement between two hawaladars to swap tranches of cash of the same value, say, one in pounds sterling and the other in Pakistani rupees, as a means of implementing a multitude of smaller deals on behalf of their respective clients.¹¹ For example, assuming £1 equals 100 rupees, if a Britain-based hawaladar consolidates £100,000 from numerous Britain-based Pakistanis sending small sums back to family members in northern Pakistan, and his Karachi-based partner hawaladar accumulates 10 million rupees from local businessmen seeking to settle £100,000 of invoices from British suppliers, the two can do a straight-forward swap: the Britain-based hawaladar physically transfers £100,000 in cash to the Pakistan-based hawaladar's representative in Britain, while a parallel transfer of 10 million rupees takes place in Karachi and the bank notes are delivered to the northern villages where migrant workers' relatives live.

As the diagramme illustrates, many actors are involved in such a deal. The tranches of value that the two consolidating hawaladars swap are almost always a product of many independently brokered deals and sub-deals negotiated by each hawaladar's agents and sub-agents. Networks even more complex than the kind shown below 'pulse' on a daily basis. In essence, each deal is a transnational swap not so much of cash but of *information* between the two consolidating hawaladars – information that promptly generates two matched, simultaneous and *local* flows of hard

cash: one flows in pounds down the left side of the diagramme, the other in Pakistani rupees up the right. Both movements of cash take place within the system's back-office dimension and lead to a steady deconsolidation of the transnational value that culminates when cash reaches hawaladars whose front-office procedures hand cash over to the ultimate recipients. To the end recipient, value transmitted from elsewhere is transformed as if by magic into cash in hand or in their bank accounts.

Should we be alarmed?

Could such networks provide a financial haven for terrorists and drug smugglers? We know huge sums of dirty money regularly flow through the formal banking system, regardless of AML/CFT requirements.¹² Informal systems are open to similar forms of malfeasance, but does it actually happen? If so, on what scale? Conspiracy theorists, uninterested in exploring how hawala networks actually operate, bemused by suggestions that they constitute a highly effective entrepreneurial initiative in the increasingly competitive global marketplace for financial services, leap for easy answers. For example, the Financial Action Task Force website unequivocally asserts that cash delivery of the kind shown in the bottom left-hand quadrant of the diagramme is *prima facie* evidence of money laundering and a classic case of 'cuckoo smurfing' – the transfer of criminal funds through the accounts of unsuspecting persons.¹³ No other possibilities are considered.

This is not to suggest that money launderers do not or cannot exploit hawala networks. Some of those tranches of US\$100,000 could indeed come from a heroin sale. But no matter how great the profits of international drug-smuggling, they are dwarfed by the scale of migrant remittances. And is it likely that Britain-based drug smugglers shelter their profits in Pakistani rupees? All serious commentators agree smugglers prefer US dollars in formally

constituted banks located in well-sheltered Caribbean jurisdictions.

That said, one cannot exclude the possibility that criminals, terrorists and drug smugglers will take advantage of those jurisdictions where no formally constituted banks currently operate. In Somalia and Afghanistan, for example, financial transactions of all kinds, from the most innocent to the most criminal, can indeed pass through hawala networks. In more normal circumstances, however, hawaladars have a direct interest in avoiding criminal activity. Coalitions of absolute trust depend on the reliability of their members and everyone their members do business with. Violated trust imperils the stability of the whole coalition and invites severe sanctions. Precisely because hawaladars expect to maintain a *personal* relationship with their customers, especially those with whom they engage in large-scale transactions, they effectively maintain their own 'know your customer' scheme. They also have a personal interest in excluding dodgy dealers: failure to do so imperils their position within the coalition.

Nobody denies the need for authorities to do everything in their legal power to contain the activities of terrorism's financiers and drug traffickers, but so far the results have not been impressive. It's easy to impound cash passing through hawala networks and claim success in destroying the financial sinews of terrorist and drug-smuggling operations. But if neither terrorists nor drug-smugglers are apprehended, if heroin becomes so plentiful that its street price declines, shaking down hawaladars looks more like a public relations exercise.

If my analysis is correct, most transactions routed through hawala networks are wholly legitimate and offer a financial lifeline to millions of migrant workers needing a cheap and reliable means of sending money back home. The authorities are correct in believing that some 'dirty money' lies concealed within the huge sums flowing through the hands of hawaladars, as is the case within the mainstream banking system. The challenge is to find an effective means of separating the sheep from the goats. But authorities appear to have issued those who guard the gates of financial rectitude with blunderbusses rather than stilettos – their efforts cause considerable collateral damage. Meanwhile, the goats continue to slip by undetected and are becoming more skilled at evading surveillance.

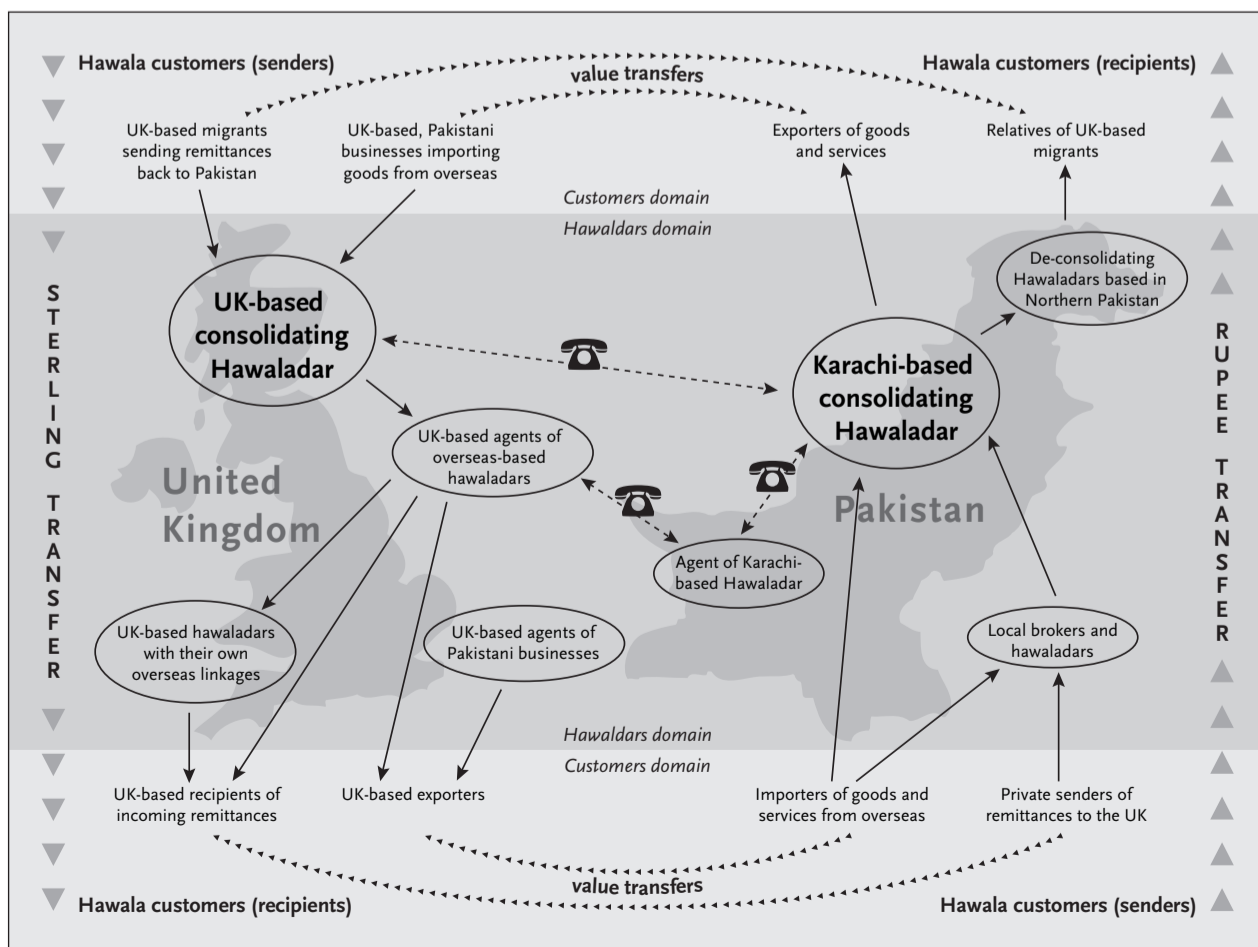
The authorities' chances of success would have been greater had they formulated their strategies with a better appreciation of the character, location and *modus operandi* of their targets. Merely driving the system underground – the currently preferred tactic – favours criminals much more than their pursuers, given that the ultimate targets are the terrorists and drug smugglers behind those alleged to be providing them with financial services. Rather than succumbing to panic, might not the authorities make greater progress if they sought the co-operation of hawaladars instead of subjecting them to random prosecution on specious grounds? If some 'dirty money' passes through the system, nobody is better placed than

hawaladars to guide investigators to its source. But there is little chance of their volunteering such information if their normal commercial business places them in constant danger of arrest. ◀

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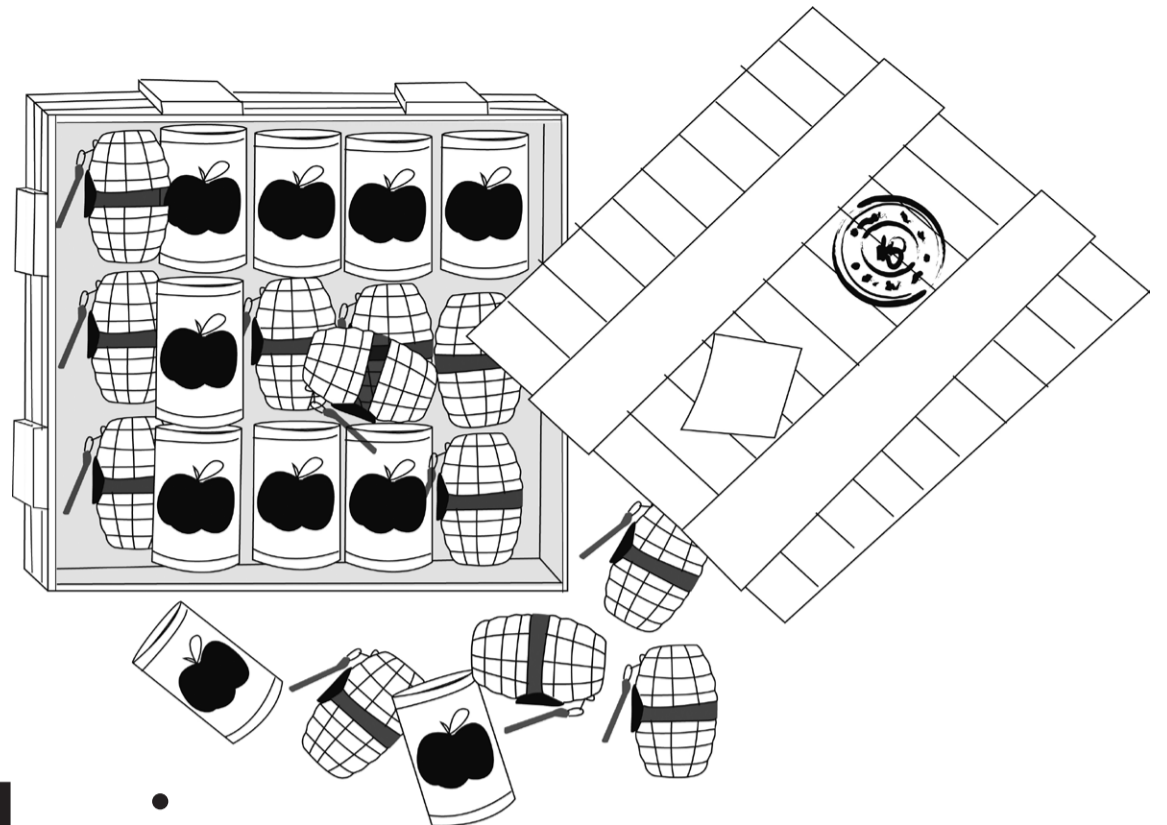
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- Ballard, Roger. 2004. 'Delivering Migrant Remittances: The Logistical Challenge'. *Journal of Financial Transformation* 12.
- Public Affairs Commission. 2004. *The 9/11 Commission Report*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Amongst other things this initiative led to the emergence of expensive AML/CFT compliance consultants. www.money-laundering.com gives constant updates on the additional spheres of financial activity into which the regulatory regime has spread, and offers ever more detailed training programmes which enable participants to become certified anti-money-laundering consultants.
- It is precisely these provisions which have facilitated the shut-down in the financial sinews of the Palestinian economy since the election of Hamas. Once labelled a terrorist regime, no international banks have dared to transfer funds into Palestine for fear of having their facilities in New York withdrawn.
- This strategy was based on a largely illusory premise. As Raymond Baker demonstrates in great and illuminating detail in *Capitalism's Achilles Heel: Dirty Money and How to Renew the Free-Market System* (Wiley 2005), trillions of shadily acquired dollars already circulate freely within the firewalls the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network is so desperately seeking to erect.
- The USA Patriot Act – A Proven Homeland Security Tool. www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=5077
- The State Bank of Pakistan's best estimate of the annual total inflow of remittance funds during this period was US\$8 billion. In other words, despite the massive post-9/11 switch into the formal sector, around 50% of the inflow was still being channelled through the informal sector. <www.sbp.org.pk/publications/wpapers/wpo3.pdf>
- World Bank. 2006. *Global Development Finance 2006*, p.3.
- Anyone who has recently opened a bank account will be familiar with KYC regulations, which require two independent forms of personal and financial identification before the transaction can proceed.
- A full analysis of how such relationships of reciprocity are constructed and maintained can be found in: Ballard, Roger. 2005. 'Coalitions of Reciprocity and the Maintenance of Financial Integrity within Informal Value Transmission Systems: The Operational Dynamics of Contemporary Hawala Networks'. *Journal of Banking Regulation* 6-4.
- In this example I am assuming that the two hawaladars are acting independently. In practice these localised swaps are often part of much larger global swaps brokered elsewhere, usually in Dubai.
- See Baker in footnote 5.
- Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Typologies 2004-2005, p.18 ff, www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/16/8/35003256.pdf



Transactions precipitated by a Britain/Pakistan exchange of debt between two consolidating hawaladars

More than 600 million small arms and light weapons are estimated to be in circulation worldwide.¹ They are directly responsible for the deaths of more than 300,000 people every year through armed conflict, homicides and suicides. The indirect effects of small arms use and availability are graver still, and include injury, disease, poverty, trauma and underdevelopment for millions.



The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons

Nicolas Florquin

Contrary to other trafficked and deadly commodities such as narcotics, small arms usually begin their life legally. Perhaps as little as 1% of global small arms production is illegal; more than 1,200 companies in over 90 countries produce small arms, light weapons and ammunition with government authorisation. Asian producers are among the largest, and include China, India and Pakistan. China produces the full range of small arms including the Type-56 assault rifle modelled after the Russian Federation's Kalashnikov. Indonesia, Iran, North Korea, the Philippines and Vietnam also produce a wide range of weapons although in global terms they are relatively small-scale producers. Japan has a highly developed defence industry and is among the few states currently developing technology-intensive light weapons such as anti-tank guided weapons and man-portable air defence systems.

The legal small arms trade comprises transfers that are authorised or licensed by governments. The value of the global legal trade in small arms and light weapons is estimated to be US\$4 billion annually. Regrettably, the legal small arms trade lacks transparency. Only half of the world's countries report their small arms imports and exports to the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database (COMTRADE).² In 2001-03, COMTRADE valued Japan's small arms exports to its recipients including Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Kenya and the United States at around US\$70m. South Korean exports in the meantime averaged US\$20m annually over the period 2001-2003. No trade data is available for several high or medium-level small arms-producing Asian countries such as China, North Korea, Pakistan or Singapore. Large Asian importers include Japan, South Korea and countries experienc-

ing internal or international conflicts such as Afghanistan, Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka.³

Black and grey markets

Corruption, battlefield seizure and stockpile mismanagement divert weapons from the legal to the illicit market. The 2001 *Small Arms Survey* estimates that approximately 10-20% of the global trade in small arms is illicit, indicating that small arms are regularly being transferred from legal to illicit circuits. Understanding how weapons move from one sphere to the other requires a better understanding of loopholes within the legal market.

While the illicit trade in small arms is difficult to ascertain, its annual worth is estimated to be several hundred million dollars. One component of the illicit trade is the black market, which involves transfers that clearly violate national and/or international laws and that take place without any official or covert government consent or control. The grey market, meanwhile, includes (often covert) transfers conducted by governments, or brokers or other entities sponsored by (or acting on behalf of) governments.

Government involvement in the grey market usually entails a hidden policy agenda or operation driving the transfer, while the black market includes only those transfers where corrupt individual government officials are acting for personal gain, or deals between non-state actors that do not involve government officials. While available data do not provide a reliable estimate, anecdotal evidence gathered during major arms smuggling investigations suggests that the larger illicit transfers tend to be 'grey'.

In Asia, weapons dispersed during conflict appear to be a significant source of illicit small arms. Decades of civil war have left several hundreds of thousands of weapons unchecked in countries

such as Cambodia and Burma. These arsenals include such destructive weapons as SA-7 surface-to-air missiles and RPG-7 rocket launchers. Private arms dealers are known to have sold some of these weapons to rebel groups in the region. Outside buyers include the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka, ethnic insurgents in north-eastern India, various guerrilla groups in Burma, Muslim rebels in the Philippines, Maoist insurgents in Nepal and separatist rebels in Aceh, Indonesia.⁴ Large organised crime syndicates have also acquired weapons from Asia's post-conflict societies. These include triads in Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan,⁵ Thai gangsters⁶ and the Russian Mafia.⁷

While the craft production of small arms most likely represents a minuscule proportion of global firearms production, it appears to be relatively prominent and technologically advanced in several Asian countries. Craft production involves the small-scale, hand-made construction of simple weapons or copies of existing ones in private workshops or homes without legal authorisation. Several countries in Asia produce such weapons. Craft production of small arms in Pakistan, for instance, has been estimated at roughly 20,000 units per year, produced mainly in Darra in the Northwest Frontier Province. Craft production of small arms is widespread throughout the Philippines. In 2002, an estimated 3,000 gunsmiths operated in Danao City in central Philippines alone, and at least 25,000 people relied on the gun trade for their livelihood. Yet in other cases, such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, enterprises may be isolated and small-scale.

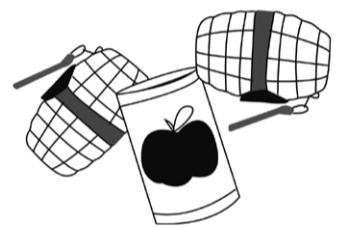
Fighting back

The international community is beginning to better understand the full dimensions of the challenge small arms pose to human security. Important international measures to address it

include the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) and the United Nations Firearms Protocol. In the PoA, adopted in 2001, member states agreed to an extensive set of commitments centred on the prevention and reduction of small arms trafficking and proliferation. The UN Firearms Protocol, which entered into force in July 2005, commits states to regulate the manufacture and trade of firearms through a licensing system. Progress has also been made in the realm of addressing transfers of certain types of light weapons such as man-portable air defence systems.

There is also increasing awareness about the role of arms brokers, and even though international efforts to address arms brokering have not made significant progress, in recent years many states have improved national-level controls. Although a standard definition does not exist, an arms broker can be described as an individual who facilitates and organises arms transactions on behalf of suppliers and recipients for some form of compensation or financial reward. There have been concrete developments in the European Union and the Organization of American States regarding the issue of illicit brokering. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has addressed the issue of illicit brokering at the regional level of transnational organised crime. The majority of states, however, continue to resist transparency regarding their legal transfers and official inventories. It is only with greater oversight, transparency and monitoring of legal weapons that the problem of the illicit trade will be successfully tackled. ◀

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Notes

1. This article draws heavily on previous research by Eric G. Berman, Sahar Hassan and Bertil Lintner for the *Small Arms Survey*. The 1997 report of the United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms provides a widely accepted definition of small arms and light weapons, according to which 'small arms' are: revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles, and light machine guns. 'Light weapons' are: heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems and mortars of less than 100mm calibre.
2. This database is compiled by the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Geneva, based on voluntary submissions of national customs data to the United Nations Statistics division.
3. The largest small arms importer for the period 2001-2003 was the US, with imports averaging US\$599m, followed by Cyprus, whose imports averaged US\$190m.
4. See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 December 2001; *Phnom Penh Post*, 20 September-3 October 1996; *Sunday, India*, 31 May-6 June 1998; *Jane's Intelligence Review*, June 2001.
5. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 24 September 2001; *Phnom Penh Post*, 21 July-3 August 2000; *Bangkok Post*, 22 December 2000.
6. *The Week*, India, 1 October 2000.
7. *Bangkok Post*, 22 April 1998.

THE RUMOUR OF TRAFFICKING

A poorly addressed women's issue in the early 1980s, 'human trafficking' is now high on the political agenda. Couched in the language of human and migrant rights and the depredations of transnational organised crime, anti-trafficking discourse describes the trafficker as the source and means of migrant exploitation in the global migration economy. Human trafficking, in the words of a G8 ministerial communiqué, is the 'dark side of globalisation'.

Diana Wong

The number of contemporary victims, however, is unclear. In a 7 March 2003 press release, the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) Deputy Director stated that 'two million women and children were trafficked across borders in 2001'. Patrick Twomey (2000), basing his figures on IOM estimates, counted four million people trafficked and as many as 200 million held in various forms of slavery worldwide. The IOM website currently claims that '700,000 women and children [are] trafficked yearly'.

These fluctuating numbers are a product of the field's loose semantics. Slavery, obviously, is a related problem. Someone 'trafficked', however, is defined not so much by the unlawful use of force (deception, as in the official UN definition, would be more accurate) as by the illicit crossing of borders. Unlawful trespass of national boundaries lies at the heart of any form of trafficking including that of people, which implies a closer link to smuggling than to slavery. Prostitution, too, is frequently associated with trafficking, underscored by constant reference to 'women and children' as victims of trafficking.

White slavery?

The semantic flexibility of the anti-trafficking discourse merits attention. A telling precursor is the 'white slavery scare' that raged in Britain and America, peaking between 1910 and 1913 and vanishing by 1917 (Doezema 2000). White slavery discourse focussed on prostitution. As abolitionists gained the upper hand over regulationists, white slave traffic took centre-stage, brushing aside the white slave victim on the legislative agenda and in media representation. The campaign's success was extraordinary. The theme of innocent victim/evil trafficker was played out in novels, plays and silent movies, and received extensive coverage in the world press. With public opinion galvanised and organisations devoted to its cause, the campaign culminated in the 1910 Mann Act in America, the 1921 Criminal Law Amendment Bill in Britain and a series of international agreements.

Despite the campaign's fury, contemporary research has since debunked its material foundation. Historical evi-

dence shows that 'the actual number of cases of white slavery... are very few' (Doezema 2000). The scare arose at a time of new transatlantic migrations, which included larger numbers of women from eastern and southern European countries, then faded away after the wave of migration was abruptly terminated by the outbreak of the first world war.

Knocking on western doors

Parallels to the circumstances surrounding present anti-trafficking discourse are illuminating. In the early 1980s, a renewed discourse on anti-trafficking emerged in Europe, this time centring on Southeast Asian women migrants (in particular from Thailand and the Philippines), foreign sex workers, and trafficked victims in the metropolises and towns of the West. It was generated by Asian feminist activists in both Europe and Asia, whose voices remained faint and marginal in the general public discourse on immigration. At the end of the 1980s, however, a new stream of women migrants, including sex workers, arrived from closer to home: the disintegrating Soviet Union. Women from eastern European countries were soon found in the American and European sex industries. A new anti-trafficking discourse emerged, spurred by vigorous American involvement and a conservative abolitionist agenda.

The trajectory – and power – of anti-trafficking discourse took another turn in the late 1990s, when it was hijacked from its initial context of imported developing world prostitution and reframed in the larger one of illegal immigration and European asylum policy. The turning point can be traced to the 11th IOM Seminar in 1994 devoted to the theme of 'Global Human Trafficking'. In an influential paper, a leading European scholar on international migration introduced a model of the new trinity – trafficking, illegal immigration and organised crime – threatening Europe's borders:

'Trafficking brings annual incomes to gangster syndicates in the magnitude of a least US\$5-7 billion a year. Other official data on illegal immigration to various countries is by definition not available. However, various estimates can be made. Thus, the number of aliens who in 1993 managed to illegally trespass

the borders of Western European states, for the sake of illegal employment or residence, could be estimated to have been in the magnitude of 250,000 to 350,000' (Widgren 1994).

The political consciousness of Europe in the early 1990s after the fall of the Berlin Wall was haunted by the new migration frontier on its eastern flank. Following the termination of guest worker recruitment programmes in countries such as the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany in the mid-1970s, asylum applications rose steadily, fuelled increasingly by developing world migrants fleeing the last convulsions of the Cold War in Afghanistan, Iran and the Horn of Africa. In the early 1990s migration jumped exponentially owing to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the wars in its wake. Flights of population previously contained in distant peripheries were now in direct proximity to Europe's borders. Applications for asylum in the European Union jumped ten-fold: from 66,900 in 1983 to 675,460 in 1992, with Germany alone receiving 438,190 applications (UNHCR 2003). This was the context in which anti-trafficking discourse was introduced to European political consciousness at the 11th IOM Seminar.

Are you the victim or the crime?

Since then, an elaborate discourse encompassing states, international organisations, NGOs and academic institutions has been established in a remarkably short time. Addressing prostitution, illegal immigration, asylum seeking and organised crime, the discourse works in a double-sense – morally and legally – to criminalise cross-border irregularities that contemporary migration research shows are extremely widespread and deeply embedded in formal state and market structures. Individual migrant lives constantly weave their way in and out of intersecting spheres of legality and illegality. Migrants resort to illicit entry – or illicit evasion of exit – often using services provided by the 'immigration industry'.

Far from being hapless victims of evil traffickers, most migrants – including women – are engaged in a constant struggle to retain control of their migration projects. So are states. That both often fail is not because of the evil machinations of human traffickers alone. The imagery of perpetrator and victim in the trafficking discourse, however, lends itself to discursive transference – from

the criminalisation of trafficking to the criminalisation of unwelcome migration. Similarly, with its metaphor of the materiality of the border and the criminality of border trespass, the image of victimhood evoked in trafficking discourse can easily be inscribed onto the personified body of the nation-state. <

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BROKERING MIGRATION FROM SOUTHERN CHINA

The income gap between rich and developing countries is still the most influential factor driving transnational migration. Although strict border controls and selection criteria have erected barriers, thousands of people who do not meet the requirements have reached their destinations, while even greater numbers would like to do so. As individual effort cannot ensure successful cross-border migration, its brokerage has become a profitable business.



Li Minghuan

My research focuses on Tingjiang, a rural region along the south-east coast of China known for decades as a source area of transnational migration. I have tried to trace how the current migration trend towards high income states began, developed and expanded. Undoubtedly, the migration wave has been the result of a combination of many interacting factors. Here I focus on migration brokerage, a key node in migration networks.

Emergence of brokerage

Tingjiang is at the mouth of the Min River. For as long as anyone can remember, young local men have been sailors. With the coming of modern shipping, many youths were employed by foreign shipping companies, and when their ships called at New York some sailors jumped ship to try their luck ashore. This was how people from Tingjiang began their lives in the United States in the first half of the 20th century.

Emigration was interrupted after the establishment of the People's Republic of China and condemned as counter-revolutionary during the Cultural Revolution. In the mid-1970s, when the Cultural Revolution was near its end, returned overseas Chinese and their families received permission to travel abroad if they could provide the required documents. Permission was severely restricted but emigration had become possible again; Tingjiang residents with relatives in the U.S. seized the opportunity. New regulations in the reform era allowed returned migrants, especially those who had family members abroad, to migrate once again.

As most applicants were unfamiliar with the necessary formalities, most applications were arranged by Chinese abroad. Some successful applicants were able to

obtain permanent residency upon arrival based on family ties or were granted work permits and settled down; others went to Hong Kong where opportunities were plentiful and wages much higher than in the PRC. News from the first emigrants was so encouraging that more followed. Only a small percentage of potential migrants, however, met the selection criteria. Many others needed help.

Helping people go abroad was first motivated by affection, friendship or sympathy, but as demand for help grew, it became a business. Relatives of overseas Chinese could more easily obtain passports and entrance visas, so some became brokers themselves, arranging transnational marriages and adoptions. Though this trend began with real marriages and adoptions, false arrangements soon appeared. As few could master the complicated procedures, it became a business for experts.

Sister Ping: illegal migrant to illegal broker

In June 2005, a series of reports in Chinese language media in the U.S. attracted the attention of Chinese immigrants and their relatives in mainland China. The reports concerned a woman on trial in New York, Sister Ping, accused of having amassed US\$40 million by smuggling Chinese into the U.S. and of involvement in the tragic death of dozens of stowaways.¹

Sister Ping (full name Zheng Cui Ping)² was born in a peasant family in Tingjiang and received only a primary school education. In 1974 she and her husband emigrated to Hong Kong; in 1981 she settled in New York's Chinatown as an undocumented worker. Nobody knows how she managed to get her green card within a year of her arrival. Ping started to help her relatives and friends emigrate. At first, in exchange

for her assistance, she received rewards of appreciation, but soon it became an open secret that 'it takes money to buy every step of emigration'. In Tingjiang in the mid-1980s, the quoted price for helping a person emigrate to the U.S. was US\$18,000. By the end of the 1990s, the price had skyrocketed to US\$60,000-70,000.

When Ping was just starting out, a new law boosted her business. The implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act enabled 2.7 million undocumented immigrants to obtain permanent residency status. Among the lucky ones were hundreds of Sister Ping's first customers. When this news spread in Ping's home region, she became a local heroine.

In the late 1980s Ping began renting and buying freighters to smuggle larger groups. According to online news reports, groups organised by Ping often included hundreds of people, and her largest group, according to what I heard during my fieldwork in Tingjiang, might have included 500 people. In June 1993 the world was shocked when 300 Chinese on board the decrepit freighter Golden Venture made an emergency landing during which 11 passengers drowned. Although Ping did not own the freighter, she had lent money to the owner and had helped in the overall planning. After the tragedy, Ping was one of the most wanted smugglers in the United States. But she used a fake passport and did not cease running her business until she was arrested at Hong Kong airport in April 2000.

From snakehead to tail: the migrant broker hierarchy

Unauthorised emigration brokers, dubbed 'snakeheads' by the Chinese state media, comprise a three-tiered hierarchy linking source and destination countries. At the top are the 'big

snakeheads': small groups (like Sister Ping's) who legally live abroad and use large sums of money to 'pave the way out' of China and into the destination country. They organise and expand transnational migration networks, take care of documents or facilities for clients, and/or bribe officials in China and elsewhere.

The middle tier is comprised of institutional brokers who often work for officially registered companies in the migration source area. Authorised to procure labour for export and assist participants in study abroad programmes and internationally contracted projects, these companies often provide training in languages, cooking, nursing, basic computer skills, job interviewing, document preparation and sometimes how to apply for legal status after arriving illegally. Clients pay for the training and upon completion receive a certificate which can be used to prove that the holders meet the immigration requirements of the destination state.

The bottom tier of brokers are local agents who act individually. They have connections with the middle tier but may also have contact with a 'big snakehead' through, as in Sister Ping's example, that snakehead's fellow villagers. Their task is to find potential customers and introduce them to companies or snakeheads. For each recruited migrant, the company or snakehead pays the local agent a commission ranging from a few thousand to tens of thousands of renminbi.

Hopeful migrants consider payment of the broker's fee an investment. The actual amount depends first on anticipated income in the destination country; the brokerage fee for expediting migration to the U.S. is always higher than for Europe. Second, it depends on the complexity of the services.

Most difficult, and thus most expensive, is acquiring official immigration status, but if the applicant agrees to go abroad as a contract worker to countries such as Israel or Kuwait, the charge will be lower. Third, it depends on the applicant's status. If the applicant is more or less qualified to meet immigration requirements, the fee will be lower. If the applicant needs to be 'trained' to qualify, the price will increase accordingly.

Since the late 1990s, the Chinese authorities have declared human smuggling illegal and local police have been hunting down smugglers. After the Dover tragedy in England, where 58 Chinese stowaways were found dead in a truck, dozens of snakeheads were arrested and put in prison. Many of those arrested, however, were at the bottom of the hierarchy; their direct contact with the victims meant they could be identified. Big snakeheads such as Sister Ping, however, often live abroad and possess several passports. Their criminal activities cannot be stopped without transnational co-operation.

The view from Tingjiang

On 16 March 2006, Ping was sentenced to 35 years in prison, meaning this 57-year old woman would spend the rest of her life in jail. Many Chinese immigrants in New York disagreed with the judgement. The commonly held opinion was that Ping 'is a good migration broker because she helped a lot of her co-villagers realise their dreams of upward mobility.' And, 'Only in the eyes of the American officials was what she did criminal.' The head of the Fujianese association in New York said, 'Sister Ping enjoys the best reputation among dozens of snakeheads. She did offend the immigration law of America. But from a moral perspective she is not a criminal. She is innocent.'³ None of the people I interviewed in

Beware of the data

The conclusion that smuggling is carried out by powerful criminal organisations is often based on government reports and official statements, whereas the conclusion that smuggling is carried out through looser social networks is often based on field interviews. Is one right and the other wrong?

Melvin Soudijn

Newspaper articles and government reports warn of 'snakeheads' who organize the journey from China to the West. These journeys can take weeks or even months, are sometimes dangerous and cost as much as €30,000. It takes migrants years to repay this debt, often by working in exploitative conditions. These statements together paint a disturbing picture: the smuggling of Chinese people is an evil business where migrants fall prey to powerful criminal organisations.

On the other hand, interviews with smugglers often show that they are not engaged in other types of crime. Transport is often provided through family networks and social contacts. Migrants themselves prove not to be hapless victims, but conscious users of services provided by smugglers. Following the famous military theorist Clausewitz, human smuggling seems nothing more than the continuation of migration by other means.

Contradictory findings about Chinese human smuggling can often be explained by looking at the kind of data used and the method of their collection. In general, there are two ways in which empirical data on Chinese human smuggling is collected: through government sources (eg, court files) and field interviews with (illegal) migrants and smugglers. The two methods have their particular advantages and disadvantages.

Analyses of court files provide insights into the organisational aspects of human smuggling. Statements by perpetrators, police observations, searches of persons or premises and conversations recorded on tapped telephone lines provide information on how smugglers work together. Nevertheless, researchers need to take a number of limitations into account. First, there is the question of how representative the subjects really are; the smarter smugglers may operate quite differently from those who get caught. Second, police observations can be incomplete, thereby painting a skewed picture; criminal bosses take precautionary measures, so relationship charts tend to be inaccurate. Third, data are collected for specific purposes, namely for investigation and criminal prosecution, not for scientific research. A lot of data relevant to social science research is therefore absent, such as suspects' backgrounds and motives.

Information on human smuggling can also be obtained through fieldwork, which entails interviewing smuggled persons or, better yet, the smugglers themselves. Zhang and Chin's 2002 study, for example, drew on interviews with 87 smugglers in America and China. The advantages of fieldwork are obvious: researchers obtain first-hand information. If interviewees can work without interpreters, they benefit from direct contact with respondents; with a sensitive subject like human smuggling, this can remove at least one potential barrier. But there are disadvantages, too. As with court files, it is never clear how representative willing interviewees really are, and smuggled persons usually have a limited view of smuggler's efforts to get them across borders.

Information obtained through court files and field interviews is rarely compared. Studies based on fieldwork generally do not use the conclusions of government reports, except to disown them. Sometimes government reports acknowledge the role of individuals or small networks in smuggling illegal aliens into the country. These reports, however, focus on more serious forms of smuggling, so-called *organised* smuggling, operations that are encountered (and duly combated) in large-scale police investigations. Field

research presumably misses these organisations as they are deemed unapproachable, which makes one wonder whether materials obtained through police investigations do indeed throw a whole new light on the subject. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to analyse just the kind of data likely to contain information on the more organised type of smuggler: Dutch court files.

Court files show many similar findings as those of field interviews: the involvement of women, the lack of central co-ordination, the importance of a good smuggling reputation and the lack of criminal diversity. But court files also provide new insights. In the Dutch case, most noticeable is the presence of non-ethnic Chinese and the cohesion of smuggling groups. Field studies often miss the presence of non-ethnic Chinese because, in general, they focus on the Chinese community, ie, ethnic Chinese smugglers. The Dutch police investigation, however, was able to observe non-ethnic Chinese and smuggling group cohesion because police closely followed the actions of several important organisers of Chinese smuggling for eight months or more. Even in the highly unlikely event that a field researcher would come across this type of smuggler, getting him to talk would likely prove extremely difficult, if not impossible.

However, the researcher should also be aware that court files generally do not address simple forms of illicit migration. This is to be expected, as smuggling via purely migratory-based, as opposed to organised crime-based ties is situated more on the unorganised end of the smuggling spectrum. Because certain 'invisible thresholds' of police practice come into play, the former are not easily investigated and brought to court. For example, interviews with government officials show that police investigations are more likely to be carried out if more than one smuggler is involved in more than one recent incident, while no sanctions were applied to those who fraudulently became guarantors of visa applicants. Officials stated in interviews that the cost of prosecuting such cases outweighs the benefits, as chances of conviction are slim and the punishments negligible. The result is that small-time smugglers (or so-called 'mom and pop' smuggling operations) are essentially absent from the court files.

This makes it perfectly understandable why official government reports stress Chinese smuggling as a highly organised criminal activity and overlook other, simpler methods of illicit migration, whereupon field interviews stress the involvement of family networks and social contacts and overlook other, highly organised criminal activity. Still, court files leave questions unanswered. Why do people go to certain countries? What is the role of family or kinship connections? Only fieldwork can fill these gaps. Therefore, it is not the case that the conclusion based on one source is right and the conclusion based on the other is wrong. Each comes to certain conclusions that the other by design cannot come to, let alone pursue. Neither do they necessarily contradict each other. In fact, court files and field interviews can be used in a complementary fashion to gain a more complete understanding of Chinese human smuggling. ◀

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often difficult to see the line between a smuggler (snakehead) and a legal agency dealing with the affairs of going abroad. Sometimes, legal agencies channel their clients illegally while undocumented brokers channel their clients legally.

Destination states have strengthened controls on immigration, but while governments desire talented people such as entrepreneurs and professionals, the market demands cheap labourers. Illegal migrants often hold the low-paying '3D' (difficult, dirty and dangerous) jobs that natives of high income states reject. Moreover, some high income states occasionally legalise employed illegal immigrants to uphold their legal rights, a possibility that tends to make such immigrants believe that their illegal status is only temporary.

Among Tingjiang residents, there is no doubt that the government has made great efforts to stop human smuggling. Severe penalties have been imposed, especially on snakeheads. Posters and pamphlets publicise the government's decision to crack down on human smuggling and urge villagers not to partake in it. However, successful Chinese returning from abroad, especially if they invest in or donate to their home region, are met with great honour. In the eyes of the migrants and their family members, 'being channelled to another country' is not a criminal act, but a worthwhile undertaking chosen by people who wish to make a fortune abroad but lack the legal entitlement. As long as migration is successful and the costs are acceptable, no one cares how the brokers deliver – what matters is the end result. ◀

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Ping's hometown regarded her as a criminal, though some maintained silence on the issue. One man told me Ping gave him a special discount for channelling his son to the U.S. because they were former classmates. 'She is always kind in responding to requests of help', he said. 'My son could not get into the U.S. without her help. I could not build this five-story house without my son's money.' When asked whether it was criminal that Ping had charged so much, one interviewee in Ping's hometown told me, 'It is reasonable because she needed money to buy the way for us. The money can be earned back so long as the person can get into the US.... All companies charge money for labour export. Only those who received money but did not send the payers to the destination state are criminal.' According to my research, this is the consensus among Tingjiang natives.

The people of Tingjiang evaluate transnational migration brokerage from three perspectives: first, whether the broker delivered the clients to the destination efficiently; second, whether the journey was safe; and third, whether the broker charged a reasonable fee. According to a local saying, it is more difficult to find the right broker than to borrow enough money to pay the brokerage fee. Taking these grass-roots principles into account, it is understandable that Sister Ping received the highest praise from her fellow villagers. According to Peter Kwong at Hunter College, focusing her business on smuggling Chinese makes Sister Ping a very capable business woman. He added, however, that praise from her compatriots cannot erase her criminal activities.

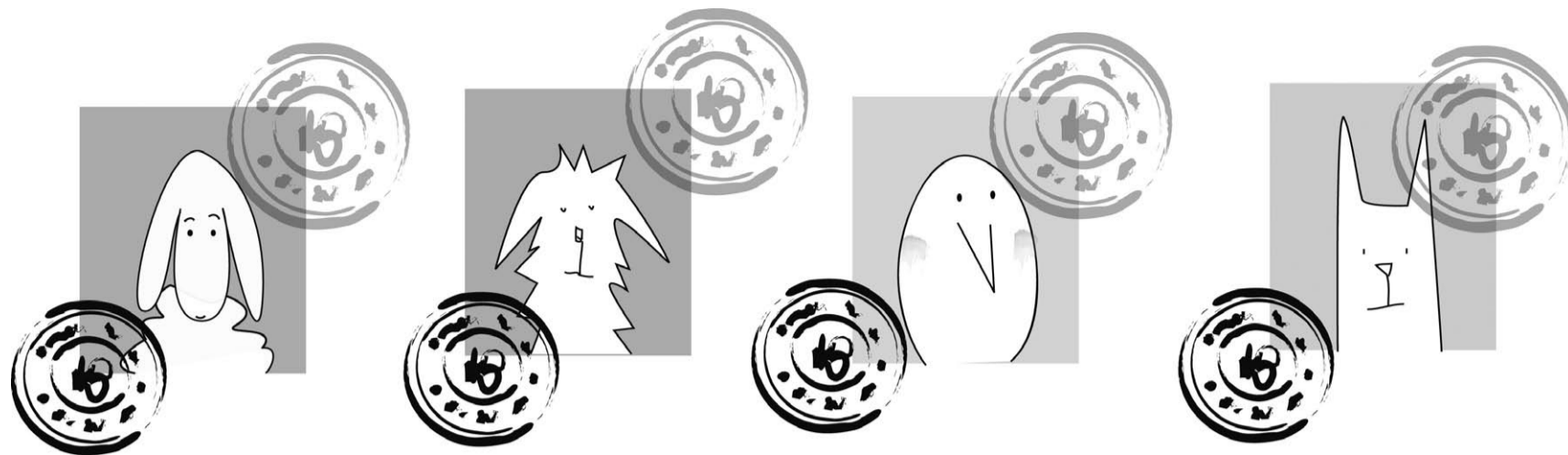
The attractiveness of working abroad – regardless of its legality – is the reward of high income for hard work. However, for the average person who is not qualified to meet the entrance criteria of destination states, upgrading one's economic status through emigration cannot occur without a broker's 'help'. If brokers are able to make emigration possible, they are socially accepted, and if their business is successful, they will even be admired. Brokers are indispensable for making transnational migration possible for average people.

Illegal but licit

The transnational migration industry in China has become institutionalised. To participants, the contradiction between official migration policies and practical labour needs in destination states transforms formally illegal transnational migration into acceptable (licit) practice. The whole process of brokerage exists in between legal and illegal realms, both in China and the destination states; while none of these states openly support illegal practices, their policies – wittingly or not – have contributed to illegal activity. From a broker's perspective, it is

Notes

1. The relevant reports can be found in various Chinese news websites. For instance: <http://www.fujianese.cn/news>; <http://www.chinapressusa.com/index.htm>.
2. In some English news reports the name has been translated as Chen Chui Ping.
3. Quoted from the relevant news report in *Qiao Bao* (China Press in USA), available online: <http://www.chinapressusa.com/index.htm>.



CASH COWS

milking Indian students in Australia

On 14 March 2006 Australian newspaper *The Age* reported on a group of international students at Central Queensland University's Melbourne campus planning a hunger strike to protest being treated like cash cows. The students, citing inadequate facilities, claimed CQU just wanted their money. While the strike was called off as students feared cancellation of their visas, the matter is far from settled.

Michiel Baas

Central Queensland University is among Australian universities that rely on international student tuition; almost half of its 24,000 students are international. The Melbourne campus has 3,753 international students of whom many are Indian. By and large, Indian students come to Australia not for higher education, but hopes of permanent residency. The Australian education industry is aware of this and many universities and colleges use it when marketing their courses abroad.

In my fieldwork in Melbourne in 2005, I gathered data on 230 international students, 130 of them from India. I interviewed education and migration agents, international programme directors, educational institution CEOs, tutors, lecturers, professors, social workers, student advisors, counsellors, student union leaders and members, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) personnel, psychologists, marketing personnel, market analysts, international student recruiters, and Indian community leaders and members.

The education industry

International students are a financial cornerstone of the Australian education industry. According to a recent article in *The Australian*, the education industry had a turn-over of A\$6.9 billion in 2005. Indian students alone spent A\$585 million, double what they spent only two years ago.¹ In 2005, 344,815 full-time international students were enrolled in Australian higher education programmes. The number of Indian students (27,661) was second only to Chinese students (81,184) but represented an annual increase (33.5%) that outpaced all others (students from China: 17.8%; from Korea: 10.9%).² Selling education to overseas students

is one of the largest service export industries in Australia – thousands of jobs depend on it.

Indian students are recruited in different ways. The non-profit organisation IDP,³ jointly operated by 38 Australian universities, is one of the largest recruiters with offices in all major cities except Calcutta. Almost half the students who come to Australia are recruited by IDP; others come with the help of so-called education agents, whose credentials are often vague. Although they are supposed to give information on education, many double as migration agents, advising potential students how to become permanent residents in Australia after graduation.

From student to migrant

A successful permanent residency application currently requires two years of higher education in a field that the Australian government designates as being in demand. The applicant must be 30 years old or younger and pass an English language test. The rules are generally clear, but often change. Once a student decides to study in Australia, it generally takes 6 to 12 months to find a suitable course, gain admission and prepare the documents to apply for a student visa. The decision to study in Australia is often based on the permanent residency requirements then in effect. But before the student is actually able to apply, two to three years pass during which the rules often change.

Paying for the education without falling into financial ruin often depends on acquiring permanent residency status. Two years of overseas education generally costs an Indian student A\$30,000–50,000 – excluding books, housing and food. Most Indian students take out a loan for which they often mortgage family property. This puts pressure on

students from the very beginning: they know it will be difficult to repay the loan in India, and that they have burdened their families. Interest due on the loan puts pressure on family finances; most students try to start repaying the loan as soon as possible, while studying.

Most students I met sought part-time jobs soon after their arrival in Australia, admitting they had known this would be necessary. Most had high hopes of landing a job in their chosen field, but this proved more difficult than anticipated. Lack of work experience and lack of time – as they needed money to cover immediate living expenses – prevented them from finding 'appropriate' jobs. Most ended up accepting low-paying jobs requiring no prior experience. International students are by law allowed to work only 20 hours per week during the semester. Many students, however, admitted working far more hours than allowed, simply because they had no choice. Not a few students were arrested for violating visa regulations and sent to so-called detention centres to await deportation back to India.

Opportunity or exploitation?

Those involved in the education industry are well aware of the situation; recruiters and others involved know the 'real' reason Indian students come to Australia. Those I talked to explained that they often go to India to organise educational fairs and symposia where students can ask questions about what it takes to come to Australia. Besides questions on permanent residency, most questions, I was told, were of a practical nature: how to get a student loan, how much interest must be paid, whether the loan can be repaid by staying in Australia after graduating. Almost everyone on the recruiting side told similar stories about their experiences in India, especially how it was unavoidable to talk about migration. Some recruiters explained that

one has to be realistic about why these students want to go abroad.

It is not only the education industry that profits from the Indian middle-class desire to live overseas. To meet living expenses and repay loans, many Indian students took poorly paid night-time jobs in petrol stations, 7-11 supermarkets and restaurants. These businesses were often run by migrants who paid employees cash-in-hand. The lack of a paper trail allowed students to work more than the allowable 20 hours per week, but also let employers pay below the minimum wage. When asked why they accepted exploitation, students explained they had no choice: it was hard to find a decent job, while families back home were pressed to meet the monthly interest payments. Employers were often aware of this. They also knew that if one student decided not to put up with the low pay, another one would. Desperate students competed with each other, those asking the least rewarded with the extra hours necessary for survival.

The reality contrasts sharply with the Benetton ad-like multiculturalism with which Australian universities market themselves abroad. The international student market is highly competitive and universities the world over consider India a high growth market. When Australian Prime Minister John Howard recently visited India, he stated, 'the deep association between [India and Australia], the growing commercial links, the greatly enhanced political dialogue, the extraordinary growth of the Indian economy – all of these things bode well for an increase in the flow of students.'⁴ That's exactly what Australian universities are hoping for, as China develops its own education industry, and the number of students from traditional markets such as Malaysia and Singapore level off.

As is clear to most in the industry, Indian student enrolment largely depends on their eligibility for residency after graduation. Many Indian students now realise the difficulties, but many still hope that the rules will change in their favour or that new opportunities will present themselves once they reach Australia. This hope is something the industry likes to keep alive. The Melbourne campus of the University of Ballarat now offers a six-month course to become a certified Hindi translator. By successfully completing the course, a student earns five migration points.⁵ Education agents will undoubtedly know how to inform their clients of this opportunity. ◀

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- 23 March 2006. *The Australian*.
- Australian Education International: <http://aei.dest.gov.au/Aei/Default.aspx>.
- IDP stands for International Development Programme. The name was officially changed to IDP Education Australia in 1994. The meaning of IDP no longer serves a marketing purpose. It is simply 'IDP'.
- www.news.com.au/story/0,10117,18396429-2,00.html
- An international student needs to score 120 points on a points test to apply for permanent residency after graduation. Points are given based on a skills assessment, English language knowledge, completion of two years of full-time study in Australia and age.

WHEN THE KOREAN WAVE RIPPLES



An image for free use on websites to show support for the anti-Korean Wave campaign

From the Japanese 'We Don't Want Something Like the Korean Wave!' website, <http://anti-korea.jugem.jp/>

Pop culture has become a major South Korean export. Only superlatives seem to apply to its popularity and sales in Asia. Superlatives also describe the scale on which illegal copies are sold, and the speed with which they appear.

Roald Maliangkay

Beautiful faces

The 'Korean Wave' began in the late 1990s when Korean pop bands and talents became popular among teenagers in Japan, China and Taiwan, their popularity later spreading to Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The blend of (often surgically enhanced) good looks and presentation, slick dance tunes and the lack of profanity and sex – as befitting Confucian morals – have often been cited as the reasons for Korean pop stars' wide appeal across Asia. Films, television series and games followed the pop bands and talents and also did extremely well abroad, appealing to a much wider audience for more or less the same reasons, though the latter may also owe their success to more general pop culture-related factors such as the level and effective application of technology and the quality of the scenarios and actors.

The Wave gained true momentum in July 2004 when Korean KBS's *Kyōul yōn'ga* ('Winter Sonata') aired on Japan's NHK and viewer ratings reached 20%. The enormous fan base for Korean dramas is said to consist mostly of women 40 and older, some of whom have fallen in love with *Kyōul yōn'ga*'s leading character Chunsang, played by Bae Yong-joon – due to his good looks, passion, sincerity and good manners.¹ While Japan continues to be by far the most important market for this and other forms of Korean pop culture, the hype fuelled a phenomenon of Korean dramas throughout Asia.

The popularity of Korean cultural products has helped raise South Korea's

image abroad. A 2005 survey by the Korea Trade Centre showed that the country's image in China and Japan had improved considerably. I would, however, argue in favour of conservatism in assessing the extent of the hype. Yet, for editor of *Yazhou Zhoukan* Yau Lop Poon, the popularity of 'Winter Sonata' in Japan has the potential to warm the chilly feelings of the past. He argues that it is a new era for Korea-Japan relations, and that people are talking about the magic of the beautiful faces.

Backlash

The hype has also provoked a backlash, some even calling for a ban on the import of Korean pop culture. Last year, Zhang Guoli, one of China's top television actors, branded the Korean Wave a 'cultural invasion' and urged his countrymen to buy Chinese products instead. In January 2006, China's State Administration of Radio, Film and Television announced that Korean dramas were to be cut by half, while the government of Taiwan, where Korean dramas are by far the most popular, was reportedly considering a ban on foreign dramas.

In Japan, blogs and manga began to express frustration over the Korean Wave's 'cultural imperialism' and Korean nagging regarding the war period, targeting above all Prime Minister Roh Moo-hyun and actor Bae.² On the other hand, BoA, a Korean female vocalist who has also had enormous success in Japan – the youngest singer ever to sell 10 million records in both Korea and Japan – hasn't become the focus of criticism, perhaps due to her ability to speak Japanese. In 2005, new rows between Korea and Japan over compensation

and territorial claims fuelled animosity that by the end of the year undermined some of the newly acquired interest and understanding.

Piracy

The Wave may be short-lived for an entirely different reason: the violation of laws protecting cultural and intellectual property. With advances in digital media, copyright infringement has become prevalent and difficult to prevent. Despite, or perhaps because of, the sales potential the Chinese market promises, Korean entertainment companies face an uphill battle. Foreign products are subjected to stringent censorship and high import tariffs while piracy is estimated to be as high as 85%.³ The latter led last year to Korea's national radio and television channels KBS and MBC cancelling their contracts with their Chinese counterparts after large numbers of illegal copies were intercepted before the official launch.⁴ Since the early 1990s, China, in its pursuit of WTO accession, has conceded several judicial changes that provide a reasonable legal framework for protecting cultural and intellectual property but, as Andrew Mertha shows, effective enforcement is another matter.⁵

A recent report by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) calls for greater market access for foreign record companies, to allow them 'to play a better role as partners in the fight against piracy.'⁶ Yi Yōngnok of South Korea's Copyright Screening and Settlement Committee's Research Institute maintains that Korean companies should work with local companies, as they could then file

lawsuits together. Korean companies also count on their government's support. In August 2005 the South Korean government announced plans to invest approximately 100 billion won (some € 86.4m) to open 15 cultural centres across Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe to promote the Wave, which will also likely increase diplomatic efforts to thwart piracy. Chi Honggu, a reporter for the Broadcasting Producers' Association Bulletin, suggests the Korean government should follow Japan's example and draw up a strategic plan specifically aimed at counterfeit products and piracy.⁷

Preventing the illegal exchange of digital media will be difficult. Although legislation may succeed, the formation of peer-to-peer (P2P) networks will prove difficult to stop. The French ruling of 8 December 2005 in favour of the user now allows French internet users to freely exchange large files with 'friends' abroad. Banning 'iso' format extensions might help reduce the number of illegal copies of digital media in circulation, as the remaining, mostly compressed files are less attractive. But problems will remain as the latter are more easily exchanged. Education and public information may have some effect, but if the real item is expensive and comes from overseas, warnings of the damage illegal copies inflict on foreign industries seem futile. At a forum on the Korean Wave held in Hong Kong last November, Chinese and Korean panel members agreed that more co-operation and cultural exchanges were necessary, and that Chinese-Korean co-productions would have greater chances for receiving legal support.

But perhaps things are not as bad as they seem. Some forms of illegal copying may actually work as appetisers while losses suffered in one area may be made up for by gains in others. Rowan Pease argues that illegal publishing in China has been a major driving force behind the marketing of Korean culture. Rather than through record sales, Korean companies make money through sponsorship and advertising deals. She quotes Hao Fang, a senior manager at News Corps' Starry Sky TV, as saying: 'Without piracy, there would be no Korean Wave'.⁸

This phenomenon of modern technology curbing the sales of physical media is not new, and mirrors developments in Korea where MP3 downloads have dramatically decreased CD sales since

1999. Korean 'talents' often have a shelf life of no more than a few years during which they are used as accessories in every possible medium. For two years before central Seoul's largest street-level store went bankrupt in spring 2005, the majority of the top ten records sold at Music Land came with small gifts and special packaging to entice customers. While these 'limited editions' may help sales of products associated with a popular star in Korea, they are unlikely to work for software or uninspired music and films. Although the pool of local talent waiting in the wings would seem to make the Korean pop fad unsustainable, the Korean films I have seen over the past year suggest that complacency in the form of predictable scenarios and too much emphasis on visual appeal may ironically be the biggest threat faced by the Wave. <

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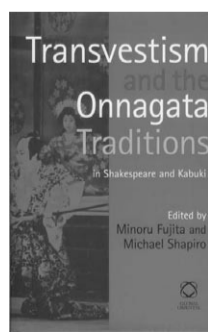
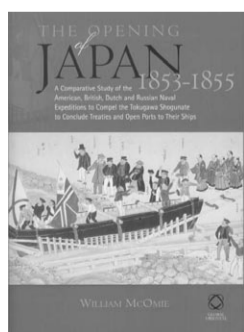
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2. See Thompson, Nevin. 29 July 2005. 'Inside the Japanese Blogosphere – The Anti-Korea Wave'. Harvard University's *Global Voice* blog website at <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu>; Norimitsu Onishi. 19 November 2005. 'Ugly images of Asian rivals become best sellers in Japan'. *The New York Times*.
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8. See Rowan Pease. 'Internet, Fandom and K-Wave in China'. Howard, Keith, ed. 2006. *Korean Pop Music: Riding the Wave*. Dorset: Global Oriental, p.177.

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CROSSING BOUNDARIES

Bangladeshi sex workers in Calcutta

It is not strange that Munni and Panna seek solace and legitimacy in an identity which is neither here nor there. Nor is it irrational for them to belong *here* while retaining ties of belonging *there*. This dualism stretches across borders between Bangladesh and India, embedded in a world of concealment and exposure where the legal brushes the illegal.

Malini Sur

Munni and Panna are not uncommon names in Sonagachi and Kalighat – Calcutta's brothel areas. Sometimes Munni and Panna take on different, Hindu names. Either way, it's difficult to ascertain whether Munni and Panna are internal migrants from West Bengal or cross-border Bangladeshi migrants. If the latter, they remain unidentified by the Indian state by assimilating within the larger population of sex workers in Calcutta. They presently live in ghettos – a marked departure from their previous mobility. Their entry across an international border into brothels escapes the gaze of the state, which supposedly monitors and controls both movement and prostitution. Though these women are able to mask their nationality and indeed do so, like all migrants they retain ties of belong-

ing with the 'home' left behind. Their trans-nationality poses new questions for understanding women's migration and re-settlement and exposes contradictions within NGO discourses on anti-trafficking measures vis-à-vis commercial sex work.

From sex slaves to sex workers

Munni and Panna (fictitious names) are often represented as 'victims' of sex trafficking – words hurled at international policy forums to convey the deepest form of exploitation. They dwell as alarmist statistics, laced with global concerns on criminal practises that seemingly accompany migrating women.¹ Individual experiences surface in sensitively documented NGO interventions.² Typically, women are enticed with false promises of domesticity or better work prospects in a big city. Instead, they

change hands several times across the border and beyond, experiencing humiliation and torture before landing in a Calcutta brothel. Upon arrival, they compete for space and clients amongst a multi-ethnic and sometimes under-age group. Their first years are spent in bondage with brothel keepers who take the lion's share of their earnings; later they work independently. They negotiate daily with pimps and police and in more recent years with HIV/AIDS interventionists – mainly public health officials and social workers. Pimps, police, social workers and politicians seek them out as stakeholders and trump cards to generate revenue, claim health targets and distribute voter cards.

The demand for the legal recognition of sex work has since 1995 been spearheaded by the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, a platform for sex

workers who want prostitution recognised as an occupation, to free it from its underpaid, highly exploitative status. The Durbar and other NGOs' attempts to unionise and confederate the women have improved Munni and Panna's position.³ The geographic, cultural and linguistic proximity between Bangladesh and West Bengal helps Munni and Panna to pass as natives of either; they can thus conceal their cross-border identities and march ahead undaunted by their status as illegal migrants. With a banner in one hand and a charter of demands in the other, they do not shun public scrutiny but join the voices demanding workers' rights, addressing media and political forums and seeking a better world for their children, most of whom are enrolled in government and NGO-run city schools. They revel in an almost festival-like celebration of their new identity: erecting stalls at public exhibitions, selling placards on safe sex and displaying their culinary skills.

Like others in the brothel areas of Calcutta, they no longer inhabit the world of the forbidden, hidden from public consciousness. By claiming a larger space through much publicised events in and around the city, Munni and Panna cling to the affirmation of NGO support that accords them entitlement to certain rights. NGO interventions have transformed the 'victim' of human trafficking from a disempowered woman shrouded from public view into a 'sex worker' who transgresses social boundaries in order to attain a legitimate place in society.

To home and back

However, Munni and Panna are not just subjects of intervention within brothels. While their physical presence might be used to demand progressive workers' rights legislation, their migration to these ghettos is also a target of NGO intervention to prevent sexual bondage. While some NGOs advocate forging alliances with trade unions, such as

the Benodini Trade Union, others (such as Sanlaap) shun forums that demand workers' rights, arguing that it is more crucial to prevent sexual trafficking, especially child prostitution. The public representation of these women reflect NGO ideologies that steer advocacy and intervention.

Typically, when women are identified as Bangladeshi victims of sexual trafficking, they are placed within safe shelters and subsequently sent back to Bangladesh. This transfer back 'home' is seen as the best possible solution to end their trauma, aided by legal guidance, NGO vigilance and diplomatic good will. However, not all of them want to return, and even if they do, they might not find their way 'home'; some spend months or years in similar safe shelters in Bangladesh. Rashida (not her real name), whom I met in Khulna, Bangladesh, in May 2004, was sheltered by a rural NGO. The custodian of a small savings group scheme in her village, she was seduced by her lover to hand over collective funds and travel with him to India. Upon her repatriation to Bangladesh after months of sexual assault and torture, she still waits for her family, her lover and now hostile villagers to accept her.

Munni and Panna are not resigned to a life in Calcutta. Only in moments of trust do they reveal their nationality. Occasionally, they divulge that they travel to Rajshahi in Bangladesh, and not to Bongaon in West Bengal, for *Eid*, sexually bribing the border patrol to claim a 'home' left behind. Their life experiences are not rooted but rather in constant movement back and forth – a state of being that is not always understood by their world of familiar faces in Calcutta. ◀

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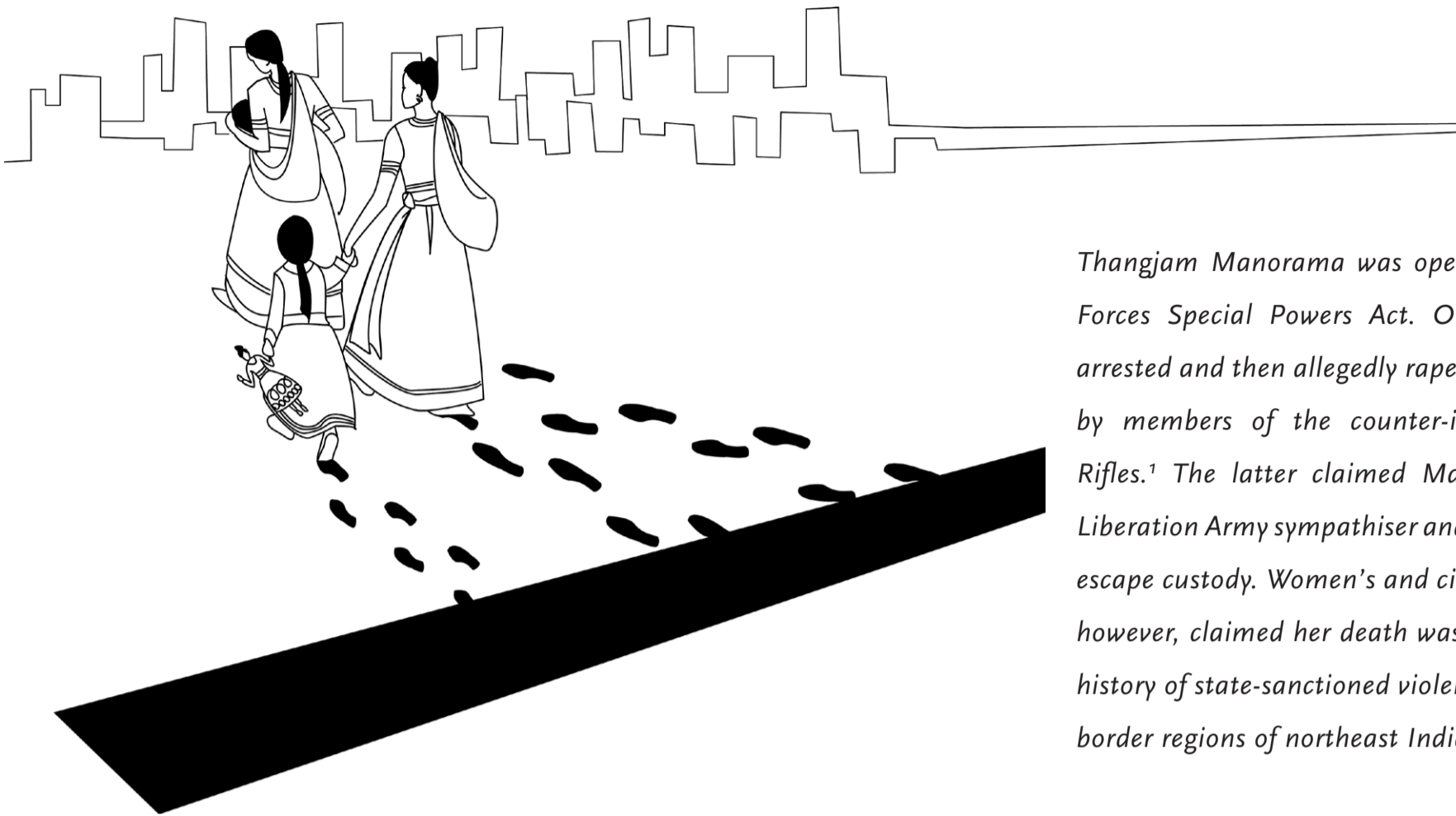
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Notes

1. Internationally, an expansive definition of trafficking includes forms of exploitation other than sexual in the 'Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children' supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (15 November 2000. UN Assembly Resolution 55/25. <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/protocoltraff.htm>). In contrast, the 2002 SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution defines trafficking narrowly, disregarding women's mobility for work (<http://www.saarc-sec.org/publication/conv-trafficking.pdf>). See also: Kapur, Ratna. Spring 2005. 'Travel Plans: Border Crossings and the Rights of Transnational Migrants'. *Harvard Human Rights Law Journal* 18.
2. I am grateful to Anindita Chakraborty of Sanlaap (Hub) for sharing case studies with me. I benefited enormously from my conversations with Deep Purakayastha (Praajak, West Bengal), Paromita Bannerjee (Diksha, Calcutta) and Kanika Kaul (Lawyers Collective, New Delhi). The conjectures here are my own.
3. See Women's Interlink Foundation and Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee Report of the First National Conference of Sex Workers organised by Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee 14-16 November 1997. Yuba Bharati Krirangan, Calcutta.



Thangjam Manorama was openly critical of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. On 11 July 2004 she was arrested and then allegedly raped, tortured and murdered by members of the counter-insurgency group Assam Rifles.¹ The latter claimed Manorama was a People's Liberation Army sympathiser and was killed while trying to escape custody. Women's and civil liberties organisations, however, claimed her death was one more episode in the history of state-sanctioned violence against women in the border regions of northeast India.

Women and borders in militarised northeast India

Paula Banerjee

A history of violence

Surrounded by Bangladesh, Nepal, Burma, China and Bhutan, Northeast India is geographically isolated from the rest of the country. Due to its irredentist movements, the region is considered hostile by the central government. In 1958 New Delhi passed the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) specifically for the region; while it was originally meant for six months, it remains in force today. Among its many articles, AFSPA gives any commissioned member of the armed forces the right to kill anyone suspected of being a terrorist. Civil liberties and women's organisations hold the legislation responsible for the plight of Northeastern women, who have been subjected to decades of human rights abuses.

The region's history under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act reflects how women have suffered under the two patriarchies of rebel and state armed forces.² After the Act's passage, state security personnel flooded into the region while migrants responded to the demand for labour to build roads and military infrastructure. This increased the number of males and exacerbated the already uneven gender ratio: the 2001 census reported 978 women per 1,000 men in Manipur, 975 in Meghalaya, 950 in Tripura, 938 in Mizoram, 932 in Assam, 909 in Nagaland and 901 in Arunachal Pradesh. This coincided with increased violence against women who were marginalised from

public spaces, while state-sanctioned and inter-communal conflict further intensified their marginalisation. Human rights abuses against women considered members of alien groups became endemic: rape, torture, trafficking and the sex trade have all increased in recent years. Newspapers report that 'the northeast has become a supply zone for trafficking women and children not only in the flesh trade, but for forced labour, child labour, organ transplantation, camel jockeys and others.'³

Threats from beyond?

Migration is considered one of the area's greatest security threats, with rebel violence and terrorism routinely portrayed as external threats which justify AFSPA. Most migration-related media reports from Northeast India verge on the sensational, are anti-immigrant, and typically emphasise the need to protect native sons and daughters. The atmosphere is now so tense that both internal and external migrant workers are regularly attacked. Infiltration is indeed among the threats that Northeast Indian women face; as the border is porous, it is easy for criminals to cross over, attack women (on either side) and then disappear back behind the border. While rape is common and is often blamed on people from across the border, the public rarely acknowledges that these incidents are part of a more general rise in violence against women, including kidnapping and marital rape.⁴

A related trend concerns Northeast matrilineal tribes such as the Khasis,

Garos and Jaintias, where migration is being used to justify making these tribes patrilineal in order to change inheritance patterns. In 1997, the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council – which has constitutional jurisdiction over Khasi 'customary law' – passed the Khasi Social Custom of Lineage Bill. It sought to codify the traditional system of inheritance through the female line, but it drew protests led by the all-male organisation *Syngkhong Rympei Thymai* (SRT), which called for changes to the matrilineal system. SRT executive Teibor Khongee claimed: 'We are just like refugees and the moment we get married we are at the mercy of our in-laws. We are reduced to bulls and baby-sitters with virtually no role in society.' The SRT claim outsiders marry Khasi women for their property. 'There is frustration among the Khasi youth', reported Shillong school teacher Peter Lyngdoh, who had to move to his wife's house after his marriage. 'I think this should be changed. We have no land, no business and our generation ends with us.'⁵ The Khasi Student Union (KSU) and the Naga Student Federation (NSF) have issued decrees prohibiting outsiders from marrying their women. The issues of migration/infiltration are thus not just used by the government to justify AFSPA; they have become tools to justify empowering men at the expense of already marginalised women.

Trafficking for the sex trade and for labour is also on the rise. India is one of seven Asian nations on the US watch list for human trafficking, and a tran-

sit country for prostitutes from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal. Girls are practically imprisoned in the region's brothels while children as young as nine are auctioned off for up to 60,000 rupees to buyers from as far as away as the Persian Gulf. 'A sizeable proportion of prostitutes found in Kamathipura and Sonagachi, the infamous red-light districts of Mumbai and Kolkata, respectively, are of Nepalese origin.... Of the 5,000-7,000 Nepalese girls trafficked into India each year, the average age over the past decade has fallen' from between 14 and 16 years to between 10 and 14 years.⁶

AIDS adds to their misery. 'Women and children who are trafficked are at high risk for infection with HIV, which is a death sentence for the victims.'⁷ Most newspaper reports portray AIDS as a disease from abroad: 'prostitutes, who

belong to the immigrant population, are the main carriers of the virus.'⁸ Wild stories proliferate: women from communities in conflict with the state are said to infect themselves in order to infect the armed forces, thus justifying the security measures allowed by AFSPA.

Increased migration has thus become an occasion for men to reconfirm their control over resources. The plight of women in Northeast India demonstrates how in times of crisis, women are victimised not merely by external power structures but also by those of their own communities. ◀

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Notes

1. See Shakespeare, L.W. 1980. *History of the Assam Rifles*. Gauhati: Spectrum Publications.
2. See Banerjee, Paula. 2001. 'Between Two Armed Patriarchies: Women in Assam and Nagaland'. Manchanda, Rita, ed. *Beyond Victimhood to Agency: Women War and Peace in South Asia*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
3. —. 1 October 2005. 'Anti-trafficking Consultation: An Eye-opener'. *Imphal Free Press*.
4. National Commission for Women report quoted in *Hindustan Times*, 3 January 2005.
5. Seema Hussain. 'Khasi Men Question their Role in Matriarchal Society'. www.khasi.ws/khasimen.htm.
6. July 2001. 'Strengthening Cross Border Networks to Combat Trafficking of Women and Girls'. Proceedings of workshop organised by NNAGT and supported by UNIFEM. Kathmandu, p.42.
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8. Ibid.

The mysterious whereabouts

dodging the film censors in Bangladesh

The Bangladeshi cinema industry is reeling from the effects of satellite television and cheap technologies for media reproduction. Faced with legislation incapable of protecting them from foreign competition and censorship rules dating from before the satellite era, Bangladeshi film producers are turning to illegal practices to keep their reels rolling.

Lotte Hoek

Two days before the film *Cruelty* (not its real name) was to be reviewed by the Bangladesh Film Censor Board, the producer met with his director, choreographer and chief editor. Locking the door behind them, they reviewed every reel of the 13,000 feet of celluloid and culled all scenes that might offend the censors. Sexually explicit images and dialogues were cut, as were references to political violence and overt criticism of the government; the omitted bits of celluloid were stored in tins marked 'cut-pieces'. The film's pruned form was then sent to the censor board. After a few weeks and a number of additional cuts, *Cruelty* was certified for release.

As the release date approached, the cut-pieces were taken out of storage and assistant directors were ordered to splice them back into the film. Which cut-pieces were retained depended on the copy's destination. If the cinema hall was in the capital Dhaka, only the least explicit were left in; if the destination was far in the countryside, more cut-pieces were retained. Thus the film materialised in 20 different forms, each copy a little more illegal than the next.

The film became a great success. Wherever it was shown, news of the extraordinary cut-pieces spread like wildfire. Young men lined up to see *Cruelty*; few Bangladeshi movies had seen such success in years. Entertainment correspondents of the broadsheet newspapers and tabloids alike penned indignant rejections of the 'vulgar' film, lamenting the state of the film industry, awash with cut-pieces, and urging the censor board to take its task more seriously. Aware of the blatant flouting of its regulations, the censor board sent its inspectors to cinema halls in distant rural areas, but to no effect. The cut-pieces causing the uproar were nowhere to be found.

Cruelty is just one among many Bangladeshi films in which cut-pieces are found. In fact, most mainstream commercial films in Bangladesh make use of them. These cut-pieces are celluloid traces of the effects that the transnational movement of images has on a national film industry. As states have difficulty policing global media, they attempt to control producers within their borders; the latter respond to state regulations and the pressures of their newly competitive environment with practices that are not strictly legal.



Side-actor shows a cut-piece

Paul James Gomes

The celluloid trace

The availability of foreign audiovisual media in Bangladesh has grown rapidly over the past two decades. When video first arrived in Bangladesh in the 1980s, it caused panic in the cinema industry, which faced foreign competition for the first time. In 1986, the president of the Bangladesh Motion Pictures Exhibitors Association threatened to violate the Cinematograph Act; members warned they would show uncertified and decertified Indian and Pakistani films in their cinema halls if the government did nothing to protect them against illegal competition. Flouting the law seemed necessary as the local film industry was being hit by 'easily available VHS showing attractive Indian and Blue Films at cheaper rates....'¹

Celluloid on the editing table

Paul James Gomes



The association also complained of 'the rampant showing of uncertified Indian films in the bordering districts. The latest Indian movies are just smuggled into this side of the border....'² The censor board responded by affirming that both the public showing of VHS and uncertified films is prohibited and is punishable with up to three years' imprisonment.

Twenty years later, only the scale of the problem has changed. Satellite television,³ DVDs, VCDs and the internet have followed video into the remotest corners of the country. The films and television series, as well as the software and video games (at 10 to 200 Taka apiece, or about 0.12 to 2.50 Euro) are neither copyrighted nor certified, while the laws remain largely unchanged and ineffectual. Amidst this vastly expanded illegal flow of moving images, most film producers have given up trying to convince the censor board to protect them from foreign competition. Instead, they have adapted their filmmaking and exhibiting practices to the new conditions.

The strategy adopted by film producers can be called the 'cut-piece method'. To create demand for their films, producers include sexually explicit sequences that they do not present to the censor board, as the code clearly states that films should not contain immoral and obscene acts including 'kissing, hugging, embracing, etc, which should not be allowed in films of Indo-Bangladesh origin for this violates accepted canons of cultures of those countries.'⁴ Rather than put these sequences before the Board, the producers keep them behind, editing them back into the body of the film once it has received its censor certificate. Through a network of representatives, local contacts and assistants, the film producers keep an eye on the local authorities to judge the likelihood of a raid on a hall. They then decide in which cinema halls, where and when, to show these cut-pieces. Posters and trailers inform audiences that the new film might contain especially attractive cut-pieces. Film producers consider those who cannot watch erotic audiovisuals within their homes as their prime audience for cut-pieces. The strategy unfailingly brings a small margin of profit. Like erotica and pornography elsewhere, little investment can yield huge profits.

Case pending

Neither the government nor the censor board has tried to regulate the immense influx of uncertified and uncensored

of the cut-pieces



Actress Shaila built her career around cut-piece controversy Paul James Gomes



Announcing 'spicy' Eid films Paul James Gomes

audiovisual material that infringes copyright. Instead they focus on irregularities in Bangladeshi cinema production and exhibition: inspectors travel the country while police are required to report irregularities within cinema halls. When cut-pieces are found, the censor board files a lawsuit against the producer, director, actors and film exhibitors. Seventy such cases were pending at the end of 2005, all filed by the censor board against films on grounds of 'obscenity' and 'vulgarity'. The oldest of these cases, from 2002, is nowhere near resolution. Rarely is a producer fined or a film banned outright.

The producer and director of *Cruelty* feel their admittedly illegal activities are warranted. When asked, they point to television and the omnipresent discs that often feature more sexually explicit material than the sequences in *Cruelty*. If the government and the censor board take no action against their producers, why should the cut-pieces in *Cruelty* be seized and banned? Besides, if they didn't use the cut-piece method, the

whole Bangladeshi film industry would collapse under pressure of Indian and American films, blue or any other colour. In their view, cut-pieces are perhaps illegal, but their use is clearly licit.

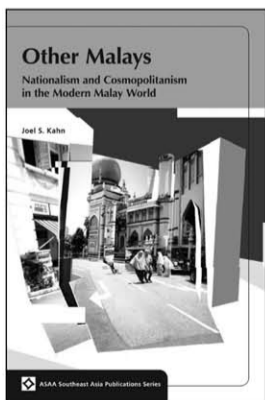
Cut-pieces are thus the visible result of the largely unregulated transnational media presence in Bangladesh. The Censorship of Films Act, Rules and Code can no longer protect the national cinema industry from foreign competition; nor can it deter producers' strategies to protect their interests. Caught in the realm of transnational media flows, film producers in Bangladesh resort to cut-pieces to resist both the censor board and foreign competition. ◀

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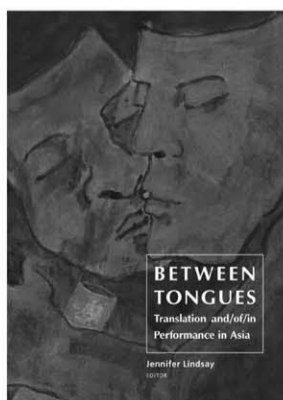
Notes

1. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Undated. Manual on Censorship of Films Act, Rules & Code with Amendments; Cinematograph Act and Rules, with Amendments; Film Clubs Registration & Regulation Act and Rules and Various Notifications, Orders, etc. Dhaka: Ministry of Information, p.109.
2. Ibid.
3. On the shadowy legality of satellite television in Bangladesh see: Page, David and William Crawley. 2001. Satellite over South Asia: Broadcasting, Culture and the Public Interest. Dhaka: University Press Ltd.
4. Manual on Censorship of Films Act, p.34.

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Located at a strategic Asian crossroads, Burma (Myanmar)¹ is one of the world's most ethnically diverse countries. Surrounded by Bangladesh, China, India, Laos and Thailand, it is also one of the most strife-torn and lawless along its 3,650-mile border. Its post-colonial experience exemplifies how illicit economies, insurgent or military-based politics and cross-border human movement can flourish in the wake of failed attempts to create a modern nation-state.

the paradox of Burma

CONFLICT AND ILLEGALITY AS A WAY OF LIFE

Martin Smith

Since Burma's independence from Great Britain in 1948, an array of state, quasi-state and insurgent groups have used armed violence to pursue their goals across all three political eras: parliamentary democracy (1948-62), General Ne Win's 'Burmese Way to Socialism' (1962-88), and the military State Peace and Development Council (post-1988). In the 21st century, Burma's socio-political landscape continues to reflect conditions of conflict. Particularly in the conflict zones, the line between 'legality' and 'illegality' is frequently blurred.

However, the notion that Burma is on the verge of collapse – or that 'regime change' is imminent – is unlikely. Six decades of civil warfare have shown that the management and economics of contemporary internal conflicts – rather than reflecting chaos or societal collapse – can be quite structured between the various stakeholders. Indeed, as Mary Callahan has argued, war and state-building have become so intertwined in Burma as to produce the 'most durable incarnation of military rule in history'.² The same adaptive systems of survival have long existed in armed opposition politics as well. Thus Mark Duffield's paradigm of 'emerging political complexes' rather than 'complex political emergencies' is most apt of how military-political life has unfolded in Burma in the absence of an inclusive rule of law.³

The economics of survival

Understanding how such social and political complexity has been sustained requires tracking the underpinnings of post-colonial economic life. The International Peace Academy's research has shown that both 'greed and grievance' can provide causes for civil war.⁴ In Burma, both are endemic. Political repression, ethnic divisions, the existence of porous borders and a freewheeling economy that frequently operates outside state or international legal parameters have created an arena where military-based organisations can carry on their struggles.

Burma in 2006 is estimated to have fallen to 18th in the world's 'Failed States Index' from 23rd the previous year.⁵ Paradoxically, the conditions of conflict have often remained stable in many borderland regions since 1948, when the central government virtually collapsed after the British departure. Since then, various armed groups – from local village militias to insurgent armies 15,000 troops strong – have maintained territory by raising taxes on local populations and trade. In the process, insurgency became a way of life and the national armed forces came to dominate government. Although often regarded as the 'hermit nation of Asia', Burma has long been the regional epicentre of many international crime and smuggling networks. International factors and complicit parties

both in Burma and abroad have repeatedly revitalised cross-border wheeler-dealing.

Burma's rugged, resource-rich geography is ideal for rural-based insurgencies and illicit activity. Its illicit opium trade was first elevated to the global stage by U.S.-backed Kuomintang elements invading the Shan state following Mao Zedong's 1949 communist victory in China. Ever since, Chinese networks have been crucial to Burma's borderland economy, linking it to Hong Kong, Thailand and all of Southeast Asia. Ethnic conflict and illicit narcotics remain intertwined.

General Ne Win's 'Burmese Way to Socialism' dramatically intensified illicit border economies. Governmental repression and the doomed attempt to isolate the country from the world by autarchic dogmas fanned the flames of rebellion. Neighbouring authorities also did not approve. A kaleidoscope of Chinese-backed communist forces and mostly pro-federal ethnic armies, empowered by Bangladesh and Thailand's 'buffer-state' policies, entrenched themselves throughout 'liberated zones' along Burma's frontiers. The more ambiguous Indian border, where Naga, Chin-Mizo and other insurgent movements operated on both sides, made Burma's strife complete. By the early 1970s, Burma had become integral to a 'regional

conflict complex'⁶ in which cross-border population movements, smuggling and political support sustained conditions of conflict.

Economic consequences followed. The government economy failed and the black market boomed. Through insurgent check-points cattle, timber, jade and opium flowed out of the country past manufactured products such as medicines and luxury goods flowing in. The scale was astonishing: by 1987, when Burma had declined to United Nations Least Developed Country status, US\$3 billion, or 40% of the gross national product, annually changed hands on the black market. In remoter areas some borderland insurgent groups were better-financed and equipped than government forces. Small-calibre arms were easily acquired in China, or purchased as Vietnam and Cambodia war surplus and smuggled in through Thailand. Larger insurgent organisations, such as the Karen National Union and Kachin Independence Organisation, ran parallel administrations to the central government along Burma's frontiers, and they – not the Ne Win government – were the *de facto* authorities in several key border regions.

The post-1988 era

Under the present SPDC government, Burma's socio-political landscape metamorphosed once again. International attention focused on issues of democratic reform, while the post-Ne Win regime emphasised accommodation with neighbouring governments and borderland ethnic opponents. Two events presaged this changing of strategies: the government's 1988 declaration of a market-oriented economic policy, and the 1989 collapse – owing to ethnic mutinies – of the Communist Party of Burma, which had long been the country's largest insurgent force. The military government then offered ceasefires to ethnic forces in the borderlands, including the Kokang, Wa and other CPB mutineers. Ethnic leaders also considered rival offers of support from pro-democracy groups in the anti-regime resistance but eventually agreed to truces in the first ethnic peace process in three decades. In contrast, the National League for Democracy (NLD), which had won the 1990 general election, was repressed and democratic reforms put on hold.

Ceasefire critics accuse military leaders on all sides of opportunism reminiscent of General Ne Win's controversial Ka Kwe Ye 'home-guard' programme, which allowed selected ethnic forces, including those involved in opium trafficking, to maintain arms and control local trade as a means of stemming political opposition. For their part, ceasefire leaders argue that, unlike the KKY militias, the present agreements allow ethnic forces to join reform discussions and maintain arms and territory until a new constitution is introduced. Ceasefire groups, such as the Kachin Independence Organisation and

Kokang ceasefire troops near the Chinese border





Drug burning ceremony, Rangoon



With an estimated 20,000 troops, the United Wa State Army is the largest ethnic opposition force in Burma

New Mon State Party, perceive the present peace process as one of 'legitimation'; none of the armed ethnic parties stood in the 1990 general election. Neighbouring governments, meanwhile, privately urge the same peace priorities on all ethnic organisations. Thus since the Cold War's end the 'regional conflict complex' around Burma has slowly transformed.

However, after nearly two decades of the present incarnation of military rule, political progress lags. With the U.S. imposing economic sanctions, licit and illicit cross-border trade has exponentially increased on the most available markets under the SPDC's new 'open-door' economic policies. Concentrating on democratisation, western governments have underestimated the regional and domestic dynamics of Burma's political economy. Most notorious, the illicit trade in opium and heroin in the Kokang, Wa and Shan borderlands sky-rocketed during the 1990s to at one stage become the world's largest. By 1998, 500,000 households were involved in poppy cultivation.⁷ Even as opium eradication programmes were introduced, a new illicit trade in methamphetamines sprang up, with an estimated 700 million tablets produced in Burma and annually smuggled into Thailand since 2000.

Meanwhile, during the 1990s, a logging trade of similar 'licit-illicit' complexity caused widespread deforestation in Thailand's borderlands, then spread to the Kachin state borderlands with China. Government, business, ceasefire and non-ceasefire groups have all been involved. Chinese and Thai networks drive the trade financially, even though (and also because) national logging bans have been imposed in their own countries. In impoverished regions where few income sources exist, survival relentlessly drives cross-border trafficking and natural resource exploitation. According to Global Witness, forest products are Burma's second most important source of 'legal' foreign exchange (US\$427.81 million in 2004-2005), and yet 'about 98%' of China's recorded 2003 Burmese timber importation was 'illegal'.⁸ Incalculable sums are disappearing somewhere in between.

Narcotics and logging are only the most controversial shadow economies thriving in modern Burma's 'get rich quick' environment. Since 1989, a shake-up in military and business relationships has resulted in some industries – notably oil, gas and jade – being taken under centralised control, while others – such as construction, gold and gemstone-mining – have been marked by individual patronage and *ad hoc* arrangements often connected to Kokang, Pao and other ceasefire groups. This new enterprise frequently creates a misleading picture of the national economy's condition. Certainly, ceasefires have bought the SPDC time, and during the past decade state control has extended further into Burma's border periphery than ever before. Yet in much of the country per capita annual income averages just US\$300. Poverty is

worsening for most and the economy teeters on the brink of bankruptcy. Substantive social and political reforms have not been introduced.

Future outlook

How Burma's political labyrinth might resolve itself remains in question. Like the liberal ideologies of Woodrow Wilson and 20th century thinkers who saw good governance and the promotion of civil society as keys to peace and security, classic conflict resolution relies on legal process and 'political solutions first', both of which are advocated by the NLD and international pro-democracy groups. Recent analyses, however, by such economists and political scientists as Mushtaq Khan, Mark Duffield and Roland Paris emphasise working within the context of a given country's local realities and cultures. Paris has proposed what he terms 'institutionalization before liberalization' in war-torn states as the most stable foundation for legality and inclusive reforms.⁹ Without such frameworks in place, hasty transition might rekindle rather than extinguish conflict.

Such discussions are relevant to the Burma paradox but take place out of earshot of protagonists on the ground. Thus Burma's neighbours, who have profited from licit or illicit trades that undermine its national economy, might determine the

future. In one of the world's fastest developing regions, transparency and the rule of law would help provide equal opportunities to local peoples and reduce corruption and cronyism. But good omens are few. The first decade of the 21st century has witnessed a new era of exploitation, with powerful interests contending for Burma's oil, gas, timber, hydro-electric power, fish and other natural resources. Narcotics trafficking and black market trades flourish in everything from fertilisers and vehicles to precious stones and wild orchids. Armed conflict continues in borderlands, involving Chin, Karen, Mon, Naga, Shan and Wa groups. More people are seeking sanctuary abroad. Ceasefires might exist, but Burma has not found peace. In a recent study of internal conflicts around the world, David Keen asked, 'War and peace: what's the difference?'¹⁰ The long-suffering Burmese might ask the same question. ◀

Martin Smith is the author of *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, London: Zed Books, 1999
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New bridge over the Irrawaddy River in Kachin state on the road to China



Notes

1. Burma was renamed by the present government in 1989. Although recognised by the United Nations, 'Myanmar' is not commonly used in English, including for historical writing.
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3. Duffield, Mark. 2005. *Global Governance and the New Wars*. London: Zed Books, p.161.
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Kenneth J. Hammond is associate professor of history at New Mexico State University and serves as a member on the board of directors of the Society for Ming Studies.

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Rein Müllerson is Professor and Chair of International Law at King's College, London where he is also the Director of the MA Programme on International Peace & Security. He has worked as the UN Regional Adviser for Central Asia. Müllerson was First Deputy Foreign Minister of Estonia and a Member of the UN Human Rights Committee. He was the Head of the International Law Department of the Institute of State and Law of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and Adviser to President Gorbachev on issues of international law.

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A personal account of what I did during my stay at

Satoshi Nakagawa

As things stood

Before coming to the Netherlands, I had been studying the modernization of the Endenese people of central Flores, eastern Indonesia, focusing on the impact of recent immigration to Malaysia and cash cropping. Regarding the former, I had published a mildly critical article (Nakagawa 2003) on modern anthropological theories about 'place' (e.g. Gupta and Ferguson 1997), in which I concluded that there were two discrete language games operating in Ende which we might label the 'traditional' and 'modern' language games. The traditional language game includes 'modern' phenomena as one of its constituent parts, by treating schools and labour migration as outside the meaningful world of kinship, and hence as non-gifts and non-places (see Augé 1992). For its part, the 'modern' language game includes 'traditional' phenomena, by representing *adat* and ceremonies as conservative, as in the way of the progressive world of development ('pembangunan'). In a way, these two language games – with which most Endenese are fluent – are like two legendary serpents eating each other's tail.

A few months after my arrival, I read a paper at an IIAS public seminar entitled 'From Paddy to Vanilla, Elephant Tusks to Money' (hereafter the 'vanilla paper') which dealt with three generations in an Ende village, from around 1960 up until now. Beginning with the idea of the Endenese tripartite economy (comprised of the subsistence, gift, and market spheres), the vanilla paper criticized the idea of money being an all-destructive agent, as advanced by P. Bohannon (1967), who described a society with a similar multi-layered economy (Tiv). The vanilla paper described how the Ende people, with the aid of some indigenous conceptual devices, managed to make the idea of money fit into their own cosmology – to tame and domesticate its power.

I had been fairly fed up with post-modernist hegemony in my old territory (cultural anthropology) and this was one reason why I temporarily converted to ecological anthropology

I came to the Netherlands with its vast colonial archives with the vague hope of acquiring data on cash cropping in colonial times, thinking, again vaguely, of writing a historical analysis of cash cropping in Ende or perhaps in Flores more generally. At least, I thought, I could expand the time-span of my vanilla paper (three generations) to more than 100 years. Even if I could not find any data of theoretical interest, I said to myself, I could still collect numerical data and do some very primitive economic-cum-ecological-anthropology-type-of-analysis. Truth to tell, I didn't have a clear idea of what I would find and what I hoped to prove – in a way, the result would depend on the documents I would find in the archive.

The only idea I had of any theoretical relevance came from the controversy between Marshall Sahlins (1985, 1993) and Nicholas Thomas (1992, 1993, etc). Sahlins emphasizes the importance of Fijian traditional exchange, called *kerekere*, in understanding Fijian history while Thomas contends that *kerekere* was an example of 'invented culture' in the Fijian's struggle against western influence. In a sense, it was a debate about facts – whether *kerekere* had existed or not. My argument in the vanilla paper can be compared to Sahlins's argument, in that I, like Sahlins, emphasize the importance of the 'traditional institution' to fully understand Endenese history. Thus it is conceivable that one could devise a similar argument against mine, insisting that Endenese ritual exchange was another example of 'invented culture'. With this controversy in mind, I entertained a hazy hope of finding some historical data on Endenese ritual exchange in the past.

I have a CD by Rowan Atkinson, a British comedian. One of his punch lines wonderfully describes my situation upon

arrival in the country: 'like a blind man groping in the dark for a black cat that wasn't there.' I was hoping there *was* a cat, though.

In the beginning

I arrived in Amsterdam at midnight on a Sunday in April 2005. I was hungry so I wandered around near my apartment, to find that I was in the centre of the (seemingly) busiest part of the city. Surprise...

I began by picking up two books, one a 'scriptie' (MA thesis, perhaps) by a former University of Amsterdam student on the history of Flores (Oele 1995), and another by an agricultural scientist on the Sikka people adjacent to the Ende (Metzner

even if I could not find any data of theoretical interest, I said to myself, I could still collect numerical data and do some very primitive economic-cum-ecological-anthropology-type-of-analysis

1982). I chose Oele's book as it contained references to economic data in the colonial archives with numbers attached to the cited documents; these numbers, later on, made my search in the National Archive easier. The second-hand data collected by Oele helped me to form an idea of what kind of data I could expect to find in the archive and thus what kind of theoretical line(s) I should pursue. Unfortunately, the only conceivable line I could take, as far as Oele's data suggested, was the one I called an economic/ecological anthropology type of analysis.

So I began re-reading the book by Metzner to guide me in the kind of data I should collect and what kind of arguments I was expected to advance in these new (to me) fields of economic and ecological anthropology. Manon Osseweijer's thesis (2001; she was kind enough to give me a copy) was of great help in versing me in the anthropology of ecology. I read a few works cited in her dissertation and then others cited in those. I think I expanded my vocabulary immensely at this stage – I was being trained as a part-time economic/ecological anthropologist.

Armed with ideas of what kind of data I would find as well as the theoretical lines I was expected to take in assembling those data, I plunged into the formidable corpus of colonial documents at the National Archive in Den Haag. As the door to the archive announces to the visitor: '100 km of 1,000 years of history'.

Population density and other dull matters

I attained some tentative results from my library work at this stage – these were not to my personal taste, though (I found out that I'm definitely a *cultural* anthropologist.) First of all, the population figures are as follows:

Colonial Period

| District | 1855 | 1915 | 1918 | 1924 | 1930 |
|-------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Manggarai | n/a | 124908 | n/a | 120500 | 155283 |
| Ngada | n/a | 92227 | n/a | 69000 | 99767 |
| Ende | n/a | 82054 | n/a | 66000 | 116015 |
| Sikka | n/a | 93159 | n/a | 83000 | 123132 |
| East Flores | n/a | 89752 | n/a | 120500 | 89752 |
| Flores | 250000 | 482100 | 336885 | 480000 | 716165 |
| | -280000 | | | | |

Indonesian Period

| District | 1952 | 1954 | 1975 | 1983 | 2004 |
|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Manggarai | 204987 | 211278 | 320543 | n/a | n/a |
| Ngada | 98142 | 101164 | 143763 | n/a | n/a |
| Ende | 141620 | 145804 | 179331 | 211851 | 242898 |
| Sikka | 141868 | 146216 | 189871 | n/a | n/a |
| East Flores | 173693 | 179044 | 57227 | n/a | n/a |
| Flores | 760303 | 785505 | 890735 | n/a | n/a |

One could make an almost coherent and plausible story out of the above (besides natural population growth) by referring to the political situation (the gradual expansion of the colonial

government) and the world economy (especially the Depression). Yet, one may be puzzled by the figures. To make the puzzle clearer, I calculated population density for each year for each district, and sometimes for each sub-district where data were available. Most of the figures are quite high for slash-and-burn agriculturists. One of Metzner's arguments is as follows: the population density in Sikka district is much higher than expected for a slash-and-burn agricultural population, and the key to understanding this abnormality (so to speak) lies in the specially-Sikka-way of agriculture, one of the elements of which is cash cropping.

The second task was therefore to collect data about cash cropping, in Ende in particular, and in Flores in general. So far so good – the research progressed as expected. It was rather dull, though.

'Have you been to Mauritshuis yet?' asked Walter Hauser, one of my fellow fellows at IIAS as well as a good neighbour, and his wife, Florence. They urged me to go to Mauritshuis, an excellent museum located near the National Archive. The visits to Mauritshuis added some flavour to my routine.

Cash cropping and other dull matters

In my investigation I came across data on the import and export of various cash crops, data about the amount of the land used for *sawah* and *ladang*, etc. These were not as extensive as I had expected, and copying numbers was an exhausting as well as dull task – I know I am not a good historian. But I did come across data which might, I hoped, enable me to pick up a few more lines along which to pursue my research in a wider context.

The first was the role played by such outsiders as Makassarese and Buginese. The most important cash crop in Ende (and in Flores generally) has been coconut palm. In my library research, I found that the coconut palm economy had been flourishing long before the colonial power arrived in Flores. Palms were sold to Makassarese and Buginese merchants and then taken to Makassar in southern Sulawesi and sold in local markets. Thus, to make the historical study of the Endenese economy reasonably more extensive, one had to investigate trade between the islands in pre-colonial times (pre-colonial in Flores but not in the rest of Indonesia).

The second was closely related to the first – if I should research Buginese and Makassarese traders and their role in trade in and out of Flores, then I could not do without mentioning the slave-trade in this part of Indonesia, especially around Flores and Sumba (the Endenese were famous slave-traders). Fortunately there is a booklet on slavery in this region by an anthropologist (Needham 1983) who claimed himself not to be a real historian. I decided to let the booklet cover this part of my research, at least for the time being.

A turning point – have I seen you before?

While doing library research as a Sunday historian, my training as a part-time ecological anthropologist continued. Then, groping in the darkness, I came across something familiar: some ecological anthropologists claim to be 'anti-essentialists'. Some even refer to Foucault. This was rather unexpected – I had grown fed up with the names of Foucault and other philosophers and post-modernist hegemony in my old territory (cultural anthropology) and this was one reason why I temporarily converted to ecological anthropology.

I found out, however, that these 'new' ecological anthropologists have done nothing new – they are pure, old-fashioned, ecology-oriented anthropologists; it is only the surrounding atmosphere that has changed. Before they said that 'tribal' people were practical; now they say the same thing, the only difference being their additional comment that tribal people are not culturally bound as some of the muddle-headed cultural essentialists claim them to be.

By 'being familiar' I don't mean merely those philosophers' names but the rhetoric in general. Replace 'practical' with

IIAS, or why I remained a cultural anthropologist

'rational' and voila! – you get the moral economy controversy, revolving around the book(s) by James C. Scott (1976) and Popkin (1979); you could go back to find the same issue in Geertz's *Involvement* book (1963) and Geertz's bashers, and further back to the controversy between formalists and substantivists (Polanyi 1957) and maybe even to Weber (and Marx, perhaps – though not as opposed to Weber). Something clicked in my head. I found myself standing on familiar ground.

Sea women and devils and other exciting matters

I looked around and saw various loose ends of my research coming together to take shape (still vague, though). And I began to remember things.

Early on in my stay here in the Netherlands, I attended (actually, just went and listened to the papers at) the Borneo conference held by IIAS. There I met my old friend, Greg Acciaoli, who is, incidentally, a superb *cultural* anthropologist. Since then, from time to time, I have been reading Greg's articles without any definite aim in mind; just for our old friendship's sake, I suppose. Most of Greg's articles deal with the Bugis in their migration place in Lindu. I reread his articles, which try to analyse Buginese 'commercial' activities in *cultural* terms.

Memory works miracle sometimes; the situation he describes in those articles, where the commercially-oriented strangers (Bugis) and the subsistence-oriented natives (Lindu) live in one place reminded me of – apart from almost the same situation in 19th century Ende – the Aru islands described by Osseweijer, and Spyer (1997). Spyer describes the parallel relationships between the Chinese merchants (the commercially-oriented strangers) and the Aru natives, and the Aru natives and the legendary sea women; the 'analogical' relationships remind us of the baptizing of money described by Taussig (1980).

Let me here recapitulate a small part of Taussig's elegant analysis. The black plantation workers in Columbia had to reconcile themselves to the new, powerful capitalist ideology. They had been familiar with the idea of money, but only in so far as money was evaluated for its use-value. The important aspect of money in capitalism is its exchange-value, in other words, money as capital, whose strange function is that it grows bigger as time passes. The black workers knew about animals, which reproduce themselves – that is, the number of animals grows as time passes. Thus, money in capitalist ideology is in some ways similar to money as they know it and different in others, while money in capitalist ideology is similar to animals in some ways and different in others. 'They must explain the transformation of money into interest-bearing capital and the conversion of use-value into exchange-value' (Taussig 1980:131).

*before they said that 'tribal' people were practical;
now they say the same thing, the only difference
being their additional comment that tribal people are
not culturally bound as some of the muddle-headed
cultural essentialists claim them to be*

In this context, the 'baptism of money', a strange and seemingly unintelligible custom among some of the black planters, made sense. Money as they knew it (money as use-value) was natural but barren, as opposed to money in capitalism which was, to them, unnatural and fertile. 'Barren money can become unnaturally fertile when transferred to God's domain and stamped with his life-giving properties' (Taussig 1980:132). In a way, the baptizing of money was how the black planters tried to understand the new and overwhelming capitalist money economy, using all of their cognitive devices – a process which a structuralist would be willing to call *bricolage*.

Rebellion and cargo cults – more and more curious

The problematique of money with its two aspects, use-value and exchange-value, fits well with my position in the vanilla

paper: the market economy and the gift economy stress the exchange of the things transacted (though in strikingly different ways), while the subsistence economy stresses the use value of the things transacted. I was searching for a way to integrate the point in my vanilla paper and Taussig's arguments.

I went back to the archive with this new insight. Besides data on economy and ecology, I began collecting data on 'onlusten' or rebellions, as rebels' ideologies must have expressed their attempts to grapple with the new capitalist ideology. I knew that scholars such as Stefan Dietrich and Robert H. Barnes had done similar research. Their analyses, however, were almost always political while I wanted to approach these rebellions from the cognitive (as it were) point of view – that is, as a cognitive struggle to reconcile old ideologies with the new capitalist ideology embodied in the idea of money as capital.

I collected data of rebellions, not only in Flores, but in the residency of Timor and the surrounding islands. Some of the descriptions were detailed, but only in numbers (of casualties, etc) and dates; the administrators did not pay much attention to what the rebels wanted.

*cash cropping, ecology, headhunting/slave trades,
stranger-businessmen and labour migration, all these
bits and pieces were beginning to merge, revolving
around: (1) the idea of money in capitalism, and
(2) traditional societies' encounter with it*

Meanwhile, outside the archive, I extended my research into the so-called cargo cults, the kind of 'movements' explicitly aiming at money and wealth. While some analyses, such as the famous *Trumpet* book (Worsley 1968), focus exclusively on politics, Burrige's (1960) analysis and data were most insightful. Burrige presents Mambu and other prophets' and followers' activities as trials to regain their integrity, and convincingly shows how traditionalism failed to help people grasp the new capitalism- and church- oriented changes in society, and how the cargo-cults filled the gap. His data deserve thorough re-analysis.

Data were collected in other fields as well, including Javanese millennium movements and headhunting rumours. I initially thought headhunting rumours were promising in more than one way: they might address a loose end (about the slave-trade) in my research and, second, I had encountered similar rumours in my field. Though it turned out that only Erb's analysis (1991) touched upon cognitive aspects, I think the data I found will be helpful as comparative material when considering the meanings attached to similar rumours in Ende. Especially the line that Erb (1991 and 1999) pursued looks, to me, promising: even though the Ende people I know have had little contact with tourists, their experience abroad (as wage labourers in Malaysia) is comparable to what Erb argues (1999).

So, at the time of writing this essay, I am: (1) an average part-time ecological anthropologist (versed in a few theories current in ecological anthropology); (2) a moderate Sunday historian (with a fair amount of data available at hand), and, above all; (3) a very willing (cultural) anthropologist with a hope of analysing old data (rebellions and 'movements' so far analysed in political terms) in a new light, that is, in cognitive terms.

An abrupt ending

Cash cropping (capitalism), ecology, headhunting/slave trades, stranger-businessmen (Bugis and Chinese) and labour migration, all these bits and pieces were beginning to merge into one configuration, revolving around: (1) the idea of money in capitalism, and (2) traditional societies' encounter with it when, regrettably, my time was up.

Even though I can no longer visit the archive, I can pursue the line I now see clearly in front of me, and will, hopefully within a short period of time, present the result in a lengthy article, or, better yet, in a book.

I really appreciate all the help and kindness I received during my stay in the Netherlands. I was going to mention all the names I could remember when my foster father's wisdom occurred to me. One day, in Ende, I was playing back the day's recordings to Bapak Epu, my foster father. One of the recorded pieces was a recital of a ritual chant. Any ritual chant in Ende begins by invoking ancestors; before coming to the main part, the chanter was reciting all the ancestors' names he could recall when Bapak Epu said, 'This is not good; not good at all. If one should drop an ancestor's name, then he (or she) feels affronted and will do something harmful, not only to the reciter but to the society as a whole. It is much better to say merely *embu kajo//iro aro*, 'grand parents and great grand parents// ancestors and forebearers' because, in that way, nobody will ever be affronted.'

Still, some names deserve special mentioning – Wim Stokhof, Heleen, Wouter. And let me continue – all other staff members and fellow fellows. I really am grateful to you all. ◀

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Stills from the footage, left to right: reciting Sanskrit texts; 'Agni is fierce'; the new priest and his wife.

Wendy van Wilgenburg



Filming fire rituals in Nepal

Nepal – until recently the only remaining Hindu kingdom in the world – has witnessed profound social and cultural change over the past few decades and political turmoil over the last few years. While the impact of the war between Maoist rebels and the government has been felt in every sphere of Nepalese society, religious rituals modestly and silently continue at the Agnimaøha, the Vedic fire temple in Patan, informed by the idea that they guarantee the continuation of the cycle of the sun and the moon, thereby securing human existence on earth.

Bal Gopal Shrestha and
Wendy van Wilgenburg

In view of the political situation, we were very fortunate to witness and record the installation rituals performed at the Agnimaøha fire temple from 20-26 November 2004, just before the borders were closed due to the state of emergency.

Our filming complemented earlier recordings at the Agnimaøha in November 1992 when ethnographic filmmaker Dirk Nijland, together with van den Hoek and Shrestha – following on the work of the late anthropologist Bert van den Hoek (1951-2001) and Bal Gopal Shrestha – filmed the Agnimaøha rituals, covering all details of the daily morning and evening rituals, the fortnightly *daråapûrñamåsa* fire sacrifices and the anniversary rituals. It was foreseen that the 1992 footage would be completed with the filming of another important ritual, the installation of new fires and a new priest (*yajamåna*) following the death of the presiding *yajamåna* or his wife. Priest Vishnu Jwalananda's died at the age of 94 on 27 March 2004.

The team of Bal Gopal Shrestha and visual anthropologist Wendy van Wilgenburg departed for Nepal on 7 November 2004. The following is a short report of our experiences and surprises during these recordings.

Fire rituals

Agni (fire) is an important god in the Hindu religion. Especially in the Vedic tradition, fire is considered to be a means to link the human world and heaven. Establishing fire implies 'life, wealth, procreation and continuation of family, clan and lineage' (Heesterman 1983: 76).

In Nepal, Rajopadhyay Brahmins have maintained the cult of fire at the Agnimaøha fire temple for centuries. It is told that a long time ago an old Brahmin couple arrived at the present location of the Agnimaøha to spend the night. They carried a walking stick which they laid down on the ground before going to sleep. When they woke up the next morning, they saw the stick rooted in the ground sprouting at its top. Witnessing this miracle, the couple thought

this was the right place for them to settle for the rest of their lives. They started to perform daily fire sacrifices and installed the *paðcågni* or the five fires, and it is believed that the Agnimaøha has existed here ever since. The Rajopadhyay Brahmins in Patan, claiming descent from the couple, assume that the Agnimaøha in Patan has been there for at least 4,500 years, as researchers found a holy Varuña tree of that age in the temple courtyard.

The daily sacrifices performed in honour of Agni are most commonly known as Agnihotra, and have been preserved until today at the Agnimaøha in Patan. It is the oldest fire temple in Nepal and one of the most important religious sites in the Kathmandu Valley. The Agnimaøha temple contains five fires, one burning permanently. The priests in charge of the Agnimaøha fire temple believe that if the tradition is discontinued the world will come to an end, as would be the case if the sun were to stop shining.

The most important participants in the fire ritual are the *agnihotrin*, or *yajamåna*, and his wife. Once chosen, they are responsible for keeping the fire burning at the Agnimaøha and taking care of all daily and fortnightly (*daråapûrñamåsa*) offerings until one of them dies. Only at the death of the *yajamåna*, or his wife, are the Agnimaøha fires discontinued and all five fire hearths broken down. The new *yajamåna* is chosen among the elders of each of the six Rajopadhyaya lineages in Patan. The elaborate initiation ceremony of the new *agnihotrin* must be completed on the first full moon after the turn of the Nepali New Year in November.

Filming the rituals

In the two weeks before the rituals began, we visited the fire temple in Patan and interviewed the main Brahmin priests. Until the new fire was installed, this temporary fireplace was used for offering fire sacrifices while the newly formed Agnimaøha Management Committee (AMC) looked after the continuation of the fire rituals at the temple.

As the most senior member of his clan, 88 years old Pundit Kabijananda Rajopadhyay was chosen to be the new

priest (*agnihotrin*). Since his physical condition was vulnerable, the Agnimaøha Management Committee made arrangements permitting him to attend the temple only occasionally, while a representative performed his daily duties.

The first day's rituals started on 20 November in the morning. On this day the god of architecture Viåvakarman was worshipped. During one of the AMC meetings the priests decided to replace the prescribed goat sacrifice with an egg sacrifice. The change was made partly to avoid blood sacrifice and partly to avoid excessive expenses. The priests would have had to organise a feast in which the head of the sacrificed goat was shared among members of the *guthi*, a socio-religious association of Brahmins associated with the Agnimaøha.

On the second day of the rituals, 22 November, we recorded the worship of *Paðcagabya* or the consecration of the five substances of a cow (milk, yoghurt, ghee, urine, and dung). Their mixture is considered holy and is used for ritual purifications.

On 23 November the divine serpent Varuña nāga was invoked from the river Bagmati at the Samkhamul confluence. At the riverbank, the priests performed a two-hour worship to call upon the divine serpent. An unexpected and heavy shower complicated the filming, but was interpreted by the priests and audience as a veritable visit of the divine serpent. They believe that *nāga*, the god of water, brings rain.

25 November, the fourth day of the rituals, was the day of consecrating (*abhicæka*) the new priest and his wife. This day is also called *Purvånga*. Surprisingly, the new priest and his wife did not attend. They were excused because of their old age and were represented by two small wooden statues. On this day, the priests also obtained fire from the sun using an eyeglass – to be safe in case the sun did not appear the next day.

The final day's rituals (26 November) were the most important as it was the day to churn fire and install a new fire in all five fire altars in the temple, as prescribed in the scriptures. Although

it had been announced in preliminary plans, no symbolic churning was carried out. The priests used the lamp they lit from the sunlight the previous day to transmit fire into the fire altar and then to the other altars. The fire in the *åhavanîya* was so enormous that the paint started to drip from the ceiling and the camera equipment began to melt. 'Agni is fierce', the priests stated. They had to interrupt their worship to let the fire calm down, as they were hit by falling paint and had a hard time breathing due to the thick smoke. This day was called the day of *Agni sthåpanå*, the installation of the *årauta* fires, and concluded the five days of rituals.

Results and prospects

This was the first time that the installation of a new fire and a new priest at the Agnimaøha fire temple in Patan was recorded completely, together with interviews and footage providing their context. It was also the last time in this form, as the temple management committee decided that with the demise of the present *yajamåna*, they will only install the new priest without the lengthy and costly procedure of re-installing the fires.

The recorded footage is about 46 hours in length. Editing the film in the Netherlands is the next step. Recited texts in Sanskrit and Newar are being translated into English and the footage will be cut back to 90 minutes. If all goes well, the film will be finished by the end of 2007.

As stated earlier, the 2004 recordings complement the earlier footage from 1992. The latter material will result in three films: parts one and two will deal with two versions of the full moon and new moon (*daråapûrñamåsa*) rituals; part three is to cover the morning ritual (*nîtya pûjå homa*), the evening ritual (*åratî homa*) and the anniversary rituals (*buså daå*) at the Agnimaøha, while the 2004 film deals with the installation of the new fire, the new priest and his wife at the Agnimaøha. Together they will

give a comprehensive view of a set of Vedic rituals that have been transmitted, adapted and added to over the centuries. The most recent filming, in particular, has captured creative change – change that should ensure continuation of the ritual tradition in a society in profound transition. ◀

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The resource curse: oil-based development in Central Asia

Mehdi Parvizi Amineh

Though Soviet centralised planning left the Caspian Sea littoral states of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan poorly developed and struggling economically, their abundance of oil and gas resources brings hope for recovery. Turkmenistan is among the top 15 gas producers worldwide, while oil reserves in the Caspian Basin – comparable to those of the North Sea – have turned Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan into oil exporters.¹ The question is whether they will be able to use their income from oil and gas exports to transform themselves into modern, diverse industrial economies.²

Although it may seem that countries wealthy in natural resources should find it easy to develop economically, the experiences of some resource-based industrialising countries have proven otherwise, especially in the Middle East. The key to success appears to be economic diversification, as demonstrated by the post-1960 industrialisation of oil exporters Iran and Malaysia and non-oil exporters Turkey and South Korea. The latter three countries invested revenue generated by agricultural or oil exports back into agriculture, manufacturing, services and banking. Over time, restructuring sufficiently developed these sectors and allowed them to compete globally, thus creating economies able to withstand sectoral shocks. By contrast, Iran did not create a globally competitive manufacturing or service sector; while collusion between the government and major oil and gas companies, corruption and revenue mismanagement wasted income from oil and gas exports and made the economy dependent on them. This close relationship between Iran's oil revenues and its GDP seriously threatens economic growth by making it susceptible to 'Dutch Disease': a drop in the global oil price directly stunts economic growth, whereas a rise blunts the competitiveness of other exporting sectors under inflationary pressure that hinders diversification.

Politics as usual

An economy cannot truly diversify without the twin buttresses of political and economic institutions. Since the 1980s, the intensified neo-liberal economic nature of globalisation, the collapse of communism and the subsequent wave of democratization created an international political and economic setting that touted a market economy and democratic institutions as paramount to development. While a complete opening up to the world economy is probably not a wise course of action, there is no doubt that change can only be sustained through complementary democratic and economic reforms. Political reform without economic reform fails to sustain liberalisation; economic reform without political reform risks oligarchy. In the latter case, groups with no interest in political liberalisation seize control of resources and turn the country into a rentier state: not dependent on

taxing society for its income, the regime supports itself through, for example, oil and gas exports by state-owned companies. Independent from society, the state becomes indifferent to the country's development.

Unfortunately, the political reform attempts of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have not brightened the prospects for successful economic restructuring. That President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, President Niyazov of Turkmenistan and former President Aliyev of Azerbaijan were secretaries of their republics' communist parties during the Soviet era demonstrates what has happened in terms of post-independence political reform. In essence, the three countries exchanged communist rule for authoritarian rule. Although all three constitutions promise democratization, day to day politics show a different picture: opposition groups and parties are repressed, elections are manipulated, the independence of the judiciary is more than questionable and human rights are not a top priority. Kazakhstan might stand out for its open political debates and Azerbaijan for its press freedom, but all three regimes, instilled with old communist attitudes, remain authoritarian, draining their political legitimacy by engendering cynicism and distrust of all political activity.

Economically, Kazakhstan's reforms have led to a substantial shifting of assets to the private sector, an impressively expanding banking sector, the privatisation of electricity and increased foreign investment. In Azerbaijan, regulatory reforms to liberalise trade policy and privatise agriculture and small and medium-sized businesses were hindered by an inefficient public administration that entangled regulatory and commercial interests and bred corruption. Turkmenistan's economic reform has taken a reluctant and slow-paced approach in which most reforms are either negligible or purely rhetorical. All three countries remain dependent on oil and gas exports: after an initial, post-independence decline in GDP lasting until the mid-1990s, economic growth increased only because of oil and gas exports. Even though recent GDP has surpassed pre-independence levels, the World Bank estimates the percentage of the population living below the poverty line in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan at 47, 20 and 50, respectively.

Resource curse

Against this backdrop, it is highly unlikely that diversification and industrialisation will succeed, except perhaps in Kazakhstan. It seems that resource abundance can actually hinder development and be more of a burden than a boon. The elitism and corrupt governance born of authoritarian rule easily leads to nepotism within clan and family circles and the 'resource curse': the paradox that countries with an abundance of natural resources fail to develop economically because

of governmental mismanagement of resource revenues. When wealth and power depend on one or a few resources, state elites often redirect state revenue to support these sectors in order to stay in power. In this sense resource revenues are not a solution to underdevelopment but integral to the maintenance of central governmental structures and self-enriching elites. The same elites often directly supervise – and effectively neuter – institutions ostensibly established to prevent such corruption, such as oil stabilization funds which ensure sufficient public funds when oil prices are low, and which supervise their use to finance infrastructural projects and promote non-oil industry developments.

For the curse to be lifted, centralisation must first be overcome. Centralisation around oil and gas export dependency increases the role of the state in the economy and job market and breeds inefficient production practices. Combined with political centralisation, which in Central Asia is promoting authoritarianism and limiting taxation of the upper classes, state income remains dependent on oil and gas revenues, which hinders the diversification of the economy.

Second, demand- and supply-induced scarcity must be addressed. Population growth, rising per capita income, higher levels of consumption, and technological change can increase domestic demand for fossil fuels to the point of scarcity. Supply-induced scarcity, meanwhile, refers to a decrease of the stock (or access to it) and inefficient use of supplies. Combined with the gradual depletion of resources, increasing demand and decreasing supply will lead to less revenue from exports as more supplies will serve domestic use. If financing economic restructuring depends on export revenues, development based on oil and gas income is uncertain.

Third, a deft sectoral investment strategy is required. Given global competi-

tion, oil and gas income reallocation is not straightforward. For example, how will the Caspian Sea states compete with Chinese manufacturing? Global economic and political linkages can help. Especially if supported by market and democratic reforms, an attractive climate for transnational companies and foreign direct investment can create opportunities and markets that could lead to economic diversification.

Finally, violence poses a serious challenge to economic development. Disputes over the control of oil and gas resources are all too familiar and often exacerbated by ethnic or religious hostility, terrorism, poverty and politics. Finding lasting solutions is always a daunting task. Education and the work of NGOs are necessary to create middle classes and minimise chances of radicalization.

A decentralisation model

A new path must be taken for Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to avoid the resource curse and the fate of rentier statehood. An alternative policy model would involve the rearrangement of political relations by decentralizing state structures in favour of more regional constellations. This would promote democratizing tendencies and limit central government control over energy income by giving regions say over how oil and gas income-funded investment is spent. More decentralised energy income redistribution would promote economic diversification, give the private sector breathing space, and spur civil society to grow and assert its influence. Crucial to this model is the balance between the government and local centres of power to keep each other in check.

Although economic and especially political decentralisation reforms will face elite opposition, the model suggests a practical alternative to dealing with centralisation and the resource curse. The removal of both paves the way for the diversification of economic sectors to address demand and supply-induced



scarcity. This will not, however, solve all problems. High population growth, global economic competition and terrorism are not directly targeted, and it remains to be seen to what extent these policy suggestions can be applied to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. <

Notes

1. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan export 211,000 and 997,000 barrels of oil per day, respectively. Proven oil reserves in billions of barrels for Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are 7.0, 9.0 and 0.5, respectively, and proven natural gas reserves are 48.4, 67.1 and 102.4 trillion cubic feet.
2. Joachim Krause and Andrea Gawrich (Institute of Political Sciences, Christian-Albrechts University) and Matthias Luecke and Natalia Trofimenko (Institute of World Economics, Kiel Germany) research the same topic within the Razkaz (Political and Economic Challenges of Resource-Based Development in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan) programme. See www.razkaz.uni-kiel.de

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HISTORY AND THE INEQUALITY

Globalisation is affecting daily life almost everywhere, so it seemed logical when the 2005 *UN Report on the World Social Situation, The Inequality Predicament*, reported that economic inequality is dramatically increasing in Asia, as it has been in the rest of the world. This trend is embedded in spatial and social patterns reproduced over the last two centuries – patterns that comprise a deeper, more pervasive ‘inequality predicament’ than the UN dares to recognise.

David Ludden

Markets, inequality and territory

To explain prevailing patterns of inequality, we can begin with Ankie Hoogvelt’s useful argument that markets move assets around the world in networks that privilege some places and people over others. Yet markets alone do not explain why wealth accumulates where it does. Property ownership defines legal entitlements to assets that move within markets. Laws governing property rights, citizenship, inheritance, taxation, state patronage and other state concerns construct authority over national territory in a way that channels market access and wealth to preferred people and places. These are territorial systems of entitlement, and they create ‘topographies’ of inequality in which markets operate and thus help determine where wealth accumulates.

Territoriality is therefore critical for understanding inequality. Even though globalisation is deterritorializing global capitalism, national territorialism is alive and well, and it may be getting stronger. National authorities exert control over transport, finance and communication infrastructure as well as trade regimes that make globalisation work. Empirically, globalisation is composed of collections of national data, and the activities that constitute globalisation always occur inside national territories, which are thus strategic vantage points for studies of globalisation.

Yet national territory is not the only kind of territory affecting inequality. Imperial forms of territorial order are also at work. Though mainstream social science has defined empire and nation as incompatible, and has made modern history appear to be an irreversible progression from empire to nation, imperial power and authority continue to shape inequality in the world of national sovereignty.

Imperial forms

We can explain prevailing patterns of inequality more effectively by locating national states and world capitalism at intersections of two kinds of imperial history, one global and the other regional. Three features of imperial territory are most crucial for such analysis. First, empire consists of culturally visible ranks of authority and privilege, supported by coercive power. Each place and person occupies a specific rank in the ‘many layered cake’ of empire. Second, empires form spatially expanding and contracting – hence essentially mobile – systems of territorial order. Imperial boundaries never stand still for long. Third, imperial territory is controlled unevenly. Struggles inside empire’s ‘many layered cake’ shift power up and down the ranks; rebellions counteract top-down authority; and some places are simply not worth integrating thoroughly into imperial ranks.

Though firmly fixed boundaries of the national sort do not exist in empires, historians have nonetheless endeavoured to lock imperial territoriality into maps and timelines that mark the ‘rise and fall’ of each empire. We can, however, distinguish histories of imperial territoriality from histories of specific empires. Exploring this distinction reveals the historic reproduction of imperial forms of power and authority across transitions to national modernity which take place through long cycles of construction, expansion, integration, fracture, disruption, fragmentation, dispersion and reorganisation.

Global empires

Today’s spatial pattern of global inequality is part of an imperial cycle stretching back to the 19th century. After 1945, old imperial nations reproduced their global supremacy by sitting on the UN Security Council, forming NATO, meeting at Bretton Woods and Davos, to mention just a few venues during the new form of inter-imperial struggle that was called ‘Cold War’. In the 1970s, a post-war economic boom ended and a new global development regime came into place led by the richest countries, the World Bank and the IMF, which came to dominate economic policy-making in most poor countries.

This global development regime enforced structural adjustment policies and produced today’s unprecedented global uniformity of free-market-oriented national economic policies which induce poor country exports, promote imports and open debtor nations to global investors.

Long-term trends in international inequality represent a reproduction of old imperial patterns. Between 1870 and 1985, per capita income ratios between rich and poor countries increased six-fold, as income levels dispersed over an ever-widening range. Since the 19th century, new wealth produced by economic development has tended to augment disproportionately the wealth of already richer countries. But neo-liberal economic theory denies the imperial character of such trends; in the words of *NY Times* columnist David Brookes, for example, ‘today’s rich don’t exploit the poor; they just out-compete them’. In this view, more productive people earn more by merit and inequality increases because markets do not provide unproductive people what they need to compete successfully in the market. Such logic induces major development agencies to promote ‘pro-poor growth’ policies, which rely on governments, NGOs and businesses to provide loans, education, health, housing and jobs that poor people need to compete. Yet despite pro-poor initiatives, inequality is increasing in most countries.

The persistent tendency of imperial power and authority to channel wealth up the ranks has locked in place today’s ‘inequality predicament’ by giving elites more capital to invest, which spurs economic growth but reduces the proportion of new wealth available at lower echelons. Economists have now shown conclusively, as Martin Ravallion says, that, ‘At any positive rate of growth, the higher the initial inequality, the lower the rate at which income-poverty falls’. In other words, increasing inequality reduces the rate at which people escape poverty, as it channels more wealth into elite hands during economic growth. Thus inequality under capitalism exerts a ‘poverty effect’ and a ‘growth effect’ at the same time.

In recent decades, during a surge of globalisation, the world has become richer under free-market-oriented economic policies, but asset inequality has also increased, meaning less new wealth available for reducing poverty is serving that purpose. Over the past four decades, the ratio of wealth held by the world’s richest and poorest quintiles almost tripled from 30:1 to 86:1. The 1996 *Human Development Report* stated: ‘The poorest 20% of the world’s people saw their share of global wealth decline from 2.3% to 1.4% in the [preceding] 30 years...[as] the share of the richest 20% rose from 70% to 80%’. In the United States, the richest 20% have increased their share of national income from 44% to 50%, and the richest 1% increased theirs from 7% to 13%. America is now more unequal – and the gap between rich and poor more expansive – than at any time since the start of the Great Depression.

Economic measures reveal that inequality increased dramatically during the global expansion of a neo-liberal economic policy regime, especially since the end of the Cold War, as more of the world’s assets have been privatized. Freeing up world markets – to the extent that rich countries have allowed this to occur – has disproportionately enriched rich countries, and especially rich people in rich countries.

Imperial India

Asian history is a composite of many imperial cycles across many regions. In South Asia, modern cycles began in the late 18th century when the Mughal Empire broke into regions of subordinate authority: imperial power descended the territorial ranks, regional elites became more independent and Mughal authority became merely symbolic. The British adopted and altered Mughal imperial forms, added industrial capitalism, built a new imperial order and expanded Indian imperial territory beyond its former limits. Beginning at the height of British imperial power, Indian nationalists identified their nation with British territory and then, as two world wars weakened all imperial nations except America,

struggled to usurp imperial authority. In 1947, British imperial territory fractured into national territories where imperial forms of power and authority acquired new life. India’s recent surge in economic growth under its neo-liberal policy regime is part of this imperial history, as Tirthankar Roy indicates when he says India has returned to free-market policies that prevailed in Queen Victoria’s day. This ‘return’ is a moment in a long process of imperial transformation.

In the 19th century, the British refashioned India’s imperial ranks into a modern entitlement system that channelled wealth upward through state institutions and markets. Imperial capitalism embedded itself deeply in India during a surge of globalisation before World War One, when world GDP grew more quickly than during any decade until 1990. In 1914, most goods arriving at South Asian ports were for export. The American Consul at Bombay described British India as ‘one of the few large countries of the world where there is an “open door” for the trade of all countries’. British India was the world’s fourth largest industrial cotton textile producer, and manufactured goods comprised 20% of all exports, a figure never since surpassed. Over the next two decades, industrial output grew more quickly in India than in Britain and Germany, as trade with Britain at India’s five major ports fell to less than one-third of total trade. Indian labour also went global. By 1921, Indian emigration far exceeded immigration, moving mostly to Ceylon, Malaya, East and South Africa, Fiji and the West Indies, all of which were part of the British Empire.

Wealth in British India followed typical imperial trajectories, enriching the British most of all but also elite Indians. Wealth moving up the ranks expanded the empire’s military and economic infrastructure, but growth was very slow and poverty increased. Extremes of inequality appeared during famines that killed millions, including several million during World War Two in Bengal, where imperial priorities concentrated assets in Calcutta and left villagers to starve. The upward mobility of imperial wealth was apparent to nationalists for whom reducing its flow out of India became a basic goal. After independence, in 1947, national governments in South Asia kept more wealth inside their territories and thus accomplished a radical shift in the world’s imperial ranks by increasing the relative economic power of the world’s lower national echelons. India remained poor – since 1947 its per capita GDP has hovered at around 10% of the American-British average – but India’s relative impoverishment trend compared to Britain and America stopped dead at independence.

The same holds true for China. In fact, increasing economic growth in both India and China slowed the rate of increase in international inequality for 30 years, until the late 1970s. After 1980, wealth in India and China increased even more quickly, and surged again after 1991, further reducing the rate of increase of international inequality. National inequality, however, has increased in both countries in recent decades, as freeing up markets has spurred growth but also aggravated the imperial tendency of wealth to move up the ranks inside each country. Since 1980, inequality has increased in Asian countries that together are home to half the world’s population.

Imperial dynamics help explain why India and China have been getting richer faster and at the same time more unequal nationally. Political power over economic resources has been shifting down the ranks into regions. As a result, national political systems have changed drastically. India’s 1956 reorganisation of states enhanced regional growth after 1980, when Indian states began to gain more power over economic resources; regional party coalitions now control the central government. An analogous devolution in Mughal South Asia fuelled economic growth in coastal regions in the late 18th century. Current high growth rates in India and China derive significantly from similar imperial economic and political devolution.

PREDICAMENT*

Inequality in India

India's imperial patterns of inequality reproduced themselves after independence. Nationalists extracted Indian territorial layers from the British Empire's 'many layered cake', forged them into a more tightly integrated national economy, invested heavily in infrastructure, increased growth, eliminated famine, stabilised income inequality and decreased inequality generally through land reforms, public provisioning and subsidies for productive inputs like water, electricity, fertilizer and High Yielding Varieties of wheat and rice.

But these national efforts did not eliminate India's imperial ranks. India's national development regime actually accentuated wealth accumulation among privileged groups and in privileged places. In agrarian regions imbued with landlord property systems under the Mughals and British, private and public investment in agriculture, health and education remained comparatively low. National development policy 'bet on the rich' to secure economic growth. In the 1980s, people who had benefited most from their status in British imperial ranks and in India's national development regime propelled India's 'return' to free-market-oriented economic policies, which were no longer associated with empire but rather with being proudly and globally Indian.

Higher growth rates resulted, and so did increased inequality. In the 1980s, rich regions got richer compared to poor regions. After 1991 growth increased more quickly and after 1999 income inequality rose measurably: 2004 National Sample Survey data show that, after 1991, most new wealth went to wealthier classes with privileged access to government and new market opportunities. Between 1991 and 2004, the top quintile of India's urban rich increased its per capita consumption by 40%, compared to 20% in rural areas. The rural rich got richer, too, but compared to the urban rich, they also got poorer, which helps explain the 2004 change in government.

In 2004, the new Prime Minister faced 600 million Indians, in the bottom 80% of rural income groups, who had suffered a decline in per capita consumption under reforms he introduced as Finance Minister in 1991 and now vowed to continue. But Manmohan Singh took pride in the 300 million Indian citizens who became richer under post-1991 liberalization. The richest among them became media stars in India's 2006 global self-promotion as 'the world's fastest growing free-market democracy'.

Generic inequality

Patterns of inequality in India cannot be explained adequately as standard features of global capitalism or as symptoms of India's national culture. Yet they do have generic qualities that characterize imperial forms of power and authority more generally.

Generic imperial inequality has clear spatial attributes. Spatial inequality occurs when core locations become privileged sites for capital accumulation. In both China and India, urban-rural and regional disparities institutionalized long before 1980 became rapidly worse after 1990. In India, recent growth favoured southern and western states, while distressing northern and north-eastern states that had been disadvantaged by public and private investment deci-

sions. Poverty in the eastern Gangetic basin dates back to the 19th century, when the east-west divergence in North India entered imperial politics, as the Indian capital moved to New Delhi. This spatial divergence continued after independence with disproportionate state and private investments in the west. In the 1990s, economic returns in regions more dependent upon agriculture declined, as annual growth in agriculture and allied services dipped to less than half the rate of growth in India's aggregate per capita GDP, and the ratio of rural-to-urban poverty increased.

Broadly speaking, Asian regions most excluded from capital accumulation lie on peripheries of former Mughal, British, Dutch, French and Chinese empires, in mountainous regions spanning Nepal, north-east India, Chittagong Hill Tracts, highland Burma, Thailand, Vietnam and South China – all of which remain tribal minority homelands on peripheries of national control. City slums are internal peripheries no less excluded from capital accumulation.

Gender marks a second generic imperial form of inequality. Gender inequality is pervasive from the global to local levels. In 2003, a national study of gender disparities in India concluded that the poorest states (home to half the total population) had not improved the condition of women, while the worst gender disparities exist in rich, fast growing states, namely, Punjab and Haryana. Women's wages and working conditions, and the social and environmental conditions of their domestic and communal labour, are worsening in a way that recalls imperial patriarchy, particularly in agrarian contexts, but also in new urban sites of female industrial labour in garment, electronics and 'global sweatshops'.

A third generic form is ethnic inequality. Imperial ranks demote poor ethnic minorities to lower echelons, where inequality embeds itself in minority cultures. India's Muslim population is becoming comparatively poorer, especially in the rapidly growing urbanised state of Gujarat, a showpiece of neo-liberal globalisation. Ethnic minority and tribal populations in poor north-eastern states and in the Chittagong Hill Tracts have continued to lose ground, reflecting their location on imperial and national peripheries.

Class inequality in the imperial ranks – a fourth generic form of inequality – divides people into haves and have-nots, most basically through the distribution of proprietary entitlements that translate into education, business and employment opportunities. In India, upward trajectories of social mobility into urban elite ranks typically start in rich market towns and in irrigated, rice-growing villages, where up-and-comers own property whose value has increased over time much more than that of dry farmland. Even today, owners of dry land are much less likely to benefit *in situ* from connections to urban sites of globalisation. Impoverished farmers around booming cities like Bangalore and Hyderabad, always on the verge of famine, routinely commit suicide under the humiliation of crushing debt.

Landless workers, meanwhile, dominate the lowest income groups who have seen their real incomes decline. Deindustrialization and casualization of labour under free-market flexible production regimes render urban and rural workers more vulnerable to poverty, and the UN's 'inequality predicament'

report has stressed above all the poverty effects of being cast into the world's growing informal economy. Exchange entitlements for poor wage workers have been further distressed by inflation and reduced subsidies for basic commodities. Proportionate wage increases favour more educated workers in settings where education is unavailable.

Generic patterns of imperial inequality overlap to generate others. Health inequalities of many kinds arise at their intersections. So does violence. A 'Maoist rebel crescent' of class war has spread across the poorest mountain regions of Nepal and impoverished Bihar, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. In northeast India and Gujarat, minority impoverishment feeds political violence. Growing inequality has sparked caste violence in Tamil Nadu and religious violence in Bangladesh.

History in the present

By exploring how the productive use of wealth inside explicit, changing ranks of imperial entitlement has driven economic growth in Asia over space and time, we can thus enrich Ankie Hoogvelt's idea that world capitalism operates in networks of mobility. When markets operate unchecked inside such systems of entitlement, they guide new wealth up the ranks and thus aggravate inequality, even as they stimulate economic growth.

Imperial power and authority have had a changing impact in each historic phase of economic development. Today, imperial inequality is generating neo-liberal policy regimes designed to 'free' markets from political interference by people who might challenge imperial power. In this context, focusing national economic development policies primarily on growth conceals imperial ranks that determine actual market operations. History suggests that pro-poor policies will not be able to reduce inequality under neo-liberal policy regimes sufficiently to secure sustainable growth, poverty reduction and social justice, because markets, left to their own devices, strengthen imperial forms of entitlement and aggravate inequality.

With this in mind, we can see in retrospect that British, French and Dutch imperialists were not the villains they often appear to be, because any policy maker – foreign imperialist, native nationalist, socialist or communist – who imagines the world as being a flat national plane of capitalist development, bereft of all vertical forms of imperial power and authority, is effectively encouraging the continued flow of wealth up the imperial ranks. Thus the inequality predicament is no impenetrable conundrum. Its solution requires sustained downward shifts in power over the production of wealth. That in turn demands more, and more profound, studies of imperial territoriality in order to inform anti-imperial struggles in every nook and cranny of globalisation. ◀

* This is the abridged version of the lecture delivered in Amsterdam on 12 May 2006. The full version with references is online at: <http://www.iias.nl/asia/wertheim/?q=node/5>

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A Manchad grammar

Suhnu Ram Sharma

Many Tibeto-Burman languages and cultures are rightly called endangered, due to socio-economic circumstances forcing speakers to adapt to more influential groups. The present study – a grammar of Manchad – will provide an in-depth description of this endangered and hardly studied Tibeto-Burman language, and hopes to facilitate a better understanding of the linguistic diversity of the northwestern Himalayas. The grammar is based on extensive field research on several Tibeto-Burman languages of the northwestern region carried out over the past two decades.

Manchad, also known as Patani or Lahauli, is spoken by about 10,000 people in the western Himalayas. More specifically, Manchad is spoken in the Patan valley of the Lahaul subdivision of the Lahaul-Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh in northwestern India. The Patan valley, at an altitude of approximately 2,700 meters above sea level, borders Tibet to the east and the Ladakh district of Jammu and Kashmir to the north while the western and southern sides of the Patan valley join the Chamba and Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh.

The name Manchad is a toponym given by the people of the Tod valley who live in the same area as the Manchad. Their socio-economic position has improved considerably in recent years thanks to modern agricultural methods and the cash cropping of seed potatoes, hops and medicinal plants. Hindi is the medium of instruction in schools. As a result of education and contact with outsiders, most members of the Manchad group are bilingual and use Hindi and English in public while the use of the Manchad language is now restricted to life at home. While there is no written literary tradition in the Manchad language, individuals have recently begun to write down Manchad stories using either Hindi or Tibetan orthography. No detailed study of the Manchad language currently exists, except for a few articles and a short grammatical sketch.

The grammar begins by describing and analysing the phonetics and phonology of Manchad, followed by discussion of the nominal morphology. Manchad has a three-way contrast in number, ie, singular, dual and plural; gender is not grammatical and is lexically based. The case system provides descriptions and discussions of the Manchad erga-

tive, objective, instrumental, sociative, locative, and genitive cases. Pronouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs are analysed and presented in detail, as is the verbal agreement system where person-number elements are incorporated in verb forms. A discussion of phrase types and the basic syntactic structure of the Manchad language in terms of simple, compound and complex sentences is part of the grammar, which also includes analysed texts and a glossary.

Speakers of Manchad worship both Hinduism and Buddhism; temples are shared by the two groups. This kind of cultural fusion has left complex linguistic traces. It is evident that the Manchad people have interacted with speakers of Tibetan languages as well as with Hindu populations for a long time, as the linguistic traces these cultures have left behind in the Manchad language are much deeper than mere loanwords.

Although Manchad is a pronominalized Tibeto-Burman language, it shares certain linguistic features with Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Munda languages. The language has also retained some features of the ancient Zhangzhung language, spoken in western Tibet before

the establishment of the Tibetan empire. For example, the patterns of verb stem alternation in Manchad remind us of the well-known alternation between four verb-stems in classical Tibetan, which is no longer faithfully preserved in modern Tibetan dialects. With four stems in the present, past, pluperfect, and future tense, stem alternation is still fully preserved in Manchad.

Manchad has been classified in the western sub-group of the complex-pronominalised group of the Himalayan branch of the Tibeto-Burman subfamily of languages. Tibeto-Burman languages are generally considered to be of an isolating and monosyllabic nature, but the Manchad language is of a highly complex inflectional character, exhibiting complex pronominalisation and a complex verbal system. Syntactically, Manchad is of the subject-object-verb (SOV) type, like many other languages in South Asia. Manchad has a two-way tonal contrast, like standard Tibetan, and has extensively borrowed vocabulary from Indo-Aryan languages, apparently ever since the time the people came into contact with people from the neighbouring districts of Chamba and Kullu where Indo-Aryan languages are spoken.

The other languages spoken in the Lahaul valley are Khoksar, Patnam Bhoti and Tod (all Tibetan languages), and Rangloi, Tinan, and Bunan, which can be classified as pronominalising Tibeto-Burman languages. Among the languages of the Lahaul valley, Manchad is predominant, and is sometimes understood by people from neighbouring areas. There are two main dialects, or socio-geographical variants. One group of speakers are Buddhist and call themselves Bodh, and are found mostly in the upper valley. The other dialect is spoken in the lower valley by a group of people who call themselves Swangla and who practice the Hindu religion. The Tinan dialect is considered to be very close to the Swangla variant of Manchad. The present study takes the dialectal variations into account, while dialectal differences are noted in the glossary. ◀

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The lure of (prosodic) typology

Bert Remijsen

In any study of empirical phenomena, the unusual holds special attraction. The Bird of Paradise with its amazing feathers, the monolithic baobabs, and the joint nursing of emperor penguins are phenomena that catch the imagination of the specialist and the interested lay person alike. The scientific study of 'outliers' holds particular promise, often revealing a system's complexity that is not evident when studying simpler phenomena.

The same holds in the study of a particular aspect of language – prosody. The same holds in the study of a particular aspect of language - prosody. Prosody refers to any dimension of speech communication other than the sequence of vowels and consonants. Defined in this

way, prosody comprises the pitch of the voice (tone), the voice quality, loudness (intensity), and the duration of segments. The function of these phenomena varies from one language to the other. For example, some languages, like Thai or Chinese are tone languages; others, like English, have a lexical stress system. Are there more typological patterns? Are combinations of tone and stress possible? And what can the study of the unusual phenomena tell us about the nature of speech prosody?

One such outlier is the prosodic system of the Curaçao dialect of Papiamentu, a Caribbean creole. Papiamentu has both distinctive lexical stress (like English) and a lexically distinctive tone contrast, very similar to the one found in Stockholm Swedish. This is illustrated in the minimal-set evidence in Figure

1. Panels A and B illustrate the lexical tone contrast. Tone pattern I (panel A) has rising pitch on the stressed syllable; tone pattern II has low or falling pitch on the initial syllable and a high or rising pitch on the final syllable. Panels B and C illustrate the stress contrast on words that have the same tone pattern. The initial syllable is more prominent in II 'lora 'to turn', the final syllable in the participle form of the same verb. Stressed syllables have a greater duration (cf. segmentations in Figure 1), and also stand out in terms of intensity and vowel quality.

Curaçao Papiamentu and a small number of similarly 'hybrid' prosodic systems reveal that languages do not necessarily have one and only one prosodic contrast – stress or tone – as traditionally assumed. Instead, it is possi-

ble for languages to combine contrasts. In this way, the study of little-known and sometimes endangered languages expands the range of known variation, and contributes to a better understanding of the phenomenon of language prosody. Undoubtedly, many possible configurations remain to be charted.

There are two driving forces behind the development of prosodic typology. First, there are the phenomena. As a result of increasingly sophisticated research, often focusing on minority languages, we know more and more about the kinds of systems that are possible in human language. The accumulation of data blindly sets an agenda, as phenomena challenge us to come up with typological frameworks and with phonological theories that can accommodate them. From this accumulation there emerges an ever richer picture. As a result, prosodic typology is moving from a stage where systems were pigeonholed into two or three vaguely defined categories, to a more fundamental fine-grained typological analysis based on the structural properties that distinguish between systems (cf. Hyman 2006).

The second driving force is linguistic theory, in particular the axiom that the

sound system of any human language includes a hierarchical structure of headed constituents – syllables, words, phrases etc. – likely to be reflected in the prosodic system (cf. van der Hulst 2005). These and other theoretical views are a valuable conservative force, challenging linguists to postulate as little language-specific processes as possible. As with any belief system, theoretical tenets constitute bias, with the potential to distract researchers from the correct analysis should the data ultimately be incompatible with them. It is obvious, then, that typology is both data-driven and theory-dependent, and that the interaction between these two approaches is vital to its development. ◀

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Figure 1

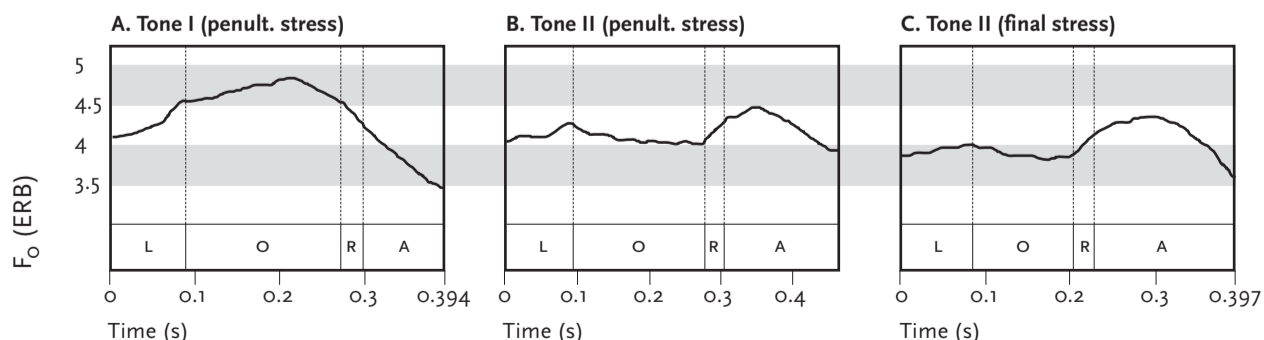


Figure 1 panels A, B, C: Pitch/F₀ tracks and segmentations of a two-syllable minimal set for stress and tone in Curaçao Papiamentu: I 'lora 'parrot' (A) vs. II 'lora 'to turn' (B) vs. II 'lo'ra 'turned' (C). Tracks A, B, C are averaged over 18, 17, and 16 tokens, respectively. Data from 9 speakers elicited in citation form.

Remijsen, Bert and Vincent J. van Heuven. 2005. 'Stress, Tone, and Discourse Prominence in the Curaçao Dialect of Papiamentu'. *Phonology* 22-2, pp.205-235.

The IIAS-sponsored conference 'Between Stress and Tone' was held in Leiden, 16-18 June 2005. A thematic issue of the Cambridge University Press journal *Phonology*, based on the conference and including some of the leading research on the topic, is forthcoming (2006, vol. 26-2).

Creating a database for Tibeto-Burman languages

In the number of its speakers, Tibeto-Burman is one of the largest language families in the world. The language family, however, has received little scholarly attention and its composition and history remain poorly understood. Many languages are still awaiting detailed documentation and description – a task that is becoming urgent as smaller languages fall victim to socio-economic and demographic pressures. Given the dazzling linguistic diversity and sheer number of languages yet to be studied, a thorough understanding of the Tibeto-Burman language family poses great challenges. One complicating factor is that presently available data are scattered, making an overview of the family and adequate historical comparisons unfeasible.

Katia Chirkova

Crossing the Himalayas

Tibeto-Burman is the most well-represented language family in the Himalayan region, broadly understood as stretching from the Chinese provinces of Sichuan and Qinghai in the north to the southern extremity of Burma, and from northwestern Vietnam in the east to northern Pakistan in the west. Our research programme – *Trans-Himalayan Database Development: China and the Subcontinent* – pools the expertise of two renowned centres of Tibeto-Burman research: George van Driem's Himalayan Languages Project (HLP) at Leiden University and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology (IEA) in Beijing. Both have worked for years on the documentation and description of Tibeto-Burman languages, with the Himalayan Languages Project focusing on languages of the Indian subcontinent (Bhutan, Nepal and India) and the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology concentrating on languages spoken within China's borders (in the Tibetan Autonomous Region and the provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan).

Both parties have thus been simultaneously working north and south of the Himalayan range that divides China and the Indian subcontinent. The mutual aspiration of acquiring a better understanding of the Tibeto-Burman family has moved them, figuratively, to cross the Himalayas in combining their achievements and sharing their research: a wealth of data on over 80 Himalayan languages amassed by the HLP, and on 57 (out of over 80) Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in China collected by the IEA.

Our current research programme targets the two major challenges of Tibeto-Burman research. On the one hand, it contributes to the documentation of endangered languages. On the other, it aspires to assemble all collected data digitally to enable multi-leveled research and, ultimately, balanced and well-documented answers to currently debated questions of historical development, sub-grouping and reconstruction.

Documenting endangered languages

The current programme's documentation of endangered languages builds upon previous work carried out by the HLP and the IEA. We chose to focus on three languages spoken in China: Shixing, a Qiangic language spoken in Muli county of Sichuan province; Bola, a Burmish language spoken in Yingjiang and Lianghe counties of Yunnan province; and rGyal-rong (Mkhono dialect), a Qiangic language spoken in Ma'erkang county of Sichuan province. These three insufficiently documented languages were selected not only for their severely endangered status, but

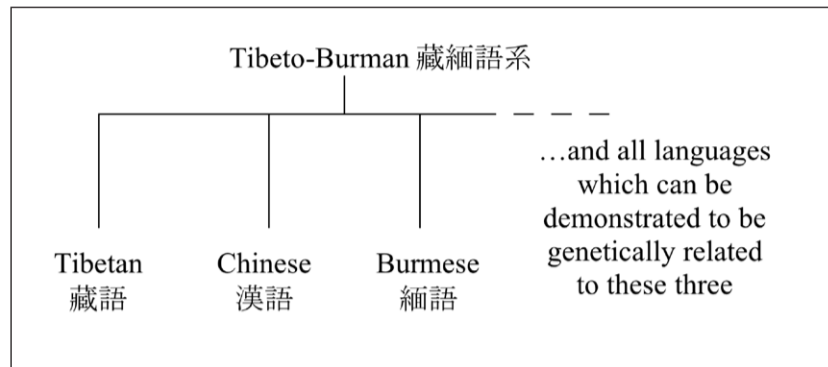


Diagram 1
Tibeto-Burman is one of the language families identified by Julius Heinrich von Klaproth in his 1823 polyphyletic view of Asian linguistic stocks. Klaproth's Tibeto-Burman family explicitly excluded languages today known to be Kra-Dai or Daic (e.g. Thai, Lao, Shan) or Austroasiatic (e.g. Mon, Vietnamese, Nicobarese, Khmer). van Driem, George. 2006. 'The Diversity of the Tibeto-Burman Language Family and the Linguistic Ancestry of Chinese. Paper presented at the 14th Annual Conference of the International Association of Chinese Linguistics and the 10th International Symposium on Chinese Languages and Linguistics, 27 May 2006, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

because they constitute important links for historical reconstruction within each language group.

The documentation of these three languages will be carried out to the extent possible within the three-year project. We expect to complete concise descriptive grammars in Chinese, accompanied by 2,000 word lists and a selection of traditional stories, to be included in the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology's renowned *Zhōngguó xīn fāxiàn yǔyán yánjiū cóngshū* [New Found Minority Languages in China] series, which aims to document all little-known and endangered languages in China.¹

A digital database

A crucial step towards a better understanding of Tibeto-Burman languages is assembling existing data in a format that allows for long-term storage and

efficient access and modification by multiple users – a goal best achieved through a digital database. Both parties already maintain their own: the IEA, in co-operation with the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, has since 1998 been compiling a database of cognate words in Sino-Tibetan languages and their dialects (in Chinese)² while the HLP hosts a digital database correlating grammatical morphemes in Kiranti and other Tibeto-Burman languages (www.iias.nl/host/himalaya/projects/mld.html). Our goal is to combine data collected by both into one database of over 200 languages so that each branch of Tibeto-Burman will be represented by numerous languages and dialects.

Theoretical and practical challenges abound. The present programme brings together two distinct scholarly traditions with different understand-

ings of Tibeto-Burman languages. The prototype of the Sino-Dutch database, that of the IEA, is structured in accordance with the Sino-Tibetan model as accepted in China, and includes data on Chinese, Tibeto-Burman, Tai-Kadai and Hmong-Mien languages spoken within China's borders. This model presents each language family as consisting of hierarchically organised subgroups with an *a priori* implied appreciation of their phylogenetic relationship. In the agnostic model advocated by Van Driem, the precise phylogenetic relationships between the recognised subgroups of Tibeto-Burman languages (which in his understanding also includes Chinese) have not been precisely determined. As different models of the exact sub-grouping of Tibeto-Burman languages abound, our project aims to give a fair overview of diversity within the Tibeto-Burman family and to let the data speak for themselves rather than formatting it in accordance with any model. Ultimately, it would be beneficial to create a system allowing users to group data according to different models, or even to create their own model to test against data in the database.

The precise structure of the database is currently under negotiation. The prototype of the proposed database, that of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology, is searchable both by Chinese translations and by semantic field and includes 1,332 predefined basic lexical items for each language. Words are grouped by semantic fields, such as body parts or celestial bodies, and are accompanied by their Chinese translation and morphological analysis (eg. initial, coda, tone, prefix if any, root, affix if any, suffix if any). A logical continuation of work on the IEA database would be to increase the number of languages in the joint Sino-Dutch database by the standard number of 1,332 basic lexical entries per language. Given the overall goal of this project and the elaborate nature of the vocabularies collected by the HLP, however, it would be desirable to include as much lexical data as possible (viz. words, accompanied by an English translation and lexical, morphological and gram-

matical comment when available). It also seems sensible to create a database which can be expanded over time.

Our project is still in its initial stage; the very idea of an open and online database is to lay the foundation for further scientific co-operation. Given the depth and breadth of our aims, we invite participation from all individual researchers and teams working in the field so that we may create a broad, well-documented foundation for historical reconstruction and sub-grouping within the family, and ultimately, influence studies in the history of Tibeto-Burman and enrich the theoretical foundations and methodology of comparative linguistics. <

Notes

1. For information on the series see: Sagart, Laurent. 2003. 'A New Collection of Descriptions of Languages of China'. *Cahiers de Linguistique – Asie Orientale* 32(2), 287-298; Thurgood, Graham and Fengxiang Li. 2003. Book notice: Sun Hongkai, ed. *New Found Minority Languages in China Series*. Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. *Language* 79-4, 843-845; and Chirkova, Katia. 2006. Review of *Zhōngguó xīn fāxiàn yǔyán yánjiū cóngshū* 《中国新发现语言研究丛书》 [New Found Minority Languages in China Series], 31 Volumes. Sun Hongkai, ed. 孙宏开. Beijing 北京: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences 中国社会科学院. *China Review International* 13-1 (forthcoming).
2. A detailed report on the IEA database can be found in Ting Pang-Hsin and Sun Hongkai, eds. 2004. *Han-Zangyu tongyuan ci yanjiu/Cognate Words in Sino-Tibetan Languages*. Nanning: Guangxi Minzu Chubanshe, vol. 3, 396-536, which contains Jiang Di's 'A Development Report on the Sino-Tibetan Cognate Database Retrieval Software' and 'The Sino-Tibetan Cognate Database Project: A Manual for Data Retrieval'.

Katia Chirkova is a fellow at IIAS and co-ordinator of the programme *Trans-Himalayan Database Development: China and the Subcontinent*. Her field of research is Chinese linguistics and Tibeto-Burman languages in China. k.chirkova@let.leidenuniv.nl

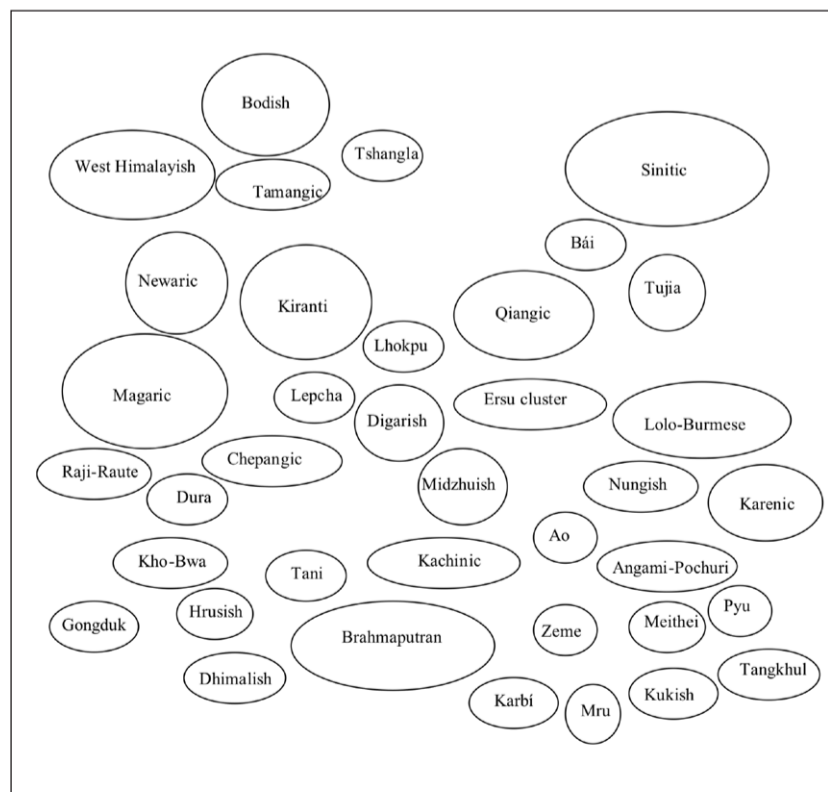


Diagram 2
Tibeto-Burman subgroups identified since Julius von Klaproth. Brahmaputran may include Kachinic and Dhimlish. Competing subgrouping proposals are discussed in the handbook *Languages of the Himalayas*. van Driem, George. 2001. *Languages of the Himalayas: An Ethnolinguistic Handbook of the Greater Himalayan Region*, containing an Introduction to the Symbiotic Theory of Language. Leiden: Brill.

Trans-Himalayan Database Development: China and the Subcontinent

The programme, launched in June 2005, pools the expertise of two internationally renowned centres of Tibeto-Burman research: George van Driem's Himalayan Languages Project at Leiden University and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology. It receives funding from the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and IIAS.

- Scientific supervision: George van Driem (Leiden), Sun Hongkai (CASS), Huang Xing (CASS)
- Documentation and description of Shixing, Bola and rGyal-rong: Katia Chirkova, Anton Lustig, Mariëlle Prins
- Data input, translation, annotation: Katia Chirkova, Hu Hongyan, Huang Chenglong, Liu Guangkun, Anton Lustig, Mu Shihua, Mariëlle Prins, Wang Feng, Yin Weibin, Zhou Maocao
- Database design and maintenance: Jiang Di and Jean Robert Ogenort

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Forest commons vs the state?

Thomas Sikor and Tran Ngoc Thanh

Research has long portrayed the modern state as an adversary to forest commons around the world. But is this really the case?

The common management of forests has seemed on the verge of extinction for some time. In 18th century Europe, state enclosures excluded local communities from agricultural fields, pastures and forests while colonial governments in Asia claimed forests as public domains, thereby limiting community access. The development of forestry in Europe and Asia was not only similar but also closely linked, as colonial governments appointed European foresters to leading positions and sent their staff to be trained abroad. Later, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, among others, disseminated European ideas and practices all over Asia. Both European and Asian states established bureaucracies to manage forests according to the principles of 'scientific forestry', leaving little space for community management.

The role of the state

The literature often describes the state as the key actor behind the disappearance of forest commons, and local communities as preferring to keep the state at arms-length. In Thailand, for example, local communities were excluded from forests over the last century as the state sought to strengthen its control over national territory. Communities contested the exclusion, building nation-wide alliances among themselves and with other civil society actors, which culminated in a Community Forestry Bill proposal in the 1990s. But as the state was unwilling to cede control over forests, community efforts failed.

Yet forest commons and states may not be as incompatible as the literature suggests. A closer look at forestry in Asia and Europe reveals the continued existence of forest commons, even in countries with well-developed state forest administrations. In Austria and Sweden, forests have been owned and managed in common next to privately and state-owned forests and have shown remarkable resilience in the face of political, economic and social upheavals over the past two centuries. In Romania, only mid-20th century communism wrested control of forests from local communities, and in China a significant portion of forests has been collectively owned since the collectivisation drive of the 1950s. Clearly community ownership and state authority are not mutually exclusive.

Community forest management has at times been supported by states, with both Asian and European governments recognising forest commons and developing systems of governance that support community management. China's constitution acknowledges collective ownership of land (*jiti suoyou*) as equal in legal status to state ownership. Sweden supported the creation and formalisation of forest commons (*Skogsallmänningar*) in the late 19th century, while Austria granted forest commons the status of corporations under public law (*Agrargemeinschaften*) in 1950 and placed them under the supervision of a specialised agency.

Decentralisation

The need to look afresh at relations between states and local communities becomes apparent when we consider the changes in forest policy currently taking place across much of Asia and Eastern Europe. Governments are in the process of decentralising power and responsibilities to local authorities; many are also devolving ownership and quasi-ownership rights over forests to local public authorities, communities and other local actors. As a result of this world-wide trend, communities today manage 11% of the world's forests and 22% of the forests in developing countries.

As part of this decentralisation, many countries in Asia and Eastern Europe are introducing reforms that favour forest commons. In Eastern Europe, the Romanian government is returning forest commons to the original owners and their heirs, including groups of households and communal authorities, while the Albanian government is transferring forest ownership rights to local authorities who in turn can grant local communities administrative rights. In Southeast Asia, the Philippine government enacted the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act in 1997, creating the legal foundation for indigenous peoples to secure common titles over land. In Indone-

sia, decentralisation has strengthened the influence of district governments over forests previously under the exclusive control of the central forest department.

Indigenous groups are taking advantage of these reforms to grant small-scale concessions for logging, thereby creating new sources of income. In Vietnam, a recent revision of the Land Law allows allocation of forests to communities – not just to individual households, enterprises and state organisations as in the past. Local communities in these countries have welcomed the new opportunities, registering their property claims with the state and requesting technical and financial support from the state for forest commons.

Reality on the ground varies, in the rights demanded by and granted to local communities. In many places, governments limit community management to forest protection, withholding from local people the rights of management and use. The recent logging ban instituted by the Chinese government severely constrains local people's use of forests, even though they legally own them. In some countries such as Vietnam, common management is closely tied to joint ownership. In others, such as Sweden, forest commons are owned by individual shareholders but managed in common. Different kinds of 'communities' also manage forest commons. Philippine legislation recognises the rights of 'indigenous peoples' while in China collective ownership is generally assumed to be the purview of the administrative village. There are differences within countries as well: in Romania, both local authorities and groups of villagers may own forest commons.

Codification, governance and tenure claims

At the workshop, Asian and European scholars – together with government officials and NGO activists from Indonesia and Vietnam – pinpointed three issues for further research: legal codification, governance, and property claims.

Legal codification of commons remains a vexing problem. While codification is necessary to recognise forest commons in statutory law, the very process of codification tends to change the customary regulations it intends to preserve. In 19th century Sweden, for example, one form of locally practiced commons was favoured over others, thus significantly altering common practice. Similarly, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act in the Philippines is informed by notions of communal tenure unable to accommodate the diversity of local practices. Analysing past attempts by Asian and European states to codify forest commons in national legislation will aid the development of new approaches to codification that preserve common practice.

A challenge for governance remains analysing the distribution of powers and responsibilities between local communities and state actors under different systems, and to fine-tune new modes of deliberative and discursive governance. Property claims on forest commons come in various forms and from different actors, and in turn are variously recognised by different forms of authority informed by patronage, the market, and custom. The question is how common control relates to individual property claims in different types of forest commons, and how forest commons can mediate competing claims in an equitable and fair manner.

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The workshop convened junior and senior researchers from 12 countries in Europe and South-east/East Asia and was co-organised by the Junior Research Group on Post-socialist Land Relations of Humboldt University, Berlin, Tay Nguyen University, and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Dak Lak. The workshop was made possible by a generous grant from the Asia-Europe Foundation and the European Alliance of Asian Studies, with additional support by the German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ) and Humboldt University. For more information on the workshop: <http://www.agrar.hu-berlin.de/wisola/ipw/plr/>

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This IDPAD/IIAS comparative research project addresses the implications of population aging for the social security and health care of elderly people. As the experience of ageing is gendered and can vary according to class, caste, and religion, the project addresses different social and economic groups, with an emphasis on women.

Coordinator: Carla Risseeuw
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Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts

In 1929, two crates of 17th and 18th century Sanskrit manuscripts arrived at the Kern Institute, University of Leiden. This Gonda/IIAS project is preparing a scientific catalogue of the roughly 500 South Indian Sanskrit manuscripts written on palm leaves in ancient Indian scripts such as Grantha, Telugu, Malayalam, Nagari and Nandinagari.

Coordinator: Saraju Rath
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Coordinator: Mehdi Parvizi Amineh
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Indonesianisasi and nationalization

From the 1930s to the early 1960s, the Indonesian economy transformed from a 'colonial' economy, dominated by the Dutch, to a 'national' economy in which indigenous business assumed control. This NIOD project explores this transformation, studying the late-colonial era as well as the Japanese occupation, the Revolution and the Sukarno period. Two issues are given special attention: *Indonesianisasi* and nationalization, in particular the expropriation of Dutch corporate assets in Indonesia in 1957-58.

Coordinator: J. Thomas Lindblad
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Illegal but licit: transnational flows and permissive politics in Asia

This research programme analyses forms of globalisation-from-below, transnational practices considered acceptable (licit) by participants but which are often illegal in a formal sense. It explores limitations of 'seeing like a state', and instead privileges the perspectives of participants in these illegal but licit transnational flows.

Coordinator: Willem van Schendel
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Socio-genetic marginalization in Asia

The development and application of new biomedical and genetic technologies have important socio-political implications. This NWO/ASSR/IIAS research programme aims to gain insight into the ways in which the use of and monopoly over genetic information shape and influence population policies, environmental ethics and biomedical and agricultural practices in various Asian religious and secular cultures and across national boundaries.

Coordinator: Margaret Sleebloom-Faulkner
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Syntax of the languages of southern China

This project aims to achieve a detailed description and in-depth analysis of a limited number of syntactic phenomena in six languages, both Sinitic and non-Sinitic, spoken in the area south of the Yangtze River. The project will systematically compare these descriptions and analyses to contribute to the development of the theory of language and human language capacity.

Coordinator: Rint Sybesma
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Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the subcontinent (Phase I)

The project's main goal is to combine the database of cog-

nate words in Tibeto-Burman languages, maintained by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) with language data of the George van Driem Himalayan Languages Project (Leiden University) to create a joint, online database of Tibeto-Burman languages with a mirror-site in Leiden. The project's second objective is to continue documentation of endangered Tibeto-Burman languages in China in cooperation with the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology.

Coordinator: Katia Chirkova
k.chirkova@let.leidenuniv.nl

Networks

ABIA South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology index

The Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology is an annotated bibliographic database for publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. The project was launched by IIAS in 1997 and is currently coordinated by the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology of the University of Kelaniya, Colombo, Sri Lanka. The database is freely accessible at www.abia.net. Extracts from the database are also available as bibliographies, published in a series by Brill. The project receives scientific support from UNESCO.

Coordinator: Ellen Raven
e.m.raven@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.abia.net

Islam in Indonesia: the dissemination of religious authority in the 20th and early 21st centuries

Forms and transformations of religious authority among the Indonesian Muslim community are the focus of this research programme. The term authority relates to persons and books as well as various other forms of written and non-written references. Special attention is paid to the production, reproduction and dissemination of religious authority in the fields of four sub-programmes: *ulama* (religious scholars) and *fatwas*; *tarekat* (mystical orders); *dakwah* (propagation of the faith); and education.

Coordinator: Nico Kaptein
n.j.g.kaptein@let.leidenuniv.nl

Initiatives

Earth monitoring and the social sciences

The space age has dramatically impacted all nations. In Asia, the 'space-faring nations' of India, China and Japan have successfully developed space technologies and applications. Other Asian nations have readily adopted these applications, including satellites for telecommunications, for gathering data on the weather, and environmental and earth resources. IIAS has initiated a series of workshops on the topic.

Coordinator: David Soo
d.n.soo@let.leidenuniv.nl

Cross-border marriages in East and Southeast Asia

The past decade has seen a rapid increase in the intra-Asia flow of brides, particularly between Southeast and East Asia. While in Europe intermediated marriages continue to be seen as a form of the commodification of women, recent scholarship in intra-Asia cross-border marriages challenges this dominant view.

Coordinator: Melody Lu
m.lu@let.leidenuniv.nl

Piracy and robbery on the Asian seas

Acts of piracy loom large in Asian waters, with the bulk of all officially reported incidents of maritime piracy occurring in Southeast Asia during the 1990s. This is of serious concern to international shipping, as the sea-lanes between East Asia, the Middle East, and Europe pass through Southeast Asia. IIAS and the Centre for Maritime Research at the University of Amsterdam are currently identifying issues and concerns, and are delineating core elements of an interdisciplinary research programme on piracy and robbery at sea in Asia.

Coordinators: Wim Stokhof and John Kleinen
kleinen@uva.nl

For more information on IIAS research: www.iias.nl

ANNOUNCEMENT



Three men from Oewaboe, valley of the Nögölö, Dèm tribe. From the collection in LeRoux's *De Bergpapoea's van Nieuw-Guinea en hun woongebied* (1948-1951).

By Aeroplane to Pygmy Land: revisiting the 1926 Smithsonian Institution / Dutch colonial government expedition

16 November 2006 | National Museum of Ethnology | Leiden

Matthew W. Stirling (1896 – 1975), pioneer archaeologist and ethnologist, was moved by curiosity for 'pygmies' and the unknown interior of New Guinea. After resigning from the Smithsonian where he was assistant curator until 1924, his wanderlust brought him to Netherlands New Guinea. In 1926, he led a Smithsonian / Dutch colonial government expedition to the highlands of New Guinea, which produced a wonderful film and startling photographs of people and panoramas by C.C.F.M. Le Roux, curator of the Museum of the Bataviaasch Genootschap.

The expedition was the first to use a hydroplane in New Guinea. The small aircraft was transported by boat from Surabaya and up the Mamberamo River. The base camp built where the vessel could no longer travel up river became home to the Dutch and American expedition leaders, a military escort of 75 Ambonese soldiers, around 130 Dayak canoemen and carriers, and some 250 Malay convicts who mainly worked as carriers. From the Rouffaer River, the expedition spent three months in the interior of the northern central ranges of West New Guinea. During aerial surveys of the terrain, Stirling spotted cultivated land in area thought to be uninhabited.

Stirling brought home 20,000 feet of film footage, much of it featuring 'pygmies' who had never before seen outsiders. While most of the nitrate film footage was lost, Paul Taylor of the Smithsonian Institution has recently disclosed some spectacular surviving fragments. This footage and other digitalized materials from the expedition will soon be available, together with interpretative essays, as part of the Smithsonian Institute's Digital Collections (www.sil.si.edu/digitalcollections). Although all copies of Stirling's original film, 'By Aeroplane to Pygmy Land' appeared lost, a Dutch compilation has been preserved. An abridged version of 'Wonderen uit Pygmy Land' was released as 'Expeditie door Nieuw-Guinea 1926' (B&W 80 min. silent film) in 1995 by the Film Museum in Amsterdam.

The 1928 *New York Times* review of 'By Aeroplane to Pygmy Land', screened at the 55th Stret Playhouse, took particular interest in 'the manner in which the explorers are supposed to uncover the habitat of these Nugollo Negroes. First they espied a clearing in the land's dense verdant cloak, and then, through telescopic lenses, they took pictures of the pygmies, showing them at first unsuspectful, but finally apprehensive. They are a wily lot, those little Ethiopians.' Explorers drew their inspiration from popular and scientific imagery of Africa since the 1870s, which had its roots in Greek and medieval European legends about small humans. The imagery of pygmies and their 'Stone Age material culture' is later employed in the Dutch film to underpin racial differences between whites, Dayaks and Papuans. Alluding to the slow progress of New Guinea's colonisation, the Dutch film ends with a dramatised departure of the expedition team from the highlands and poses the question: Will the pygmies miss the Europeans?

Overlooked until now are the telling notes contained in the diaries of the director of the National Herbarium in Bogor, Docters van Leeuwen, and the military commander Posthumus, and, of course, Le Roux. Together with the pictorial stories and Le Roux's posthumously published three-volume set *De Bergpapoea's van Nieuw-Guinea en hun woongebied* (1948-1951), their observations narrate Papuan interactions with outsiders that are worth revisiting. The Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of Ethnology, the Papua Heritage Foundation and IIAS are organising this revisit in Leiden, during which the expedition website will officially be launched, parts of the film screened, photographs displayed and some of the collected artefacts exhibited, while speakers will detail the dynamics of the expedition and the meaning of its outcomes.

– Jaap Timmer

For further information:
www.rmvm.nl, www.iias.nl or www.papuaheritage.nl

Marloes Rozing
m.rozing@let.leidenuniv.nl





The newly launched Modern East Asia Research Centre at Leiden University aims to become a European hub to support disciplinary research on Greater China, Japan, and – in the near future – Korea, covering the period from the 19th century until the present. MEARC's research aims to contribute to our understanding of the region and the roots of current developments, to address the normative challenges posed by East Asia, and to further our understanding of mainstream disciplines including politics, history, and philosophy.

MEARC will offer a visiting scholars program; provide grants for recent PhD graduates to prepare their manuscripts for publication; organize and co-finance conferences, workshops, research seminars and a lecture series; publish monographs, working papers and feature editions of journals in both area studies and the disciplines; and support the acquisition of resources.

Modern East Asia Research Centre
Chris Goto-Jones and Axel Schneider, directors
Leiden University
Arsenaalstraat 1, PO Box 9515
2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands

Tel: +31-(0)71-527-4172
Fax: +31-(0)71-527-2526
info@mearc.eu
www.mearc.eu

Scientific research during World War II

Conference: 25 - 26 January 2007, Leiden
Call for papers
Deadline: 1 November 2006

This two-day conference will explore how scientists coped with the particular circumstances created by the war. We invite presentations from historians working on World War II, science, and scientific instruments.

The first day will deal with the circumstances under which scientists worked in war-waging countries such as Germany, Japan, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, and the results of their research. Topics to be discussed include the service of scientists in weapon programs and strategic industries, and the immigration or emigration of researchers.

The second day will address the circumstances under which scientists worked in occupied countries, such as the Netherlands and France, and the results of their research. Topics include how scientists coped with scarcity of resources, limited means of communication, and the often remarkable continuity in research conducted under apparently difficult circumstances.

Proceedings of the conference will be published. Proposals can be submitted until 1 November 2006. For more information see: www.museumboerhaave.nl/conference

Towards a new age of Asian art

AAH 33rd Annual Conference
12 - 14 April 2007
Belfast, UK
Call for papers
Deadline 10 Nov 2006

Cities in the Asia-Pacific region have over the past 20 years been at the centre of economic growth and cultural re-examination. Globalisation has encouraged the Asian metropolis to deconstruct its own cultural heritage while urbanisation has prompted inhabitants to reconsider development, competition, modernised cultures and values. In recent biennales and triennials, artists have given expression to their (post-colonial) national identity by combining and redefining traditional materials and aesthetics with high technology. This session encourages papers that focus on, but are not limited to, the questions: How do curators' strategies aid the understanding of contemporary Asian art? How do artists hybridise their artistic languages? How do artists and curators find the balance between nationalism and globalisation?

We invite art historians, artists, theorists, and cultural and media analysts to submit abstracts in English (250 words maximum) with your name, affiliation (if any), contact details, and a short CV by 10 Nov 2006. Materials or enquiries to Ming-Hui Chen, Loughborough University School of Art and Design.
m.chen3@lboro.ac.uk
<http://aah.org.uk/conference/index.php>

Energy and security

Call for papers
Deadline 15 November 2006

With oil prices reaching all-time highs, crises in oil-producing regions, and ever-increasing global demand, issues of energy and security have come to the fore on the international political agenda and in scholarly debate. These challenges affect both energy importing and exporting countries:

- While Europe and other importing OECD countries may have to re-think their relations with increasingly powerful exporting countries, redesign their energy security policies and search for alternatives to oil, the impact on the 'have-nots' in the developing world will be even more challenging.
- The scarcity of oil and other energy resources will shift relations between importing and exporting countries, and between importing countries (and possibly between exporting countries, for instance conflicts over disputed reserves). An 'oil hunt' has already started in regions such as the Gulf of Guinea and Central Asia and may also affect the Middle East and Latin America.
- As a consequence, energy and security, rather than energy security, is a pertinent issue for domestic politics in exporting countries. In the scholarly analysis and debate, the 'rentier state' approach (which predicts that windfalls from abundant resource exports have harmful consequences for growth, corruption and democratization) and the 'resource curse' hypothesis (which suggests that a resource bonanza cre-

ates both motive and opportunity for civil conflict and violent power struggles) have received particular attention. Debate has also emerged over whether the current prominence of security concerns has led to neglecting 'traditional' development approaches (with the effect of undermining social and political stability in entire subregions of Africa and elsewhere in the medium and long term) or whether security must be seen as a pre-condition for the achievement of development goals.

We invite articles addressing the above issues, as well as related issues provided they combine the main topic of 'energy and security' with a regional focus on Asia, Africa, Latin America or the Middle East, trans-regional perspectives or comparative approaches. Papers should be submitted to giga-journal-family@giga-hamburg.de by 15 November 2006.

For further information: www.giga-hamburg.de/giga-journal-family

Susanne Goldstein
German Institute of Global and Area Studies
goldstein@giga-hamburg.de

14th Gonda Lecture

24 November 2006
Amsterdam

The 14th Gonda Lecture by Alexis Sanderson, University of Oxford, will be held on Friday, 24 November 2006 at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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[advertisement]

Südostasien aktuell

Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs

Call for Papers

Südostasien aktuell – *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* is an internationally refereed academic journal published by the Institute of Asian Affairs (part of GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies), Hamburg. The bimonthly journal focuses on current developments in Southeast Asia. It has a circulation of 750 copies and reaches a broad readership in the academia, administration and business circles. Articles to be published should be written in German or English and submitted exclusively to this publication.

Südostasien aktuell is devoted to the transfer of scholarly insights to a wide audience. The topics covered should therefore not only be orientated towards specialists in Southeast Asian affairs, but should also be of relevance to readers with a practical interest in the region.

The editors welcome contributions on contemporary Southeast Asia that are concerned with the fields of international relations, politics, economics, society, education, environment or law. Articles should be theoretically grounded, empirically sound and reflect the state of the art in contemporary Southeast Asian studies.

All manuscripts will be peer-reviewed for acceptance. The editors respond within three months. Research articles should not exceed 10,000 words (incl. footnotes and references). Manuscripts should be submitted to the editors in electronic form: suedostasien-aktuell@giga-hamburg.de. For detailed submission guidelines see: www.giga-hamburg.de/ifa/stylesheet.

Recent topics:

- ASEAN: Cooperative Disaster Relief after the Tsunami
- Confronting the Past – The Difficult Road to Accountability in East Timor
- Burma: Drug Control Progress and Possibilities

Editors: Marco Bünte • Howard Loewen

Institute of Asian Affairs
GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies
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Phone: +49 40 4288740 • Fax: +49 40 4107945
Website: www.giga-hamburg.de



Tenure-Track Appointment

History of China in the Nineteenth and/or Twentieth Centuries

University of British Columbia

The Department of History at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver) invites applications for a tenure-track appointment at the rank of assistant professor in the history of China in the nineteenth and/or twentieth centuries, effective 1 July 2007. This appointment is intended to enhance the department's existing strength in East Asian history. Applicants are expected to provide evidence of innovation and excellence in research, as demonstrated by their published contributions or potential contributions to scholarship in the field. A strong commitment to teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate levels is also required.

The University of British Columbia hires on the basis of merit and is committed to employment equity. We encourage all qualified candidates to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. The position is subject to budgetary approval. Applications should include a C.V., a description of current and future research interests, and letters of reference from three referees (under separate cover). Applications may include up to three reprints of unpublished papers or chapters. Application materials should be received no later than 30 October 2006 and should be addressed to:

Dr. Glen Peterson
Chair, Search Committee in Chinese History
Department of History
University of British Columbia
#1297-1873 East Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1, Canada
E-mail: glpeters@interchange.ubc.ca

[advertisement]

es, Amsterdam. Admission to the lecture is free. Those wanting to attend are requested to notify the secretariat of the Gonda Foundation, Antwoordnummer 10785, 1000 RA Amsterdam (tel. 020-5510 782, e-mail: bernadette.peeters@bureau.knaw.nl).

Political participation and regime legitimacy in contemporary China

International Workshop
28 February - 2 March 2007
Duisburg, Germany

State-led institutional innovation and political reform in China in recent years has been most notable at the local level. While direct village elections became obligatory in 1998, new modes of participation have also been introduced in China's cities. These measures are promoted by the government to enhance social stability, cadre efficiency and accountability, and overall regime legitimacy.

Participation, citizenship and legitimacy are our key concepts for comparing China's villages and urban neighborhoods to assess the political awareness of peasants and city dwellers, the current relationship between the local cadre bureaucracy and the people, the degree of tension and trust in the local state and the scope and limits of a 'harmonious society'. The workshop will assess the success of reform measures thus far, drawing on the results of a joint German-Chinese research project on rural and urban political participation.

Thomas Heberer
University of Duisburg-Essen
thomas.heberer@uni-duisburg-essen.de

Gunter Schubert
University of Tuebingen
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Migration, livelihoods and human rights: lessons from EU and ASEAN

ASEF/Alliance Workshop
The Hague, the Netherlands
July 2007

The intersection between international migration, human trafficking and human rights is among the most complex of contemporary issues. Recent theories on global migration emphasize the need for context; migration cannot be conceptualized as 'uncontrollable flows'. Mediated by institutions and shaped by social relations which give rise to relatively stable migration regimes, current migration involves formal and informal channels and creates risks for specific groups of migrants. Particular attention will be paid to relations of class, gender and generation and how they shape a continuum ranging from human trafficking to illegal but safe forms of migration.

The workshop aims to move beyond the nation-state as the unit of analysis with sector-specific analyses of migration as chains of labour and value, and how these are embedded in the restructuring of economic, political and social relations in the EU and ASEAN. In this light, the workshop aims to show the necessity of developing clear human security goals and of approaching migration policy as a mix of instruments to answer differentiated and culturally shaped interests and needs at particular points within migration chains. The workshop will also draw on the narratives of migrants collected by qualitative studies to illustrate where collaborative efforts may be required between states, employers, human rights organisations and migrant workers.

The workshop will gather researchers, policy makers and representatives from migrant groups with expertise on Southeast Asia and/or Europe. The workshop is convened by Thanh-Dam Truong, Centre for Human Security Studies, Chubu University, Japan, and Roy Huijsmans, Institute of Social Studies, the Netherlands. Further information will be available at www.asia-alliance.org



金基氏李
Lee Foundation

3rd Asian Space Conference

21st – 23rd of March 2007, Singapore
<http://pdcc.ntu.edu.sg/ASC2007>

First Announcement and Call for Papers

SCOPE

The Asian Space Conference aims to provide a forum for research, operation and education in the area of space science and technology as well as the related fields of the humanities and social sciences. The conference fosters communication and discussion among space engineers and scientists, sociologists, rural and urban planners, economists, political scientists, legal experts, educators and satellite service providers (telecommunications, earth observations, meteorologists). The objective is to interact outside individual disciplines and to discuss and share information and knowledge of space applications to solve common problems of sustainable economic growth, poverty alleviation, social stability and disaster mitigation with an emphasis on Asia.

The areas of interest are, but not limited to, the following topics:

Space systems in the Asian region:

- Current space activities and missions
- National space systems and infrastructures
- Future space missions
- Cooperative regional and international activities
- Launching possibilities

Socio-economic:

- Satellites in national policy and planning decisions
- Space applications (economic growth, poverty alleviation, social stability, disaster mitigation)
- Role of regional and international organisations
- Space science and technology in education
- Creation of awareness

Satellites and the humanities:

- Sociological uses
- Environmental / disaster monitoring
- Historical perspectives and archaeology research
- Impacts on cultures, commerce & communities

Legal aspects:

- Framework for satellite services and applications
- Role of private enterprises under international and national law
- Regulatory regimes for Asian space activities
- Legal aspects of earth resource satellites
- National sovereignty

PAPER SUBMISSION

Authors are invited to submit a full length 8-page paper of double column text using single spaced 10pt size type on A4 paper. Detailed paper formatting and submission instructions are available on the conference webpage.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Individuals and institutions are invited to submit proposals to organise and chair workshops, special sessions, panel discussions and / or round tables on space related subjects.

IMPORTANT DATES

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Papers submission: | 6 th of November 2006 | Camera-ready paper: | 16 th of February 2007 |
| Notification of acceptance: | 8 th of January 2007 | Event proposal: | 6 th of November 2006 |

CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

Timo Rolf Bretschneider
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N4-02a-32 Nanyang Avenue
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Fellowships at the International Institute for Asian Studies

IIAS invites postdoctoral researchers to apply for fellowships in Leiden or Amsterdam. IIAS fellows are invited to present lectures, participate in seminars, and cooperate in research programmes. Applications can be submitted at any time.

For more information and an application form see the IIAS website:
www.iias.nl
iiasfellowships@let.leidenuniv.nl



Leiden or Amsterdam?

The IIAS main office in Leiden is hosted by Leiden University, which has a long tradition in Asian Studies. Its departments of languages and cultures of China, Korea, Japan, South and Central Asia, and Southeast Asia and Oceania all have extensive collections.

Leiden hosts the Research School CNWS (School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies), the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM), the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV), the Faculty of Creative and Performing Arts, the Faculty of Theology (with an emphasis on the theology of Islam), the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences with its departments of Cultural Anthropology, Development Sociology and Political Science, the Institute of Environmental Sciences (CML), the Van Vollenhoven Institute for Law, Governance and Development, and the Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC). Asia-related museums in Leiden include the National Museum of Ethnology and the Sieboldhuis Museum. Leiden University is language oriented and focused on classical as well as contemporary studies.

In The Hague (15 minutes by train from Leiden) one can find the Leiden University Campus The Hague (specialized in Law and Governance Studies), the National Library of the Netherlands (KB), the Netherlands National Archives, the International Institute for Social Studies (ISS) and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael.

The IIAS branch office in Amsterdam is hosted by the University of Amsterdam (UvA). The university counts departments of Cultural Anthropology, Sociology, Political Science, Communication Science, Media Studies and has an Academic Medical Center (AMC). Amsterdam has two universities. The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VUA) includes departments of Political Science, Social Cultural Sciences, Social and Cultural Anthropology, and the VU University Medical Center. Both UvA and VU have extensive department libraries in addition to their main libraries.

Asia-related institutes in Amsterdam include the Amsterdam School for Social Research (ASSR), Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASiA), the International Institute for Social History (IISG), the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD), The Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT). As the (cultural) capital of the Netherlands, Amsterdam hosts many museums, such as the Rijksmuseum and the Tropenmuseum of Anthropology, and musical venues which feature Asia-related exhibitions and performances. The departments in Amsterdam have a more interdisciplinary and comparative social science approach. Leiden and Amsterdam are 30 minutes apart by train.

October 2006

10 October 2006

Wageningen, the Netherlands

From Green to Gene Revolution?
78th International Conference on Agriculture and Development (ICAD)
Information: www.klv.nl

13 - 15 October 2006

Dakar, Senegal

Youth and the Global South: Religions, Politics, and the Making of Youth in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East
Conference
Convenor(s): The Steering Committee
Organised by ASC/CODESRIA/ISIM/IIAS
Contact: Manon Osseweijer
m.osseweijer@let.leidenuniv.nl

13 - 15 October 2006

Gwalior, India

Third Biennial Conference of the Indian Association for Asian & Pacific Studies
Conference
Contact: Lipi Ghosh
iaaps2000@hotmail.com

13 - 15 October 2006

Delhi, India

Culture Matters: Understanding Development from the Perspectives of Marginal Communities
Conference
Organised by the Doshkal Society
Contact: desh13@rediffmail.com
www.deshkalindia.com/conference/

16 - 18 October 2006

Shanghai, China

Creative cities, creative economies
ASEF-Alliance Workshop
Convenor(s): Lily Kong and Justin O'Connor
Organised by National University of Singapore and Manchester Metropolitan University
Contact: Lily Kong and Justin O'Connor
lilykong@nus.edu.sg and
j.oconnor@mmu.ac.uk

20 - 21 October 2006

Aix-en-Provence, France

The Chinese in Vietnam: When Past and Future Converge
Organised by Diasporas Chinoises research group IRSEA / UMR (UP/CNRS)
Contact: Michel Dolinski, Université de Provence
dolinski@up.univ-aix.fr
or Jean Baffie, Administrative responsible « Diasporas Chinoises » and director of IRSEA
Jean.Baffie@up.univ-mrs.fr

25 - 27 October 2006

Moscow, Russia

XVI International conference on China, Chinese Civilization and the World: History, Modernity and Future Prospects
Organised by Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Far Eastern Studies
ifes@cemi.rssi.ru

26 - 28 October 2006

Amherst, USA

Rethinking Marxism 2006
Organised by "Rethinking Marxism: a journal of economics, culture and society"
Contact: Vincent Lyon-Callo
Vincent.lyon-callo@wmich.edu
www.rethinkingmarxism2006.org

26 - 30 October 2006

Gwangju, South Korea

Asia Culture Forum 2006
Organised by Asia's Future Initiative
Contact: acf@asiacultureforum.org
<http://asiacultureforum.org/index.php>

November 2006

4 November 2006

Vienna, Austria

Austrian Research in Continental Southeast Asia: Continuities and Discontinuities
Workshop
Organised by Southeast Asian Cultural Association and Museum of Ethnology, Vienna
Contact: Erika Daum-Karantisch
Erika-d-k@utanet.at

6 - 7 November 2006

Turku, Finland

Asian Studies at a Turning Point – Tandem walk or boxing match between social sciences and humanities
Conference
Organised by Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Turku and the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen
Contact: Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Turku
Asia-centre@utu.fi
<http://asianstudies.niasconferences.dk>

13 November 2006

Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia across Orders: The reorganisation of Indonesian society
Conference
Organised by the LIPI-NIOD Indonesia across Orders research programme
Contact: Project bureau Indonesia across Orders
indie-indonesie@niod.nl
www.indie-indonesie.nl

22 - 25 November 2006

Quezon, Philippines

19th IAHA Conference
Organised by Philippines Social sciences Council
Contact: Filomeno V. Aguilar Jr
iaha@pssc.org.ph

24 November 2006

Amsterdam, the Netherlands

14th Gonda Lecture
by Alexis Sanderson, University of Oxford
Organised by Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
Contact: Bernadette Peeters
bernadette.peeters@bureau.knaw.nl

24 November 2006

The Hague, the Netherlands

IDPAD End Symposium: Reflections on Development Theory and Practice
Organised by IDPAD
Contact: Sanchita Dutta and Cora Govers
Ratna26@rediffmail.com and govers@nwo.nl
www.idpad.org

30 November - 2 December 2006

Macau, China

Christianity and Cultures: Japan and China in Comparison (1543-1644)
Symposium
Organised by Ricci Institute
www.riccimac.org

December 2006

1 December 2006

Taipei, Taiwan

EU relations with Taiwan and China
Conference
Organised by Academia Sinica
Contact: Der-Chin Horng
dchoring@sinica.edu.tw

2 - 3 December 2006

Kobe, Japan

The Japan Economic Policy Association (JEPA) – 5th International Conference
Asian Economic Initiative: How do we integrate our economies
Conference
Organised by Aoyama Gakuin University
jepa2006@econ.aoyama.ac.jp
www.econ.aoyama.ac.jp/~jepa2006/index.html

3 - 7 December 2006

Sydney, Australia

World Without Walls: Asia and the West
Organised by Oriental Society of Australia (OSA)
jocelyn.chey@arts.usyd.edu.au
www.arts.usyd.edu.au/conference/OSA2006/

6 - 7 December 2006

Carlton, Australia

Europe and Asia: Regions in Flux
Conference
Organised by Contemporary Europe Research Centre, the University of Melbourne
cerc@erc.unimelb.edu.au
www.cerc.unimelb.edu.au

6 - 8 December 2006

Hamburg, Germany

Comparing microfinancing in Eastern Europe and South-East Asia: Lessons learnt
ASEF-Alliance Workshop
Convenor(s): Katharina Michaelowa, Du Xiaoshan and Grzegorz Galusek
Organised by Hamburg Institute of International Economics, CAS, and Microfinance Centre for Central and Eastern Europe and the New Independent States
Contact: Katharina Michaelowa
k-michaelowa@hwwi.org

13 - 17 December 2006

Rotterdam, Netherlands

Cultural Diversity in Music and Dance Education
Conference
Organised by World Music and Dance Centre Rotterdam
www.wmdc.nl

14 - 16 December 2006

Paris, France

Rituals, Pantheons and Techniques: A History of Chinese Religion before the Tang
Conference
Convenor(s): John Lagerwey
Organised by Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, UMR 7133 and IIAS
Contact: John Lagerwey
john.lagerwey@neuf.fr
www.iias.nl/iias/show/id=57609

27 - 29 December 2006

Jaipur, India

53rd Conference of the Indian Political Science Association (IPSA)
Conference
Organised by University of Rajasthan
Contact: Madhuka Shyam Chaturvedi
ipsa53@yahoo.co.in

January 2007

11 January 2006

The Hague, the Netherlands

Cultural festival and conference Indonesia across Orders
Organized by the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation in cooperation with the International literary festival Winternachten
Contact: Project bureau Indonesia across Orders
indie-indonesie@niod.nl
www.indie-indonesie.nl

12 - 15 January 2007

Honolulu, USA

5th Annual Hawai'i International Conference on Arts and Humanities
Contact: Andrew Burge, Conference Coordinator, Hawai'i International Conferences
humanities@hichumanities.org
www.hichumanities.org/index.htm

28 January - 2 February 2007

Hyderabad, India

12th Annual Cultural Studies Workshop
Workshop
Organised by Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta
Contact: Susanta Ghosh
csw@cssscil.org and cssscil@vsnl.net
info@cssscil.org
www.cssscil.org

February 2007

9 - 10 February 2007

Berkeley, USA

UC Berkeley Graduate Student Conference on Vietnamese Studies
Organised by Center for Southeast Asia Studies
cseas@berkeley.edu

22 - 23 February 2007

Sydney, Australia

Queer Asian Sites
Conference
Convened by the AsiaPacQueer Network
apq@anu.edu.au
<http://apq.anu.edu.au/>

March 2007

14 - 17 March

Oslo, Norway

The Japan anthropology workshop
18th Conference
Organised by JAWS
jaws-2007@khm.uio.no
www.khm.uio.no/jaws-2007/

19 - 23 March 2007

Bangkok, Thailand

Technology and culture: Genetics and its social and ethical implications in Asia and Europe
ASEF-Alliance Workshop
Convenor(s): Soraj Hongladorom and Brigitte Jansen
Organised by Center for Ethics of Science and Technology, Chulalongkorn University
Contact: Soraj Hongladorom
hsoraj@chula.ac.th

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Annual Asia-Europe Workshop Series 2007/2008

The European Alliance for Asian Studies and the Asia-Europe Foundation welcome proposals for workshops on themes of common interest to Asia and Europe, to take place in 2007/2008.

The deadline is 1 February 2007. Proposals will be refereed by an Asia-Europe Selection Committee; six will be selected for realisation. Applicants will be informed of the Committee's decision by June 2007.

Financial support, up to a maximum of €12,500 per workshop, consists of contribution towards travel and accommodation.

CRITERIA

- Three day expert workshop, to be held between September 2007 and September 2008 in an ASEM member country.*
- Jointly organised by an Asian and a European institute from ASEM member countries.
- Participants: coming from at least eight different ASEM countries (Asia and Europe equally); male/female parity; balance between senior experts and promising junior researchers
- Participants are invited primarily from academia - though contributions from

- politicians, journalists and representatives of industry are welcome.
- The topic should be innovative and interdisciplinary, address shared interests between Asia and Europe, be of interregional/multilateral importance, and stimulate interregional dialogue.
- Workshops initiated by young postdocs aimed at creating an academic network are favoured.

THE PROPOSAL

Maximum eight pages, in English.

- The proposal should contain:
 - Title of the workshop, proposed dates and venue, names of initiators and organising institutions in Europe and Asia (include at least two signed letters of intent), and one contact address (p. 1)
 - Introduction to the topic and scientific objectives (p.2-4)
 - List of confirmed participants, with institutional affiliations and disciplinary

- competence in relation to the workshop's topic (p.5)
- Detailed programme including paper titles (p.6)
- Itemised, detailed budget showing expenses and expected income (p.7)
- Envisaged follow-up including publication(s) (p.8)

DEADLINE AND ADDRESS

Proposals should be received (by regular mail) before 1 February 2007.

SECRETARIAT ASIA-EUROPE WORKSHOP SERIES
c/o International Institute for Asian Studies
PO. Box 9515
2300 RA Leiden
The Netherlands



Address for hand delivery or private courier service: IIAS, Nonnensteeg 1-3, 2311 VJ Leiden, The Netherlands



ASIA-EUROPE FOUNDATION

The ASIA-EUROPE FOUNDATION (ASEF), Singapore, was established by members of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) on 15 February 1997. ASEF promotes engagement between the civil societies of Asia and Europe and the forging of mutual understanding. For more information: www.asef.org



European Alliance for Asian Studies

THE EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR ASIAN STUDIES is a co-operative framework of European institutes specializing in Asian Studies. Members include the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS); IIAS - the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies; the Institute of Asian Studies; the Institute of Asian Affairs (IFA); the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS); the Centre for International Studies and Research (CERIS); the Centre for International Studies (SOAS); and the Swedish Studies (SSMAPS). www.asia-alliance.org

* ASEM COUNTRIES: AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, BRUNEI, BURMA/MIYANMAR, CAMBODIA, CHINA, CYPRUS, CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, INDONESIA, IRELAND, ITALY, JAPAN, KOREA, LAOS, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBURG, MALAYSIA, MALTA, NETHERLANDS, PHILIPPINES, POLAND, PORTUGAL, SINGAPORE, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, THAILAND, UNITED KINGDOM, VIETNAM.

21 - 23 March 2007

Singapore

3rd Asian Space Conference

Convenor(s): Timo Rolf Bretschneider and David Soo

Organised by Nanyang Technological University/ IIAS

Contact: Timo Rolf Bretschneider and David Soo

astimo@ntu.edu.sg;

d.n.soo@let.leidenuniv.nl

<http://pdcc.ntu.edu.sg/ASC2007>

22 - 25 March 2007

Boston, USA

AAS Annual Meeting

Organised by Association of Asian Studies

www.aasianst.org/annmtg.htm

April 2007

12 - 14 April 2007

Belfast, United Kingdom

Toward A New Age of Asian Art

AAH 33rd Annual Conference

Contact: Ming-Hui Chen

m.chen3@lboro.ac.uk

<http://aah.org.uk/conference/index.php>

19 - 21 April 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

Production, Distribution and Collection of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Ancient South India

Seminar

Convenor(s): Saraju Rath

Organised by IIAS and KU Leuven

Contact: Saraju Rath and Marloes Rozing

m.rozing@let.leidenuniv.nl

May 2007

3 - 6 May 2007

Tempe, USA

Second International Conference on Lao Studies

Organised by the Faculty of Southeast Asian Studies at Arizona State University, and the Center for Lao Studies, San Francisco, CA

Information:

www.asu.edu/asian

www.laostudies.org

24 - 27 May, 2007

Bangkok, Thailand

Syncretism in South and Southeast Asia: Adoption and Adaptation.

Conference

Organised by SSEASR and is co-sponsored as a Regional Conference by International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), Member of CIPSH, a n affiliate organisation of the UNESCO.

Contact: Sophana Srichampa

conf2007@sseasr.org

sseasr@gmail.com

www.sseasr.org

June 2007

2 - 9 June 2007

Budapest, Hungary

The 8th Conference of the International Society for Shamanistic Research (ISSR)

www.etnologia.mta.hu

15 - 17 June 2007

Honolulu, USA

41st Annual Conference of Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast

Organised by the East-West Center and the University of Hawai'i

Convenor(s): Gordon Ring, Barbara Andaya, Ricardo Trimmillos, and William Vanderbok

Contact: William Vanderbok

Aspaco7@social.rr.com

www.apac.info

July 2007

9 - 11 July 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

5th Urban Language Survey Seminar

Seminar

Convenor(s): Marinus van de Berg and Vincent van Heuven

Organised by LUCL/IIAS/NOW

Contact: Marloes Rozing

m.rozing@let.leidenuniv.nl

www.iias.nl/ilci

13 - 15 July 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

China Summerschool: "The Spread of PTH"

Convenor(s): Marinus van de Berg and Vincent van Heuven

Organised by LUCL/IIAS/NOW

Contact: Marloes Rozing

m.rozing@let.leidenuniv.nl

www.iias.nl/ilci

August 2007

2 - 5 August 2007

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ICAS 5

Conference

Organised by University Kebangsaan Malaysia/ATMA-IKON and ICAS Secretariat

Contact: Institute of Malay World and Civilization (ATMA)

icas5@ukm.my

www.atma.ukm.my/icas5.htm

www.icassecretariat.org

September 2007

10 - 15 September 2007

Ankara, Turkey

Peace at Home, Peace in the World

ICANAS '38

38th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies

Organised by Ataturk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History

Contact: yuksekkurum@ataturkyuksekkurum.gov.tr

12 - 15 September 2007

Naples, Italy

EUROSEAS Conference

Organised by EUROSEAS

Contact: Pietro Masina

ofrattolillo@iuo.it

<http://iias.leidenuniv.nl/institutes/kitlv/euroseas.html>

IIAS portal

www.iias.nl/portal is an open platform for visitors to place information on events, grants and funding, job opportunities, and websites. You can subscribe to the portal at the address above and stay up to date through regular RSS feeds. Event information posted on IIAS portal will be considered for publication in this newsletter's International Conference Agenda.

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'Asian History'
1 October 1999 - 1 October 2007

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 **NEWSLETTER**

> Colophon

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