



Courtesy Didi Kwantanada and family

44

Asia's Colonial Photographies



# NEWSLETTER

## Photography's Asian Circuits

Accounts of colonial photography in the Dutch East Indies focus on European photographers and exceptional figures like Kassian Cephas, the first (known) native Javanese photographer.<sup>1</sup> Yet photography was not simply a 'European' technology transplanted from the European metropole to the Asian colony. Decentring European photographers from the history of photography in the Indies reveals the more circuitous - and Asian - routes by which photography travelled to and within the archipelago.

*Karen Strassler*

Chinese studio photographers represent an underappreciated thread of Indonesian photographic history. Europeans owned the earliest and most illustrious studios in the Indies (the first opened in 1857), and there were also large numbers of Japanese photographers in the Indies in the last decades of colonial rule. But by the early 20th century immigrant photographers from

Canton had established a strong presence throughout Java and in other parts of the Dutch colony. These Chinese photographers often settled in smaller provincial towns as well as large cities, and served a less elite clientele than the better-known European studios. My oral history research with contemporary photographers in Java suggests that by the late 1920s, there were more studios under Chinese than European, Japanese, or other ethnic ownership.

In the Indies, portrait studios mirrored social hierarchies, with European-owned studios typically reserved for the highest levels of colonial society. The rest of the population who could afford photographs went to the more modestly appointed and affordable Chinese 'toekang potret'. 'Toekang' means craftsman, signalling that photography was a skilled kind of labour, but labour nonetheless. Indeed, most studio portraitists were recent immigrants of humble origins, a more skilled subset of the massive influx of immigrants from Southern China that occurred in the last decades of the 19th and first decades of the 20th century.<sup>2</sup> Most photographers emigrated from Canton at a young age, sometimes apprenticing in Singapore before arriving in the Indies. Cantonese immigrants to the Indies were known more generally as craftspeople, recognised especially for their expertise in making furniture. Since it was expensive to buy cameras, Cantonese photographers often deployed these

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## Director's note

### Building bridges to, from and with Asia

It goes without saying, networking is crucial for communication. Of course there is a business overtone and some direct motive, but there are strategic considerations too: It is good for your career, or it adds to your power and influence if you know many people in important positions - if you know the 'right' people. In the business world such motivations are understood by everybody and more or less accepted as necessary PR and a regular component of your work.

In academia we are catching on fast. Every year academics the world over travel to conferences in far flung places, attend receptions, participate in workshops, sit on learned committees, returning home with our pockets full with new business cards and contacts. For those of us trying to cut down on our global emissions, the internet and email is making building bridges and crossing borders easier than ever.

In this issue of IIAS Newsletter, we look at the consequences of people crossing borders and making connections with our theme on Transnational Marriage in Asia. The collection of articles hopes to offer new insights into marriage and migration, the impact on communities and the difficulties of building trust and genuine relationships in a cross-cultural environment.

Building trust and genuine relationships brings us back to networking, of course. Following the recent convention in Kuala Lumpur, ICAS has proved itself to be a prime example of an Asian Studies network that is successfully building bridges across regions, disciplines and subject areas. I am also pleased to report that IIAS has become an observer to an agreement founding the European Consortium for Asian Field Studies (ECAAF). You can read more about this exciting initiative from the École française d'Extreme-Orient (EFEO) in the Institutional News pages of this issue. I also suggest you read the article 'Forging Links Between Distant Lands' (p 41) on the new addition to the Asian Studies fold - ASIS, The Icelandic Centre for Asian Studies. This surprising setting for the Asian Studies curriculum results from an explosion in trade, tourism and cultural exchanges between Iceland and Asian countries in recent years.

These are just a few examples of the bridges that are being built to, from and with Asia and by carrying on this trend and investing time in each other, I am convinced Asian studies will reap the rewards.

Max Sparreboom  
director



**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](http://www.asia-alliance.org)) and the Secretariat General of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS: [www.icassecretariat.org](http://www.icassecretariat.org)). Updates on the activities of the Asia Alliance and ICAS are published in this newsletter. ◀

[www.iias.nl](http://www.iias.nl)



# Transnational marriage in Asia

MELODY LU  
Guest Editor

In today's rapidly globalising world, marriage as a contract between two individuals based on love and commitment to each other is increasingly considered a norm. The degree of women's control over their marital decisions and choice of mate, based on individual traits rather than the family's socio-economic status, is seen as a measure of whether a society has embraced modernity. In reality, marriage involves many actors with complex decision-making processes and multiple considerations. In many Asian societies, being and staying married, for both men and women, is a social and family obligation and a criterion of social standing. Kin members, the state, marriage intermediaries (institutional or individual) and commercial sectors are all involved in decision-making. This is particularly the case of cross-border marriages, with the state deciding and controlling who is allowed to marry, whether spouses are allowed to enter or reside in the receiving societies, as well as their naturalisation and assimilation process.

As well as a rapidly increasing intra-Asian flow of marriage migration, there is a continued growth of Asian women marrying and migrating to the West and 'in between' diaspora communities. For the most part, it is women marrying (and 'marrying up') and migrating to wealthier countries. The dominant view is that women enter cross-border marriages for economic gains, and generally in order to extricate themselves (and their families) from poverty.

Scholarship on cross-border marriages in Asia has been vigorous in recent years. Two terms indicating rather different conceptual emphases are used: cross-border and transnational marriage. These two terms are used interchangeably but often not defined clearly. To make it more confusing, both terms can be used to refer to cross-ethnic/cultural or same-cultural marriages. The term *cross-border marriage* emphasises geographical, national, racial, class and gender and cultural borders constructed in the hosting societies. These borders are mainly mediated by the states as well as other social actors in order to differentiate the 'we' and 'the others'. This stream of scholarship concerns the impact of marriage migration on the host societies in terms of population pressure and social security, the political and social citizenship of marriage migrants and their integration and acculturation. Particular attention is paid to studying how to empower migrant wives in exploitative situations, such as domestic violence and commodified marriage brokerage. There is also a growing scholarship on the actors' strategies of crossing these borders.

The term *transnational marriage* emphasises a transnational network and space created by the actors themselves; as well as the transactions of economic resources, symbols and political and cultural practices between the sending and receiving communities (see Panitee Suksomboon's article 'remittances and 'social remittances': their impact on cross-cultural marriage and social transformation, p 6); and how these transactions influence local development, social practices and cultural norms in both sending and receiving societies. The term 'transnationalism' by no means suggests the end of the nation-state; instead, it focuses on how actors' opportunities and choices are mediated by the state and other transnational actors. (Willis et. al, 2004, see list of further reading). The articles in this theme issue follow this framework on transnationalism. They address diverse aspects of transnational marriages and challenge assumptions made by earlier scholarship, particularly the social actors other than the state.

Lenore Lyons and Michele Ford's article tells of couples comprised of Singaporean men and Indonesian wives in the Riau Islands. The men choose to live in Singapore, however they do establish a base in the Riau Islands and make regular visits to their wives. On the one hand, their choice of residency is shaped by the restriction of immigration policies imposed by both the Singaporean and Indonesian governments. The immigration policies of both governments are tied up with labour policy and class status. The husbands of cross-border

marriages have to prove to the state that they are of sufficient means to support their wives and thus will not become a welfare burden. On the other hand, the state's intervention does not seem to matter much for the couples in their daily experiences. For them, the choice of residency is clearly a lifestyle choice. As well as benefiting from an immediate improvement in their economic situation, Indonesian wives also experience class mobility. Their marriage to Singaporean men allows them to move into the lower-middle class. Equally, the working-class Singaporean husbands who are marginalised in Singaporean society can enjoy a comfortable middle-class lifestyle in the Riau islands. Lyons and Ford make the point that the wives do not wish to live in Singapore, a place they consider to be stressful and isolated.

Like Lyons and Ford's article, Shuko Takeshita's essay on transnational families of Pakistani men and Japanese women shows that aside from the economic motivation (job opportunities or wealth) and cultural practice (patrilocal), there are other factors affecting the transnational families' decisions and choices of residency. In this case children's education and the transmission of cultural and religious values. Takeshita studies the importance of religion in children's education and socialisation. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) are chosen as the migration destination of Japanese wives and their children instead of the couples' countries of origin. Pakistani men establish a transnational, kin-based business network trading used vehicles between Japan, UAE and Pakistan. Japanese women favour a home in the UAE over Pakistan because of the modern lifestyle and less control from their husband's family, yet they can still enjoy the social support of some kin members. The transnational kinship network therefore provides business opportunities, social support and helps maintain religious and cultural identities. Japanese women are active agents in this multiple migration process by choosing the destination, forming a support network among themselves, and developing educational strategies for their children who learn English and Japanese while being socialised in an Islamic environment.

Panitee Suksomboon's article gives a nuanced picture of Thai women who marry Dutch men and live in the Netherlands. These women actively maintain social ties with their home communities, and by doing so, they create a transnational space. This transnational space is important for Thai women not only in terms of social support, but also because their class mobility only exists in their home community and not in the host society (as Riau Islands wives in Lyons and Ford's study). To maintain their new-found social status Thai women transfer economic resources to their natal families either by economic remittance or via cultural practices such as gift-giving or paying for holidays for the whole family. They also disguise their economic and emotional hardships, creating an image of a happy life in Europe. This image, together with the socio-economic disparity between families with and without women marrying foreign men, fuels the desire of more women to marry abroad, thus triggering a chained migration. Suksomboon shows the linkage between the movement of people, transaction of economic resources as well as the cultural ideas and practices flowing in between this transnational space.

All three articles give pictures of marriage migrants as active agents in the migration process. Their choices challenge the assumption that marriage migrants marry either for economic gains, citizenship and welfare or lifestyle in an affluent society. However, as Lyons and Ford warn us, their choices are limited by the existing gender ideologies and their dependency on their husbands, which is strengthened by the economic disparity between the host and sending countries. While marriage migrants actively create a transnational space, not all of them can engage their husbands in it. While Singaporean and Pakistani men enjoy the advantages of the transnational space, Dutch men appear to have greater difficulty in appreciating the cultural practices of the wives' community and do not enjoy the social status and respect that their wives 'win' for them.

Parents in many Asian societies are heavily involved in the marital decision and mate choice of their children. This is also the case in cross-border marriages. Hsing-Miao Chi's article addresses an

understudied aspect of transnational marriages in the current literature - the inter-generational relations. This generation of mothers-in-law in Taiwan is 'caught in-between', in the sense that when they were young they were expected to fulfil the role of obedient daughters-in-law; now that they are old they are expected to do domestic work and care for young grandchildren when their Taiwanese daughters-in-law enter the job market. Previous research shows that one of the motivations for Taiwanese parents to choose a foreign wife (mainly from Southeast Asia) for their sons is that Southeast Asian women are considered to have 'traditional virtue' of gender roles and to be more obedient. Despite such expectations, Chi's study shows that the Taiwanese mothers-in-law of local marriages and those of cross-border marriages may have the same experiences. Having a foreign daughter-in-law does not necessarily increase the power of the mother-in-law. On the contrary, the unfamiliarity of the language and cultural practices of their foreign daughters-in-law makes them suspicious of daughters-in-law's intentions and creates what Chi calls 'emotional burden'.

A large number of intra-Asia cross-border marriages are intermediated either by institutions or individual matchmakers within the actors' kin and social network. These marriages are termed 'commodified marriages' and at times equated to trafficking. Michiel Baas's article problematises the dichotomy between 'love' and 'arranged' marriage in the context of India's IT industry. IT professionals in Bangalore tend to choose their marriage partners within the industry, regardless of their caste. On the one hand this is due to the fact that the transnational business practice of the industry is based on meritocracy - the IT companies deliberately discourage employees from following the cultural practices of the caste system. On the other hand, migration experiences, both internal and international, uproot IT professionals from their social and kin networks and place them in an isolated working environment that demands long working hours and flexibility. The IT professionals are able to break away from the practices of arranged marriage within the same caste and choose their marriage partners with the families' permission (what Baas calls 'arranged love marriage') due to the economic benefits and social prestige associated with the industry. However, rather than based on romantic love, their mate choice is a result of practical considerations such as maintaining the lifestyle the transnational business practice requires.

## Further reading

Constable, Nicole ed. 2005 *Cross-border marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*. University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia.

Lu, Schoonheim and Yang eds. (forthcoming) *Cross-border marriage migration in East and Southeast Asia: socio-demographic patterns and issues*. Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam.

Palriwala, Rajni and Uberoi, Patricia eds. (forthcoming) *Marriage, Migration and Gender*. Series of Women and Migration in Asia, no. 5. Sage: New Delhi.

Piper, Nicola and Roces, Mina eds. 2003 *Wife or workers? Asian women and migration*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Willis, Yeoh and Fakhri 2004 Introduction: transnationalism as a challenge to the nation, in Brenda, S.A. Yeoh and Katie Willis (eds.) *State/Nation/Transnation: Perspectives on Transnationalism in the Asia-Pacific*. Routledge: London and New York.

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woodworking skills to construct their own cameras, using imported German lenses.

### Family Ties

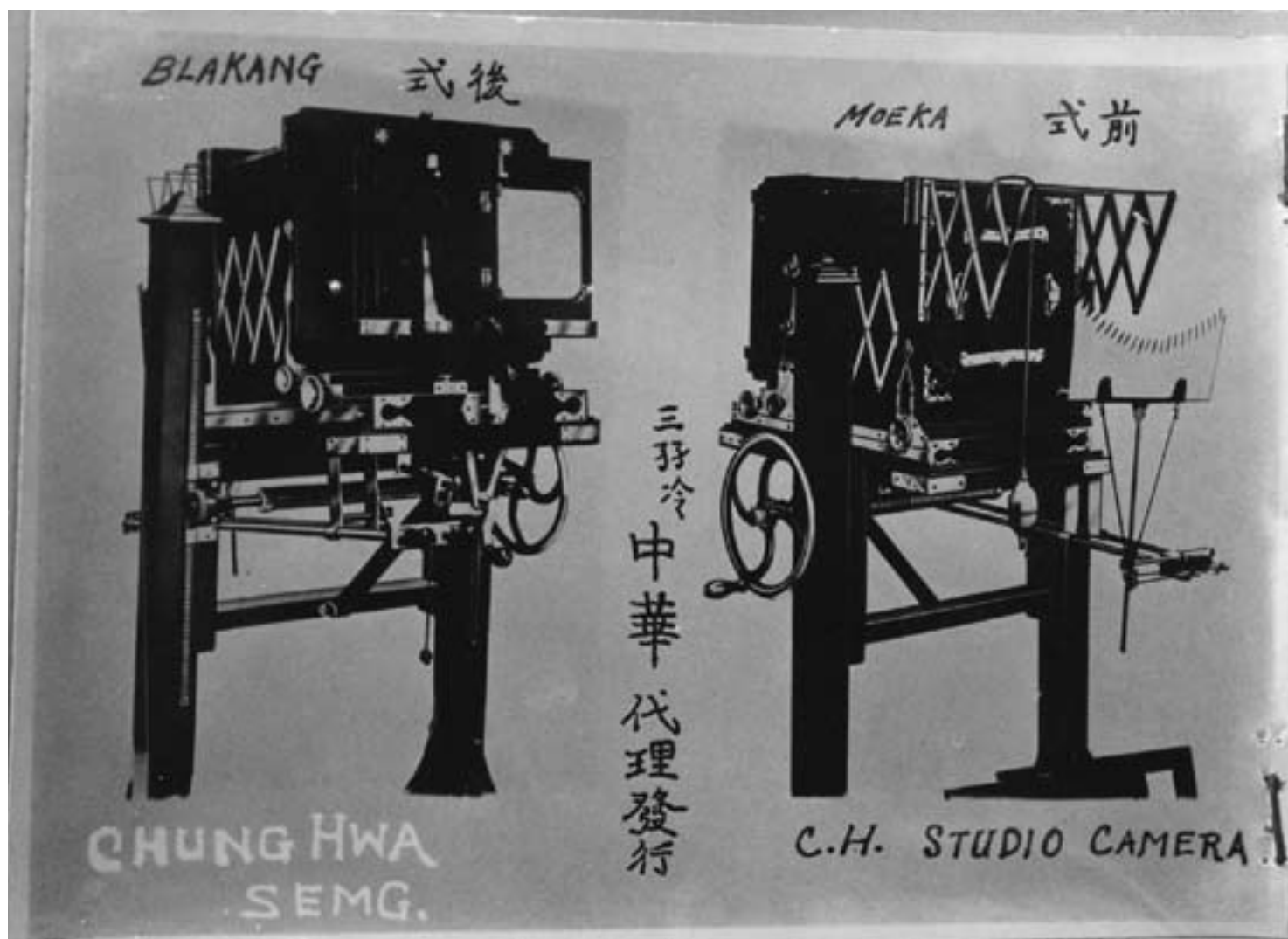
Networks of ethnic Chinese photography studios, linked by familial and regional ties, extended throughout the Indies. Cantonese immigrant photographers typically learned the trade from already established Chinese photographers (usually their own relatives). After a period of apprenticeship, a photographer would open his own studio, often with borrowed money and handed-down equipment. Once a photographer was well established, it was his turn to invite a sibling, a cousin, or someone from the same village in China to join him as an apprentice. This pattern appears to have been a broader Southeast Asia-wide phenomenon. Liu, for example, details the history of the Lee Brothers Studio in Singapore (1910-23), owned by a family that originated in Canton. Members of the Lee family ultimately operated more than a dozen studios in Southeast Asia, including eight in Singapore, one each in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh, and three in the Indies, in the cities of Batavia, Magelang, and Bandung (Liu 1995).<sup>3</sup> Chinese studios were run as family businesses. Wives, children, and other relatives helped run the shop, and children usually took over the studios of their parents. As one elderly photographer told me, "Photography in those days was still a secret. You didn't tell outsiders how you did it. Now everything's out in the open, but in the past it was kept strictly within the family."

Chung Hwa [China] Studio of Semarang, founded in 1922 by Lie Yie King, exemplifies the general pattern I found in my research in Java.<sup>4</sup> Lie Yie King (b. 1900) was one of seven children

Page from a Chung Hwa catalogue, late 1930s.

Courtesy Didi

Kwartanada and family.



(five males, two females) born to a poor farmer in Canton province, all of whom, with the exception of the eldest daughter, would eventually come to the Indies. In 1913, Lie Yie King left home for Singapore, where he found work in a studio owned by a Singapore Chinese. In 1920, he set out on his own to Semarang, a bustling commercial port in Central Java, which he believed would offer greater opportunities for himself and his siblings at home. He worked

for a short time in a studio there (possibly owned by a relative who had preceded him) before opening up his own Chung Hwa Studio.

Chung Hwa's rapid success prompted Lie Yie King to invite other siblings to the Indies as well. Eventually, there would be at least eleven studios directly connected through family ties to Chung Hwa (five in Semarang and the rest in other parts of Java).<sup>5</sup> For one of Lie Yie

King's siblings, though, arrival in the Indies proved a rude awakening. Lie Yap King, Lie Yie King's older brother, had left Canton for Singapore in 1910, at the age of 14. In 1928, he heeded his brother's call to come to the Indies and left behind his comfortable job at a large Chinese-owned studio in Singapore. His son recalled, "My father was deeply disappointed when he came to Indonesia. He didn't know it was so far behind Singapore. In Singapore everything was

more advanced...all of father's dreams were lost when he came to Indonesia." Nevertheless, Lie Yap King's Djawa Studio, which catered to a cross-section of the colonial elite - Dutch, Eurasians, Javanese, and Chinese - would also prove highly successful. Elegant portraits of Chinese opera stars and wealthy Singaporeans hung on the walls of his studio as testaments to his skill and cosmopolitanism.

By the late twenties, Chung Hwa had expanded into the business of distributing and importing photographic equipment and supplies; it would become one of the major purveyors of photographic equipment in Java in the late colonial and early postcolonial period. Lie Yie King's knowledge of English (learned in Singapore) gained him access to British and American publications and allowed him to make direct contact with foreign companies. This enabled him to compete with the five Dutch importers of photographic goods that were based in Semarang at that time. But Lie Yie King also maintained business ties to the Chinese mainland, importing backdrops from Shanghai as well. While the majority of backdrops of the late colonial period placed people in vaguely 'European' scenes, some of these Chinese backdrops instead visualised 'Chinese' locations. One, painted in the 1930s and still hanging in Chung Hwa's former studio, shows a large pavilion with carved pillars looking out onto another Chinese-style pagoda. Another from the same era at Djawa Studio shows a garden and a lake with distinctive rock formations, referencing classical Chinese painting motifs. Such backdrops were probably popular among the large ethnic Chinese populations of the Indies, many of whom were experiencing a renewed sense of their ties to the mainland in response to the rise of Chinese nationalism.



Ethnic Chinese family portrait, late 1930s, Che Lan Studio, Yogyakarta.

Courtesy Didi Kwartanada and family.





Postcolonial backdrop (detail), late 1950s, from City Photo, Yogyakarta.

Photograph by Karen Strassler.

#### Notes:

- 1 On Colonial photography in the Indies, see Groeneveld, Anneke et al., eds. 1989. *Toekang Potret: 100 Years of Photography in the Dutch Indies 1839-1939*. Amsterdam and Rotterdam: Fragment Uitgeverij and Museum voor Volkenkunde; Reed, Jane Levy, ed. 1991. *Toward Independence: A Century of Indonesia Photographed*. San Francisco: The Friends of Photography. On the British studio of Woodbury and Page, see Wachlin, Steven, Marianne Fluitsma, G.J. Knaap. 1994. *Woodbury and Page: Photographers Java*. Leiden: KITLV Press. On Cephas, see Knaap, Gerrit. 1999. *Kasian Cephas: Photography in the Service of the Sultan*. Leiden: KITLV Press.
- 2 See Anthony Reid, "Entrepreneurial Minorities, Nationalism, and the State" in Chirot, Daniel and Anthony Reid, *Essential Outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe*. Seattle UW press 1997: 53.
- 3 The Malaysia branch also operated a photography supplies store called Lee and Sons. Another part of the family enterprise was Wah Heng & Co. in Singapore, which in the 1920s was an important supplier of photography equipment throughout Singapore, Malaysia and the Indies. Liu, Gretchen. 1995. *From the Family Album: Portraits from the Lee Brothers Studio, Singapore 1910-1925*. Singapore: Landmark Books. Berticevich also notes that "many of the photographers of the Southeast Asia region were ethnic Chinese" and many purchased their backdrops from Hong Kong (in particular from the Leung Studio) in the 1950s and 60s. Berticevich, George C. 1998. *Photo Backdrops: The George C. Berticevich Collection*. (Exhibition Catalogue), San Francisco: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, p. 17.
- 4 The following account is based on interviews with Lie Yie King's son Lukito Darsono (who ran Chung Hwa after his father's death in 1967), Sept 1 and 2 1999, Semarang, and Lie Tiong Dang, current owner of Java Studio (formerly Djawa Studio) and son of Lie Yap King, Sept. 2 1999.
- 5 Other studios opened by relatives of Lie Yie King were, in Semarang, Oy Lan, King Son (now a department store), King (now an electric goods store), Mi Fong (now a travel agency) and Foto Varia. In Purwokerto: Foto Pemuda. In Temanggung: Foto Tjie Sing. In Bandung: Foto Sinar (now closed). In Surabaya: Foto Varia, and Foto Tek Sin (closed). Apparently there was also another studio in Cirebon, but the name has since been forgotten.



Chinese-style backdrop at Chung Hwa Studio, late 1930s, Semarang.

Photograph by Agus Leonardus.

### From Colony to Nation

When the Japanese Occupation (1942-5) and the war of Independence (1945-9) forced an exodus of Japanese and European studio photographers from the Indies, it was left to ethnic Chinese photographers to bring studio photography into the Indonesian era. In the 1950s and 1960s, the numbers of Chinese-Indonesian owned studios, most tied by direct descent or apprenticeship to those that had operated before Independence, increased dramatically. Translating colonial era conventions into new national idioms, ethnic Chinese photographers worked with Javanese painters to develop a distinctively Indonesian style of portrait backdrop. These backdrops featured such iconic tropical images as volcanoes, beaches, rice fields and palm trees, often conjoined with modern architecture. Others evoked a more fantastical modernity realised in material signs like cars and houses equipped with radios, staircases and electric lights. Unlike the more subtle, blurred style of European backdrops, these post-colonial backdrops, featuring scenes painted in exuberant detail and vivid colour, more closely approximated the style of contemporary Chinese backdrops.

The fates of Chung Hwa Studio and Djawa Studio in the transition to Independence and the post-colonial period are again exemplary of larger historical patterns. In 1942, the Japanese shut down Chung Hwa and confiscated all of the business's cameras, equipment, and supplies, along with two cars, without compensation. While the Japanese shut most studios down across Java, they did allow some to continue operating in order to provide photographic services for the army and the occupation administration. Djawa Studio, often under extremely difficult and abusive conditions, was allowed to contin-

ue functioning in this capacity. Lie Yie King, meanwhile, survived the Japanese Occupation by opening a grocery store, and started Chung Hwa again "from nothing" in 1946. By the mid-1950s, Chung Hwa had regained its former stature and once again supplied studios throughout Java and in Sumatra, Lombok, Makassar, and East Kalimantan.

In the late 1970s, the era of the *toekang potret* - photography as a craft - gave way to that of *cuci cetak* ("wash and print"). Cheap snapshot cameras and automatic developing and printing of colour film rendered many of the specific skills passed down through generations of ethnic Chinese photographers obsolete. Foreign companies began aggressively pursuing the Indonesian market by establishing their own exclusive Indonesian partners (Fuji's Indonesian partner PT Modern Photo was founded in 1972), bypassing earlier networks for distribution of supplies and equipment. Today Chung Hwa has all but shut down, and Djawa Studio (now called Java Studio) faces increasing competition from cheaper, faster, and more "modern" studios. Yet many owners of Indonesia's modern studios are the children and grandchildren, nephews and cousins, of colonial-era *toekang potret*. To this day, studio photography in Indonesia has an ethnic Chinese face. ◀

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Postcolonial Studio Portrait, 1955. Photographer unknown. Courtesy Ibu Soekilah.



Fig 1: Advertisement for the Asanuma Company (Tokyo), Shashin shimpo [Photography News], no. 37 (1906)



Fig. 2: "Western People's love of antiquity". Woodblock print after a drawing by Wu Youru (d. 1893), published in 1908



Fig. 3: Portrait of Zou Boqi (1819-1869). Lithograph based on his photographic portrait included in Qingdai xuezhe xiangzhuān [Portraits and Biographies of Qing Scholars], part 2, published by Ye Gongzhuo in 1953.

# Photography in China: a global medium locally appropriated

When photography is discussed as a colonialist imaging practice, two obvious notions of seeing and being seen come into play. Seeing implies empowerment; being seen does not.

Oliver Moore

In China, one long-standing perception of unequal empowerment was fed by diplomacy. During the hostilities of the second Opium War (1856-1860) the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) government voiced its strong resentment of foreign photographers' engagement on the battlefield. Following the Crimean war, China became the latest theatre for practicing a new Western visual practice of foreign reporting. This was keenly felt in East Asia, and a rapidly industrialising Japan soon made photography an indispensable technique for its imperialist ambitions, envisaging the camera as a kind of dreadnought battleship (fig. 1). The foreign exercise of photography might even usurp what had been taken for granted as an exclusively Chinese privilege to indulge its love of the cultural and material heritage of an ancient civilisation (fig. 2).

But photography has many histories.

Photography served colonial ambitions of seeing, but the force of Western colonial adventures should not presuppose that colonised and semi-colonised societies were only seen and saw nothing. Colonising and colonised constructs reveal histories of photography that resisted the technological empowerment of Western vision precisely because native photographers and consumers of the images indigenised photography for local priorities of content, form and patterns of circulation. Photography in the late Qing was part of a visual economy that has been overlooked in accounts of the West's discovery of China. This article proposes means to explore a Chinese history of photography, and to look more broadly at how the social roles of visual images changed during the transition from tradition to modernity in China. What may be gained is a social history of visual art - within which photography was one medium - that accommodates similarities and differences across diverse cul-

tural settings in late-19th century China. Important too are the documents of the period's rising discourse on photography. Space precludes considering all genres (for example, diaries, poems and technical treatises), but newspaper advertisements profile extremely well the larger discourse to which they belonged. This Chinese discourse may be read not simply as a sign of social change reflected by photographs from China, but as the motivating impulses within the medium itself.

## A Chinese history of photography

Despite the medium's potential for change, the terms in which photography was explained in Chinese documents seem curiously un-modern. This is consonant with the history of many commodities, when the newness of a product is often accompanied by efforts to make it look old and to search for indigenously sources. China's first-known serious enquirer into photography was Zou Boqi (1819-1869) (fig 3), a mathematician from Guangzhou, who determined that the camera worked according to optical principles already recorded in ancient scriptures (dating to 500 BCE!).

Many terms soon co-existed to name photography, including "painting the verifiable image" (*xiezhen*), which is still current in Japanese (*shashin*), but obsolete in China. The word has deep roots in Chinese painting theory, and this etymology shows how predominantly the lexicon of painting techniques featured in photography discourse. The new medium of photography was addressed with highly traditional concepts borrowed from the manigraphic (hand-drawn) skills of painting. Indeed, the popularisation of photography was in part due to a highly durable conception

that photographers did only what painters had done and continued to do, both naming their art *xiezhen* (fig. 4). Significantly too, material evidence shows that the photographic idiom was borrowed for older visual media, such as painting and woodblock printing. Figure 3 shows a lithographic portrait of Zou Boqi that merges a photographic image of the sitter's head with a few sketchy brush strokes for his body.

Even the current Chinese term *paizhao* (to photograph) is usually overlooked as yet more evidence of a completely non-Western conception of photographic method. *Pai*, literally "to beat time" is an etymological fossil of the

discourse. "Beating the time of a picture" shows how a dichotomy of traditional and modern infused a new concept of image-making.

## Discourse on photography

Discourse focused primarily on studios. A rare visual document is a photograph of the Lihua Studio on Nanjing East Road, Shanghai, made in about 1890 (fig. 5). This is the smarter kind of establishment to which advertisements and other contemporary documents often refer. Advertisement readers - none of whom had heard of Zou Boqi - were eagerly convinced that photographic practice was Western, and early advertisements strengthened this prejudice:

*"Our business's photography was instructed by a Westerner. Our technique is highly skilled. As for using chemicals – when adding gold and silver solutions – we do not stint on production costs. As you will want to keep the image for ever, we add colours that are bright and that will not fade in the future. Our prices are fair. If you are interested, please visit: top of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street [Hankou Road]. Posted by Su Sanxing."*

(Shenbao 1873.1.1)

method by which the studio photographer measured exposure time by reciting a set number of words from the *Thousand character essay* (a classical text that school children memorised), and, like a story-teller, accompanied each syllable by beating with a piece of wood. This fascinating lore suggests how the adoption of Western time for telling hours and minutes - so common in many other walks of life - met initial resistance in studio prac-

What is striking in this advertisement is that it assumes a high degree of familiarity with photographic processes. Clearly, readers of the new newspaper already had acquired - or easily could acquire - a sound knowledge of photography's technicalities. The studio's commercial success and aesthetic expertise is authorised by Western instruction, but that authority relies equally on a high degree of technical knowledge on the part of the readers.



Fig. 4: Photographing and painting portraits. Tuhua ribao [Illustrated Daily News], ca. 1910





Fig 5: Lihua Studio, Shanghai, ca. 1890. After *Lao zhaopian* [Old Photographs], v 32 (2003), p 94

This early studio advertisement also shows one fundamentally modern social activity that had arisen as recently as two decades earlier: the patron visits the 'artist' or photographer at the latter's address. Previous generations had only to snap their fingers to summon a painter into their home. Perhaps this social reversal offered the rationale for building grandiose studio premises - a 'selling point' of some Shanghai advertisements - which more fittingly accommodated patrons whose social station might otherwise preclude their custom. The studio in *figure 5* was certainly well maintained, featured upstairs accommodation and was positioned with eye-catching effect on a street corner. But, visiting studios delivered new problems. Most obviously disadvantaged were women whose casual entry into the morally ambiguous world of female portraiture was not free of anxiety. In

1905, an advertisement on behalf of the founder of Yaohua Studio, reassured readers that his daughter was manager of the premises:

*"If you have daughters,  
they will be photographed  
by a woman in strict  
accordance with  
the etiquette that  
separates male and  
female."*

(*Shibao* 1905.3.21)

Several scholars have remarked on the huge enthusiasm that swept Chinese cities and towns for photographic portraits during the late-19th century. Rather less has been said concerning

the context and material culture of portraits. A remarkable documentation of supply and demand is the frequent advertising and even illustration of all the essential accoutrements - books, clocks, water pipes, paintings, furniture, official and theatrical costumes - for composing a fashionable portrait. In daily practice, no one had to buy all this stuff, since perusing the advertisements was reliable guidance as to whether a studio provided all the latest items on the market. The assembly in *figure 6* is a good visual corroboration that these artifacts convinced sitters and viewers that a well furnished scene fulfilled the expectations of the new portrait idiom. This image of a planter and his family was taken at their home in southern Russia where poignantly they dressed up in the full theatricals of prevailing - or outdated? - Chinese photographic taste.

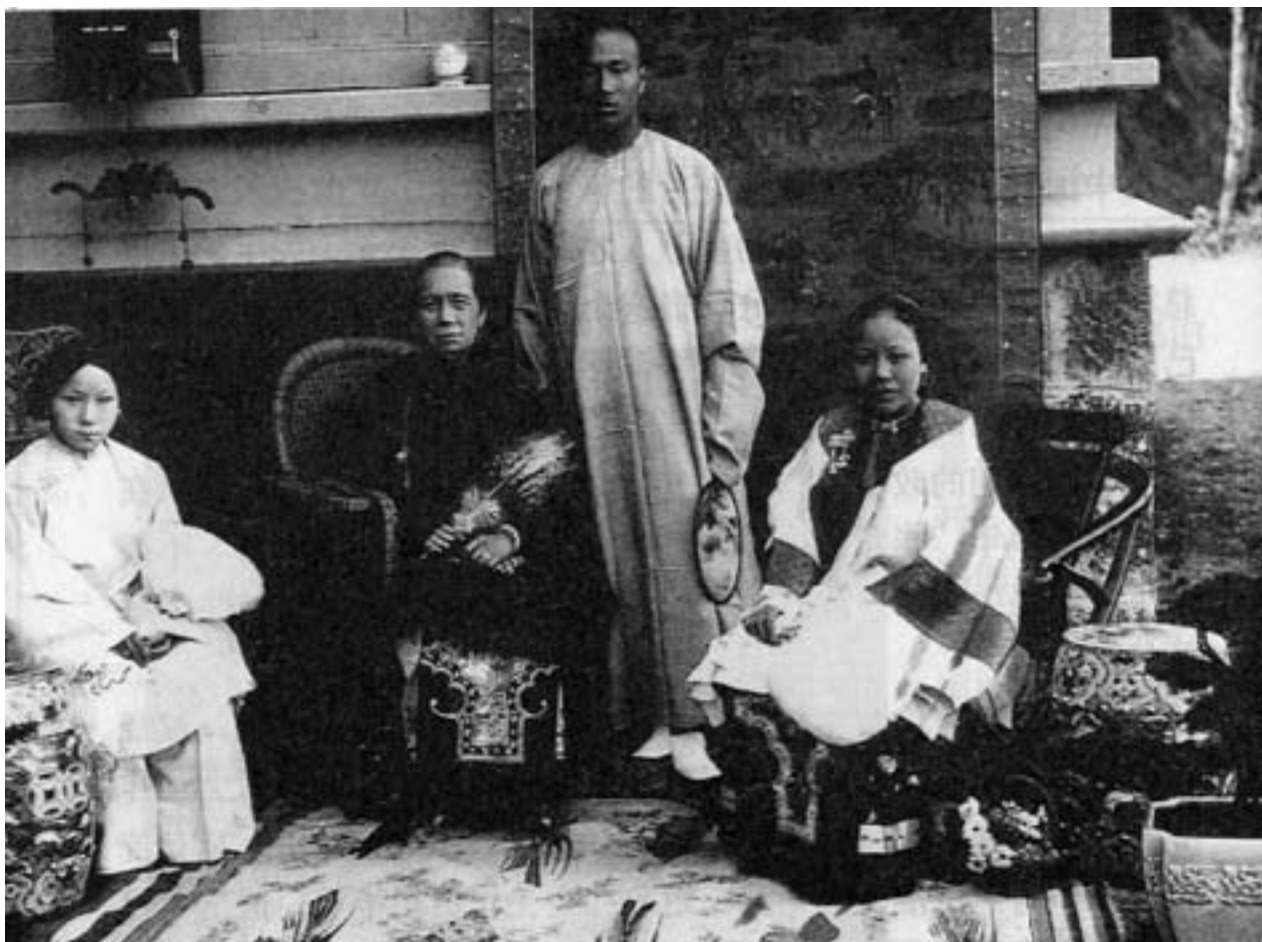


Fig. 6: Tea planter and family members., ca. 1900. After *Lao zhaopian*, v 24 (2002), p 102

Within portraits, painted landscape also enthralled as the presence of a senior art tradition within the photographic image. An advertisement of 1889 is a first-class witness to both the cultural and visual importance of landscape within the category of portrait-making. A painter Qian Shouzhi, who hails from Nanjing, 'paints' portraits and 'landscape portraits' (*shanshui xiaozhao*). The portraits cost one dollar, but a fee for the landscape background is charged separately. Qian also did landscape fans in various dimensions at respectively differing prices. Thus, all production in this studio is priced, except for the large landscape backgrounds which demand the most time and effort. These are clearly available in a range from which the client can choose, provided that he accepts that a scale of prices corresponds with several standards of workmanship.

In its simplest material terms, this is not using a new image technology to entirely supplant an old one. Instead, it exemplifies how one particular operator deployed photography as the means of reproducing manigraphic visual productions in photographic form, at the same time as earning various levels of reproduction fees. The conservative brand of visual nostalgia that Mr Qian presupposes on behalf of his clients may have been a basis for profit only so long as he supplied a crucial cultural justification: his origins in a Nanjing school of image practice. Qian Shouzhi's advertisement is a phenomenon of the highest interest for studying the tensions between modernity and tradition. When modern imaging practices and their increasing industrialisation in Shanghai already threatened the future viability of traditional forms of visuality, a practitioner of those forms adopted the new technology to regain his economic advantage. Moreover he secured the social relevance of this strategy by exploiting the appeal of familiar recent history and regional cultural standards - the location and notion of Nanjing, a byword for elegance and skill in all manner of lyrical and visual creativity. On the one hand, Qian Shouzhi seems to be a classic illustration of Weber's maxim that the market declassifies culture, since through his own self presentation in the field of image production he deliberately mixed genres and made crossing boundaries the commercial attraction of his art. On the other hand, he appears as a subtly attuned market operator who understood which socially valued genres confer prestige upon those who have mastered them, adopting a modern visual technology to reclassify his art in a new prevailing culture.

Studio advertisements reveal how strongly photographic discourse of this period maintained photography and painting as ontologically indistinct. This offered opportunities to prioritise photography with painting aesthetics, more often than not visible in contemporary photographs and in the images with which they might be reconfigured, for example, *figure 3*. One of the commonest Chinese prejudices against photographic portraiture was that excessive contrasts of light and shadow disfigured the sitter. In an advertisement that Yaohua Studio ran twice in 1896 the text defends the studio's work against criticism of photographs that were too dark

or too light. The advertiser attempts to clinch the argument that these images are acceptably in tune with Chinese preferences because Yaohua had commissioned a redesign of its studio by a German expert in lighting. What was at stake, then, was not dispelling the cruel deceptions of light and dark - since photography is not an art adapted to that purpose - but the acceptance of a European technology in illumination on behalf of Chinese aesthetics.

### Conclusions

Recent work on photography now challenges the primacy of photography's European vision. Its contributors show how to understand the medium of photography as both globally disseminated and locally appropriated. Chinese practitioners and consumers acknowledged that they had borrowed a new technology of vision from the West. However, they added cultural value to visual productions by reference to traditional art forms and by indicating clearly the social conditions by which the maker and receiver of an image entered into contract. Photography was a cultural project that could not function without its proper discourse, of which advertising was simply one of several expressions. Such texts are an essential tool for the historical and critical contextualisation of visual images, especially since they orient the modern reader towards the cultural priorities of Shanghai society in the late nineteenth century. Photography in Shanghai - and in China - was a social production that combined new aesthetic expressions of content and form, and stimulated new social habits. Advertisements were not just tell-tale symptoms of social change that had happened; they were equally reports that set change in motion and visualised it. ◀

### Further reading:

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# Moving Pictures: postcards of colonial Korea

*They seem like shards of flash-frozen reality compacted into two dimensions, putative proof of having been there and seen that. They move over various forms of distance and time, while carrying with them ephemeral yet precious moments or sights to be appreciated, and then possibly forgotten. Viewing postcards of colonial Korea as visual records, art objects, or propaganda has generated useful insights; at the same time, Hyung Gu Lynn suggests that postcards of colonial Korea encapsulate and embody the multiple notions of mobility that emerged in the early 20th century.*

Hyung Gu Lynn

Picture postcards have been popular since the late 19th century, and many collectors' associations have existed for decades; however, the academic study of postcards has only really begun to grow in earnest since the late 20th century. Moreover, when postcards have been treated as the primary subject of study, there have been several notable tendencies. The first is to treat postcards as straightforward forms of communication, stationery with visual decoration, in effect. Although limited by their exposure to prying or accidental looks, postcards do in fact deliver information. The second is to approach postcards as simply a visual record of modern history. Indeed, postcards can be seen as a medium that captured everyday life, whether posed or natural, or as a visual record of images that appealed to consumers. The third is to focus on the aesthetic elements of the image at the expense of the larger political, social, and economic contexts surrounding the production, dissemination, and reception of postcards. Recent work in English on the art of the modern Japanese postcard, for example, emphasises the aesthetic of the postcard, a recovery of the medium for the field of art history. Postcards of colonial Korea might also be seen as examples of photographic art; some of the cards also used paintings by recognised Korean painters, or photographs from professional photography studios (fig. 3). The fourth tendency is the invocation of context, particularly in colonial or imperial settings, as the overriding explanatory factor that generated the images on the postcards. Notions of colonial hierarchy and Orientalist representations certainly infused the photographic postcards.

While these approaches greatly aid our understanding of the meanings and significance of picture postcards, postcards also occupied the intersection of new

forms of printing, photography, tourism, postal distribution, and consumption. Therefore, instead of seeing postcards as strictly art, archive, or propaganda, I propose that they might also be treated as concentrated nodes for various myths or fantasies of mobility. The fantasy of travel was inherent in the picture postcard, which invited the reader to share the visual record of new forms of physical mobility. Development and diffusion of photography propagated the myth that realities and recent pasts could be captured instantly, and transported home via the postal system. Also implicit was the sense of mobility through time, both past and present. The sender of the postcard was no longer present at the site portrayed on the postcard, or wherever they had purchased the card, by the time it reached the receiver. In this sense, the postcard allowed for a journey into the afterglow of the recent past. At the same time, postcards could also provide the basis for expectations of the future. When or if the recipient of the postcard travelled to the same destination, the expectation would be that the



Fig 2: An envelope for a set of postcards based on the theme 'Korean customs'.

destination should look like the image on the postcard. In fuelling anticipation, expectation, and imagination, postcards were – in a figurative sense – conduits for mobility into the future.

## The material postcard

In material terms, postcards began to gain widespread popularity in Japan, as in most of the world, between 1900 and 1905. The government was the sole issuer of postcards in Japan from 1870 to 1900, after which the post office allowed private production and use of postcards. The medium skyrocketed in popularity during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Demand for updates and images from the war, coupled with developments in photography, printing, and the postal system, resulted in a postcard frenzy, with people lining up and crowds jostling for the latest prints.

The Korean Agriculture and Commerce Department produced the first known postcard in Korea in 1900, while the first Korean picture postcard followed in 1901. Most of the early postcards had an address side and a blank side without any images. Although Japanese, French, and other European companies produced photographic postcards depicting Korea in the 1900s, based on the numbers of extant cards in various collections, Japanese firms appear to have dominated the market especially after 1905, when the Japanese Protectorate of Korea was established.

During the colonial period (1910-1945), postcards of Korea were printed by various Japanese organisations that were grouped into four categories: government agencies, such as the Japanese Ministry of Communication, the Government General of Korea (in particular, the Railway Bureau), and Pusan Municipal Government; private printing firms, such as Keijō Hinode Shōkō (the largest producer of postcards), and Taishō Shashin Kōgeisho (headquartered in



Fig 1: Between 1907 to 1918 Korean postcards had one-third of the back reserved for writing, with the remainder left for the address.

Wakayama); individual photography studios, such as Pusan Kobayashi Photographic Studios; and smaller bookstores and firms.

Despite the array of different producers, the vast bulk of the postcards came in one standard size, which was 14.2 cm x 9.1 cm. There were some variations on the size, which were limited for the most part to specific periods. For example, panoramic cards that had two or more folds were produced up to the early-1920s, and stereoscopic postcards, ideally viewed with three-dimensional glasses, were made until around 1910.

Periodising postcards of colonial Korea in more detail is possible since all the producers followed the regulations for postcards issued by the Japanese Ministry of Communication. From 1900 to 1907, text had to be written on the image itself, since no writing was allowed on the back. Thus, postcards with writing on the photographic image are from this early period. Postcards from the second period, from 1907 to 1918, had one-third of the back reserved for writing, with the remainder left for the address (fig. 1). From 1918 on, the space was enlarged to around half. After 1933, the "ga" in "Yūbin hagaki" (Post cards) that was printed on the right edge changed from "ka" to "ga", providing another method for dating postcards.

In addition to dates from postcard regulations and specific historical events, changes in the urban landscape also help to date postcards. For example, the new Government General of Korea's headquarters were completed in 1926 (fig. 4), sparking a spate of new postcards that captured it from an array of angles. Some cards were issued to commemorate specific anniversaries. For example, the tenth anniversary of Japanese colonisation of Korea in 1920, seen here (fig. 5), features portraits of

Governor Saitō Makoto on the left and Vice Governor Mizuno Rentarō on the right. Furthermore, changes in specific buildings and squares, types of streetlights and tramcars, and other noticeable changes in landmarks provide specific hints about when the original photograph was taken.

The process of dating is complicated somewhat by the practice of using the same photograph in a multitude of variations. One of the more common changes was to take a black and white image, and hand-colour the plate. Another method postcard makers used to create variety was to take the photographic image and set it against a different background, or juxtapose it with another image on the same card. Printing a reversed image, or printing the same image with a different monochromatic tint, were other methods employed by postcard producers.

Although no detailed statistics record the total production and sales of postcards in colonial Korea, there are fragmentary accounts that indicate that postcards were very popular. For example, by the mid-1920s, demand was sufficient enough for Keijō Hinode Shōkō to operate four printing facilities in Keijō, colonial-era Seoul. According to one 1929 account, an estimated 10,000 cards a day were sold.

The majority of the extant postcards of colonial Korea that I have seen are housed in university libraries and research centres, museums, used bookstores, and private collections. The vast majority of these are unposted, which may reflect a bias in collecting. Many used postcards presumably remain in the possession of the recipient, rather than in collections sold to collectors, museums, and academic institutions. However, the preponderance of unused cards suggests that picture postcards were not purchased solely as stationery





Fig 3: painting by leading artist of the colonial period, Yi In-Song



Fig 4: Completion of the Government General of Korea's headquarters in 1926 sparked a spate of new postcards.

to be used for communication, but also purchased as visual tokens, souvenirs that could be collected.

**The antinomous postcard**

In addition to the material outlines and the visions of mobility briefly discussed above, picture postcards also helped reinforce a discourse of backwardness and progress, often juxtaposing 'quaint' or 'traditional' Korean customs with the more modern forms of space and production that were introduced, according to the images, through colonial rule. Through this narrative frame, the implicit movement of Japan into modernity was often contrasted with depictions of the relative stasis of Korean society.

This trope was reflected in the various types of images mounted on the postcards – modern urban spaces introduced by the Japanese colonial state, contrasted with rural 'Korean' villages; the ubiquitous images of ancient historical sites, natural landmarks, and most commonly, people in 'traditional' settings; and the paucity of 'modernised' Koreans in Western-style suits and dresses. 'Korean customs' was a popular genre, usually depicting subjects in 'traditional' dress, ceremonies, markets, and play. For example, figure 2 shows an envelope for a set of postcards that is based on this theme.

At the same time, by collapsing the sense of space and reinforcing a myth of mobility, colonial postcards contributed both to the amplification of distance and the reinforcement of the boundaries of the Japanese colonial empire. On the one hand, colonial Korea was closer (to the Japanese metropole) than before, as implied by the postcards, by ship, rail, and post, and other material markers of modernity; yet on the other, the colony was liberally populated with people who were constructed as distant and different. Along with various other media, postcards thus helped portray

the colony as a place that was desirable because of its distance, its picture postcard exoticism.

Images of Korean women doing laundry (fig. 6) and *kisaeng* (female entertainers) (fig. 7), seemed to have held a mesmerising allure for postcard producers and consumers alike. Paralleling the Japanese "*bijin-ga*" or "beauties" postcards, the postcards of the *kisaeng* in particular catered to the ocular obsessions of Japanese male (and to some extent Korean male) viewers. This of course is not to suggest that all travellers to Korea expected the country to be populated with pliant and obliging *kisaeng*. Nevertheless, the power of the postcard images to guide future expectations and transport the viewer into a future of one's own imagining should not be underestimated.

Digital photographs sent as attachments and web-based photograph albums may eventually render the postcard obsolete. However, in looking at the postcards of colonial Korea, we are reminded that whether they were wending their way through the labyrinths of the international postal system, eliciting aesthetic responses in viewers, triggering a cascade of memories in recipients, or forging a template for future expectations for travellers-to-be, picture postcards were and remain, in many senses of the word, moving. ◀

**For Further Reading:**

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Fig 5: postcard commemorating 10th anniversary of Japanese colonisation of Korea.



Fig 6: Postcard depicting Korean women doing laundry.



Fig 7: Kisaeng with Kayagum (a koto-like musical instrument). Korean female entertainers were popular subjects for postcards.





Vivan Sundaram, "Remembering the Past, Looking to the Future", 2001.

Courtesy of the Artist & SEPIA International.

# Photography in India

*Photography was first introduced to India in 1840, only a year after the announcements of the daguerreotype and calotype processes in France and England. The fragility of this early material, the uniqueness of the daguerreotype and the harshness of the Indian climate mean that photographs from this time are scarce, leaving us with a fragmented picture of the development of the medium.*

Sophie Gordon

Initially, commercial studios were established in cities such as Calcutta, where an ever-increasing clientele could be relied upon to keep up a demand for portraits. Some amateurs also brought cameras to India; some of the earliest surviving photographs from India are in a family album, now in the Getty Museum, containing views taken in Nainital, Bareilly and Kanpur during the mid-1840s (Fig.1). Around the same time, the French daguerreotypist Jules Itier (1802-77) passed through India, whilst engaged in a treaty negotiation with China. A handful of his views of South India still survive today in a number of collections. The extremely small amount of material that has survived from the 1840s must represent only a fraction of the photographic activity that took place.

## The Colonial Contribution

This lack of material from the 1840s makes the story relatively straightforward to tell in its early years. After 1850, with the use of the camera spreading across the subcontinent, things get a little more complicated. The number and

type of photographers at work increases dramatically within the space of a few years. Their output ranges from studio portraits to ethnographic documentation, from picturesque landscapes to documentary records of architecture, works of art and the natural history of India. The history of photography in India has, over the last quarter of a century, been told largely from the perspective of a handful of colonial collections, in particular the India Office Collection, now housed at the British Library in London. Publications by British Library curators, including Ray Desmond's *Victorian India in Focus* (London, 1982) and John Falconer's *A Shifting Focus: Photography in India 1850-1900* (London, 1995), have been influential in establishing significant photographers and events, while emphasising the importance of British documentary work. This colonial dominance is inevitable, for although the photographs in the India Office Collection combine to create an extraordinary collection of around 250,000 items containing the work of hundreds of photographers, it represents what successive colonial administrators believed to be worth collecting and preserving, rather than being truly

representative of photography in India. In particular the collection contains the photographs amassed by the Archaeological Survey of India, the official body set up by the British administration in 1870 to identify and preserve India's architectural and archaeological heritage. This collection alone consists of 37,781 prints, according to the online catalogue. (Fig.2)

The development of 'photography in India' as a field of research has taken place within the wider context of the growth of the history of photography as a subject of serious investigation. This is evident through the creation of separate photography departments in museums, libraries and archives (the Museum of Modern Art in New York established a photography department relatively early in 1940, but many departments in European institutions were not created until the late 1960s and early 1970s) and, hand-in-hand with this, the development of a commercial market for buying and selling photographs. With museums focusing on the aesthetic qualities of photography at the expense of its social history and meaning, the work of a handful of photographers was

identified and promoted at the expense of a greater understanding of the medium. From India, both Linnaeus Tripe (1822-1902) and Dr John Murray (1809-1898) are frequently cited as the most accomplished masters of the art, and to a lesser extent, Samuel Bourne (1834-1912). The work of these British photographers fits the European paradigm for successful, aesthetically-pleasing compositions and the landscapes of Bourne in particular are composed according to the demands of the Picturesque ideal. (Figs.3 & 4)

There is some tension within the field between scholars from South Asian departments who concentrate exclusively on Indian photography within an Indian context but who know little about the broader history of photography, and those who work regularly with a wider range of photographic images, such as curators and photography dealers, but who generally know little about India. This debate can be boiled down to 'context versus aesthetics' and at present it shows no signs of abating. Some, however, have successfully engaged with different approaches and aspects of the work. Maria Antonella Pelizzari's publi-

cation *Traces of India: Photography, Architecture and the Politics of Representation, 1850-1900* (Montreal, 2004) contains contributions from a variety of scholars of different backgrounds, discussing a range of meanings and interpretations for architectural photography.

## The Private Collector

The growth of the market and the role of the private collector have done much to stimulate the field into broadening and embracing new avenues for research. Each individual collector inevitably brings a unique set of criteria for making acquisitions. Indian collectors in particular come with ideas that differ greatly, in the most positive way, from those of Western museums. This usually ranges between a desire to preserve India's photographs because of the richness and beauty of the medium, to ensuring that the information contained within the images such as records of events and fast-disappearing buildings is not only saved but made available and used in the many conservation projects now establishing themselves in India. The Alkazi Collection, for example, has embraced many of these approaches. The collection acquires the acknowl-



edged masters of photography as well as attempting to expand this category through promoting the work of other accomplished artists such as John Edward Saché (1824-1882)<sup>1</sup>. It is also creating an archive of work that represents local traditions and practices, for example, painted photographs<sup>2</sup>, collage and montage work, and material from studios working for the independent princely states as well as for middle-class Indian families. Scholars such as Christopher Pinney and Malavika Karlekar have recently worked on this type of material, presenting new lines of thought and opening up new and unexplored collections in an academic field that has, since the 1990s, been in danger of stagnating under Foucauldian approaches to (colonial) discourse and power. (Fig.5)

Karlekar's work has also broken the artificial chronological boundaries that have arisen in the field, wherein early photography up to c. 1911 is considered the domain of the historian, early 20th century photography that of the anthropologist, and photography after 1947 belongs to the modern art world. These categories, coming from equally artificial timeframes imposed in Western art history and other humanities subjects, do not take into account local practices. This has resulted in large quantities of material, particularly from the early to mid-20th century, being ignored. For example, although photographic journals from the 19th century have been fully examined, the journals of the Photographic Society of India that were published in the 1920s are rarely referenced. Work that is typically reproduced and discussed in the journals was stylistically heavily influenced by Pictorialism - consciously drawing on the conventions of Western academic painting and emphasising the position of the photographer as Artist - at a time when Europe was rejecting the art photograph in favour of work that challenged existing conventions and traditional definitions. This 'soft pictorialism' that was practised in India was enormously popular for many years, yet it remains an unexplored avenue within the field.

These divisions and omissions have also lead to modern and contemporary photographic practice in India being divorced from its own history, as Indian artists look almost exclusively to Euro-American photographers for precedence. This has some parallels with past and current debates within the contemporary art field in India, leading in particular to questions over identity that have been raised by artists as well as by critics.

**Photographic Connections**

The last few years have been remarkably fruitful with more publications and exhibitions tackling diverse aspects of this extraordinarily rich subject. The efforts of Sabeena Gadihoke to explore the work of Homai Vyarawalla (b.1913), which began in Gadihoke's documentary film *Three Women and a Camera* (1989), have culminated in a substantial publication that presents Vyarawalla's entire output, while focusing in depth on her work as a photojournalist. There has also been a publication dealing with



fig. 1: One of the earliest surviving images of India. Unknown amateur, Street scene in a town in Uttar Pradesh. Salt print, c 1843-5. (c) Christies Images Ltd. 2007



fig. 2: William Henry Pigou, Shiva Temple at Chaudanpur, in Karnataka. Albumen print, c. 1857. From the Archaeological Survey of India Collections. (c) The British Library. Photo 1000/9(1043)



fig. 3: Dr. John Murray, Agra, Taj Mahal. Salt print, c.1858. The Royal Collection (c)2007 HM Queen Elizabeth II. (RCIN 2701440)



fig. 4: Samuel Bourne. Kanpur, The Memorial Well. albumen print, 1865. The Royal Collection (c) 2007 HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 20701748).



fig. 5: Unknown Studio, "Raj Sri Kishore and Raj Sri Hari Singh, against a European backdrop", photomontage, gelatin silver print, watercolour, & gold, c. 1900. Courtesy of The Alkazi Collection of Photography.



fig. 6: Unknown photographer, possibly Nicholas & Co. Kottayam, Syrian Church with the priest Mar Dionysius standing on the stone. From Lady Napier's Tour of Travancore Album. Albumen print, c. 1868. The Royal Collection (c) 2007 HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2701525).

the Lafayette studio's portraits of Indian rulers, all of which were taken in Britain in the early 20th century. The collection of glass negatives from the Lafayette studio is now split between the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Portrait Gallery in London, the latter receiving the post-1925 material.

This work raises interesting questions not only over representation and identity when in the home of the *Raj*, but also over photographic links between India and Britain. Material was frequently sent from India to Britain, through diplomatic and official channels, in order to pass on information about the country. The Royal Collection in Britain contains several groups of photographs that were sent to Queen Victoria, Empress of India for just this purpose. Amongst these is a particularly unusual group of views of Travancore (modern-day south Kerala), sent to the Queen by Lady Napier, wife of the Governor of Madras, who toured the region in 1868. The photographs were accompanied by lengthy descriptions by Lady Napier, recounting everything that was encountered on tour. (Fig.6)

Some photographers sent their work for inclusion in exhibitions in Britain; for example, Murray exhibited a view of the Taj Mahal in the London Photographic Society exhibition in 1858, and Captain Henry Dixon showed views of Udayagiri (in Orissa) in the 1861 Architectural Photographic Association show, also in London. British families often purchased photographs and compiled albums as souvenirs; later they sent home postcards, showing monuments such as the Taj Mahal or the site of the Kanpur massacre.

The flow of information was not just one-way, however. Portraits taken in the Lafayette, Vandyk or Bassano studios in Britain frequently found their way to India. Even from the 1850s, photographs by leading British photographers were exhibited in exhibitions and were circulated at photographic society meetings. Extracts from several European photographic journals were published in India, where everything from reviews of the latest exhibitions to how to compose the best landscape views was discussed. The photographic societies - the first being established in 1854 in Bombay, followed by societies - in 1856 in Calcutta and Madras - were central in the early decades to establishing information networks through their meetings and journals and encouraging an exchange of queries and responses from the members.

Today in India, contemporary photographic practice faces the same dilemmas as it does anywhere else in the world. With the recent re-branding of photography as 'contemporary art', we are now in danger of establishing a two-tiered system in which anything not deemed worthy of the contemporary art description is regarded as second-class. Those photographers, or 'camera artists', promoted to an international level have their work displayed in major galleries and museums such as Tate Modern, and their prints are sold in contemporary art auctions at Sotheby's and Christie's (rather than in photography

auctions). It is interesting that one of the few Indian artists working with photography at this level is Vivan Sundaram (b.1943), yet he is not a photographer. He employs photographs by Umrao Sher-gil (1870-1954) and then manipulates them digitally to incorporate further images of Umrao's daughter, Amrita Sher-gil, one of India's foremost twentieth century painters. Sundaram is Amrita's nephew. (main image)

What is remarkable about Sundaram's series of photographs titled *Re-take of Amrita* (2001-2) is that, while sometimes beautiful and at other times deeply unsettling, it engages with photographers and artists, as well as with critics and the public, over issues concerning truth, identity and the nature of the medium. These concerns were central to debates over photography in the 1850s and remain so today. <

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www.bl.uk  
www.sepia.org

**Notes**

- 1 Exhibition held at Sepia International Inc., New York, 22 November 2002 - 11 January 2003.
- 2 Exhibition held at Sepia International Inc., New York, 10 May - 12 July 2003.

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# Side Streets of History: A Dutchman's stereoscopic views of colonial Vietnam

*Jan George Mulder, a salesman from Haarlem, left a legacy of over 2000 stereo photographs, more than half originating from his time in French colonial Indochina. Yet not one of them contains a caption or even a hint about the contents. What's more, Mulder's life in Vietnam remains something of a mystery. John Kleinen immersed himself in this unique collection, determined to learn more about the images and the man behind them.*

John Kleinen

There is little in the collection of photographs that Jan George Mulder (1869-1922) left to his family that provides direct information about his life in Vietnam. What we do know about the man is gleaned from archival documents, secondary sources and account books that he kept after 1908 on his return to the Netherlands. Mulder was an employee of the German firm Speidel & Co that began operating in Indochina in the 1880's. He travelled to Asia at the age of 35 and in 1904, started to sell lamp oil (kerosene) for the Asiatic Petroleum Company (APC) in the remote harbour town of Haiphong. APC was the marketing company for two emergent giants in the oil business, Shell Transport & Trading Co. and Royal Dutch. From 1904 to 1908, Mulder used a *Gaumont Stéréospido* to photograph his work environment (offices and outside settings), scenes from his private life, as well as outings to several places. Mulder's photographs are mainly stereoscopic images on glass plates and depict cities, harbours, landscapes and a number of human subjects whose identities remain unknown. The result is a large number of fascinating if somewhat enigmatic images of colonial Haiphong and its surroundings, none of which contains a single caption or any textual information about what is pictured.

Mulder's photographs - stereoscopic views - were produced using a technology that had lost its once exalted position. These views were made by mounting two photographs side-by-side. They appear three-dimensional when viewed through a stereoscope. They enjoyed tremendous popularity but around the time Mulder was photographing, the picture postcard was taking over as the preferred format of photographic representation. Nevertheless, Mulder chose to make stereoscopic views and his camera, a robust *Gaumont Stéréospido*, and a stereoscope have survived together with the glass plates. Mulder's choice of equipment is surprising given that he was from a family of photographers and would have had extensive knowledge about the latest developments in pho-



J.G. Mulder at home with a servant. The chamber servant (boy) was also responsible for fanning the room, with a *punkah*, a large frame covered with cloth and suspended from the ceiling.

tography. A visit to the World Exhibition in Paris in 1900 probably induced him to buy the expensive *Stéréospido*, which was aggressively promoted by Gaumont.

## Haiphong

The gate to the Red River delta was the port of Hai Phong, which means 'the Guardian of the Sea'. Traditionally, a lucrative trade in silk, tea and textiles extended as far as Yunnan in southern China. Haiphong soon became home to a small French enclave and gradually grew to include a number of villages along the main river, the Cua Cam. This *Quartier Indigène* was preceded by a harbour area where small storage facilities and a customs house were built. In 1884, the former French *résident* and mayor of Hanoi, Raoul Bonnal, built a European quarter. In 1904, the year that J.G. Mulder arrived, the city of Haiphong resembled a building

site, with a newly erected hospital for the French Navy and local government staff, and other major projects underway. The municipality was represented by a tribunal, a Chamber of Commerce and a local branch of the *Banque de l'Indochine*. The population numbered about 18,000 Vietnamese and 6000 Chinese. A minority of about 1000 Europeans, mainly French men and a few women, occupied the European quarter. Mulder's compatriot, Hendrik Muller, described the town in his *Azië gespiegeld* (Asia Mirrored, 1908) as having no quayside yet, and "seen from the river it looks unimportant, but as soon as one enters, it is very hospitable. Along the excellent, paved roads, lined with small trees and pavements, are tall, beautiful houses built of brick and plastered in French style". Jan George Mulder had his office along the busy *Rue Paul Bert*, in a building Speidel & Co shared with a branch of the

British *Chartered Bank*. He soon moved to a private house at the corner of the *Canal Bonnal* and the *Rue de Cherbourg*. Using his *Stéréospido*, Mulder created a visual memory for his relatives in the Netherlands. His record of Haiphong includes the Chinese quarter, the streets near his house, the port area and the surrounding countryside, including the embryonic beach resort of Do Son. He also photographed the storage area located at the entrance to the harbour, which contained lamp oil tins and large oil tanks inscribed with the company names APC and Speidel & Co.

Mulder's pictures of himself seated or travelling with Chinese traders are fascinating. These compradores distributed the lamp oil throughout the Delta. One of them, a Vietnamese entrepreneur who had entered the maritime trade, was reputedly one of the four wealthi-

est people in Vietnam. An almost visible 'colour line' existed in Haiphong. This was institutionalised in the colonial grid of the town planning, with separate quarters for Vietnamese, Chinese and Europeans. The Chinese were treated as foreign nationals or 'Eastern foreigners'. Part of an international link between the port of Hong Kong and Haiphong, their presence was tolerated as long as it benefited French business.

The colonial city, which still had a number of empty spaces at the time Mulder lived there, resembled a quiet, slumbering French provincial town. The best-known locations were the *Hotel du Commerce*, a meeting place for bachelors and European prostitutes, and the *Hotel de Marseille*, near Speidel's office. Though tourism was not yet developed, the hotels served those travellers who used Haiphong as a stop-over before boarding ships to destinations in Asia or Europe. Mulder's own travels remained confined to an occasional visit to Hanoi and once to Angkor Wat. Boats were the primary method of transport, and Mulder used the river during his few trips to Hanoi, where he photographed the *Pont Doumer*, the busy waterfront and the Hoan Kiem Lake.

Judging from his images, Mulder was most interested in the Vietnamese countryside where he visited communal houses, temples and pagodas, and where he went duck hunting. He favoured outings to the Bay of Ha Long and the beach at Do Son (20 kilometres from Haiphong). This fishing village was originally a centre for blue water fishing. Soon it would serve as the 'Deauville of Haiphong'. About 3000 workers readied the dirt road to Do Son for cars. A local transport entrepreneur, A. Bertrand, promoted his private taxi service, while the city council designed a tramway, which was completed after Mulder had left the country. Mulder used Bertrand's taxi service extensively, but more colourful was a local service of human porters who carried European tourists and rich Vietnamese around in bamboo sedans.

The so-called *Les Porteuses de Do Son* attracted the attention of Mulder's lens





Mulder and a colleague in a sedan chair carried to the beach and surrounded by the 'Porteuses de Do Son'.



Harbour estuary with river sampans on the foreground. The steamship belonged to the fleet of Chargeurs Réunis.



Vietnamese housekeeper clad in brown silk tunic (ao nam than). A silver necklace adorned with dragon motives completes the dress.

as well as those of local postcard producers, who also distributed prints of scantily clad fisherwomen. The *Porteuses* looked like singers of popular chansons (*quan ho* or *ca tru*) and were dressed in brightly coloured gauze tunics in rich purples and deep reds with multi-coloured ribbons and flattened round hats. The atmosphere of the photographs evokes a Vietnamese version of Manet's *Le Dejeuner sur L'Herbe*.

### Life in the Tropics

Haiphong's community of non-French Europeans was small. At the turn of the century, the city counted just 100 'aliens'. Mulder's colleagues were mainly Germans working for Speidel & Co. Mulder was a bachelor but a Vietnamese housekeeper ran his household, and posed proudly for the camera on the house's doorstep. Her long-tailed silk robe and silver hanger indicate her important household position. The stereoscopic views give only a superficial glimpse of colonial life. The names of the many men and women that figure in these photographs are unknown. But there is indeed a sense that 'tropical time' - slower than European time - ticked languidly away in the images. The degree of slowness is embodied in the relaxed way these people posed for the camera in white suits and their festive outfits, while they are drinking, eating or enjoying an activity, the precise nature of which is unclear to the viewer. The extended act of remembrance is taken over by nostalgia.

Mulder showed a clear interest in his native personnel, represented by the *amah*, seated next to a European baby, his housekeeper and a number of Vietnamese domestic staff. Their Tonkinese clothes signify that they were part of a rich European household. Outside, there is the gardener, and in front of the



Stereoscopic photograph of Vietnamese babysitter (*amah*) in traditional dress with hair turban (*khan giai*) and white tunic (*ao ban than*)

gate the cyclo driver. They belonged to the underclass, pejoratively called *nha-que* (bumpkin or peasant).

When Mulder returned home from Haiphong in 1908, he left a place where the modern history of Vietnam had started to take shape. In that year, the first of a series of nationalist activities started a string of anti-colonialist revolts. The backdrop was provided by the emerging modernisation of Vietnamese culture and influenced by the stunning Japanese victory over Russia in May 1905. Patriotic scholars organised schools free of colonial supervision, such as the Free School of Tonkin (*Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục*), and organised cooperatives and places of work where a new generation of Vietnamese could be prepared for a peaceful independence. The colonial administration's tolerance for the modernisation movement was short lived and promptly vanished

after uprisings in central Vietnam and attempts to poison the garrison of Hanoi in June 1908. Mulder, who must have witnessed or at least known about these events, returned to Europe and married. He had earned a fortune at Speidel's firm, which enabled him to emigrate to the US in 1910. He founded a farming community in Virginia inspired by the Dutch socialist, writer and psychiatrist Frederik van Eeden, who, inspired by Henry David Thoreau's Walden, established a communal cooperative in Bussum, North Holland. This idea, similar to one adopted by reformist scholars in Vietnam, was that residents would be self-sufficient, sharing everything in common. Like Van Eeden's experiments and the ill-fated cooperatives of the Vietnamese, Mulder's plans failed. After his return to the Netherlands, he invested in Imperial Russian Railway bonds and was eventually left bankrupt. He died in 1922. His memories embod-

ied in his photographs are presumed here, but we cannot know with certainty what he perceived or projected. As Roland Barthes has said, "whether or not it is triggered, it is an addition: it is what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there". Not being remembered at all: that is the fate of most of the people in Mulder's images. The memorialisation of Mulder's Haiphong years is not a way of reviving the past, but facing a future in which that very past is forgotten. ◀

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\* This is an abbreviated version of an essay that John Kleinen wrote for a collection of Mulder's stereo photos: J.G. Mulder. *Zijstraten van de geschiedenis - De wereld rond 1900 in stereofoto's*. Amsterdam, De Verbeelding, 2006, ISBN 90 74159 96 8. A longer version was presented at a recent Conference on Vietnam's early modernisation in Aix-en-Provence, May 3-5, 2007.

J.G. Mulder having a meal with three Chinese compradores at their office.



Storage for lamp oil, brand Crown Oil, produced by Shell or Dutch Petroleum and distributed by APC through Speidel & Co.



European quarter of Haiphong with the Hotel de Marseille and the Hotel de l'Europe (today the Huu Nghi Hotel) in the background.





# Photographic Encounters in the Philippines, 1898 - 1910

At the end of the Spanish-American War, Spain ceded the Philippine Islands to the United States. The U.S. engaged in a three-year war against the Filipinos, who fought fiercely for their independence, and in 1902 it took possession of a country half a world away.

Melissa Banta

From photographs published in U.S. government surveys, anti-imperialist literature, newspapers, travel memoirs, and textbooks, a picture of the Philippines at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century began to emerge. Not a single view but a multiplicity of narratives. These images, assembled from varied contexts, reveal diverse perspectives of the Filipino-American encounter that took place over 100 years ago.

The early period of American-Filipino relations remains a relatively lost chapter in world history. "The undercurrents of imperialism and its consequences - identity and alienation, redemption and guilt, loyalty and betrayal," notes professor Terry Oggel, "[are] conflicts exacerbated by suppression, not only in the United States but in the Philippines, too." Recent scholarship, including *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899-1999*, edited by Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia, and *White Love and Other Events* in Filipino History by Vicente Rafael, represent notable efforts to retrace and repossess this history.

"Two wounded insurgents in tent hospital on the First Reserve grounds, 1899".



The insightful *Displaying Filipinos* by Benito M. Vergara, Jr. explores, in particular, photography and its use in support of an imperial ideology. The objectifying, de-humanising quality of thousands upon thousands of mug-shot portraits of Filipinos taken in the early 1900s under the auspices of the U.S. Bureau of Science, for example, sur-

vey as jarring reminders of the colonial enterprise in which they were created. From these highly publicised pictures, Americans began to form an impression of the Philippines and develop a consciousness of the role of the U.S. as an occupying power.

At that time, despite the strident impe-

rial message, a raging public debate and wide-ranging views concerning the war and subsequent American occupation were also being expressed in words and pictures. The Philippine-American War, which began in 1898, was a brutal guerilla conflict that lasted over three years and resulted in over 6,000 U.S. casualties and the deaths of over 220,000 Filipino



"Negrito man, type 3, and Dean Worcester, showing relative size. Full length front view, 1900".

soldiers and civilians. At the time, opponents of U.S. military action included not only Filipinos, but also members of the American Anti-Imperialist League, African-Americans sympathetic to the cause of Filipino independence, and European observers. Photographs and political cartoons depicting the conflict figured in pro- and anti-war literature, newspapers, textbooks, and even fictional accounts that portrayed the campaign variously as a heroic military duty or a needless carnage.

## Benevolent assimilation

President McKinley's doctrine of 'benevolent assimilation' - 'to educate the Filipinos, and uplift them and civilize and Christianize them' - provided the moral justification for the U.S.'s eventual annexation of the country. The first task, explained Howard Taft, then director of the Philippine Commission, would entail gathering data of the 'social and industrial conditions of the people, as the basis for intelligent legislative action.' Dean Worcester, Secretary of the Interior for the Philippines from 1901 to 1913, took nearly 5,000 photographs (with the assistance of photographers and other anthropologists) on surveys sponsored by the U.S. Bureau



"Moro boy, type 1. Son of Datu Batarasa, with Governor E. Y. Miller, 1905".



"Bontoc Igorots in automobile, 1904".





"Bontoc Igorot entering service, 1901".



"After a year's service, 1902".



"After two years service. 1903".

All photographs courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard Museum. Please note that for historical accuracy, all photograph captions are reproduced as they originally appeared.

of Science. A professor of zoology at the University of Michigan, Worcester was well versed in the process of scientific data gathering. In makeshift field studios, he photographed and classified hundreds of unnamed Filipinos according to evolutionary ideas of the day, ranking them on a hierarchical scale from savage to civilised.

Series of before-and-after shots of Filipinos transformed 'from their nakedness and headhunting into constabulary uniforms and baseball' served as documentary proof of 'successful' American reforms. Worcester's photographs and anthropological findings, which appeared in the extensive publications of the Philippine Commission and in histories written by Worcester, played a persuasive role in supporting U.S. policies ranging from economic development to the question of Filipino independence. Images taken by Worcester and others on government surveys later appeared in magazines (including *National Geographic*) and newspapers. "The average American knew almost nothing about [the Philippines]," a travel writer wrote in 1907, "until the newspapers and magazines began to educate him."

At the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, where over 1,000 Filipinos (including Negritos, Igorots, Moros, and Visayans) were showcased in a recreated village situated on a 47-acre site, fairgoers could see government photographs exhibited as well as purchase illustrated guidebooks. Over time, however, these widely published portrayals earned Worcester the distrust of both Filipinos and a growing number of Americans. "Ask the average man on an American street what his impression of the Filipinos is and he will describe the naked dog-eating Igorote," the *New York Evening Post* reported in 1913. "The man responsible for the inaccurate conception is Dean C. Worcester."

**Personal accounts and political views**

In addition to government-sponsored



"Tagalog man, cleaning a hardwood floor, 1900".

venues, an extensive body of literature about the islands was being produced. Among these accounts, which were often illustrated with photographs, were political pieces, travel memoirs, as well as novels written by Western travellers, teachers, missionaries, and diplomats and their wives. Often illustrated with photographs, each publica-

tion expressed its own nuanced view of American imperialism.

Images in personal albums of U.S. administrators also fill out the picture of early American occupation by revealing a rare and intimate view into colonial life experienced by government officials and their families living on the islands.



Invaders and Resisters, acrylic on paper, 1980, by Ben Cabrera. Courtesy of the artist.

Snapshots of polo games, country club galas, Filipino servants, and children with Filipino nannies offer a striking contrast to the stark government photographic records. Another view of the Filipinos emerges in photographs of the intellectual and professional class, many of whom were prominent Philippine civic and business leaders. These

highly stylised images, taken in elaborate studios in Manila, reveal the manner in which the Filipino elite chose to represent themselves.

In recent years, a number of contemporary Filipino artists have returned to images created during the American occupation. Through a variety of inventive approaches, they have appropriated historic photographs into their work as a means of understanding the past and exploring their national identity. Historic photographs continue to illuminate the broader complexities of the American-Filipino relationship, and examination of the varied uses of the medium over time reveal the dynamic and shifting intersection of anthropology, politics and public perception. <

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"Two professional Moro dancing girls, 1901".



"Blas Villamor and his wife, 1906".



# Postcards from the Edge of Empire: Images and Messages from French Indochina

Postcards from French colonies are sold today as nostalgic evocations of a vanished world. The erotic, opium-infused images of Indochina have been particularly popular since the elegant fiction of exotic utopia they depict was carefully constructed to justify the colonial enterprise<sup>1</sup>



(1) (Card #68 Una Bayadere Annamite: Sortie de bain d'une jeune femme annamite) The text, composed on April 17, 1908, reads on top of the image "Ni formes, ni couleurs! Rien de beau chez elle!" ("No form and no colour! Nothing beautiful about her!") On the back: "My dear Jane, I prefer to send you a few examples of this stunning collection. You will thus be able to judge for yourself the women who are represented on these cards: I agree with you: these yellow skins do not appeal to me at all! Oh, when will I be able to see again the pale faces of the pretty women in France!" The eroticized image is a way of flirting and teasing the young woman it is addressed to, giving her a frisson of the temptations of the Orient, while apparently assuring her of the writer's fidelity.

Janet Hoskins

Colonial postcards are often published and critiqued for their racist and propagandistic content, but the ethnographic value of the postcard has been neglected, as has the content of the messages printed on the other side. Including messages in the analysis amplifies and complicates the visual tendency to stereotype, exoticise and, at times, demonise. There is sometimes a synergistic consonance between image and message, at other times an unconscious, ironic or metaphoric dissonance.

A reading of colonial postcards from both sides, especially large collections

like the 2617 postcards in the Getty Cultural Exchanges Archive, suggests that we need to return them to the dialogical context in which they were first sent. Rather than reading them as aspects of a totalising 'colonial gaze', we particularise the gaze, and recognise subtle variations in its content. The caption offers an official guide to interpreting the image, but the scribbled message is more personal, telling the reader "this is what you should think when you look at this card". It simulates, across a great separation of time and place, the experience of gazing together at the same image, and offers us data to historicise the reception of these cards in a colonial context. The signatures on many cards are illegible but the addresses are not, so the best analytic angle open to us is a 'reception study' - looking at the cards from the perspective of the readers, consumers of the colonial spectacle and listeners to distant confessions. This focus offers us a more nuanced and complex perspective on how postcards are gendered, as they move from predominantly male senders in Indochina (71% of those in the Getty collection) to predominantly female addressees (59% of those whose addressee could be gendered). Commentators of the period referred to postcard collecting as a 'feminine vice' (Naomi Schor 1994: 262), and women were major donors of museum collections and published announcements in exchange journals (Mathur 1999: 112). The postcard was the very example of the feminine collectible (Schor 1994: 262), but the activity of sending cards encompassed both genders and many different subject positions in colonial society, from simple soldiers and housewives to elite commanders and ladies of leisure. Opening family albums which display the images but conceal the messages provides the scholar with the transgressive thrill of lifting them out of their plastic slots and indulging in the guilty pleasure of reading someone else's mail.

Postcards were the public emblem of colonial travel, and the preferred form of correspondence for overseas residents of all classes. Printed both as part of imperial propaganda efforts (MacKenzie 1984) and church-based missionary societies (Mathur 1966), their main use was in personal communication. Their messages provide us with a diaristic form of note-jotting, reflecting on the daily grind, the experiences of feeling lost or disoriented, and - most interestingly - the projection of inner feelings onto exotic others, the use of visual images as foil for comments both sardonic and occasionally sincere.

The first French postcards were printed in 1873, and in French Indochina the first series of cards was published in 1900 by François-Henri Schneider and Raphael Moreau of Hanoi (Franchini and Ghesquière 2001: 220). Within a year, they had published 3000 cards, and soon a competition developed with Pierre Dieulefils, a retired military officer in Tonkin, who issued more than 5000 post cards from 1902 to 1925 (Vincent 1997). The photographer is not always known or acknowledged on the cards, but the Saigon firms of August Nicolier and later Salin-Vidal published many early photographs by Émile Gsell (Franchini and Ghesquière 2001: 224). Several Chinese photographers (Tong Sing, Pun-Lun, Yu Cong) and one Vietnamese (Phan Chau Trinh, an exiled nationalist) were well known, although their photographs were sometimes rejected from official colonial publications (Franchini and Ghesquière 2001: 241).

The French community in Indochina was tiny, estimated at between 25,000 and 42,000 at its peak in 1940, which was roughly 0.2 percent of the total population. At the turn of the century, almost all French citizens in Indochina were born in France, and the vast majority expected to return there, so they tended to see themselves as exiles rather than settlers. While Indochina was far from France both spatially and conceptually, its elaborate temples and exotic culture made it 'the pearl of the Extreme Orient' (a rival to British India's 'jewel in the crown'), and it was promoted as the most civilised, as well as the most profitable, of the colonies.



(2) Tattouer au travail Another card out of 11 sent to the same Jane as (1) repeats the theme of nudity and flirtation, by showing a scene of naked pain with the cheery greeting ("I wish you many joys! And you?") with on the back an elaborate description of how the skin is decorated (dated July 10, 1908): "They use a long piece of bamboo which becomes a very fine needle. How much they must suffer! But they are disciplined to accept it, and perhaps a quarter of those people we see do have their bodies decorated with tattoos in this fashion."



(3) Types d'Extreme Orient Racial differences and racial stereotypes were a common theme of postcards of this era, such as this portrait of three types (races) identified as the Annamite (Vietnamese), Malabar (India) and Chinois (China), followed by the comment (dated February 26 1906) "Ce sont les trois races qui dominant ici, et elles se valent bien!" ("These are the three races which are dominant here, and not one of them is worth more than the other!")



(4) Une horizontale Annamite The Pigeon French phrase "chi trouve zième femme pour Jean, beaucoup jolie!" ("I'll find you a pretty second wife!") mimes invitations from local touts. The locker room tone of this card and several others recalls Alloula's analysis of The Colonial Harem cards printed in North Africa (Alloula 1989).





(6) Charette de Buffle

A postcard of rice fields from Tonkin bears this message for Eugenie: "Thank you for your sign of affection. I am glad to see you haven't forgotten me. It is useless to tell you how my life has become sweeter here, here one can live like a landlord, and the climate is healthy which is very appreciated. We are getting along marvelously, my little doll as well, though she has become a real devil. At this instant she is on the veranda with her congaie playing the tamtam (annamite music). At least the time is passing and my daughter is growing up without causing me too much trouble." The message of European comfort and prosperity is directly juxtaposed to the products of native labour.

Few of the writers of the *belle époque* expressed a desire to spend the rest of their lives in what seemed a remote outpost of a far-flung empire. Some were bored, depressed and homesick, while others found their adventurous travels exciting, interesting and challenging. As a group, they were wealthy and had great economic power, since they controlled the most sizeable French colonial economy after Algeria's (Brocheux and Hemery 1995: 310). As individuals, however, many were poor and plagued by debt and disease, often asking relatives in Europe for financial assistance. Dysentery and malaria were endemic, and cholera was an intermittent threat to public health. Colonial nostalgia has come to cloak the region in a fog of dark romanticism, epitomised by the cliché of an opium-inspired reverie, in which naked concubines and noble savages float around on sampans, drifting across the bay of Ha Long. Postcard messages, while they often comment sardonically on these themes, also move us away from remembered delights to everyday concerns, and show us a population not merely reflecting on a lost past but grappling with present concerns.

It is my argument that the interiority of the coloniser is often made visible through images of the colonised. Although racial stereotyping remains part of the picture, there is also a more subtle process of seeking out the mysteries of the 'natives' and using this peculiar world as a mirror to reflect upon aspects of their own lives. In 1854, Oliver Wendell Holmes described photography as the mirror with a memory, a new technology that reflected one's past to oneself. What he failed to understand was that the heyday of popular photography and postcards coincided with the heyday of empire. Holmes's mirror encompassed colonised peoples and lands, whose frozen images would provide alternative selves through which colonial residents might search for their own reflections.

The postcard writers had a variety of reactions to the images, and while we do not know very much about them as individuals, we can contextualise their comments and try to understand them for what they are - part of a process of mirroring and projection, which is



(5) La Japonaise Oki Kon

Repulsion mixes with attraction again in this image of a Japanese courtesan baring her breast, inscribed with the local gossip: she was killed by a jealous client. The back text says: Saigon 8 November. "My old buddy boy (vieux potaux), You know the punishment that I received at the infirmary when you left Saigon, the Colonel changed that into 15 days in prison. After that I went back into the hospital for hot piss <gonorrhoea> and cystitis. When I get out I will send news of our pals." The women are presented by implication as a possible source of his infection, perhaps during an unauthorized leave taken in the company of the male addressee.



(7) Enfants mois

"My dear little friend, Please hug your father and mother and tell them that next Sunday I have to go off on a hunting expedition among the gentlemen who live on the other side. Big kisses to my little Georges." Naked ethnic minority children holding cross bows are sent to a young friend or relative with news of a visit to their territory by the writer, underlining an implied contrast between the lives of children in France and Indochina.

(9) Les bonzes a la pagode

(dated December 11, 1916) Back text: "What can we hope for if not the end of this cruel war and that God will keep us in good health! I hope that the end of all that is near, and that soon God will tell you that we should all come together to cry and pray together for those who have so courageously given their lives for the country and for God!" Christian prayers are invoked with the image of Buddhist monks, in a text showing more identification than distance.



(8) Repas annamite,

The front of this card says in misspelled English, "What a joy!" while the back describes (to a daughter studying in London) the "dirty and disgusting" foods that local people eat. This card comes from a long series sent by this man to both his son and his daughter, with a clearly gendered selection of images - cooking, theater troops and village scenes for his daughter, military fortifications, ethnic minority warriors and soldiers for his son.



uniquely suited to the world of photography. Erotic images (figs. 1, 2, 4, and 5) make up about a quarter of the whole, followed by scenes of daily life (3, 6, 7, 9) and landscapes or street scenes (8). Sardonic jokes and cheery greetings inscribed in the front image are often paired with painful confessions on the back (5, 8).

One couple in Hanoi, Paul and Berte Ullman, received over 70 postcards from former houseguests, another couple who lived in Laos from 1904 to 1908. Mr. Ullman was an engineer and the Chief of Public Works in Hanoi. The sender is a railroad official nearing retirement who writes that he is depressed and tired. He feels homesick and believes he is cursed with bad luck (#7: *J'ai toujours le guigne qui me poursuit*), He worries about his health and his finances and declares he has no taste to stay on in Indochina. His wife, on the other hand, describes life as wild and full of charm, and is enthusiastic about the beauty of the countryside, local festivals, women's hairstyles and theatrical performances. He finds the weather exhausting (*énervant*), while she finds it invigorating (*température idéale*). Their child becomes tanned and healthy from the mother's perspective, but tired and vulnerable from the father's. He sends 26 cards, all of them rather restrained and respectful, to the man who may be his employer. She sends 43 cards, filled with a large, loquacious script, to the woman she describes as her dear confidant. They seem to inhabit two very different countries - hers is utterly enchanting, while his is repugnant.

The transition from a glorified, masculinist age of conquest (which in Indochina corresponds to the turn of the 20th century) to a tamer, more bourgeois form of settler colonialism is not only denied in French colonial postcard images, it is the motivation for their miniature format. Susan Stewart observes that "The miniature, linked to nostalgic versions of childhood and history, presents a diminutive, and thereby manipulable, version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination" (1993: 69). Similarly, the postcard image embodies many potentially troubling aspects of colonial life, such as racial inequality, sexuality, violence and, at least for the writer, transforms what might otherwise be threatening and overwhelming into something small, endearing, and exotic.

"I let myself live between fierce animals and forests", one writer tells us on the back of a card showing a Vietnamese woman in a rocking chair, adding that "here there is much wild game and wild lovemaking, and there are also rabbits." His reference to a soft furry small and decidedly benign animal familiar to him from his childhood 'downsizes' the exotic menacing wildness of his surroundings, and also

domesticates it, as does the picture of the native woman in his (westernised) home. A 'hot rabbit' (*lapin chaud* in French slang) designates an ardent lover, while one who 'leaves behind a rabbit' (*poser un lapin*) has jilted his beloved and gone his own way. The rabbit, which lives both in the wild and captivity, and is both eaten and kept as a pet, is a crucial image of the transition from conquest to concubinage, from penetration to cohabitation. The writer identifies with the rabbit, an animal known both for its sexual assertiveness and for its cuddliness, but also one not usually associated with long term fidelity. It miniaturises the colonial experience into one of comforting familiarity, but reminds the reader of the fact that the writer will someday leave his partner 'rabbit' (the native woman) behind to return to France. ◀

Notes:

1 Norindr, Panivong, 1996. *Phantasmatic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film and Literature*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press. Morton, Patricia, 2000. *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

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# Chinese performing arts: from communist to globalised kitsch

While Chinese authorities closely monitor artists, artistic venues and performances, they give free rein to commercial culture as long as stability, prosperity and consumerism are sustained. The result, given China's blistering urban economic growth, is that commercial pressure, more than government restriction, determines the conditions of cultural production and export. This has led to a kind of mass production of the art and culture the state approves of and a snuffing out of what it does not. This is how Chinese communist kitsch has transformed into a kitsch of globalised capitalism.

Dragan Klaić

The Chinese economic boom is what interests most foreign observers, politicians and investors. They know much less about shifts in cultural production and distribution, though state control over freedom of expression is the most frequently discussed topic. Google, for example, has been criticised by its users for bowing to China's restrictions on links to 'sensitive' websites, while last year's ban on the performance of the Chinese-language version of *The Vagina Monologues* in Shanghai struck some as an intervention of old-fashioned prudishness. Such incidents attract international attention, but they also trivialise the complex circumstances and changes in cultural policy that remain hidden from public scrutiny.

## A tsunami of commercialism

Government control over culture remains oblique, unsystematic and unpredictable, yet censorship is not the main impediment to artistic develop-

ment. Commercial pressure is more detrimental and threatens to curb artistic innovation, harm cultural heritage and favour the production and export of a limited range of uniform cultural goods in place of multifaceted forms of international cultural cooperation. The capitalist frenzy, with its thousands of construction sites, ugly office buildings and shopping centres, rules the Beijing urban landscape. Ostentatious advertising is a ubiquitous eyesore, as though communist kitsch has been smoothly transformed into an equally ghastly capitalist sort. Popular commercial culture imagery, chiefly Japanese and American, dominates the public space.

Less visible are all the government bodies that have established their own companies for cultural production, distribution and mediation. Many government-subsidised cultural organisations behave like commercial enterprises or have created for-profit business units. Artists, managers, teachers and researchers, as well as present or former government and party functionaries, have also established their own commercial companies; with an unabashed hard-sell rhetoric of hyperbole, they offer services in event management, program development, art export, the presentation of foreign works and even ways to circumvent the bureaucratic stranglehold on licensing.

## Licensed to death

The entrepreneurial climate has affected the arts, but those effects and the arts themselves remain under an oppressive cloud of restrictions and controls. For example, all performing arts venues must be licensed, and productions coming from abroad, from the provinces or authored by unofficial companies operating in Beijing require additional licensing as well. While government authorisations to perform might not be immediately denied, they are not always issued or are repeatedly postponed. For international work, local presenters must submit Chinese translations of the script, videotape, photographs and reviews three months before a scheduled performance, then arrange all logistics not only at great expense but without any guarantee that a licence will be issued in time. Informal ways to speed up, circumvent, or otherwise expedite the approval process seem to exist, but for productions not based on a play, such as dance or movement pieces or for international co-productions with Chinese artists, these obscure, heavy-handed government review procedures can be insurmountable.

In principle, one cannot sell tickets for an unlicensed show or for a show at an unlicensed venue. Informal companies that temporarily claim or 'squat' a performance space and produce low-key performances for small audiences

risk being banned but are sometimes allowed to carry on for a few evenings. Foreign embassies, whose cultural departments occasionally bring artists from abroad to work with Chinese peers outside state institutions, complain of the bureaucratic labyrinths but are reluctant to trespass the ambiguous limits of an expanding grey area of creativity that is neither explicitly banned nor permitted. Yet it is precisely in that realm where radical and innovative Chinese artists dwell, testing the boundaries of the possible and expanding the zone of experimentation.

Besides 'unlicensed' events in abandoned factories and construction sites, rare site-specific performances, even on crowded pedestrian overpasses and normally busy roads, are occasionally licensed. Audiences gather mainly thanks to information communicated only by popular websites, text messages or word of mouth. Otherwise scarce media attention might signal more interest for prestigious and commercial programmes, but occasionally it's the result of a government effort to marginalise a 'sensitive' production into anonymity. Meanwhile, some unlicensed performances, that manage to see the light of day, (in fact they tend to happen at night), and reach the public are clearly the work of small cohorts of colleagues and friends. Thus ten years after the founding of the Beijing Modern Dance Company, contemporary dance is still in a pioneering phase and, even in this enormous city, attracts a miniscule audience as it takes place in a shabby cultural centre on the periphery.

## Cultural prostitution

While the authorities seem eager to keep tabs on artists, spaces and audiences, much of their controlling impulse is probably topical. Capitalism ushered in the freedom of entrepreneurship. Along with it came the a new tolerance for traditional religious expression after decades of officially imposed atheism. Today some worshippers insist on praying in public while prostrate or kneeling and offer sacrifices in Confucian temples, such as big plastic bottles of cooking oil and thousands of red notebooks that attest to parental wishes for their children's academic success. Whole districts around shrines thrive on the sale of religious paraphernalia. This business is tolerated, but government is worried. It sees a surge in religion as a challenge to the Communist party ideological monopoly; thus the topic of religion is not allowed on the stage and neither are references to recent events in China's history that could cast the Communist party record in a negative light. Pornography, however, is allowed to run rampant, spawning a growing number of 'adult' stores that no longer need to disguise themselves as foot and body massage parlours. Again,




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this is tolerated as small business, but it would never be allowed to become subject matter for a theatre production. Commercial impulses are allowed and even encouraged, but works of art must not challenge official ideological tenets. Art is expected to refrain from any social critique and cannot be allowed to expose the gap between the official communist line and the thriving capitalist reality that includes some problematic features, such as prostitution, pornography and a rapid stratification of the society.

Shanghai observers tell of sudden cancellations and postponements of various cultural initiatives since early 2006. This is probably as a result of a silent political purge, culminating in the autumn of 2006 with the arrest of the Party boss of Shanghai and many of his cronies for siphoning municipal social security funds. That this political upheaval blocked cultural production is another indication of how much the arts remain under government control and how much international cultural cooperation remains dependent on tacit official support. Now, the Shanghai power infrastructure needs to be reconsolidated before the flow of cultural production and ambitious international programming can start again.

The Chinese-European Performing Arts Meeting in Beijing, organised in October 2006 by the Informal European Theatre Meetings (IETM) network ([www.ietm.org](http://www.ietm.org)), allowed European theatre and dance professionals to look behind the ornate but clichéd décor of the Chinese stage and explore its systemic features, grasp its socio-economic and political environment, examine the diversity of its creative work, and understand artists' motivations, aspirations, limitations and frustrations. European and Chinese professionals talked about their work and questioned each other's position and priorities.

The Chinese participants kept asking their European colleagues: which cultural products interest Europeans? What kind of artistic export would be a success? This frequent question implies the readiness of hosts to deliver it all: Chinese acrobatics, circus, Kung Fu musicals, traditional Beijing opera (in a compressed, more easily digested form), folk dances, traditional orchestras, even Western classical music. The same driven, lightning-quick acumen that produces millions of shoes of Italian-like quality at a fraction of the cost

is being unleashed in cultural production. Because the government subsidises mainly prestigious, traditional cultural institutions (such as the National Theatre and the National Symphonic Orchestra), and invests little in artistic development, the current generation of young artists is left at the mercy of market forces and standards set by the globalised culture industry. They are pushed into serial production – originality, innovation, artistic integrity and vision carry much less leverage and are trampled in the rush toward profit.



Museums are jazzed up to resemble theme parks, to peddle 'antiquity' to tourists and fleece them with souvenirs, while cultural heritage renovation is carried out carelessly, because time is money and money needs to be made fast. One year before the 2008 Olympics a ban on new construction will come into force to spare the city from more dust and rubbish and help make it look clean and tidy. Meanwhile, the provincial authorities and some richer cities want to follow Beijing and Shanghai's cultural lead: they dream of their own theme parks and prestigious spectacular mass events, willing to invest in the acquisition of top stars from abroad, like Madonna.

### Mass cultural production

In a city as big as Beijing there is not much official interest in small-scale cultural infrastructure that will serve artistic development. For example, Factory 798 on the north-east periphery was originally an artistic squat but now boasts over 200 galleries, some exquisite cafés and restaurants and a small, well-equipped contemporary dance space. The complex thrives on the growing demand from rich Chinese for Chinese art and on the foreign market hyped by international dealers and curators. Worse, a corporation, with government complicity, could take over the complex, make it even trendier and more commercial. In music, performing arts, photography, video, film and literature the same commercial impulses and corporate approaches loom.

Thus the public interest and artists' interests are subject to corporate powers that often collude with government bodies and functionaries. The Central Academy of Drama Theatre, recently renovated and well equipped with classrooms and studios, several venues, a dorm and a canteen, caters to 2,000 students who enjoy excellent facilities. But these students must pay 1,000-2,000

euros, (and as much as 20,000 euros for a masters degree), to cover yearly tuition fees and their cost of living. The state subsidy has been increased several times in recent years but the tuition is being charged nevertheless – a common phenomenon everywhere in China, making the concept of free education obsolete, even in elementary and secondary education. Siemens and other European companies donated expensive sound and light equipment to the Academy, obviously banking on students becoming loyal customers in their professional career, but some teachers have set up factories at the outskirts of Beijing and are churning out unlicensed copies of the same stage gadgetry. In two years the Academy will move to a huge new campus with even better facilities, some 70 kilometres outside of Beijing, where a new generation of artists might be protected from commercial pressures, but they will also be detached from the inspirations and challenges of the metropolis with its huge contrasts of old and new, rich and poor, traditional and fashionable.

Not that this concerns the state. In fact, at this point, true artistic development isn't even on the state's agenda. With the Olympics approaching, the government is interested primarily in continued prosperity and consumerism, unperturbed stability and culture as a representation of ideology, national glory and successful modernisation. In the meantime, the for-profit culture industry can be as imitative as it chooses, while true creativity struggles between market pressures and state cultural policy. ◀

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# What is immediate perception? The Buddhist answer

Is the immediacy of our knowledge an epistemological ideal or merely a psychological reassurance that our senses don't misguide us? If we disregard immediacy in favour of other means to determine all of our knowledge including sensation, how can we discern sensation from knowledge? Conversely, if we regard immediacy as a physiological event (sense stimulation), how can we prove that it's part of the cognitive process? Immediacy-related problems arise in any epistemological discourse – Western or Eastern, ancient or modern. What is immediacy according to Buddhist epistemological tradition (*pramanavada*) represented by Dignaga (480-540) and Dharmakirti (600-660)?

Victoria Lysenko

According to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (henceforth, the SEP), immediacy requires two criteria: 'The first one appeals to the idea of *inference*: something is immediately experienced or is given if the cognitive consciousness of it is not arrived at via any sort of inferential process. The second one appeals to the idea of certainty: something is immediately experienced or given if the awareness of it is certain, incapable of being mistaken' (BonJour: Fall 2001).

In their disputes with Brahmanical thinkers the Buddhists tried to exclude any kind of mental construction (*kalpana*) from the realm of the immediately given. But, deprived as it is of mental construction, immediate perception becomes automatically incapable of providing any cognitive information about its object. That is why Buddhist thinkers had to prove that immediate perception (*pratyaksha*), in spite of its non-conceptual character, is still a genuine instrument of knowledge (*pramana*). How did they manage to reconcile the 'blindness' of pure sensation with its being part of the cognitive activity?

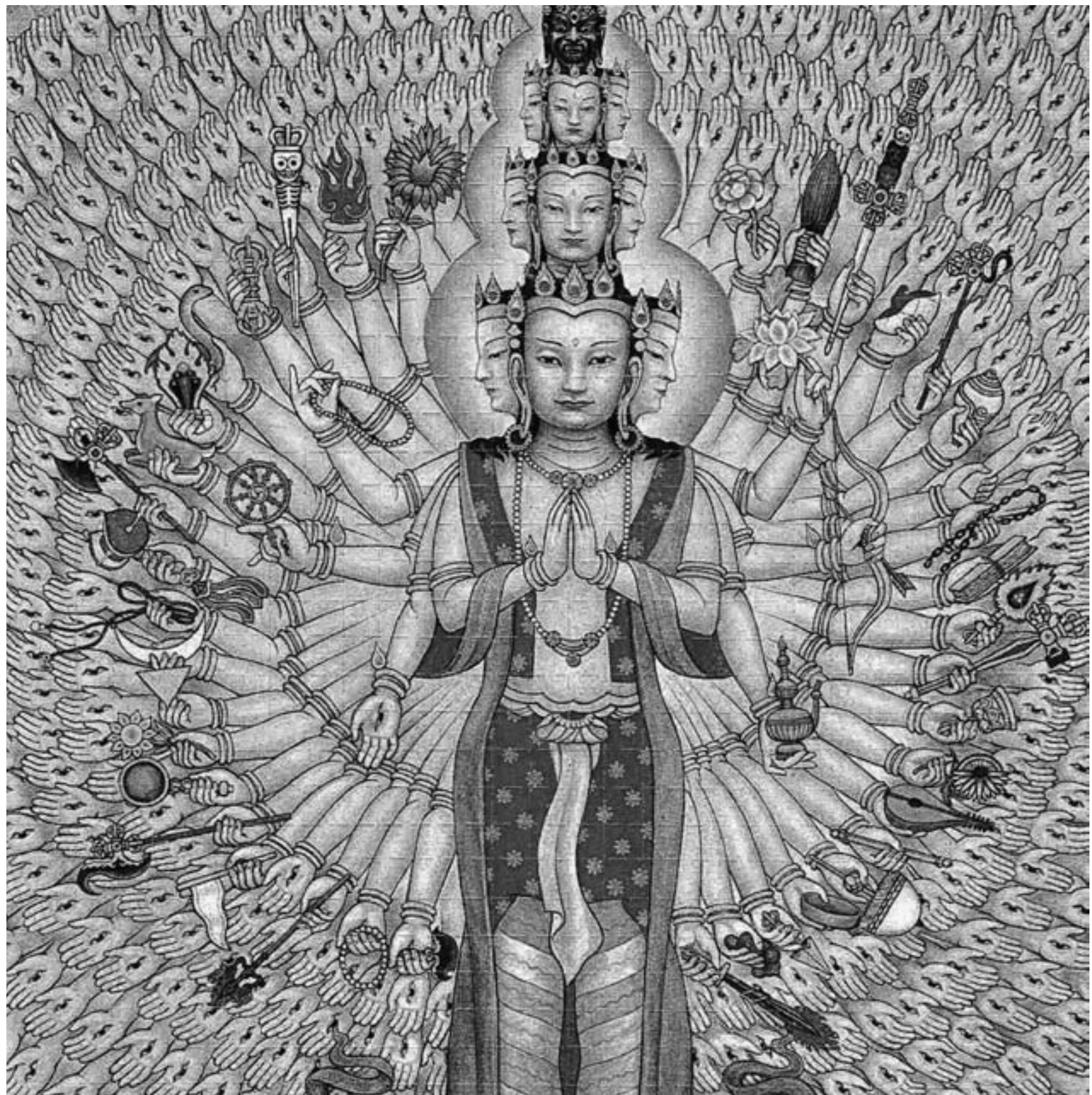
## Units of becoming

The main goal of knowledge from the Buddhist point of view is to know things the way they are (*yathabhutam*) or to know reality as such (*tathata*). What then constitutes reality? For the Buddhist the essence of reality is impermanent (*anitya*); to exist means to change, because nothing has any enduring essence (*anatman*). Existence is being reduced to a stream of discrete momentary *dharmanas*.

The term *dharmanas* (in plural form) has no equivalent in Western thought; it has been interpreted in many ways: 'phenomena', 'point-instances', 'units of becoming', 'properties', 'tropes' etc.. To know reality as it is means to know it as a series of *dharmanas*. For the Buddhist this kind of knowledge is obtained in meditation and has a totally immediate character. In this way immediacy is obviously related to the religious soteriological perspective of the Buddhist tradition, but it is the immediacy of the common cognitive experience that was a subject of epistemological discourse and controversy among philosophers of different Indian schools and traditions – Buddhist as well as Brahmanical.

## Particulars and universals as subject-matters of *pratyaksha* and *anumana*

According to Dignaga's major epistemological work *Pramanasamuccaya* ('A Collection of Instruments of Knowledge', henceforth, PS), only two



instruments of valid knowledge (*pramana*) exist: *pratyaksha*, or perception, and *anumana*, or inference, and each of them has its own subject matter. *Pratyaksha* deals with what Dignaga calls *svalakshanas*, literally, that which characterises itself, a particular characteristic or pure particular – something absolutely unique, singular and, most important, momentary (*kshanika*). As *svalakshanas* are ultimately real (*paramarthasat*) and inexpressible, to experience them means to experience reality as it is. The object of the other *pramana*, inference (*anumana*), is constituted by conceptualisations, verbalisations, reflections and other products of mental construction (*kalpana* or *vikalpa*)

that Dignaga calls *samanyalakshana* – a general characteristic applicable to many objects or distributed over many instances. *Samanyalakshanas*, generally translated as 'universal', are enduring and not subject to change – for this reason they are regarded by Buddhists as only relatively real (*samvritisat*).

The term *svalakshana* does not easily lend itself to interpretation. Its understanding is still a highly controversial matter among scholars. The problem is that its ontological status is quite ambiguous in our authors' writings. The reason for this ambiguity was formulated by George Dreyfus: 'Dignaga and Dharmakirti...are ontologists

only inasmuch as their epistemology requires them to be. They even seem to feel free to alternate between several conflicting metaphysical standpoints. For example, in most of their works, Dignaga and Dharmakirti adopt a so-called Sautrantika standpoint, presupposing the existence of external objects. In other parts of their work, however, they shift their ontological frameworks and move to a Yogacara rejection of external objects...Commonsensual levels are introduced for the sake of convenience and withdrawn to be replaced by higher but more counterintuitive schemes' (Dreyfus 1997: 49). A choice of ontological positions is equally applicable to *svalakshana*: it may be either

mind-independent or mind-dependent. As far as immediacy is a kind of inner experience of mental actuality, it will be natural to accept that *svalakshana*, at least in some of our authors' texts, is regarded as a sort of sense data.

## Is *pratyaksha* a cognitive event?

To Dignaga, a *pratyaksha* (etymologically, 'before eyes') is above all an immediate experience, and its immediacy proves its veracity and certainty. This immediacy is so important that he defines *pratyaksha* through the exclusion of mediacy in the form of mental constructions. Thus he calls it *kalpana-apodham*, 'free from mental constructions' (PS: 3c). In this



way the first criteria of immediacy from the SEP is strictly observed.

If *pratyaksha* is construed by Buddhists as a direct experience (*anubhava*), does it mean that its immediacy consists in the activity of the sense faculties (*indriya*) or in the contact of the senses with their object (*indriya-arthasannikarsha*)? Buddhists accept neither of these alternatives. That a sense faculty cannot by itself possess cognitive activity was acknowledged by all Indian epistemologists (*pramanavadins*). And the majority of Indian philosophers, except Buddhists, saw in the sense-object contact the main condition of sense perception. Why didn't Buddhists? First, for them not all senses could enter in direct contact with their objects (they insist on non-contactualness of certain senses – the visual and auditory). Second, *pratyaksha* is not necessarily a sense perception. Among its manifestations Dignaga lists mental perception (*manasa pratyaksha*), yogic perception (during meditation) and self-awareness, which have nothing to do with senses. Thus we could safely say that immediacy of *pratyaksha* is not reduced to any sort of direct sense stimulation.

Then how is it produced? Dignaga is not clear about this question. According to Dharmakirti, a *svalakshana*, or particular, possessing its causal function (*arthakriya*), can produce its own image or aspect (*akara*) in our mind. Does it mean that we really apprehend *svalakshana* at the moment of perception? Taking into account that all of our own cognitive devices – images, conceptions, words, etc. – are products of mental construction, how could we say that immediate perception of particulars or of their aspects is a cognitive event? For Dignaga and Dharmakirti the answer to this question is not simple. Being Buddhists, both of them reject the existence of *Atman* or Self in a role of a permanent cogniser. For them there is no subject of knowledge apart from the knowledge itself, which is a flow of momentary point-instances (*dharmas*). So what makes an instance of *pratyaksha* a piece of knowledge if sense-object contact is not cognitive and conceptualisation is cognitive but not immediate?

They might propose an answer connected to their concept of *svasamvedana*



as a variety of *pratyaksha*. Literally, *svasamvedana* is a self-awareness, not the awareness of the Self as *Atman*, but the awareness of the cognitive event itself, or self-reflective awareness. Dignaga distinguishes between mental perception of the object, such as colour and other sense qualities, and self-awareness of desire, anger, pleasure, pain, etc., which for him constitute mental events not dependent on any sense organ. *Svasamvedana* is a sort of intuitive experience (*anubhava*) that accompanies all kinds of mental activity, being itself free of any conceptualisation. It is sometimes rendered by the term 'apperception', introduced by Leibnitz in the sense of the reflexive awareness of our personal cognitive experience as desirable or not. But that does not mean either that cognition is cognised by a separate cognitive act (otherwise, there would follow an infinite regression) or that *svasamvedana*, being a sort of introspection, has other mental states as its objects.

### Is *pratyaksha* a true or an instrumental cognition?

When Dignaga defines *pratyaksha* as

exempt from mental construction, does he mean that the *pramana* of *pratyaksha* is a true cognition? The confirmation that *pramana* is not tightly associated with truth lies in the veridical status of *anumana* (inference). Being a mental operation dealing with mentally constructed objects, it could not grasp the true nature of the object and for this reason is regarded as *bhrranta* – erring or subject to errors. Nevertheless, it is still a *pramana*. Why? Because, according to Dharmakirti, it may reveal something previously unknown and may lead to a successful action. It is *pramana* because of its instrumentality with regard to practical tasks, including final emancipation (*nirvana*). Thus we may safely add instrumentality to what we suppose may be the Buddhist definition of immediacy.

### Sketching a new definition of perceptual immediacy

Dharmakirti argues that when we think of an object, we have only a blurred cognition of it, whereas when we see it we have a vivid apprehension. But for him simple seeing and 'seeing as', (perceiving an object as

something), for example, a jug, constitutes two different cognitive events that have different contents. One is perception without mental constructions, the other is perceptual judgment somehow caused by this perception and assisted by memory. For Dharmakirti the perceptual judgment 'this is a jug', unlike inference (*anumana*), is not a *pramana* because it deals with something already apprehended by perception. But how does he explain our experiencing immediacy with regard to seeing something definite, like a jug? For him it is because of the *kalpana* (mental construction) that a cognitive image appears for us as a totally external thing (*Pramanavarttika* III: 359-362). One more distinguishing feature of *kalpana* owing to its mediate character is its lack of vividness (*Svavrtti to Pramanaviniscaya* I. 31). Accordingly, *pratyaksha* is distinguished by its vividness (*spashta*), which may be construed as our fourth criterion of *pratyaksha's* immediacy. To this set of criteria one may add another: *sarupya*, the congruency of internal image with external object, or the fact that the knowledge takes the

form of its object. To exclude the possibility of interpreting *sarupya* in the sense that knowledge may have only the form of the object, but not its own form (*nirakaravada*), we should add to our criteria the self-reflexive character (*svasamvedana*) as a confirmation of the fact that cognitive event has its own form as well.

Thus, we can single out six criteria of immediacy from the works of our authors: 1) non-inferential character (*kalpana-apodham*), corresponding to the first point of the SEP definition; 2) non-erring character (*abhrranta*), corresponding to the second point of SEP definition; 3) instrumentality (*pramanatva*) with regard to practical tasks; 4) vividness (*spashta*); 5) congruence (*sarupya*) with its object; and 6) self-reflexive character (*svasamvedana*). In this way, an acquaintance with Buddhist epistemology may suggest new perspectives for our understanding and interpretation of perceptual immediacy. ◀

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[ advertisement ]



# The future of the East Asian political economy: China, Japan and regional integration

As international newspaper headlines increasingly focus on energy and security issues, one could almost forget that the main ties that bind states and regions of the world together are trade and economic relations.

Maike Heijmans

From the 1970s onward, international economic relations have been broadened to include the political sphere – marking the start of much discussion on ‘the political economy of...’. Politics in this respect encompasses not only international political relations but especially domestic politics, cumulating in the so-called ‘two-level game’<sup>1</sup>. This dual approach is particularly useful in a region where economic means have been used, arguably more than anywhere else, for international as well as domestic political purposes: the East Asian region.

The current status of East Asia, (i.e. Northeast and Southeast Asia), should be attributed first and foremost to the economic success and attractiveness of the region. Notwithstanding the much debated loose political integration, economic connections in the region are profound, although for a long time at the inter-firm and inter-regional rather than the inter-state level. Causes, explanations and possible solutions for issues in international relations of the region in the broadest sense of the word – the political economic, but also energy and security issues – should be sought therefore first and foremost in the field of political economy. The three developments in the field of political economy that I believe will shape the future of international relations of East Asia are addressed here. These are the development of China, the relationship between China and Japan, and the economic integration between countries in the region. The changing role of the United States in the region is of great importance with regard to the second and, to a lesser extent, the third development. In conclusion, the importance of these developments in general and for the EU in particular are sketched briefly.

## Development of China

Whether spoken of in terms of the ill-phrased ‘peaceful rise’ or the more recent ‘peaceful development’ slogan<sup>2</sup>, the development of China is a crucial factor in the shaping of East Asia’s international relations. Not only does China’s growth depend on domestic policies, reform and stability – China’s success or failure affects the region as a whole. China has become economically interconnected with the region to the extent that real and even perceived (in)stability will significantly affect other East Asian countries, as did the aftermath of the collapse of the Japanese ‘bubble’ in the early 1990s.

China is revitalising its relations with countries in the region, particularly the countries grouped in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The ASEAN countries are engaged in a balancing act of taking the opportunities their large neighbour has to offer while not being overshadowed by it. China is conscious not to be seen as an economic threat, as its proposal for a free trade area with ASEAN back in November 2000 illustrates. This move by China was largely geopolitically motivated. It should be seen as an attempt to engage neighbouring states and shed the threat perception stirred by China’s success in attracting industrial jobs and foreign investment. The success of China’s policy of engagement, as well as the positive but wary attitude of ASEAN-countries, was apparent when another step toward the creation of the full completion of the free trade agreement was taken last January. Following the signing of the trade-in-services agreement, Philippines President Arroyo said: ‘We are very happy to have China as our big brother in this region’<sup>3</sup>.

The domestic challenges faced by China (analysed in detail in the latest of a series of World Bank regional studies in East Asia<sup>4</sup>) are diverse and profound. Cities and liveability, cohesion and inequality, and corruption are of crucial importance in managing the domestic distribution of economic rents. The Chinese government itself also recognised these challenges and placed internal challenges high up the agenda. Indeed, President Hu’s recent proposal for a ‘harmonious socialist society’ has been interpreted as one of the most profound shifts since Deng geared the country



towards high growth rates by opening the country to foreign investment<sup>5</sup>. The success or failure in making China’s development sustainable will for these reasons – and as suggested by the two-level game – have a profound influence on the region.

## The relationship between Japan and China

Notwithstanding signs of improvement since the inauguration of Japanese Prime Minister Abe last September, relations between Japan and China are extremely fragile. Bilateral relations fell to an historical low in recent years, and while this deterioration long resulted in ‘cold politics, hot economics’, they came to a point where even economic relations were increasingly politicised. The Japanese business lobby, grouped in *Nippon Keidanren*, openly expressed concern to its government and urged it to repair relations with China – and, for that matter, South Korea<sup>6</sup>. The sudden decision in 2005 of the Japanese government to end ODA loan aid to China should also be seen in this (political economic) perspective, while taking into account the legacy of war and colonial past in bilateral relations. The sudden shift in ODA policy can be attributed to certain Chinese policies, the deterioration of relations, the fast economic development of China and its implications for Japan, and a general aid fatigue of public opinion<sup>7</sup>. Opinion polls found that public perceptions of the other country in Japan as well as China have deteriorated. The percentage of Japanese who indicate they ‘like’ China had been decreasing

already from the mid-1990s, and fell below five percent in recent years<sup>8</sup>. One only has to remember the Chinese boozing of the Japanese team during the final of the Asian Cup in 2004 and the fierce anti-Japanese demonstrations in 2005 to understand why. The Chinese on their side, have been much antagonised by the continuing visits of former Prime Minister Koizumi to the infamous Yasukuni Shrine. The government has taken the change in Japanese leadership as an opportunity to mend ties, however. The Chinese government was remarkably quiet following Abe’s comments on so-called ‘comfort women’ in March – a clear indication of the strong desire to improve relations and avoid dismay prior to Premier Wen’s visit to Japan. The unprecedented shift in media coverage from a focus on historical issues to coverage of contemporary Japan in connection with Wen’s trip is confirms this<sup>9</sup>. The Chinese government is obviously raising pressure and playing for high stakes, at the risk of extensive domestic criticism should Abe betray Wen’s faith. The new engagement between China and Japan is a positive sign, but tensions remain despite the warm rhetoric on both sides. Important questions are yet to be answered. notably whether or not Abe will visit the Yasukuni Shrine and whether he will gain support for his policy in the Upper House elections in July. Abe’s position was weakened by the quick fall in his popularity domestically soon after his inauguration, but more recently the Prime Minister regained credit for engaging China while not seeming soft, and for his long overdue visit to the United States in April. A complex



mix of international and regional status, bilateral rivalry and domestic politics defines the bilateral relationship.

Rivalry between the Japanese and the Chinese cannot be understood apart from both countries' aspiration for leadership in the region – or, better, wariness of the other country taking a leadership position. While the United States remains a great power in the region, its supremacy is waning as China's influence grows. Preoccupied with the Middle East and Central Asia, the Americans furthermore give leeway for and even encourage Japan to take a more pro-active role in the region. Neither Japan nor China however, seems in a position to claim a leadership role now or in the near future. Through an active policy of economic diplomacy, Japan has throughout the past decades led the region in economic terms. It did not however, actively seek to translate this position into leadership in a more general sense. This changed as China started gaining prominence on the world stage and is increasingly spoken of as a future leader of the region. The speech by Foreign Minister Taro Aso in December 2005, in which he presented Japan's objective to be a regional thought leader, a stabiliser and a country that wants to build mutual relationships of trust, showed Japan's new ambitions. Japan's proposal for an East Asian community and East Asian Economic Partnership Agreement should be seen as further proof of its renewed interest in and engagement with the region. Undeniably however, Japan is losing leverage over countries of the region. While ASEAN countries are, for economic reasons, inclined to lean increasingly towards China, for political reasons they welcome a more active Japan. The China-Japan relationship thereby will shape East Asia's political economy.

### Economic integration in East Asia

A third factor that is to profoundly influence the future of the political economy is the region's path of economic integration. Integration was throughout the 1970s and 80s based on expansion of (private) Japanese production networks, spurred by the Plaza Accord of 1985. The 1990s saw attempts to state-led intra-regional integration, mainly through APEC. While monetary co-operation took off successfully in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 1997-98, inter-regional economic integration largely failed due to lack of political will on the side of numerous East Asian countries. Since the beginning of the new century however, economic integration has taken a more regional (Asians-only) turn and advanced through government level talks and negotiation<sup>10</sup>. China's entry in the WTO in 2001 provided an essential stimulus to this effect and the United States' more permissive stance – as opposed to its earlier strong disapproval of Japan's proposal for an Asian Monetary Fund – increased possibilities. Here also, domestic as well as international developments merit attention.

As traditional regionalisation is increasingly complemented by efforts toward regionalism, an increasingly complex 'noodle bowl' is connecting countries and sectors of economies<sup>11</sup>. Although the term is not usually used in this sense, a second 'noodle bowl' of institutionalised relations through inter- and intra-regional institutions is forming. Throughout the past decade East Asia has seen a surge in government-led initiatives for regional co-operation, such as ASEAN+3, ASEAN+1<sup>12</sup> and the East Asia Summit. Generally these gatherings have been talking shops more than they have been able to produce real results, however. What East Asia needs now, is management, not vision<sup>13</sup>.

Much is still uncertain about where East Asian integration is heading. While some suggest that bilateral and regional agreements are undertaken with the final goal of integrating the whole region, others foresee that increased fragmentation will come to a point of no return. The question is whether countries are in for short-term gain or for real economic integration in the long term. It is high time to create oversight at the government level and to manage the two noodle bowls before they become too knotted to unravel. The ASEAN+3 grouping encompasses the major production networks spanning East and Southeast Asia and is experienced in political engagement with other regions, notably through the Asia-Europe Meeting. A more institutionalised process spurred by these countries therefore provides the most likely route to success. Consciously structured or not, the regional framework for political economic relations of the future will be outlined throughout the next decade.

The future of East Asia's political economy is important for observers in and outside the region. Increasing regional trade integration notwithstanding, East Asia is still one of – if not the – most open regions of the world. It is of major importance for its largest trade partners – the European Union (EU) and the United States – to ensure that East Asia remains open and transparent. For this purpose, increased understanding and co-operation between the regions is required. With regard to the EU-China strategic partnership however, one analyst remarks that three years after its announcement, 'it has become clear that political rhetoric on the scope and nature of EU-China relations has yet to catch up with political reality.'<sup>14</sup> Regrettably, critique of inter-regional co-operation resembles that of East Asian intra-regional cooperation. The EU as well as a stronger ASEAN+3 should make an effort to turn the tide.

In his presentation of the Communication that is part of the renewed China strategy of the EU, Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson commented that 'trade policy stands at the crossroads of the EU's internal and external policies'<sup>14</sup>. For the EU, just as for the East Asian region, the political economy remains a two-level game involving domestic as well as international interests. But EU policy of putting tariffs on textiles from China as recent as late 2006, is not setting the right example. ◀

### Notes

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- Kato, Takanori 2007. 'China walking media tightrope', in: *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 1.
- While regionalization refers to the expansion of informal, bottom-up linkages, regionalism entails formal, state-led integration in the form of free trade and economic partnership agreements and inter-governmental institutional linkages. The 'noodle bowl'-metaphor to describe trade arrangements in the East Asian region was first used by Baldwin (2004). It should be seen as the East Asian version of the spaghetti bowl phenomenon of FTAs, introduced by Bhagwati albeit referring to the crisscrossing of FTA linkages and their varying rules, not the rules of origin. This difference is rightfully pointed out by Kotera, column 23 May 2006, Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry, Tokyo.
- While ASEAN+3 (ASEAN Plus Three or APT) is the grouping of ASEAN and China, Japan and Korea, ASEAN+1 refers to the meetings of ASEAN with these countries individually.
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- Speaking points by Commissioner Mandelson, Press Room, European Commission, 4 October 2006. Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_barroso/mandelson/speeches\\_articles/sppm117\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/mandelson/speeches_articles/sppm117_en.htm)

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# Rituals, pantheons, and techniques: a history of Chinese religion before the Tang

The study of Chinese religion over the last 30 years has led to fundamental changes in the way we see Chinese history and civilisation. The traditional paradigm – that saw China as an empire governed by an agnostic, philosophically sophisticated elite and populated by superstitious masses – has been overturned, but nothing coherent has replaced it.

John Lagerweij

A recent conference in Paris aimed to do precisely that: create a new paradigm for the understanding of Chinese religion from the ancient period to the end of the 6th century, by which time the basic contours of Chinese religion had stabilised into the familiar configuration of the Three Teachings and what most students now call shamanism.

If this had not hitherto been attempted, it is at least in part because of the explosion of knowledge and the increasing specialisation that accompanies it. But it is also because of the lack of a unifying theory or, at the very least, methodology. The answer to the first difficulty is to invite leading specialists to work together and, to the second, to propose a common approach. It is this common approach which will be the key to success or failure and which, therefore, requires explanation.

This approach is, in the first place, multi-disciplinary, relying on philology, archaeology, and epigraphy as the foundations of any well-rounded account of an ancient society in which texts remain a primary source. In a certain sense, the key role is played here by archaeology, in part because of the vast range of new textual and iconographic materials it has provided, but also and perhaps above all because material remains, deposited in tombs whose shape and contents vary over time and space, offer hitherto unimagined, nearly direct access to daily life, actual practice (as opposed to ideological prescription), and regional cultural variety.

The second critical feature of the approach is that it is at once sociological and anthropological. The determined focus of the work on rituals, pantheons, and techniques reflects the weaning away of religious studies from philosophy, thanks in large part to the impact of the anthropological study of societies without written texts. Religion is now seen to consist in techniques of communication with the invisible; it is about what people do, whom they address, and how. Mythology and other modes of discourse are implicit in ritual gestures, spatial dispositions, and iconographic traditions.

The search for meaning in Chinese religion must give pride of place to this implicit as opposed to the explicit discourse because it is through rituals and around specific gods that social groups are constituted and the empire defines itself. The discovery of the centrality of ritual in Chinese social and political life and elite discourse concerning them is relatively recent, but it has come increasingly to dominate the Sinological agenda. In organising the chapters of each successive volume around the two basic issues of religion and society and religion and the state, the project aims at keeping the focus on the sociological dimensions of religion. Inclusion of chapters on hagiography, sacred geography, and festival calendars confirms the overriding emphasis on religion as practiced.

But perhaps the most important innovation of all is the inclusion of shamanism, because if the emergence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism as China's three major religious traditions is the central subject of Chinese religious history from the founding of the empire in 221 BCE down to the end of the sixth century, this emergence goes together with a joint attack on traditional, shamanistic modes of interaction with the invisible world. But shamanism does not just go softly into the deep, dark night. It remains central to popular forms of religion to this day, and its Buddhist and Taoist rivals for ritual monopoly also integrated important aspects of shamanism into their own practices. Any history of Chinese religion which considers Chinese society to be its real subject ignores this dynamic interaction at its peril. ◀

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The international conference *Rituals, Pantheons, and Techniques: A History of Chinese Religion before the Tang* was held in Paris, 14-21 December 2006, and was organized by the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Department of Religious Studies (Paris), and the UMR 7133 Centre de recherche sur les civilisations chinoise, japonaise et tibétaine. IIAS was among its many sponsors.



# Equalisation as difference: Zhang Taiyan's Buddhist-Daoist response to modern politics

Since the late 1980s, scholars have viewed China's progress towards market capitalism with great optimism, but in the last ten years intellectuals, both in China and abroad, have begun to voice reservations. Critics have pointed out China's growing problems of income inequality, unemployment and environmental degradation. In this context of critical reflection, Viren Murthy argues that the work of the late Qing intellectual Zhang Taiyan is especially meaningful.

Viren Murthy

During a period in Chinese history when most intellectuals were supporting ideologies related to modernisation, such as social evolution, Zhang constantly drew on Buddhism and Daoism to express criticisms. Given that throughout the 20th century, and even today, both the Chinese government and Chinese intellectuals have generally endorsed some version of modernisation as a political and economic goal, Zhang's writings have an uncanny contemporary relevance.

Scholars have generally interpreted Zhang's thought in terms of indigenous contexts, but I contend that Zhang's philosophy, and the late Qing ideology to which he responded, follow a larger global pattern. Specifically, that Zhang's thought has similarities with that of critics of German idealism, such as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and that we can explain such conceptual affinities with reference to the common context of global capitalism. Georg Lukács links the principles of German idealism to the social forms of capital, and provocatively contends that modern philosophers often mistake historically specific aspects of the structure of capitalism for universal forms of consciousness.<sup>1</sup> German idealists posit a transhistorical movement of consciousness that realises itself in modern institutions such as the state. Nietzsche and Schopenhauer attack this structure of consciousness from an abstract perspective. To counter Hegel's idea of the teleological movement of Spirit, they argue that consciousness and history is a wild interplay of drives or the will. They eventually aim to overcome this blind progression of history and put forward some type of alternative. There is a similar antinomy between optimistic and pessimistic visions of history in late Qing China. Specifically, the majority of intellectuals during the early 20th century endorsed some version of history as a progressive movement and Zhang Taiyan developed a critique of this view from Buddhist and Daoist perspectives. Following Lukács, one can conclude that both sides of this debate respond a-historically to transformations of capitalist modernity, since each group presupposes some type of transhistorical ontological movement, which becomes their foundational standpoint.

## From imperial power to global player

To understand the above philosophical debate in the context of early 20th century China, we must note how intellectuals were shaped by, and responded to, their rapidly changing environment. Social and intellectual life in the late Qing was influenced by widely circulating discourses of modern philosophy and the concrete forces of the global capitalist system of nation-states. After

a series of defeats in wars during the late 19th century, the Qing Empire and late Qing intellectuals began to think of ways to transform China into a nation-state that could compete in the global capitalist system. The modern state and economy entail a host of categories from citizenship to equality and intellectuals began to re-orient their learning and writing towards these new concepts.

Until the late 19th century, Chinese intellectuals were largely trained in traditional classics and they aimed primarily at becoming bureaucrats or functionaries in the imperial government. However, in the midst of national crisis, they began to use their knowledge creatively to envision a passage from imperial to modern institutions. In this context, not only would intellectuals search outside of the canonical Confucian tradition and mine Buddhists and Daoist texts for resources, they would also invoke the philosophies of Kant and Hegel to create hybrid theories of modernisation. Late Qing scholars from a number of different political perspectives often drew on Western philosophy along with traditional ideas to create new concepts adequate to the task of modern nation building.

One such new concept, which reformers, revolutionaries and anarchists generally endorsed, was the universal principle (*gongli*). The universal principle refers to a concept or movement, such as the ethical principle of citizenship or a process of social evolution, which subsumes particular things or actions. Intellectuals applied this principle to both the realms of science and



Zhang Taiyan.

ethics. Thus, references to the "universal principle of science," "the universal principle of morality" and the "universal principle of evolution" are found in late Qing texts. The principle of evolution is particularly important, since, despite political differences, reformers, revolutionaries and anarchists often presupposed some vision of history as progress.

Zhang Taiyan's attitude to this principle changes depending on the period. From 1900-1903, he endorses the universal principle and some type of evolutionary vision of the world in the context of his anti-Qing Dynasty writings. However, in 1903 Zhang was convicted of writing seditious essays defaming the emperor and he was sentenced to three years in prison. In jail, Zhang avidly read the sutras of Yogacara Buddhism and later claimed that it was only through reciting and meditating on these sutras that

he was able to get through his difficult jail experience. When he was released from jail in 1906, Zhang went to Tokyo to edit the famous revolutionary journal, *The People's Journal (Minbao)*, and in this journal, he developed a new philosophical framework largely critical of dominant intellectual trends.

During the years 1906-1910, often referred to as Zhang's *Minbao* period, he addressed both the reformers and the anarchist's ideologies, claiming that they were insufficiently self-reflective. Following Kant, Zhang attempts to return concepts and the world of experience to their conditions of possibility; however, he understands conditions of possibility in Buddhist terms, namely as the karmic fluctuations of the seeds in *ālaya* consciousness (the storehouse consciousness). By drawing on Yogācāra Buddhism, Zhang develops a vision of history as an unconscious process of drives. According to Yogācāra Buddhism, the storehouse consciousness, which is the highest level of consciousness, contains a number of seeds which initiate a type of historical process. Dan Lusthaus interprets the effects of karmic seeds as historicity and stresses the organic metaphor of seeds. He explains that just like plants, karmic experiences develop from unseen roots, which stem from seeds.<sup>2</sup> As we act in these experiences, we unconsciously plant new karmic seeds and so a cycle of the interplay between past, present and future continues. In his 1906 essay, *On Separating the Universal and Particular in Evolution*, Zhang uses this framework to explain Hegel's philosophy of history. In short, he claims that what Hegel describes as

a triumphant march of spirit is really a degenerative disaster created by karmic seeds. He then combines Buddhism and Daoism to describe a world outside of this karmic progression of history.

## Pushing language to its limits

Zhang develops this philosophical alternative in a number of essays during 1906-1910, but he expressed this philosophy most completely in what many take to be Zhang's masterpiece "An Interpretation of a 'Discussion on the Equalization of Things,'" published in 1910. In this text, Zhang uses Yogācāra Buddhist concepts to understand the ancient Daoist philosopher, Zhuangzi. Zhang pushes language to its limits to express an ideal that escapes the conceptual categories associated with karmic history and points to a world of difference and a new affirmation of singularity. In so doing, he brings Buddhist, Daoist and Western ideas of equality together in a unique manner. More specifically, Zhang constantly gropes for a way to express something beyond mundane concepts. Thus he contends that Zhuangzi's conception of "equality" involves making distinctions without concepts:

"Equalizing things" (*qiwuzhe*) refers to absolute equality (*pingdeng*). If we look at its meaning carefully, it does not simply refer to seeing sentient beings as equal ... One must speak form (*xiang, laksana*) without words, write of form without concepts (*ming*) and think form without mind. It is ultimate equality. This accords with the "equalization of things."<sup>3</sup>

The above passage may seem opaque, but given that Zhang explicitly opposes his philosophy of equalisation to Hegel's teleological vision of history, it is possible to interpret him as searching for a concept of difference free from conceptualisation, a gesture we may find in Gilles Deleuze's philosophy. In particular, in Deleuze's interpretation of his compatriot Henri Bergson, he distinguishes difference from determination. According to Deleuze, Hegel's dialectic represents a linear movement because his idea of difference is exterior to the thing itself and hence inevitably involves both determination and contradiction. We see this in a number of the antinomies that pervade his thought such as the opposition between being and nothing, or between particularity and universality. Deleuze clearly attempts to draw on Bergson to think his way outside such oppositions and claims that in Bergson's view "not only will vital difference not be a determination, but it will rather be the opposite – given a choice (*au choix*) it would select indetermination itself."<sup>4</sup> Were it merely indetermination, Hegel could retort that in essence Bergson is simply unable to think difference and thus the phrase "given a choice" is crucial. Ideally, we should not choose between determi-



Zhang constantly drew on Buddhism and Daoism to express criticisms.



nate and indeterminate, but from our usual conceptual grid, we can only see “vital difference” as indeterminate. To express this paradoxical determination, Zhang cannot stop at leaving words, concepts and mind. He affirms some type of mark made in this non-conceptual space by form (*xiang, lakshana*).

Zhang attempts to think of an equality that avoids the contradiction between the universal and the particular, or the antinomies between sameness and difference, which he sees in German idealists. In Zhang’s view, it is not mere thought that produces conceptual antinomies; rather, through our karmic actions, we generate a conceptual framework, which confronts us as a type of inescapable logic. Zhang compares the conceptual framework that people create through karmic action to Kant’s categories and when he attacks this framework, he reproduces a basic structure we see in the pessimistic critiques of German idealism. Rather than grounding concepts such as the universal principle in a historically specific social formation, Zhang links contemporary ideological trends to the trans-historical dynamic of karmic action.

However, Zhang’s philosophical significance shines through when placed in the intellectual history of 20th century China. Throughout the 20th century, and even today, most Chinese intellectuals presuppose some version of evolutionary history. The Chinese communists institutionalised such a reading of history and then during the 1980s and 1990s, intellectuals would often criticise Chinese communism using a similar model of history. For example, they claimed that Chinese communism represented China’s failure to modernise. From the mid-1990s, however, a growing number of intellectuals such as Wang Hui and Sun Ge, have drawn on the legacy of Zhang Taiyan, and those who develop the critical dimension of Zhang’s thought, such as his student Lu Xun, to question the legitimacy of contemporary capitalist society. These

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intellectuals, however, face a problem that Zhang could never adequately conceptualise, namely how to translate theory into a historical practice that transforms the global capitalist world. ◀

#### Suggestions for Further Reading

The literature on Zhang Taiyan is immense, especially in Chinese and Japanese, I include here only a short sample.

#### Western Languages

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3. Wang Young-tsu, *Search for Modern Nationalism: Zhang Binglin and revolutionary China; 1869-1936*, (London: Oxford, 1989).
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#### Chinese and Japanese

1. Wang Yuanyi, “Duli Cangmang: Xinhaigeming Qian Zhang Taiyan de Jijin Sixiang jiqi Wutuobang yu Fan Wutuobang Xingzhi” (Independent and Boundless: Zhang Taiyan’s Pre-Republican Revolution Writings and its Utopian and Anti-Utopian Dimensions) (*Intellectual Inquiry* Vol. 10

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2. Kondo Kuniyasu, “Shō Heirin no kakumei shisō no keisei” (The Formation of Zhang Binglin’s Revolutionary Thought) in *Chūgoku kindai shisōshi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Keiso shobo, 1981)
3. Takada Atsushi, *Shingai kakumei to Shō Heirin no seibutsu ronshaku* (The 1911 Revolution and Zhang Binglin’s “Interpretation of the Equalization of Things”), (Tokyo: Kenbun shuppan, 1984)

#### Notes

1. Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (HHC), Rodney Livingston trans. (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1971) 110-111.
2. Dan Lusthaus, *Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch’eng Wei-shi lun* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002) for the link between karmic seeds and history see, 25 and 179. For a discussion of the plant metaphor, see 193-194.
3. Zhang Taiyan, “Qiwulun shi,” in *Zhang Taiyan quanji* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1980) vol. 6, 1-59, 4.
4. Gilles Deleuze, “La conception de la différence chez Bergson,” *Etudes Bergsoniennes*, 1956, 92. “Bergson’s Concept of Difference” Melissa Macmahon trans. in *The New Bergson*, John Mullarkey ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999) 50 trans amended.

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[ advertisement ]



# Colonial or indigenous rule?

## The black Portuguese of Timor in the 17th and 18th centuries

From the late 15th century, the Portuguese created a far-flung political, religious and economic network in maritime Asia, where Portuguese men often married Asian or mixed-blood women who were Catholic by birth or conversion. The resulting *mestiço* groups constituted a ubiquitous and important presence in Portuguese Asia for hundreds of years, as they became instrumental in maintaining relations with indigenous Asian societies. One interesting case is the Topasses or black Portuguese population on Timor, which enjoyed a pivotal role on the island in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Hans Hägerdal

The scattered complex occasionally known as the Portuguese ‘seaborne empire’ was directed in Asia by its colonial organisation Estado da Índia, based in Goa, India, but its control over Portuguese activities was less than complete. Rather, it was but the formal aspect of the Portuguese presence. Almost from the beginning of the Portuguese enterprise in Asia, merchants and soldiers acted outside the auspices of the Crown.

Portuguese society contained an element of racialist thinking, but it is not enough to look at indigenous Asians using European perceptions of human categorisation. Rather, we must put the Portuguese groups in Asia in a localised context, exploring how they adapted to indigenous conceptions. For while Portuguese newcomers to Asian waters prided themselves on their whiteness and discriminated against *mestiços*, whites and *mestiços* both were seen as Portuguese, not least in the eyes of their Asian neighbours. In what is conventionally called the early modern period, roughly 1500–1800, religious affiliation frequently constituted a more important marker of identity than physical features. Thus the Catholic creed was the fundamental denominator of Portuguese-ness in Asia, and since most people of Portuguese descent retained a marked Portuguese identity, intermarriage was a means to establish a loyal Catholic community in Portuguese posts.

Timor was economically attractive to external powers owing to the trade in sandalwood and beeswax. It was also known for problematic geographical conditions, which made the means of subsistence and even access by sea cumbersome. The island’s multi-ethnic society possessed primitive technology and was divided into innumerable principalities. Still, it was on Timor and some surrounding islands that the name of Portugal was preserved, while its other South-East Asia possessions were knocked off by the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) between 1605 and 1641. This is the more remarkable since the Estado da Índia had few resources to spare for the marginal Timor. The number of whites on the island was never large. Moreover, since 1613, the Portuguese had to contend with Dutch interests in the Timor area, though the Dutch, too, allocated few resources to this far corner of Southeast Asia.

Part of the eternal question of how the Portuguese managed to hang on in Timor for several hundred years lies precisely in the dynamics of the Topasses – a term probably connected to the Indian ‘du-bashi’, meaning ‘bilingual’ or ‘interpreter’. Their *mestiço* community evolved in nearby Solor in the late 16th

century and later moved to Larantuka on East Flores – both places were stepping stones to appropriate sandalwood and other commodities on Timor. In the mid-17th century they began to move to the Lifau area on the north Timor coast. This modestly sized group, which was moreover hostile to the Estado da Índia for long periods, was able to prevail and retain a Portuguese identity owing to four factors: ethnicity, religion, political structures and the group’s place in the early colonial system.

### ‘Blacks with shotguns’ and ‘hanging trousers’

The ethnic composition of the Topasses was constantly changing, and this relates to the ethnic perceptions prevalent in Southeast Asia until fairly recent times. At this time there was no propagation of a racial hierarchy based on alleged intellectual or other properties. It was entirely possible to alter one’s ethnic belonging, thus it was possible for people of all skin colours to become members of the Topass community. Topass leaders, the Hornay and Da Costa families, descended from a North European and a Pampanger (Filipino), respectively, which exemplifies both the breadth of their ethnic origin and the possibilities of advancement regardless of skin colour. The mixed community that arose in Solor and later Larantuka was thus reinforced during the 17th and 18th centuries. The sources of such demographic reinforcement were several.

One, oddly enough, was the great rival of the Portuguese, the VOC, because numerous defections from VOC outposts and ships took place in East Indonesian waters. Conditions for VOC servants in these faraway places were often miserable, which made desertion a dangerous but attractive alternative. Such desertions are known to have taken place both in times of war and peace until 1730. Very few instances have been found of Portuguese deserting to the VOC side, though suppressed Portuguese clients on Timor sometimes did.

The non-official aspect of the mixed Portuguese community was also underscored by the social position of white Portuguese who joined their ranks. A 1689 Dutch colonial report characterises them as pennyless people and runaways, which implies that they were on the margins of white society. Another Dutch colonial report, from 1665, mentions prisoners from Cochin and Cannanore, most of whom were presumably Indian Christians or of mixed blood, who ended up in Lifau. It is apparent that people who the Estado da Índia wanted out of the way were sometimes sent to the Timor area.

However, locals from Timor and the surrounding islands were able to join



A ‘Topas’ or ‘Mardick’ with his wife.  
From a sketch by Johan Nieuhof, published in his work  
*Voyages and Travels in the East Indies 1653–1670*. (1682).

the Topasses. A 1659 report by a Dutch official notes some 300 Topasses on Timor, of whom few were white or of mixed race; the great majority were ‘blacks with shotguns’. Thus locals acquired a Portuguese identity and proficiency in European weaponry, which was important when the main Timorese weapon was still the assegai. A 1670 Franciscan report attests that the Portuguese language was spoken in Larantuka by the local population, and that locals educated by the Portuguese community identified themselves as ‘Portuguese’. Even Timorese princes were at times categorised as Topasses and behaved in a fashion that ran contrary to traditional Timorese codes of conduct. It was possible to enter the ethnic category of ‘Portuguese’ by adopting certain markers, such as language, profession (soldier, administrator, trader) and clothing (the Dutch know the Topasses as ‘hangbroeken’, meaning ‘hanging trousers’). All this, again, accords well with the flexible Southeast Asian way of alternating between ethnic identities.

### Padres, generals, wife-giving and -taking: consolidating power through religion and politics

More than blood, religion was the more profound identity marker; one is reminded that the very word ‘ethnic’ in early modern European dictionaries referred to something pagan or non-Christian, rather than something related to racial origin or material culture. Dominican priests, who enjoyed a role in Topass society that was not restricted to religious service, demonstrate religion’s role in the reification of Topass identity. Documents contain many hints of the great devotion Topasses exercised toward Dominicans, who sometimes

even headed military expeditions. Dutch reports repeatedly complain about ‘Roomse paapen’, or Catholic padres, who easily influenced local populations to the detriment of Dutch aims.

The rather few priests operating in the Solor-East Flores-Timor area were able to strengthen the Topass sphere of influence through their missionary activities. In the 1620s, 1630s and 1640s, an intense flurry of conversions swept West Timorese rajas into Catholicism. Much of this was obviously superficial, but at the same time conversion implied a political approach to solidifying the Portuguese colonial empire, where the institution of the Portuguese kingship in Lisbon was symbolically important in spite of its obvious distance.

That leads to the third factor in Topass retention of Portuguese identity, the political development of the Topass community. From the late 16th century the mixed group on Solor was led by officers with the title *Capitão Mor*, while the main title-holder in the 18th century became *Tenente General*. Owing to the non-existence of the Estado da Índia in these waters before 1702, the choice of leaders was made locally. A kind of dynastic dynamics evolved after 1664, when the Hornay and Da Costa families ascended to the leadership. These two families ruled in turns up to modern times in the Oecusse area in north-western Timor. Their genealogies are insufficiently known, but it’s clear that they regularly intermarried after 1700. From the second half of the 18th century, moreover, they intermarried with the Da Cruz royal dynasty of Ambeno on whose traditional domain they settled. It is interesting to note that the Hornays and Da Costas, apart from a few brief periods, were not violent rivals, but rather peacefully co-existed. By the early 19th century, they even signed contracts jointly.

The Topasses were able to dominate the most important West Timorese principalities from around the mid-17th century. In 1670, they undertook expeditions to the eastern coastlands and brought them into a superficial state of submission. By the late 17th century they thus had a very strong position on Timor, while the Dutch were confined to the island’s westernmost parts. One important aspect of this was their martial culture, which was even able to include members of Timorese aristocracies. Another aspect was their ability to act as wife-givers and wife-takers. The Topass leader Mateus da Costa (d. 1672) married a princess from the principality of Amanuban, which in the Timorese system placed him into a strategic position vis-à-vis his in-laws; as a wife-taker he was expected to support the latter, but he also found an important base in Amanuban for fighting his rivals.

### The fall: from officers to petty kings to ‘Black Foreigners’

For the Topasses, the 18th century was filled with conflicts with the Estado da Índia, which imposed Goa-appointed governors who settled in Lifau beginning in 1702. Although the Hornays and Da Costas managed to expel the white governor from Lifau in 1769, their power had been on the wane since 1749, when they suffered a major defeat against the VOC in western Timor. The conflicts deterred traders from Macau and emboldened Southeast Asian Chinese to increase their economic networks on Timor to the detriment of the old Topass-dominated system. Towards the end of the 18th century their influence was mainly confined to the Oecusse-Ambeno enclave and Larantuka, and the Hornays and Da Costas emerged as local petty kings of Oecusse rather than just colonial officers.

Was, then, Topass rule on Timor colonial in any meaningful sense, or is it more judicious to regard it as a basically indigenous power? Arguments support either position. Documents from the heyday of Topass rule, from the 1650s to 1702, reveal a rather loosely structured tribute system, the *tuthais*, that was adopted from the local Timorese principalities. This may seem more like a pre-colonial, rent-seeking practice than colonial rule (in the sense of a systematic subordination in order to produce economic and other benefits to an external nation or power). In general, the Topasses may not have been terribly different from the majority population, and for the most part they were of course of Timorese or East Florenese blood.

On the other hand, it is also true that there was a close relationship between Topass governance and the colonial system managed by Portuguese traders, particularly from Macau. The rationale for external interference on Timor – the sandalwood trade – demanded cooperation between a polity able to secure regular shipments and traders from other Portuguese-controlled Asian ports who appeared on a likewise regular basis. Timor therefore was included in an early colonial system built on a superficial but often heavy-handed domination over the innumerable Timorese principalities. That the Topasses were something apart is also reinforced by a study of local Timorese traditions recorded over the last two centuries. In spite of being overwhelmingly Timorese in terms of ethnic origins, the Topasses were and remained in the eyes of Timorese posterity *Kase Metan* – the Black Foreigners. ◀

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# Remarkable liaisons among the well-to-do

Fragments, marginal texts, and even 'bad literature' can sometimes take us further than better-known, canonical works. I was reminded of this after an unexpected find in Leiden University's van Gulik Collection.

Wu Cuncun

My 'find', a pornographic novel bearing the title *Fugui qiyuan* ('Remarkable liaisons among the well-to-do'), does not appear in any of the major catalogues of traditional Chinese fiction. It is clear from the poor quality of the lithographic printing, the cheap grade of paper, the many errors and the two roughly worked illustrations in the front pages that this small book belongs among the many similar works printed for popular consumption in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The first thing to note about this work, beyond its physical signs, is that it is not original: reading through it we find that it is actually a much corrupted, unrecorded, re-titled edition of the early Qing dynasty erotic novel *Taohuaying* ('Peach blossom shadows'). The author of *Taohuaying*, identified here by the pseudonym Yanshui Sanren ('Unencumbered Man of Mist and Water'), is generally agreed to be Xu Zhen, a novelist whose lifespan straddled the end of the Ming dynasty and beginning of the Qing dynasty. While the characters and storyline are more or less unchanged in *Fugui qiyuan*, the latter is a much-abridged 'edition' and contains numerous graph (character) and grammatical errors.

Comparing it to the edition of *Taohuaying* in the modern *Siwuxie huibao* collection (published in the mid-1990s in Taiwan), we find this renamed edition is of such poor quality that it appears to have been printed without having been proofread. There are glaring errors, such as the incorrect rendering of the name of the famed early Ming artist Shen Shitian (Shen Zhou 1428-1509). And in chapter six we find that Xu Zhen's original opening – a tightly composed passage of approximately 100 words that considers the place of homoerotic attraction in Chinese tradition ('When even august emperors were fond of it, should we be surprised that it is so thick on the ground today') – has been so radically abridged in *Fugui qiyuan* that the 38 graphs that remain convey little more than nonsense.

It is clear that the later 'editor' was interested only in preserving licentious detail. Everyday episodes, literary passages and auto-commentary have been pared down to brief, dull and insipid passages, while erotic description always remains carefully preserved. A work of this kind may be evidence that there was a readership interested primarily in titillation, a market serviced by cheaply available forms of pornography stripped of any literary pretension.

## An erotic tale of its time

While it suffers from all the above deficits, *Fugui qiyuan* (and its antecedent) is perhaps not all that atypical for a certain style of erotic fiction published from the late Ming through the early Qing. The outline of the narrative and plot are quite predictable and conventional. Along the same lines as, for example, *The Carnal Prayer Mat*, the novel unfolds around a young gifted scholar who pursues liaisons with a great number of beautiful women. Wei Rong is young and handsome, from a wealthy family and effortlessly attracts any 'beauty' he casts his eyes upon. He also excels as a talented sexual partner, and with the aid of Daoist aphrodisiacal lore he manages to establish a large household of many concubines. At the end of the tale he ascends, with his entire entourage, to a life among the immortals in the celestial spheres.

There is little here that makes this novel stand out from among the many other 'conventional' popular erotic tales of its period and that may be why it was largely forgotten as time went by. Nevertheless, there are a number of things worth noting about chapter six, entitled, 'A drunken fish is robbed of its rear courtyard flower', which revolves around male homoerotic practices between two men of high social standing. While it is often the case that something common and conventional in one era may seem unusual in another, we need not be surprised when a homoerotic episode is included in a Chinese novel that otherwise describes the licentious carryings on of men and women.

There is no doubt that Wei Rong has a soft spot for female beauty and takes every opportunity to engage in lovemaking; neither social background, age nor even marriage are ever

cause for hesitation. At the same time, an abundance of love stories or erotic tales produced in the 17th century in China included at least one or two homoerotic episodes interwoven with the main narrative threads, and *Fugui qiyuan* is only following an already established convention when it includes two such strands. In the first the merchant Qiu Munan, a wealthy landlord from Nanjing, becomes irresistibly attracted to Wei's fine looks and proceeds to lure him into his confidence. He plies him with drink, and when Wei collapses in a drunken stupor he rapes him. What is most unusual in this episode is that, despite this insult to the young scholar's high status, they then proceed to become firm friends, largely as a result of the merchant making his comely young wife available to Wei.

In the second homoerotic episode Wei enjoys dalliances with a young waif he has taken in as his page. As we should expect in late imperial China, in this (consensual) episode, in contrast with the first, the young scholar is the active party. What is notable, however, is that the episode with the merchant takes up the whole of chapter six and their friendship continues as a strand through subsequent chapters until the novel's end. It is in the extensive treatment of this earlier episode, where the hero ends up ignoring the insult of penetration, that this minor example of erotic literature falls outside the run-of-the-mill homoerotic cliché found in other novels from the early Qing. However, while the episode where Wei Rong is penetrated by the merchant is somewhat outside the mould, the way in which the episode is set up, and also the way in which it is complemented (or even compensated) by his own dalliances with the page (where the direction of penetration is 'conventional'), it actually functions as a vehicle for rehearsing and accenting the accepted status rules surrounding male-love.

## The sacrosanct 'rear courtyard'

This is made clear if we examine the episode in more detail. It is love at first sight when the merchant meets the young scholar, who has come looking for a room to rent while attending the provincial examinations in Nanjing. Qiu has a very pretty young wife (Huashi), but he is only attracted to young men (his name is a homophone for 'adore males'). The following day he becomes increasingly frustrated because he knows that while he has a regular relationship with a young melon-seller, status rules do not permit him to approach his young tenant. Recognising Wei's soft spot for the opposite sex, he guesses that even if he rapes Wei while he is drunk and defenceless, his anger will be assuaged if his beautiful wife is offered as an unspoken compensation. He even calculates that it would be best if this was arranged to take place as soon as Wei begins to emerge from his stupor. At this point, besotted with Wei, he determines, 'If by any chance my love could be satisfied, and then Wei does not forgive me, I would feel no regret at losing life and property'. As it turns out, Wei is intensely angry over being raped, but his anger subsides under the unrestrained ministrations of Qiu's young wife.

What Qiu Munan has done so far is, in effect, to propose a new paradigm for deciding the propriety of same-sex relations between men. And it makes both structural and historical sense that he is a merchant. Structurally, it is clear that his model is one that makes sexual relations a 'good' that can be exchanged in a deal like any other. We might even call it a barter-based model, if not a ledger-based model. Historically, we know that from the Song dynasty scholar-official values and mercantile values were in a relationship of constant tension.

Qiu Munan is able to use a merchant's guile to make an assault on the supposedly sacrosanct 'rear courtyard' of a scholar. Reflecting social attitudes of the time, as well as the application of the law, Ming and Qing novels usually portray homoerotic behaviour between elite men and their (sometimes shared) servants, entertainers or catamites. The inequality of these relationships was never questioned, nor did same-sex relationships within these boundaries cause any social offence; instead, they were taken as a sign of a literatus's romantic lifestyle. Examples of same-sex relationships between upper-class men are harder to find, in either life or literature, but allusions and references to the scandal such a

union would cause are numerous; and, in particular, penetration caused intense shame for the penetrated.

## Mercantile morals?

Given the accepted balances pertaining between social status and sexuality at the time, Wei's forgiveness of Qiu, and their subsequent friendship, is quite extraordinary. There is no question that Wei feels wronged, but Qiu manages to make a deal that overrides morality. Perhaps we are meant to believe that what Qiu's wife has to offer is so priceless it erases all debt or crime: 'I will take you as payment for his crime... We are all open-minded people. Why should I fix upon his past misdemeanour and deny him the opportunity to reform?'

At one level the narrative provides a running ledger, and at another level a running joke. No sooner does Wei forgive Qiu than he asks him if he can continue to see his wife when he is away on business. Qiu's reply is quite businesslike: 'When men find themselves in such friendly agreement, why should they squabble over a woman?' And having penetrated Wei once, Qiu's desire appears to have been completely satisfied, and they become friends as if nothing had ever happened. The business of deal-making has united them, and in subsequent chapters they are seen doing their best to assist each other to get on in life. Qiu is happy to allow Huashi to become one of Wei's concubines; Wei presents Qiu with his own page, Guangge. A common device for ending tales of sexual adventure, the hero achieves immortality. Before that occurs in this case, Qiu leaves to become a Buddhist mendicant, but first he presents Wei with his entire household, including maids and servants. Not long after, Wei also decides it is time to discard all fame and wealth, and he ascends into the realm of immortals with his wife and five concubines (including Huashi).

While the tendency in 17th century erotic novels to dismiss chastity, social status or sexual taboos may have been in part fed by a fashion for high-minded libertine ideals of individual freedom and expression, this strand in *Fugui qiyuan* and its 17th century predecessor suggest that models of mercantile exchange may also have contributed to thinking about moral alternatives. How much should we read into this?

Perhaps in *Taohuaying* chapter six was originally meant to be little more than the imaginative development of a homoerotic interlude in what is in the end a rather formulaic exploration of erotic possibilities. Like much erotic writing from the 16th and 17th centuries, while there is an abundance of rollicking action, *Taohuaying* places as much (if not more) emphasis on exploring social permutations as it does on describing physical contortions. When all the permutations have been explored there is nowhere left for the narrative to go, except upward into the celestial spheres (the authors were not interested in heading downward). In contrast, *Fugui qiyuan*, a later and much corrupted edition of the same tale, attempts to divest itself of everything extraneous to the bedroom scenes. Its readership may have become bored with the 'social titillation' that so fascinated 17th century readers. ◀

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# ‘Danzanravjaa is my hero!’: the transformation of

This is quite possibly the first literary critical paper to be written in English on contemporary Mongolian poetry.<sup>1</sup> As such, it would seem fitting that the title used here repeats the words of the poet Ayurzana. That he, a member of Ulaanbaatar’s young, cool intelligentsia, should see the 19th century poet-monk Danzanravjaa as his hero provides us with a powerful socio-cultural platform from which to observe how these young poets work in a modern idiom while remaining aware of their Mongolian heritage.

## G-A AYURZANA (1970)

*Standing in the silence of night, my mind stupefied,  
Who was it flashed across my dulled sight?  
This vision was as incense through the darkness,  
A path of sadness hanging in the air.*

*I stumbled along a lighted path,  
Seeking what remained in my memory.  
A rose garden nearby, and  
I fell into the past.*

*And suddenly I returned.*

*That perfume!  
I'd fallen for it utterly, had picked it, breathed it in.  
O, what flower was it?*

*Was this truly someone's love  
Floating around me? Or a shooting star?  
Or else, in the silence of night,  
Was it a shining visage floating past?*

*There, a thousand suns burning in my heart,  
The words of the Buddhas in the infinite sky  
Flew like a crane, leading the flock into spring.*

*Some suns fade from existence.  
Some words vanish from the world.  
And some tumble into my eyes as snow,  
And strike the earth.*

*Anemones, shocked into life by the melting earth,  
Have gripped my mind.  
I sensed their new buds, autumn's evening  
Perfume, from a thousand years away.*

*the sound of rain falling on the felt roof  
the sound of rain striking the felt roof  
the sound of sound striking the felt roof  
...repeating without repeating...*

*the sound of rain falling on the felt roof  
the sound of rain striking the felt roof  
the sound of sound striking the felt roof  
...repeating without repeating...*

(translated by Simon Wickham-Smith)

## TS BAVUUDORJ (1971)

### A VERY BIG, WHITE ELEPHANT

*A very big, white elephant  
Has passed through the world.  
He's left with the calmness  
Of the mighty ocean.  
He's left, uprooting  
The serenity of the earth.  
He's left, shaking  
Dew from the topmost leaves.  
He's returned, disturbing the sun gods.  
He's left, commandeering  
Golden temples, shining with blood.  
He's left, waking  
Grey peaks under snow.  
He's left, shutting the eyes of the mighty.  
He's returned, shaking East and West.  
A very big, white elephant  
Has passed through the world.  
A very big, white elephant...*

Simon Wickham-Smith

I have written here previously on the life and work of the 5th Noyon Khutugt Danzanravjaa.<sup>2</sup> Danzanravjaa's education provided him with a vast corpus of religious and literary material from which he could draw, and it is the use he made of this tradition which characterises his poetic output. Structurally, his technique makes frequent use of the head-and-tail form, in which each line of a stanza begins with the same letter and ends with the same word. What is contextually most interesting here is that this is clearly a technique based upon orality: repetition through the stanzas serves as an *aide memoire*. Over time, however, the metalinguistic aspects of orthographic and aural structure have been subsumed into the form of the genre and the genre itself has become integral to the literature.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of subject matter, too, Danzanravjaa begins from the traditional topoi of Mongolian poetry – nature, the seasons, the nomadic life – and interweaves them with practical advice based on Buddhist wisdom to produce what in many ways is a radical and unusual corpus. In fact, it was precisely the accessibility of his lyric to the nomadic stock from which he came that so set him apart from the religious establishment.

Perhaps, then, it is a striking conceit to frame Danzanravjaa as the precursor to the work of today's young Mongolian poets. But he is just a frame. The new voices of Mongolian poetry live in a society where national pride and tradition are being deliberately focussed on the future and out into the wider world. Young poets are discovering a way to combine the Mongolian poetic tradition with a Western sensibility and are thus creating what might tentatively be designated a new strand of world literature.

### The nomadic life: dreams and visions

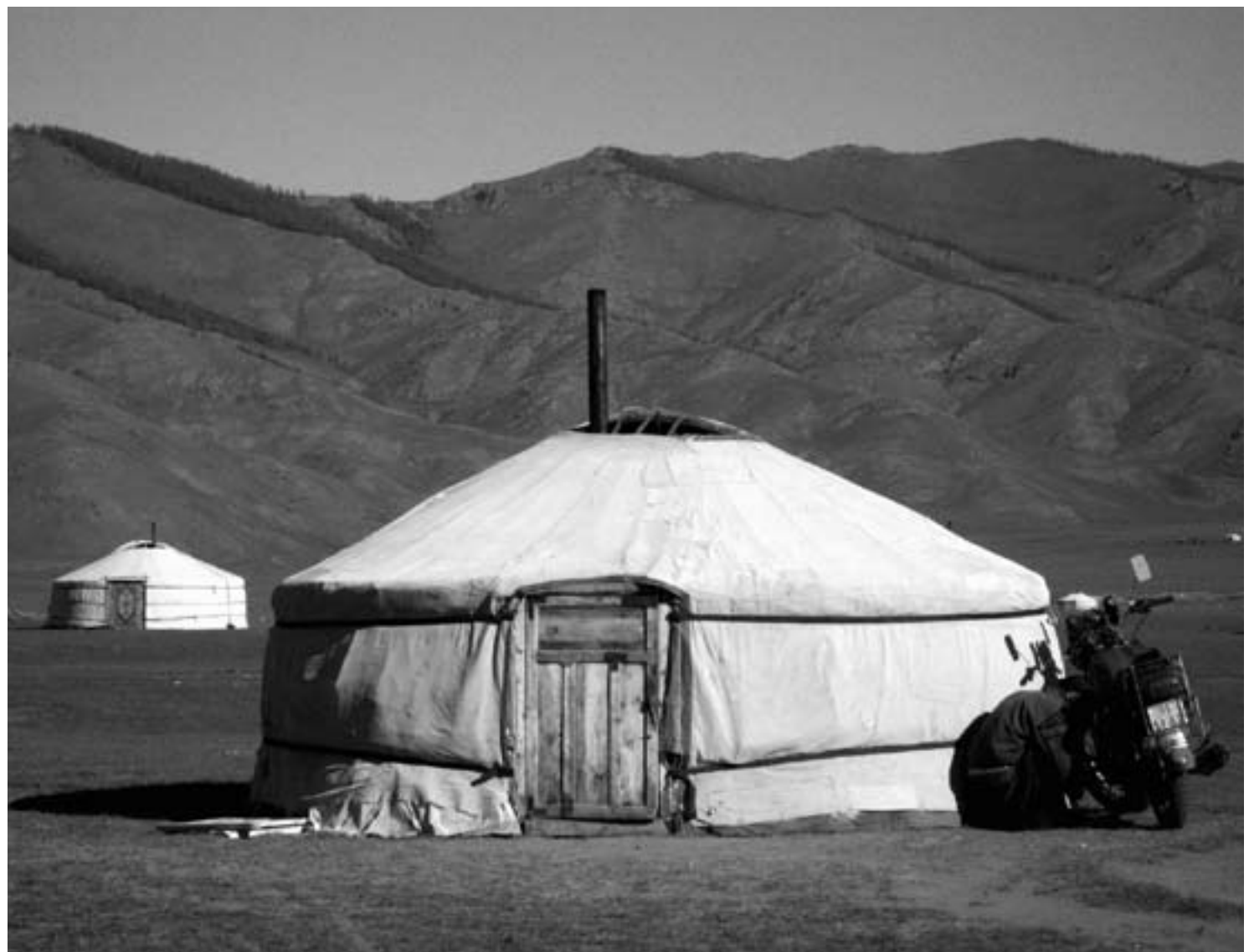
A cursory glance through the pages of Mongolian poetry<sup>4</sup> will reveal that, as is the case with Mongolian culture as a whole, the experience of dreams and visions is central to the poetic aesthetic. Indeed, the repetition founded in orality is a kind of

enchantment, the creation of a dream state through alliteration and echo.

In fact, it is more a memory than a dream, but a memory caught in the clasp of melancholy, which characterises much of this poetry. Take, for instance, Ölziitögs's poem *In your absence*. For me, the overwhelming loss expressed in this poem is a temporary loss, and this emphasises the feeling that her lover (presumably) is going to return. But this is a poem about vision, and Ölziitögs's vision holds a powerful image to which she can open only in the darkness: 'In the dark, in the dark alone, you appear / Where the whole world, time and existence, grow dim'. This is more than simply a vision in her mind of her lover's image; it is a revelation of a love which is found in the world beyond the senses.

Ayurzana, who has claimed, *Danzanravjaa is my hero!*, deals with a similar theme in his poem 'Standing in the silence of night'. It is interesting to compare the work of these two poets, as the ideas within their poems seem to relate closely to one another. The relation between the work of Ayurzana and Ölziitögs is further enhanced by the information that they are married to each other. Whilst I do not want to presume any creative similarity from this information, it would seem pointless to ignore the obvious emotional input given the nature of both of their poetries. Here, for instance, we have another poem concerned with the physical senses – of smell rather than vision – but Ayurzana's approach is more narrative. His narrative, in fact, seems to range from a kind of wakeful dream (in which he is caught unawares by a presence, a scent) through memory (again catalysed by scent – 'A rose garden nearby, and / I fell into the past') to a feeling of disassociation in the final verse that, in some ways, resolves the poem into an eternal mystery.

What strikes me in particular when comparing the work of these two poets is the ways in which they address the physical world. Nature and our relationship with it have been central to Mongolian poetry for centuries: for instance, this relationship is one of Danzanravjaa's principal themes and the medium





# tradition in contemporary Mongolian poetry

through which he frequently chooses to express his understanding of Buddhist teachings. But the turning of the seasons is so commonplace a focus for both contemporary and premodern literature that it would be extraordinary not to find it in the works of even the youngest and most urban(e) of writers.

So whereas Ayurzana chooses to express nature through a dream of concrete (or at least explicit) images (the silence of night, a lighted track, a rose garden) and evokes scent, that most fragile of senses, to express his sudden emotion, Ölziitögs uses the visible solidity of phenomena (an apple, a hat, butterflies, a cloud) to express something that is absent from her and yet felt absolutely.

## Accepting pain and sadness

The complex interweaving of images in and between these two poems can be extrapolated to the work of other poets. The signature poem of Enkhboldbaatar, one of the founders of the poetry collective UB Boys,<sup>5</sup> expresses a sense of desperation and confinement relative to the feelings evoked by Ayurzana and Ölziitögs. 'I sit in a darkened room', Enkhboldbaatar writes in his poem *The Set (Absolute Values)* extending the idea of confinement into another of the standard themes of Mongolian literature, the idea of facing the world, with all its difficulties, in a direct and self-aware way. Of course, this theme is also central to Buddhist literature, but there is perhaps a harsher – or at least a stronger – tendency in Mongolian literature (and arguably in Mongolian society as a whole) to accept pain and sadness, which can be seen in part as a manifestation of Danzanravjaa's influence. For Danzanravjaa was scathing in his criticism of people who refused to acknowledge the truth that was right in front of them, with all its problems and cruelties: when we look at Enkhboldbaatar's poem, then, we should take into account not only his personal experience but also the historical feeling expressed by poets such as Danzanravjaa.<sup>6</sup>

The stifling quality of this poem closes around us even as we read; we are forced to feel the poet's misery and futility. The one outside reference, to the moon, 'Like a woman's eyes, gazing', is so dulled and non-committal that its almost total lack of effect is startling. And, later, when the moon reappears, the effect is again to plunge the poet more deeply into his grief, a kind of lunacy or night madness in which emotions are heightened and desperation is made more profound.

How interesting, too, that the poet 'feel[s] freedom in the darkness'. But this darkness is a natural darkness and, finally, he exchanges this reassuring darkness for the personal inner darkness of 'my grief and sadness...'. The ellipsis here, more frequently used in Mongolian poetry than perhaps in Western poetries, seems to me to emphasise the poet's understanding of his own futile and pointless life.

These three poets discuss the relationship between the inner and outer worlds, their inner and outer lives. This is of course not an aspect exclusive to Mongolian poetry, but I would argue that the deep sense of feeling for, and direct relationship to, nature is characteristic of Mongolian literature, at least from the earliest written sources. The nomadic instinct that informs Central Asian literature as a whole brings to the fore not only the earth and its creatures beneath, but also the heavens and the stars above; the entire cosmos takes on a central role.

## External influences: haiku and the Buddha

The literature of neighbouring cultures has been a constant influence on Mongolian poetry. I have already mentioned the nomadic literatures of Central Asia, but of course the Buddhist poetry of Tibet and China has also exercised a powerful effect. Although Danzanravjaa never actually visited Tibet, the general monastic and specific Buddhist education that he received shows throughout his oeuvre: there are direct references to the poems of the 6th Dalai Lama, with whom he is often compared, and also less obvious references to the *glu* and *gzhas* traditions of both secular and religious Tibetan poetry.<sup>7</sup>

But in the contemporary world, Mongolian poetry has been influenced by cultures further abroad. Erdenetsogt's *Mongolian Haiku* series uses the traditional Japanese form in a loose way: rather than presenting an image followed by a short concluding idea (in the sense preferred by Basho), Erdenetsogt often presents a single image over the three lines. So these are not haiku per se, but rather an adapted form, namely, Mongolian haiku: this recalls the way in which the premodern traditions of nature poetry and Buddhist poetry have been given a more modern voice.

As with traditional Japanese haiku, Erdenetsogt's Mongolian haiku evoke nature: the examples printed here are representative of the entire collection, with references to flowers, the

## SORROW

*I have come crawling to you,  
Through arrogance and sudden drops in temperature,  
Through the colours of the world and  
Through the suppression of dreams.  
I want to love you  
With the kind of sweet affection  
That can dwell only in a human being.  
In my heart I mourn one thing,  
That I've not been able to love another.  
I regret I'm not a swallow on the wild steppe,  
That I cannot soar to meet another.  
I want to love you, to  
Open the eyes of cross-legged Buddhas.  
I've such a magic storm –  
I want to make a lily in the snow glance up.  
I've such a shining wind...  
I want to love you...but  
In the hazy smile of this moment  
I can't come close to you.  
In this cold glow of arrogance,  
I cannot come to you.  
I wanted only to love you...*

## MUSIC

*Times of loud noise inside the ger  
Of the fire's smell...  
The lion protects our heritage in the moonlight.  
Father's dreams underfoot,  
Mother's fingers on her rosary,  
Only Buddha in their minds...  
Their calm, clear eyes are heavy, their  
Mantras flying,  
An ornament of sound...*

(translated by Simon Wickham-Smith)

## L ÖLZIITÖGS (1972)

*Looking at mountains, I feel I am a mountain.  
Looking at mist and haze, I feel I am a cloud.  
After the rain has fallen, I feel that I am grass, and  
When sparrows start to sing, I remember I am morning.*

*I am not a human, that's for sure.*

*When stars flare up, I feel I am the darkness  
When girls shed their clothes, I remember I am spring  
When I smell the desire of everybody in this world,  
I realise how my quiet heart is a fish's.*

*I am not a human, that's for sure.*

*Under the colourful sky, an immense EMPTINESS  
Starting from today I am only...*

## A SECRET WHISPERED TO GOD

*What do you like, God asked me in a whisper.  
The sound of the church bells,  
The lit candle melting down,  
The snow, shining in the darkness,  
And my Bombuulei's smile.*

*What don't you like, God asked me in a whisper.  
The sound of the church bells,  
The lit candle melting down,  
The snow, shining in the darkness,  
And my son's smile.*





D ENKHBOLDBAATAR (1971)

A SET (ABSOLUTE VALUES)

.1,56,..oO∞.E,E,ooooT∞..,∞

point (not a new start),  
 one (this is the real start),  
 comma (links a numerical sequence),  
 fifty-six (not an age, not an order, not anything),  
 comma (this could be the end),  
 comma (but this one's a mistake),  
 another point (this delimits the values),  
 zero (the correct form) and, behind it,  
 the letter O (same shape, different meaning),  
 infinity (this is the continuation),  
 point (the limit of the endless infinite),  
 the letter E (this is the end),  
 comma (starting over), and again  
 the letter E (but this is where it starts),  
 comma (signal),  
 zero zero zero zero (four places),  
 the letter T (meaningless),  
 ∞ (the most amazing [being other]),  
 point (geometrical), and again  
 point (literal),  
 comma (this is how it ends. It means...),  
 continuing (this indicates the beginning)...

I sit in a darkened room,  
 Thinking about this and that.  
 The dull moon peers in through the window,  
 Like a woman's eyes, gazing.  
 The clouds move awhile,  
 Plunging me into darkness.  
 My sight is far away now,  
 I feel freedom in the darkness.  
 From behind the clouds, the moon reappears.  
 Again, the room closes its walls around me.  
 I cannot see beyond the walls,  
 And close my eyes in desperation.  
 I leave behind the freedom of the dark,  
 And sit amid my grief and sadness...

... (EMPHATIKOS)

Live not in song but in tears, and  
 Don't be too frail when you're in love.  
 Be aware that you can barely see through rancour, and  
 In forgiveness, that all of us are sinned against by life.  
 No, no, our fate has always been  
 To be an ordinary and downtrodden servant.  
 We have looked up to the sun,  
 We have had no history up to now.  
 My right hand tightly envelopes my left,  
 My heart tortures my brain,  
 Else desire and trust will gnaw themselves,  
 And my dear body will be mutilated.  
 We may oppose the fury of our fate,  
 But its hook will trick us,  
 As the roe deer is struck down by the hunter's arrow,  
 And, helpless, collapses to its knees.  
 Oh yes, we are always slaves,  
 We are born into the hands of destiny,  
 And there we die. But we must fight and,  
 If we fight, then death will be acceptable.  
 So live not in song, but in tears,  
 Live to endure, to struggle, and to struggle once again,  
 Like a sword, like a sharp knife, and  
 Barely able to see through righteous anger.  
 But, at the end, one thing:  
 In this struggle, you will never be victorious.  
 You will never win. And that's because  
 There's nothing good in anything.

(translated by Simon Wickham-Smith)

seasons, horses, the moon... all these images are central to the Mongolian aesthetic sensibility and, taken together, the entire collection of poems present this traditional aesthetic in a modern form.

The principal structural difference within these poems is between a form more in keeping with the Japanese model ('mirages canter / along the mountain cliffs / the sun still burns untamed') and the single-image of Erdenetsogt's creation ('waterweeds, swimming / like fish in a pool / under a grass-green moon'). In my opinion, these haiku indicate one especially significant feature of contemporary poetry in Mongolia: the interest and enthusiasm of poets for experimentation with basic forms.

**Buddha in a gulag of form**

But while Erdenetsogt's haiku exemplifies the general tendency among young poets toward experimentation with common forms, almost none of them attempt to radically experiment with form itself. This is probably owing to the interplay of aesthetic conservatism in Mongolian culture and the fear of novelty and boundary-breaking that characterised Soviet culture after its initial radicalisation during the 1920s. Thus there is no evidence of L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poetry (a movement in experimental poetry), no abstraction, no fragmentation, no visual poetry.

I have been able to find only one poem, Enkhboldbaatar's 'A Set (Absolute Values)', that pushes in any way against the envelope of form. It is a simple, line-by-line exposition of a series of numbers, letters and symbols. What appears to be a random list has, however, been infiltrated by additional punctuation and irrelevant letters, and the feeling evoked as the description continues is one of hopeless surreality. Given the arrow that ends the sequence, which 'indicates the beginning', this hopeless surreality is set to continue ad nauseam.

In many ways, this abstract and apparently experimental poem repeats the feeling of the Enkhboldbaatar poem discussed above. Both poems emphasise a sense of futility, of spiralling misery, while conjuring (both literally and metaphorically) with ideas of freedom and darkness. We can possibly see a source of these feelings in the situation of Soviet and post-Soviet Mongolia: the apparent hopelessness of being confined within a dictatorship has given way to perhaps an equally hopeless democracy, where totalitarian control has been swapped for a nearly lawless free-for-all. But we can also see that other strong influence on Mongolian culture, Buddhism. For Buddhism offers personal freedom but appears

also to deny the sensate world; it is frequently portrayed as *via negativa*, so much so that to combine it with an upbringing under Soviet control might very likely give rise to feelings of desperation.

This combination is at work in Erdenetsogt's poem 'Sketch' Neither the image seen, nor the melody heard, can be recorded, and the poet remains frustrated. But the disconnect here is metaphysical; it brings to mind the inability to remember an entirety, how Buddhism shows the fleeting quality of experience and, thereby, shows the poet the immediacy of his experience and thus of his mind. So the poem is also imbued with a feeling of acceptance, that this is how the world, the universe, is. This is in itself a realisation of wisdom, an acceptance of the nature of reality, and expresses the influence of Buddhism upon Mongolian culture.

**Language over meaning: the sound of thoughts conveyed**

However, we can no longer characterise Buddhist thought as inherent to the Mongolian psyche. Seventy years of MPRP domination reduced explicit Buddhist practice to a minimum, although domestic and international efforts are trying to revive it. A more coherent understanding of Buddhism's place in the contemporary literary scene can be found in the work of Bavuudorj. On a superficial level, there are copious references to Buddhism throughout his work; on a deeper level, however, it is the atmosphere created by his language in which Bavuudorj's approach to spirituality is revealed. This atmosphere relates perhaps to a kind of animated aesthetic, as though the 'real' world were somehow crossed with a cartoon. The imagery thus becomes somewhat distorted and simpler, though in places it is considerably more potent and vivid.

'A Very Big White Elephant', for instance, refers to the 'precious elephant', which represents the strength of an enlightened mind, one of the Buddha's seven royal attributes. So while this is a poem about a marauding elephant, it is also a poem about the nature of the enlightened mind. This particular approach to Buddhism might be seen as a kind of spiritual re-evaluation, even revolution. After all, this elephant has not only 'commandeer[ed] / Golden temples, shining with blood', he has also 'left, shutting the eyes of the mighty and returned, shaking East and West'. That this appears to be only a reference to the precious elephant, rather than a poem specifically about it, leaves the semiotic field open for individual interpretation, not unlike the fundamental openness of Buddhist practise.





On the spiritual level, then, 'A Very Big, White Elephant' is slightly unhinged, a dervish of a poem, where the poet's created world is more conducive to ecstasy than to contemplative calm. 'Music', on the other hand, is a quiet and diaphanous poem. Dwelling in the past, it is a conjuring of memory, of a family scene where harmony is effected through an upholding of tradition and Buddhist practice. In this way, we can see how Bavuudorj presents the traditional, *ger*-dwelling nomadic lifestyle within the context of a peaceful remembrance. There are commonalities here with other contemporary Mongolian poets, not least of them Mend-Oyoo, one of the most important voices of the generation prior to Bavuudorj's. But among these young poets, the language of vision and memory points backwards to the national cultural tradition and forwards to a new way of looking at the changing world of Mongolian society: neither wholly nomadic nor wholly urban, neither wholly Buddhist nor wholly atheist.

Contemporary Mongolian poetry has suffered from being reared during the cultural isolation of the Soviet era, but it is nonetheless a vibrant force among Central Asian poetries. The work of these five young writers not only addresses the common themes of nomadic literatures but also the Buddhist tradition with which Mongolians are now starting to reconnect. In this way, then, these poets are closely following the tradition of Danzanravjaa, expressing their ideas of love and separation, of spirituality, of the natural world in a straightforward manner and with direct language. Furthermore, the almost total lack of formal experimentation bespeaks an emphasis on content over form, which reflects the practical nature of a nomadic culture.

But at the root of these poems there remains the visionary, dreamlike quality, a thread stretching back through the history of Mongolian literature. This quality is frequently expressed more in the language than in the meaning; it is the way in which ideas are expressed, the sound of the thoughts conveyed. Sound in the original is all but lost in translation, for translation can only attempt to indicate the original. But if attempt is all we can do, then attempt we must, for translation is a tool that broadens audiences, gets poets heard, and thus encourages a deeper investigation of this literature, as much in Mongolia itself as in the West. ◀

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#### Notes

- 1 I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Elizabeth Myhr in helping me to organise my thoughts regarding the relationship between Mongolian and Western poetic forms
- 2 I have been unable to find any criticism, in fact, on any contemporary Mongolian literature in any Western language. I would be happy to hear from anyone who has information on previous studies.
- 3 Wickham-Smith, Simon. Spring 2006. 'The Way of the World'. *IIAS Newsletter* (40).
- 4 This is of course not only the case in Mongolian: it is noteworthy how many people still feel that poetry has to exhibit rhyme and rhythm in order to be poetry.
- 5 There is no space here to look beyond the confines of contemporary Mongolian poetry, but the anthologies mentioned in the bibliography, one compiled and translated by Charles Bawden and another by myself and Tsog Shagdarsüren, will provide the reader with sufficient comparative evidence.
- 6 This group was founded in 1989 by Enkhboldbaatar, Dashmunkh, and Nyam-Ochir and is at the forefront of the small but influential Ulaanbaatar literary scene. The group's English motto sums them and indeed all the poets discussed in this paper up perfectly: 'We are not new, but we don't want to be old'.
- 7 I should also mention here another strand of poetry prevalent in the 20th century, namely, the underground, anti-communist *samizdat* tradition. This had its own feeling of desperation and misery and humour but, again, is beyond the scope of this essay.
- 8 Glu and gzhaz are short verses, used by both spiritual and secular poets, to express specific and immediate ideas, in a way quite similar to Japanese haiku. Generally consisting of two couplets, these styles were used by poets such as the 6th Dalai Lama, Drukpa Kunley, and Milarepa and exist in the present day in the form of repartee, work or political songs.

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Translator of Mongolian and Tibetan literature



## TERDENETSOGT (1971)

### SKETCH

*When I thought about the World  
An unusual portrait revived  
As I took my brush to paint it  
Things were without shape...*

*When I thought about the Universe  
A multi-coloured melody picked up  
As I took my pen to write it down  
Whispers were with no words and a colourless ink...*

### VERSE UPON AN OFFERING SCARF

1.  
*A poet's verse,  
Whispered to autumn birds, is the teaching of God,  
is the song of coming back,  
is the fate of being left behind.*  
*A poet's song,  
Offered to the winter moon, is a burning love,  
is the wisdom of struggle,  
is an echo from the mountains watching over us.*  
*A poet's feelings,  
Caressing a spring flower, the tears of beauty,  
are an undimmed sadness.  
are a credulous desire.*  
*A poet's character,  
Brimming over the summer skies, is a flash of stars,  
is the sound of the universe,  
is the garden of space.*  
*A poet's verse,  
Offered to humanity, is a song of freedom,  
is the wind moving a pennant,  
is a point to lean upon, a body to wear away.*  
*A poet's words,  
Famous throughout Mongolia, are the laws of the state,  
are a decree of the state  
are an oath to the state*

2.  
*A poet is a glimmering of the universe.  
A poet is a magnificent flash of light.  
A poet is the whip of the sky.  
A poet is the messenger of God.*

### FROM MONGOLIAN HAIKU

*I dreamed  
a smile long gone  
next to my pillow, the moon*

*mirages canter  
along the mountain cliffs  
the sun still burns untamed*

*waterweeds, swimming  
like fish in a pool  
under a grass-green moon*

*a string of birds  
and clouds leave flowers  
with eyes of tears*

*as spring days  
long for rain,  
my thoughts find no rest*

### IN YOUR ABSENCE

*In my eyes there are butterflies, a felt hat, mirror and a candle.  
In my eyes there are women, an apple, trees and a bird.  
In my eyes there are clocks, a key, cloud and the sky.  
In my eyes there is everything, except for you.*

*Even the wings of the butterfly and the nice felt hat cause me sadness.  
Because you are not here, the sun is not yellow and the tree is not green.  
If I can't see you and I can't hear you,  
I don't need ears and eyes, I don't need anything.*

*In the dark, in the dark alone, you appear,  
There, where the whole world, time and existence, grow dim.  
I will close my eyes, therefore.  
Oh, this burdening light, this burdening sun...*



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# Southeast Asia: an additional bibliographical tool

Antweiler, Christoph. 2004. *Southeast Asia: A Bibliography on Societies and Cultures*. Singapore: ISEAS, 111 pages, ISBN 9 873825 877062

Jürg Schneider

In spite of the abundance of printed bibliographies and increasing reliance on internet-based tools and information, this bibliography can usefully support general and introductory reading on Southeast Asia in the social sciences.

There are plenty of bibliographies that cater for the needs of researchers on Southeast Asia. Kemp's relatively recent (1998) *Bibliographies of Southeast Asia* published by KITLV lists over 5,380 bibliographies of which 433 refer to the region as a whole. The remaining close to 5,000 entries refer to more specialised subject or geographical bibliographies. The magnificent indices of Kemp's publication greatly facilitate efforts to find specialised bibliographies on the region, or any of its parts.

Contrary to what its title seems to indicate, Antweiler's (2004) contribution, *Southeast Asia – A Bibliography on Societies and Cultures*, is not a comprehensive reference bibliography of publications treating individual societies and cul-

tures within Southeast Asia. His aim is rather to provide an 'orientation about general books on the whole region as well as on books about specific topics which are trans-nationally relevant within Southeast Asia' (Antweiler 2004:3). Perceiving the lack of short, general and interdisciplinary bibliographies featuring publications on Southeast Asia from a general (regional) or disciplinary point of view, Antweiler has collected about 900 references. These titles are presented in alphabetical order by author name, without annotations. However, deviating from the general rule of a regional focus, some works on specific topics or ethnic groups are included if they are 'of exemplary relevance' or of 'general importance for the region'. In practical terms, this refers to studies that have greatly influenced Southeast Asian research and can now be considered classics, such as Freeman's (1980) study on 'Iban Agriculture'. Evidently, there is a lot of discretion at work here regarding what one would consider a work of exemplary relevance.

Coming with no indices, this book would be difficult to use if it did not include

a CD-ROM with all its contents on a word file. This allowed me to perform a number of searches on the CD-ROM to find out more about the potential uses of the bibliography. A simple full-text search on the term 'history' for example produced around 40 titles, most of which would be of genuine interest to anybody intent to read up on Southeast Asian history. As Antweiler indicates in the preface, the references selected would be to the greatest part relatively recent publications (post 1980s). The English language dominates, but some German and French publications are also included.

Looking for broad introductory material on forest issues in the region, I obtained 15 useful references from a search on 'forest', covering various disciplines, also a good start to get a first overview of the subject. A final example: A search on 'agriculture' yielded nine hits, relatively low given the long importance of the subject to Southeast Asian studies. This indicates that the compilation is also a function of the research interests of the author, and that subjects of similar importance

may have received differential treatment. In addition, search terms need to be quite generic to produce useful results. Also, a certain familiarity with research on Southeast Asia is required to assess the value of a search result as the author provides us with no further information or annotations on the entries selected.

Thus, selectivity and interdisciplinarity can be considered as the two merits of Antweiler's compilation. Drawing from a narrow sample focusing on the region as a whole, search results will tend to be small and focused. The user is spared long lists of hits that he or she would then have to narrow down further. The range of disciplines covered – from anthropology, political science, history, geography to economics – may provide useful leads into any of the disciplines of this vast field of study.

A shortcoming is the lack of a review section introducing the major disciplinary traditions and research areas represented in this selection which would expand on the remarks on selection criteria in the introduction.

In sum, this book – or rather the accompanying CD-ROM – can be used to identify general and comparative studies on Southeast Asia. Thus, it may be useful for those who want to find material for introductory courses on Southeast Asia, but also for researchers of specialized topics within the region who are trying to identify studies with a broader or more comparative view. ◀

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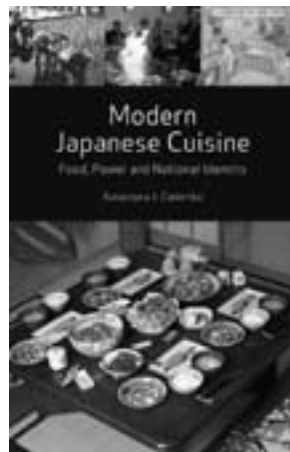
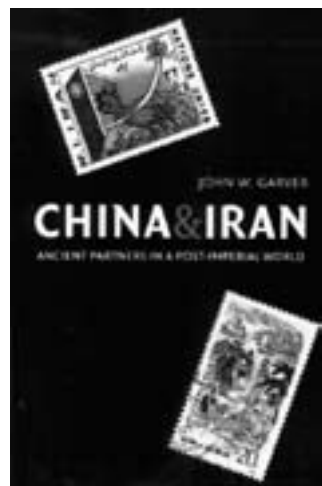
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## China & Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-Imperial World

By John W. Garver  
University of Washington Press, Seattle 2006  
ISBN 0 295 98631 X

In recent years, Iran's nuclear aspirations have dominated its relations with the US and Europe. China stands as Iran's staunchest ally on the UN security Council, as well as its primary source of advanced technology and military assistance, built on centuries of close economic relations. Successive governments of these two ancient and proud nations have reaffirmed their common interests in seeking an Asia free of Soviet expansionism and US unilateral domination.

This interesting and timely book from Garver, (the first of its kind), charts the evolution of Sino-Iranian relations through several phases, including Iran under the shah, the 1979 revolution, and the Iran-Iraq war. China and Iran also explores the contentious debates over Iran's nuclear programmes and China's role in assisting these programmes and supporting Iran's efforts to modernise its military and oil industry infrastructure.



## Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity

by Katarzyna J. Cwiertka  
Reaktion Books, London 2006 ISBN 978 1 86189 298 0

Over the last decade the popularity of Japanese food in the West has increased immeasurably, contributing to the continuing diversification of Western eating habits; but Japanese cuisine itself has evolved significantly since pre-modern times. This book explores the origins of Japanese cuisine as we know it today, investigating the transformations and developments food culture in Japan has undergone since the late 19th century.

Among the key factors in the shift in Japanese eating habits were the dietary effects of imperialism, reforms in military catering and home cooking, wartime food management and the rise of urban gastronomy. Japan's patchwork of diverse regional cuisines became homogenised over time and was replaced by a set of foods and practices with which the majority of Japanese today ardently identify. This book demonstrates that Japanese cuisine as it is currently understood and valued, in spite of certain inevitable historical influences, is primarily a modern invention concocted in the midst of the turbulent events of the late 19th and the 20th centuries.

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka is a recognised expert on the subject of Japanese cuisine and its modern history, and this book is a result of more than a decade of research. It also includes a section on the spread of Japanese food and restaurants in Western countries. *Modern Japanese Cuisine* will be of interest to the general reader interested in Japanese culture and society, as well as to a more specialised audience, such as scholars of Japan, anthropologists and food historians.

## The Urban Generation: Chinese cinema and society at the turn of the 21st century

Editor, Zhang Zhen  
Duke University Press, Durham, NC 2007  
ISBN 978 0 8223 4074 4

Since the early 1990s, while mainland China's state-owned movie studios have struggled with financial and ideological constraints, an exciting alternative cinema has developed. Dubbed the "Urban Generation," this new cinema is driven by young filmmakers who emerged in the shadow of the events at Tiananmen Square in 1989. What unites diverse directors under the "Urban Generation" rubric is their creative engagement with the wrenching economic and social transformations underway in China. Urban Generation filmmakers are vanguard interpreters of the confusion and anxiety triggered by the massive urbanisation of contemporary China. This collection brings together some of the most recent original research on this emerging cinema and its relationship to Chinese society.

The contributors analyse the historical and social conditions that gave rise to the Urban Generation, its aesthetic innovation, and its ambivalent relationship to China's mainstream film industry and the international film market. Focusing attention on the Urban Generation's sense of social urgency, its documentary impulses, and its representations of gender and sexuality, the contributors highlight the characters who populate this new urban cinema – ordinary and marginalized city dwellers including aimless bohemians, petty thieves, prostitutes, postal workers, taxi drivers, migrant workers – and the fact that these "floating urban subjects" are often portrayed by non-professional actors. Some essays concentrate on specific films (such as *Shower* and *Suzhou River*) or filmmakers (including Jia Zhangke and Zhang Yuan), while others survey broader concerns. Together the thirteen essays in this collection give a multifaceted account of a significant, ongoing cinematic and cultural phenomenon.





# The Really Forgotten Korean War

Hawley, Samuel. 2005. *The Imjin War. Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China*. Seoul: The Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch; Berkeley: The Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 664 pages, ISBN 89 954424 2 5

Sem Vermeersch

If the Korean War of 1950-53 is still often labelled the 'forgotten war', then what about the Imjin War of 1592-98? While there are now literally hundreds of works available in Western languages on the Korean War, Samuel Hawley's volume is only the second devoted solely to the Hideyoshi invasions, and the first to give them their full due. Although the war is undoubtedly a key event in world history, even a basic description of its development was until recently unavailable. Previously, the only facet of the invasions that managed to draw the West's attention were the exploits of Admiral Yi Sun-sin and his alleged invention of ironclad 'turtle ships'.

This is a pity, because the Imjin War was a major event in the final stages of the traditional East Asian world order and in the transition to the modern period. The pragmatic, militaristic Japanese, spurred on by the megalomaniac warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi, clashed with the idealistic Confucian bureaucracies of Ming China and Chosŏn Korea. An international war of a kind never seen before, it was perhaps the first example of modern warfare, with the speed, organisation and sheer size of the invading Japanese force unrivalled until the modern period: the more than 150,000 men conquered the 450 kilometres from Pusan to Seoul in just 20 days.

The war is also important in world history as a case study of the effects of Western missionary, trade and military expansion; the muskets that were perfected and used to such devastating effect by the Japanese had been introduced by the Portuguese in the 1540s, while many of the Japanese commanders and their troops were Christian converts. A Spanish missionary accompanying Japanese troops sent back to the West its first eyewitness accounts of Korea, and missionaries or traders also introduced plants from the New World, such as red pepper and tobacco. Hideyoshi's death in 1598 signalled the final retreat of Japanese forces, but his invasions left enduring material and psychological scars on all three countries involved.

## 'Fighting with a river to one's back'

Samuel Hawley provides a comprehensive, in-depth overview of the war, its causes and effects, and the reasons for failure and success in battle. Based on all available English-language secondary sources, primary sources and a few modern Korean studies, the author writes in a lively prose style that includes both dramatic re-enactment of key scenes and more reflective expository passages. The result is an engrossing narrative that reads almost like a novel. Despite the action-packed plot, Hawley avoids reducing actors to stereotypes of heroism or cowardice, good or evil, and does so without ignoring the tragedy of the war.

Although the book offers no new revelations, it accurately reflects current knowledge. In this sense it resembles Stephen Turnbull's *Samurai Invasions*, the only other English language book-length treatment,<sup>1</sup> which is superior in terms of its lavish illustrations but inferior in its detail. Their ordering of events is similar, but their assessment of key issues differs somewhat. One of the most enduring controversies regarding the invasions is whether or not Yi Sun-sin's 'turtle ships' were ironclad. Hawley argues that they were almost certainly not (pages 195-8), while Turnbull leaves some room for doubt (pages 243-4).

Hawley's major strength is his insight on Korean military tactics. While the Chosŏn army suffered from the neglect and discrimination of Confucian officials, it drew heavily from Chinese military classics, which clearly inspired

key military decisions. This is clear in General Sin Rip's defence of Ch'ungju. Hawley shows that his strategy of 'fighting with a river to one's back' was not mere folly but rather based on Chinese military precedent<sup>2</sup>. By cutting off all escape routes for his untrained and inexperienced men, he hoped they would fight for their lives (pages 154-8). While this reliance on Chinese military manuals proved disastrous on land, it worked very well at sea, where the Japanese had no answer for Yi Sun-sin's superior battle strategies.

## Accommodating the lay reader to a fault

The author uses secondary sources responsibly, but the shortcomings of relying mainly on English-language sources are obvious, as many date back to the very beginning of Western scholarship on Korea and Japan. Many primary sources, meanwhile, demand more

rigorous criticism, for they may have served to paint their authors in a flattering light, as may have been the case for Yu Sŏng-nyong's war reflections. Also, a few of the author's generalisations are open to question, for example, that the Koreans did not need Chinese intervention, or that Koreans were good fighters when defending high ramparts and bad ones when standing the ground of their adversaries.

It is disappointing that the author decided to apply romanisation standards very loosely. All diacritics have been omitted, not only the macrons on Japanese vowels and the breves on Korean vowels, but also the apostrophes indicating aspiration. Thus the city of Ch'ŏngju is rendered as 'Chongju' throughout, but with many similar place names (besides Ch'ŏngju there is also Chŏnju and Chŏngju), readers unfamiliar with Korean geography will be confused.



Japanese 'megalomaniac warlord' Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

Moreover, different romanisation systems are often mixed, especially the McCune-Reischauer system and the Revised Romanisation System of Korean; thus we find 'Kwak Jae-u' instead of Kwak Chae-u (Mc-R) or Gwak Jae-u (Revised).

Another annoying feature is the frequent repetition of whole sentences, even paragraphs. Undoubtedly, this is to refresh the reader's memory – the invasions developed on many fronts, and as the narrative moves back and forth some repetition is inevitable – but the author could at least have made an effort to vary his phrasing. Meanwhile, while maps are provided to help readers trace the main stages of the war, they are rather sketchy, and many battle sites are not listed. No maps show battle formations at major engagements.

Perhaps these were editorial decisions in the interest of making the work more accessible to the general reader, but I think they are counterproductive, as they tend to confuse rather than simplify. On the whole, however, the author has succeeded in providing us with a much needed reference work which gives us all the basic facts about a devastating conflict that is crucial in understanding the recent history of northeast Asia. What remains to be done, however, is to move beyond the details of the battlefield into the realm of political, economic, cultural and social history to reveal the larger contours and effects of the Imjin War. <

## notes

1. Turnbull, Stephen. 2002. *Samurai Invasion. Japan's Korean War 1592-1598*. London: Cassell.
2. The expression "*Bei shui yi zhan*", literally "fighting with the river at your back", was often used to mean "either win or die". This expression came from the battle of Jingjinkou, in which the military commander Han Xin deliberately stationed his troops facing the enemy, with their backs to the river, leaving no escape route. The knowledge that there was no way out but victory or death inspired the soldiers to fight harder.

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A turtle ship replica at the military museum in Seoul.



# Music and Manipulation

Brown, Steven and Ulrik Volgsten eds. 2006. *Music and Manipulation. On the Social Uses and Social Control of Music*. New York, London: Berghahn Books. 376 pages. ISBN 1 57181 489 2

Bob van der Linden

Among human beings (and animals), music has always been a key mode of communication, being able to influence individual and group behaviour and to create social cohesion as well as conflict. Rhythm, harmony and melody manipulate and can be manipulated. The interdisciplinary anthology under review contains theoretical analyses by sociologists, humanists and psychologists about the use and control of music in society. It is the first volume 'to address the social ramifications of music's behaviourally manipulative effects, its morally questionable uses and control mechanisms, and its economic and artistic management through commercialisation, thus highlighting not only music's diverse uses at the social level, but also the ever-fragile relationship between aesthetics and morality' (back-cover).

## Music, censorship and colonialism

In 1953, the Indian government founded the National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama in New Delhi for the preservation and development of these arts. The main nationalist themes propagated through this institution were unity through diversity and the cultural and moral uplift of the population through art. For the same reason, the Indian government founded institutions like the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and made use of its monopoly over All India Radio (and later state television) to disseminate national music. By broadcasting Indian classical music on the radio, the government not only aimed at improving the public's knowledge of music but also manipulating its taste. The harmonium, for example, was banned from the radio until the early 1970s. In the footsteps of Rabindranath Tagore and Western ethnomusicologists like A.H. Fox Strangways and Arnold Bake, the Indian government declared that the instrument's fixed-pitch did not confirm Indian flexible intonation and therefore was harmful both to the singer's and audience's perception of musical refinement. Likewise, songs from films that contained elements derived from Western popular music, were banned from radio on moral grounds. Alternately, to breed the idea of unity through diversity, All India Radio frequently broadcasted manipulated sessions of Indian folk music, whereby arrangements of the traditional songs were recorded with studio musicians.

The comparison between India and Pakistan is interesting. Like Christendom, Islam has an ambivalent attitude towards music. The Quran does not mention anything at all about the making of music but it is generally forbidden by the *ulema* on the basis of the *hadith*. Even so, though the Muslim clergy solely legitimises the quasi-mystical chanting of the Quran and the call to prayer, music is played in numerous Islamic folk and art traditions. A good example is *Qawwali* music of South Asia, originally sung and played at the

shrines of Sufi saints (which often also serve as music schools): This music, made famous in the West by the Pakistani singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, is based not on the text of the Quran but on Sufi poetry. As in Independent India, it seemed that initially the Pakistani government was going to support the broadcast of classical music. Yet the clergy's opposition to music prevented this, mainly because the texts of many of the classical songs were connected either with Hindu deities or with the separation of lovers. Accordingly, the Pakistani government adopted a more easy-going attitude, with the result that the market for classical music gradually diminished and popular (mainly film) music became utterly dominant. In 1974, however, the government did establish the Institute of Folk Heritage in Islamabad, which among other things did much for the conservation of Pakistani folk music.

Since the late 19th century in particular, music censorship and canonisation largely took place under the banner of nationalism. Folk music collection, and on its basis the creation of an authentic national music style, was undeniably crucial to this universal process. While in the West this process generally led to modernist developments in music, (partly because of Orientalist and ethnomusicological scholarship), musical progress in the non-West remained much under the influence of (neo-) colonialism.

The hegemony of Western music in colonised cultures led to the subsequent decline of traditional music making because of its relegation from central ritual and social functions to 'native' and 'tribal' contexts, such as entertainment for tourists or celebration of the past. The performances of *gamelans* (orchestras) on Bali and, as discussed by Helen Rees (2000), Naxi music in China's Yunnan province are only two examples. Alternatively, one of the positive effects of colonialism for instance remains the introduction of the Western violin in South Indian Karnatic music (Meunier 2006; Weidman 2006).

## Consensus and conflict

Governmental and religious music censorship is just one of the themes discussed in *Music and Manipulation*. All contributors consider music as a com-

Traditional Indian instruments. www.hinduwisdom.info



munication system and take the social production of music rather than music itself as a starting-point for the understanding of the relationship between music and society. Music can create both consensus and conflict as it is 'a major tool for propagating group ideologies identities, and as such serves as an important device for reinforcing collective actions and for delineating the lines of inclusion for social groups' (p. 2). Importantly, while being part of a trans-national entertainment industry, music today has become a significant economic commodity. On the whole, the role of music in contemporary society raises moral questions in relation to censorship, propaganda, commercialisation and globalisation. Following a preface by the editors and an introduction by Steven Brown, the book is divided in two main segments: eight chapters subdivided in three parts on the social use of music ("Manipulation by Music") and five chapters in two parts on the social control of music ("Manipulation of Music").

In the first part "Music Events", Ellen Dissanayake draws parallels between 'the evolutionary (biological) process of "ritualization" in animal communication and the ritual (cultural) uses of musical behaviour in human rites or ceremonies' (p. 32). Despite the commerciality of music today, she believes that 'it is still possible in music to set aside, to some degree, everyday knowledge and experience so that... we can enter an "extra-ordinary" state, sometimes even feeling transformed' (p. 51). Peter J. Martin argues that going to a modern classical, jazz, pop or any other concert, shows signs of formalised ritual and reinforces identity. Ulrik Volgsten, then, emphasises that both the language around music, that is culturally internalised by the listener, and mass media provide increasing possibilities for musical manipulation. In part two "Background Music", Adrian C. North and David J.

Hargreaves unsurprisingly make clear that 'it is extremely difficult to predict how customers or staff will react to a particular piece of music because any response to music is determined by three interacting factors, namely, the music itself, the listener, and the listening situation' (p. 117). Steven Brown and Töres Theorell question the validity of the dogma that "good music is good for you". In their opinion, twentieth century music therapists and musical healers of all times and places uncritically 'ignore social factors such as listening context, personal history, culture, and even species; in other words, all ignore music as a communication system' (p. 143). Likewise, the idea (based on experiments with rats!) that listening to the music of Mozart enhances performance of spatial reasoning tasks completely overlooks personal and cultural differences. Undoubtedly, music can 'produce immediate physiological and psychological effects on people' but 'the extent to which there is a deterministic relationship between a given musical parameter and its effect, independent of cultural mediation and individual experience' remains to be questioned (p. 143). In part three "Audiovisual Media", the essays by, respectively, Philip Tagg, Rob Strachan and Claudia Bullerjahn consider the manipulative potential of music that occurs in a wide range of mass media - including film, television, commercials and music videos - as well as at music events and as background music.

In part four "Governmental/Industrial Control", Marie Korpe, Ole Reitov and Martin Cloonan focus on religion and government as the two main agents of music censorship. Besides the former Soviet bloc, Nazi Germany, South Africa and the United States (where jazz and rock music have been called the work of Satan), they also refer to the extreme cases of music censorship in Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini and in Afghanistan under the Taliban. Afterwards, Joseph J. Moreno discusses the bizarre employment of music during the Holocaust and Roger Wallis deals with the industrial control of music (i.e. the world of music copyright and the recording industry). In part five "Control by Reuse" Ola Stockfelt looks at the moral questions surrounding the re-use of music. Closely related, Ulrik Volgsten and Yngve Åkerberg investigate the pros and cons of music copyright and, for example, ask themselves: 'who would find it logical to pay a fee to Einstein (or his heritors) every time "his" knowledge would be used for something?' (p. 355). In the epilogue, the editors reconsider the ambiguous relationship between

music and morality without giving any definite resolution.

## The light of Asia

*Music and Manipulation* is a timely book that, despite the overtly theoretical and repetitive style of writing, sets a standard for a new field of study and therefore deserves to be read widely. On the whole, disappointingly, the authors do not provide precise explanations about music's powerful effects on people but, even so, their contributions contain fascinating material for further study. Moreover, the issues dealt with solely concern Western musical practice and their treatment in the light of musical developments in Asia would surely extend our knowledge of music as a mode of communication. Much research is still needed in relation to the emergence of music as a commodity in a global market in the Asian context. In fact, perhaps more than in the West, it is the market rather than religion and/or state that controls (and censors) musical life in Asia today. The endless production of illegal CD's, DVD's and video's as part of a global music market certainly stands in clear opposition to the Western feudal vision of property of which music copyright is part. And how to explain the overall success of background music and Karaoke bars in Asia? What are the musical manipulations behind Bollywood music and why is it always played so incredibly loudly in Indian buses? Equally, the controlling developments and changes in musical style and sound, musical behaviour and musical conceptualisation as a result of colonialism merits further scholarly investigation. Recently, Gregory D. Booth (2005) wrote about the (colonial) history and social role of Indian wedding bands. Likewise, for example, a study about the influence of Christian hymnody and the harmonium on north Indian popular music traditions or one about the manner in which Sikh sacred music was canonised under colonial rule would be welcome. ◀

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Bob van der Linden (Ph.D., University of Amsterdam 2004) is a historian of modern South Asia and a practiced musician. His book *Tradition, Rationality and Social Consciousness: the Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyah Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab* is forthcoming with Manohar in New Delhi and his new research project concerns the relationship between music and empire in Britain and India.  
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# Japanese apologies

Yamazaki, Jane W. 2006. *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study*. London and New York: Routledge. xii, 196 pages, ISBN 0 415 35565 6

Gerhard Krebs

The Japanese government turns a blind eye to the country's colonial and second world war misdeeds – so goes the oft-heard criticism that periodically creates tension throughout the Far East. Jane Yamazaki, however, challenges the view that Japan has never apologised for past crimes, and argues instead that the rest of the world has turned a deaf ear on repeated Japanese expressions of regret. In recent decades Tokyo has apologised several times in different ways ranging from merely making excuses to expressing sincere regret. The problem often lies in language, since Japanese can be difficult to translate or leave a lot of room for interpretation. Yamazaki, therefore, not only details the history of Japan's multiple apologies; concentrating on the years between 1984 and 1995, she also analyses their rhetoric and translates different expressions.

## From 'hansei' to 'chinsha': how to say 'sorry'

Yamazaki begins her chronology of Japanese apologies with the 1965 normalisation of relations with South Korea, when Foreign Minister Shiina Etsusaburō expressed 'true regret' ('makoto ni ikan') and 'deep remorse' ('fukaku hansei') over an 'unfortunate period in our countries' history'. Japan later used the same term in a joint communiqué when it normalised relations with China in 1972: 'The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself [fukaku hansei]'. 'Hansei' ('remorse', 'reflection') is actually a weak expression of apology. Even softer was Emperor Hirohito's reference to Japan's treatment of China during the second world war while visiting President Ford in 1975: 'The peoples of both countries...endured a brief, unfortunate ordeal as storms raged in the usually quiet Pacific'. Three years later, when Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping visited Japan, Hirohito referred to

South Korean children taking part in anti-Japanese demonstrations.



the past by merely saying, 'At one time, there were unfortunate events between our countries'.

In 1982 a controversy erupted over alleged revisions of Japanese history in school textbooks. Following what was perceived by many as Japan's less than diplomatic handling of the situation, violent reactions occurred in China and South Korea. The rising tensions induced Japanese politicians to apologise more clearly, though they still used the rather lightweight 'hansei'. In 1985, for example, on the United Nations' 40th anniversary, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro declared, 'Since the end of the war, Japan has profoundly regretted [kibishiku hansei] the unleashing of rampant ultra nationalism and militarism and the war that brought great devastation to the people of many countries around the world and to our country as well'. While regretting past wrongs, Yasuhiro stressed that Japan had suffered, too, a tactic repeated by other politicians.

The stronger 'owabi' ('apology') was first expressed in 1990, by Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki to South Korean President Roh, and has been used regularly since: '...the people of the Korean peninsula experienced unbearable grief and suffering because of actions of our country...[we/I] are humbly remorseful [hansei] on this and wish to note our frank feelings of apology [owabi]'.

Simultaneously, however, Japan stubbornly denied maintaining second world war 'comfort stations' with forced prostitutes, most of them Korean. Cornered by Japanese historians, Cabinet Secretary Katō Kōichi publicly apologised to the 'victims' ('higaisha') in January 1992. Visiting Korea the same month, Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi even called Japan the 'aggressor/perpetrator' ('kagaisha').

Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro's August 1993 apology resembled Kaifu's in 1990, but with one addition that other politicians later reiterated several times: that Japan 'will demonstrate a new determination by contributing more than ever before to world peace'. Hosokawa's cabinet included three ministers of the Socialist Party, which had been calling for reconciliation with other Asian peoples and 'sincere Japanese apologies to achieve that goal'. In Korea in November 1993, Hosokawa 'apologised from the heart' ('chinsha') for 'Japan's past colonial rule', calling his country the aggressor/perpetrator ('kagaisha'). The Japanese public approved of his mention of 'aggression' and 'colonial rule', but conservatives bristled. Having gone beyond what fellow party members and his coalition government were willing to admit, Hosokawa was at times forced to backtrack. Nevertheless, the next Prime Minister, Hata Tsutomu, uttered almost the same words in a May 1994 Diet speech.

In August 1995, as the 50th anniversary of the second world war's end approached, the Socialist Murayama Tomiichi led a coalition government that included his long-time enemy, the conservative LDP. A known pacifist and advocate of non-alignment, neutrality and a closer relationship with Asian nations, Murayama apologised no differently than Kaifu, Miyazawa or Hosokawa had, yet the world took him much more seriously. Ironically, his stature as an apology advocate undermined his own government's recognition of his apology: after a long debate and vociferous right wing pressure, the resulting Diet resolution was so watered down that the word 'apology' didn't even appear. This reinforced the outside world's impression that Japan had never apologised at all. Later prime ministers, all of them conservative, restated Murayama's apology almost verbatim.

## The politics of apology: Why say sorry?

Other nations also hate to apologise for wrongdoings, the author writes, and cites as an example the long overdue American apology to Japanese-Americans for their internment during the second world war. She finds American and British apologies are typically selective and ignore broader cases such as slavery, the use of napalm in Vietnam or the British Opium War. Indeed, when France passed a law, in February 2005, requiring history education in schools and universities to emphasise the 'positive role' of the French colonial presence on other continents, it spurred harsh criticism by the French left and vehement protests in the countries concerned, above all in Algeria and the Antilles.

As for Japan, Yamazaki admits that its apologies are sometimes expressed only in a general way concerning warfare, aggression, war atrocities or colonial rule, but she also provides several examples of apology for specific violent events or practices, such as the Nanking massacre, biochemical warfare, sexual slavery, and mistreatment of allied soldiers and civilians. Japan's reasons for apologising, according to Yamazaki, are several: to repair relations with Asian countries; to stimulate national self-reflection and a learning process leading to a new, improved identity; to affirm moral principles. She also cites the historian Yoshida Yutaka, who sees apologies and other conciliatory strategies as motivated by the Japanese ambition to assert leadership in Asia. But the domestic call for self-reflection is also motivated by opposition parties or new administrations who wish to criticise previous ones – most clearly demonstrated by Prime Minister Hosokawa in 1993.

Japanese left-wing groups, unlike conservatives, are vehemently antimilitaristic and see the second world war as an instance of Japanese imperialism. Advocating closer ties with China, Korea and other Asian countries, they consistently demand a more remorseful stance and

compensation for victims of Japanese aggression. The different political attitudes – conservative versus left-wing – are also reflected in the choice of expressions: 'comfort women' versus 'sex slaves', 'Nanking incident' versus 'Nanking massacre', 'China Incident' versus 'China War'. Yamazaki sees the conservative aversion to apology as an expression of a masochistic view of history and also of a fear that apologising would imply the Emperor's responsibility, if not culpability. But she neglects to sufficiently address conservatives' fear that admission of guilt would invite demands for compensation.

## Appearing unrepentant

The author believes that the South Korean government was ready to accept Japan's 1965 apology – its 'hansei' on the occasion of normalising relations – but that the Korean public was not. The Chinese government's situation was similar, she says, but it later changed its attitude. Unfortunately, Yamazaki's study ends with the year 1995, after which the Chinese repeatedly campaigned to blame Japan for its alleged lack of sensibility.

Other Asian countries believe Japan shouldn't feel guilty or apologise at all. Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Burma and Indonesia have taken a neutral attitude, holding that Japan should concentrate on present and future problems instead of wasting time and energy on historiographical reflection. They support the position of Japanese apologists, who claim that the second world war was fought for the liberation of Asia from white domination. Taiwan's reticence, meanwhile, probably reflects its ambivalence toward its former coloniser (1895-1945), close economic partner and ally in its campaign for recognition as the legitimate government of China, at least until Taipei lost that fight in 1972.

Though the author herself admits that some Japanese apologies have been insufficient, her evidence that they have been expressed is convincing. But the period covered by Yamazaki's study ended over ten years ago. Since that time, regardless of any apologies expressed, Prime Minister Koizumi's numerous visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and the Ministry of Education's approval of controversial textbooks, (in 2001 and 2005), that present a 'new view' of national history, have renewed a perception of Japan as unrepentant. Still, Yamazaki's book is a valuable response to the question of how Japan has dealt with its own history and of how the world has, or has not, responded. ◀

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Prime Minister Koizumi still visits the controversial Yasukuni Shrine.



# Parting the Mists

Wong, Aida Yuen. 2006. *Parting the Mists, Discovering Japan and the Rise of National-Style Painting in Modern China*. Series: Asian Interactions and Comparisons Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. ISBN 978 0 8248 2952 0

Lucien van Valen

Aida Yuen Wong's *Parting the Mists* portrays Japan as having exerted a positive and dynamic role in the development of 'national-style painting' in China. Using art, historical and linguistic sources, Wong focuses on the gradual transition to modernism in traditional Chinese art circles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a disturbing period of social and political unrest in China, when its artists looked to Europe and Japan. Foreign influences in technique and imagery were used by some and despised by others. In Wong's vision Japanese influence is responsible for the emerging *guohua* ('national-style painting') as a style of modern Chinese painting. Coupling art and politics, she takes the discourse to a another level: 'Despite its imperialistic ambition in China, Japan emerges...as a critical ingredient in China's imagination of "the nation"...the forging of a nationalist tradition in modern China was frequently pursued in association with, rather than in rejection of, Japan' (p. 100).

It is very likely that the Chinese were influenced by their oppressor during that dramatic period in history, but I doubt the Chinese will ever be able to accept Wong's concept. (It's a starting point I myself find hard to digest). That said, the book reveals many interesting personal meetings and well documented anecdotes, for example, about the exchange of works of art.

## Overlooked evidence

To support her theory Wong analyses several aspects of the artistic discourse; she addresses the education of Chinese intellectuals and artists in Japan and meetings between artists and entrepreneurs, and provides rich information on early 20th century Chinese histories of art written by Chinese or Japanese connoisseurs. At the beginning of the 20th century large numbers of Chinese artists and intellectuals travelled to Japan, as Wong writes, 'to be educated' (p. xxiv), language that suggests the trend was the equivalent of Japanese development aid to the Chinese. She provides a detailed overview of the early art historical surveys published in Japan and China, basing her argument on her analysis and comparison of their structure and content. Few European examples are mentioned and she focuses mainly on Japanese written sources.

Wong presents several paintings as evidence of her theory. Of *Horse and Groom* by Zhang Daqian (Chang Dai-qian, 1899-1983, p. 19), which was exhibited in a Zhang retrospective at Washington, D.C.'s Sackler Gallery, Wong writes, 'The animals twisted torso and dancing hooves, as well as the groom's strained posture, were not taken from the Tang dynasty or the Song dynasty, as stated in the catalogue, but from Meiji Japan.' Zhang's painting closely resembles Kano Hogai's *Gallant Steed under a Cherry Tree*, a work shown at the Second Domestic Painting Exhibition in Tokyo

in 1884.<sup>2</sup> Although Wong might be correct in her assumption that Zhang must have known Kano Hogai's painting at least in reproduction, her conclusion is mistaken. In the Sackler collection I have seen the original painting that is identified as the model for Zhang's painting: *Tartare Horsemen and a Rolling Horse*.<sup>3</sup> If we compare Zhang's painting with this 14th century work, it's evident that this theme has been part of Chinese imagery for centuries, and long before the Hogai painting. Wong must have overlooked this painting in her comparison.

This leads to another flaw. China always had a strong tradition of artists following the great Chinese masters of the past, which have been discussed and honoured in traditional Chinese painting manuals. To illustrate her argument that modernism in Chinese art history books must be ascribed to Japanese influence, Wong sometimes turns to 'facts' that are not solid. For example, in chapter two, 'Nationalism and the writing of new histories', Zheng Wuchang (1894-1952) is presented as an 'artist-cum-art teacher' and a promoter of *guohua*. Zheng wrote several books on Chinese art and, according to Wong, 'was determined to prove that Chinese were more than capable of writing their own history of art' (pp. 49, 50). Yet on the next page she writes, 'Although Zheng Wuchang was not beholden to Fukuzawa, Taguchi, or any single Japanese scholar in particular, he must have known the two surveys by Omura Seigai and Pan Tianshou.' Wong repeatedly uses 'must have known' to establish facts to prove her argument.

## Japanese 'Chinese-ness'?

In her concluding chapter, 'Six Exhibitions and Sino-Japanese Diplomacy', Wong presents a string of events and meetings between Chinese artists and their Japanese colleagues as a final proof of her theory. But for at least two centuries before this period, in certain circles Japanese intellectuals had been copying 'Chinese-ness'.<sup>4</sup> Giving parts of this tradition back to China can hardly qualify as 'Japanese influence'. Rather, mutual influence between Japanese and Chinese art has been indisputably present over a long period of history.

I enjoyed reading the book for the overall impression it presented of a time of great change and moments of contact between two great Eastern traditions, but I am not persuaded by the writer's theory that Japan was 'the critical ingredient in China's imagination of "the nation"'. I want to come back to the term *guohua* in connection to 'nationalism'. Wong writes, 'The binome *guohua* was derived from the Japanese *kokuga*' (page 12). In fact, traditional Chinese painting was, and still is, called *Zhongguohua*, 中国画, in contrast to *Yanghua*, 洋画, 'foreign painting'. The term *guohua*, 国画, can be taken as short for *Zhongguohua*. Guo, 国, means country and *Zhongguo*, 中国, is the chinese name for



Zhang Daqian

China, while *hua*, 画, means painting. But Wong argues that *guohua*, 国画, is adopted from the Japanese *kokuga*, 国画. A mere comparison of the written characters makes Wong's argument disappear into the mist. <

## Notes

- 1 Daqian, Zhang. 1946. *Horse and Groom*. Ink and color on paper, 94.5 cm x 46.3 cm. Private collection. Source: Shen C.Y. Fu with Jan Stuart. 1991. *Challenging the*

*Past: The Paintings of Chang Daichien*. Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery; Seattle: University of Washington Press, p. 153.

2 Hogai, Kano. 1884. *Gallant Steed under a Cherry tree*. Ink and color on paper, 137.9 cm x 63 cm. Collection of Bansho Co. Japan. Source: Conant Ellen P. et al. *Nihonga, transcending the past: Japanese-style painting, 1868-1968*, St. Louis, MO, 1995, p. 135.

3 *Tartare Horsemen and a Rolling Horse*. 14th-15th century. Silk on panel, 120 cm x 46.3 cm; Acc. No F 1916.526.

4 Beerens, Anna. 2006. *Friends Acquaintances, Pupils and Patrons, Japanese Intellectual Life in the Late Eighteenth Century: a Prosopographical Approach*. Leiden: Leiden University Press.

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[ advertisement ]



# Lucknow: City of Illusion

Llewellyn-Jones, Rosie. ed. 2006. *Lucknow: City of Illusion*: New York, London, New Delhi: Prestel and the Alkazi Collection of Photography. 296 pages, ISBN 3 7913 3130 2



Felice Beato, albumen print 1858. Panorama of the Husainabad Imambara, Lucknow. The Alkazi Collection

*Gerda Theuns-de Boer*

This beautifully produced and printed book presents a visual and historic record of the development of the city of Lucknow, (Uttar Pradesh, India), from its establishment as the Nawabi capital in 1775 until its annexation by the British East India Company in 1856. The main visual source of the material used is the fabulous Alkazi photo collection.<sup>1</sup> This naturally brings the focus of the book on the second half of the 19th century. A time when photography developed from pioneering activities into professionalism and advancing photomechanical techniques resulted in the birth of the postcard, around 1895. A selection of photographs dating from the 1850s to the 1920s testify to the original context of the buildings, their alterations and decay or even their disappearance. The book successfully merges, (and therefore strengthens), a number of different sources. The quality of both the research by its seven contributors and the careful selection of the imagery, originating from 15 early photographers, makes this book a treat. For too long the written and the visual record were explicitly separated, as if its respective scholars missed the drive to look beyond their self-constructed walls. Historical books were sparsely illustrated, which resulted in readers having to put their own, not always accurate, interpretation on the text; whereas photo books still had a strong album format, predominantly stressing the picturesque, but seldom contextualising their historical content.

## Monumental grief

Architecture is the focus of the book as it is the only means to express not only the city's former wealth, but also the effects of general decay and the partial destruction caused by the '1857-58 Uprising', (a mutiny by Indian soldiers serving under the British Army), in which 'large sectors of a once radiant and sparkling city were reduced to rubble', (p.7). Lucknow was transformed

into a city of severe grief. The albumen prints of the Greek-British photographer Felice Beato (1834-c.1907) are the main source for studying the city's architecture and design in the direct aftermath of the mutiny and are well represented in the book.<sup>2</sup> Beato is regarded as one of the first war photographers, documenting army campaigns and their devastating effects. The moment he heard of the British campaigns against the rebel

sepoys, (Indian soldiers who served in the British armed forces), he decided to come down from the Crimea, where he had been photographing, among other things, the fall of Sebastopol in September 1855. He arrived in Calcutta in February 1858. In March of that same year he was licenced by the East India Company to photograph in Lucknow, Cawnpur and Delhi.<sup>3</sup> His photographs have become landmark visual historic

records of human and monumental disaster. His photographs of the human remains of the slaughter of around 2000 sepoys in Lucknow's Sikandar Bagh are renowned, but it is his images of the ruined city which are featured in this book.

The prints evoke the oppressive atmosphere of a city in ruins, with its 'sounds of silence'. The absence of people in the compositions and the limited tone scale of 19th century photography, add a sense of drama. The eight enlargements of Beato's 360 degree panoramic views taken from the minarets of the Asafi Mosque within the Great Imambara Complex, have great historic value and also bear witness to the British efforts to hastily dispose of any references to the city's former glory by general clearance.

## From Kothi to country house

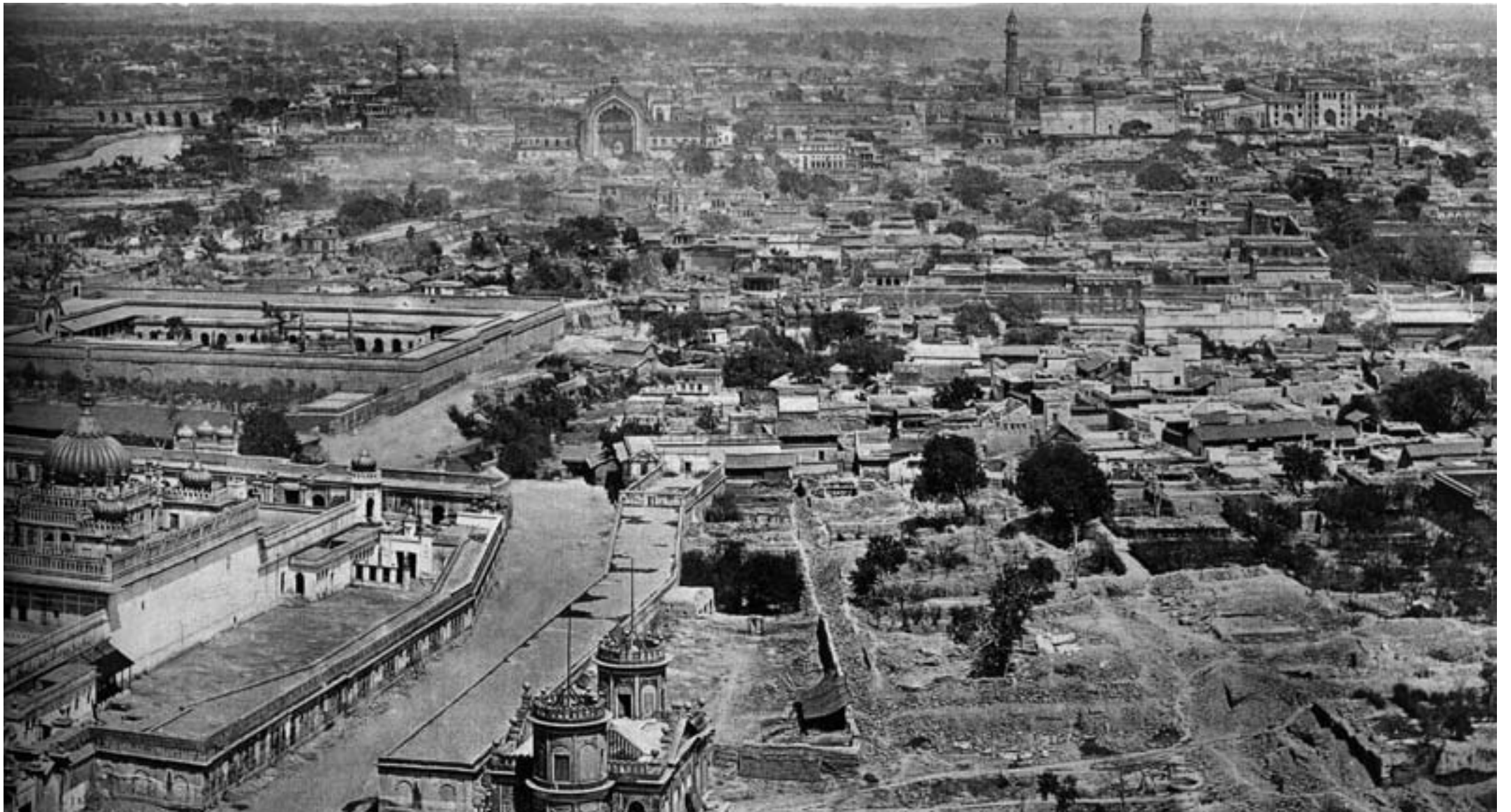
But the book is not meant to commemorate the Uprising. Its seven contributors construct a contextual background to the many photographs and other illustrations which are rendered to sketch Lucknow's development from a Nawabi capital into a spatial organisation influenced by European styles and programmes of decorations, testifying to the growing political pressure on the indigenous rulers, the Awadhi nawabs. Whereas Sophie Gordon focuses on the nine royal palaces which constituted the dream world of Nawabi culture from 1739 onwards, E. Alkazi and Peter Chelkowski focus on Lucknow's number one monument - the



Felice Beato, albumen prints 1858. Four albumen photographs from a set of eight views taken from one of the minarets of the Asafi Mosque, Great Imambara, Lucknow.







Bara Imambara or the Asafi Imambara. Built by Kifayutullah between 1784-1791, this is the world's largest complex devoted to the rituals and cult of Shia Imam Husain, who was massacred by Sunni Muslims in Karbala (Iraq) in 680. Alkazi presents Beato's 360 degree photographic survey of the complex - a cluster of buildings and open spaces formed by mosques, gateways, tombs and bazars; Chelkowski provides a religious and cult framework. The still extant Husainabad Imambara, built by Muhammad Ali Shah in 1837-78, is another example of an Islamic monument of grief'. In Neeta Das' contribution 'The country houses of Lucknow', we witness the process of acculturation between Nawabi and Western architectural styles. Das discusses fourteen 'villa type' houses (kothis) made by and for the European and Indian elite between the late-18th and early-19th century. The oldest kothi dates back to 1775 and was built by Captain Marsack for Nawab Asaf-ud-daula, whereas Nawab Saadat Ali Khan, who commissioned several houses and roads, showed a strong predilection for 'things European'. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones traces the history of the Residency complex, the symbol of colonial power, which started as a modest bungalow, but was replaced in 1786 by a more impressive series of buildings. After the final siege of the British, the demolished, but much photographed, residency became an object of obsessive public interest, not least because of its cemetery containing the graves of British victims. Another intriguing monument, La Martinière, is dis-

cussed by Nina David. It is a tribute to the French military man, educationalist, 'engineer-architect' and businessman, Claude Martin (1735-1800). The central building of the complex, known as 'Constantia' was turned into a college in 1845 and still functions as such today. Martin's skeletal remains are kept in the basement of the building; a tangible reference to a period in which Nawabs and Europeans could live side by side.

Although the book is clear in its aims, the strict focus on architecture results in a somewhat ghost-like image of the town, in which photographic portraits of its inhabitants are seriously missed. As the Scottish essayist, Thomas Carlyle once wrote 'portraits are the candle to history'. The 'sounds of silence' of the Uprising's aftermath dominate the book in this respect. The only photograph which catches a glimpse of street life is a print of a shopkeeper by Edmund Lyon. In all the other photographs people are depersonalised and merely serve the purpose of stressing the architecture's monumentality by their limited size.<sup>4</sup> Also, the book barely touches upon early photography as such. How did its photographers manage to create these photographic jewels in a tropical, photography-hostile environment and by what means did they, each in their own way, succeed in rendering Lucknow's overpowering monumentality and aesthetics? Thanks to a valuable appendix by Stéphanie Roy, which includes short biographies of the various photographers, we at least get to know some of their background. Equally useful is the

catalogue part of the book in thumbnail-format and the short descriptions of Lucknow's buildings up to 1856, which includes details of their current state.

In brief, a marvellous book of serious scholarship and perfectly reproduced prints, which brings out the technical characteristics of each photograph. Revealing the splendours of Lucknow's past, and to some extent, its present, was a must. If its architecture had not been the victim of such a monumental disaster, it would surely have become one of India's most beautiful cities. ◀

#### Notes

- 1 The privately owned Alkazi Archive is available for scholars in New York, London and New Delhi and comprises 75,000 photographs of South Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.
- 2 The book also includes a few 1858 views by Alixis de la Grange, Captain J. Milleken, P.G. Fitzgerald, Ahmad Ali Khan and Robert and Harriet Tytler.
- 3 For a selection of his Delhi views see Jim Masselos & Narayani Gupta *Beato's Delhi 1857, 1997*. Delhi, 2000: Ravi Dayal Publisher.

- 4 To catch some more glimpses see Sophie Gordon's article 'A city of mourning: The representation of Lucknow, India in nineteenth-century photography', in *History of Photography* 30:11, pp. 80-91.

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# Eyes on the Prize

Lovell, Julia. 2006. *The Politics of Cultural Capital: China's Quest for a Nobel Prize in Literature*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 248 pages, ISBN 978 0 8248 3018 2.

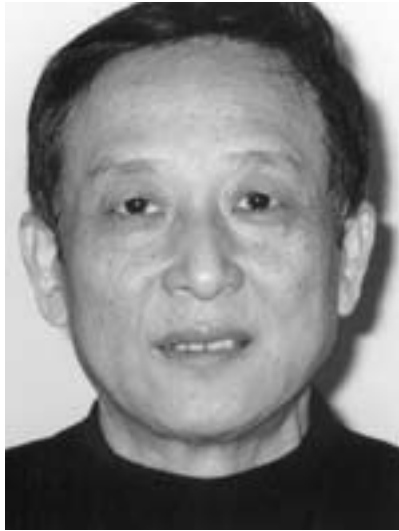
Kerry Brown

Back in the mid-1990's, I was based in Inner Mongolia in China. In a medium-sized book shop in a small provincial town, I remember coming across a multi-volume edition of the main works of all of those awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, translated into Chinese. The series fascinated me because, even with the English version supplied, I was unable to work out who many of the Laureates were. Julie Lovell's study of China's particular experience of aspiring to, and winning, Nobel Prizes, makes clear that, especially in the field of Literature, the decisions of the Stockholm-based committee have sometimes been palpably political – choosing Winston Churchill as Nobel Laureate in Literature in 1953 – or deliberately strategic. Exiled playwright and novelist Gao Xingjian was awarded the prize in 2000. As Lovell explains, he ticked a number of useful boxes: he was Chinese; wrote experimental, obscure literature; he was an émigré and had attracted a small but devoted band of academic followers in the West who vouched for his intellectual authenticity. Despite his relative obscurity, Gao Xingjian was to become China's first, and so far only, winner of the Prize.

## 'Nobel Prize fever'

'The Politics of Cultural Capital' captures an interesting cluster of issues, and it is surprising it has taken this long for someone to look at the subject more closely. The Nobel Prize, in whichever discipline it is awarded, is in some sense an expression of Western commendation, and perhaps even an imposition of Western standards and ideals. But its allure has been reciprocated. Since the 1950s, six ethnic Chinese have received Prizes, however, all of them were based abroad. As a result, there's been a sustained attempt in China over the last two decades to campaign for and secure Nobel Prizes for mainland scientists, economists and artists, (what Lovell calls 'Nobel Prize fever'). This odd synergy between the Nobel Committee, (implicitly representative of Western cultural values), and the PRC (half loathing, half desiring this recognition from outside), captures many of the paradoxes of modernism in China. The recurring issue of how much China can, in its transformation and reconstruction, 'use foreigners for China's good' (*weizhong liwai*). Finding the balance between maintaining elements intrinsic to its own identity while also exploiting the advantages of foreign-inspired modernisation without being overwhelmed by them. The tension between these competing urges has run throughout China's history in the last two centuries.

Gao Xingjian, while being most definitely Chinese (despite now being a resident of France, he lived in China till he was 47) was certainly not what the Chinese cultural apparatchiks and leaders had in mind during their years of lobbying as a suitable recipient. They would have desired someone like the great Qian Zhongshu, or Ba Jin, or



Gao Xingjian, China's first, and so far only, Nobel Prize winner.

more recent writers like Wang Meng. An obscure, exiled writer and painter whose most significant work in China had been a Beckettian performance art piece about people waiting for a bus in Beijing that never turns up, (*Bus Stop*, 1981), was certainly not what they felt represented the best their literary culture had to offer. The *People's Daily* greeted the announcement of the prize in 2000 with a snuffy 'this is politically motivated' statement. To this day, Gao's works are not available in mainland China and his profile there is minimal. It would be interesting to see if an updated version of that series I came across in the mid-1990's has a gap covering Gao's period.

Literature, more than the sciences, was an area of particular aspiration, but also

very specific problems, between China and the West. Lovell gives a very good overview of the huge differences in understanding on both sides. The consensus in the West, at least until very recently, was simple: Chinese classical literature, of course, contained some of the great works of human culture. But in the last half century, its literary products have been a 'busted flush', poleaxed by Maoist realism, and politico-literary constraints. This perception has been compounded by the generally lamentable quality of translations available in the West. There is nothing on a par with the excellent products published in Japan, (by, among others, Kodansha Press), disseminating the best that contemporary Japanese culture can offer. For many years the best Westerners could expect from China were yellowed, bulky, stolid tomes issued from the Foreign Languages Press in Beijing. These lengthy attempts to articulate a Chinese cultural position, (in the hope of it being seen as credible by Westerners), more often than not ended up with works that came across as slightly bastardised – neither Chinese nor Western – using narrative devices and techniques from one culture and characterisation and context from another. This was hardly helped by a ten year shut down during the Cultural Revolution in which hardly anything was published. In the 1980s, the great market reforms introduced a similar phenomenon in literature – follow the market, go where the money can be made, (witness the honourably

unprincipled career of Wang Shuo), and keep well clear of politics.

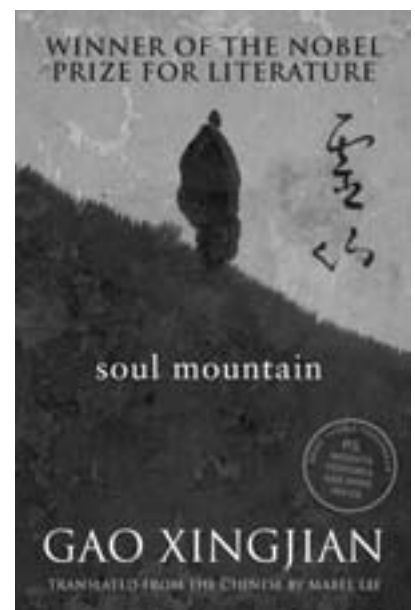
## A celebration of obscurity

Lovell looks too at the careers of those Chinese writers who left China and tried to articulate positions in exile. People like Bei Dao and Yang Lian and the Misty Poets. While they certainly found an audience of sorts, as Yang Lian noted, they ended up being branded wholly on their being exiles, expected to produce further proof of the unending horror of the Beijing regime for their western audience; commodifying and promoting their own pain to get on. This limited the ways in which they were received, and meant that they worked within a straight-jacket that was placed on them as soon as they were seen as Chinese poets working outside China.

The constellation of competing problems, and desires and ambitions was unlikely to have a good ending. In fact, the Committee's choice of Gao Xingjian in 2000 was probably less political than it might at first appear. Gao was someone who celebrated his obscurity (creating his own ideology of 'Not I-ism'), took few public positions on political issues, and whose main work, *Soul Mountain*, (first published in English in 2001) was primarily a narrative of self-exploration – what Lovell amusingly calls a 'spermatic tour' of modern China; more introspection than declaration of a political manifesto. He had a devoted but small following in Europe, had not been part of any distinctly 'exiled' groups, and was unconnected to any



Nobel Prize medal. © The Nobel Foundation.



*Soul Mountain*, more introspection than declaration of a political manifesto.

prominent dissident. Choosing poet Bei Dao, perhaps, or other higher profile exiled writers would have sparked even more umbrage from the cultural apparatchiks in Beijing. Gao Xingjian simply baffled most people inside and outside China.

There was an extra dimension to all of this, and though Lovell doesn't deal with it in any detail, it impacted on the whole issue of awarding the Nobel Prize to China. That was the internal workings of the Nobel Committee itself, where only one of the members, Goran Malmqvist, was a Chinese specialist. Lovell alludes to the fact that in the last few years, the Committee have almost been seeking out 'non-Western' recipients. But there is a big question mark about how much these decisions are almost gestural, or based on any general principles of literary judgement. In its early years, the Committee sought for works which affirmed 'universal values'. That meant ignoring writers like James Joyce, Joseph Conrad and Henry James for a swathe of others whose names are now hardly remembered. Such 'universal values' have more complex currency these days, and in trying to accommodate other cultures the Committee has been pushed into making some maverick choices. There is also the final question of just how meaningful these prizes ever are. That, however, should be the subject of another study.

Lovell has picked a good pressure point between Chinese and non-Chinese understanding. Like the awarding of the 2008 Olympics to Beijing, the symbolic import of a Nobel Prize and the 'cultural capital' it brought was to be judged worthy of a long hard campaign. While the Olympics seem to have paid off, (we will have to wait until the summer of 2008 to see if it really is the case), the Nobel Prize in Literature awarded in 2000 put paid, at least temporarily, to aspirations in that direction. The bigger question remains: just how far, in the 21st century, the PRC can translate its immense economic growth and soft power into hard power and a positive cultural influence that is recognised and understood outside of China. That involves the issues of nation branding that most other nations are also grappling with. <

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# Negotiating the state in Mughal India

Hasan, Farhat. 2004. *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, c. 1572-1730*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 144 pages, ISBN 0 521 84119 4

Karuna Sharma

**S**tate and Locality in Mughal India attempts to study the nature of power in early modern South Asia and the relationship between imperial sovereignty and local networks of power. The initial overview of the historiography of the Mughal state outlines the 'structural-functionalist state' model of the so-called Aligarh School and the 'patrimonial-bureaucratic state' as well as the 'processual' models as the major approaches to date. The present book is a critique of these models since, in the author's view, they 'isolate the state from social forces and overlook the extent of interconnectedness'. The author engages with various theoretical frameworks in which power has been conceptualised (by Foucault and many other social theorists) to locate accommodation of local interests within the system of rule to illuminate the actual functioning of the Mughal state. Culling information from extant Persian documents pertaining to two important commercial towns of Gujarat, Surat and Cambay, the author tries integrating the contestations from the weaker sections of society to emphasise that imperial power was constantly in a state of negotiation.

Hasan argues that negotiations, forging alliances and winning allegiance were more important factors in Mughal political success than military fastidiousness. Through these processes, the local power holders could be incorporated within the imperial structure of rule and won over by the state as necessary adjuncts and co-sharers of power in mutually reinforcing relationships. They shared honours and perquisites, but without actually appropriating the rituals and symbols of imperial sovereignty. All of this led to a widening of the base of Mughal rule in Gujarat. The devolution of imperial power was not confined to local elites but permeated down to the common people as well. This aspect of interconnectedness is already relatively well accepted in the historiography of the Mughal state, but Hasan's analysis of the attitudes and responses of subordinated social groups to the state, through the examples of different socially disadvantaged groups, represents a crucial departure from the conventional history.

## Subaltern contestation

The system of rule based on alliance with the local intermediaries was contested by subordinate sections of the society. To the latter, this 'compact of rule' was an undifferentiated oppressive system and popular resistance was in fact articulated against this. Resistance in any form, the author suggests, was a political means by which the common people interacted with the state and participated in the system of rule. Through social protests, they could make those in power aware of the limits to their authority. Yet by constantly drawing this to their attention, through symbolic protests and other forms of resistance, subordinate groups were in fact

themselves reinforcing and perpetuating the system of rule. Hasan calls this process the 'ritualised participation' of subaltern society in the political system. Other forms of resistance included violent actions (as in the *khutba* episode, which appears to have challenged the legitimacy of imperial sovereignty) and social crimes and banditry, which were acts of popular retribution for infringements of the shared normative system, namely the *sharia*. The mode of resistance employed by merchants, analysed here in detail, differed from other forms since the presence of corporate merchant bodies made it easier for both merchants and the state to contain areas of potential conflict within the existing political framework.

The normative system assumes central importance in Hasan's analysis of resistance since all contestations necessarily took place within this framework. He notes that people would often appropriate the *sharia* in articulating resistance, irrespective of their religious affiliations, and reiterates the subalterns' use of ambiguities present in the *sharia* to their advantage. In order to stress the 'plasticity of *sharia*' he shows how one subordinated group, women, manipulated it. Using local Persian documents concerning marriage transactions and property transference, Hasan demonstrates that women were able to defend their symbolic and material interests. For example, ordinary women quite often exploited the *sharia's* ambiguities to get certain terms and conditions included in their marriage contracts.

## Property and revenue

That the imperial system was at times vulnerable and that it co-opted pre-existing beliefs is again shown through an analysis of documents relating to the sale and purchase of property. The buyers and sellers and the process of approval and confirmation of the important residents, who stood as surety to the property transactions, signified a perpetual control of community and social units of residence which the author calls the 'community-*muhalla* compact. The complex power relations involved in property transactions and the fusing of the domestic sphere with the larger system of rule is illustrated by an analysis of how the office of the *qazi* (an official appointee to settle disputes and punish offenders) functioned in close collusion with local structures of power. This office, which was rooted in local power relations, could be appropriated by social actors to preserve their interests. An understanding of the *qazi's* role in property transactions sheds further light on the participatory, shared nature of the Mughal state.

The imperial fiscal system is yet another sphere that was regularly modified and reshaped by local power holders, merchant bodies, and subordinate groups. In addition to this system, there were local customary levies which, though officially illegal, nevertheless had to be co-opted into the system of rule. The imperial system of revenue realisation



Mumtaz Mahal, second wife of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan I. Her name means 'beloved ornament of the palace'.

in the town was integrated with the local system of power, functioning through networks of alliances with local power holders (such as merchants). The consolidation of sovereignty in the towns thus entailed a growing and more rooted redistribution of the state's resources.

Hasan's study brings to light various ways through which the local power holders and their customary practices impacted upon imperial sovereignty, showing the negotiated character of Mughal rule and its empowering of the

local gentry and merchant classes. The reorganisation of fiscal administration by integrating local structure of levies within imperial system further augmented the perquisites and privileges of the local power holders. Thus in a bid to wrest cooperation from local social and political elites, the state created its own circuits which checked or curtailed powers of the state.

This book is a solid piece of research and the author has culled information from hitherto neglected Persian sources. The dynamics of local-imperial inter-

action are examined through the lens of the locality. Local evidence pertaining to marriages, property transactions, and resistance is analysed and interpreted in such a way that the notion of a contested yet shared sovereignty stands justified. The book's underlying assumption that the state and the locality represented two distinct political entities, however, belies the fact that the state itself was fluid. Like the normative system, the Mughal state was not a rigid and fixed edifice. Depending upon circumstances, it adopted different approaches towards accommodation or exclusion at different times and places. In the same way, the locality was quite fragmented in its articulation of power and influence. The state did not approve of acts of transgression and was quick to act to maintain its system of rule. Contestation or resistance thus took place within the framework of the state, not outside it. Whatever reservations one might have about the author's theoretical approach, the book is a brilliant attempt toward an understanding of the nature of the Mughal state as it functioned in certain localities of Gujarat. ◀

Karuna Sharma specialises in medieval Indian history, particularly aspects of labour, sexuality, and culture. karunahis96@hotmail.com

[ advertisement ]



## Independence and after in Southeast Asia: Old and new interpretations

APRU School of Humanities conference  
14-15 August 2007, Penang, Malaysia

2007 marks the 50th anniversary of Merdeka (independence) for Malaysia. Malaysia attained political independence from British colonial rule in August 1957 through constitutional means. This led to a smooth handing over of power to Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj - the prime minister and architect of Merdeka. Other countries in the region endured years of conflict and bloodshed before independence from colonial rule was achieved, the most recent being Timor Leste in 2002. The notable exception is Thailand which escaped the shackles of colonial domination by remaining the only independent, sovereign nation-state in Southeast Asia.

The discourse of nations achieving political independence and the characterisation of the years that followed as the 'postcolonial' period has long been a mainstay of the academic agenda in studies of Southeast Asia, particularly in the disciplines of history, political science, economics, literature and language, anthropology, and sociology. The road to independence was often long and arduous. The years following the attainment of national sovereignty were equally troublesome with seemingly insurmountable challenges. Whilst Malaysia faced the sensitive issue of managing race relations, the Philippines struggled with a leftist insurgency, Thailand 'seesawed' with weak civilian governments and military juntas. Meanwhile Myanmar was secluded under a military dictatorship, and Cambodia experienced a nightmare following the establishment of a genocidal regime. The ups and downs of nation-building, the maintenance of political stability and economic sustainability are just some of the major issues that faced post-independent nation-states of Southeast Asia.

For more information visit [www.usm.my/APRU/index.html](http://www.usm.my/APRU/index.html) or contact [shakila@usm.my](mailto:shakila@usm.my)

## The political economy of growth, inequality and conflict

ISAS 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on South Asia  
29 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007, Singapore

Economic, social and regional inequalities constitute major sources of political friction, conflict and even violence. With the rapid socio-economic and political transitions underway throughout South Asia, there is pressing need to research inter-relationships among economic growth, inequality and conflict and to draw out their implications for public policy. The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on South Asia will provide a forum for presenting and discussing results of fresh research on this vital subject, for comparing and learning from national experiences within the region and for promoting future collaboration among scholars of the region. Under the broad rubric of *Political Economy of Growth, Inequality and Conflict*, topics for discussion will include:

- Economic reforms and inequality trends: the politics of measurement and perception
- Growth and inequality under reforms: political causes and consequences
- Political-Economic institutions of governance and growth
- Social and regional inequalities: does faster growth help of hurt?
- Social policies for re-dressing social inequalities: the politics of principles and practices
- What constrains redistribution under unequalising growth: politics or economics?

The theme demands trespassing across disciplinary boundaries and so ISA extends a special invitation to scholars in economics, sociology, anthropology, political science and geography.

\* probable dates for the conference.

For information about ISAS and updates on the conference visit [www.isas.nus.edu.sg](http://www.isas.nus.edu.sg)

Or contact the organising committee:  
Institute of South Asian Studies  
469A Tower Block,  
Bukit Timah Road #07-01  
Singapore 259770  
[isasseminars@nus.edu.sg](mailto:isasseminars@nus.edu.sg)

## Rapid urbanisation in Asia

9<sup>th</sup> Asian Urbanisation Conference  
18-23 August 2007, Chuncheon City, South Korea

Rapid urbanisation and city growth in Asian countries have followed different processes that have given rise to a variety of social, economic and political problems. With a view to promoting research on these problems, of which the geographical and economic characteristics are particularly emphasised, the Asian Urban Research Association is holding the 9<sup>th</sup> Asian Urbanisation Conference. The conference, hosted by Kangwon National University, hopes to attract highly qualified and active scholars in the field from various parts of the world, and expand the network of international professional contacts. The aim of the conference is to encourage dialogue and allow participants an opportunity to exchange views and experiences. There will also be an opportunity to analyse the situation of Asian urbanisation and the policies of different countries for their urbanisation processes, grasp new trends of research, evaluate urban and regional planning approaches and the processes per se, and to present research papers for discussion and selection for publication.

**For more information visit:**  
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## Thai societies in a transnationalised world

10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Thai Studies  
9-11 January 2008, Bangkok, Thailand  
Call for papers.  
Deadline 30 September 2007

The 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Thai Studies intends to bring together scholars from all disciplines and intellectual perspectives to discuss the transformation of Thai Societies in a Transnationalised World: how transnationalism affects the nation's life, prospects and identities; what kind of challenges awaits Thai society; how traditions could be modified and new mechanisms devised to cope with current and emerging challenges; and how Thailand can contribute to the world's peace and prosperity. The deadline for abstract and full paper submission is September 30, 2007.

For more information please contact website <http://www.thaiconference.tu.ac.th> or e-mail [thaiconference@gmail.com](mailto:thaiconference@gmail.com)  
The Tenth International Conference on Thai Studies  
The Thai Khadi Research Institute  
Thammasat University  
Bangkok 10200, THAILAND  
Tel 662-6133201-5 ext 22  
Fax 662-2262112

## China: Evolution or revolution?

British Association for Chinese Studies Annual Conference  
6-7 September 2007, Manchester, UK

The British Association for Chinese Studies (BACS) is pleased to announce that its 2007 Annual Conference will be held in conjunction with the Centre for Chinese Studies at the University of Manchester on 6-7 September 2007. BACS will be joined in Manchester by their sister organisation, the British Chinese Language Teaching Society, holding their second BCLTS International Symposium.

The conference theme emerged from a 'China Rising' discussion. After decades of underestimating China's contribution to world culture and its place in the world, in the last few years we have witnessed a Zhongguo re 'China fever', certainly in Europe. We have also seen a counter-reaction with some people claiming China is over-hyped, that it lacks creativity and that the impressive progress China has made in recent years is all down to Western investment and models. What has China's contribution to world culture been? Does China offer alternative models? Are we witnessing a paradigm shift in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Is our discourse on China capable of capturing the immense complexity and challenge China presents? Are we still trapped in modes of understanding that belong to the past and hamper our ability to comprehend the China of today?

These are the questions the central theme seeks to address, critically evaluating the claims of both traditional and contemporary China to creativity and originality.

BACS promotes scholarship on all disciplines relating to China, both traditional and modern, and including China proper, other Chinese-speaking areas and the diaspora. We welcome papers across the whole spectrum.

The BACS Annual Conference welcomes international and UK based participants, both members and non-members, to offer papers or just attend the conference. There will be distinguished keynote speakers in plenary sessions, specialist panels and postgraduate student sessions. For further details visit [www.bacsuk.org.uk](http://www.bacsuk.org.uk)

## CESS 2007

Central Eurasian Studies Society  
8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
18 - 21 October 2007, Seattle, USA

The 8<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) will be held at the University of Washington, hosted by the Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies.

The conference aims to raise topics and discussions relating to all aspects of humanities and social science scholarship on Central Eurasia. The geographic domain of Central Eurasia extends from the Black Sea and Iranian Plateau to Mongolia and Siberia, including the Caucasus, Crimea, Middle Volga, Afghanistan, Tibet, and Central and Inner Asia. Practitioners and scholars in all humanities and social science disciplines with an interest in Central Eurasia are encouraged to participate.

There has been a huge growth in interest in the CESS conference as our society has become more established. Over the past three years, attendance has averaged about 500 per year, with dozens of countries and all major fields of scholarship represented. We expect a similar number to attend in 2007.

For more information visit:  
[http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS\\_conference.html](http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS_conference.html)  
or contact:

Allison Dvaladze  
Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies  
203B Thompson Hall, Box 353650  
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Seattle, Washington 98195  
USA  
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## The Cold War in Asia

Workshop  
Zhongshan University  
1-2 November 2007, Guangzhou, China

The United States and Soviet Union carved out their respective spheres of influence at the end of the Second World War. The contest of these two global powers was a matter of ideological conflict, intermittent with arms race and economic warfare, rather than direct military confrontation. The invention of nuclear weapons made many believe that the arms race could escalate into another world war. This did not materialise and the contest ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

The study of the Cold War has flourished in the West as we can see from the works

of John Gaddis and others. But scholars in the Asia region and around the world have just begun to explore its Asian variations as archives have slowly become available. The Cold War in Asia was different than in Europe because it became a hot war with real conflict in Korea and Vietnam. As Chen Jian has argued, Asia, and specifically, China was at the centre of the Cold War. The Asian theatre was complex and dynamic as geopolitics and ideological differences were intertwined with historical links and cultural ties. Since Akira Iriye pioneered the field, too few scholars have explored the Cold War in Asia from Asian perspectives and more importantly the "soft" side of this global as well as regional conflict. The goal of this conference is to challenge the conventional wisdom on the Cold War and launch the study of the Cold War in Asia from an Asian perspective first with a conference that will include the following major themes:

- the propaganda and print war, anti-communist and anti-imperialist
- the ping pong and other styles of "soft" diplomacy
- the social and material legacy, civilian mobilisation for example
- the ideological war/alliance, the Bandung conference for example
- Americanisation/Westernisation of Asian popular culture, movies for example
- the continuing Cold War in Asia, continued American presence in the region

The conference is organised by the Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Manchester; East Asian languages and Civilisation, Harvard University and the School of Humanities, Zhongshan University. For more information, please contact Miss Catriona Dobson:  
[catriona.dobson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:catriona.dobson@manchester.ac.uk)

## Emotions and East Asian social life

Summer School  
3 - 8 September 2007, The Isle of Procida, Naples, Italy

Due to increasing economic and social links between Europe and the East the cross-cultural understanding of emotions is becoming a highly-valued and sought-after skill. Understanding emotions is as important as language in the success of cross-cultural communication. For this reason the University "L'Orientale" of Naples – an institution with a strong background in East Asian emotion research – has developed a topic-related summer school, the first of its kind in Europe.

*Emotions in East Asian Social Life: Theory and Practice* will offer an excellent opportunity for students and professionals to gain expertise in all aspects of East Asian emotion management. The courses, given by an international team of experts, will be invaluable not only for students of East Asian studies, but for anyone interested in improving their intercultural communication skills.

For further information visit [www.iuo.it/emotion\\_summer\\_school](http://www.iuo.it/emotion_summer_school) or contact:  
Professor Paolo Santangelo:  
[psantan@iuo.it](mailto:psantan@iuo.it)  
or Dr. Dániel Z. Kádár:  
[danielkadar@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:danielkadar@yahoo.co.uk)



## Societies in transformation

**8th Conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association**  
**19-22 November 2007, Penang, Malaysia**  
**Call for papers**  
**Deadline 22 October 2007**

Rapid globalisation, coupled with economic liberalisation and financial deregulation, has opened up the economics of the Asia Pacific region. Increasing wealth generation is heralded as a sign of great personal and notional success, while large numbers of people remain marginalised in poor paying and insecure jobs. Youth are under extreme pressures in terms of successful education and gaining secure employment. The media glorifies the consumer revolution, and we see increasing use of new technologies which are changing forever the very fabric of work, family life, health and culture in the countries of the Asia Pacific. The region is seemingly now more integrated, with unprecedented levels of tourism, migration, and economic and cultural linkages. But, are the nations of the region, and their populations, becoming more divided, united or are they funda-

mentally unchanged over the past two decades?

The 8th conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association (APSA) aims to explore the various dimensions of the rapid social transformation of the Asia Pacific. Papers that empirically or theoretically address the themes of social transformation, in its diverse forms, are particularly welcome.

Deadline for registration : 22 October 2007  
 Submission of full paper : 22 October 2007

The conference is co-sponsored by the School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and the Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS), University of Wollongong, Australia.

For more information visit [www.asiapacificsociology.org](http://www.asiapacificsociology.org) or contact:

The Secretariat  
 The 8th Conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association  
 School of Social Sciences  
 Universiti Sains Malaysia  
 11800 USM  
 Penang, Malaysia

Tel: 604-6533369  
 Fax: 604 6570918  
 E-mail: [dean\\_soc@usm.my](mailto:dean_soc@usm.my)

## Call for Papers

### Conference



### Anthropology of Elites Methodological and Theoretical Challenges

**24-25 January 2008**  
**Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

How do structures of power shape our society? This question lies at the core of many of the social sciences. Within anthropology, an understanding of power is central to many theories; however, the study of those groups which hold significant power (i.e. elites) is far less central within the discipline. Our conference explores anthropological approaches to studying elites.

An important book that deals with many of these issues is *Elite Cultures, Anthropological Perspectives* (Routledge, 2002), edited by Cris Shore and Stephen Nugent. This collection contains several highly relevant methodological and theoretical angles and interesting ethnographic examples. However, there has been little occasion for in-depth discussion on the matters raised in Shore and Nugent's book since. Therefore, to further our ethnographic knowledge and deepen methodological and theoretical debates on elites we wish to create a platform of discussion in the form of the conference: 'Anthropology of Elites, Methodological and Theoretical Challenges'. The conference will address the following themes:

1) Methodological questions regarding the study and ethnographies of elites. As Shore states, elites do not always recognise themselves as elites. It is a term of reference rather than self-reference (Shore 2002: 3). How, therefore, do we deal with this problem when studying elites? Moreover, elites are allegedly difficult to research. What are the different experiences regarding this matter? Finally, in anthropology the main research method is ethnographic fieldwork based on intensive participant observation, something that is often not feasible in the study of elite groups. How can we tackle these methodological shortcomings? Does anthropology have the right tools for studying elites? And furthermore, what ethical questions arise when studying elites?

2) What can the anthropology of elites contribute to elite studies in general? Shore notes that elites have been of much concern to sociologists, historians and political scientists, but anthropologists have hardly studied them at all (ibid 2002: 10). However, an anthropological approach is important for understanding elites from 'within'. In order to get a better grip of power structures in societies we have to understand the dynamic of elite cultures, and how elites employ their influence and power. We would like to pursue this debate at the conference by focussing on ethnographies of elites. Further, our aim is to deal with this matter in a debate with other social scientists involved in studying elites, in order to stimulate a multi-disciplinary approach in the study of elites.

3) What can ethnographies of elites contribute to anthropology in general? Shore argues that studying elites 'provides a useful focus for addressing important anthropological and sociological concerns including language and power; leadership and authority; status and hierarchy; ideology and consciousness; social identities and boundary-maintenance; power relations, social structure and social change' (ibid 2002: 9). One of the most renowned ethnographies of elites Abner Cohen's *Politics of Elite Culture* (University of California Press, 1981), for instance, addresses a range of these concerns. However, since the publication of Cohen's work there have been developments, such as increasing modernisation, globalisation and transnationalism that have become core in anthropological research. Thus, we would like to establish what the variety of recent ethnographies of elites might contribute to understanding how elite studies relate to larger anthropological debates.

### Important dates:

- 15 September 2007: deadline for submission of abstracts (max. 400 words) including brief CV of author(s) (max. 100 words)
  - 15 November 2007: deadline for submission of papers (max. 8.000 words)
- Abstracts and papers should be written in English.

### Please forward your submission to:

The organising committee: Professor Dr. Jon Abbink, Dr. Sandra Evers, Tijo Salverda  
 E-mail: [t.salverda@fsw.vu.nl](mailto:t.salverda@fsw.vu.nl)

Any further queries or requests for information on the conference should be sent to the above e-mail address.

## Rising China in the age of globalisation

**International Conference of the UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland / Irish Institute for Chinese Studies**  
**16-18 August 2007, Dublin**

China's rapid growth over the last quarter of a century has propelled it to become the world's fourth largest economy in 2006 and potentially it's largest in the foreseeable future. This development has seen China's 1.3 billion people begin a process of integration into the global economy and become a major driving force in the process of globalisation, particularly since joining the World Trade Organisation in 2001. There has been increasing interest and speculation as to the rising China and its cultural, social, political and legal practices today which have to be recognised and reconsidered within the context of globalisation.

This two day conference will be co-organised by University College Dublin and Renmin University of China and sponsored by University College Dublin and Renmin University of China and sponsored by the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban).

The conference aims to provide a forum for researchers, academics, practitioners and government officials and business executives to share up-to-date findings and developments in the fields of Chinese culture and language, Chinese economy and business, and the Chinese political and legal system in the era of globalisation.

For more information:  
[www.ucd.ie.china](http://www.ucd.ie.china)  
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[ advertisement ]

# SieboldHuis

## シーボルト・ハウス

### The first worldwide ethnographic collection about Japan, the Siebold Collection, in a historical Dutch canal house.

The SieboldHuis in Leiden offers the best from the old and new Japan in a house of historical stature; prints, lacquer ware and ceramics, fossils, herbaria, prepared animals, coins, textiles, old maps and hundreds of other treasures. All has been collected in Japan between 1823 and 1830 by the Bavarian physician Philipp Franz von Siebold. Siebold was sent as a physician to the Dutch trading post in Japan by the Dutch government, with the special assignment to collect as much information as possible about this mysterious country. Siebold collected a magnitude of objects in a wide range of fields: botany, zoology, mineralogy and geography, as well as daily objects, artefacts, models, industrial raw materials and semi-manufactured products. He returned in 1830 and bought the house at the Rapenburg to live in and to show his Japanese collection. Siebold was known for decades as the Japan specialist in Europe. In 2004 the magnificent building was restored to its old splendour and nowadays, it houses seven exhibition rooms, each with their own atmosphere. In addition, it offers a varied program of temporary exhibits and numerous Japan-related activities.

### TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

*Calligraphic arts of Ogawa Toshu and students from the University of Leiden*  
 20 juni 2007 – 29 juli 2007

*Summer in the SieboldHuis – Okinawa, the other Japan, prints from Yuusuke Namihira*  
 3 August 2007 – 9 September 2007

*Fleeting Instant – Photos by Lucienne van der Mijle*  
 28 September 2007 – 9 December 2007

### ACTIVITIES

*Leiden Film Festival – Japanese movies in the SieboldHouse*  
 31 Oktober 2007 – 4 November 2007

*Siebold lecture series – Thursdays 11, 18 and 25 November 2007, 6 p.m.*

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 Rapenburg 19  
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 E-mail: [info@sieboldhuis.org](mailto:info@sieboldhuis.org)  
 Website: [www.sieboldhuis.org](http://www.sieboldhuis.org)



# Beyond binaries: sociological discourse on religion

The interface of religious identities, with state and politics is creating communal, ethnic and sectarian conflicts in South Asia. In spite of its geographical vastness and thousands of communities, the region remains conceived by sociologists in terms of religious identities. By continuing to discuss religious experiences, identities and conflicts in majority-minority terms, sociological discourse has become a tool of power and domination.

Sujata Patel

Sociological discourse on South Asia has not grasped the complexities of religion as it faces modernity. Seminal assumptions of colonial modernity and knowledge created a matrix of binaries – West and East, modernity and tradition, materiality and religiosity – that represented the project of modernity and were a colonial means of domination. Anthropologists and sociologists accept these binaries, constructing theories of imminent and continuous religious traditions without realising that what they consider traditional is actually a modern process. Binary language prevents them from penetrating the opaqueness that binaries themselves construct (Patel 2006).

In India, the binary of majority and minority is not merely a discourse: creating group classifications highlights differences and structures power. Sociologists play into this: cultural differences are dissolved into a master narrative of majority and minority in order to empirically study groups. Such language associates the same groups with the politics of constructing a majority based on upper caste perceptions of religious practices. Since the late 19th century, attempts have been made to organise India's Hindu majority as a nation under upper caste, or *savarna*, hegemony. Today, in a context of global change, this project continues to define Indian society and politics.

Sociologist T.N. Madan has written the most on this topic, using descriptive and indological methods to understand India's religions, pluralism, diversity and secularism in terms of equality-hierarchy binaries. He questions the process of modernity, but his language does not reflect the distinction between its dominant forms, such as colonial modernity and non-western modernities. Thus, Madan uncritically integrates the binaries of West and East, materiality and religiosity. Such a position cannot differentiate cultural practices among *jatis* and ethnic groups, and fails to assess how these differences are subsumed under an upper caste perspective on Hinduism. His latest book, *India's Religions. Perspectives from Sociology and History* (2004), cites census statistics to suggest that Hindus form the largest religious community, followed by Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains. Two issues must be considered here: using numbers to determine the strength of religious communities, and using the census to identify religious groups.

## The trouble with numbers

The census depends on individuals to identify their religious affiliation. G.S. Ghurye and M.N. Srinivas have commented on how the census in colonial and independent India was used to mobilise groups by defining identities. B.S. Cohn (1987) has suggested that the census was a tool not only for constructing self-identity but that self-identifica-

tion occurred in response to the colonial government's objectification of identities. British officials and anthropologists studied India as a pre-modern civilisational society. Their initial task was to classify groups and communities in order to rule over them. Cohn argues that British officials thought 'caste and religion were the sociological keys to understand the Indian people. If they were to be governed well then it was natural that information should be systematically collected about caste and religion' (1987:243). As a result, Nandini Sundar argues, census 'statistics on identities became important as communities demanded entitlements on the basis of numbers, in a politics which conflated representation (standing on behalf of) with representativeness (coming from a particular community)' (2000:113).

Dirks (1997:121) argues colonialism was sustained not only by superior arms, military organisation, political power and wealth, but also through 'printing and the standardisation of languages, self-regulating and autonomous legal systems, official histories of the state and people and the celebration of national shrines, symbols and pilgrim centres' that were part of the British colonial elite's larger political project of imposing the nation state. Colonial conquest enabled ways to construct what colonialism was all about: its own self-knowledge (2001:13).

Documenting community social behaviour, customs and mores became a major project for the British, who used not only enumeration but age-old scriptural and indological methods to naturalise indigenous complexities. Indologists built an extensive repertoire of knowledge on Vedic and post-Vedic scriptures and translated ancient Indian texts from Sanskrit into European languages. British officials relied on 'native informants', generally Brahmins, to codify practices and classify castes. The Brahmins had already elaborated the *varna* four-fold classification theory, but manipulated it to capitalise on new opportunities presented by the British.

The census also created spatial-cultural differences, which implied two assumptions: group distinction based on the West's spatial-cultural structures and the creation of spatial-cultural zones; and the boundedness of these groups defined by numbers and now called castes and tribes, which were placed in a structured hierarchy and identified by a cultural attribute of 'spirituality' emanating from Hindu civilisation. Hinduism became organically linked to the caste system in the new language of hierarchy devised by colonial census officials. A religion came to define a territory: India and Hinduism became one, establishing Hindus as the majority and all other groups as the minority.

Cohn shows that the first census, in 1871-72, classified castes within each

religious community. Subsequently, British officials tried to place *jatis* among the four *varnas* or in 'categories of outcastes and aborigines'. These officials recognised the difficulties and, Cohn adds, the 'absence of a uniform system of classification', but 'it was widely assumed that an all-India system of classification of castes could be developed' (1987:243). As this system assumed the point of view of Brahmins and other *savarnas*, it codified their privileged perspective.

## Finding religion

Madan's position reflects this perspective and remains etched in the discourse of binaries. For example, he considers 'four out of five Indians' Hindu, using numerical superiority to define the majority (2004:1). Like earlier indologists, he consults the scriptures and *Manusmriti* to identify religious constituents. Later he collapses all Indians into being Hindu when he states that 'many components of culture and aspects of social structure of the non-Hindu communities...have either been borrowed from the Hindus or are survivals from their pre-conversion Hindu past...' (2004:1).

Madan was profoundly influenced by Louis Dumont, who reconstructed binaries in an elaborate theory of hierarchy in the East and contrasted it with the theme of equality in the West. While sociologists like Srinivas (2002) used the empirical method to debunk received assumptions and distinguished between *varna* and *jati*, Dumont criticised this empirical position, insisting not only that 'a sociology of India lies at a point of confluence of sociology and indology' (1957:7), but that '[t]he very existence and influence of the traditional higher Sanskrit civilisation demonstrates without question the unity of India' (1957:10). Madan echoes this: 'South Asia's major religious traditions...are totalising in character, claiming all of a follower's life so that religion is constitutive of society' (2004:399). Thus he argues that 'the religious domain is not distinguished from the secular, but rather the secular is regarded as being encompassed' (2004:2).

What is this holistic notion that unifies all religious activity in India? For Madan, it's Dharma, which to him connotes the sustenance of moral virtue. This self-sustaining cosmo-moral order runs through all India's religions, especially Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, which incorporate subtly nuanced Hindu principles. Thus he asserts a long tradition of Hinduism that was never a source of conflict, because its 'scope of inter-religious understanding is...immense and it is in no way contradicted by the holism of the religious traditions of mankind' (2004:385). Hinduism's internal differences are part of this long history.

In *India's Religions*, Madan characterises Hinduism as inherently plural and uses 'pluralism', as defined in the

American tradition, to assess Hinduism. In America, religious pluralism is loosely defined as being peaceful relations between religions and the negotiated accommodation of differences. This process of conflict and dialogue, it is hoped, leads to a common good and implies it is not given as an a priori; the common good's scope and content is found only through negotiation (a posterior) and does not, according to pluralists, coincide with any one entity's position.

Madan's position, then, only makes sense if it interrogates the binaries and abandons theories of power that construct the majority and minority as instruments of objectification. How can common good be negotiated between groups who are objects of the politics of knowledge construction? And those who have formed their self-identities as a majority? Whose identities have been defined by the colonial state and *savarnas* who benefit from these definitions? When self-identities accept the hierarchy?

Madan and many of his contemporaries who uphold 'traditions' don't seem to recognise that 'traditions' are a construct of modernity. In their logic, South Asia is a world steeped in 'native' resources that mitigate religious conflicts. By being critical of secularism, Madan questions modernity and how secularism interfaces with politics to create religious conflicts. As he states, '...it is the marginalisation of religious faith, which is what secularisation is, that permits the perversion of religion' (1991:396).

But is secularism the source of religious conflict? Or is the source the processes by which religion and religious affiliation have become part of the politics of identity construction? Surely, we possess the sociological language to assess these processes and explain how knowledge construction helped build the identities articulated through them. Andre Betille (1994) appraises Madan's use of the concept of secularisation as related to secularism and indicates the need to dissociate these two terms. On Madan's use of scriptures to develop a position on India's religions, Betille reminds us that theology alone is not enough to assess religion in sociological terms.

Madan's ideas on India's religions exemplify how colonial binaries were imposed on the language of the sociologist, who naturalised not only the concepts of majority and minority but also various theories that homogenised them. Knowledge alone cannot play a role in hegemonisation; social movements and intellectuals must mobilise the populace through ideas. This was how the Hindu majority was created.

## Sanghathanas, seva and gurus

Hinduism as an ideology formed during colonialism. Its contemporary aggres-

sion, and legitimation, can be traced back a hundred years, when it emerged as the voice of the majority. Today it is being reconceived, but its core principles remain the same as those conceived in the late 19th century.

Historian Romila Thapar (1996:3-4) has argued that Hinduism was 'a juxtaposition of flexible religious sects' before colonialism attempted to homogenise them. Hinduism does not affirm a single God, prophet, founder, church, holy book, religious symbol or centre; faith is difficult to apply to its inherent diversity of beliefs, deities, schools of thought, practices, rituals and organic cultural links. Hinduism has no fewer than six schools of philosophy, an idea of God that ranges from monism to dualism to polytheism, and rituals from the individual Dhyana to the social 'yagna'. Denominations like Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism and Smartism try to organise Hinduism around a specific deity or philosophy.

This diversity was reorganised in the colonial period. Religious groups called *sanghathanas* (literally, 'organisations' or 'associations') formed around gurus, who framed a group's objective within the national narrative. *Sanghathanas* aimed to mobilise a new majority of believers in Hinduism against the colonial state and its religion, Christianity. Mobilisation entailed proselytising through a set of practices, called *seva*, combined with allegiance to a guru.

*Sanghathanas*, *seva* and gurus all had a pre-colonial existence, when they formed around sects and temple towns, but their late 19th century form was radically different, attempting to reflect and replicate the structure and culture of organisations established by the colonial state in the western tradition (Copley 2000, 2003). Thus *sanghathanas* emulated the Christian tradition of building a congregation around a church – some were even named missions, such as one of the first, the Ramakrishna Mission – but they were instead built around gurus, who were considered the authentic interpreters of Hindu religion. At first, *sanghathanas* were revivalist, seeking to either defend one particular Hindu tradition or denounce parts of it in order to posit a less recondite but socially oriented religion. Eventually they were organised around *seva*, which included guru discourses (*pravachanas*), prayers (*satsangs*) and work as *sevaks* (volunteers), for instance, teaching in schools and helping in disaster relief. Some *sanghathanas* also established medical help centres, hospitals, colleges and universities.

The guru has been defined as a spiritual teacher, 'one who brings light out of darkness' (Copley 2000:5). Colonial period gurus whose *sanghathanas* endured were distinctive. Most were English-educated, from *savarna* upper castes and experienced teachers. Their writings were mainly in English and



# in South Asia

oriented toward the emerging upper and middle classes. Copley argues that dominance rather than friendship and equality defined the relationship between the guru and his disciples, as gurus encouraged obedience and loyalty and were considered elitist and authoritarian (2000:6).

While the tradition of *seva* is as old as Hinduism itself, its traditional notions of performing service to oneself, family and god in the four stages of life incorporated new, socio-political dimensions during the colonial period. Earlier texts defined *seva* in terms of life's personal aspects and gave it religious overtones. It belonged to the private sphere, within the figurative walls of *karmic* isolation. In the late 19th century, *seva* was redefined as the individual *sevak's* pride in a new religio-political identity born of an imagined Hindu nation defined by gurus. At the time, Hinduism was threatened by Christian missionaries converting lower castes, and the colonial state's new western ideas. Hinduism confronted them by developing a new public identity through mobilisation of the populace as a Hindu nation. The ideas of *seva*, the guru and the *sanghathana* incorporated non *savarna* groups into a majority Hindu community.

## The Swami and Hindu chauvinism

Swami Vivekananda standardised Hindu principles by excavating 'traditions' and explicating a *savarna* reading of Hinduism. In the late 19th century, his ideas became the fountainhead of majoritarian Hinduism. Driven by his quest to understand the reasons for India's colonial subjugation, Vivekananda declared the concept of *seva* as 'organised service to humankind' (Beckerlegge 2000:60). Unlike his own guru Ramakrishna, who attempted to synthesise and universalise Hinduism's many popular traditions (Sarkar 1997), Vivekananda was unique in that his project remained simultaneously social – to reform Hinduism – and political – to displace colonial suppression – by mobilising new groups into an institutionalised structure of Hinduism. To create this constituency, he reconstructed Hinduism's defining principles by blending two distinct traditions: orthodox Hinduism, incorporated in the earliest Hindu religious texts called the Vedas and the religion's contemporary socially sensitive and reformist aspects, with its principles of charity and service as embodied in Christianity.

Vivekananda did not stray from vedantic metaphysics. Of the four yogas, he emphasised Karma, which he redefined as 'traditional caste-based rituals and obligations with humanitarian service. The jnana of Vedantic monism was sought to be transformed...into a message of strength and strenuous help to others' (Sarkar 1997:347). This fusion influenced a generation of religious and political thinkers and continues within Hindu *sanghathanas*. He applied traditional Hindu concepts of *seva*,

selfless service, and *sadhana*, 'spiritual penance', and insisted on the material poverty of *sevaks*.

Vivekananda's dominant principles were humanitarianism and physical morality. In the Ramakrishna Mission, *seva* represented humane and ethical religiosity that would forge a new Hindu community united around the principle of selfless social duty. The community's strength would be its spiritual and physical fitness; its objective was to help the downtrodden by improving their material condition and social position, and by spreading the social awareness and spiritual enlightenment that encouraged the wealthy to aid the less fortunate.

Most scholars see Vivekananda's ideas as radical and revolutionary, arguing that by focusing on the masses – the deprived, under-privileged, weak, exploited and diseased – Vivekananda modernised a very old religion steeped in fatalist traditions and empowered Hindu society to be confident, self-sufficient, strong and fair. Some interpret his focus on individual human joy, suffering, achievement and failure as Hinduism made 'human-centric', and his dislike of contemporary Hindu revivalism as reformist. Others consider his ideas universal, given his stance that Hinduism is what the world needs to solve its social, economic and spiritual crises.

Indeed, his sensitivity to the 'masses', inclusion of 'untouchables' in mission activities and criticism of mindless ritualism in *sanatana dharma* (orthodox Hinduism) makes Vivekananda a radical, democratic social thinker in some eyes. But he advocated that his *sevak* disciples train themselves to be pure, noble and discerning souls who rise above superstitions and appreciate Hinduism's true character. He emphasised physical strength and endurance to withstand any challenge, as a nation comprised of weak people would be controlled by outsiders, both spiritually and physically. Through *seva* and *sadhana*, *sevaks* were to overcome the ignorance that impoverished and subjugated Hindus (Sarkar 1997), and to appreciate the Vedas in order to understand Hindu principles, what Hinduism represents and cleanse it of its ritualism.

In reality, Vivekananda is interested in the salvation of the *sevaks*, not of the masses. His ideas are not radical. He merely reiterates the early meaning of *seva* as practices performed by the individual. I agree with Sarkar (1997): Vivekananda not only distilled Hinduism's diverse traditions, but also diluted his personal appeal to society's underprivileged. By asserting Hinduism's vedantic orientation mainly to a literate English-educated upper caste audience, Vivekananda distinguished upper castes from the rest of Hindu society in new and subtle ways and yet preached for their reform. Today, communal organisations, such as the Rash-

triya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), trace their ideologies to Vivekananda's notion of *seva* and his dream of making Hinduism a world religion (Beckerlegge 2003, 2004; Copley 2000, 2003; Sarkar 1997). As Sarkar states, 'More relevant today, ominously so, is the image of the Swami as one of the founders of 20th century "Hindutva", of a unified and chauvinistic Hinduism' (1997:291).

Like colonial officials, Vivekananda used indological sources to reconstruct a codified Hindu set of principles, operated within the caste hierarchy and presented a Brahminical upper caste male view of Hinduism. Thus his *sanghathana*, organised through principles of hierarchy, made the guru Hinduism's main interpreter and demanded the congregation's complete loyalty. His mission became a model for other gurus.

But there is a caveat. Given Indian public life's richness and diversity, and the continuous reorganisation of traditions in diverse forms, it's incorrect to argue that Hinduism constructed one uniform narrative and model. *Seva*, *sanghathanas* and gurus simply became the means through which Hindu communities mobilised, which is not a process of Hindu revivalism or reform but rather an upper caste intervention to create a Hindu nation based on religion. It was a political process reflecting many of the assumptions colonial modernity had articulated regarding 'Hindu traditions'.

## An alternate language

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), mentioned above, formed in 1925 as 'an organisation of the self-motivated' and its *parivar* (family). RSS founder Dr Keshav Hedgewar, like Vivekananda, believed in the *seva* of education, discipline, organisation and instilling pride in Hinduism to create a band of (celibate) male *sevaks* who undertake humanitarian service. After Hedgewar's death in 1940, new RSS leader Madhav Sadashiv Gowalkar integrated his predecessor's notion. At the time, the RSS had 500 *shakhas* and a structure whose leader had absolute decision-making power. Gowalkar's message 'to worship God through serving society' became the motto that still unites the RSS and its *parivar*. He created many small *sanghathanas* for special *seva* activities; by 1997, RSS operated 2,866 such units in India and the world (Beckerlegge 2004:116). These units have exacerbated religious and communal conflicts because for the RSS *seva* activities are meant to help Hindus alone. Schools, medical centres and hospitals are established under various *sanghathanas* but serve only Hindus. This divides the populace according to religious identities. The RSS argues it is forced to do this because state education and health programmes mainly benefit minorities. Generations of Hindus have grown up to believe this falsehood; *sanghathanas* even mobilise vigilantes to prevent minorities from using state resources. The RSS justifies

these actions by its belief that India is a Hindu, not a secular, state.

The discourse of colonial modernity and the creation of the Hindu majoritarian movement are organically linked. Both elided the different cultural practices of *jatis* and ethnic groups and subsumed them under an upper caste perspective of Hinduism. Brahminical and *savarna* male interests were consolidated and their authority legitimised. Thus, majoritarianism fuels aggressive integration of Hindu identity, reclassifies group distinctions into religious majority and minorities, and legitimises daily caste- and gender-related violence based on its justification of overt and covert religious discrimination. Hindus are encouraged to interact with each other and avoid minorities. Hindu authorities deprive minorities of services and mobilise Hindu citizens to do the same. This attitude leads to violence where employment, services and infrastructure are limited. Majoritarianism subtly divides communities, who are then mobilised during communal clashes to burn, loot and kill each other.

*Sanghathanas* not only legitimised colonial modernity's project, they codified and systematised Hinduism in terms of a *savarna* reading of tradition and provided a model of maintaining *savarna* and patriarchal domination that the RSS still follows. Sociologists must recognise how colonial modernity's institutions, processes and structures were renewed after independence and are reflected in the way majority-minority binaries continue to be reconstituted.

Religiosity, ethnicity and communalism define everyday South Asian life. Religion provides ideological legitimacy for extreme social and economic exclusion. While communal violence is an overt manifestation, covert communalism is bred by converting everyday practices into majoritarian projects through integration with the language of caste. Social science language must not become part of this language. To study the religious fault lines governing today's South Asia, sociological discourse on religion must understand the discourse that created the majority-minority binary. Liberation from the language of domination inherited from colonial modernity, and the creation of an alternate language, are required to accomplish this daunting but necessary task. ◀

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# The Generosity of Artificial Languages

A revolution in language heralded the birth of modern science. Latin was replaced by formal languages, such as algebra, born of artificial notations and practical devices like new numerals. Frits Staal argues that some of the roots of that revolution lie in Asia.

Frits Staal

Still ignored by the majority of Asian scholars who should know better, the Euro-American idea that 'science' is 'Western' has long been discarded. Long before the modern period, Asian contributions to ancient and medieval science were expressed through classical languages such as Old-Babylonian, Chinese, Sanskrit, Greek, Arabic, and Latin. In their scientific uses, some of these languages were formalised to some extent, but they were not designed to express abstract relationships in a systematic manner. They were intimately linked to different civilisations and lacked universality. What happened next and culminated during the 17th and 18th centuries was a revolution in language. The construction of formal languages grew out of natural language, artificial notations and special devices such as numerals. The replacement of Latin by such universal languages, in particular the languages of algebra, was a greater revolution than the so-called European scientific revolution.

## The birth of artificial or formal languages

Some of Newton's laws provide simple examples. They were not, at first, written in an artificial form. Newton formulated his law of motion in cumbersome, ambiguous and obscure Latin. Less than a century later, it was disambiguated, clarified and formalised by Euler by making use of an artificial language. It is now taught to children as  $f = ma$ .

A more dramatic example provides a demonstration of the thesis that some of the roots of modern science lie in Asia. Madhava of Kerala, Southwest India, who lived around 1400 CE, invented infinite power series that are expansions of  $\pi$  and the trigonometric functions **sine**, etc. by using methods that led to the infinitesimal calculus. Similar developments led to similar findings by Leibniz and other European mathematicians three centuries later. In

her forthcoming book on the history of Indian mathematics, Kim Plofker refers to this discovery as the Madhava-Leibniz series of  $\pi$ .

The accompanying illustration depicts, on top, the infinite power series that expresses the circumference of a circle with diameter D (i.e., two times the radius R) in Sanskrit. It is followed by a translation into English by Kim Plofker. At the bottom is the series in its modern form which is basically the same as what was written by Leibniz.

Rarity of artificial notations and absence of an artificial language go far towards explaining why modern science did not originate in India or China. Old-Babylonian, Indic, Chinese and other early forms of Asian mathematics inspired the algebra of the Arabs, but to what extent was that an artificial language? India developed a formal or artificial language for linguistics. It is now a science worldwide, but how could it have originated earlier by more than two millennia?

Jeffrey Oaks answered the first question in "Medieval Arabic Algebra as an Artificial Language." It provides our account with an important missing piece: a historical survey of algebra applicable to Arabic and European languages. Starting in the 9th century with systematic verbal solutions of equations, it reached a symbolic form in the 12th century in the western part of the Islamic world.

Brendan Gillon's "Panini's Ashtadhyayi and Linguistic Theory" gave a brief overview of Panini's grammar, showing that it could address all of the central concerns of a formal grammar, including what pertains to not only the syntax of Sanskrit but also its semantics. He then showed that three concerns that are central to current linguistic theory - compositionality, implicit arguments and anaphoric dependence - figure centrally in Panini's grammar.

Frits Staal explained how the surprisingly early development of an artificial meta-language for linguistics in India is explained by early Vedic ideas about a hierarchy of languages of which the lowest is our common spoken language. He wondered "to what extent the innate faculties of language and number may be dissociated from each other and from other features of civilisation?" During the preceding workshop (of which the Proceedings are now published in The Journal of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 34: 2006), Karine Chemla and Charles Burnett demonstrated that the Chinese and Latin written traditions led to greater separation between natural and artificial expressions but not to greater clarity. Does an oral tradition like the Vedic maintain a closer connection between the two innate faculties of language and number? Do artificial languages result from a fusion of the two faculties?

## Generosity

The French mathematician d'Alembert wrote: "algebra is generous: she often gives more than is asked of her." It means that notations and equations achieve far more than that for which they were originally designed. A simple example is the expression  $(a + b) = (b + a)$ . It applies to integers, but also to rational, real and complex numbers, then to vectors, various geometric and other figures, etc. It also applies to natural language, though there are exceptions as philosopher Gilbert Ryle pointed out: "She took arsenic and died."

An example of generosity from modern logic started in 1942 with J.C.C. McKinsey coming to Berkeley to study intuitionistic logic with Alfred Tarski. Tarski had already seen that the work would best be reformulated in algebraic terms, and so the two of them tied three topics together in "The Algebra of Topology." In the 1970's, the computer scientist Edgar F. Codd developed a method for dealing with relational databases. Later it was shown that that was another notational variant. Such unexpected generosity explain that Dirac declared of his own equation: "it is smarter than I am."

## Over-generosity

Jens Hoyrup examined several examples of over-generosity. One is the extension by a 14th century Italian mathematician of rules like:

$$\frac{a^4}{a^2} = a^2$$

to rules like:

$$\frac{a^2}{a^4} = \sqrt{a}$$

Such generosity is unwanted. The same holds for Cantor's unrestricted acceptance of sets as members of other sets.

These over-generosities correspond to over-generalisations in natural language. If we know the English plural

*trees* we can make the plural *plants*. Children pick it up soon but may go too far as in *mans* or *sheeps*. Philosophers, European as well as Indian, have always done it - claiming, for example, that the world may be explained in terms of substances and qualities because sentences consist of subjects and predicates.

Panini's grammar is very generous. The techniques he uses to refer to groups of sounds, called "condensation" (*pratyahara*), are also used to refer to groups of nominal and verbal endings.

John Kadvany's "Positional Notation and Linguistic Recursion" compared ancient relationships between linguistics and mathematics to modern ones. He used Sanskrit positional number words and the formal techniques of Panini's grammar to explain how modern mathematical computation is constructed from linguistic skills and language structure.

## The distinction between natural and artificial

Joachim Kurtz supplemented Jeffrey Oaks' contribution with an account of the surprising adventures of European Syllogistics - medieval reformulations of Aristotelian logic - in Late Imperial China. Since it involved the introduction of some 800 unintelligible new terms, it relied on Kanji characters found in logic textbooks imported from Japan.

Martin Stokhof's "Hand or Hammer?" discussed 'grammatical form' and 'logical form' in early 20th century Euro-American analytical philosophy. Adding linguistics and the philosophy of language, he wondered whether the distinction between natural and formal languages can be maintained.

In "Can the world be captured in an equation?" Robbert Dijkgraaf discussed a variety of examples, some of them suggesting that physics benefits from the generosity of mathematics, others (especially in the quantum theory of strings) that they develop simultaneously, others again that reductionism plays a role or that a sense of playfulness or beauty is decisive.

## The Indic contribution

The Indic approach to the exact sciences has generally preferred computation to theory, and so assigns a role to language, natural or artificial, different from that in European science. Roddam Narasimha showed how the best example of this approach is the Bakshali Manuscript of around 800 CE. Here computational tasks are displayed in an artificial language that is written with the help of symbols for arithmetical operations that foretell the algebraic equations of modern science. These displays did not lead to equations like the Newton/Euler

$f = ma$ , but their spirit survives in the famous diagrams that the self-confessed Babylonian Richard Feynman invented for doing calculations in quantum physics.

Most of the works of the Kerala school of mathematics are in Sanskrit, but one is composed in a Dravidian language. In "The First Textbook of Calculus: Yuktibhasa," P.P. Divakaran examined a Malayalam work of the mid-16th century which describes the development of infinitesimal calculus for the geometry of the circle and the sphere, together with all proofs. These proofs are written almost entirely in natural Malayalam, without the help of a formal notation or even diagrams. Divakaran presented translations of two passages to illustrate the point that the lack of an artificial language did not hinder the communication of the subtle reasoning involved in this new mathematics. He then argued that, nevertheless, an efficient artificial language is a prerequisite for abstraction and greater generality and that its absence may have played a role in preventing the Kerala work from realizing its potential.

The story of generosity has not come to an end. One afternoon in Bangalore, at the time of writing this report, the author had a long conversation with Roddam Narasimha and P.P. Divakaran, both primarily physicists, and Vidyanand Nanjundiah, who started out as a physicist but is now responsible for Molecular Reproduction and Development Genetics. He declared and illustrated that "Every structure is generous." It's a good place to stop and think again.

Robbert Dijkgraaf referred to "the great little meeting in Amsterdam" and added: "it was a gem." The event owed much of its success to the lively rulings of the chairs who included Henk Barendregt, Kamaleswar Bhattacharya, Dirk van Dalen, Fenrong Liu, Kim Plofker and Bram de Swaan. Like the *Proceedings* of the first, the papers will again be published in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*. The present report owes much to conversations with Roddam Narasimha and P.P. Divakaran, strengthened by emails from Kim Plofker. The author thanks them all and expresses his sincere gratitude to Shri K.S. Rama Krishna of the *National Institute of Advanced Studies* at Bangalore for his generous computer and general IT assistance. ◀

Frits Staal

<http://philosophy.berkeley.edu/staal>

vyāse vāridhīhate rūpahṛte vyāsasāgarābhīhate

triśarādiviṣamasamkhyābhaktamṛṇam svaṃ pṛthak kramāt kuryāt

labdhaḥ paridhīḥ sūkṣmo bahukṛtvā haraṇato 'tisūkṣmaḥ syāt /

Add or subtract alternately the diameter multiplied by four and divided in order by the odd numbers like three, five, etc., to or from the diameter multiplied by four and divided by one.

The result is an accurate circumference. If division is repeated many times, it will become very accurate.

$$4D - \frac{4D}{3} + \frac{4D}{5} - \frac{4D}{7} + \dots$$

Infinite Series Expansion of the Circumference of a Circle

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# The EU through the eyes of Asia: Media perceptions and public opinion in 2006

In 2006, a study initiated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) of media and public opinion perceptions of the European Union was undertaken in six Asian locations - Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and mainland China. This article summarises the findings from the daily analysis of three newspapers and one prime-time television evening news in each location for the period 1 January – 31 October 2006 as well as from an online public opinion survey conducted in November 2006 (400 respondents in each location).

Martin Holland and Natalia Chaban

To summarise, 7,850 news items related to the European Union (EU) were identified in the 18 newspapers surveyed demonstrating that coverage of the EU is modest. Where the EU is reported, it is predominantly described as Europe as an external actor elsewhere in the world (interacting with a third party), and not as necessarily locally relevant. Compounding this, the importance of the EU angle to a story was typically minor although the tone of the reports were generally neutral-positive. The EU's economic prowess is still recognised but this is now balanced by recognition of an emerging active political international role, even when that role is with a third country elsewhere. Against these common themes regional differentiations were also evident with mainland China the most noteworthy case.

On television, the EU appears almost invisible (just 185 news items in total), except perhaps on CCTV-1 in China where an average of 11 news items a month mentioned the EU as either a major, secondary or minor actor (a total of 129). The findings for television coverage across the six locations were broadly consistent with those for the popular press: third party and a minor focus on the EU and generally neutral in tone, yet with a strong awareness of Europe as an international political actor (perhaps reflecting the nature of television, where foreign affairs generate images that are more audience appealing). But clearly the EU is now visible as a political actor and it appears widely recognised in the popular media that there is at least a face (Javier Solana) if not a single phone number that former US Secretary of State Mr Kissinger could now contact!

So, if the EU is largely peripheral in the mass media is that necessarily problematic? The data suggest that there is a potential 'expectations deficit': if the EU is not given prominence and its role in the region under-reported, reduced expectations of Europe's involvement may be an inevitable consequence. A self-fulfilling logic – lower demands leading to reduced media interest leading to lower demands... - could ensue. Given that the EU is a major economic partner for all the areas covered in this research and has growing political and security relationships, misperceptions based on media choices pose significant policy challenges, such as a possible undervaluing of the EU-ASEAN/ASEM relationship. Any such downgrading runs the risk of missed opportunities for both the EU and Asia. While under-reported, the positive development unearthed by the findings is the emerging perception of an EU that is more economically and politically bal-

anced: Europe's image is no longer just that of 'Fortress Europe'; rather the EU as a benign, international actor is being reported more often and more accurately. Provided that this media trend continues (and the EU's global role continues to expand) new opportunities for matching Asian needs and objectives with what the EU might be in a position to provide are possible.

### What then of public opinion?

Although for all the locations studied the EU constituted a major economic player this reality was not reflected when respondents were asked to rank the EU. The EU was given significantly less emphasis and importance and nowhere ranked higher than fourth, and in Japan and in Singapore only the sixth most important current partner. Opinions on the EU's future importance reflected a similar pattern. Evaluations of the current state of relations with the EU were overwhelmingly viewed as positive everywhere (on average in excess of 85% describing it as steady or improving). Only Thailand displayed any meaningful level of discontent (with 6.8% of respondents describing the relationship as worsening). However, the relatively high percentages in both Thailand (31.4%) and South Korea (30%) that viewed the relationship as "improving" may also suggest that the past was somewhat more negative.

One specific EU event common to all Asian locations was the 6th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) held in Helsinki in September 2006. When respondents were asked about the extent to which they followed this news item divergent patterns were evident. Singapore (43%) and Japan (48.8%) were similar – this time in their shared disinterest towards ASEM – while South Koreans were the most actively engaged with ASEM developments (with 85.7% following news of the meeting).

Perhaps the most significant findings relate to the images of the EU. The survey asked respondents: "When thinking about the EU what thoughts come to mind?" There were some remarkable similarities across the locations (see Table 1). Firstly, the Euro is now widely associated with the EU even if this symbolic linkage distorts the reality that just 13 of the 27 member states have currently adopted the single currency. It featured in first or second place in the minds of Koreans, Japanese, Singaporean and citizens of Hong Kong. Secondly, for these four regions the notion of the EU as a positive example of integration was also prevalent cementing a somewhat benign and unified image of the EU from an external Asian perspective. But thirdly, and perhaps paradoxically, in all locations the EU was also represented through individual Member States potentially

Table 1 Public Opinion "Dominant EU Images"

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Korea	European union, integration	Euro	Individual countries	Exceptionalism/problems
Thailand	Individual countries	Economic power	trade	Euro
Hong Kong	Euro	trade	European union, integration	Individual countries
Singapore	European union, integration	Euro	Economic power	Individual countries
Japan	Euro	European union, integration	Individual countries	Disparities/unfairness

undermining the notion of a collective group of 27 and reducing the EU to the EU3, for example. Thailand presented the most extreme case and was unique in predominantly presenting the EU in economic and country terms. This notwithstanding, the images expressed by the majority suggest that Asian publics have a supranational appreciation of the EU rather than one based around antagonistic images of 'Fortress Europe' or national imagery.

### Can EU visibility in the Asian media be raised?

A starting point would be to build on what Mr Solana has achieved. Here, the European constitution plays a crucial role. The more the EU can have a single external personality, then the more understanding in the media and public opinion is likely to follow. Second, the Euro was a significant dominant image which, while not created for reasons of external perceptions, is now a symbol that the general public in the Asia-Pacific region associate with the EU. Increasing the visibility of Euro as an international currency in the region could be a way of raising visibility in general for the EU. Third, the positive interpretation of Europe's integration project as a reference point (not a model) could be developed more assertively within ASEM, again increasing the profile and relevance of the EU among Asian citizens.

Increasing EU public diplomacy constitutes a fourth mechanism for addressing Asian perceptions of the Union. While greater financial resources may be part of the solution, a better strategy rather than just more money may be the more effective approach. Lastly, in terms of comparative advantage and distinctiveness, Europe's global development role appears to have been under-utilised in the EU's public diplomacy. The combined Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the EU and the member states represents over half of the world total. Yet, both in public opinion, and in the Asian media, the notion of Europe as a 'Development Superpower' largely

lacks profile and needs to be popularised through a more active and directed public diplomacy.

### Conclusions

Persisting stereotypes can be promoted and maintained where the media fails to provide informed news and accurate portrayals of actors. Such misperceptions based on inadequate knowledge can lead to inappropriate policy choices. The general low level of news reporting on the EU in Asia heightens this risk. While the data does provide some grounds for limited optimism (the changing recognition that Europe is more than 'butter mountains' and 'tariff quotas'), and even conceding that the EU is still punching below its weight as a global actor, the media's perception of the EU's importance for Asia and its level of coverage is lower than is justified. There is a paradoxical challenge too: the EU has to be careful, if it enhances its profile it must ensure that it can meet renewed and higher expectations. If the EU promotes itself and raises expectations of being a serious political actor, there needs to be the capacity to deliver, otherwise the project becomes self-defeating.

More broadly, the analysis presented here is not disconnected from the wider debate on the nature and direction of the integration process. What happens externally does have important internal implications for integration. If there is a supportive external view concerning the purpose of the EU, if integration *per se* can provide benefits externally for Thailand, South Korea, Japan, China, Singapore and Hong Kong (whatever those may be) then the potential exists

for a positive spill-back effect that might influence Europe's public. Were European citizens informed about the EU's wider agenda and that it is more valued externally than it is perhaps internally, there could be positive outcomes for the construction of European identity. Consequently, how the EU's external image is represented and conveyed can play an important dynamic in the internal integration process. The success of that enterprise, however, depends upon the portrait of the EU as painted in the global media. <

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The "EU through the Eyes of Asia" is the pilot project of the European Studies in Asia (ESIA) network initiated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). This ongoing two-year trans-national study is a collaboration between ASEF and the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) and an unprecedented mobilisation of six European studies centres in the Asian region, Chulalongkorn University (Thailand), Korea University, National University of Singapore, Keio University (Japan), Hong Kong Baptist University and Fudan University (China). The project will be completed later this year. This article is a summary of the second interim report. Please visit <http://esia.asef.org> to view the full report.



## Asia Alliance

The European Alliance for Asian Studies is a cooperative framework of European institutes specializing in Asian Studies. Its partners are:

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**IFA**

**Institute of Asian Studies**

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# Technology and culture: Genetics and its ethical and social implications in Asia and Europe

*Soraj Hongladarom*

Genetics has become a prodigious force in today's world. After the success of the Human Genome Project, which sequenced the entire genomic structure of humans, genetics has become much more powerful. Not only is genetics of importance to professional scientists, it, and the disciplines it has spawned have had an impact on wider society, religions, cultures and traditions. Since the genetic make up of human beings can be said to define what it actually is to be human, the social and ethical implications are profound. Moreover, as the sciences and technologies that make up these new fields have become part and parcel of the current globalising trend, there is a growing enthusiasm for genetics and its related disciplines. Countries, determined not to be left out, are 'jumping on the genomic bandwagon'. It is not surprising then to see genetics at the forefront in Asia too.

On 17-18 March, 2007, the Center for Ethics of Science and Technology (CEST), Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, (in collaboration with the European Academy of Environment and Economy, Germany), organised an international workshop on "Technology and Culture: Genetics and its Ethical and Social Implications in Asia and Europe." The workshop was part of the Eighth Asian Bioethics Conference, and also part of the Asia-Europe Workshop Series 2006/2007 organised by the Asia Europe Foundation and the European Alliance for Asian Studies.

The key question of the workshop was: what are the ethical and social implications of this introduction of the new field of genetics in Asia and Europe? Around twenty scholars from more than ten countries gathered together for two days to search for an answer. The scholars came from a large variety of disciplines. There were philosophers such as myself, Margit Sutrop from Estonia, Leonardo de Castro and Peter Sy from the Philippines, and Ole Döring from Germany. There were lawyers such as Jürgen Simon from Germany, Carlos Maria Romeo Casabona from Spain, Terry Kaan from Singapore, Jakkrit Kuanpot from Thailand, and Cosimo Mazzoni from Italy. Moreover, Anna Cambon-Thomsen from France is a medical doctor; Minakshi Bhardwaj, representing the UK but originally from India, represented both biology and science policy studies; Le Dinh Luong from Vietnam is a geneticist, and Chan Chee Khoo is an epidemiologist. Despite the group's diversity, there were no disciplinary barriers. We were determined to search for common ground.

Among the topics discussed during the workshop, one or two stood out. Le Dinh Luong asked a very pertinent question: What use is ethics in science and technology to people who are poor? He told

the group that he was born into a poor family and had experienced first hand the horrors of the Vietnam War. He then became a scientist and believed that science and technology could indeed deliver his people from poverty. But he added, for people in poverty, there is little room for ethical considerations. Such discussions were the provinces of the rich who had the leisure to ponder them as their basic needs have been met. This reflects the viewpoint that science and technology are to be seen as instruments for economic development. Le Dinh Luong's view was not shared by the other members of the group, though everyone shared his sentiment. Perhaps ethics should be seen, not just as a perk for the rich, but as a necessary part of a regulatory framework which would make it possible for science and technology actually to become poverty-reduction instruments. Without such a framework, it is entirely conceivable that, instead of science and technology, (genetics included), becoming a tool for poverty reduction, exactly the opposite would occur - science and technology could become tools of the rich to further exploit the poor. The problem, then, is how to institute such a framework so that global justice is achieved and genetics and its related disciplines becomes a friend of the poor rather an enemy. To find a solution, a clear understanding of the social, ethical and cultural implications of genetics is crucial.

The group also discussed how different norms and values, such as those apparent in the East and the West, could be reconciled. Margit Sutrop was critical of the notion that these values are simply too different to be reconciled under one system. According to her, values that are typically associated with the East, such as putting more emphasis on the community rather than the individual, downplaying individual privacy in favour of public order, etc., are also to be found in the West. Privacy, of course, was an important concept in the discussion of genetics because there was a natural concern about the genetic data of a population being manipulated in such a way that the rights of the people are undermined (this was the main focus of the lawyers who attended the workshop). When the issue was raised about how privacy is justified, then the different belief systems became apparent. My colleague Somporn Promta, also from the Philosophy Department at Chula, and Chanroen Pa from Cambodia are Buddhists, and are naturally concerned with how the Buddhist teachings can be interpreted so that we gain further insights on the problem of privacy. Nonetheless, it was agreed that there are certain values that should be upheld no matter what cultural tradition one originates from. The group also discussed the Singaporean proposal of 'reciprocity.' This is an implicit agreement between the government and its citizens where the government expects certain loyalty from the citizens and



they, in turn, accept a certain degree of restrictions for the sake of public order and stability. As an alternative the group discussed the concept of 'solidarity' which does not presuppose the hierarchical or paternalistic attitude which seems to be implicit in the concept of reciprocity. 'Solidarity' is a concept that has roots within the Western tradition, but it can also be seen as 'typically Asian' too, given the sense of wholeness felt within communities in Asia.

Having travelled from far away places to Bangkok, the members of the workshop came to an agreement that there are perhaps more similarities than differences between them. Any differences can indeed be exposed, that is not to say that all differences would, or could, be washed away. Be that as it may, the members became much closer and after two days of intensive meeting there a solidarity emerged among the members which, I am quite sure, will spur on more intensive and varied collaborations in the future. <

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# ICAS at TEN

In ten years of existence the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) has brought more than 5,000 academics from 60 countries together at five conventions where four thousand papers were presented during more than a thousand panels. Behind these figures lies a world of multiple interactions across borders and disciplines which has resulted in new long term international research partnerships. ICAS is established as one of the largest gatherings of Asia scholars in the world. In the run up to ICAS 5 in Kuala Lumpur, it's a good time to both reflect on the last decade and look to the future.

Josine Stremmelaar & Paul van der Velde

Since 1995 the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) was looking for ways of internationalising Asia Studies. The main goals were to transcend the boundaries between disciplines, between nations and regions studied and between the geographic origins of the scholars involved. This concept acquired a name: International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) and it became a platform on which Asia scholars from across the globe could study problems of interest to all.

ICAS was officially launched in 1997 and IIAS became the host of ICAS 1. The announcement of the convention brought enthusiastic responses from every corner of the world. Nearly one thousand participants from 40 countries attended ICAS 1 in Leiden, the Netherlands. More than 350 universities, institutes, and organisations were represented. In 2001 the Freie Universität Berlin hosted ICAS 2. Two key decisions were taken in Berlin: 1) it was agreed that future editions of ICAS should, (for obvious reasons), be held in Asia; and 2) the ICAS Secretariat was founded to safeguard the continuity of the ICAS process. The main tasks of the Secretariat are: assessing new ideas concerning ICAS; publicising ICAS and its activities; organising the ICAS Book Prize; monitoring the ICAS Publication Series and keeping an up-to-date database of participants, institutions, exhibitors and advertisers. The Secretariat is hosted by the IIAS.

Following the Berlin decision, ICAS 3 was hosted by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. The attendance was much higher than in Berlin both in terms of participants, (in particular those from Asia), and papers presented. Two years later, in 2005, ICAS 4 was held in China hosted by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. It was equally as succesful as ICAS 3. At the opening ceremony of ICAS 4 the ICAS Book Prizes were

awarded for the first time and the ICAS Publication Series was announced.

## The ICAS Book Prize

The bi-annual ICAS Book Prize (IBP) is a global competition which provides an international focus for publications on Asia. The book prizes are awarded for: (1) best study in the humanities; (2) best study in the social sciences. Furthermore there is a prize for the most outstanding PhD dissertation in the field of Asia Studies. The 2005 winners in the social science category were: Elizabeth C. Economy (Institute for Foreign Affairs, New York) with *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future* and Christopher Reed (Ohio State University) for *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937*. Sam Wong (University of Leeds) was awarded Best Book Dissertation for his thesis on *Community participation of Mainland Chinese migrants in Hong Kong – rethinking agency, institutions and authority in social capital theory*. Wong's thesis is published as part of the ICAS Publication Series (AUP) and will be launched at ICAS 5.

Eighty new publications (46 humanities and 34 social sciences) and 10 PhD theses have been submitted for the 2007 ICAS Book Prize. This is 50% more entrants than IBP 2005. The Reading Committee - consisting of six respected scholars in the field of Asia Studies - has been particularly impressed by the high quality of the PhD theses and calls upon PhD supervisors to stimulate our young colleagues to submit their doctoral theses for the next IBP in 2009. The long lists, (consisting of 10 books in both categories), were announced in March 2007 at the AAS Annual Meeting in Boston. (For details see 'The ICAS Book Prize: A Showcase for Asia Studies' p 4-5 ICAS supplement to IIAS Newsletter 44). The 2007 IBP sees the launch of the Colleagues Choice Award. This new award has been established following numerous requests to give the academic community the opportunity to voice their choice. To cast your vote visit the virtual polling station at www.

## International Convention of Asia Scholars

Year	Place	Participants	Panels	Papers	Countries	Institutions
1998	Leiden	1000	130	640	40	350
2001	Berlin	800	100	500	35	280
2003	Singapore	1100	250	940	54	400
2005	Shanghai	1200	270	1020	58	420
2007*	Kuala Lumpur	1400	350	1400	60	500

\* Estimated figures

icassecretariat.org which will be open until 15 July 2007.

## ICAS publication series

Recently ICAS signed a contract with the Amsterdam University Press (AUP) to produce an ICAS Publication Series consisting of monographs, edited volumes and Proceedings. Five volumes of Proceedings are currently being produced. The contents include 65 out of a total of 130 papers submitted to ICAS. The ICAS 4 Proceedings are planned for publication in the course of this year and beginning of next year.

The first edited volume appeared in 2006 and is entitled *Multiregionalism and Multilateralism. Asian-European Relations in a Global Context* (Sebastian Bersick et al eds.). More titles are in the pipeline. The first volume to appear in the monograph series will be the reworked thesis of the IBP prize winner Samuel Wong. (The prize is the publication of his thesis). ICAS 5 also sees the launch of Marleen Dieleman's *The Rhythm of Strategy: A Corporate Biography of the Salim Group of Indonesia* as part of the ICAS Monograph Series. All friends and sponsors of ICAS will receive a free copy of one of these books or the aforementioned *Multiregionalism and Multilateralism* at ICAS 5. The hallmark for all books in the ICAS Publication Series is sound academic work that appeals to a wider public.

## Sharing a future in Asia

At ICAS 4 in Shanghai it was announced that the Institute of Occidental Studies (IKON) and the Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA) at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) are to host ICAS 5. It takes place 2-5 August 2007 in the Kuala Lumpur Convention Center and will be the largest gathering of Asia scholars in the world. ICAS 5 has the theme 'Sharing a Future in Asia' and the programme offers more than 300 sessions with 1500 active participants from 60 countries. In total 185 panels have been submitted of which 136 organised panels, (panels formed by a group of scholars who will present their papers within one

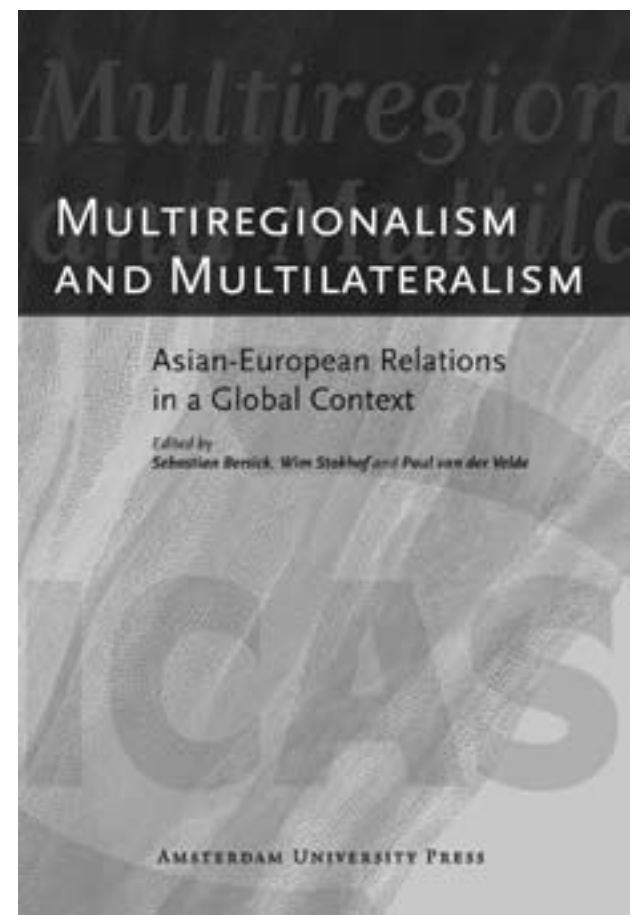
or more sessions), and 45 institutional panels (sponsored by various organisations studying Asia in the broadest sense), have been accepted. A further 168 panels have been formed on the basis of individual submissions. This combination of organised and individual panels is an ideal mix and also a confluence of various paradigmatic approaches which typify the multidisciplinary and border transcending character of ICAS. The wide variety of themes, disciplines, and regions covered promises an intellectually challenging convention.

One of the new features at ICAS 5 will be the ICAS Institutions' Carousel: To showcase the different institutions that are participating, while at the same time (re)acquainting scholars with their activities, academic organisations have been invited to represent their institutions in the exhibition hall or have virtual presentations. In the ICAS Carousel, institutions will inform the

audience about new developments and activities. Participants can explore new developments by visiting the exhibition hall where personal and virtual presentations will alternate. Presentations will be between five and 15 minutes.

## ICAS 6 and beyond

The venue for ICAS 6 will be announced in the course of this year. At the time of writing, the secretariat is finalising the negotiations with the future hosts of ICAS 6. We can confirm that it will be an institution in East Asia. In cooperation with the local host we are striving to widen the platform in order to involve representatives from applied sciences and the field of innovative technology in particular. We are convinced that the ICAS activities will solicit strong support from Asia scholars and others worldwide and hope that as many as possible will become friends of ICAS enabling us to make ICAS stronger for the sake of all Asia scholars. <





# > IAS fellows

IIAS hosts several categories of post doctoral researchers (fellows) in Asian Studies. Sponsorship of these fellows contributes to the institute's aim of enhancing expertise and encouraging the exploration of underdeveloped fields of study.

More information and IIAS fellowships application forms are available at: [www.ias.nl/ias/fellowships](http://www.ias.nl/ias/fellowships)  
For specific information, please contact: [iasfellowships@let.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:iasfellowships@let.leidenuniv.nl)

## Fellowship categories

Affiliated fellows, Research fellows, Senior fellows, IIAS Professors and Artists in Residence.

IIAS fellows can choose to be based in Leiden or at the Branch Office Amsterdam.  
All fellows currently engaged at IIAS are listed below selected by region of specialty and in alphabetical order.

## GENERAL

### Dr Katia Chirkova (Russia)

Programme coordinator, within the programme *Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent*, sponsored by CASS/KNAW (see Chenglong)  
1 September 2005 – 1 April 2008

### Melody Lu, MA (Taiwan)

Research fellow  
*Intermediated cross-border marriages in East and Southeast Asia*  
1 February 2006 – 9 September 2007

### Dr Prasanna Kumar Patra (India)

Research fellow, within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme 'Socio-Genetic Marginalization in Asia' (SMAP)  
*Cross-cultural comparative study of genetic research in India and Japan*  
15 December 2005 – 15 November 2008

### Dr Ellen Raven (the Netherlands)

Project coordinator, within the network 'South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaeology Index' (ABIA), sponsored by Gonda Foundation  
1 June 2003 – 1 June 2008

### Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt (the Netherlands)

IIAS Professor  
Special Chair at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, 'Asian History'  
1 October 1999 - 1 October 2007

## CENTRAL ASIA

### Dr Mehdi Parvizi Amineh (the Netherlands)

Stationed at Leiden and the Branch Office Amsterdam  
Project coordinator, within the IIAS/Clingendael 'Energy Programme Asia' (EPA)  
1 July 2002 – 31 December 2007

### Dr Alex McKay (New Zealand)

Affiliated fellow  
*The history of Tibet and the Indian Himalayas*  
1 October 2000 – 1 May 2008

### Dr Irina Morozova (Russia)

Stationed at Leiden and the Branch Office Amsterdam  
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung  
*The transformation of Political Elites in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia, 1924-2006: A Comparative Historical Analysis*  
31 March 2006 - 1 September 2008

## SOUTH ASIA

### Dr Sekhar Bandhyopadhyay

Victoria University of Wellington  
Affiliated fellow  
*Meanings of Freedom: Decolonization and Politics of Transition in West Bengal, 1947-1952*  
1 October – 31 December 2007

### Dr Jyotsna Agnihotri Gupta (the Netherlands)

Research fellow, within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme 'Socio-Genetic Marginalization in Asia'  
*Reproductive genetics and counselling in India: Decision-making regarding genetic screening and prenatal diagnosis*  
1 September 2004 – 31 August 2007

### Dr Dipika Mukherjee

Affiliated fellow  
*Negotiating Languages and Forging Identities: Surinamese-Indian Women in the Netherlands*  
15 January 2007 – 15 January 2008

### Nathan Porath (U.K.)

Affiliated fellow, sponsored by USIP  
*Islamic education, secular education and civil society in South Thailand*  
1 March 2007 - 1 September 2008

### Prof. Om Prakash (India)

Senior fellow, sponsored by Van den Berch van Heemstede Foundation  
*The trading world of the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800*  
15 June – 15 September 2007

### Dr Saraju Rath (India)

Affiliated fellow, sponsored by Gonda Foundation  
*Catalogue collection Sanskrit texts*  
5 January 2004 – 5 January 2009

### Dr Karuna Sharma (India)

Affiliated fellow  
*From reverence to devaluation: Women and labour in Medieval India c. 1200- c. 1800*  
2 January 2006 – 2 January 2008

### Dr Suhnu Ram Sharma (India)

Affiliated fellow, sponsored by Gonda Foundation  
*A grammar of Manchad language*  
1 May – 31 September 2007

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

### Dr Jet Bakels (the Netherlands)

Affiliated fellow  
*Researching tribal traditions in a changing society*  
1 March 2006 – 1 March 2007

### Dr Greg Bankoff (UK)

Affiliated fellow  
*Cultures of coping: Community and natural hazard in the Philippines*  
1 September 2004 – 31 August 2007

### Dr Chin Yee Whah (Malaysia)

Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam  
Affiliated fellow  
*Chinese entrepreneurship in Malaysia*  
1 May – 31 July 2007

### Marianne Hulsbosch (Australia)

University of Sydney  
Affiliated fellow  
*Pointy Shoes and Pith Helmets: Dress and Identity Construction in Ambon from 1850 to 1942*  
15 August – 15 November 2007

### Prof. Mashudi Kader (Malaysia)

IIAS Professor, holder of the European Chair of Malay Studies  
*The morphology and the movements of constituents in the syntax of classical Malay*  
1 October 2006 – 1 September 2008

### Dr Ritsuko Kikusawa (Japan)

National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka  
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by NWO  
*An examination of the genetic affiliation of the Malagasy languages: their internal and external relationship in the Austronesian language family*  
1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007

### Prof. Lawrence Andrew Reid (USA)

University of Hawai'i  
Affiliated fellow  
*Reconstruction of Southern Cordilleran "Phrase Markers"*  
1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007

### Prof. Hein Steinhauer (the Netherlands)

IIAS Professor  
Special Chair 'Ethnolinguistics of East Indonesia' at the Radboud University Nijmegen  
1 September 1998 - 1 September 2008

## EAST ASIA

### Prof. Chiu Hei-Yuan (Taiwan)

Institute of Sociology, Taipei  
IIAS Professor  
1 September 2007 – 31 August 2008

### Dr Huang Chenglong (China)

Affiliated fellow, sponsored by CASS/ KNAW  
*Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent*  
1 July – 31 August 2007

### Dr Hong-chih Huang (Taiwan)

National Science Council  
Affiliated fellow  
*A study of asset adequacy and retirement financial planning for aging society in Taiwan*  
1 August – 31 October 2007

### Dr Myungshin Kim (Korea)

Yonsei University, Seoul  
Visiting Lecturer, sponsored by AKS  
*The correlation of aesthetics and politics; North Korean literature*  
16 January 2007 – 20 January 2008

### Dr Kato Masae (Japan)

Research fellow within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme 'Socio-Genetic Marginalization in Asia'  
*A comparative study on socio-genetic marginalization: Japan in "Asia" in relation to the "West" as a reference group*  
1 April 2005 – 1 April 2008

### Dr Ko Chyong-Fang (Taiwan)

National Science Council  
Affiliated fellow  
*Bring Family Back? The impact of cross-border marriages on host societies.*  
20 August – 20 November 2007

### Dr Jan-Eerik Leppänen (Finland)

PhD student within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme 'Socio-Genetic Marginalization in Asia'  
*Socio-genetic marginalisation and vulnerable ethnic groups in Southwest China*  
1 February 2005 – 1 February 2009

### Dr Li Yunbing (China)

Shanghai Normal University  
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, CASS  
Affiliated fellow  
*Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent*  
1 July – 31 August 2007

### Prof. Liu Guangkun (China)

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)  
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (IEA)  
Affiliated fellows  
*Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent*  
1 July – 31 August 2007

### Dr Liu Zhengai (China)

Peking University  
Affiliated fellow (vrouw van WU)  
*Historical Memory and Identity: A Historical Anthropology Study of Manzu*  
20 June – 20 September 2007

### Prof. Minohara Toshihiro (Japan)

Affiliated fellow  
*Path to War: European-Japanese Relations from the Manchurian Incident and SIGINT, 1931-1941*  
1 October 2006 – 30 September 2007

### Prof. Sakamoto Hiroko (Japan)

Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office  
Hitotsubashi University, Graduate School of Social Sciences  
Affiliated fellow  
*Research on Intellectual History and Culture of Cartoons in Modern China: From the Points of View of Multicultural Linkage, Media and Gender*  
1 August 2007 – 31 January 2008

### Prof. Sun Hongkai (China)

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)  
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (IEA)  
Affiliated fellow  
*Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent*  
1 July – 31 August 2007

### Prof. Tsai Yen-zen (Taiwan)

IIAS Professor, holder of the European Chair in Chinese Studies  
*Chinese religion*  
28 August 2006 – 1 September 2007

### Dr Wang Feng (China)

Affiliated fellow  
*Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent*  
1 July – 31 August 2007

### Dr Wang Yi (China)

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences  
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by CASS  
*Female roles in Chinese Novels, 15th-18th Century*  
20 April – 20 October 2007

### Dr Wu Yongping (China)

Tsinghua University, School of Public Policy and Management  
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by KNAW  
*The Political Economy of Rent Seeking and Economic Privilege in China*  
20 June – 20 September 2007

### Zheng Ying Ping, MA (China)

Institute of International Information  
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by CSC  
*Strengthening Asia-Pacific Multilateral Security Cooperation: European Experience*  
15 February – 31 December 2007

### Prof. Yu Yake (China)

Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office  
Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences  
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by CSC  
*Theory and Practice of Regional Integration: A Comparative Study on the Cases of EU and ASEAN*  
1 August 2007 – 31 January 2008

## IIAS partners and fellow sponsors:

ASSR: Amsterdam School for Social Science Research, the Netherlands  
BICER: Bureau of International Cultural and Educational Relations, Ministry of Education, Taiwan  
CASS: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences  
CNWS: School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies, the Netherlands  
CSC: Chinese Scholarship Council  
ESF: European Science Foundation  
IDPAD: Indo-Dutch Programme on Alternatives in Development  
KNAW: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences  
AKS: Academy of Korean Studies  
LUMC: Leiden University Medical Centre  
NIOD: Netherlands Institute for War Documentation  
NSC: National Science Council, Taiwan  
NWO: Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research  
RoGB: Royal Government of Bhutan  
SSAAPS: Swedish School of Advanced Asia-Pacific Studies  
SASS: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences  
WOTRO: Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research



# IIAS research programmes, networks & initiatives

## Programmes

### 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**  
s.rath@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

### Energy programme Central Asia

This programme on the geopolitics of energy focuses on Chinese, Indian, Japanese and South Korean strategies to secure oil and natural gas from the Caspian region (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, and Russia) and the Persian Gulf. The programme is institutionally supported by IIAS and the Clingendael International Energy Programme (CIEP), Den Haag.

**Coordinator: Mehdi Parvizi Amineh**  
m.p.amineh@uva.nl

### 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**  
h.w.vanschendel@uva.nl

### Socio-genetic marginalisation 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 Sleeboom-Faulkner**  
m.sleeboom-faulkner@sussex.ac.uk

### 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**  
r.p.e.sybesma@let.leidenuniv.nl

### Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the subcontinent

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](http://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 and Gerda Theuns-de Boer**  
e.m.raven@let.leidenuniv.nl  
[www.abia.net](http://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

### 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.

**Coordinator: John Kleinen**  
kleinen@uva.nl

For more information on IIAS research: [www.iias.nl](http://www.iias.nl)



During the 21st century it is projected that there will be more than one billion people aged 60 and over. This will actually reach nearly two billion by 2050, of whom three-quarters will live in the less-developed world. The bulk of the ageing population will reside in Asia. Ageing in Asia is attributable to the marked declines in fertility shown over the last 40 years and the steady increase in life-expectancy. In Western Europe, where the development of ageing populations came at a slower pace and could initially be incorporated into welfare policy provisions, governments are currently aiming to trim and reduce government financed social welfare and health-care, including pensions systems, unleashing substantial public debate and experienced insecurity. Many Asian Governments are confronted with comparable challenges and dilemmas, involving both the State and the family, but which - comparatively - need to be addressed within a much shorter time-span. In short, both sets of nations are reviewing their social contract with their people.

## Private and public old-age security arrangements in Asia and Europe

### Joint conference organised by

National Science Council (NSC), Taipei, Taiwan  
International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS),  
Leiden, the Netherlands

### Convenors

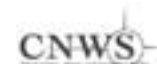
Prof. CHENG Li-Chen, Department of Social Work,  
National Taiwan University  
Prof. Carla Risseuw, Department of Anthropology,  
Leiden University, the Netherlands

### Date and venue

5-8 September 2007, Campus The Hague,  
Leiden University at The Hague, the Netherlands

### For further information

Martina van den Haak, IIAS, [m.vandenhaak@let.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:m.vandenhaak@let.leidenuniv.nl)  
The conference programme is available on [www.iias.nl](http://www.iias.nl)





# > Arts agenda

## Australia

### Melbourne Museum

11 Nicholson St  
Carlton, Victoria  
T + 61 3 8341 7777  
www.melbourne.museum.vic.gov.au

#### Until 22 July 2007

*Great Walls of China: dynasties, dragons & warriors*

Over 50,000 kilometres long, the Great Wall of China is now a major international exhibition. National treasures tell the 2,000-year-old story of the building of the walls across China as part of successive defensive and offensive strategies. Themes explored include the origins, construction, and function of the walls, the cultures of the peoples living nearby, the introduction of Buddhism that followed the Silk Road trade routes along the course of the walls, and the significance of 'The Great Walls of China' as a national symbol, precious cultural heritage, and tourism icon.

### The Art Gallery of New South Wales

Art Gallery Road, The Domain  
Sydney NSW 2000  
T +02 9225 1700  
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

#### 24 May – 5 August 2007

*Ishiuchi Miyako: Mother's*

This exhibition of photographs by noted artist Ishiuchi Miyako reconstructs the show she presented at the Japan Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2005, including a series of moving photographs of her deceased mother's personal belongings.

## Canada

### Royal Ontario Museum

100 Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M5S 2C6  
T +416 586 8000  
www.rom.on.ca/index.php

#### 3 June to 12 August 2007

*Drama and Desire: Japanese Paintings from the Floating World 1690 - 1850*

This show presents the world of 17th to 19th century Tokyo through extraordinary masterworks of ukiyo-e painting – 'pictures of the floating world' that depict daily life in Japan.

## China

### Vitamin Creative Space

301, 29 Hao, Hengyijie Chigangxilu

Haizhuqu, 510300 Guangzhou  
T +86 20 84296760  
www.vitamincreativespace.com

#### Until 31 August 2007

*Chu Yun: Smile of Matter*

The first solo exhibition of Chu Yun.

### Hong Kong Heritage Museum

1 Man Lam Road  
Sha Tin, Hong Kong  
T +852 2180 8188  
www.heritagemuseum.gov.hk/english

#### Until 30 July 2007

*Cameras Inside Out*

While examining the evolution of the manufacture of cameras, the first part of this exhibition showcases a number of cameras that date back as far as 100 years. It also probes the development of the photographic art in a display of selected works by a group of senior local photographers including Kan Hing-fook, Tchan Fou-li, Leo K. K. Wong, and Ngan Chun-tung. In the second part, the exhibition presents the diversity of modern photography through the works of five contemporary artists – Almond Chu Tak-wah, So Hing-keung, Bobby Sham Ka-ho, Lam Wai-kit, and Chow Chun-fai.



#### Until 24 September 2007

*The Poetic Spirit – The Art of Henry Wo Yue-kee*  
Chao Shao-an Student Exhibition Series 1

## Denmark

### Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

DK-3050 Humlebaek  
T + 45 - 42 19 07 91  
www.louisiana.dk

#### Until 5 August 2007

*Made in China*

This exhibition presents nearly a hundred works from one of the world's largest collections of contemporary Chinese art, the Estella Collection. The selected works offer insight into the many currents that are moving through contemporary Chinese art and provide an introduction to art which is rapidly attaining an important position on the international art scene.

## France

### Halle Saint Pierre

2, rue Ronsard  
75018 Paris  
T +33 (0) 1 42 58 72 89  
www.hallesaintpierre.org

#### Until 26 August 2007

*India: Nek Chand @ Jivya Soma Mashe*

Nek Chand, born in 1924, and Jivya Soma Mashe, born in 1934, both create works that connect art and the landscape. This side-by-side view of their works is a first. The exhibition is also punctuated by other works of tribal and popular art.

## Germany

### Sparwasser HQ

**Offensive for Contemporary Art and Communication**  
Torstrasse 161  
10115 Berlin  
T +49 30 21803001  
www.sparwasserhq.de

#### Until 31 December 2007

*Ho Tzu Nyen – Part of the Glowing Whistle Festival*

Sparwasser HQ is launching its new program called The Glowing Whistle Festival. The first artist involved is Ho Tzu Nyen who presents his last project Bohemian Rhapsody, a film recently produced for the Singapore Biennial. Ho Tzu Nyen's work is simultaneously a courtroom drama (young men being sentenced to death), a documentary of its own production, and a vehicle that incites the spectators' participation in an exercise of mental karaoke.

### ZKM / Museum of Contemporary Art

Lorenzstraße 19  
76135 Karlsruhe  
T +49 (0)721 8100-0  
http://on1.zkm.de/zkm/e

#### 14 June – 21 October 2007

*Thermocline of Art: New Asian Waves*

The exhibition presents more than 100 contemporary artists from twenty Asian countries. The term 'thermocline' refers to a dramatic change in the temperature of ocean water causing a maelstrom that has remained invisible until this point to suddenly shoot out over the surface. In a similar fashion, this show exposes a huge continent of art, which has remained hidden below the surface of observation. The exhibition presents primarily emerging artists who still live in their countries of origin - from Kazakhstan to Korea, from Mongolia to Indonesia. It is a postmodern and post-ethnic art that shows the results of globalization and its effects on the Asian region. This panorama of art includes paintings, installations, film, video, photography, sculpture, and objects which occasionally transgress the borders of Western understanding of art.

### Linden-Museum Stuttgart

State Museum of Ethnology  
Hegelplatz 1  
D-70174 Stuttgart  
T +49 (0) 711/2022-3  
www.lindenmuseum.de

#### Until 21 October 2007

*In the Sign of the Dragon – on the Beauty of Chinese Lacquer Art: Homage to Fritz Low-Beer*

This exhibition presents the extensive collection formerly belonging to Fritz Low-Beer (1906-1976), who is regarded as a pioneer of Chinese lacquer art in the West. The exhibition offers a comprehensive insight into the fascinating techniques for creating and decorating Chinese lacquer art. The collection focuses primarily on carved lacquer and archaeological finds from the Western Han period (202 BCE-9 CE).

## Italy

### Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma (MACRO)

via Reggio Emilia  
54 – 00198 Rome  
T +39 06 6710 70400  
www.macro.roma.museum

#### Until 30 September 2007

*Into Me / Out of Me*

Into Me / Out of Me represents an exploration of the art of performance since the 1960s. The exhibition highlights the concrete and metaphorical ways in which humans interact with each other, themselves, and material matter. The focus is on three primordial and radical relationships between the internal and the external: metabolism, reproduction, and violence. Works by Nobuyoshi Araki, Patty Chang, Zhen Chen, Noritoshi Hirakawa, Tracy Nakayama, and Rirkrit Tiravanija are included.

## Venice Biennale

www.labiennale.org

#### 10 June – 21 November 2007

*52nd International Art Exhibition*

*Think with the Senses – Feel with the Mind: Art in the Present Tense*

The central international exhibition, set up in the Arsenale Corderie, in some spaces of the Arsenale Artiglierie and in the Italian Pavilion at the Giardini, will present about a hundred artists from all over the world with works – including site-specific and new productions – created in co-operation with the Venice Biennale for this occasion. Asian pavilions include:

China: Arsenale.

China - Hong Kong: Calle della Tana near Arsenale.

Central Asia: Spiazzi.

Japan: Pavilion at the Giardini.

Korea: Pavilion at the Giardini.

Singapore: Palazzo Cavalli Franchetti.

Taiwan: Palazzo delle Prigioni.



Courtesy of National Museum of Indonesia

## Japan

### Kyoto National Museum

527 Chayamachi, Higashiyama-ku  
Kyoto  
T +075-541-1151  
www.kyohaku.go.jp/eng/tenji/index.html

#### 8 August – 17 September 2007

*Treasures of Daikaku-ji Temple: Commemorating the 700th Anniversary of Emperor Gouda's Appointment as Abbot*

Daikaku-ji Temple underwent a major revival in 1307, when the retired emperor Gouda (1267-1324) became its abbot. This exhibition features treasures from Daikaku-ji, including the cloistered emperor's calligraphic works and screen paintings by Kano Sanraku (1559-1635) that adorned the temple quarters.

## Pakistan

### Mohatta Palace Museum

7 Hatim Alvi Road  
Clifton, Karachi 75600  
T +(92-21) 583 7669  
www.mohattapalacemuseum.com

#### Until 30 September 2007

*Tale of the Tile: the Ceramic Traditions of Pakistan*

The Mohatta Palace Museum presents a panoramic view of the ceramic traditions of Pakistan from c. 2800 BCE to the present day. The more than 400 historical objects consist of architectural elements, tiles, and vessels from Mehgarh, Multan, Uch, Sitpur, Lahore, Sehwan, Kamarro Sharif, Thatta, Hala, and Hyderabad. Highlights include stunning calligraphic panels of Persian verses by Bahauddin Zakaria.

## Singapore

### Asian Civilisations Museum

1 Empress Place  
Singapore 179555  
T +(65) 6332 7798  
www.acm.org.sg/exhibitions

#### Until 31 August 2007

*Asian Beauty: 200 BCE to Today*

This exhibition examines the many interpretations of beauty across Asian cultures.

### NUS Centre for the Arts Museum

National University of Singapore  
Lee Kong Chian Art Museum, UCC Annex  
50 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore  
T +6874 4616 / 6874 4617 / 6874 4618  
www.nus.edu.sg/museums/exhibitions.htm

#### Until 1 December 2007

*Responding to the Divide: David Kwo*

From landscapes and figures to flowers and birds, David Kwo painted a variety of subjects interpreted through traditional Chinese brush techniques and Western styles. He is most famous for his portrayal of small animals, especially cats and dogs that became his hallmark. On display are over 50 paintings, including some influenced by Fauvism, the Bauhaus, Cubism and Abstract Expressionism.

## Spain

### Fundación Telefónica

Gran Vía 28  
28013 Madrid  
T+ 91552 66 45  
www.fundacion.telefonica.com

#### 9 July – 26 August 2007

*PHotoEspaña 2007: Zhang Huan*

PH07 will be offering more than 60 exhibitions with work by photographers and visual



artists from 31 countries. The Fundación Telefónica is mounting the largest ever exhibition in Spain by Chinese artist Zhang Huan. It is comprised of his work from the last seven years, taken both from Spanish collections and the artist's own anthology. A previously unseen video will be screened depicting the creative process of a controversial artist whose work has frequently been censored by the Chinese government.

## Switzerland

### Kunstmuseum Bern

Hodlerstrasse 12  
3000 Bern 7  
T +41 31 328 09 44  
www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/

### 21 September 2007 – 6 January 2008

*Horn Please: The journey of the narrative from the 1980s to the present in Indian art*

This exhibition follows the journey of the narrative from the 1980s to the present by tracing certain critical moments in Indian art – moments of both assimilation and intervention – through which a particular kind of narrative was constructed. By representing scenes from everyday life, fictional happenings, mythology, and satire as well as using autobiographical, societal, and historical material, the contributing artists reflect an India that has changed economically, politically, and socially.

### Museum Rietberg Zürich

Gablerstrasse 15  
Zurich, Switzerland  
T + 41 (0)44 206 31 31  
www.rietberg.ch

### Park-Villa Rieter

#### Until 23 September 2007

*Courtly paintings from India*

Masterpieces from the Museum Rietberg collection.

### 19 August - 2 December 2007

*Angkor - Sacred Heritage of Cambodia*

This exhibition will be the most comprehensive of its kind yet seen in Switzerland. The show offers a survey of Cambodia's culture, beginning in the 6th century with stone sculptures from the Pre-Angkor kingdoms of Funan and Zhenla. The main focus is the art and architecture of the Angkor-Period (9th – 13th century). Factors contributing to the wealth of this culture such as water management, rice cultivation, and trade relations will also be addressed.

## Taiwan

### The National Palace Museum

221 Chih-shan Rd., Sec. 2, Taipei  
T +886 2 2881 2021  
www.npm.gov.tw/index.htm

### Until 25 December 2007

*Grand View: Sung Dynasty Rare Books*

The print industry prospered in the Song dynasty because of advances in papermaking, ink production, and printing technologies.

These rare tomes carry historical significance in the fields of philology, literary criticism, and the art of printing. This exhibition presents the archetype printed Song book with respect to four themes.

### Taipei Fine Arts Museum

181 ZhongShan N. Road, Sec. 3  
Taipei 10461  
T +02 2595 7656  
www.tfam.gov.tw

### Until 5 August 2007

*Open FUN – 2007 Taipei International Modern Calligraphy Exhibition*

## United Kingdom

### The Museum of East Asian Art

12 Bennett Street  
Bath BA1 2QJ  
T +44-1225 464 640  
www.bath.co.uk/museumeastasianart

### Until 12 August 2007

*Batik Transitions: From Classic to Contemporary*

In celebration of the British Batik Guild's 20th anniversary, this touring exhibition captures the exquisite nature of traditional batik art from China, Vietnam, Laos, and Indonesia. In addition to the presentation of fine examples of traditional batik, the show also provides an opportunity to see selected contemporary work from internationally known artists and Guild members.

### Brunei Gallery

SOAS, University of London  
Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square  
London  
T +44 (0)20 7898 4915  
www.soas.ac.uk/gallery/home.html

### 11 July – 22 September 2007

*From Soho Road to the Punjab: Documenting the Contribution of Bhangra and its Cultural Relevance in Britain today*

50 years of Bhangra, photographs, interviews, music, and artifacts.

*Edge of Arabia: Art & Identity in the Land of the Prophet*

Through the work of ten contemporary artists this exhibition explores the individual's voice on the Edge of Arabia. The work focuses on the different ways artists are expressing their values and beliefs in a climate of change.

### ArtSway

Station Road  
Sway, Hampshire SO41 6BA  
T +44 1590 682260  
www.artsway.org.uk

### Late July – Mid-September 2007

*Ma Yong Feng - PRODUCTION*

The work of Ma Yong Feng relates to aspects of animal culture, specifically in relation to man-made environments and topographic modelling. He builds artificial landscapes and then photographs them and he makes films. He aims to look into ideas of anthropocentrism and its effects on animal habitats, and how humanity thinks itself as progenitors of aesthetic ideas.

## United States

### Museum of Fine Arts

Avenue of the Arts, 465 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts  
T +1-617 267 9300  
khygysician@mfa.org  
www.mfa.org

### Until 8 October 2007

*Women of Renown: Female Heroes and Villains in the Prints of Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)*

Artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi combined the popular theme of beautiful women with his personal specialty, warrior prints showing legendary heroic figures from Japanese and Chinese history. From the historical woman warrior Tomoe to the fictional sorceress Takiyasha, from ancient empresses to present-day criminals, Kuniyoshi's dynamic portrayals show women who were not just passive beauties but strong, courageous, talented, and sometimes even wicked.

### The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street  
New York, NY 10028-0198  
T +212 535 7710  
www.metmuseum.org/home.asp

### Until 26 August 2007

*Journeys: Mapping the Earth and Mind in Chinese Art*

This exhibition, featuring 70 works dating from the 11th to the 21st century, explores the theme of journeys both real and imagined. Depictions of real journeys range from intimate scenes to grand imperially commissioned panoramas. But Chinese artists have more often been inspired by journeys of the mind: roaming through the mountains or escaping to wilderness retreats or utopian paradises that can provide refuge, if only vicariously, from challenging realities.

### San Jose Museum of Art

110 South Market Street  
San Jose, CA 95113  
T +1 408 2716840  
www.sjmusart.org

### Until 8 July 2007

*Il Lee: Ballpoint Abstractions*

This mid-career survey is the largest showing of Il Lee's work to date. Featuring well over a hundred works, the survey is an unparalleled opportunity to explore Lee's practice and see many never before exhibited works. Highlighting the criticality of working on paper to Lee's practice, a special installation of seventy-seven works on paper is grouped together on one wall. This grouping offers a rare opportunity for viewers to directly compare the disparate art resulting from Lee's extensive experimentation with theme, surface, and technique.

### Saint Louis Art Museum

One Fine Arts Drive  
Forest Park, St. Louis, MO 63110-1310  
T +314 721 0072  
www.stlouis.art.museum/index.aspx?id=2

### Until 19 August 2007

Chinese Textiles

This exhibition presents a selection of rarely seen Chinese textiles from the museum's collection. Most of the pieces date from the Ming and Qing periods dynasties with fine examples of imperial and court attire; garments used in the belief systems of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism; ceremonial costumes; and decorative hangings. Highlights include a pair of late Ming tapestry-woven chair covers with four-clawed dragons and a richly-coloured red-and-green silk Daoist robe.



# > International conference agenda

## July 2007

9 – 11 July 2007

### Leiden, Netherlands

5th Urban Language Survey Seminar  
seminar

convenors: Marinus van de Berg and Vincent van Heuven

organised by LUCL/IIAS/NOW  
contact: Martina van den Haak  
m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl  
www.iias.nl/ilci

12 – 14 July 2007

### Leiden, Netherlands

China Summerschool: "The Spread of PTH"

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

organised by LUCL/IIAS/NOW  
contact: Martina van den Haak  
m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl  
www.iias.nl/ilci

13 – 15 July 2007

### New York, USA

8th World Hindi Conference 2007  
Conference

organised by the Government of India in cooperation with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and other Hindi organisations based in the US  
www.vishwahindi.com

13 – 15 July 2007

### Victoria, Canada

New Courts in the Asia-Pacific Region

conference

convenors: The Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (University of Victoria) and the Asian Law Centre (University of Melbourne)  
http://capiconf.uvic.ca/ocs/index.php?cf=2

18 - 20 July 2007

### Singapore, Singapore

In Search of Reconciliation and Peace in Indonesia

conference

organised by Asia Research Institute/ National University of Singapore  
contact: Dr Birgit Bauchler  
arrib@nus.edu.sg  
www.ari.nus.edu.sg

23 – 26 July 2007

### Edinburgh, Scotland

Mutiny at the Margins' New Perspectives on the Indian uprising of 1857.

conference

convenor: Crispin Bates, School of History and Classics, University of Edinburgh  
organised by the Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh  
contact: 1857conference@ed.ac.uk

26 – 28 July 2007

### Singapore

2nd Singapore Graduate Forum on Southeast Asia Studies

Workshop

Organised by: The Asia Research Institute (ARI) of the National University of Singapore (NUS)

contact: aribox3@nus.edu.sg

## August 2007

2 – 5 August 2007

### Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ICAS 5

convention

organised by University Kebangsaan Malaysia/ATMA-IKON

contact: Institute of Malay World and Civilization (ATMA)  
icas5@ukm.my  
www.atma.ukm.my/icas5.htm

12 – 18 August 2007

### Stockholm, Sweden

2007 World Water Week

conference

convenor: Stockholm International Water Institute  
contact: sympos@siwi.org  
www.siw.org

16 – 18 August 2007

### Dublin, Ireland

Rising China in the Age of Globalisation

conference

convenor: Dr Liming Wang  
organised by UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland, Irish Institute for Chinese Studies  
contact: Elva Hickey  
elva@conferencepartners.ie  
www.ucd.ie/china

18 – 23 August 2007

### Chuncheon City, Korea, Republic of

The 9th Asian Urbanization Conference

conference

organised by Asian Urban Research Association/Kwangwon National University  
contact: Dr Nakhun Song  
snh@kdri.re.kr  
http://webpace.ship.edu/aura

4 – 26 August 2007

### Copenhagen, Denmark

7th conference of the Nordic Association for Japanese and Korean Studies

conference

convenor: Marie Højlund Roesgaard  
organised by NAJAKS  
www.najaks.dk

## September 2007

3 – 8 September 2007

### Naples, Italy

Emotions and East Asian Social Life: Theory and Practice

summer school

convenor: Prof. Paolo Santangelo  
organised by University "L'Orientale" of Naples  
contact: Prof. Santangelo /Daniel Kadar  
psantan@iuo.it or danielkadar@yahoo.co.uk  
www.iuo.it/emotion\_summer\_school

5 – 8 September 2007

### Leiden, Netherlands

Care for the Elderly: Asia and Europe Compared

conference

convenors: Carla Risseuw and Chen-Li Cheng  
organised by NSC-IIAS  
contact: Manon Osseweijer  
m.osseweijer@let.leidenuniv.nl

6 – 7 September 2007

### Manchester, United Kingdom

The British Association for Chinese Studies

Annual Conference

conference

organized by BACS / Centre for Chinese Studies, Manchester University  
contact: Catriona Dobson  
catriona.dobson@manchester.ac.uk  
www.bacsuk.org.uk

7 – 11 September 2007

### Rome, Italy

13th Colloquium of the International Association of Ladakh Studies

conference

organised by: International Association of Ladakh Studies  
contact: John Bray,  
JNBray1957@yahoo.co.uk  
www.ladakhstudies.org

10 – 15 September 2007

### Ankara, Turkey

International Congress of Asian and North African Studies

conference

organised by ICANAS  
http://www.icanas38.org.tr/icanas38en.html

12 – 15 September 2007

### Naples, Italy

EUROSEAS Conference

conference

convenor: EUROSEAS  
organised by EUROSEAS  
contact: Pietro Masina  
ofrattolillo@iuo.it  
http://iias.leidenuniv.nl/institutes/kitlv/euroseas.html

12 – 15 September 2007

### Ankara, Turkey

European Society for Central Asian Studies (ESCAS) Tenth Conference: Central Asia - Sharing Experiences and Prospects

conference

organised by: European Society for Central Asian Studies (ESCAS)  
www.escas.pz.nl

20 – 22 September 2007

### Kolkata, India

The Second Critical Studies Conference on

"Spheres of Justice"

conference

organised by the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group  
contact: mcrgr@mcrgr.ac.in  
www.mcrgr.ac.in

## October 2007

4 – 6 October 2007

### Ottawa, Canada

4th International Conference on Women and Politics in Asia

conference

contact: rcwp.wpa07@uottawa.ca or wpa07@wpaf.org

18 – 21 October 2007

### Seattle, United States

Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) 8th Annual Conference

conference

convenors: Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies  
organized by Central Eurasian Studies Society / University of Washington  
contact: Allison Dvaladze  
cess2007@u.washington.edu  
cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS\_conference.html

19 October 2007

### London, UK

Indian Mass Media and the Politics of Change

conference

convenors: Sadmediacow / Centre for Media and Film Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)  
contact: collective@sacredmediacow.com  
www.sacredmediacow.com

## November 2007

1 – 2 November 2007

### Guangzhou, China

The Cold War in Asia

workshop

organised by Centre for Chinese Studies, Manchester Univ. / Harvard University / Zhongshan University  
contact: Catriona Dobson  
catriona.dobson@manchester.ac.uk  
www.ccs.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/research/index.html

7 – 9 November 2007

### Lund, Sweden

Culture and the Configuring of Security: Using Asian Perspectives to Inform Theoretical Direction

conference

convenor: Alexandra Kent  
organized by Nordic NIAS Council (NNC)  
contact: Alexandra Kent  
alix.kent@swipnet.se  
http://www.asiansecurity.niasconferences.dk



13 – 16 November 2007  
**Albion, Michigan, USA**

*The Conference on the Study of Religions of India (CSRI) Annual Meeting* conference  
organised by CSRI, Albion College  
contact: Selva J. Raj  
sraj@albion.edu  
www.albion.edu/csri

15 – 19 November 2007  
**Waikiki, Hawaii**

*3rd International Conference of the Social Capital Foundation on Ethnic Diversity and Social Capital* conference  
convenor: The Social Capital Foundation  
contact:  
conferences@socialcapital-foundation.org  
www.socialcapital-foundation.org

19 – 22 November 2007  
**Penang, Malaysia**

*The 8th Conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association* conference  
organised by APSA, Captrans, School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Univ. of Wollongong, Australia  
dean\_soc@usm.my  
www.asiapacificsociology.org

19 – 22 November 2007  
**Georgetown (Penang), Malaysia**

*Asia Pacific Region: Societies in Transformation* conference  
organised by Asia Pacific Sociological Association  
contact: Asia Pacific Sociological Association  
dean\_soc@usm.my  
http://www.asiapacificsociology.org

21 – 23 November 2007  
**Singapore**

*Early Indian Influences in Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Movements* conference  
convenor: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)  
www.iseas.edu.sg

22 – 24 November 2007  
**Lucknow, India**

*8th International Conference on Asian Youth and Childhoods 2007* conference  
organised by Circle for Child and Youth Research Cooperation in India (CCYRCI) / JNPG Degree College, Lucknow  
contact: Vinod Chandra  
ayc2007@rediffmail.com  
http://ayc2007.com/contact.htm

22 – 25 November 2007  
**Dunedin, New Zealand**

*17th New Zealand Asian Studies Society (NZASIA) International Conference* conference  
convenor: University of Otago, New Zealand  
contact:  
nzasia.conference@stonebow.otago.ac.nz  
www.nzasia.org.nz

23 – 24 November 2007  
**Rotterdam, The Netherlands**

*International Conference on Peaceful Coexistence* conference  
convenor: Erasmus University, Rotterdam  
contact: info@gulenconference.nl  
www.gulenconference.nl

27 – 29 November 2007  
**Butu Malang, Indonesia**

*Muslim Youth As Agents of Change In Indonesia* conference  
convened by: Indonesian Young Leaders Programme  
organised by: Leiden University, the Netherlands / the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Indonesia / Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA), Indonesia.  
Contact: M.R van Amersfoort  
youngleaders@let.leidenuniv.nl  
www.indonesiayoungleaders.org

28 – 30 November 2007  
**Berlin, Germany**

*Online Education Berlin: 13th International Conference on Technology-Supported Learning and Training* conference  
organised by ICWE  
info@online-educa.com  
www.online-educa.com

6 – 8 December 2007  
**Oslo, Norway**

*Approaching Elections in South Asia: Performances, Principles and Perceptions* workshop  
convenor: Political Culture in South Asia research project, Humanities Faculty, University of Oslo  
contact: pamelag. Price or Arild Engelsen Ruud  
p.g.price@iakh.uio.no or a.e.ruud@ikos.uio.no  
www.hf.uio.no/ikos/forskning/forskningsprosjekter/south-asia/index.html

1 – 15 December 2007  
**Kolkata, India**

*Annual winter course on Forced Migration Orientation Course*  
Organised by: The Calcutta Research Group in cooperation with the Government of Finland, UNHCR and the Brookings Institution  
Contact: forcedmigrationdesk@mcrq.ac.in / mcrq@mcrq.ac.in  
www.mcrq.ac.in

## December 2007

1 December 2007

**Guangdong and Macao, China**  
**Canton and Nagasaki compared: 1730-1830**

conference  
organised by Zhongshan University, Guangdong, Cultural Institute of Macao and Consulate General NL, Guangzhou  
contact: Evert Groenendijk  
evert.groenendijk@minbuza.nl

## IIAS portal

[www.iias.nl/portal](http://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.

# Muslim Youth as Agents of Change in Indonesia

First Announcement and Call for papers

1<sup>st</sup> International Conference within the framework of the Indonesian Young Leaders Programme

organised by Leiden University, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Indonesia and Universitas Islam Malang

Youth is intrinsically linked to the search for independence, individuality and identity, as well as with the contestation of the status quo. In Indonesia, authority and seniority go hand in hand but, despite this, youth have always played an important role in changes in the political, intellectual and social landscape, as became clear, for instance, from the prominent role of youth in the developments which led to the fall of President Suharto in 1998. The present conference aims to investigate the role of Muslim youth as agents of change in Indonesia, where Muslims constitute the majority (approximately 90%) and where a majority is under the age of 25.

The conference will investigate under what circumstances Muslim youth have become agents of change by looking at their personal and educational backgrounds, exposure to media, and the influence of Islam (in the form of *dakwah* and other manifestations), in order to establish what moral values have been transmitted and/or inculcated to prompt the youth to act in the way that they have (or have not).

**Deadline to send in abstracts: 15 August 2007**  
Abstracts should be no longer than 200 words and be accompanied by a short resume/CV (max. 2 pages).

Funds will be made available to invited speakers and to those selected speakers (from Africa, the Middle East and South/Southeast Asia) who do not have resources available for the coverage of their travel and lodging expenses. To qualify for a grant, please submit a short letter of motivation to the below e-mail address.

**For further information**  
M.R. van Amersfoort, MSc:  
youngleaders@let.leidenuniv.nl  
Or visit [www.indonesiayoungleaders.org](http://www.indonesiayoungleaders.org)

27 - 29 November 2007

Klub Bunga Hotel, Batu Malang



[ a d v e r t i s e m e n t ]

> International Conference agenda



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'Ethnolinguistics with a focus on Southeast Asia'  
1 September 1998 - 1 September 2007

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## > Colophon

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