IIAS
International Institute
for Asian Studies

theNewsletter

Encouraging knowledge and enhancing the study of Asia

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CyberAsia
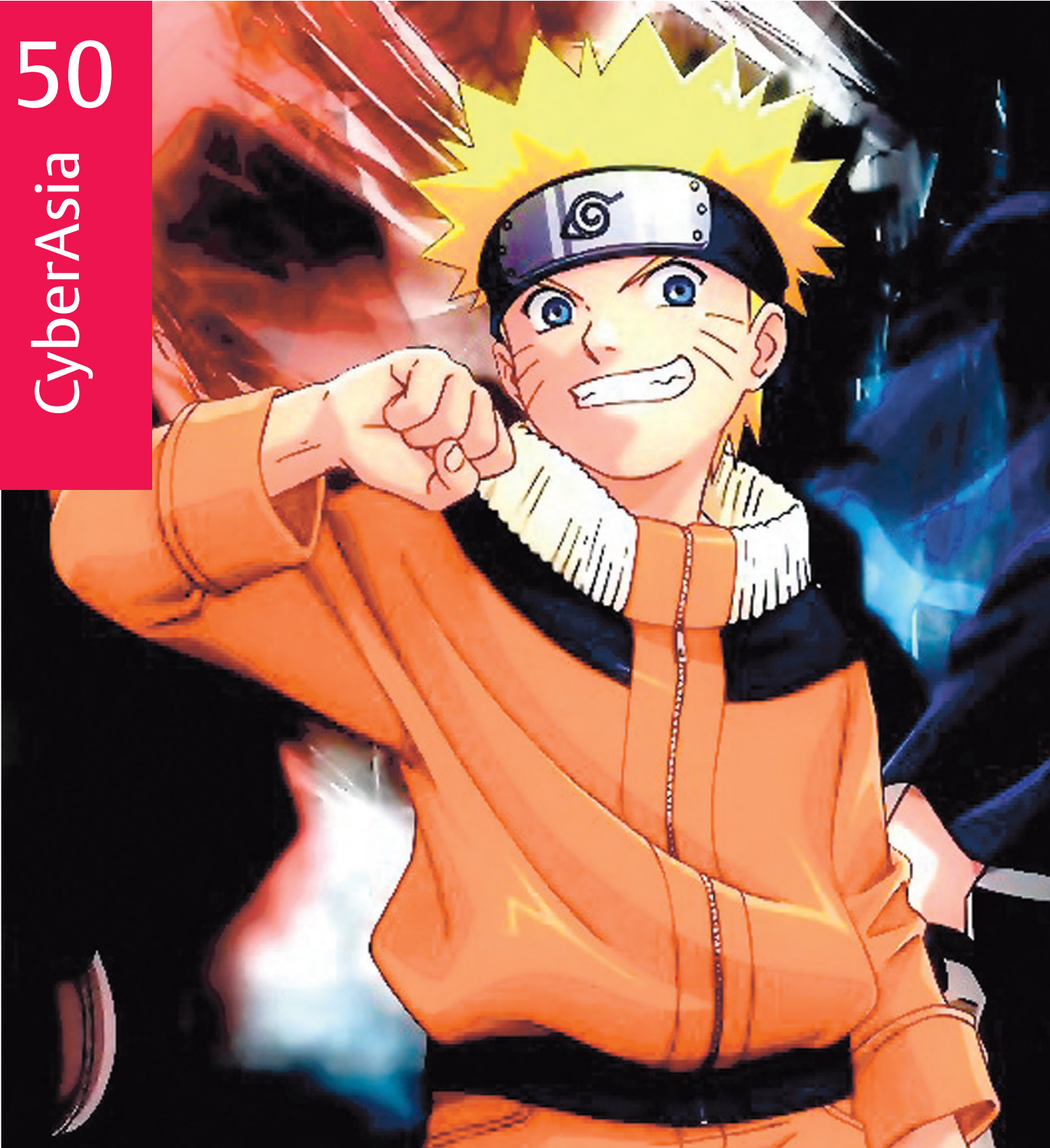
Guest Editor Chris Goto-Jones guides us through CyberAsia, a brave new world offering new technologies, new knowledge and new ways of thinking about Asia.

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Welcome

I don't usually write editorials for the Newsletter, I think the paper speaks for itself, but the launch of the 50th issue and the re-design are reason enough for me to break the habit.

Anna Yeadell, Editor

I AM IN THE PRIVILEGED POSITION of having inherited (two years ago) a highly successful and well-respected publication with a large and loyal readership. I am never ceased to be amazed by the steady flow of articles which come my way, the breadth of interests and the enthusiasm of authors. My guest editors are always committed and energetic and engage in their task of recruiting writers from their research networks with gusto, providing the Newsletter, over the years, with provocative, lively and interesting themes.

I am a firm believer in change. Change, of course, is not always easy. I realise there may be some of you who will wonder why we have undergone a re-design, who may not like the new look, who feel it was just fine as it was. And it was. But for me change and renewal are about progress and, in this case, a clear signal of the Newsletter's vitality.

The main purpose of the redesign, though, is to make the newsletter more readable. The most obvious changes are that there's more colour now and that the theme (now called 'The Focus') has moved to the middle of the paper. But you won't have to look too far so see that while they may be called something slightly different, all the features you have come to rely on are still there.

Of course, content, rather than design, is why you subscribe to the Newsletter and also why we print it. I hope you will agree that while the look is different the integrity and quality of the Newsletter remain firmly in tact.

The Newsletter is going from strength-to-strength and that's largely down to you, the readers. Your feedback can help us fine tune the paper and also let us know about what you want to read about in the Newsletter. If you have comments then please email them to iiasnews@iias.nl

There has been the proverbial, blood, sweat and tears involved in the making of this 50th issue, but I, for one, am proud of the result. I couldn't have done it without the support of my Director, my colleagues, my designers and others (you know who you are!) I hope you enjoy it!

From the Chair of the IIAS Board:

The publication of the 50th issue of the IIAS Newsletter is something worth celebrating. Since the very first issue was launched back in 1993 it has managed to reach a wide readership nearly all over the world and has become one of the most important and effective means of communication in Asian studies. As such the Newsletter has succeeded in creating an imagined community of thousands of scholars from various backgrounds who are committed to the study of Asian societies. To demonstrate its vitality the Newsletter has been given a re-vamp. I like the 'face lift' and would like to congratulate our editor Anna Yeadell for the dedicated and professional way she is running our Newsletter.

Don't throw this issue away, it will become a collectors item.

Henk Schulte Nordholt, Chair, IIAS Board

The Newsletter | No.50 | Spring 2009

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or to download previous editions of the IIAS Newsletter

From the Director

The 50th issue of the IIAS Newsletter is worth a moment of reflection. *The Newsletter,* as it is now called, has a new face, a new design, a new name. The editor however is the same, Anna Yeadell, and the institute from where *the Newsletter* is issued is the same IIAS. I should like to use this occasion to update the reader on the policy and activities of this institute.

Max Sparreboom, Director

QUALITY, IN ALL ITS FORMS, is the key to all IIAS activities. As a hosting/facilitating institute it is of great importance to us that our researchers are able to work on their projects in a professional and pleasant atmosphere, furnished with all the necessary facilities and resources, including staff support. Quality is also paramount in the decisions we make when selecting IIAS research programmes and individual fellows' projects. In this regard, attention is paid to research methods, the use of collections and informants, and output in the form of publications (both academic and those destined for a wider audience) and seminars. For the same reasons, the many fellows that visit our institute in the cadre of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) are, wherever possible, embedded in existing IIAS programmes or those of colleagues from Leiden University and other universities.

IIAS is what I like to call 'extraverted.' It looks to what is happening in society. Many of our current and new research programmes are focused on science/scholarship as a way of solving societal questions, such as sustainable development, good governance, civil society, social cohesion, and education. In this way, IIAS research in the coming years will give attention to the problematic of large cities in Asia, rural development in post-conflict societies, governance questions in China and India, but also to new religious movements. This does not mean that there is no room left for curiosity- or science-driven research, research in which the unraveling of complex processes and the searching for starting points for renewal and improvement of theories are central, or the opening up of new textual or historical sources. Our ABIA (Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology) programme and the Gonda Fund financed fellowships for research on India are good examples of this. In other words, the research we facilitate is diverse and ranges from studies in the field of Asian linguistics, religions, politics, economics and literature to music/arts, media and history.

IIAS is meant for post-doctoral researchers. Most of our fellows hold a PhD in some branch of learning from the social sciences or humanities. It is especially the younger guard among them in whom we have an interest. We are planning to organise meetings with talented junior researchers - PhD students or recent PhDs – where they present their own ideas on the future of their field of research.

Alongside the hosting and undertaking of academic projects and the subsequent disseminating of the results of work in progress during seminars and conferences, IIAS is also responsible for facilitating knowledge exchange between the academic world and a wider audience. *The Newsletter* is a clear example of this. Besides this we organise lectures, debates and other events with partners such as De Rode Hoed (centre for cultural debate in Amsterdam), international festivals and museums. Much of this knowledge transfer takes place in Amsterdam in co-operation with the Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASiA) programme from the University of Amsterdam.

In fact, almost everything that IIAS undertakes is based on co-operation. IIAS has a proven and successful track record in collaborating with partners, such as the European Alliance for Asian Studies, the Asia Europe Foundation in Singapore, the National Science Council in Taiwan and – if you call participation in grant schemes collaboration – with the Research Council NWO, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences KNAW, and several Asian and European organisations. We are constantly searching for new opportunities to join efforts with other institutes in the Netherlands, in Europe, Asia and the US. A good example is the organisation of the International Convention of Asia Scholars, ICAS: The upcoming ICAS 2009 is being organised in Daejeon in Korea in co-operation with Chungnam National University.

We pride ourselves in having a flexible and responsive way of operating. IIAS has a board and an academic committee, all consisting of committed scholars from different disciplines and universities, who each bring their expertise to the institute. Research initiatives can be handled in an unbureaucratic way; that is, we can decide how we wish to pursue initiatives, depending on the subject and the circumstances. This may be through a one-off workshop based on the work of one of our fellows, through a series of workshops such as the series on Piracy in Southeast Asia, a master-class, or a full-scale international research programme with researchers paid via external funds, such as the programme on Socio-Genetic Marginalisation in Asia, which will be concluded this year.

Co-operation is also the key word within the office at IIAS, among IIAS staff members. Together we create the conditions to host our research fellows as best we can; together we deliver our 'products', whether it be *the Newsletter,* our publication series, our seminars or other initiatives.

We at IIAS – that is the board, the academic committee and IIAS staff – are constantly searching for new opportunities and seeking ways to improve the way we work, as well as applying for external funding for what we consider good and timely new research. The new look Newsletter is just one example of how IIAS continues to evolve.


The Director at 4000 metres in Sichuan

The Newsletter's first editor

Paul van der Velde is the founding father of
The Newsletter. As editor-in-chief from 1993 to 1998
he produced 17 issues. He left IIAS at the end of
1998 to work at the University of Amsterdam until,
at the beginning of 2006, he returned to IIAS as senior
consultant. For this special 50th issue, we profile the
man and reveal what his plans in Asian studies are.
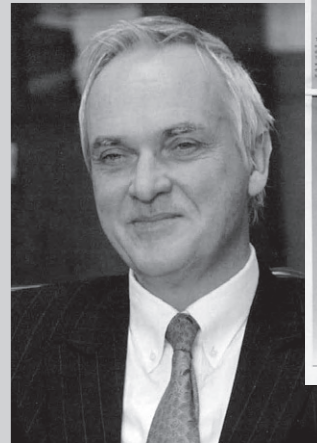
MY BACKGROUND IS IN HISTORY AND SINOLOGY. After two years of studying sinology my father died and I had to take over the running of his textile company. During that time I was still enrolled at the history department of Leiden University, and in those days it was relatively easy to combine studying with my business obligations. After my BA in history, I went to Middleburg College in 1982 for an intensive Chinese course, which was supervised by the sinologist Perry Link. I spent the latter part of 1984 and 1985 in Taipei at Taida University, studying Chinese and Art history, and specifically temple sculpture. In 1986 I got an MA in modern history, minoring in Chinese language, history and art. I then worked for a while for the Dutch multinational OCE van der Grinten, a company which produces high-end copying machines. When my proposal to start producing their machines in Taiwan was rejected, I decided that a life in the service of photocopiers was not for me!

Between Deshima and biography
In 1988 I took a part-time job at the Institute for the European Expansion and Reaction (IGEER) at Leiden University. It was a stimulating environment where I met a lot of researchers from Asia. I became editor of the Deshima Diaries Source Publication Project and worked closely with its supervisor the Asia historian Leonard Blussé. The idea to make the diaries accessible to the international scholarly community involved indexing the diaries written by the Dutch heads of the VOC factory in Nagasaki and making summaries of the entries in English. I worked through 80 diaries consisting of 20,000 pages of 17th century handwriting: some were almost impossible to decipher! I wrote a couple of articles based on the discoveries I made but the most significant consequence of my daily diary reading was developing a vivid interest in biography. At that time biography wasn't taken very seriously as an historic genre in The Netherlands. For me, writing history runs through my veins, and so I started popularising this genre as history writing.

By this time I had become president of the *Historisch Platform* (HP, 'Historic Platform') an organisation for young historians in Holland, and was co-founder of its periodical *Historisch Nieuwsblad* which approached history from a journalistic angle. At first it was looked upon by my colleagues with suspicion but within a couple of years it had gained in popularity, something it maintains to this day. Opinions towards HP began to change following its ground-breaking conference on biography and also with the publication of my provocative article 'Who is Afraid of the Historical Biography'. It wasn't long after that HP founded the Committee for the Historical Biography which, together with other initiatives, have helped biography become an accepted and popular genre among historians.

During this time I began work on two biographical projects of my own. Together with Jaap de Moor I edited the complete works of Jacob Haafner, a Dutch novelist who wrote five very readable books on his stay in South Africa, India and Sri Lanka. He was an ardent anti-colonialist and multiculturalist. The biography *'He Who Lives under Palm Trees. The Sublime World of Jacob Haafner* (1754-1809)' – was published in Dutch last year. My second project was a biography of the Dutch ethnographer, geographer and populariser of the Dutch Indies P.J. Veth. In fact, I had proposed this as a subject for a PhD, and had been offered a job by the then director of IGEER, Henk Wesseling, as a PhD student, but I declined. While I have always been drawn to the academic world, I realise that teaching is not my cup of tea, so a traditional academic career is not an option. it was a risk, declining such a job offer, especially as my contract with IGEER was coming to an end, but then, in 1993 – as a *deus ex machina* – the editorship of the IIAS came my way.

The world of Asian Studies
What was originally a part-time job quickly evolved into more than a full time job, and I became responsible for the communication division of IIAS. This meant being editor-in-chief of the *IIAS Newsletter,* arranging all IIAS public relations and publications, setting up a database of Asia scholars. The mission outlined by the then IIAS director, Wim Stokhof, was unambiguous: 'Increase the visibility of Asian studies and make IIAS into a well-known facilitator of these studies worldwide.' This was easier said than done, because the world of Asian studies was completely scattered. We did not have the faintest idea, for example, about who in Europe was doing what in Asian studies. So we started to build a database. This became the basis for publishing the *Guide to Asian Studies in Europe* in 1988. This work on the database established that there were more than 6000 people working on Asian studies in Europe. Of course they all became welcome recipients of the *IIAS Newsletter.* Of equal importance, many academics in the field became aware of each others existence and networks were created. Now, with the 50th edition of *The Newsletter* before us, it is hard to imagine that this was the situation 15 years ago.

We saw *The Newsletter's* primary role as a means of communication for a community in the making: that of Asia scholars. It was devised as a source of information on new developments in the field. It was available online from its inception (even though many scholars at the time asked what the use of such an (electronic) newsletter was!) I still remember a trip Wim Stokhof and I made to the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) in Washington in 1995. The only thing we took with us was 1500 newsletters and a huge pile of bags with the IIAS logo on them. By the end of the meeting all the bags and newsletters were gone and as we looked around the conference hall our logo was staring back at us from all quarters! Everybody was talking about this new International Asia Institute. *The Newsletter* soon reached a circulation of 15,000 copies worldwide and became one of the premier channels of communication among Asia scholars.

The US and the Eurasian space
At the beginning of 1997 I made a trip to Ann Arbor to see the then Secretary-Treasurer of the AAS, John Campbell, to discuss the idea of an International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS). He agreed that in view of the increasing internationalisation of Asian Studies such a meeting could be a good idea. Although AAS Annual Meetings receive between 2-3000 visitors, they were overwhelmingly American. A more international set-up could be hugely beneficial. Needless to say, IIAS took a big risk organising the first ICAS. Five days before the deadline there were hardly any registrations but then the phenomenon which has come to be known as the 'ICAS miracle' occurred and by the time the deadline passed we had well over 1000 participants from 40 different countries representing the rich tapestry of research traditions in Asian studies.

With the first ICAS under our belts and IIAS well and truly on the map, it was time to focus on finishing my seriously neglected PhD. This I did while Executive Director of the Institute of Comparative Economic and Political Institutions at Amsterdam University (UvA). I finally attained my doctorate in 2000 *(A Lifelong Passion. P.J. Veth and the Dutch East Indies, 1814-1895).* In that same year I became senior policy advisor at the UvA and decided it was time to make a fresh start as a freelancer and independent scholar.

ICAS and EUforAsia
After a successful ICAS 2 in Berlin (2001), Wim Stokhof and I established a secretariat in order to better monitor the ICAS process. We made another important decision to move ICAS to Asia and ICAS 3 was organised in conjunction with the National University of Singapore in 2003. We initiated the ICAS Book Prize which is now in its third edition and has taken on a life of its own (see article on pp. 34-35). The nearly 100 books sent in this time around clearly mark a shift away from traditional to contemporary Asia, with a substantial increase in social science submissions. In 2008-2009 the ICAS publications series will present eight edited volumes, with themes such as Asian material culture, identity and nationalism in Asia and reframing Singapore, based on papers presented at ICAS 4, Shanghai and ICAS 5, Kuala Lumpur. These will be published by Amsterdam University Press.

Without realising it my world has come to revolve around Asia and Asian Studies. I very much look forward to the next ICAS in Daejeon (6-9 August 2009), and we are also looking ahead to ICAS 7 which will be jointly organised with the AAS in Honolulu in 2011. It has the potential of becoming not only the biggest but also the most interesting convention yet.

Most of my time now, however, is focused on the EUforAsia project, the Europe-Asia Policy Forum initiated by IIAS which has received three year funding from the European Commission. The project, in co-operation with the Asia-Europe Foundation, the Singapore Institute of International Affairs and the European Institute for Asian Studies in Brussels will be officially launched on the 29th of April 2009 and there will be an electronic newsletter fully integrated into www.euforasia.eu - and yes, we will, without a doubt, link up with *The Newsletter!*

The changing order of mobility in Asia
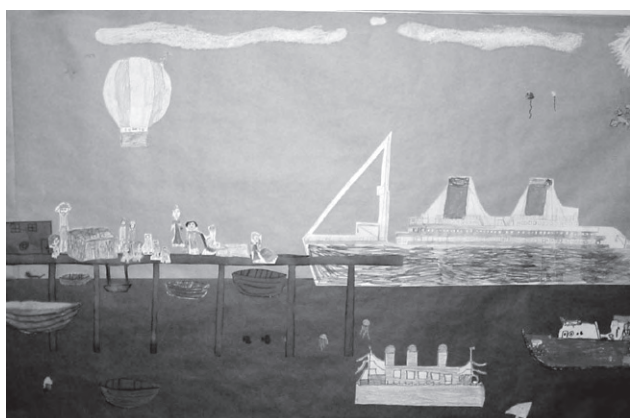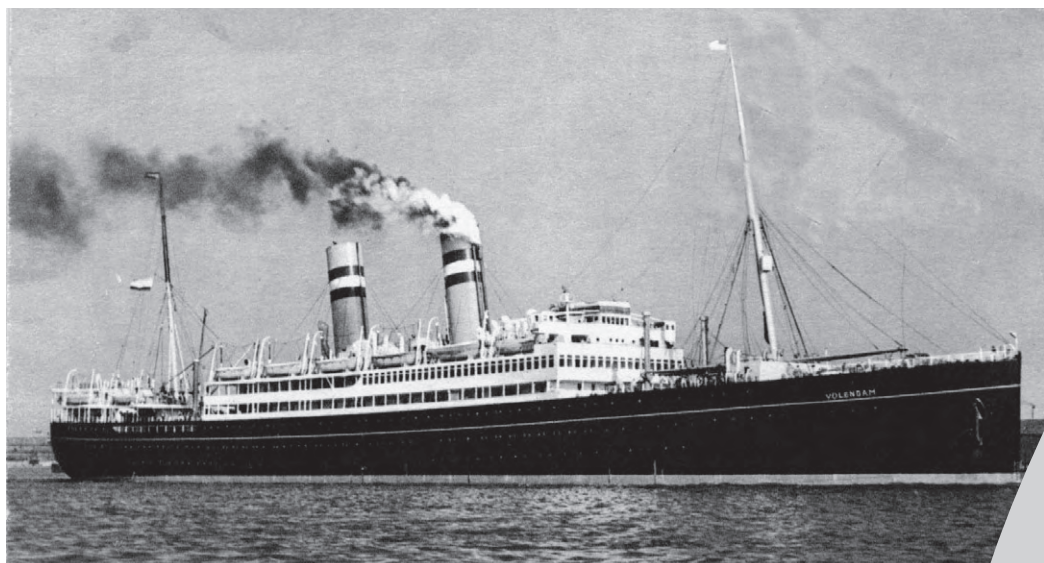
Return is an integral part of any migration flow. Between 1870 and 1940, one quarter to one third of the transatlantic migrants returned to Europe, which translates to 10 million.

Xiang Biao

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, 14.7 million people departed from the ports of Xiamen, Shantou and Hong Kong in south China between 1869 and 1939, primarily for Southeast Asia, and 11.6 million returned through the three ports between 1873 and 1939 (Sugihara 2005: 247-50). More noteworthy than the magnitude of large-scale return are the significant social changes it is inherently related to. The return of South Asians to the subcontinent following the independence of India in 1947, Chinese in Southeast Asia to the newly founded PRC in the 1950s and 1960s, and more recently, Viet kieu to socialist Vietnam, are just a few examples. Regarded as an unquestionable right and an incontestable duty at once, 'return' is both enormously emotional and deeply political.

The current waves of return migration reflect certain global conditions of this particular historical juncture. A new regime of return migration is emerging worldwide. Large numbers of refugees were repatriated to their home countries after the end of the Cold War, either because of the resumed normalcy, or simply because of a redefinition of political risks by the west, especially in former communist countries. The United Nations Refugee Agency declared the 1990s to be the 'decade of epatriation'. On another front, concerned with the alleged increase in irregular migrants and 'bogus asylum seekers', receiving states enforce return as a means of countering the unwanted inflows. More recently, various European countries attempt to reinvent the guest worker programme in order to mitigate labour shortage without leading to migrants' long-term settlement. The catchword is 'circular migration', of which return is a defining feature. Frank Field (2008), a UK Parliament Member, called for a 'one man in, one man out' migration scenario. In Asia, circular migration has been the default pattern of labour mobility.

Voluntary return migrations also increase due to changes in the global economy. In most parts of Asia, return nowadays is an enterprising project, instead of an exercise due to nostalgia. Returning to China or India from the west, for example, is perceived as a 'return to the future' – to be ahead of global business and technology curves. Finally, return migration is also related to the politics of nationalism and identities. In South Korea and Japan, for example, ethno-nationalism both encourages and is energised by the return of ethnic Koreans and Japanese from overseas.

Despite the burgeoning literature on transnational migration in Asia, however, research on return remains scarce. The workshop Return Migration in Asia, held in July 2008 at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, brought various streams of return migration to light. Apart from examining return as an important migration phenomenon, the workshop interrogated it as a powerful social political and ideological notion, and opened up the concept of 'return' as a strategic moment redefining economic, social and political relations in the region.

The following four essays were among the over 40 papers presented at the workshop. Koji Sasaki's article traces the little known debates among Japanese migrants in Brazil about return throughout the first half of the 20th century, and demonstrates how 'return' served as a central idiom in the migrants' nego-tiation of their political positionality in the changing global geopolitical order. Wang Cangbai tells us how the Chinese state turned returnees into a special policy subject in the 1950s in the process of socialist nation building. Sylvia Cowan follows the journey of former Cambodian refugees who were forced to return by the US government despite being US permanent residents. Forced return helps maintain law and order in the US from the state's point of view, but creates disruptions and disorder for the deportees and their family. Finally, Xiang Biao's piece about labour migration in East Asia highlights how com-pulsory return has become an indispensible policy tool for the authorities to manage migration. Return is enforced through complex collaborations between the state, the employer, the recruiter and other public and private institutions.

Above:
The Chinese character
gui, **meaning return.**

Running through the four essays is the common concern with the intersection between the logic of territory upon which state sovereignty and the political order is based, and the logic of mobility which is essential for the globalising economy. The intersection manifests itself as different configurations at different historical stages and in different cases. The essays collectively demonstrate that return migration warrants serious research not only because it is important in itself, but also be-cause it constitutes a productive lens to delineate the changing pattern of mobility and the evolving global geopolitical order in general. More conference papers in the full version will take the form of collective publications in due course.

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Moral mobility Return in the Japanese community in Brazil 1908-1955

To return or not to return, this was never a straightforward question for Japanese immigrants in Brazil. 'Return' is not only driven by economic considerations, but is also a moral act conditioned by migrants' complex relations with the state, the community, and their families. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, intellectuals from the Japanese immigrant community in Brazil debated the moral meanings of their mobility and immobility. The debates were shaped by and reflective of the radically changing political conditions and the collective sense of the self.

Koji Sasaki

The desire for return as a 'backward' mentality
Japanese migration to Brazil began in 1908 through the initiative of a private agency, the Imperial Emigration Company. During the period 1908 to 1941, more than 188,000 Japanese were shipped to Brazil, where most peasant immigrants worked in coffee plantations in the state of São Paulo. They saw their work in Brazil as temporary and expected to return to Japan after earning some money, 'to return to the homeland dressed in brocade' *(kokyo ni nishiki wo kazaru)*, as the well-known saying goes.

Such an attitude, common to many migrant populations, was criticised by various migrant elites, especially editors of immigrant newspapers and leaders of immigration organisations, in the 1920s. They held that the immigrants' 'sojourner mentality' *(dekasegi konjo)* was detrimental to agricultural development and insisted that the Japanese in Brazil should settle permanently. At that time, new immigrant colonies, meant to facilitate long-term settlement, were being built in the hinterland of São Paulo state. The educated settlers widely propagated the motto of 'loving the soil, settling permanently'. Paradoxically, the advocacy for permanent settlement was closely related to an emerging imperial cosmopolitanism of the Taishō era (1912-1926). The immigrant newspaper editorials, for example, stressed that the immigrants should see themselves as pioneers in the mission of Japan's overseas development, declaring that 'there is no reason why being a Japanese requires living and dying in Japan'.[1]

Imagined re-migration to the empire
Political conditions in Japan went through a decisive shift in the 1930s. After the 'Manchuria Incident' in 1931, when Japan annexed a large part of northeast China, Japan was soon engulfed by militarism. As news about Japan's invasion of Southern Pacific countries reached the immigrants in Brazil, they enthusiastically embraced the imperial ideology of *'Hakko ichiu'* (the whole world under one roof). They were even more determined to settle in Brazil, but decided to educate their children in the Japanese language, aiming to turn the next generation into superior Brazilians with Japanese blood and tradition.

However, as Getúlio Vargas took over the presidency of Brazil in 1937, the New State *(o Estado Novo)* implemented a series of policies aimed at national unification, which imposed severe constraints on the activities of foreigners. Education and publication in the Japanese language were prohibited, and the Japanese immigrants were put in a state of great anxiety. Unsurprisingly, this triggered the immigrants' desire to return to Japan once again. A 1938 survey of a rural region of São Paulo carried out by an immigration officer, Shungoro Wako, showed that as many as 85 per cent of the immigrants hoped to return to Japan.

This anxiety about the new state of Brazil, the resumed desire for return, and the advances of the Japanese imperialism, collectively resulted in a new notion of return. Rokuro Koyama, the editor of *Seisyu Shimpo,* the leading Japanese newspaper in Brazil, argued that the Japanese in Brazil should 're-migrate' to the Southeast Asian region under the control of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.[2] According to Koyama, before Japan's expansion to the Chinese continent, the Japanese were forced to engage in what he called a 'hybrid migration' *(konko ijuu),* wherein emigrants had to assimilate themselves to the culture of the destination country. The new geopolitical condition, he argued, allowed for an 'ethnically pure migration' *(minzoku-teki jun ijuu)*, in which the migrants were no longer required to assimilate and would thus remain 'pure' Japanese.[3] *Seisyu Shimpo* published a series of editorials in 1941 advocating a 'glorious retreat' from Latin America to Asia 'under the Japanese flag'.[4]

This imperialist concept of return acquired strong currency in the immigrant community. Ando Zempati, the editor of a literary journal in the late 1930s in São Paulo, recalled that 'this feverish desire was so influential that majority of the people expected to re-migrate to the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere even after Japan's unconditional surrender'.[5] Curiously, the migrants' extreme willingness for global mobility and imperial return was hardly appreciated by their homeland government. This was indeed a peculiar perception among the migrants who were caught up between cosmopolitan ideals, imperialist ideology and the emotional difficulties in the foreign land. The imagined collective return from Brazil to Japan's Asian Empire was their particular ideological response to the changing political conditions.

The cult of return
After its defeat in World War Two in 1945, Japan had to transform itself from an imperialist empire with an expanding territory, into a small nation-state. This radical change in regime would have logically required a corresponding transformation in the subjectivities of its citizens, both in Japan and overseas. However, with regard to the Japanese community in Brazil, this process was slow, marked by a series of reactionary incidents.

In the late 1940s, many Japanese immigrants in Brazil still believed that Japan had won, or was winning the war. As lines of communication were broken during the war, it took a few years for the immigrants in rural plantations to receive full information. The 'convictionists' who believed in Japan's victory, gained great popularity by persistently rejecting the news of Japan's defeat. When the members of the 'recognition-ist' movement organised campaigns to inform the community about the defeat in the late 1940s, members of the *Shindo Renmei* (League of the Ways of the Emperor's Subjects), by far the most influential convictionist group, organised terrorist attacks and killed many recognitionist leaders.

It was against the same background that various rumours about return emerged in São Paulo in the early 1950s. Exploiting ordinary migrants' lingering desire to return, the rumours went that the 'victorious' Japanese government would soon come to rescue them from Brazil. Numerous tricksters swindled large amounts of money from the immigrants by persuading them to sell off their properties in a rush, to be ready for the 'repatriation ships' that would arrive anytime to send them back to Japan.

During this tremendous turmoil and confusion, the *Sakura-gumi Teishin-tai* (Sakura Volunteer Army), was formed as a 'cult for return' in 1953. Although the agenda of the group was fundamentally driven by a desperate desire to return to Japan, they presented their proposals as highly political projects. The leaders urged Japanese immigrants to participate in the 'UN forces' in the Korean War, but at the same time to 'fight with communists to liberate Taiwan'. They also advocated 'forced repatriation of all Japanese immigrants in Brazil'. They organised street demonstrations and even a collective hunger strike, only to be scorned by the general public due to its deeply contradictory agenda. In 1955, the frustrated members attacked the Japanese Consulate in São Paulo, injuring several officials.

The Japanese migrants' desire for return faded away by the late 1950s as they learned that their war-torn homeland could no longer welcome them. The history of the debates about mobility in the Japanese community in Brazil reveals how the migrants responded to the shifts in the larger political conditions by formulating possible strategies of settlement, return and re-migration. The discourse of return constitutes a prism through which we can delineate how migrants' sense of duty, as overseas imperial or national subjects; their sentiment for the homeland; and their ambivalence towards the foreign soil, intersected in a complex manner.

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Fig. 1
A street demonstration organised by Sakura Volunteer Army in the Praça da Sé, São Paulo on 3 February 1955. The banners read, 'Ethnic Return' and 'Total Repatriation of 400,000 Compatriots'. Photo courtesy of the Museum of the Japanese Immigration in Brazil, São Paulo.
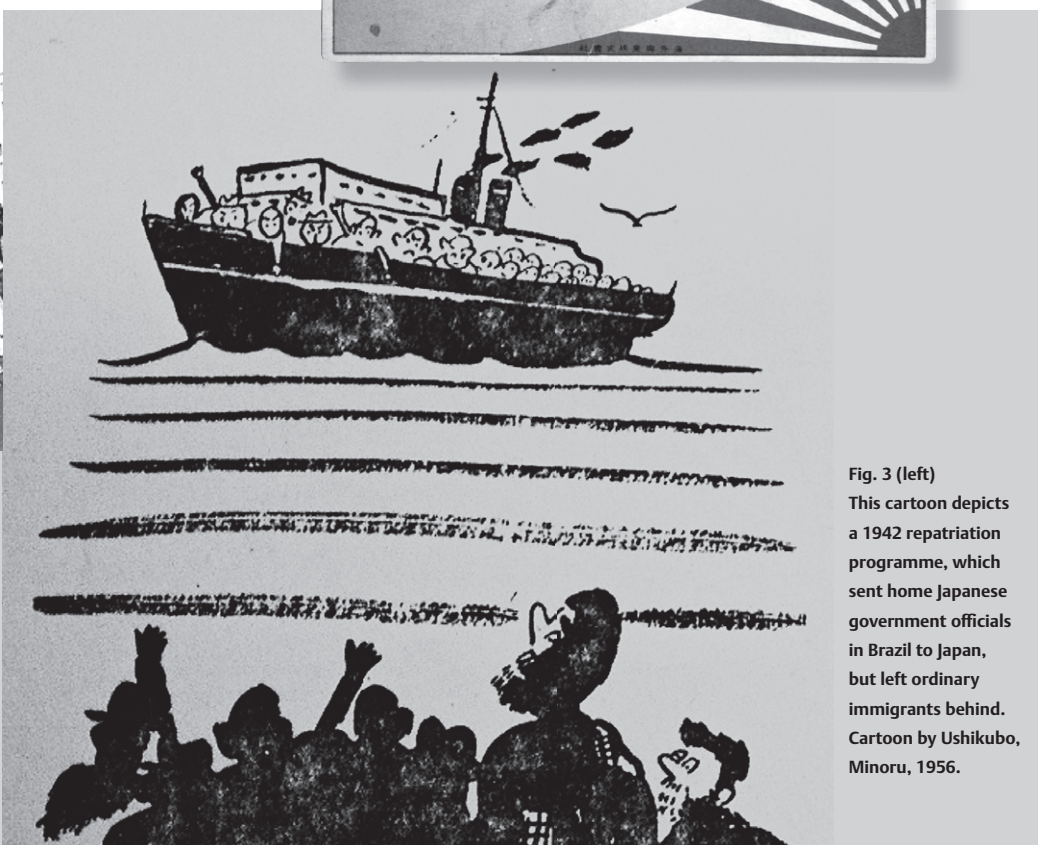
Fig. 2 (below)
A postcard published by the Overseas Development Company *(Kaigai Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisya)* between the late 1920s and the early 1930s. Image courtesy of the Museum of the Japanese Immigration in Brazil, São Paulo.

Fig. 3 (left)
This cartoon depicts a 1942 repatriation programme, which sent home Japanese government officials in Brazil to Japan, but left ordinary immigrants behind. Cartoon by Ushikubo, Minoru, 1956.

Guiqiao Returnees as a policy subject in China

Nearly half a million Indonesian-Chinese 'returned' to China in the 1950s and 1960s, motivated by new Chinese nationalism and the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, and by Indonesian policies aimed at marginalising ethnic Chinese. 'Return' meant re-embracing Chinese ethnicity, culture, and a political decision to join the new Chinese nation. However, as Wang Cangbai reveals, their journey 'home' was to be a painful one.

Wang Cangbai

RETURN MIGRANTS ARE OFTEN DRIVEN by material considerations such as higher incomes and better career prospects at home, but for the nearly half a million Indonesian-Chinese – students, petty shopkeepers, traders and labourers – who 'returned' to China in the 1950s and 1960s,[1] the motivations were something else. Their decision was partially motivated by the new Chinese nationalism brought about by the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, and partially due to the Indonesian policies aimed at marginalising ethnic Chinese. Most of these returnees were born overseas, including many from *Peranakan* families who have lived in Indonesia for generations. To them, 'return' meant a re-identification with the Chinese ethnicity, re-embracement of the Chinese culture, and more importantly, a political decision of joining the new Chinese nation. Ironically and tragically, however, their journey to China turned out to be painful and traumatic. This was not so much because of ill adjustments to the Chinese society on their part, but was mainly due to the Chinese state's refusal to recognise them as 'one of us'. They were turned into an isolated group excluded from 'the People' *(renmin)*.

The invention of the Guiqiao category
Shortly after their 'return' to China, the Chinese government invented an official category, *guiqiao*, to refer to the Indonesian-Chinese and Chinese returnees from other countries. Despite the fact that earlier Chinese governments had previously been engaged with overseas Chinese and that return migration had certainly taken place before, it was the first time that the Chinese government created an official definition for returnees. In the past, returnees were lumped together with overseas Chinese and were generally referred to as *huaqiao* or *qiaomin*, both simply mean 'overseas Chinese'. The word *guiqiao*, as an official category, first appeared in a 1957 document 'Explanations about the Statuses of Overseas Chinese, Families of Overseas Chinese, Returned Overseas Chinese and Returned Overseas Chinese Students' *(Guanyu huaoqiao, qiaojuan, guiqiao, guiqiaoxuesheng shenfen de jieshi)*, issued by the State Commission of Overseas Chinese Affairs. *Guiqiao* was used as a rather generic term, referring to any overseas Chinese who 'returned' to China regardless of their nationalities, age, time

of 'return' and whether the 'return' was voluntary or forced. In socialist China, the national body politic was imagined not simply in ethnic terms, but also along class lines. The returnees' dubious class backgrounds and connections with the capitalist world disqualified them from joining the mainstream part of the Chinese nation – the working class 'People'. They instead had to be re-educated and constantly monitored by purposely established state apparatus and through specifically designed *qiaowu* (overseas Chinese affairs) policies. An editorial of the flagship newspaper of the State Commission of Overseas Chinese Affairs, *Qiaowu Bao* (News of Overseas Chinese Affairs), declared in 1958 (no. 9) that:

"Considering the fact that most *guiqiao* came from capitalist countries and were influenced by capitalist ideology, they must be transformed; as many *qiaojuan* [family members of overseas Chinese or returnees] have been living on remittances and have never participated in manual labour, they must be remolded into working people who will live on their own labour; as they [*guiqiao* and *qiaojuan*] have relatives overseas, they are susceptible to continuous influence of capitalist thoughts. Therefore, the task of transforming *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* will be time consuming and arduous."

In Chinese, the word *gui* (return) means more than a reverse movement. It also implies a reconversion of allegiance and renewed pledge of obedience, specifically to those who had previously deviated from the norm, but then came back to comply. For example, the words *guihua* (return and absorb) and *guishun* (return and obey) were used to describe the incorporation of ethnic minorities or rebels by the authorities. In addition, deep attachment to the home land was traditionally seen as the normal state of life and a respected virtue. For instance, the Ming and Qing Courts strictly prohibited their subjects from going abroad for most of their reign. Therefore, in Chinese tradition, the word *qiao* (sojourners overseas) has negative connotations, and suggests someone who is an outcast or untrustworthy. The category *guiqiao* was purposely created by the party-state in order to call for returnees' loyalty to the socialist motherland, and at the same time to enable the state to monitor and control the returnees.

Historical vicissitudes
The relationship between the state and *guiqiao* has been unstable, and has been conditioned by changes in the overall political atmosphere. Roughly three stages of development can be discerned. In the early 1950s, the Chinese government formulated a set of policies designed specifically toward *guiqiao*. The central principle of the policies at this stage was 'to treat [the *guiqiao*] equally as other Chinese citizens with appropriate preferential arrangements' [*yishitongren, shidangzhaogu*]. The original thoughts of policy makers at that time, especially Liao Chengzhi (廖承志) and Fang Fang (方方) who had overseas backgrounds themselves, was to grant *guiqiao* certain privileges in daily life, such as additional rations to purchase luxury goods at special shops, in order to facilitate their adaptation and to mobilise them to participate in socialist development. The relationship between the government and the *guiqiao* decisively deteriorated at the second stage. During the Cultural Revolution, many *guiqiao* were accused of being 'spies' or 'counter revolutionaries' and were imprisoned; more were attacked for subjugating themselves to foreign forces *(chongyang meiwai)*. *Guiqiao* and even their China-born children were refused entry to the army, the Party, any professions that were considered vital to state security, or from taking up important positions in the state apparatus. The overseas Chinese policies, as observed by Fitzgerald, 'had veered from left to right, and alternated between severity and leniency'.[2] At the third stage, in the 1980s, the situation changed again. When China earnestly needed foreign investment and technologies for its economic

reform, Deng Xiaoping and other Chinese leaders suddenly found that 'overseas connection is a good thing'[3] which could be utilised to bridge China with the outside world. *Guiqiao* once again became a positive term. Underlying these dramatic turns in the *guiqiao* policies throughout history has been the state's constant pursuit of 'national interest'. The *guiqiao* policies thus constitute an integral part of how the Chinese state has imagined itself, its relation to the internally differentiated population, and its relation to the outside world.

Re-migration
The political categorisation of *guiqiao,* as a special policy subject, has created profound gaps between the returnees and the local mainlander Chinese. Whereas discussions about *guiqiao* in both academic and popular publications are dominated by nation-centric narratives, the real thinking of the returnees themselves is far more complicated. Disappointed by their experiences in China, more than 250,000 *guiqiao* left for Hong Kong and Macao along with their families in the late 1970s once China loosened its control.[4] However, even among the *guiqiao* who stayed in China – most of whom were beneficiaries of the preferential treatment in the 1950s and were staying in the cities after receiving university education – there is still a strong feeling of estrangement and a mentality of sojourning. A survey of Indonesian-Chinese in Beijing in 1998 revealed that, among the 359 respondents, over 11 per cent said they regretted 'returning' and over 29 per cent said they would stay in Indonesia if they could choose again.[5]

Since the 1990s, China has received a new generation of returnees. Dubbed *haigui*, they are mostly mainland Chinese who have studied or worked overseas for a period of time. How will they fit in with the new developments in China? It is perhaps too early to determine what their relations to the state and the larger society will be. However, the *guiqiao* story forcefully reminds us of the role that the party-state has played in shaping the returnees' life of in China.

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Fig. 2 (above left)
Full of excitement in anticipation for a new life in China, a Peranakan youth visits the Tiananmen Square in 1953 for the first time. Photo courtesy of Huang Fushun.

Fig. 3 (above right)
The registration form of Zheng Tianren (originally from east Java), shows that he was enrolled in a 'preparatory school' in Beijing in 1957. Upon arrival in China, returned overseas Chinese students were received by *qiaowu* apparatus and were brought to special 'preparatory schools for returned overseas Chinese student' *(guiguo huaqiao xuesheng buxi xuexiao)*. Image courtesy of Zheng Tianren.

Fig. 1
A group of Indonesian-Chinese in their sixties performs an Indonesian folk dance wearing traditional Indonesian costumes in Hong Kong in 2001. They are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of a Chinese school in Palembang, Indonesia. They returned to the mainland China in the 1950s and 1960s and then re-migrated to Hong Kong in the 1970s. Photo courtesy of the author.

Compulsory return A means of migration control in East Asia

Compulsory return is central to most programmes of transnational unskilled labour migration in East Asia. Migrants have to go home not only when their contracts expire, but also whenever they fall ill, become pregnant, or have disputes with employers. Compulsory return places migrants in a perpetually liminal, disposable and transient position, and thus renders the migration flows controllable.

Xiang Biao

MR TANIMURA, OWNER of a garment factory in Kobe, Japan, hires about 10 Chinese workers at any point of time since 1996. The most difficult part in managing foreign workers, he said, is sending off workers in the airport. Not that it is too sad to say goodbye; on the contrary, he has to work hard to make sure that the workers leave Japan to return home on time. In his words, it is like 'fighting a battle'. Whenever he sends off two workers, Tanimura normally brings five colleagues or friends. In the airport, the Japanese team makes a human cage by holding hands and encircling the workers in the middle. Step by step they move, across the hall, through the crowds, towards the immigration checkpoint.

At the checkpoint, Tanimura hands each worker a neatly wrapped package. Inside are the air ticket, passport – which Tanimura (like most other employers) has kept since the worker's arrival – and the unpaid salary accumulated over the past one or two years. It is a standard practice, not only in Japan but also in other countries such as Canada and Australia, that employers pay Chinese migrant workers between 10 and 50 per cent of their monthly wage as allowances, and pay up the rest immediately before the airplane takes off. Because of the large amount of cash they carry, the workers normally place them in pockets purposely sewn into the underwear for safety. To see the workers (all female) do so in the middle of the busy airport is awkward, Tanimura admitted. He is also genuinely concerned that the migrants' family would lose literally everything in the case of an air crash. If so, why does he not remit the money to migrants' families? Tanimura has obviously thought this through:

"If we remit the money after [the workers] return, they won't agree. They are worried that we won't remit. But if we remit the money before they go home, there will be a time gap. The worker will insist that they leave only after receiving the confirmation from their family [about the receipt of the money]. During that time, they can plan to run away and overstay."

Such an obsession about return is not, of course, simply unfounded paranoia. In Japan, as well as in South Korea and Singapore, the employer or the recruitment agent will be fined and/or banned from importing migrant workers, if their workers go missing or overstay. It would be a nightmare if the workers absconded as a group in the airport when they are supposed to leave. Compulsory return serves as the states' central means of regulating labour migration.

Return-oriented migration programmes
In East Asia, the admission of unskilled foreign workers is based on the assumption that the migrants would return. In the case of Singapore, employers have to pay a SGD 5,000 security bond (USD 3,400) to the government for each foreign worker recruited. The bond will be confiscated if the worker fails to return on time. As for South Korea, the government determines the number of admissions based on the number of exits, in order to control the overall size of foreign migrants. Employers who fail to ensure the exit of their workers when their visas expire will not be given 'replacement quotas' and thus, will be unable to bring in new workers. This 'no return, no new arrival' policy was clearly designed to enforce the 'rotating door' principle. In Japan, before the workers' arrival, many local employers pressure the workers to sign an 'agreement' that, in case of the company's closure, the workers will return to China at their own expense and will not demand compensation.

Compulsory return is often seen as an effective solution to potential social tensions arising from migration. Migrant workers have to return, not only when their contracts expire, but also when employers terminate the contracts. In Japan, South Korea and Singapore, when a dispute arises, the employer can simply cancel the worker's visa. As the immigration law supersedes employment and other legislations, an illegal being cannot practically pursue justice, and the worker has to return unconditionally.

Once they return, migrants are effectively deprived of their basic capacity to take legal actions due to the sheer physical distance, the differences in legal systems across countries, and the territorial boundaries of state authority. When migrants fall ill in Japan or female migrants become pregnant in Singapore, they are required to leave as well. Furthermore, compulsory return enables the states to 'reverse' migration flows in economic downturns to minimise undesirable social repercussions, as the Malaysian and Thai governments have done.

Compulsory return is also aimed at rupturing migrants' social ties in the destination country. Since March 2003, for example, the South Korean government has launched periodic crackdowns in order to deport illegal migrants. In these campaigns, those who have overstayed for less than a year are given a grace period to exit without punishment, and those who overstayed longer are detained, fined and immediately deported. Thus, those who have proven themselves to be more employable and have deeper social connections in the Korean society are the target of punishment and are the priority to be returned. Until recently, both South Korea and Japan banned former migrants from re-entering the country as unskilled workers. Behind this apparently bizarre policy is, again, the well calculated fear that workers with previous experiences in the country may have too much information and too wide networks that would complicate future compulsory return.

Migrant repatriation companies
Compulsory return is not an automatic result of particular policies, nor is it executed by government alone. It is, instead, implemented through complex collaboration between the state, the employer, the migrant and various private and semi-private institutions. In Singapore, for example, there were six private companies specialising in repatriating migrant workers on behalf of the employer or recruitment agent in 2007.[1] They are all small companies, registered as transport or other services firms, provide no uniforms for their personnel, and are staffed by 'tough' men. These companies constitute an 'informal sector' of the booming security industry.

The price for the repatriation service in Singapore is fairly standardised. Repatriation companies in 2007 charge SGD 450 for escorting a worker to the airport, an additional SGD 100-150 per day for housing (which is an essential part of the service as the employer often wants the worker to be taken away immediately once the contract has been terminated; the repatriation company is tasked to arrange for the air ticket), SGD 450 for catching a missing worker if the employer provides information about the worker's whereabouts, and SGD 500-1000 if no clue is provided. Companies also provide 'offshore solutions' – to escort workers all the way back to their home countries; the price needs to be negotiated on a case by case basis. Apart from the repatriation companies, recruitment agents also see it in their interest to reinforce compulsory return.

"How can we make money if they all stay on and foreign companies don't need new people?" A manager of a large labour sending company in China asked. Underlying the compulsory return is thus a complex set of institutional arrangements, and in this sense return provides a productive lens for examining the entire labour migration system and beyond.

Controlling migration by enforcing return reflects the larger logic underlying the current phase of globalisation. When capitalism becomes 'disorganised,' when production, consumption and speculation are globalised, and power appropriation from above and social movements from below both operate through complex networks, it is increasingly difficult to identify oppositional social forces. States, for example, are at once warmly welcoming and deeply wary about labour migration. Return provides a productive means for the state and employer to make order from mobility because return is not against mobility. Return is mobility itself. It is a special kind of mobility that it tames, regulates and curtails mobility. Structurally, compulsory return brings more people on the move. However, at the same time, it places migrants in a perpetually liminal, disposable and transient position, and thus renders them controllable.

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Notes
1. Interviews with an NGO activist, August 11, 2007, and the manager of a security company, August 18, 2007, Singapore.

Fig. 1 (above right)
Migrant workers from China have to sign a promise letter like this one, before going to Japan. Signing this document means that they 'agree' to be sent back by force and shoulder all the costs if they: participate in an assembly, strike or petition; terminate contracts unilaterally; repeatedly sleep in different rooms other than the one designated to them; and report internal disputes to other organisations or individuals, or entrust other parities to intervene.

Fig. 2 (above left)
A standard form issued by the Japanese authorities, to be filled out by the sending company of labour migrant (the 'trainee'). The last section of the form asks about the arrangement with regard to the migrant's employment status upon his/her return. The visa may not be issued if no proper arrangement about the trainee's return is made.

Fig. 3 (far left)
Two Chinese migrants in Singapore await to be sent back the next day. They were both dismissed by the employer due to disputes over salary, and were sent back to the recruitment agency for repatriation. They had paid more than USD 5,000 to their agents, but had only been in Singapore for two months. Returning thus entails huge financial losses. Photo courtesy of the author, 2007.

Fig. 4 (left)
A shop sign of a repatriation company in Singapore advertises the kinds of services they offer. Photo courtesy of the author, 2007.

A TEAM SERVICES
LOCATING OF MISSING WORK PERMIT HOLDER
REPATRIATION SERVICES FOR MAIDS & FOREIGN WORKERS ETC.
PROVISION OF FOOD & LODGING SERVICES
• SURVEILLANCE SERVICE
• ASSIST IN RAID/SPOT-C... AT CONSTRUCTION SIT... COMPANY QUARTERS, ILLEGAL WORKERS & IMMIGRANTS
• OVERSEAS ASSIGNM...

Forced return The deportation of former Cambodian refugees from the US

Cambodians who came to the US as refugee children after the Khmer Rouge genocide are being sent back to the country that they barely knew. Growing up in inner city America, some of them became involved in gang activities and petty crimes; they are deported even after serving time in prison. Not allowed to return to the US, they are once again forced to separate from their families.

Sylvia R. Cowan

Fig. 1 & 2
Catholic Workers Protest Deportation,
Kansas City, Missouri, USA; April 28, 2008.
Photographer Mona Shaw; used with permission.

AFTER GROWING UP IN THE US, Karney, (This is a pseudonym. All the names in this article have been changed to protect the anonymity of respondents), now in his mid-thirties, is in Cambodia trying to rebuild his life and reconstitute his family. His life has been disrupted and displaced repeatedly. Fleeing Cambodia at the age of 10 after Vietnamese troops ousted the Khmer Rouge, then spending two years in Thai refugee camps, he arrived in the US as one of the 145,000 Cambodian refugees who were resettled in America between 1975 and 1999 (Hing 2005). After living in the US as a permanent resident for 22 years, however, Karney was forcibly 'returned' to Cambodia, a country he barely knew. Most deportees, including Karney, were forced to return to Cambodia after serving their time in prison for gang activity and other, often minor, crimes.

This wave of 'return migration' is a direct result of the changes in US Immigration laws in 1996. The Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act made deportation mandatory for all legal permanent residents who are sentenced to a year or more for 'aggravated felonies', 'moral turpitude,' or use of controlled substances. Judges' discretion in individual cases was removed, so that no defendant can be exempted from deportation by considering his/her prison experience, rehabilitation, attitude, behaviour, ties to family, and length of time living in the US. The US and the Cambodian governments reached an agreement in March 2002 to repatriate Cambodian citizens who had broken the law and served their terms in US prisons. From June 2002 to September 2008, 192 Cambodians were 'returned,' many leaving behind families and children in the US. They are not allowed to return to the US, even to visit family members there.

Furthermore, about 1,500 more Cambodians, currently on a list 'to be deported,' are living a life of uncertain futures. Aside from the change in policies, more complex human stories lie behind the forced return.

"We're the product of the American system"
For many refugee families from Cambodia, success in crossing mine-filled terrain to temporary camps at the end of Pol Pot's reign and reaching a new country did not put an end to the trauma. More challenges awaited them in the new territory. Confronted with a completely alien language and culture, the adults often had to work two or three jobs simultaneously in order to make ends meet. The children, often left neglected, made the streets of America's inner cities their new homes. Their peers often became like family. Billy, one of the deportees, told me:

"Man, our parents were traumatised, didn't know what was happening with us kids. I was a good boy at home – washed the dishes, cleaned up – so they didn't know anything about gangs. We just got into gangs to protect ourselves. We were just kids, thrown in the inner city with Mexicans and Blacks. We're the product of the American system." (Personal communication, August 2008)

Similar to Billy, Karney described himself as a 'good boy', who helped distribute water and food in the refugee camps, and has always been fair and kind. In the US, he tried to obey his strict uncle, who took the role of his father. But never feeling he could measure up, Karney sought comfort elsewhere:

"I started going to school… and was getting harassed by everybody. The Hispanics. The blacks and the whites. You know 'cause we stayed in a mixed community… everybody was there… all kinds of people… like the ghetto type. Then I had my bike taken. My silver necklace taken. I started meeting other Asian males around there so we started going in groups. Not just alone. That way we'd feel more protected. Which worked. At that time, yeah, they'd see us a bunch, and then they wouldn't come charging at us. They'd think twice. So that… you know, slowly but surely, it turned into more serious stuff. We started retaliating. We started fighting in school. And by the time I was 14… seventh grade… you know… I started not going to school. Then I started having problems failing. I went to different schools and after school and stuff. So that's how things got started. [It] got worse."(Personal communication, August 2008)

Group solidarity was intended to protect each other, yet this also led them to more serious activities. For Karney, it was juvenile court, then later, six years in and out of prison. It was in prison that he decided to turn his life around:

"My last trip [prison], you know, I started going to school and stuff. Take a trade course. A government program… anything really to help me better myself. Get my GED [General Education Development credential, equivalent of high school completion]. College courses… parenting course… you know and… and all for a guy who only went to and dropped out at seventh. When I passed my GED I was so like proud. For only two years of school." (Personal communication, August 2008).

Yet when Karney completed his sentence, he was picked up by the then Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS; the agency was later merged into the Homeland Security as the Immigration and Customs Enforcement), and taken to a detention

Fig. 3
Father and son; Phnom Penh, February 2006.
Photo courtesy of the author, 2007.

centre, where he waited for 12 months to be transported to Cambodia. His daughter, left behind in the US, later asked him in a telephone conversation,

"When are you coming home, daddy? You said you were coming home when you got out of prison." (Personal communication, February 2006).

A New Life in Cambodia
Karney, like other 'returnees' to Cambodia, found it arduous to live in a place he had never really known. Luckier than others though, he had continued to speak Khmer in the US and has some relatives still in Cambodia. Nevertheless, the process of adjustment was long and hard. The most difficult part was the forced separation from the family:

"It's the worst when they had a wife and kids in the States, and can't ever go back there. That's a punishment too harsh. They served their time… it's too hard, to keep them from their families. It's hard on them, hard on their families. The kids end up growing up with no dad. And they can't support them." (Personal communication, February 2006)

Karney has made a new life. He married a Cambodian woman, and now has three children. He's found new meaning in life by helping others:

"I even help people that are the same as I was. I give 'em food, a place to stay in my house. As long as they don't mess up. Although I'm struggling with myself…it's time for me to give back and sometimes even though I get tired and wonder, why am I doing this? I'm helping a few people myself with a lot of things. I have to do it. It's a way of giving back to what I've taken from society." (Personal communication, August, 2008)

But not everyone who went through these enormous upheavals is able to turn things around. Some have turned to drugs; a few ended up back in prison; one committed suicide; some are just getting by day-to-day. There was no system of assistance that was planned for these Cambodians, in anticipation of the first groups' arrival. One American who is a long term resident of Phnom Penh started the Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) with small donations to provide transitional housing, assistance with job searches and adjustment. Later, this project received USAID funding and was formalised as the 'Returnee Integration Support Program'. That funding is not being renewed, and RISP may have to close down.

The deportation of the Cambodians is part of a larger programme of expulsion of the US government. Annually nearly 200,000 people are forced to return to their country of citizenship. While solving complex issues of undocumented immigrants eludes politicians, they can look tough enforcing deportation on this group. The policy is justified explicitly as a necessary means for reinforcing law and order within the US territory, and implicitly by the notion of 'return': is it not 'natural' for one to 'return' to where he/she was born? While return is often imagined as a warm, comforting journey home, forced return entails enormous human costs. While the deportation programme may appear to maintain social order in the US, it has certainly created disorder for the returnees, their families, and many in the Cambodian society. Meanwhile their children in the US are growing up without fathers. The law must be changed to reflect justice and fairness, to provide judicial review in determining whether deportation is justifiable in individual cases.

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Race and empire Japan, the Hague Convention and the prewar world

It has often been observed that the Hague Peace Convention of 1907 reflected the optimism and idealism of its age, however naïve. Its ideals remain a beacon for our times. Then and now, the Convention was cause for pride regarding the progress of human civilisation as a whole, and hope for a brighter and more humane future. But a look back at the Hague Convention, and Japan's place within it, also provides a lens onto the contradictions and ambiguities of a modern world founded on the imperialist law of the jungle.

Ethan Mark

A moment of optimism

For Japan, the only non-Western imperial power, participation in the Hague Peace Convention of 1907 had a special symbolic meaning: It was a source of optimism and pride regarding Japan's acceptance as an equal, autonomous, and civilised nation within the global community of nations. As such it was one of a series of events over the decade preceding it, including the victory over Russia in 1905, that marked Japan's arrival as one of the world's Great Powers. Yet for all the optimism, the early 20th century world was also a divided and tough place, a world in which in many ways the law of the jungle applied to the competing Western powers, between the West and the Rest, and between empires and colonies. In this context, the optimistic promise of the Hague Convention could not in fact be shared equally by all, and as a non-Western empire, Japan's position was in fact always a rather tenuous and ambiguous one.

While recent history had taught the Japanese to be wary of how their nation counted among the imperial powers, there was perhaps no moment when Japanese hopes for full inclusion among them burned brighter than in the period of the Hague Convention. How far Japan appeared to have come in the 54 years since the first arrival of Perry's warships in Edo (Tokyo) Bay in 1853. Then, Western force had compelled a weak, vulnerable Japan to open its ports, its economy, and its society to Western trade and Western ways. Forced to acknowledge that it was far behind the Western powers technologically, militarily, economically and institutionally, Japan had been subject to a humiliating series of 'unequal treaties' that compromised its sovereignty in areas such as international trade and legal jurisdiction.

The forced ending of Japan's 200-year self-imposed isolation from the West and the imposition of the unequal treaties resulted in both a severe sense of humiliation and severe economic instability. Combined with a number of complicated domestic factors, this in turn contributed to a period of turmoil that ultimately led to the establishment of a new political regime in 1868. The primary objective of this new Meiji State was to respond to this crisis and reverse Japan's downward spiral in a threatening world. For more than 250 years, the decentralised, feudal Tokugawa Order had proven a good system for keeping the domestic peace. But it was clearly entirely inadequate for surviving the rapidly changing and competitive international system of the 19th century. Signaling their openness to a new course, Japan's new leaders embarked on a tour around the world in the early 1870s to observe the conditions that had made the West so strong, and the rest of the world so weak. Along the way they not only visited the U.S. and Europe, but also journeyed through the Suez Canal and witnessed conditions in the European colonies of North Africa, India, and Southeast Asia.

What the Meiji leaders saw on their travels confirmed what they had already witnessed from afar: To compete successfully in the modern international system, you needed to have a unified and industrialised nation-state such as those that had emerged in Britain, France, the Netherlands, the US, and, more recently, Germany. Each had a powerful, respected and effective central government, an educated and motivated population, military might, an enterprising industrial elite and a strong sense of national mission. These nation-states had put such a gap between themselves and the rest of the world that they could increasingly project their power across the globe. There was no hiding from this reality any longer: Those who were not quick enough to achieve such central control, national unity, and technological advancement were doomed to colonial domination. Japan had to mobilise and concentrate the human and material resources needed for industrialisation and the building of a strong military – and to do it quickly.

For the non-Western world at least the last decades of the 19th century were tough ones. Historians refer to this period as the time of 'High Imperialism,' or, more colloquially, the 'carving up of the Globe.' Western expansion continued relentlessly into many parts of Africa and the Asian societies of Burma and Indochina. The scramble for imperial glory and the world's resources intensified. Eyeing the worsening situation in neighbouring China in the 1880s, the liberal Japanese politician Sugita Tei'ichi famously commented,

The Western powers in China squabble over their interests, each trying to assert hegemony over the country. As close as we are to this scene, my colleagues and I wonder whether Japan will be served up as the main dish in the coming feast, or whether it should join the guests at the table. Surely it would be better to sit at the table than to be part of the menu.

Following this hard but inevitable logic, the Meiji leaders set about building a powerful nation able to defend itself in a competitive world. This also meant building an empire that might ensure national security, prosperity and prestige. When Japan thus imposed its own unequal treaties on Korea as early as 1876, there was remarkably little internal concern about the hypocrisy such a move might suggest. It should be noted that this act of imperial mimicry drew no protest from the Europeans or Americans either.

Japan's relatively 'late arrival' on the international scene, and the urgency of Japan's modernisation and imperial expansion, imparted to Japan's development a special character that was in some ways similar to that of Germany. The development of local heavy industry, the expansion of state power and influence, the instilling of patriotism and loyalty in the population, and the strengthening of the military were to receive absolute precedence. Existing resources were to be exploited to maximum advantage, and anything seen to stand in the way was to be consistently and often brutally suppressed. Victims included, for example, fledgling movements for greater popular representation and free speech, movements for improved wages and working conditions, and religious or political beliefs that might be seen to question the political and moral authority of the emperor and the nation.

The Meiji Regime was not always popular among its citizens as a result, and the repressive trends it set in motion were ultimately to haunt Japan's development and its dealings with the rest of the world. In the dog-eat-dog international environment of the late 19th century, however, national loyalty and strength were valued above all else in most of the world's advanced nation-states. For not only the Japanese state but the society at large, the building of empires was seen as a normal and indeed natural consequence of being an advanced nation. Like citizens in Europe and the US, Japanese people were quick to see themselves in the national reflection, and to glory in the advances of the empire. Like those in the West too, Japanese imperial expansion was accompanied by a belief that Japan was also bringing the light of modern civilisation to the world's 'backward' peoples.

For Japanese however, the building of a modern nation and empire had an even deeper significance, precisely for the reason that Japan was not a Western nation. We cannot overlook the fact that the period of high imperialism was one in which European and American racism was at its peak. Just as the Hague Convention was getting underway, anti-Asian legislation was being passed in California amidst press reports of an impending 'Yellow Peril.' The experience of humiliation at Western hands with the imposition of the unequal treaties, along with Western racial arrogance towards non-whites, awakened in many Japanese a fierce sense of national pride and determination. Reflecting this, the removal of the unequal treaties, and the receipt thereby of a Western acknowledgement that Japan was civilised enough to run its own affairs, was perhaps the single highest political priority of late 19th century Japan.

Not surprisingly, then, early failures in negotiating an honourable ending to the unequal treaties in the 1880s resulted in an extreme popular political backlash. The state's promulgation of the Meiji Constitution in 1889, while important as a response to domestic pressures for greater political representation, was perhaps more important for its symbolic value in heralding Japan's legal arrival among the community of civilised nations. In 1894, when Japan finally succeeded in gaining a British promise to end the unequal treaties in 1899, the development was greeted with an outburst of pride and patriotic sentiment. Japan's subsequent easy victory in its first imperial war against China in 1895 brought a great financial windfall in reparations as well as Japan's first colonial possession in the form of Taiwan. But most of all it brought a newfound sense of power and prestige. In 1900, Japan was invited by the Great Powers to contribute substantially in putting down the Boxer Rebellion in China, further signalling to Japanese that it was beginning to be included as a Great Power itself. This sentiment was immensely encouraged with the signing of a treaty of alliance with mighty Britain in 1902, and most of all with the difficult but unexpected victory over Russia in 1905.

The period in the wake of these developments, which included the year of the Hague Convention, might then be seen as a peak in Japanese optimism and pride at being included as one of the world's Great Powers. Accepted as a military and economic equal, Japanese also hoped that in the long run at least, Japan would also receive acknowledgement as a political, cultural, and racial equal as well. This optimism coincided with, and strengthened, a shared faith in the idealism that characterised the Hague Convention.

A world of double standards

In retrospect it is not hard to see the precariousness of this optimism. Within seven years of the signing of the Convention, the European powers were engaged in the most brutal and all-encompassing war yet seen in human history. World War One laid bare the degree to which the law of the jungle still prevailed in the modern world, whatever Europe's pretences of representing a higher and more humane civilisation. For many observers around the globe, however, the smouldering inter-European rivalry just underneath the Convention's civilised surface was not the only issue that threatened its legitimacy. In a number of ways, the aims and achievements of the Hague Conference, while noble and admirable, must also be set against the awkward reality that the Convention's historical context was a world of double standards with regard to notions of human civilisation itself.

Fig. 1 (right)
French political cartoon from the late 1890s. A pie represents China and is being divided between UK, Germany, Russia, France and Japan.

Fig. 2 (below)
The ill-fated Korean emissaries. Courtesy of www.yijunpeace-museum.com
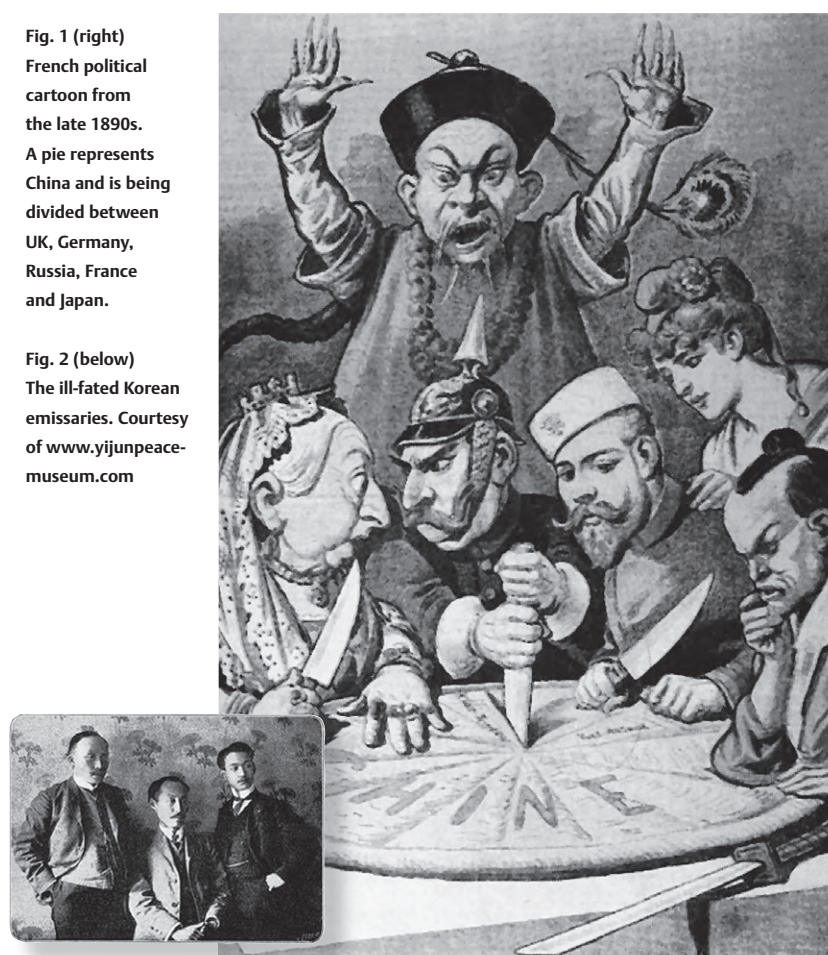
As early as 1902, the famous Japanese poet and art conservator Okakura Tenshin observed:

"Do we not all alike enjoy the blessings of consular courts where murder is an accident on the part of the Western, accident an assassination on the part of the Oriental; where the systematic perjury of white witnesses over-rules the evidence and testimony of all our kind? Do we not all alike rejoice in extorted concessions, and enforced tariffs, in residents who goad us to impotent rage, in financial advisors who advise us to ruin, in medical counsellors who counsel sanitation in measures worse than death? Do we not all alike delight to invest in magnificent harbours where ships may come to drain away our gold; in gigantic railroads which frustrate the water-course, and bring us fever and famine; in splendid churches where they hurl anathemas against the holiest ideals, in expensive hospitals where they only are privileged to recreate, in beautiful parks where we are forbidden to walk? All these bounties we enjoy and what more? – Starvation."

Among Japanese of his day, Okakura was exceptional both in how much he mistrusted the Western imperialists, and how much he identified with fellow Asians under colonialism. In the more optimistic times of the Hague Convention, most Japanese remained patient that Western recognition of Japan's proper status would eventually come – and that in the meantime, Japan still had much to learn from the West. They saw little alternative to participation and cooperation in a global order dominated by the Western powers.

The Convention's noble notions of universal standards of human decency, basic human rights, equality, and dignity meant to apply to friend and foe alike, were in fact drawn up at a time that most people in the world thought in terms of races and nations that were by nature different from one another in their essential character. More ominously still, at the time, most people in the world's most powerful nations also believed that the world was divided into a hierarchy of peoples and races, whereby it was only natural that the world's 'weaker' and 'uncivilised races' should be perpetually dominated by the stronger ones. The period was in fact one in which this sort of racial thinking had recently become stronger, not weaker. Dutch legal statutes in the Netherlands Indies of the day reflected this trend: systematized in this period, they were divided into three according to race, with separate provisions for whites, 'foreign Orientals,' and 'natives.'

Reflecting this worldview, only representatives of nations acknowledged by the Great Powers as independent and sovereign were invited to attend the Convention. Secondly, the Convention conceived of war as a form of conflict between sovereign nations, with the definitions of combatants defined accordingly. Signators were obliged to follow the rules and understandings therein as they applied to conflicts between sovereign states. But what of colonial conquests and suppression? Within the understanding of international intercourse of the day, including that of the Hague Convention, these conflicts appear to have fallen under the heading of domestic disputes – meaning that the Convention's signators would be under little or no legal obligation to enforce its statutes in these cases. In the colonial thinking of the day, meanwhile, there was a common belief that in dealing with resistance from 'inferior,' races, there was little moral obligation to observe the rules of 'civilised warfare' either.

The case of the people of Korea in this period, including their experience of their would-be representatives at the Convention, is an interesting and provocative illustration of the 'double standards' of the day. Officially at least, prior to 1910, Korea was a sovereign nation. But in recognition of Japanese colonial claims upon Korea, Korean representatives were not invited to the Convention. In the years leading up to the Hague Convention, Japan had encroached increasingly upon Korea, and was clearly heading towards annexation. The Great Powers of the day accepted this as normal intercourse between a strong and advanced nation and a weak and backward one. With its victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese hegemony

over Korea was generally recognised by the West as a spoil of war. Japan was viewed by both the British and the American governments as a useful ally in countering the threat of Russian regional domination. While some Western missionaries and other progressives were nurturing Korean hopes regarding notions of liberty, equality, and the right of national self-determination, the official line of their governments was: no interference in Japan's increasingly aggressive dealings with Korea, this being after all an 'internal' matter.

Not surprisingly unsatisfied with this situation, and eager to hold the Great Powers to the ideals of peace and justice they believed the Convention represented, the Korean government devised an elaborate plan to send emissaries to the Convention in secret. After arriving in The Hague, the emissaries managed to make their case to the newspapers, but their attendance was successfully blocked by the Japanese delegation. Embarrassed and angered by the unexpected appearance of the Koreans, the Japanese government soon forced the Korean king to retire. Within three years, Japan was to annex Korea as a colony. In the meantime, and from now on, Koreans who resisted were brutally suppressed in ways that often defied the terms of the Hague and Geneva Conventions. Yet officially, the international community never held Japan to account in this 'domestic dispute.'

The experience of the Koreans at the Hague Convention and afterwards clearly indicates that Japan had taken its place among the world's Great Powers. Yet in light of what might be called the racial double standards of the day, Japan's own position at the table of world powers also remained tenuous and provisional. Illustrative in this regard is the way that Japanese were defined in the legal codes of the Netherlands Indies after 1899 as 'Honorary Whites.' On the one hand, this status reflected how far Japan had come in the eyes of the Western world. But it also reflected Japan's contradictory racial position as a nation caught, in some sense, between the Western Imperial Powers and the rest of the world's 'coloured races.' While the West was compelled to acknowledge Japan as an equal in terms of military, economic, and political power by the time of the Hague Convention, Westerners remained much less inclined to recognise Japan as a genuine racial and cultural equal. In the more optimistic times of the Hague Convention, most Japanese remained patient that Western recognition of Japan's proper status would eventually come. They saw little alternative to participation and cooperation in a global order dominated by the Western powers.

As the 20th century wore on, however, the problem of global double standards continued to find Japan as both party to and victim of discriminatory racial treatment. As Japan further modernised, the Japanese grew not only increasingly convinced of their superiority over their Asian neighbours, but also of their right to equal status with the West. When relations with the West worsened amidst the subsequent turmoil in the global order in the 1920s and 1930s – fostered by the Great Depression, increased imperial rivalry, and rising anti-colonial movements, particularly in China – the fact that Japanese had never really felt fully accepted within the Western order made it easier for them to attempt to withdraw from it.

Japan now turned to its Asian neighbours, claiming to act as Asia's leader and champion in a shared struggle against Western domination. The continued Japanese notion of racial and cultural superiority over its Asian neighbours not only undermined any chance of acceptance in this role, but also made possible atrocities against 'brother Asians,' and the Chinese in particular, that violated any notion of civilised conduct in warfare. The subsequent conditions of treatment of Western POWs also appears to have violated the Hague and Geneva protocols. But it is telling that the adminstration of POW camps, however bad their subsequent conditions, was only formally established by the Japanese state in the weeks following the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941– more than four years after Japan had begun a brutal war of colonial aggression in China that was to claim, according to certain estimates, some nine million Chinese lives. Here was the application of double standards of the most awful variety: As hated as the Western enemy had now become, their lives were apparently still valued more highly than those of the lowly Chinese.

In establishing a context to the Hague Convention, and in understanding Japan's participation and later contravention of its precepts, it is important to reflect that the world of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was in many ways a world of double standards in which Japan occupied a particularly awkward place. It was a world in which pacifism, universal brotherhood and equality could be sincerely promoted in the name of the advancement of civilisation. At the same time, it was also a highly divided, hierarchical world dominated by the European powers, in which the possession of a superior 'civilisation' was also used as an excuse to dominate 'inferior races'.

In their colonisation of Asia societies such as Korea, the Japanese proved adept at manipulating these same double standards to their benefit. 'Inferior,' 'obstinate' Koreans and Chinese who resisted Japanese rule were treated with ruthless brutality that reached a crescendo in the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). At the same time, as a late arrival to the imperial scene of a 'different race,' the Japanese often felt themselves the victim of double standards at Western hands. For all the successes of their modernisation, nation- and empire-building, the Japanese never felt accepted as full members of the imperial club. The result was a fundamental lack of mutual trust and an underlying resentment that expanded greatly in the period between the two World Wars. In part this reflected the decline in the West's imperial power and stature, prompted by such events as the Global Depression, the rise of communism, and the spread of anti-colonial movements. It was also encouraged and inflamed through the military propaganda and crisis atmosphere that penetrated all walks of Japanese life in the 1930s.

By the time of the Second World War, Japan's longstanding sense of insult and isolation from the Western powers made it easier for Japanese to imagine that they represented a civilisation whose job it was to save Asia from Western imperialism. Blinded to their own role as oppressive imperialists, many Japanese even viewed Chinese anti-colonial resistance as a Western-sponsored anti-Japanese scheme. More so than at the time of the signing Hague Convention in 1907, the Japanese of the World War Two era felt themselves at a far remove from the West racially, culturally, and morally. This is certainly no excuse for the ferocity of Japan's wartime behaviour, but it does perhaps go some way to illuminating at least part of the story behind it.

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Developing fears Environmental conflicts and pollution accidents in China

With the growth of environmental awareness, it is becoming common to consider harmony between human beings and the environment as a major goal of human progress. Rapid economic development can without doubt enhance people's quality of life. The challenge, though, is to develop in a manner sympathetic to existing environments. Two cases of environmental accidents in China highlight the mismatch between these two needs and the increasing reality of environmental conflicts.

Yu Hou and Tian-zhu Zhang

IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, environmental conflicts flare up over issues linked to social inequalities. In rural areas, these clashes are triggered more by the seizure of natural resources (land, water or forests) or the preservation of indigenous peoples and protection for poverty-stricken families living in these areas. Guha and Martinez-Alier (1997) call these disputes 'ecological and distributive'. In urban areas, these conflicts are prompted by the takeover of land and the benefits of government investments, or mitigating and offsetting the impacts of development projects. In this paper, environmental conflicts refer specifically to mass protests over environmental pollution.

In recent years, China has been keen to demonstrate its engagement in environmental protection work in various fields together with the development of civic environmental awareness, which has come about as a direct result of the pollution and environmental damage caused by a rapid increase in disputes in recent years. Statistics gathered by China's State Environment Protection Administration (SEPA) in 2006 suggest that from the mid-1980s to 1997 environmental disputes remained steady at about 100,000 a year. In 1998 the figure soared to more than 180,000 incidents, in 1999 to 250,000, and to more than 300,000 in 2000. Since 1997, environmental disputes have risen annually by 25 per cent with an upward linear trend. SEPA statistics also show that mass protests due to environmental problems have increased annually by an average of 29 per cent. Using two typical cases which occurred in China in 2006, this paper will discuss the increasing trend in environmental pollution accidents in the country which have not only led not only to a growing number of environmental disputes but also to a growing number of health risks for the population. It is important to examine both the reasons and characteristics of these disputes so as to resolve them successfully, and where possible reduce their occurrence.

Incident 1: liquid chlorine leak
On March 22, 2006, a short circuit occurred at an electro-chemical company located in the Ningbo Daxie Development Zone, (in the Yangtse River Delta area). This led to liquid chlorine leaking out of a pipeline for about 10 minutes. The company failed to report the accident to any managerial department and also to inform the nearby residents. The decision was taken to deal with the incident as a simple production accident and production was resumed that same afternoon.

The accident caused pollution damage to food crops in the area and some villagers nearby reported dizziness, tightness in the chest, an irritating cough, skin irritations and other symptoms. In fact, by March 28, 678 people had visited the hospital, 51 were kept in under observation, and two people were diagnosed with mild chlorine poisoning. The lack of information and communication about the incident caused panic within the community and more than 100 people who lived in the village nearby the accident site besieged the electrochemical company.

The Environmental Protection Bureau of Ningbo City received a report of the accident the day after it occurred, on March 23. Yet it took until March 26 for the Ningbo Daxie Development Zone to officially order the company to cease production. On the morning of March 28, Ningbo City held a special meeting which established an inspection group, headed by the deputy mayor, in order to deal with the accident. On that same morning, SEPA was passed information about the incident from the Office of the State Council of Information. Only then were field surveys and an official investigation into what had happened set up.

According to expert assessments, approximately 100-120 kilogrammes of liquid chlorine had leaked. Traces of chlorine gas were detected up to 1.2km away. A large area planted with broad bean crops was damaged. The investigation later revealed that the scope of the chlorine affected area had been approximately 1,000 metres long and 500 metres wide.

Incident 2: contaminated drinking water
On April 5 2006, more than 40 people blocked the main thoroughfares through the village of Nanshan in Taizhou City, (situated in Zhejiang province, eastern China), in protests against the rupture of a sewage pipeline which had spilled waste water into surface water and nearby wells. Environmental protection departments confirmed that water in a number of the village's wells had become acidic, and levels of organic (soil) pollution had been detected. Two companies were suspected of the pollution and ordered to stop production.

Four days after the initial incident, on April 9, 29 villagers went to hospital to ask for a medical examination. Nine of them produced urine samples which tested 'positive' and could suggest exposure to pollution. Once again protesters blocked the roads through the village. On April 10, some villagers attacked one of the suspect factories and assaulted the owner. On the afternoon of April 14, more than 60 villagers approached local government offices demanding that the government close down the suspect businesses, provide monitoring data about the incident and pay the medical expenses of all those affected by the polluted water. By April 15, a total of 190 villagers had been examined by the hospital, and 59 people (including the 9 referred to above) had tested positive for signs of contamination. However, it was later to be stated by the team investigating the incident that none of these test results had a link with the rupture of the sewage pipeline.

In fact, field surveys carried out by a joint investigation team, comprising both provincial and municipal public health and environmental protection departments showed: (1) there was no obvious correlation between the results of the urine tests and the contaminants; (2) the results of urine tests carried out on the population in Nanshan Village produced results similar to those of tests carried out on villages which were not affected by the pollution; (3) there was evidence that a number of businesses adjacent to Nanshan village had been, to varying degrees (the report was vague in this respect), responsible for polluting the environment. Investigations also discovered that only one out of 13 companies in the affected areas had an official licence to carry out production for five years; the remaining 12 companies had all been producing illegally for two years – they had been manufacturing, albeit on a small-scale, obsolete equipment without the approval of environmental protection departments. The waste being generated from this illegal production and processing was being left untreated.

On April 25, the local government entered into a dialogue with the villagers. Compensation for health damage was offered (although the amount of compensation was not specified) and the villagers' access to relevant environmental monitoring data was agreed. In order to facilitate the clean-up operation after the incident - the complete removal of sources of pollution and dealing with the contaminated water and soil - SEPA demanded that all those companies which did not comply with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures halt production immediately; that environmental monitoring in the area would continue and be strengthened; that there should be a timely reporting of monitoring data; and that a widespread investigation of all businesses in the area would take place to weed out any hidden environmental dangers and inconsistencies in the environmental protection procedures.

'Since 1997, environmental disputes have risen annually by 25 per cent with an upward linear trend'

Findings
While the two events documented here are distinct from each other, the reasons behind the incidents, the exposed population, the information publishing process and the effects of both pollution accidents have much in common.

Both incidents were caused by a facility failure. One was caused by an electrical short-circuit, the other by a pipeline rupture. Evidence and experience suggest that facility failures usually occur as a result of one of the following: improper operation, neglect of maintenance, no prior maintenance, no replacement of ageing equipment or a design fault in the equipment itself. Yet in the reports which followed the investigation of these two cases, there was no mention made of any of these things.

The exposed groups in the two incidents described here were similar. Both incidents occurred in industrial areas which were in close proximity to rural areas. The individuals affected in both accidents were villagers. Until conflict between the villagers and the polluters occurred there had been no information made public regarding either of the accidents. The incident at the Ningbo Daxie Development Zone occurred on March 22 2006, but it took six days for SEPA to be informed of the accident. The Nanshen incident took place on April 5, 2006, yet it was more than half a month before the Environmental Protection Administration of Zhejiang Province reported the accident to SEPA. We would suggest that the site survey data was available almost immediately.

In the first incident, exposed individuals reported dizziness, chest tightness, irritating cough, skin irritations and other acute symptoms. Only two were officially diagnosed with mild chlorine poisoning following chest x-rays. In the second incident, 59 people produced a urine test positive for contaminants, yet no obvious correlation between the results of the urine test and the contaminants could be found according to the joint investigation by provincial and municipal public health and environmental protection departments.

Crop damage and fears of adverse health effects aroused disputes between villagers and the polluting companies in both cases. Pollution prevention practices were implemented by local government to appease angry villagers.

Comments
That there are so many factors common to both incidents is worth further examination. An important question is whether there were corresponding circumstances associated with each incident that could explain the similarity. An in-depth causal analysis of the accidents and disputes is required.

Emergency situations and how to handle them should be addressed in the operating instructions for facilities and, in particular, be dealt with in training. Clearly, the strengthening of operators' awareness of production safety, compliance with operating regulations, and the timely maintenance and decommissioning of old equipment will help to reduce the risks of pollution accidents.

Oversights in terms of environmental management and a lack of emergency plan probably contributed to unnecessary damage in both cases mentioned here. The fact that the majority of firms were active without the necessary environmental permissions shows inherent weaknesses in environmental regulation and corporate social responsibility. As shown above, there is no legislation instructing companies to pass on information about incidents, in a timely manner, to the authorities. Accident information depends largely on reports put together some time after events have taken place, and often many details of incidents simply go unreported. Significant communication problems occur and, as shown, the consequences can be serious conflicts. Encouraging firms to act in an honest and ethical way is the only way forward.

In both cases, damage to crops and personal health aroused disputes between villagers and the polluting companies. According to China's 'Environmental Protection Law', a citizen has the right to challenge a firm's actions regarding violations of environmental laws and, where damage has occurred, ask for compensation. Yet few environmental conflicts have been resolved in this way in the recent decades, and our two case studies were no exception. The complexity of the law, the costs of legal action and the difficulty in identifying causal relations between pollution and damage are the major obstacles.

Fear appears to be a major factor which leads to many disputes. This fear is not limited to the immediate, tangible, environmental impact of an incident but includes uncertainties as to what the long-term impact of a pollution accident will be on a community. Debates frequently centre around the nature of health effects experienced, often couched in terms of 'true' effects - objectively measurable - versus 'perceived' effects. It is argued that levels of compensation for possible health effects is difficult to determine because of the absence of sound epidemiological evidence against which to judge individual or collective cases.

Conclusions and recommendations
A side effect of China's rapid development has been an increase in environmental problems, including the frequent occurrence of pollution accidents and environmental disputes. It wasn't until after the 9th 5-year plan that Chinese officials began to develop an awareness of environmental issues, and that these issues started to influence domestic politics and economy. There appears to be a correlation between the growth of environmental awareness and an increase in disputes following environmental pollution accidents.

Our study shows that an environmental conflict often occurs following a pollution accident where urban and rural China converge – areas where development zones or industrial parks are usually located. It is very important for regional development that ways are found of resolving these kinds of disputes. The key actors in these disputes tend to be contractors, local and national governments, and local residents (villagers). The major causes of environmental disputes are fears over health damage and fear of the unknown. Gaining the co-operation and trust of local residents is critical to dispute resolution.

Under current practices, efforts to resolve disputes with the public are left to the somewhat arbitrary discretion of regulatory officials or the firms involved. According to

China's 'Environmental Protection Law', a citizen has the right to challenge, publicly, or even sue a firm whose development plans or actions are in violation of environmental laws. Yet few environmental conflicts have been resolved in this way. While suing a company is not the only way to resolve environmental disputes, we suggest there is urgent need for a legal mechanism to be put in place which maintains the people's rights and interests.

Finally, we would like to emphasise that the fact that so many companies are operating without the necessary environmental licences or permits shows major weaknesses in the environmental management of China. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an important tool in environmental management used for deliberating various claims concerning proposed activities. The EIA requires developers to prepare a report regarding any development plans, demonstrating to decision makers the environmental soundness of the project. In fact, the EIA has evolved into a vital instrument for mitigating the adverse impacts of any development plans. These EIAs are used to help define the types of activities that can or cannot be conducted in certain types of geographic areas; to define the conditions under which permitted activities may take place; or to define (based upon scientific findings) acceptable thresholds for certain activities or, for example, the acceptable level of certain substances in given environments. This is positive, but stricter observance and enforcement of EIA is needed in China.

The administrative and enforcement power of environmental laws and regulations need to be strengthened. At the very minimum, regulatory officials should develop guidelines for firms who recognise their corporate social responsibility and see the value and efficacy of addressing issues based on the lessons learned thus far.

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Kazi Nazrul Islam Bengal's prophet of tolerance

In November 1922, British colonial authorities issued an arrest warrant for the poet Nazrul Islam, a rising star of Bengali literature, charging him with sedition for his poem *'The Coming of Anandamoyee'*.[1] Published two months earlier in the newspaper *Dhumketu*, of which Nazrul himself was editor, the poem vividly depicts the subjugation of India's population. He called the British colony a 'butchery' where 'God's children' were whipped and hanged. The authorities reacted with vindictiveness and in January 1923 he was sentenced to one year of rigorous imprisonment.

Peter Custers

TODAY, WHEN THE RIGHT to free speech has obtained a super-status in the Western world, Nazrul's story appears rather perplexing. Yet, the story of the court case over Nazrul's poem, and of his year in detention, contains further surprises. Not least, that the poet chose to conduct his own defence, in a statement that has come to be known as the 'Deposition of a Political Prisoner'.[2] Rather than repent for writing inflammatory poems and essays, Nazrul presented himself as the representative of 'Truth', holding the 'sceptre of Justice'. The colonial government used the charge of sedition to try and silence Nazrul, to prevent him from articulating that the Indian people were 'enslaved'. Nazrul, apparently without embarrassment or shyness, proclaimed that his was a message from God. He could not be blamed. God was speaking through the voice of the poet.

Nazrul Islam hailed from a Muslim family. Growing up, his father had been head of a village mosque. Yet, in his court statement, the poet freely used imagery derived from Hinduism in order to highlight his own views. In the poem targeted by the colonial state he specifically called on the Goddess Durga, to play her role in countering tyranny. In his widely published and acclaimed deposition, Nazrul enthusiastically raised the spectre of Shiva, Hinduism's ascetic God of destruction. Clearly from the very beginning of his career, Nazrul was willing to explain and illustrate his views using the religious imagery familiar to the people of Bengal. He consciously and unreservedly drew on the religious traditions of both Muslim and Hindu sections of the population to make himself heard.

The arrest and imprisonment of Nazrul in 1922-1923 reveal some of the most characteristic features of his personality. The speech he made in court illustrates how he uncompromisingly defended a poet's right to free speech. It also shows that his opposition to the injustices perpetrated by the coloniser was religiously inspired. Nazrul's relationship with religion was, to say the least, unconventional. For whereas he had grown up in a Muslim environment and had obtained his initial formal education in a Muslim primary school, he did not by any means restrict himself to using imagery of the religion of his youth in his journalistic and literary creations. Instead, he freely transgressed the borders between Bengal's two main faiths, Hinduism and Islam. In this essay, I will explore the legacy of Bangladesh's national poet and, in particular, his significance for the cause of religious tolerance today.

National awakening

Nazrul lacked any formal training as a journalist or artist, and appears to have built his artistic experience through his participation in folk musical troupes in his youth. After two years of high school, Nazrul joined the army of the British colonial government. Stationed in Karachi during World War One, as part of the Bengal regiment, he rose to the position of a sergeant, a *havildar*. It is striking that his career as a rebellious writer-poet began as a serving British soldier. From Karachi, Nazrul started submitting poems and short stories to literary and other magazines, published in Bengal. In doing so, he attracted the attention of the editor Muzaffar Ahmed, a key architect of the Leftist movement in Bengal. Ahmed and others published Nazrul's essays because of their moving patriotic and internationalist content.

Rabindranath Tagore who hailed Nazrul Islam with the words: 'Come, O Comet, build a bridge of fire across darkness'.

When Nazrul Islam returned to Kolkota in 1920, he was largely unknown in the city's literary circles. This changed dramatically within the space of a year. Indeed, Nazrul's rise to literary prominence was extraordinarily rapid in comparison with other poets who have gathered fame in the history of Bengal. Undoubtedly his talent explains a large part of his success. In 1920, Nazrul became a performer of Tagore songs, and surprised many people with his capacity to memorise the master's lyrics. He also became a journalist, writing essays on contemporary world events affecting India's fate. Most significantly, he wrote poetry that stood out for its aesthetic, and unmistakably high, quality. So much so, that Tagore was moved to welcome him as a new star in Bengali literature. In the benediction written for the bi-weekly publication launched by Nazrul Islam, Tagore hailed Nazrul with the words: 'Come, O Comet, build a bridge of fire across darkness'.[3]

Nazrul Islam's poetry and other writings reflected the spirit of his time; the spirit of nationalist awakening in colonial India. A time of mass resistance to British colonial dominance. Nazrul Islam expressed this spirit of awakening in his writings in a way that earned him the admiration of a wide readership in Bengal. One particular example illustrates his spirit of anti-colonial nationalism. It is an essay about the events in Jalianwalabad. Jalianwalabad, in Amritsar, is the place where a British officer, General Dyer, ordered indiscriminate firing on an unarmed crowd of civilians in an enclosed space. News of the event enraged many Indians, and it also infuriated Nazrul Islam who expressed indignation at the cruelty perpetrated in the name of British rule. He went further though, and assessed the psychological significance of the massacre for the awakening of the Indian's people sense of self-respect. In his essay entitled *'Memorial to Dyer'*, Nazrul argued that any monument to the Jalianwalabad massacre should not just be dedicated to the people who lost their lives, but such a statue should also recall the role of Dyer. For the murders which Dyer ordered, so Nazrul explained, served to generate consciousness among the Indian people about their own dejected state.[4]

Nazrul Islam was not just aware of the fact that Indian men and women needed to be pushed into standing up for their rights. He was also farsighted and gained credit, in particular amongst Bengalis, for advocating that the struggle against the British should result not just in concessions, but in revolutionary change.

The 'Muslim Renaissance'

A brief comment needs to be made on the poet's relation to the Muslim cultural *renaissance*. In the period subsequent to India's first war of independence – the soldiers' mutiny and guerrilla war of 1857 – British rulers consistently stigmatised members of the colony's Muslim community. Consequently, Muslims had great difficulties in accessing education and jobs in the colonial administration, exacerbating their sense of inferiority and frustration. Well before Nazrul Islam appeared on the literary scene in Bengal, a movement of 'Muslim renaissance' was born, drawing on the intellectual history of the Muslim world and on the European renaissance, in order to strengthen confidence among the Muslim minority population of British colonial India. Nazrul became a fervent proponent of this struggle for a Muslim 'rebirth'.

Nazrul repeatedly addressed Bengal's Muslim literary society, the *Bangiya Muslim Sahitya Samaj*.[5] He wrote numerous poems on themes derived from the history of the Muslim world, or in styles derived from Persian and other Middle Eastern traditions, as exemplified by his *ghazzals*. Yet the poet's position was far from orthodox. Thus, Nazrul warned against any blind reliance on scriptures, including the Quran, and expressed a scepticism towards all priesthood, including Islam's priesthood of *mullahs*. In his poem *'Manush'* ('Human Being'), he chastises *mullahs* and priests who put loyalty to holy scriptures above human solidarity. Nazrul revolts against the idea that the Quran, or any other holy scriptures, can be put above the lives and rights of humans. He openly condemns those ready to kill humans in the name of any scriptures, recalling the fact that all holy scriptures were brought into existence by human beings themselves.[6]

At a time when sections of the Western media and public opinion-builders are depicting Islam as a religion which is inherently intolerant, it is particularly important to stress that Nazrul Islam propagated the very opposite. Against the background of rising intolerance between religious communities in colonial India Nazrul insisted that the prophet Muhammad was a messenger of tolerance.

Firm opposition to communalism

Nazrul Islam took a determined and principled stance against religious-communal hatred. He truly militated against the growing danger of communal conflagration, and he used all his skills as a journalist and poet to convince both Hindus and Muslims of the folly of religious-based hatred, passionately arguing that he 'entirely believed in the possibility of Hindu-Muslim unity'.[7]
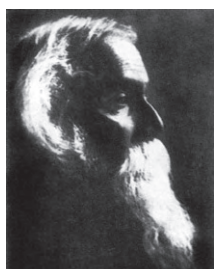
তোমার সাম্রাজ্যে, যুবরাজ
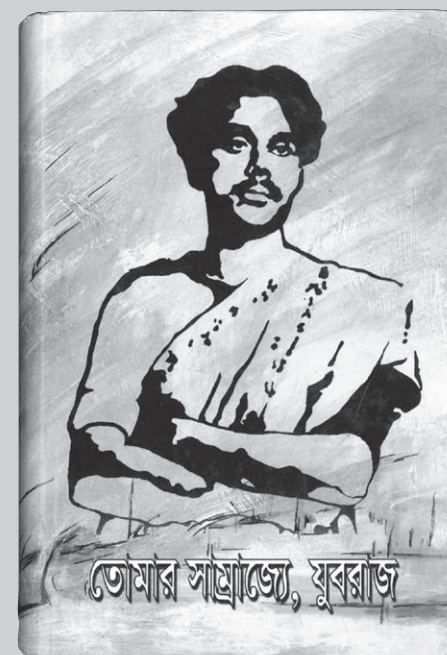
By the mid-1920s, the political climate in Bengal had changed dramatically. Outbursts of communal violence were reported not only in Kolkota and other urban centres, but also in remote rural areas. Moreover, it is recorded that religious leaders actively instigated communal hatred amongst members of their own community, which explains Nazrul Islam's strong criticism of the role of priests and other religious functionaries in his poems.

Nazrul's writings reveal how deeply aware he was of the dangers posed by the heightened tensions, and also show the ways in which he tried to fight the trend. In his essay *'Mandir O Masjid',* ('Temples and Mosques'), published in the magazine *Gana Bani,* of which Nazrul was chief editor, he directly addressed the theme of communal frenzy:

"…Once again the murky Hindu-Muslim issue has raised its head. First, there are brawls, then they hit each others' head. Yet once those who have got drunk over the 'prestige' of Allah or *Ma Kali* get bashed, then, as I can see, they do not cry for Allah or *Ma Kali*. No, Hindus and Muslims together cry and lament in the same language: *'Baba Go, Ma Go'* – just as children who have been abandoned by their mother, cry for their mother in one choir. Hearing the weeping of the wounded, the mosque does not waver, nor does the Goddess-in-stone of the temple respond".[8]

Nazrul described the outcome of the riots in earthy terms, using the tragedy of incidents which had already occurred as a mirror, in an effort to pre-empt further violence. He used key opportunities to speak or present his views, to warn political leaders of India's nationalist movement against the dangers if they failed to stem the tide of violence. One of these occasions was the annual session of the Indian National Congress, the common platform of anti-colonial struggle, held in Krishnanagar. Here, Nazrul sang one of the most famous songs he ever composed, *'Kandari Hushiar'* ('Helmsman Beware'). He sounded the alarm with the words: 'In this dark night, O sentries of Motherland be alert'; 'this helpless nation is drowning – it does not know how to swim'; 'helmsman, tell those who are drowning that they are no Hindus or Muslims, for they are drowning as human beings'.[9]

These words illustrate Nazruls' deeply felt recognition of the fact that the Indian nation would 'drown', if the Congress – as the political force leading the struggle for independence from colonialism – failed to stem the tide of communalism. When Nazrul wrote these sentences in 1926, the incidents of communal violence were merely local sparks. But these sparks would turn into a communal conflagration. At the time of Partition in 1947 millions of Muslims and Hindus perished. As Nazrul Islam was writing *'Helmsman Beware'*, those days were still more than 20 years away, yet he seems to have sensed the immensity of the dangers ahead. His poem is a passionate appeal to the Congress, to work more determinedly for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, so urgently required in the struggle against British dominance.

Tolerance and equality
This poet-writer fervently supported ideals of social and economic justice, ideas just starting to be propagated by socialist activists in Bengal at the time when he rose to prominence. Nazrul consciously combined his advocacy of religious equality, with an advocacy of economic equality. In fact, it is evident from Nazrul's writings and practice, that he strongly believed in the need to oppose the escalation in communal violence by simultaneously advocating two imperatives – communal harmony and united class struggle – waged jointly by labouring Hindus and Muslims. In this respect there is a significant difference between Nazrul Islam's position and that of Mahatma Gandhi, the Congress leader with whom he shared a deep commitment to Hindu-Muslim amity. Contrary to Gandhi, Nazrul did not hesitate to champion class struggle, fighting landlordism or factory exploitation. In fact, the poet is known to have pioneered efforts towards the politicisation of Bengal's peasants and workers, in particular from 1925-1926 onwards.

In his essay *'Dharmaghat'* ('Strike'), Nazrul states his commitment to the toiling peasants in words which continue to be voiced by social activists in Bangladesh today:

"The peasants who during the whole year undertake back-breaking physical labour, while removing the sweat from their forehead with their arms, cannot even eat two full meals of boiled rice. Accept for a rag reaching down to his knees, he does not even avail of one proper dress (piran) through all his life… But the lord who takes his paddy rice spends twelve months under a royal (nawabi) roof, enjoying one after the other festival".[10]

Alongside his support for peasants' struggles, Nazrul enthusiastically supported the struggles of waged labourers for emancipation. A characteristic poem is 'Kuli-Mazur'. (Coolies and Labourers), in which he combines imagery that is familiar from other poetry on class exploitation with imagery derived from the subcontinent's religio-cultural traditions. He calls the labourers who build steam engines *'dadhichis',* a reference to the sage who sacrificed his own bone to allow the God Indra kill a demon. Later on in the same poem, he re-employs the same metaphor, describing the labourers who, with their hammers, crowbars and shovels, crush mountains to make way for roads; yet their 'bones now lie scattered on both sides of the road'.[11] Nazrul expresses his hope and expectation that workers will stage a rising which will make God smile in heaven, and leave 'Satan in fear'.[12] Once again Nazrul does not hesitate to utilise religious imagery as a tool to strengthen workers' confidence and consciousness.

Nazrul's writings effectively reveal his combined commitment to equality between members of different religions, with an equally strong commitment to the struggles of Bengal's labouring population for social and economic equality.

Mysticism and Syncreticsm
It is time to return to the thematic posed in the introduction to this essay. When describing the episode of Nazrul's arrest and imprisonment, I referred to the poet's religious inspiration. Here I will try to establish what his own religious position was, beyond his artistic and political interests. An analysis of the extraordinary speech which Nazrul gave to the Muslim Literary Association *(Muslim Sahitya Shamiti)* in April of 1941 is helpful in this context. The speech, entitled *'If the Flute Does not Play Any More',* was to be the very last of Nazrul's life.[13]
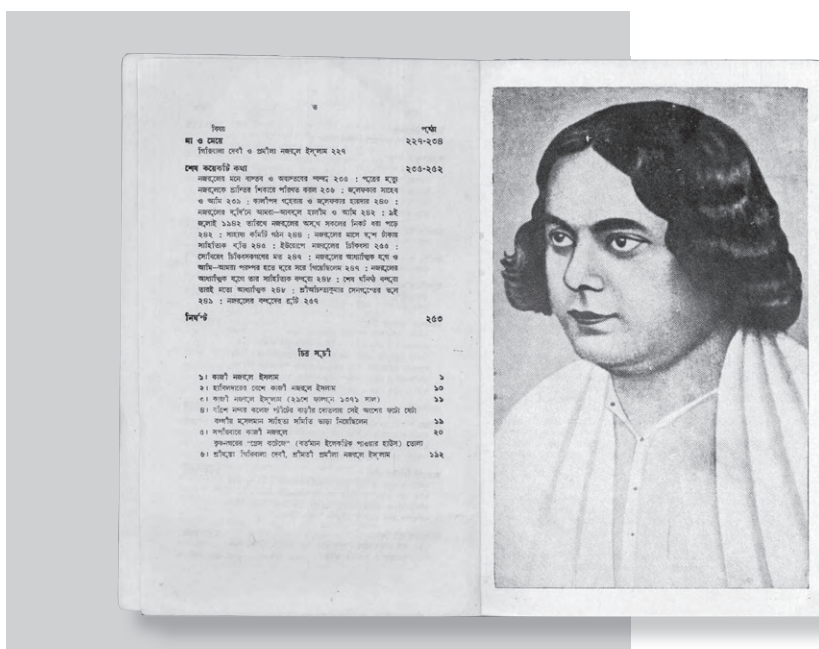
In July 1942, while participating in a children's programme on All India Radio, Nazrul suddenly lost the power of speech. His mental capacities reportedly were affected too. Although several attempts were made to arrange for medical treatment, in the hope of him making a full recovery, Nazrul Islam spent the rest of his life, until his death on August 29, 1976, incapacitated. The cause of his collapse, although probably attributable to utter despair over the unstoppable wave of communal politics, officially remains a 'medical mystery'.

Nazrul's speech is a testament to his personal beliefs. In the opening paragraph he elaborately expresses his *mystical* search, his desire for union with a loving absolute reality, or Supreme Being. God is depicted as both beautiful and loving. Nazrul's speech also expresses the poet's *syncretic* orientation. To convey his message, he singles out two deities from the Hindu pantheon, and uses imagery relating to their roles, in order to highlight his own quest and admonish his Muslim audience. Strikingly, they are a God and a Goddess - Krishna, the earthly-loving God of the current of *vaishnavism*, and the Goddess *Anandamoyee* or Durga, whom we encountered in the introduction to this article as an exemplary fighter of demons. Krishna and *Anandamoyee* are juxtaposed repeatedly throughout his testamentary speech.

On the one hand, Nazrul counter-poses the rhythmic dance to the tune of Krishna's flute, to the reality of communal violence around him.[14] On the other hand, *Anandamoyee* is projected as a source for his own search. Thus, Nazrul speaks of her 'Power of Love', of her power to take him to a state of meditation, suggesting his own dissolution into her Being: 'If the power of *Anandamoyee* in me does not dissolve me by carrying me into the supreme Void, then I will once again sing the songs of love, of equality…'[15] While leaving open the possibility of a return to worldly matters, Nazrul impresses on his audience his refusal to service Islam, or any other established

religion. '…If I come, I will come only as a servant of the one and only indivisible God, who is above Hindus and Muslims, above all nations and creeds'.[16] In line with a long tradition – to which the 14th century saintly composer of hymns, Kabeer, as well as the 19th century Bengali composer/singer Lalan Shah belong – Nazrul Islam sought to overcome the historic divide between the subcontinent's religions, by taking a *supra-denominational* position.[17]

The legacy of religious tolerance
Nazrul Islam's views, reflected in his literary and political writings drafted during his creative period (1919-1942), were well ahead of his times. This counts, in particular, for his vision regarding religious tolerance. It is important to note that Nazrul's championing of religious tolerance in the 1940s did not initially receive a favourable response from politicians in Bengal. The decision to Partition the region in 1947, on the basis of the Hindu-Muslim divide, followed a tragic escalation in tensions instigated by communal politicians. However, it remains significant that the majority of the region's politicians, including those who were to steer East Bengal's subsequent struggles for self-determination, eventually embraced the politics of secularism, defending a strict separation between state and religion, so as to counter communalism. In the 1950s and 60s, Nazrul's poetry and songs enjoyed a lasting popularity, in West Bengal, India, and in East Bengal (East Pakistan).

Furthermore, Nazrul Islam's way of propagating religious tolerance – through the combined emphasis on respect for human equality in the religious and economic spheres - in the period when East Bengal formed a part of Pakistan, was shared by broad sections of the province's politicians and activists. As previously stated, Nazrul Islam was simultaneously vocal against the spread of violence between Bengal's two religious communities, and advocating the need for both Muslim and Hindu peasants and workers to stand up and defend their rights against landlords and industrial bosses. In this respect, Nazrul has been vindicated, for in the course of the 1950s and 60s, and as part and parcel of the struggle for a secular nationalism, powerful movements representing the interests of the rural and urban poor were built in East Bengal. After independence in 1972, the newly-installed government of Mujibur Rahman made Nazrul Bangladesh's first national poet. And while it is true that more recently, severe pressures towards abrogation of the principles of tolerance and secularism have built up in Bangladesh, the principles of religious tolerance and of social equality have been vibrant in the country's society since independence. There are compelling reasons to take Nazrul Islam's example seriously in contemporary international debates on religious tolerance.

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Notes
1. For the full text of the poem see Ahmed, Muzaffar. 1981. *Kazi Nazrul Islam. Smritikotha* Kolkata: National Book Agency. For a short excerpt in English: Kamal, Sajed. (transl.) 1999. *Kazi Nazrul Islam. Selected Works.* Dhaka: Nazrul Institute.
2. For further details on the court case and on Nazrul Islam's conviction: Ahmed, Muzaffar. (1981). For an English translation of the 'Deposition of a Political Prisoner', see Sajed Kamal (1999)
3. For an English translation of Tagore's tribute to Nazrul, see Sajed Kamal (1999)
4. From Hossain, Monowara. 'Nazruler Rajnoitik, Artha-Shamajik O Sanskritik Prabandha'in: Rafiqul Islam, Shampadana Parishad. 2000. *Nazrul Janmashotoborsho Smarakgrantha.* Dhaka: Nazrul Institute.
5. For an overview of Nazrul's participation in Muslim organisations' events, see the life-chronology appendix in Sajed Kamal (1999)
6. For English translations of *Manush:* see Sajed Kamal (1999) and Rafiqul Islam (1990).
7. Mustafa Nurul Islam, 1999. *Samakale Nazrul Islam.* 1920-1950. Dhaka: Nazrul Institute
8. See Hossain, Monowara (2000); also Mahmood, Majid. 1997. *Nazrul. Tritiya Biswer Mukhopatra.* Dhaka: Nazrul Institute
9. For an English version of the poem see Sajed Kamal (1999)
10. Monowara Hossain (2000)
11-16. ibid
17. on Kabeer's supra-denominational mystical position, see e.g. Hedayetullah,Muhammed. 1977. *Kabir: The Apostle of Hindu-Muslim Unity.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers; on the legacy of Lalan Shah, see Chakraborti, Sudhir. 1998. *Bratya. Lokayat. Lalan.* Kolkata: Pustak Bipani.

Eloquent Parrots Mixed language and the examples of hinglish and rekhti

Fig. 1
The 2008 Bollywood film 'Money Hai To Honey
Hai' reflects the current trend for Hinglish.

'Hinglish' has become the lingua franca among urban Indians today. Listen closely and you'll hear Hindi and Urdu peppered with English words and phrases. Likewise, English sentences are spiked with Hindi or Urdu. In fact, many words that used to be well known in Hindi and Urdu have now disappeared from the vocabulary of native speakers, who have switched over to English equivalents. Ruth Vanita uncovers some of the roots of this mixed language phenomenon in the hybridised poetry of rekhti.

Ruth Vanita

MOST URBAN INDIANS TODAY speak variants of a new dialect, sometimes termed 'Hinglish'. English spoken in non-formal settings tends to be spiked with many Hindi/ Urdu words, phrases and sentences, while almost all Hindi/Urdu speakers incorporate numerous English words in their speech, not just words like 'email', or 'TV' but also words like 'sorry', 'tension' and 'minute'. Many words that used to be well known in Hindi/Urdu are now almost incomprehensible to native speakers, who have switched over to English equivalents, for example, 'ball' now replaces *'gend'* both in daily speech and in cricket commentary on radio and television. Most TV dramas, comedies and even newscasts that are purportedly in Hindi are now actually in the new mixed language. When English words are used in Hindi, shades of meaning sometimes change, so that resulting formulations are

comprehensible only to those familiar with Indian English. I was once searching for a friend's apartment and had forgotten the number. When I told the apartment building doorman her name he did not recognise it. I then described her as short and stocky with short hair, at which point he remarked, with dawning recognition, *'Ab to mujhey doubt honey laga hai'.* This literally translates as, 'I'm now beginning to have doubts', by which he meant that he suspected he knew her, and indeed he did direct me to the correct apartment.

Today, most Hindi television dramas and news reports are cast in this mixed language, which perhaps first emerged on a national scale in Bombay cinema, especially in songs. In the films of the 1950s and early 1960s, serious romantic songs tend to be couched in the high language of Persianised Urdu or, less often, in the high language of Sanskritised Hindi, while comical songs may incorporate English words. In this early example, from Shehnai (1947), a man woos a woman in a mix of Hindi and English, offering to take her to Paris and London, and regale her with whisky, brandy, and eggs, all of which she rejects in chaste Hindi. He then continues, *'Aana meri jaan meri jaan Sunday ke Sunday... Aao haathon mein haath le walk karein hum/Aao sweet sweet talk karein hum'* (Come every Sunday, my dear, Come, let's walk hand in hand, Let's engage in sweet talk).

By the 1970s, serious songs could include English refrains, such as, *'My heart is beating, keeps on repeating, I'm waiting for you'* (Julie, 1975), and in the 1990s, songs commonly jumble English with a number of languages, especially Punjabi, Haryanvi, and Bihari Hindi.

The language of women?
One ancestor of the Hindi/Urdu film song is, I have argued elsewhere, rekhti poetry, on which I have now been working for some years. Rekhti is a genre of Urdu poetry, purportedly composed in 'women's language', which arose in the 18th century and came into prominence in the early 19th century. Early literary Urdu, called rekhta, has a preponderance of Persian and Arabic vocabulary, but the language of rekhti, which approximates more to the non-literary language of everyday speech, incorporates words and idioms from north Indian languages and dialects.

In rekhti poetry, this supposedly 'women's language' is indistinguishable from colloquial, less Persianised Urdu. Urdu literary critics identify it as 'women's idiom', by which they mean proverbs and sayings used by women, as well as exclamatory forms of address, such as *'Re', 'Haan ri',* and *'Hai Allah'.*

However, many rekhti poems do not contain either proverbs or exclamatory addresses. They are merely written in less Persianised Urdu than is mainstream rekhta poetry. Conversely, some rekhta poems, such as those of Jur'at, do contain these exclamations.

What then was 'women's language?' Was it a code spoken by women that men did not understand? Clearly not. Most rekhti was written by men and not just by a few men privy to a secret language of women but at the height of its popularity, by numerous poets. It was recited at mushairas (poets' gatherings), and understood by both women and men.[1] One analogy could be classical Sanskrit drama, where elite male characters speak Sanskrit while women characters and male servants speak Prakrit, but the male characters do understand Prakrit while the women characters understand Sanskrit.

Educated people in North India were conversant with Persian, the language of royal courts and high culture, but most educated people were multilingual and used more than one script to write Urdu and Persian just as people did with Sanskrit; this tradition continued throughout the 19th century. Many Urdu poets wrote in other languages too; for example, the last king of Avadh, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, wrote in Avadhi, Braj, Marwari, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Persian. Major poet Insha Allah Khan, who wrote under the name 'Insha' (Elegantly Stylish), 1756-1817, was a polyglot who wrote in several languages, including Persian, Arabic, Urdu, Turkish, Hindi and Punjabi, and composed both rekhta and rekhti poems.

Rekhti poets' use of a female persona is closely integrated with their use of a relatively non-Persianised Urdu. Women of upper class Muslim families, especially in the urban centres, were likely to be able to speak some refined or Persianised Urdu, but they would also speak to servants, neighbours and relatives from middle class backgrounds in local languages. Fluency in local languages was required to converse with Hindu women, whether vendors, servants or friends.

Under the Islamicate, it was more common for Muslim men to marry Hindu women than for Hindu men to marry Muslim women. Muslim kings, nobles and gentry often married Hindu women. For example, the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, an accomplished poet in Urdu, Persian, Brajbhasha and Punjabi, had a Hindu mother. Many Muslims, both men and women, were recent converts and maintained links with their Hindu kin.

For both Muslim and Hindu elite men who spoke the language of high culture in public, 'women's speech' was the language of their private lives, of emotions and of significant imaginative domains. It was the language of the women servants, both Hindu and Muslim, who raised these men in the women's quarters before they reached puberty; it was the language of many of their mothers and sisters, family friends and neighbours, cousins, aunts, and wives. It was the language of domesticity and the marketplace, and was often close to the mother tongues of the courtesans and male youths with whom these men might develop liaisons.

While many courtesans were accomplished women, who spoke Persianised Urdu in public, they spoke 'women's speech' in private. Permitted, even expected, to speak more freely of erotic matters, they could spice up literary Urdu with jokes and obscenities that respectably married women might use among themselves but would not be expected to use in men's presence. The mixed clientele of the kothas (homes and workplaces of courtesans) also encouraged the use of mixed speech. Rekhti poet Sa'adat Yar Khan, pen-name 'Rangin' (Colourful), 1755-1835, claimed he learnt the language of rekhti from khangis, married women who discreetly engaged in prostitution, and thus represented the overlap between normative households and courtesan households.

'Women's speech' was closely related to the languages of villages and small towns, which were also heard in the streets of Delhi and Lucknow. Used in devotional songs, both Hindu and Muslim, and in romances, it was employed to different degrees in the standard Urdu ghazal (love poem).

English words are infiltrating Hindi sentences:

Time kya hua hai? = What time is it right now?
I have hazaar *things to do.* = I have thousands of things to do.

A selection of popular Hinglish expressions based on Hindi words:

badmash *adjective* naughty. Also used as a noun (plural badmashes) to refer to a hooligan, an aggressive or violent person.

changa *adjective* fine, great.

desi (also deshi) *adjective* authentic, relating to the idea of national or local as opposed to foreign, e.g. desi food would refer to rice, curry, chapati, etc. Desi pastimes include watching Bollywood movies, listening to Hindi music, going to the temple/ mosque etc.

filmi *adjective* dramatic, characteristic of Bollywood movies.

haramzada *noun* a despicable, obnoxious male. Haramzadi is a female form. Both terms can be used to refer to a man/woman born of unmarried parents.

jungli *adjective* unruly, wild in behaviour.

yaar *noun* friend, used as a familiar or affectionate form of address.

Fig. 2
The last king of Avadh, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, wrote in Avadhi, Braj, Marwari, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Persian.

Most of the idioms employed in rekhti and identified by Urdu critics as 'women's idioms' are not at all specific to rekhti. Examples include blessings like 'Bathe in milk and be fruitful of sons' and curses like *'aag lagey'* (burn up) or *'bhaad mein jaye'* (go into the stove). These are also among the idioms that late 19th century Muslim male reformers criticised Muslim women for using. Reformers considered these usages inappropriate because they were unislamic.[2] These idioms are still widely used today.

Eloquent parrots
Because Persian was the language of high culture, most Urdu poets composed in Persian as well, and literary Urdu tended to be highly Persianised. Some major poets and many minor ones wrote rekhti as well, which, arguably, had the effect of helping make colloquial Urdu more acceptable in poetry.

Rekhti poets, drawing attention to the elegance of their language, emphasise both its non-Persian ambience and its Indic urbanity. As opposed to later critics who characterise rekhti as trivial pornographic entertainment for men, rekhti poet Mir Yar Ali 'Jan Saheb' (1817-1896), posits it as the symbol of Lucknow's high culture. He laments the British massacre of Lucknow's citizens after the 1857 rebellion, and their destruction of its sophisticated culture:

Jan! You are reading rekhti in Lucknow
The nightingale is singing in a ruined garden.[3]

In another poem, Jan Saheb characterises his language as emblematic of Indic (Hindustani) creativity:

Foreign aunt! You are a nightingale of Shiraz [in Persia]
I am a parrot of Hindustan and my tongue is eloquent...
The wretched native hill crows cry 'caw, caw'
I will hide my face if they can ever speak my language.[4]

If the nightingale (bulbul) here stands for Persian poetry, the crow represents the supposedly rustic dialects of semi-educated Indians. Invoking the Indic symbol of the parrot, which has a long ancestry in Indian literatures as a figure of creativity, not mere imitation, this Urdu poet proudly claims that his language is sophisticated as well as specific to his native land.

Jan Saheb writes almost entirely in rekhti. Although he always writes in the female voice, he does not confine himself to conventionally female themes. He addresses a variety of topics, including politics, poetic convention and poetic rivalries.

As nationalist social and religious reform movements developed on the subcontinent in the later 19th century, the lines between Hindus and Muslims hardened. The unfortunate identification of Urdu with Muslims and Hindi with Hindus became institutionalised when, in 1947, India became independent, with Hindi as its national language, and Pakistan was formed as a Muslim state, with Urdu as its national language. While Hindi became increasingly Sanskritised and purged of Persian-based words, Urdu became increasingly Persianised and purged of Sanskrit-based words. Partly as a result of this, rekhti poetry of the early 19th century, with its unashamed hybridity, came to be denigrated and excised from the canon of Urdu poetry.

Despite the efforts of purists, however, hybrid colloquial modern Urdu/Hindi, or what used to be called Hindustani, with its infusion of words from many other languages, continued to flourish in non-academic and non-governmental domains. Bombay cinema played a central role in disseminating and developing it, as did Hindi popular fiction. The emergence of Hinglish is not, therefore, indicative of a new process but the continuation of an old one – the hybridising of language in urban milieus. It represents the fusion of father tongue and mother tongue, the language of public thought with the language of private emotions and intimacy.

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Notes
1. In his history of Urdu, Darya-e Latafat, poet Insha recounts an anecdote told by a poet to a courtesan, about a famous rekhti verse that men and women in Lucknow and Delhi used to recite. Quoted in Azad, Muhammad Husain. 2001. Ab-e Hayat, translated and edited Frances Pritchett. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
2. See Minault, Gail. 1994. *'Other Voices, Other Rooms: The View from the Zenana,'* in Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories ed. Nita Kumar. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
3. S.S.M. Naqvi, S.S.M. 1983. ed. Intikhab-e Rekhti. Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Urdu Akademi. All translations are by me.
4. S.S. M. Naqvi, S.S.M. 1983. ed. Intikhab-e Rekhti. Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Urdu Akademi.

CyberAsia

In the popular imagination of many in the so-called West, Asia enjoys a romantic and intimate relationship with high technology. Visionary representations of the future, such as those elaborated in films like *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982) or novels like *Neuromancer* (William Gibson, 1984), often lend the global future an Asian flavour, either as a sign of the world's possible cosmopolitan destiny or more simply as an indication of the way that digital technology and East Asia appear to be closely interwoven. This associative weave is particularly strong in the cyberpunk world of virtual reality, artificial intelligence, networked communications, and explorations of cyberspace as the new final frontier. CyberAsia weds Asia to the politics of futurities in complicated and diverse ways.

Chris Goto-Jones

Allegations, imaginations and analyses

This special issue of *The Newsletter* offers a variety of lenses on the question of cyberAsia. This expansive neologism contains: allegations of Asia's technological superiority; imaginations of Asia's utopian relationship with digital technology; and finally analyses of the concrete ways in which high technologies have transformed social and cultural practices in the region (and permitted the region to ripple around the world). Hence, the term cyberAsia is a confounded one, generating myriad possible meanings and implications, both empirically and theoretically.

In his contribution to this edition of *The Newsletter,* Tom Lamarre offers some thoughts on the various ways in which cyberAsia might function in discourses of today's politics of knowledge.

The political relationship between technologised visions of Asia and a more classical sense of Orientalist mystique is noted with increasing frequency in the literature of Asian Studies. Scholars such as Ueno Toshio and (more recently) Wendy Hui Kyong Chun have argued that this re-representation of Asia as a technological icon amounts to a kind of 'techno-Orientalism.' Indeed, in some ways, it seems that the domain of cyberspace itself might function as a space of Orientalism within the so-called West: it is a virtual (and largely textual) man-made geography created as an often fantastical 'other' place, or heterotopia. In this sense, the association of Asia with cyberspace begins to look like another strategy of epistemic distancing and domination. It is along these lines that my own provocation in this issue of *The Newsletter* seeks to argue that Asian Studies might share a frontier with the enterprise of Science Fiction. At stake here is the status of 'Western' knowledge of (cyber)Asia.

Transforming modernity

Of course, even if we were willing to accept that a kind of Orientalism is at work within the concept of cyberAsia, it is not the case that the connection between Asia and digital technology

has been invented *only* by observers in Europe or the US. In this issue, for instance, Fabian Schäfer draws on the well-known work of Japanese critic Azuma Hiroki to explore the ways in which internet-use within the increasingly inclusive *otaku* (geek) subculture functions to transform modern subjectivity.

Elsewhere, Azuma himself has argued that this *otaku* subculture is effectively the vanguard of a new, postmodern society that has abandoned its modernist attachments to coherence and narrative logic in favour of a kind of 'database' model of engagement with the world. Cyberspace is a key technology in this process of overcoming modernity, but Azuma also ties it to other allied media forms, such as *anime* and *manga*. For Azuma, the landmark moment in the 'animalisation' of postmodern Japan was the broadcast of Anno Hideaki's epic anime series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Gainax, 1995-6). Other commentators have pointed to classic anime such as Oshii Mamoru's breakthrough, *Ghost in the Shell* (Production IG, 1995) as signalling a kind of self-Orientalism in the *anime* industry, fuelling a global perception of an intimate connection between Japan and the technological future. In his contribution to this issue, however, Cobus van Staden takes a different approach to the relationship between Japan and *anime*, focusing instead on the ways in which *anime* representations of Europe have helped the medium (and hence Japan) to reach global audiences. Van Staden suggests that a deep-seated Europhilia in Japan serves to exoticise *anime* for the Japanese themselves whilst providing one of the conditions for the possibility of Japan's cultural globalisation at the same time.

Like Van Staden, Jeroen de Kloet is interested in the ways in which the media associated with cyberAsia are actually used by the people themselves (in the present). Focusing on the practice of hackers and bloggers, De Kloet discusses the ways in which these cyberactivities have (or have failed to) transform the public sphere in China. Drawing on a wealth of empirical evidence about actual internet usage in China (including Taiwan and Hong Kong), Jens Damm provides an insight into the extent to which this vital player in the future of Asia is saturated by cyberspace, mapping some of the ways in which the virtual realm of the PRC spreads a net around the world.

An unknown but projected future

As the case of China shows clearly, the whole project of cyberAsia is overshadowed by the political menace of the unknown but projected future; the emphasis on technology constantly raises questions about power and wealth disparities within societies, highlighting the unevenness of access to cyberspace and other digital technologies as well as the possible development of these disparities in the future. However, as Bart Barendregt shows in his essay, the issue of technological development also functions as a problematic between nations or regions. With particular attention to the newly developing Muslim majority nations in Southeast Asia, Malaysia and Indonesia, Barendregt explores the creative collision of religion with technological advancement, elaborating the ways in which these particular instantiations of cyberAsia provide models of aspiration for the future of the Islamic world that differ from the predominant visions of the so-called West as well as those of some radical Islamic groups. In the words of Richard Barbrook, Barendregt considers some of the ways in which the present serves as a 'beta version of a science fiction dream,' and he demonstrates the importance of understanding the dimensions and diversity of these dreams in Asia and elsewhere.

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What is a Techno-region?

Asia can be, and has been, imagined as a region in terms of geography, geopolitical configurations, language, culture, society, economy, or some combination of these. In disciplinary terms, there are many different 'Asias' that do not necessarily coincide. Is the notion of 'cyberAsia' intended to construct a different imaginary of Asia, or offer a critique or a new critical angle on received ways of thinking about things Asian? Or, is the neologism cyberAsia supposed to reflect some new condition that has arisen in Asia?

Thomas Lamarre

SUCH QUESTIONS ARE RELEVANT because the term Asia, like the term Orient, frequently conjures forth a sense of fantasmatic unity, contrasted with the West while shoring up Western identity. Critiques of Orientalism have exposed and challenged the self-other dialectics implicit in the Western construct of the 'Orient,' and consequently scholars have largely dropped the term, favouring instead the term 'Asia'. Yet this substitution does not necessarily change the self-other dialectics of Orientalism.

In the early 1990s, David Morley and Kevin Robins used the term 'techno-orientalism' to illustrate how images of the technologisation and technological superiority of Japan served as a focal point for American panic over the economic success of Japan and the potential threat to American hegemony. In keeping Edward Said's reminder that Orientalism is not simply a matter of negative stereotypes but also of positive stereotypes that posit a putative unity in the interest of stabilising an object of knowledge, Ueno Toshiya used techno-orientalism to describe the reception of Japanese anime and pop culture outside Japan, especially in the United States. Such critiques force a blunt question: how does cyberAsia differ from techno-Orientalism? Does the term cyber, with its aura of technological novelty and futurity, posit the imaginary unity of Asia in order to impart the illusion of neutrality and objectivity to collecting and accumulating of knowledge of cultures, technologies, commodities and peoples?

'Other Asias'
Gayatri Spivak's recent evocation of 'other Asias' might provide a good point of departure for thinking about the implications of the term cyberAsia. While she explicitly challenges the imposition of a fantasmatic unity called Asia abundantly evident in Orientalism and pan-Asianism, she speaks of a pluralised Asia in which difference would no longer be articulated between, say, the West and Asia but within Asia itself. Rather than surrender the idea of Asia, she seeks a pragmatic localised deconstruction of this disclinary construct which, like Said's Orient, is after all not an airy fantasy easily blown away. Spivak's account invites us to ask how the concept cyberAsia might deal with internal difference, with other Asias. Here it is not simply a matter of speaking in the plural, of cyberAsias. Pluralising the term only makes a difference if that multiplicity presents a critical and analytical challenge to some set of received orientations or dispositions, be they perpetuated in the academy, the media, the cultural industry, or some other discourse, institution or habitus.

Given that the cyberAsia project foregrounds cultural production associated with Japan (*manga, anime,* video games), questions arise about the relation between Japan and Asia in particular. Two received sets of dispositions become particularly important in that context. First, there is the geopolitical imaginary in which East Asia, and specifically Northeast Asia (China, Japan, Korea), comes to stand in for Asia in general. To some extent, this might be thought to be postwar North America's Orient or Asia, in contrast to Western Europe's Orient (the Middle East), which present different condensa-

tions or formations of Western modernity. How can looking at Asia from the angle of cyber present a challenge to this imaginary and address the internal difference of Asia, of the West and of modernity? Second, in the context of Japan, there is the history of pan-Asianist thought that posits the fantasmatic unity of Asia only to hierarchise relations between Japan and its colonies. This is a bad way of conceptualising the internal difference of Asia, which serves as another reminder that plurality is not merely a matter of adding an 's' onto words. Nor is internal difference a matter of juxtaposing nations or cultures. If the cyberAsia project wishes to challenge rather than reinforce the fantasmatic unity of Asia, then it must think about how the term cyber might spur or hinder our imagination of other Asias. It must directly address how thinking 'cyber' can have an impact on the imagination and articulation of difference within 'Asia'. In other words, critical attention should fall on the implications of the rather elusive term cyber.

Technologies of control
The prefix cyber- has become common, even overly used, in referring to almost anything related to computing or electronics, and as the Wikipedia entry notes, there is a great deal of overlap with the prefix e-. Nonetheless, the two have very different connotations. Partly due to the literal meaning of cyber- as control (as in cybernetics) and partly due to its association with highly technologised dystopian worlds (as with cyberpunk and cyborgs), cyber- implies a distinctive technological condition, linked to new information and communication technologies. And the prevalence of dystopian valences denotes some manner of critical response to this technological condition, a 'cyberised' or cybernetic world that suggests extensive technologies of control in which telecommunications are associated with telecommand, in which cyber-entities grapple with or struggle against their cyber-condition. Yet, as Félix Guattari points out, this manner of thinking technology can be very structural and mechanistic – and thus highly deterministic. There is a post-Romantic fascination with technological determinism and its discontents, which results in a struggle to break the grip of technologies of control.

Such a manner of thinking technology strives to locate moments of indeterminacy within the mechanism, moments and sites where life emerges (so-called artificial life) from the inorganic, or where thought emerges from brute matter or mechanism (so-called artificial intelligence). In effect, the term cyber frequently entails a search for internal difference, a quest for indeterminacy under conditions in which new technologies imply structural determinism. Of course, there is always the danger that this way of thinking information and communications technologies, because of its presuppositions of determinism, serves to mystify rather than enlighten. This is precisely why caution is needed. Because the discovery of emergent life or intelligence is commonly taken as the harbinger of a new era or new world, care is required

in thinking about the conditions for and status of new. In addition to the simple question of whether this is truly new, the question arises about whether this newness repeats ideologies of an overcoming of the modern or postmodern technological condition, thus completing, fulfilling and entrenching that condition rather than critiquing it.

This is especially important when the term cyber becomes a prefix for Asia. If cyber is to sustain its theoretical and critical force, it must be posed as a question of technology, not a fact of technologisation or (post)modernisation, or as a fact of novelty. Just as Spivak's pluralisation of Asia demands an internal differentiation of received ideas about Asia, so the idea of cyberAsia must open and sustain specific questions about technology and techno-cultures associated with the term cyber, and at the same time, address how technologies serve to integrate or differentiate the fantasmatic unity of Asia, whether it is posited and sedimented linguistically, culturally, socially, economically or geopolitically. In other words, the cyberAsia project must give precedence to the question begged by its neologism: 'what is a techno-region?' A number of questions follow from this one. If we take cyber as an index for a particular mode of technological or techno-cultural integration/differentiation, we might, for instance, think about how this mode of techno-integration/differentiation interacts with the deterritorialising and reterritorialising forces of capitalism (perhaps in the context of the emergence of newly integrated economic zones in East Asia). Questions also arise about how this techno-integration/differentiation affects the articulations of national culture and social identity. In light of theories that see a graphic integration/differentiation in East Asia based on legacies of writing and drawing associated with Chinese characters, the question of the relation between techno-integration/differentiation and histories of writing is equally urgent.

To pose the question of cyberAsia in this manner means giving up on the idea that novelty – specifically, the novelty of attaching the prefix cyber to Asia – is a guarantee of difference or otherness and thus of critical engagement. Rather it is imperative to acknowledge that 'cyberising' Asia does not necessarily amount to pluralising Asia and articulating other Asias. This also means giving up on the fascination with new objects and the collusion with the logic of markets that currently mars the study of popular culture and especially Japanese popular culture, for instance. Rather than fuss over the next big thing, the goal would be to pose questions about the relation between technologies, knowledge production, cultural production, circulation, distribution and regionalisation, in the interest of questioning rather than grounding the technological condition, and in the interest of pluralising rather than unifying Asia.

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Animalisation, subjectivity and the Internet

Digital and virtual forms of culture are intensely choice-based. In the absence of meta-narrative, we are constantly being solicited as an agent of choice, between alternatives, to follow links. To examine this most modern of issues Fabian Schäfer turns to the mature traditions of philosophy. Distinguishing Japanese cultural critic Azuma Hiroki's concept of human and animal action, and the influential German philosopher Martin Heidegger's authentic and fallen selves, in terms of the notions of choice and reversibility, he poses the question of whether the subject of virtual choice is best understood in one context or the other.

Fabian Schäfer

Fig. 1
Salvador Dalí
(1930/31): 'Tactile
Cinema'. Illustration
in a letter to Louis
Buñuel. Reprinted
in: Augustin Sanchez
Vidal. 1988. Buñuel,
Lorca, Dalí. El enigma
sin fin. Barcelona:
Planeta.

IN THEIR AUGUST 2008 ISSUES, the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* and the American journal *The Atlantic* published cover stories on the dangers of internet-based communication and knowledge. Both magazines posed the question, 'is Google or, more generally, the Internet making us stupid?' The discourse splits into two camps of critics and enthusiasts. On the one hand, it is emphasised that the Internet is leading to the occurrence of new simultaneous modes of perception, a democratisation of knowledge, and unprecedented creativity by its users; on the other hand, the loss of critical reason or the capacity for remembering, rising attention deficit, the loss of a common culture existing through the reading of books, and the intellectual passivity of internet users is harshly criticised. Moreover, the critical camp often psychopathologises the effects of the use of the Internet. Proponents of this faction agree that spending five to six hours on the Internet per day, searching through a cornucopia of texts, videos or music or writing emails and instant messages, can cause social behavioural disorders such as an anti-social attitude or an unwillingness to communicate.

Philosophical aspects of databases, the Internet and hypertext
It is the effects of the Internet on our cognitive abilities and reading capability that particularly unsettles the critics. In his editorial for the *The Atlantic*, American writer Nicholas Carr complains that persistent Internet use is influencing his capacity for concentration and contemplation. According to Carr, he was 'once (...) a scuba diver in the sea of words. Now [he] zip[s] along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski.'[1] The reason for this effect upon our cognition is based on the most important feature of the Internet or electronic databases – the fact that they are based on interactivity or HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) in particular.

However, how the interactivity of hypertext affects its users, and in how far they are capable of handling the simultaneous existence and accessibility of documents or websites, remains questionable. Specifically, it is the inner restlessness that one feels when faced with the decision between two or more possibilities which complicates the absorption of knowledge by means of interactive media. Links can be compared to junctions or options, or, as Martin Heidegger once put it, to possibilities on which *Dasein* ('existence') can project itself onto. In this sense, the networked structure of the Internet or a database might be described as a miniature of the possibilities-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*) of *Dasein*. As in real life, deciding in favour of one possibility (namely a link) necessarily means to negate others.

'Distraction', 'squirreling' and 'fallen' uses of the Internet
However, it is only in what Heidegger called the 'authentic' (*eigentlich*) mode of Being (*Seinsweise*) that *Dasein* can ''choose' [or] win itself' and thereby 'be' itself (*Selbstsein, Being-one's-Self*) through an existential projection in the choice of 'its ownmost possibilities.'[2] Most times, Heidegger admits, the *Dasein* is determined by the possibilities given by the Man and is therefore not situated in the mode of authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) but in one of 'fallenness' (*Verfallenheit*). Speaking in the words of Heidegger, the possibility of 'falling' seems to be relatively high in the case of the interlinked structure of the Internet or databases if compared to the reading of a linear-structured book.

'Surfing' the Internet or browsing through databases can be described as what Walter Benjamin termed 'reception in a state of distraction.' (*Rezeption in der Zerstreuung*).[3] This mode of perception, according to Benjamin, is based on the 'tactile quality' (*taktile Qualität*) of the object of perception – in Benjamin's case, movies and photographs.[4] This tactility of visual media Benjamin describes is even emphasised by the interactivity of the Internet or databases. As Nicholas Carr's editorial in *The Atlantic* rightly asserts, hyperlinks, '[u]nlike footnotes', 'don't merely point to related works; they propel you toward them.' The perception of the Internet is, in Benjamin's terms, one of 'tactile appropriation' that is based on 'habitualisation' rather than on 'attention.'[5] To Heidegger, who used the term '*Zerstreuung*' (distraction) in a comparable way, distraction is based on 'curiosity' (*Neugier*), a mode of fallenness. Other than *Verstehen* (understanding) as the self-projection of the being on its ownmost possibilities, curiosity is merely based on 'seeing' (*Sehen*). In this mode of being, 'Dasein seeks what is far away simply in order to bring it close to itself in the way it looks. Dasein lets itself to be taken along (*mitnehmen*) solely by the looks of the world.'[6]

The dangers of 'fallen' or 'distracted' Internet use are substantiated by the findings of a recent study of online research habits, conducted by scholars from University College London (UCL).[7] As part of a five-year programme, researchers analysed the behaviour of visitors to two popular research sites, one operated by the British Library and one by a UK educational consortium, that provides access to journal articles, e-books, and other sources of written information. The results showed that people using the sites exhibited 'a form of skimming activity,' hopping from one source to another and rarely returning to any source they had already visited. They typically read one or two pages of an article or book before jumping to another site. Sometimes they saved a long article, but there's no evidence that they ever

went back and actually read it. Apparently, many Internet users seem to react to links as 'possibilities' in Heidegger's sense or the flood of information provided by the Internet with an individual 'databasification' of information retrieved from larger databases – a behaviour that the scholars of UCL called 'squirreling.'

Internet, databases and animalisation
In a series of lectures held in 1929-30, Heidegger distinguished between animal and man by describing the animal's mode of being as one of 'poverty in world' (*Weltarmut*) and that of man as 'world-forming' (*weltbildend*). Accordingly, one might argue that the *Weltarmut* of the animal (i.e. its 'captivation' (*Benommenheit*) and 'absorption' (*Eingenommenheit*) by its environment) bears parallels to the curiosity and fallenness of *Dasein* that is, as already mentioned, taken along [*mitnehmen*] solely by the looks of the world.[8]

With regard to the 'animalisation' or 'fallenness' of *Dasein* to a tactile and habitualised information seeking behaviour in the digital age, it is valuable to take into account the contemporary philosophical discourse on the phenomenon of *otaku* culture in Japan, since much of the public debate on the positive and negative sides of the Internet parallels the discourse on *otaku* culture in Japan. *Otaku* is a Japanese term that refers to people with obsessive interests in various Japanese subcultures, particularly manga, anime, science fiction, or computer games. The *otaku* are often psychopathologised as being anti-social, uncommunicative, and self-absorbed. Cultural critic Azuma Hiroki, however, saw value in analysing the *otaku* from the perspective of their pioneering role in the 'information society'.

In his book *Dōbutsuka suru posutomodan: Otaku kara mita Nihon shakai* (2001, Animalising Postmodern: Japanese Society as Seen from the Perspective of Otaku), Azuma considers the *otaku* phenomenon not as particularly Japanese, but as an inflection 'of the global trend of postmodernization'.[9] With regard to French philosopher Alexandre Kojève's neo-Hegelian distinction between two forms of 'post-historical existence' – the 'animalisation' of American society based on consumerism and the highly formalised and aesthetised 'snobbism' of the Japanese –, Azuma asserts that *otaku* culture consists of a 'two-tiered mode of consumption' that reflects the two-layered structure of the postmodern itself[10] (See figs. 3 & 4). Other than the two layers of the modern world-image – the 'depth' of 'grand narratives' (namely ideals, ideology) and a 'surface' of many 'small narratives' – Azuma claims that, with reference to Loytard's notion of the end of grand narratives, the latter were replaced by a 'grand database' in the postmodern world-image (*sekaizō*).

Fig. 2
Illustration from a 13th century Hebrew Bible, Ambrosian Library, Milan. According to Giorgio Agamben, the attributing of an animal head to the remnant of Isreal in this scene, which represents the messianic banquet of the righteous on the last day and thus the end of humanity, suggests 'that on the last day, the relations between animals and men will take on a new form, and that man himself will be reconciled with his animal nature.' The Open: Man and Animal. Transl. Giorgio Agamben, Kevin Attell. Stanford University Press 2004.
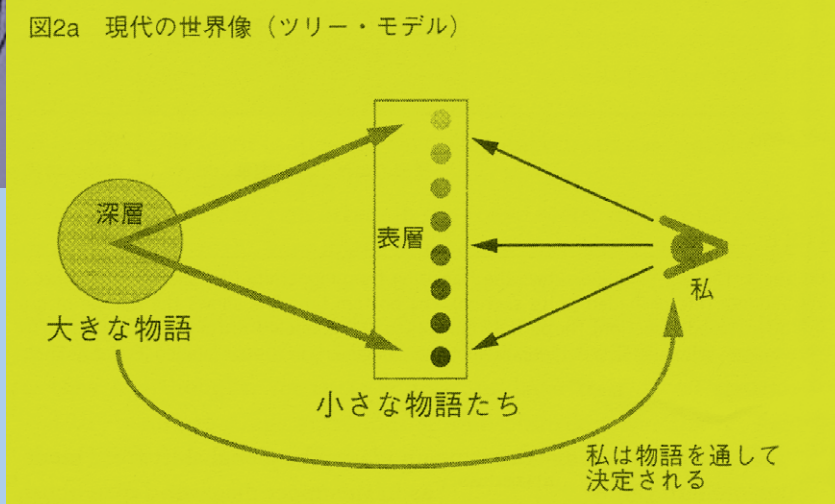
Fig. 3
Azuma 1: the world-image of the modern age: the tree model. The shaded circle is labelled 'Depth' and associated with 'Grand Narratives'. The centre rectangle is labelled 'Surface' and associated with 'Small Narratives.' The eye-shaped figure (right) is labelled 'I', which, the figure notes, is 'determined through narratives'. (Azuma 2007 [2003]). Courtesy of University of Minnesota Press.
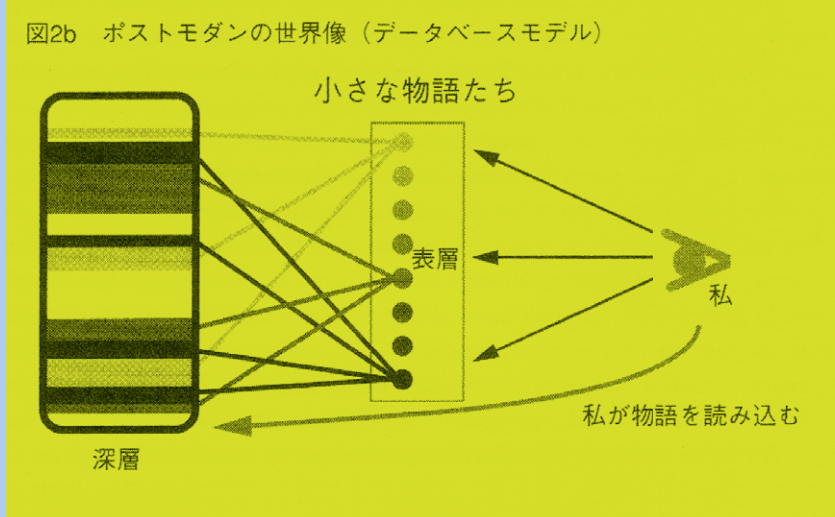

Fig. 4
Azuma 2: the world-image of the postmodern age: the database model. The striped rectangle (left) is labelled 'Depth'. The centre rectangle is labelled 'Surface' and associated with 'Small Narratives'. The eye on the right is labelled 'I', and is the one who 'reads into (inputs) the narratives'. (Azuma 2007 [2003]). Courtesy of University of Minnesota Press.

Whereas the modern era formed a structure in which a single grand narrative or ideal controlled the diverse small narratives and cultural and social criticism consisted of analysing grand narratives as reflected within various small narratives, in the postmodern, people may grasp any number of small world-images.[11]

Azuma claims that one can identify two ways in which the *otaku* deal with this new world-image. He calls one the 'animalesque' (*dōbutsuteki*) side of database consumption; that is the solitude and passive consumption of the many small narratives of computer games, anime, or manga that are merely based on 'combinations' (*kumiawase*) of self-referential elements from the grand database. Database consumption also has a second, active or 'humanesque' side, because *otaku* actively intervene in received commodities by breaking down the narratives into their compounds (for computer games these are screenplay, character, background or for manga it is the single 'sensitive elements' (*moe yōso*) that characters are composed of), and thereby get access to the database that lies in the 'depth' behind the small narrations and 'recreate' (*niji sōsaku*) from it their own narrations or pictures.[12] This 'double structure' (*nisō kōzō*) of deconstruction and reconstruction prompts Azuma to interpret *otaku* culture as a deconstructivist and, thus, subversive form of cultural reception that brings it close to a deconstructivist method in contemporary literary theory.[13] Azuma bases this assertion also on the fact that to the *otaku* it doesn't matter any longer if the 'author' of the small narratives they consume is a professional - '*author*ized' by one of the big manga or anime publishers - or an amateur who publishes his self-made anime or manga in one of the many fanzines (*dōjinshi*) or on the Internet.

Internet, databases and pedagogy
What can we conclude from Azuma's positive remarks on the new media literacy of the *otaku* with regard to what I have defined rather negatively as the 'fallenness' of the Internet user? In any case, the suggestive question posed by *The Atlantic* or *Der Spiegel*, about whether Google, the Internet, databases, or the new flood of information in general, is making us stupid *per se*, seems to be pointing in the wrong direction. Even Heidegger's or Benjamin's perspective on distracted or habitualised perception is not as pessimistic as I have described it here. In fact, they agree that curiosity or tactile appercep-tion aren't necessarily something that should be condemned from the outset. According to Heidegger, curiosity, which is non-'anticipatory' (namely 'non-self-projecting') and thus merely 'awaiting' (*gewärtigend*), 'has its natural justification [...][and] belongs to the everyday kind of being of Da-Sein and to the understanding of being initially prevalent.'[14] Similarly, Benjamin reminds us that perception in a state of distraction is important, since 'the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation.' Obviously, if applied to our cognition of the interactive structure of the Internet, Heidegger's and Benjamin's perspectives refer to two ways of dealing with electronic and interlinked texts. First, the 'authentic' *Seinsweise* of understanding and contemplation, one that, to borrow hypertext theorist Jay D. Bolter's words, looks '*through* the text' and thus grasps and understands the meaning of the narration 'behind' the text. (This is what Azuma describes as the 'deconstructivist' and 'humanesque' side of *otaku* culture). Secondly, a 'fallen' or 'animalised' mode, in which the user has to 'look *at* the text, as a series of possibilities [or links, F.S.] that he or she (...) can activate.' Accordingly, they are to a lesser extent two *modes* of usage – one active and 'authentic' and one passive and 'in-authentic' – than two different *strategies* of dealing with electronic and networked information – namely explorative browsing ('power browsing') on the one hand and the purposeful search for a particular document and its subsequent contemplative reading on the other. As for the latter, it is important for the user not to lose sight of his – in Heidegger's words – 'ownmost projection' that has to guide a search; for the former, it is even necessary to let oneself be 'taken away' by one's curiosity, governed merely by the possibilities given by the structure of homepages or databases. With regard to university pedago-gies, however, it is necessary to teach students the sharp distinction between these two modes of dealing with digitised texts and knowledge that is based on the particular goal one pursues. Moreover, it will be of particular importance to teach contemplative and analytic reading to a generation of *otaku* and Google users that possesses a highly developed digital literacy but is beginning to lack basic reading and writing skills.

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3. Benjamin, Walter 1977 [1936]. *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit.* Frankfurt: Suhrkamp
4. ibid.
5. For instance, the tactility of hyperlinks is particularly obvious if a phrase of a text appears as a hyperlink (i.e. blue font colour) but does not have the respective function. Only through the *Unzuhandenheit* (un-readiness-to-hand) of a link *as a link* do we become aware of the haptic interactivity of hypertext described by Benjamin as 'tactile appropriation'.
6. Heidegger 1993 [1927]
7. http://www.ucl.ac.uk/slais/research/ciber/downloads/
8. Heidegger based this distinction on the fact that an animal is essentially captivated and wholly absorbed by its environment (its *Umgebung*, as opposed to the *Umwelt* of *Dasein*) and thus can only behave other than how a human being does. Heidegger, Martin (1983 [1929/30]). 'Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt – Endlichkeit – Einsamkeit'. In: *ibid.: Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung Vorlesungen 1923-1944. Vol. 29/30.* Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann
9. Azuma, Hiroki. 2001. *Dōbutsuka suru posutomodan: Otaku kara mita Nihon shakai.* Kodansha: Tokyo
10. ibid.
11. ibid.
12. *Machinima* ('machine cinema'), the art of using a computer game to create a movie, is a similar active form of 'recreation' by computer users. Cf. http://www.machinima.com
13. Hypertext theorist Jay D. Bolter emphasized the relationship between Derridarian poststructuralism and hypertext as well. According to Bolter, based on the rhizomatic structure of the internet or databases, electronic texts don't have a centre or margins because of their 'deconstructive reading': "The reader can follow paths through the space in any direction, limited only by constraints established by the author. No path through the space need be stigmatized as marginal." Cf. Bolter, Jay D. 1991. *Writing Space: The Computer, Hypertext, and the History of Writing.* Hillsdale NJ: Erlbaum
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Alien Autopsy The science fictional frontier of Asian Studies

The term cyberAsia is both an observation of the technological progress exhibited in Asian societies, and a provocation concerning the status of Asia in the epistemic frameworks of 'the West'. Chris Goto-Jones contends that under certain conditions Asia serves as place-marker for a field of speculation that we might term science fictional. Where 'cyber' contains intimations of futurities and technologisation, cyberAsia and science fictional Asia converge.

Chris Goto-Jones

THE MEANING OF 'SCIENCE FICTIONAL ASIA' stretches from moments of representational techno-Orientalism in Euro-American literature at one end – where Japan, Hong Kong, or India become the fantastical site of a projected technological future – to an epistemic framework that privileges the disorientation of the West at the other. It is this final frontier that intrigues me. In particular, the status and purpose of the knowledge created or discovered during explorations of this frontier of knowledge, as well as in the authority of the author in each case. My central provocation is that there is a frontier at which the epistemic structures and objectives of science fiction (SF) and of Asian Studies (AS) meet, and that we might usefully see family resemblances between the two fields. If there is a place in which these two life-forms coincide as a common species, should we consider whether they might mate and produce some interesting offspring? Alien Studies?

To some extent, this frontier serves as both a caricature and a critique of the Area Studies enterprise as a whole, with AS the most striking case, marking out the dangerous and nebulous border between fictional representations and representations of fictions. Of course, as a caricature, this presentation makes no claims to being comprehensive or nuanced about all the varieties of SF or Area Studies (or even AS) – rather it focuses on the dimensions of a particular frontier at which particular aspects of those fields meet.

Clarifying the known. 1: Science Fiction

SF is already a difficult terrain, and its dimensions are continuously contested. It exists in a condition of peril within broader realms of literature. There have been various attempts to define it, but there is neither the space nor the need to elaborate them all here. Let us suffice with a series of thematic commonalities: SF is about technology and mechanisation and particularly about speculations regarding their social and interpersonal effects in the future - it is a product of modernity and of the industrial revolution. The other central, thematic concern of sci-fi is often considered to be the encounter with (or exploration of) difference, and occasionally with either the mystification or the demonisation of difference. This has often been seen to tie SF to (post)colonialism.

Because, like the past, the future is a different country where they do things differently, these two characteristics (temporal and spatial explorations) converge around a single concern for the encounter with an Other, often figured in SF as a literal encounter with the alien. I still find Darko Suvin's 1979 characterisation of SF as 'the literature of cognitive estrangement' apt. I understand this provocative phrase to contain both a methodological marker – cognitive – and an intentional or purposive marker – estrangement. It characterises SF as a literature that accomplishes estrangement (whatever that might mean) via a process of cognition (whatever that might mean). This implies, of course, that other literatures seek objectives other than estrangement and employ means other than cognition (or at least that none combine the two).

In terms of estrangement, Suvin draws out a continuum between literature that seeks the 'exact recreation of the author's empirical environment' on the one hand to that which maintains an 'exclusive interest in a strange newness, a *novum*' (ibid.) on the other.[2] In terms of cognition, he claims to be relying on a Germanic sense of science as *Wissenschaft* (ie. one that encompasses the human and mental sciences as well as the material ones).[3] This enables him to tie SF to the foundations of the real and to argue that estrangements that abandon (rather than creatively develop) the scientific conditions or conventions of the 'reality' should not be considered SF, but rather myth, fairytale or simply fantasy. For Suvin, SF is a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment.[4]

Missing from this description is a sense of function and purpose: what should be the impact of cognitive estrangement? What is the force of SF, if indeed it has any at all? Suvin, like most of the other leading SF theorists, most recently and powerfully Fredrik Jameson, is clear that the purpose of estrangement in this context is critique. In the most obvious terms, this means SF is frequently (albeit not necessarily) satirical. Rather, SF might be envisioned as playing a deliberate and deliberative role in the politics of knowledge: the purpose of cognitive estrangement is reflexive. That is, the author seeks to displace the reader from the everydayness of his/her context and challenge them to test their reality against the difference presented. The cognitive nature of the estrangement should make the alteriority of SF thinkable (even realistic) and thus both effective and affective.

Future or distant places (together with their various inhabitants) should be wrought as a mirror to the reader and his/her world. 'But the mirror [should not be] only a reflecting one, it is also a transforming one... the mirror is a crucible', revealing the innovative possibilities of an Other.[5] SF aliens should not be so very alien after all: we should recognise ourselves (and the possibilities of ourselves) in them, otherwise they do not estrange us they simply alienate us. This is a crucial distinction. It leaves us with an expansion of Suvin:

SF is a textual tradition that aims at cognitive estrangement with a critically reflexive function in the politics of knowledge, challenging and endangering the scientific *(Wissenschaftlich)* suppositions that underlie the everyday context of the reader.

In other words, SF attempts to use difference to challenge the status quo. We'll return to the nature of this status quo later.

Clarifying the known. 2: Area Studies

If SF is a contested category, then Area Studies risks not being a category at all. Indeed, this field has been continuously under attack in various ways and from various angles certainly since the second half of the 20th century. The result is a field that is at least as defensive amongst its peers as SF. Responding to criticisms that it is little more than an atheoretical data-collector in the service of government interests, Area Studies has increasingly defended itself by defining its mission in terms of the epistemic violence that it can cause to the conventional disciplines, which it often designates as Eurocentric.

In a recent volume that attempts to sketch the shifting contours of this expansive field, Alan Tansman suggests that Area Studies might be considered an 'enterprise seeking to know, analyze, and interpret foreign cultures through a multidisciplinary lens'.[5] Most scholars of Area Studies would find such a minimal and inclusive notion relatively unobjectionable, although even a slight rephrasing already begins to look a little provocative: to know, analyse, and interpret the alien using extra-disciplinary forms of knowledge.

In the same volume, David Szanton argues that 'Area Studies scholarship attempts to document the existence, internal logic, and theoretical implications of the distinctive social and cultural values, expressions, structures, and dynamics that shape societies and nations beyond Europe and the United States.'[6] From this we might deduce that the 'status quo' referred to earlier refers to something Euro-American or 'Western' and that the proper subject of Area Studies is 'non-Western'. Whilst I have deep reservations about this position, it does appear to reflect the actual situation of Area Studies in the university (both in the past and today).

Immediately intriguing is that the spatial scope of Area Studies is defined in terms of a negation: places beyond Europe and the United States; the non-West. The non-West is not simply a politically offensive category but it is also infinitely expansive: whilst the privilege of 'Western' might only be awardable to a discrete socio-historic group of places and people, anywhere and anyone else is non-Western. Indeed, the non-West is literally everywhere the West is not. This observation teeters
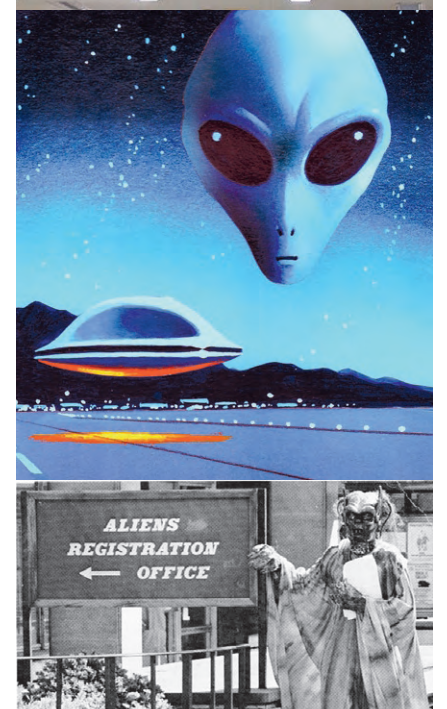
'The real difficulty when defining the frontier between Asian Studies and Science Fiction, however, concerns the question of method'

on the brink of being facile, but it begins to become interesting in the company of SF, as we boldly go where no-one has gone before. The subject matter of Area Studies in the West, in its least politically correct form, is the alien, be that terrestrial or extra-terrestrial. Alien Studies, Area Studies and Asian Studies share a theoretical frontier: AS.

Let us posit (or perhaps anticipate): in 2025 intelligent life is discovered on the moon of a planet orbiting the distant star of Sirius. The study of that society and its culture will be the preserve of AS, since it will certainly be a non-Western civilization.

A key question at this point, just as it was in the case of SF, is: why should we be interested in a category of knowledge that is explicitly defined as being about 'something other than us' (no matter who we are)? This is an incredibly difficult and also intimate question.

For Szanton there are two basic answers.[7] The first is the 'intrinsic value' and interest of difference – we might simply call this curiosity. This is a banal response and not in anyway exclusive to AS. The second, which is far more powerful and purposive, and which dominates much of the literature, is the way that the alien acts reflexively to 'de-naturalize the formulations and universalizing tendencies of the mainstream disciplines,' which are themselves Euro-American products.[8]

In other words, the core purpose of AS is to combat Eurocentrism in the academy on the basis that 'seriously seeking the diverse and alternative knowledges and experiences of other cultures and societies can be deeply challenging, decentering and [even] threatening.'[9] The fundamental role of Area Studies is, in Szanton's provocative terms, to 'de-parochialize US- and Euro-centric visions of the world' that dominate the social sciences and humanities. The quest is not only for new knowledge or empirical data, but also for new kinds of knowledge.

This position represents a constructive variation on (or perhaps a reflexive reappropriation of) Said's critique of Orientalism, in which the 'Oriental Other' is engaged as a kind of mirror that reaffirms, through exoticised difference, the integrity and identity of the (Western) self. Here, however, difference is not seen as comforting or reassuring regarding a particular identity but rather as threatening to the universalist aspirations of that particularity (or simply as revealing those aspirations as naïve and unreflective versions of imperialism).

At this point, then, it may be enough to note some purposive kinship between this vision of AS and SF as cognitive estrangement: both are necessarily and centrally concerned with de-parochialising or estranging the self from the accepted conventions of knowledge in Europe and the US via the exploration of other cultures, which (at least in the case of SF) may be fictional, and via reflexive self-interrogation provoked by the findings.

Encountering the frontier
It seems to me, however, that the frontier between these fields is clearly marked. Despite the pretensions of a 'purposive kinship,' AS and SF stand on opposite sides of the fictional frontier, or the frontier of fiction. Or, to spin this another way: the frontier is reality itself.

While SF makes no explicit claims to be exploring the 'real world,' AS must engage with and interrogate 'real' aliens. In SF, the much lauded reflexivity is a kind of literary navel-gazing, while in AS it should be a scientific radicalisation of concrete political issues. We might argue that SF is a fictional projection of AS, or conversely that AS is a scientifically delimited version of SF.

I'd like to spend a little time testing this frontier, since, like the borders drawn on maps, it seems much less clear when you're flying over it in reality.

Function, purpose and the redundancy of reality
My first concern about this boundary is the relevance of reality in the first place. This is not to say that I don't recognise the category of the real or that I believe in the essentially illusionary or fictive nature of all things. Rather, it seems that the various definitions of the purpose of AS make scant reference to knowledge of reality. Instead, the purpose of AS might be considered to be the de-parochialisation, the de-naturalisation, or even simply the endangering of the universalising tendencies of the mainstream disciplines and their European roots.

The real issue here is not the excavation of new truths or kinds of knowledge per se, but rather the use to which those knowledges can be put to challenge the status quo. In this context, it seems entirely legitimate (or even necessary) to ask why the reality of

the particular non-Western country in question is relevant. Does Asia have to be real in order to be the subject of AS?

There are many answers to this question, of course, but on closer inspection none of them appear to be absolute barriers. The frontier is more a hazy and expansive zone than a crisp border. One possible answer is that we are simply more likely to be moved to serious reflexive, de-naturalisation or estrangement if our impetus to do so is the concrete experience of a group of others in whom we can recognise ourselves (rather than a fictional group of deliberately imagined others). If this is true, it is a matter of degree: reality is *more* effective and affective than fiction when it comes to cognitive estrangement.

I'm willing to take this seriously, but I'm not yet willing to believe it. Even though it's a rather soft claim, it also seems fragile. It is not necessarily true: experience tells us that fiction can be more effective and affective than reality when it comes to cognitive estrangement. Indeed, in SF, the methodological marker 'cognitive' appears to have been placed precisely to mitigate against the alleged ineffectiveness of fiction: SF can/ should be thinkable as real even if it is not a representation of an actual reality.

Perhaps the real function of reality in this framework should be captured (this is a moral should) by the distinction posed earlier between estrangement and alienation. That is, the effectiveness of presentations of the 'expansively non-Western' is contingent upon the 'Westerner' being able to recognise him/ herself in the dilemmas of the other and hence recognise the possibility of transformation of self that this other represents. In other words, something has to connect the reader with those represented in the text, and that something could be reality.

Unfortunately (again in a moral sense), reality is not always enough to prevent alienation. Indeed, many of the disciplinary critics of AS are explicit that, for instance, the intellectual traditions of the non-West are so alien to those of the West that 'we' cannot 'recognise ourselves' in their dilemmas or solutions. Richard Rorty even claims that an alien visiting our world from Sirius would simply give up and go home if asked to compare a Buddhist sense of self with that of a European sense; the two are unrecognisable to each other.[10]

The point is that, in practice, the border between West and non-West might be experienced as more alienating than the border between reality and fiction. For some, a Buddhist model of selfhood cannot transform 'our' thinking about the self, although the science fictional figure of an alien from Sirius can help to persuade us of the truth of this. Certain Euro-American philosophers are alienated from Tibetan thinkers, but only estranged from envoys from Sirius. SF is less alien than AS. In other words, when it comes to cognitive estrangement, reality may be beside the point (which has some serious moral and political implications).

Narrating and imagining the alien
The flip side of this issue concerns the matter of authorial authority and the meaning of textual reality. At its most basic: can we really talk about reality in texts, or are we always dealing with representations mediated by authors with varying authorities?

There is a wide and sophisticated literature on this question and there is no need to rehearse it here.[11] But let me reiterate: I am not interested in making the philosophical claim that all texts are essentially fictions and hence that there is no epistemological difference between representations of Sirius, Laputa, Glubdubdrib and Japan.[12] I am interested, rather, in exploring the frontier where SF and AS appear to meet and what sets them apart if they really share some kind of purposive kinship.

A possible answer involves two core questions: what is the author's subject? ie. what is he/she 'seeking to know, analyse, and interpret'; and what devices are employed to accomplish this?

In terms of the first question, we have already seen that the provisional and expansive answer for both AS and SF is the dubious category of 'non-Western' cultures. However, we need to ask whether authors are trying to represent or analyse real cultures or imaginary ones. In the case of AS, we must assume that authors seek to represent real cultures as directly and transparently as possible (accepting that absolutely direct and transparent representations are impossible). In the case of SF as cognitive estrangement, we also assume that authors seek to represent real(istic) cultures, albeit creatively or indirectly with varying degrees of proximity to the real. Recall that representations of the entirely imaginary are fantasy, myth or fairytale, not SF. In other words, the question of the nature of the writer's subject erects only a hazy frontier between SF and AS.

The real difficulty when defining the frontier between AS and SF, however, concerns the question of method. While it is clear that SF employs a form of Imagineering (with varying degrees

of scientific research in order to satisfy the 'cognitive' requirement), AS is not able to differentiate itself through recourse to a rigorous disciplinary methodology. Indeed, AS often voices an explicit commitment to inter-, multi- or extra-disciplinary techniques and new forms of knowledge creation. Its method is non-exclusively defined – could it include Imagineering? There is a perceptible haze around the frontier, and hence writers may slip from one territory into the other. There is a no-man's land of Alien Studies.

Conclusions
It would obviously be ridiculous to argue that AS, even the study of cyberAsia, is a variety of science fiction. But it does not seem quite as ridiculous to claim that there is a science fictional frontier to AS, at which it interleaves with some of the conventions, practices and goals of SF. At some point, both seek to 'document the existence, internal logic, and theoretical implications of the distinctive social and cultural values, expressions, structures, and dynamics that shape societies' in the non-West. And both aim to use these documents to denaturalise the West.

It is interesting that both AS and SF appear to have pushed out into this shared frontier as part of aggressive processes of self-defence within larger realms that constantly assault their credibility. This generates a number of implications. In terms of method, AS moves most strongly away from its science fictional frontier when it embraces rigorously disciplinary work (merely focussed on Asia). However, this also risks undermining the radical agenda of AS to de-parochialise the conventional disciplines themselves – in the extreme this is a capitulation to this parochialism. At the other extreme, AS might explore its science fictional frontier more explicitly, questing for new types of knowledge to endanger the status quo, developing new theories and methods, boldly going where no-one has gone before. However, this direction risks transforming AS into a literary genre.

Finally, I wonder about the ethical status of knowledge at this frontier. In particular, since the knowledge generated there is explicitly instrumental in purpose (it is to be *used* to de-naturalise the West), I wonder whether SF could be seen as the moral conscience of AS. Following Kant, treating another as a means rather than as an end is an absolute evil. Hence, if we seek to use, say, Japan as a foil to de-parochialise Western disciplines, wouldn't it be morally superior to use Swift's Japan in *Gulliver's Travels* or Gibson's Japan in *Neuromancer?*

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3. Ibid. p.32
4. Ibid. p.27
5. Ibid. p.25
6. Szanton, op. cit. p2
7. Here I'm ignoring the various answers that serve as common critiques of the whole Area Studies enterprise, such as the argument that the purpose of Area Studies is to 'know they enemy.' This critique is especially common in the USA since World War Two.
8. Ibid. p.2
9. Ibid. p.2
10. This argument is developed in Goto-Jones, Chris. 2005. 'If the past is a different country are different countries in the past,' in *Philosophy,* 80:311
11. In the field of anthropology, see in particular, Clifford, James. 1988. *The Predicament of Culture.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
12. A fascinating interrogation of the function of Japan in Gulliver's Travels is Markley, Robert. 2004. 'Gulliver and the Japanese: The Limits of the Postcolonial Past,' in *Modern Language Quarterly,* 65:3
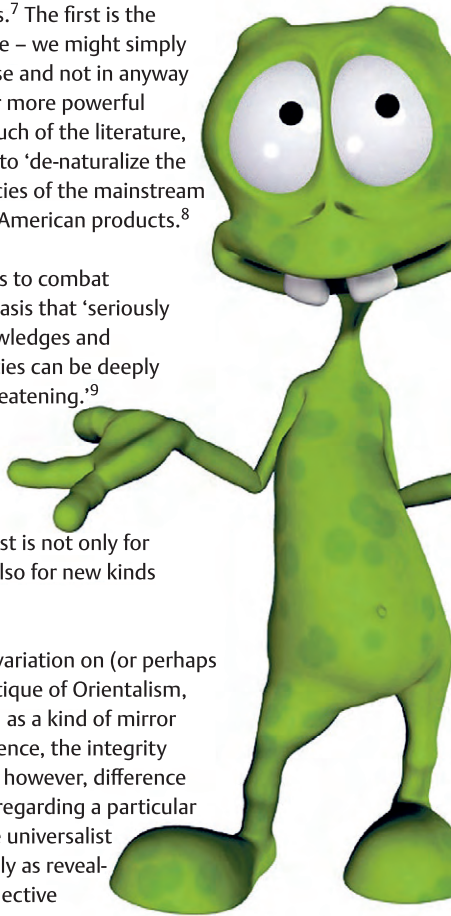
Heidi in Japan What do *anime* dreams of Europe mean for non-Europeans?

Examining mechanisms through which *anime* narrative became naturalised in non-Asian countries teaches us much about how non-Hollywood, non-Western cultural global-isation happened. Before *anime* became cool, it had braved knee-jerk dismissal and it frequently did so by entering the international market via traditionally underrated genres such as children's television, with stories set in Europe or adapt-ations of European children's books. However, as Cobus van Staden explains, this strategy was also prefigured by a long tradition of Europhilia in Japan, which significantly com-plicated the reception of *anime* both in Japan and abroad.

Cobus van Staden

TAKAHATA ISAO'S ANIME ADAPTATION of Johanna Spyri's 19th century novel Heidi is a good example of both Europhilia in Japan and acceptance of *anime* outside of Asia. *Heidi, a Girl of the Alps (Arupusu no Shōjo Haiji,* Japan, 1974) became a hit in Japan and ended up dubbed and syndicated around the world, including South Africa, which is where I first encountered her.

Heidi retains a potent nostalgic power that is fundamentally related to its depiction of an Alpine life most audience members have never experienced. However, the meaning of this European setting becomes highly unstable in different contexts, an instability I hope to describe in this article.

Heidi in Japan
The fashion for European settings was sparked in the 1970s by the 1972 *Shōjo* (girls') manga hit *The Rose of Versailles,* and its anime adaptation (*Berusai no Bara,* Nagahama Tadao and Dezaki Osamu, Japan, 1979). The same decade brought *Sekai Meisaku Gekijou* (World Masterpiece Theatre) a series of anime adaptations of Western children's classics produced by Zuiyo Eizou (later Nippon Animation.) It represented a major Japanese move into the European market and included *Moomin, The Dog of Flanders* and *Anne of Green Gables.* Takahata's *Heidi* was a particularly successful part of this series.[1]
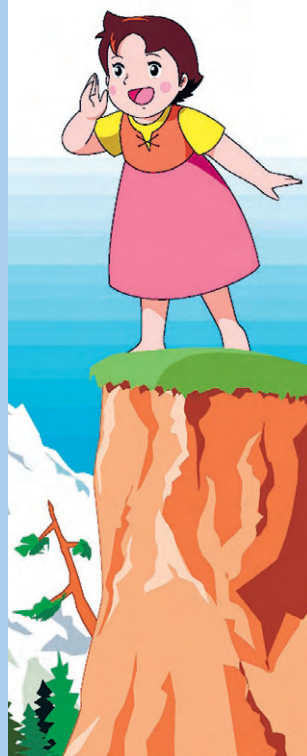
Subsequently, European settings have shown up in anime regularly, varying from relatively realistic depictions of Victorian England *(Emma – A Victorian Romance [Eikokukoi Monogatari Ema,* Kobayashi Tsuneo, Japan, 2005]) to using 19th century Europe as a setting for a robot invasion *(Steamboy [Suchiimuboi,* Ōtomo Katsuhiro, Japan, 2004]). These depictions also vary in terms of geographic specificity. Whereas, for example, Miyazaki Hayao's *Kiki's Delivery Service (Majo no Takkyuubin,* Japan, 1989) is set in a bricolage-Europe, seemingly assembled from bits of European cities all the way from Helsinki to Naples, *Heidi's* Alpine setting is very specific. In fact, Miyazaki Hayao worked as a background designer on *Heidi* and even went on a research trip to Switzerland in order to render the setting accurately, a detail which was used in the marketing for the series in Japan.[2]

'Everyone's beautiful, enchanted country'
It is worthwhile asking why European settings retain such power, compared to the relative scarcity of American settings in *anime.* While I don't want to opine on how Japanese people relate to Europe, it is interesting to compare depictions of Europe in earlier Japanese pop culture to its depiction in contem-porary *anime.*

In 1927, and again in 1947 and 1957 revivals, the all-female Takarazuka theatre troupe put on a revue called *Mon Paris.* A travelogue with scenes depicting exotic locales from Tokyo to Paris, the show epitomised what Jennifer Ellen Robertson characterises as Japanese orientalism. Most of the scenes were set against exotic backgrounds such as Ceylon and Egypt, portrayed less as societies and more as a series of static essences (the Egypt section, for example, featured a Cleopatra-like queen). When the travellers reach Paris, they find bustling crowds, the dynamic modernism contrasted with sleeping Asia. They decide to take in a revue, only to find that *Mon Paris* is also on in Paris – the French have imported Takarazuka. One of the travellers remarks that Paris and the whole of France is like Takarazuka – 'everyone's beautiful, enchanted country; a country of dreams smoldering since childhood.'[3]

'Heidi retains a potent nostalgic power that is fundamentally related to its depiction of an Alpine life most audience members have never experienced'

While the regularity with which European settings recur in *anime* would indicate that Europe retains an emotional power in Japan, two important differences emerge between *Mon Paris* and *Heidi.* Firstly, in *Mon Paris,* Europe represents burgeoning modernity and Asia sleepy timelessness (with Japan symbolically making the passage from one to the other.) However, in *Heidi* and the vast majority of *anime* series with European settings, the site of timelessness is Europe, not Asia. There are very few *anime* depictions of contemporary Europe. Mostly, Europe is treated as a changeless Ruritania, where the use of historically European detailing and landscapes designates the setting as 'beautifully past.'

Secondly, the Takarazuka revue depicted the implied validation of Japan in Europe through the fantasy that Takarazuka is also popular in big, modern Paris. *Heidi* however, doesn't mention Japan at all – it doesn't need to. The characters might speak about their yearning for the Alps, but they do so in idiomati-cally correct Japanese. Even the very European class divisions between the characters are principally expressed through the use of different politeness registers in spoken Japanese. There is no need for an explicit Japanese presence in Heidi because it is infused with 'Japaneseness' from within. The *anime* version of Heidi represents a remaking of a European children's classic in Japanese terms. Johanna Spyri's original novel was a standard of Swiss primary school curricula. Its representation of the Alps as a life-giving force and Heidi's decline after being taken to Frankfurt was used to strengthen Swiss self-identification in relation to its powerful neighbour.[4] The anime adaptation, however, does not demand such specific knowledge about Europe. For example, it doesn't even emphasise that Frankfurt is in a different country than the Swiss Alps. Switzerland has changed from an actual place with its own politics to a fantasy territory, primarily created for the pleasure of Japanese consumers. The evolution from *Mon Paris* to *Heidi* offers a coded snapshot of how Japanese attitudes *vis-à-vis* European power changed against the background of Japan's own economic ascendance during the 1970s.

Heidi in Africa
The story of Heidi's consumption in South Africa is intimately linked to apartheid-era local content law, which demanded equal broadcast time in English and Afrikaans. This led to a burgeoning dubbing industry. Because the history of popular culture and dubbing in South Africa is largely undocumented, I base my discussion of *Heidi* in South Africa on a series of interviews I conducted in 2008 with people who were directly involved in the dubbing of *Heidi* into Afrikaans.

When Heidi was originally broadcast in 1979, it became a South African phenomenon. Rina Nienaber, who provided the voice of Peter the Goatherd described how she was approached for interviews by several magazines and was featured in a special inset on *Heidi* in *Huisgenoot,* South Africa's most popular weekly magazine. On a web discussion forum dedicated to South African pop culture, I found the following comment from an anonymous contributor: 'Heidi – it was on Tuesday night at 7 o'clock. Even our school never arranged anything for Tuesday nights because no-one came as everybody was watching Heidi. Lol'.[5] Heidi wasn't just popular with children – it became a multi-generation-al hit. Nienaber told me she heard the rumour that B.J. Vorster (South Africa's Prime Minister from 1966 to 1978, whose reign saw the bloody suppression of the 1976 Soweto Uprising and the killing of Steve Biko) never scheduled meetings on Tuesday nights because he was watching *Heidi* with his grandchildren.

How did *Heidi's* portrayal of Europe and its cultural specificity relate to its popularity? When I put this question to those I interviewed, I received diametrically opposed answers. On the one hand several respondents felt the power of the Afrikaans dub made people feel that the series was their own. Marida Swanepoel, who was involved in the acquisition of children's programming, said the series gave one the feeling that it had originally been made in Afrikaans. That was certainly what I thought as a five-year old Heidi fan. On the other hand, several respondents also suggested that the European setting was a crucial contributing factor to its popularity. Kobus Geldenhuys, who translated the script, felt that the setting appealed to Afrikaners' cultural roots. Rina Nienaber suggested that Afrikaners of the era didn't really feel that they were living in Africa at all. Due to the overwhelming Eurocentrism of apartheid education, the Alps felt much less exotic than South Africa's neighbouring states.

It seems to me that *Heidi's* success is related to Afrikaners' conflicted relationship with Europe. At the exact moment when Western Europe was leading the campaign to isolate the apart-heid regime and to dissociate itself from its colonial creation, Afrikaners were using dubbing to insert themselves into a 19th century European landscape. The theme tune, which fused Afrikaans lyrics with mock-Swiss yodeling became a sym-bol of apartheid's attempts to proclaim itself as simultaneously Europe's heir and peer – much to the distaste of actual Europeans. The irony of course is that this was facilitated by Japanese animation. An additional irony is that several of the people I inter-viewed did not actually realise *Heidi* is Japanese. Several of them assured me that the series was actually German.

Anime dreams of Europe
How is it possible for one *anime* series to evoke such wildly divergent meanings? I think the non-European audience's encounter with this onscreen Europe is less related to their knowledge of actual Europe than with their perception of this setting as 'beautifully past'. This is a version of what Arjun Appadurai has called 'nostalgia without memory'. The power of Europe in this series lies not on the level of intelligibility but on the level of appeal. It functions by building atmosphere and providing background. Appadurai has argued that this nostalgia – not driven by actual experience but rather by its lack – is fundamental to contemporary marketing:

"Rather than expecting the consumer to supply memories while the merchandiser supplies the lubricant of nostalgia, now the viewer need only bring the faculty of nostalgia to an image that will supply the memory of a loss he or she has never suffered. This relationship might be called armchair nostalgia, nostalgia without lived experience or collective historical memory."[6]

I believe that the power of Europe in *anime* should not simply be understood as the continuing power of Europe itself in the imagination of the world. It is worth asking whether fictional Europe's power as 'everyone's beautiful, enchanted country' might not point to the power of capitalism to create the illusion of memory out of the absence of memory. In that case, contemporary Europeans might be as alienated from – and yet strangely connected to – these images as the rest of us.

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Bloggers, hackers and the King Kong syndrome

It is tempting to celebrate the emergence of the Internet as the dawn of a new era, promising possibilities for political change, civic participation, and obliteration of traditional geographical confines. More specifically, the rise of new technologies is often heralded as breaking open regimes that do not live up to the hegemonic ideologies of democracy and capitalism. Jeroen de Kloet reveals the two interlocking narratives which continue to preoccupy Western academic and popular discourse on the Internet in China.

Jeroen de Kloet

King Kong in China

The first of these narratives regards stories related to online protest, which at times triggers offline protests. For example, the protest in the summer of 2007 against the building of a chemical factory in Xiamen was generally perceived as a consequence of protest postings by blogger Zuola. The second is stories related to issues of censorship and digital human rights. The Great Firewall of China may well be the most popular, if not worn out, metaphor mobilised to point to the assumed omnipotence of the government.

Lokman Tsui has rightly observed that such a metaphor builds on a cold war rhetoric in which China is positioned as the constitutive outside of 'the free, open and democratic West.' His observation resonates with what literary critic Rey Chow refers to as the King Kong syndrome, 'producing 'China' as a spectacular primitive monster whose despotism necessitates the salvation of its people by outsiders.' Indeed, the motif running through the two interlocking narratives concerning Internet in China is precisely the urgent need to expose, discipline and punish this monster, to tame it, hopefully, to the world of 'liberal' and 'democratic' societies. Not surprisingly, what is being played out in the Chinese cyberspace is more messy, and thus more ambivalent than such narratives want us to believe. Rather than taking a clear position, I want to explore this messy digital domain called 'The Chinese Internet,' drawing on my research – online and offline – among bloggers (in 2008) and hackers (in 2004), before returning to deliberate on the destiny of our giant monster.

Citizen voices?

When I met Wang Xiaofeng in 1997, he was a rock journalist; 10 years later, he has become one of the most popular bloggers of the mainland. As many fellow bloggers, he combines his job as a journalist with his blogging, while the latter has become a commercial enterprise in China: the more readers you have, the more advertisements and money you can attract. Wang's style is ironic and cynical, poking fun at everything around him. To him, blogging offers a way to play with language, to experiment online with words and phrases that would not easily pass censorship. During the wave of pro-Tibet protests and corresponding pro-Beijing nationalism surrounding the Olympic torch relay in April 2008, Wang ridiculed the popular 'I Love China' T-shirts as well as the 'I Love China' sign used by millions of MSN users in their name tag. His response to the boycott of French products (called for in protest against the meeting between French President Nicolas Sarkozy and the Dalai Lama), was simple, 'if there is one thing that I boycott, it is stupid things.' At the same time, he also points his critique towards Western journalists; he writes on his blog: 'Western journalists always hope that the Chinese people they interview will touch upon sensitive issues and give sensational

remarks. They try their best to make their interviewee look like a dissident.' One of his best known stunts took place in March 2006, when Wang posted on his blog that 'Due to unavoidable reasons with which everyone is familiar, this blog is temporarily closed.' As he expected, it was only a matter of hours before the 'news' became known worldwide through global news channels. Subsequently, he revealed it was a hoax, to put up a mirror to the Western media that is so obsessively searching for cases of censorship.

Informed by such complexity as demonstrated by bloggers like Wang Xiaofeng, any study of the Chinese blogosphere must try to be alert of metanarratives and stay close to the specifics. The outspoken blog by Michael Anti, for instance, was removed by Microsoft after he voiced his critique on the dismissal of critical journalists at the Beijing News. This shows how global capitalism is deeply complicit with censorship practices in China. At the same time, to avoid foreclosing the political potentials of digital technologies, I have to be reminded of yet another specific incident. Last October, blogger Zuola went with a number of activists to one of the 'black prisons' in Beijing, where political activists were illegally detained. This group of activists, through their mobile devices, immediately uploaded their story to Twitter and their blogs, complete with pictures and sound recording of the harassment that took place when policemen started to fight with two of the visiting activists. In this case, new technologies did open up immediacy to citizen politics as we know it.

Again, I must hasten to add: such examples are not only rare, but also risk reducing 'China' to the conventional understanding and expectation of politics. The definition one gives of China's blogosphere is likely to be very much informed by a specific political agenda – if one likes to see politics, one can find politics, just as if one is looking for seedy sex blogs, one can also find precisely that. The examples I have cited point to the impossibility of speaking of the Chinese blogosphere – there are many spheres, which are as complex as the prefix 'Chinese' is problematic in its privileging of the nation-state above other possible cartographies either more localised or more globalised.

Techno nationalism?

If we move from the blogosphere towards hacker cultures in China, we enter a grey zone that often borders on the illegal. Yet, this zone is equally complex, making, once again, simple generalisations impossible, if at all desirable. In the West, most media attention has been given to the nationalistic hackers of China, who, allegedly spend their holidays breaking into Taiwanese, Japanese or American sites, to add a PRC flag, or insert political slogans. Sharpwinner is such a 'red hacker', who believes 'Chinese hackers have a strong sense of politics.' On his involvement in the attacks on the website of the

American White House, he explains: 'Those .gov and .mil sites are always our targets. For the White House site, we have spent most of our time to find the loopholes.' The attention they get is much to the dismay of hackers like Goodwell, a Beijing-based hacker who looks down upon 'scriptkiddies' like Sharpwinner who simply copy codes to hack other sites. 'I think [the hacking war between China and Japan and the US] is just awkward and boring. The real hackers have no sense of boundaries, they have nothing to do with politics, politics should never infect technology.' To Goodwell and his friends, the spirit of hacking revolves around curiosity: 'As a hacker, I think you should never give up, you should always study on, whether you fail or succeed, so as to develop new technologies.' While relentless curiosity should be a driving force that binds hacking cultures, China, in the view of Goodwell, is a bad place for hackers: 'In America, hackers may have their own culture and ideology, in China people have no sense of hacking culture and ideology. In China, you first need to secure your income. (...) Chinese have no sense of cooperation, no team spirit, if they developed a certain program or system, they may not share it.' Following Sharpwinner and Goodwell, it seems that the grey hacking zone in China is criss-crossed with fault lines of (a)political longings as well as (un)willingness to share and cooperate. The lack of shared cultural practices makes it, indeed, difficult to speak of a hacker culture in China, a stark contrast to my research experience in New York among the hacker communities there, where sharing (manifest, among others, in their meeting places, conferences and gatherings) was largely the norm.
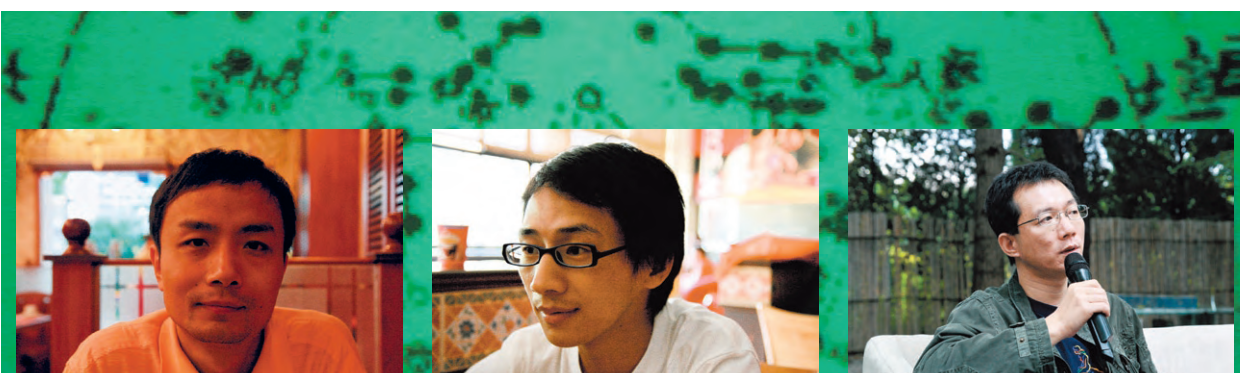
King Kong reconsidered

What, then, can we learn from these observations on bloggers and hackers? Let me return to the King Kong syndrome, which configures a monster to be tamed and brought to the civilised world. What we eventually witness, at least in King Kong films, is buildings crumbled, windows smashed to pieces, and the order of the day radically disrupted before the primitive monster ends up being killed by modern weaponry. I will therefore make two appeals from this brief account of Internet in China. First, such chaos and fragmentation that King Kong brings with it is precisely what we need to acknowledge and accept when we try to make sense of China and its Internet. Too often, accounts on Chinese Internet communities are driven by an agenda that is drenched in a cold war rhetoric that will not bring us very far. Second, the death of King Kong should force us to rethink narratives of civilisation, and the hegemonic mantra of 'democracy', 'freedom' and 'human rights.' The problem is the lack of reflection upon the production of knowledge over China and its intricate relation to power and ideology. The basic Foucaldian (and Said-ian) question of why we produce what tropes of knowledge is all too often ignored.

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On the black prison story, see: http://globalvoicesonline.org/2008/10/17/china-co-operation-20-on-beijing's-black-jails/

Bloggers (from left to right): Michael Anti, Zuola and Wang Xiaofeng.

In the year 2020 Muslim futurities in Southeast Asia

Thinking of the future is hardly possible without reference being made to the role of digital information technologies or the growing impact of knowledge industries. But how relevant are these concepts outside the Northern Hemisphere? Said to be on its way by 2020, Islamic Information Society posits an alternative to both Western ideas on the Global Village, as well as the hijacking of Islamic futures by radical conservatives. Bart Barendregt examines how majority Muslim countries in Southeast Asia have increasingly become role models in Islam's quest for a digital future.

Bart Barendregt

IN HIS *IMAGINARY FUTURES* (2007), Richard Barbrook points out how the novelty of technologies lies not so much in what they can do in the here and now, but in what more advanced models may do one day in the imaginary future. Contemporary reality, he argues, is the 'beta version of a science fiction dream'. Some of our most dominant science fiction dreams have been remarkably stable and continue to haunt us today.

For over four decades the idea of Information Society has been a battleground for ideologists, a struggle whose origins can be traced to the early Cold War era. Although in those days the US outwitted the Soviets on most terrains, including economics, the USSR could always resort to the powerful rhetoric of tomorrow's communist paradise. Hence a much needed counter future was needed, which was eventually to be found in McLuhan's bestselling *Understanding Media* (1964). While the Soviet intelligentsia propagated a future cybernetic communism by means of developing a 'unified information network', American think-tanks appropriated McLuhan's technology in their drive for progress, above all his notion of the Global Village, eventually producing what we now know as the Net, one of the building blocks of today's information society.

Today our future remains largely technologically driven, encouraging blind faith in technology, bringing in its wake not only long-term conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also the rise of a global economy in which e-commerce and e-governance are not yet standard but nevertheless are a much sought after ideal by many. Does this mean that what Barbrook refers to as the 'Californian ideology', a strange contradictory mix of the Left's liberal society and the Right's liberal market place, has become the dominant dictum in information society? Towards the end of his book Barbrook mentions how lately our future has once more become contested with 'cyber jihadi' eagerly making use of information communication technology (ICT) to propagate their ideas. To this assertion, we may add the assurance that Muslim politicians and intelligentsia are certainly not willing to leave the future to radical conservatives and consequently have been forced to come up with viable counter scenarios; these ideas are widely commented on in developmental programmes for the Islamic world as well as in the domain of Muslim popular culture. The latter offers a useful starting point in this brief inventory of the contestation of information society.

Muslims in Space
Western stereotypes tend to describe Islam scathingly as a 'backward' orientation or an absence of futurity because fate seems to lie in the hands of Allah. Indeed, writings by Muslims futurists are still far between.[1] There is some Arabic science fiction, alternative histories and, not surprisingly, Islamic terrorists increasingly play a prominent role in Western sci-fi novels. This dearth does not imply the future and sci-fi are wholly incompatible with Muslim thinking. Nuruddin (2006) describes how science fiction is central to the ideology of various African American Islamic movements, which believe their predecessors were Black Muslim astronauts from outer space. Exotic though these readings of the past may be, they do offer an alternative interpretation of world history, colonialism and racism, and also teach present-day Muslims how technology will lead to a resurgence of their ancient Islamic civilisation in the near future. In that sense their ideal is not too far removed from what is happening in mainstream Muslim societies, in which there is a growing tendency to look at space and

technology as being the next frontier. Recently, the Malaysian Astronomy and Islamic Law Association discussed how to maintain the kneeling prayer posture while in a weightless condition, eating *halal* food and proper washing when aboard a spaceship. Malaysian scientists are even developing software named 'Muslims in Space', which should enable Islamic astronauts of the future to find how to face Mecca. Here issues of religion and technological development seem to collide with questions about the future orientation of the Muslim community worldwide. A future which is no longer associated exclusively with countries traditionally thought of as the cultural heart of the Islamic world. While not all Muslims welcome the reliance on new Information technologies with undivided joy, technology has been widely embraced by Southeast Asian Muslims, often for religious and also political purposes. When it comes to technology in Islamic futurist thinking, some of the countries in Muslim Southeast Asia have become a role model not only for the region and the developing world at large, but also for Muslim coreligionists in other parts of the world. To explain this, the focus of this article will be concentrated on two newly developing Muslim majority nations in Southeast Asia, Malaysia and Indonesia. Both countries have a near past of nation-building and developmental thinking in which an almost iconic role has been accorded information technology.

Techno nationalism and digital development
Observers from Anderson to Mrázek have noted how from the outset nation-building in the newly developing Southeast Asian states has been characterised by a profound obsession with things modern, especially iconic technologies. Such iconic technologies have evolved from the early days of print nationalism to national cars and lately national phones. The realisation of ICT infrastructure and innovative e-governance applications especially have become a hallmark of Southeast Asian modernity. Such projects include Indonesia's successful launching of its own satellite system in 1976, creating a modern day variant of Anderson's national audience, and boosting New Order techno-political visions (Barker 2005). However, in the 1990s when a new Internet era evolved Southeast Asian politicians began focusing on prestigious state-run campaigns to develop the needed ICT infrastructure. The best known of these projects is Malaysia's Vision2020, which comes with the Malaysian answer to Silicon Valley, Cyberjaya, and its associated Multimedia Super Corridor. In 1991 Prime Minister Mahatir Mohammad chose a year nearly three decades into the future as a target for his country's national, political, economic, and social development. By that magical year (and 2020 would frequently appear as ultimate target), Malaysia would be ready to participate as a regional, if not world power. Similar information technology infrastructural projects have been envisaged in other parts of Southeast Asia, albeit not all of them equally successful. These projects have all been devised to make the great leap forward, preparing Southeast Asia for the challenges of the 21st century. Lately the belief in a technologically driven future has been transformed into what is now known as information technology for development. This ICT4D discourse has resulted locally in the formation of an e-ASEAN group focusing on the potential of both e-commerce and e-governance applications, echoing the hopes of a digital revolution in the near future, very similar to the imagined futures fostered by the Cold War elites. As a (not always intended) consequence, the Southeast Asian region has become a much sought after market for media and telecom conglomerates from both the West and East Asia, but there are other future collaborations on the horizon. Examples of such alliances include the marketing of such by now extremely popular 'Made in the Middle East' Muslim gadgets as the Islamic Phone or the Ipod-like 'Pocket Muslim'.

Indonesian telecommunications provider Telekom recently launched its *Telekom Ibadah* service, targeting Southeast Asian mobile phone users on the pilgrimage to Mecca. And in early 2007, as another even more exciting example of such new post-national projects, Malay newspapers reported on a new hi-tech city being developed in Medina with Malaysian support. The Medina Knowledge Economic City (KEC), expected to be completed by 2020, is to be a landmark providing opportunities to such twin programmes as Malaysia's Multimedia Super Corridor with what will be happening in Saudi Arabia in a few years. One newspaper quoted the Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister as saying that: 'It shows how two Muslim countries can co-operate and collaborate in the interest of the *ummah* (Muslim community) and can indeed transform the Muslim world' (Habib 2007). The Deputy Prime Minster states it was no more than fitting that Medina, the holy city which saw the beginning of the Islamic acquisition of knowledge, was chosen to transform the Muslims and bring about a true revival. It is this newly gained Islamic techno pride which brings us back to the future and how this is currently imagined among Southeast Asian Muslim intelligentsia.

Back to the future and back to Islam!
From a Western perspective, the Islamic world has failed to modernise, secularise, and innovate. Recognising the gap between Western and Muslim civilisation at the outset of the 21st century, many Muslims blame this lack of development in Muslim societies on the experience of colonisation and subsequently the ongoing political and economic repression by the same West. It is this feeling of injustice which at present serves to unite Muslims. Scholars of Islam have argued how the same political and cultural repression has led Islam to be developed as a social philosophy comparable to socialism, communism, and capitalism. This rise of Islam as an ideological system is heralded by the overt use of new media technologies throughout the Muslim world now enabling a new Muslim middle class to discuss their religion easily without necessarily looking to classically trained authorities. As one of the basic tenets of Islam is to acquire knowledge, an interest in information technology seems to have become an end in itself among many believers, with technology and spirituality now reinforcing each other strikingly. The interest Southeast Asian Muslims take in a future determined by ICT therefore accords very well with the nationalist development ideologies mentioned above and with broader trends discernible throughout the Muslim world. One of the consequences of this new techno-savvy Islam has been the overt use of information technology by transnational Ikhwan and Salafi groups which propagate the ideal of the *cyber Caliphate*. The problem with their 'retro futurism' is that by means of modern ICT they resort to a seventh century 'near perfect past', leaving the Islamic world little room for progress.

More progressive thinkers argue that there is more to the contemporary revival of Islam than the radical views of conservative Muslims. There is the success story of Islamic economics (from *syariah*-based micro credit, to present-day Islamic mobile banking) and the more controversial call for a truly Islamic science. They argue that classical Muslim discourse is not greatly concerned with State and politics, but concentrates entirely on the issue of a community bound by faith (*ummah*). Hence, some have urged for a multicultural Islam to commence a dialogue with the West and East Asia, in which Islamic ideas on economics, politics, the environment, not to mention science and technology, will become part of a global agenda.

Fig. 1 (below) Muslim countries in Southeast Asia have increasingly become role models in Islam's quest for a digital future.

Fig. 2 (below left) 'Cyber-jihadi' are eagerly using information communication technology to propagate their ideas.

Fig. 3 (below right) 'Made in the Middle East' Muslim gadgets such as GSM phones which carry digital versions of the Holy Qur'an are extremely popular.

They envisage an alternative modernity based on a world governance system which is fair, just, and representational; which stresses the existence of self-reliant, sustainable ecological communities and, not surprisingly, the use of advanced technologies to link such communities (see Inayatullah 2005). It is such a concept of tomorrow's *ummah*, first referred to by people as Muslim intellectual Sardar, and also embraced by Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim (1991), which can compete with the crowd-pulling power of cyber fundamentalism or, for that matter, the more Western style liberal Information Society. Once again, such futures of a post-postmodern Muslim society are not all that far off.

From Malay visions to technological blessings
Malaysia has been internationally heralded as a leader in planning for the future, combining economic progress with cultural values (Islam, Malay, and later even Asian values); a reputation which is largely attributable to the tireless efforts of former prime minister Mahatir and his vision for the year 2020. Nevertheless, while generally respected as a great statesman in the Muslim world, some at home have criticised Mahatir and his UMNO party for using Islam only superficially to win votes. Consequently, it is not surprising that the post-Mahatir era has seen Muslim organisations and individuals claiming an even more religiously inspired future. In the popular domain, this thinking is signalled in the Malaysian film *Syukur21* (Blessings for the 21st century), which was released throughout Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and Indonesia in early 2001, in the hope of drawing crowds to the cinemas at the end of the annual fasting period. The film, claimed to be the world's first-ever Islamic science fiction, offers an Islamic counter-modernity to the ambitious, recent large-scale development projects in the target markets. The year in which it is set – 2021 – is not coincidental as it follows directly on the heels of the State-run Malaysian campaign of Vision2020. And the film is not the sole counter reading of nationalist futures. Two years after the release of *Syukur21*, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), representing 57 Muslim majority countries in the UN, held its biennial congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The conference, aptly entitled 'Science and Technology for Socioeconomic Well-Being of the Ummah', promoted a combination of spirituality and technology as medicine to aid the newly developing post-colonial world. The Kuala Lumpur declaration of 2003, better known as *Vision 1441* (the Islamic year 1441 not coincidently equals 2020 and therefore is again a clear reference to the more secular Vision 2020, showing to what extent Malaysia has become a spiritual guide in the modernisation of the Islamic world) urged its members to focus on strengthening the knowledge-based or K-economy, but also to fight the deepening divides which threaten much of the Islamic world, large parts of which are still situated in the poor South. Some years earlier, the Tunis Forum on ICTs and Development in the Islamic world (2000) had already signalled similar dangers facing many Muslim and developing countries which were lagging behind in the area of ICT. Participants in both conferences have hence been mobilised not only to fight computer illiteracy, but also to urge Muslim governments and NGOs to think about long-term ICT policy, Islamic centres of excellence, and transnational cooperation throughout the Muslim world.[2] This project includes the creation of an Islamic ICT Fund, the strengthening of an all Islamic Broadcasting Corporation, but also enshrines the wish to establish an Islamic Portal which encompasses the entire Web. Such ideas have meanwhile been taken over by other platforms. Recently Islamic-world.net, the site of the Malaysia based Khalifah Institute, came up with its 'Web Plan'.[3] Part of this Plan is to realise the number one top Islamic web portal providing posi-

Fig. 4 (above)
Homepage of www.
islamic-msn.com

Fig. 5 (above left)
The belief in a
technology-driven
future has led to
ambitious projects
across Southeast Asia
such as Malaysia's
answer to Silicon
Valley – Cyberjaya.

Fig. 6 (above right)
See notes.

'Recently, the Malaysian Astronomy and Islamic Law Association discussed how to maintain the kneeling prayer posture while in a weightless condition, eating halal food and proper washing when aboard a spaceship'

tive information about Islam and giving daily commentary on important international news events from an Islamic perspective. Other strategies in very much the same vein as the present web 2.0 hype include such as polls to assess the opinion of Muslims worldwide on various issues important to Islam, while there is also the promise of developmentalism when cheaply Xeroxed materials are to be provided in areas of the world with as yet still limited access to electronic information technology. However, most interesting is the proposal to develop the 'Islamic Net', separate from the Internet as we know it, and with the provision of at least one computer terminal in every mosque in the world being linked to it. Here a future vision of the Net equals the coming of a united *ummah*.

From Muslim technocrats to poster preachers
Whereas the US, Japan and South Korea are still prime examples of what modernity is supposed to look like, fellow OIC countries increasingly serve as an additional role model to Muslims in imagining the future: Turkey when it comes to an ideal political system; Iran for challenging US hegemony; Dubai for its economic successes; and Malaysia for the promise of a technological but none the less spiritual future. Indonesia, although not able to boast about considerable hi-tech successes, may provide us with an even better illustration of Islam's digital future, as many progressive thinkers here increasingly make use of a techno savvy form of Islam. After the end of the Suharto regime in 1998, Islamic politics soon flourished, gaining momentum as this coincided not only with the earlier mentioned Islamic Resurgence but also chimed in precisely with the worldwide ICT revolution. One of the most prominent examples of the combination of Islam, politics and information technology is the success story of the Prosperous Justice Party or PKS. The PKS, which emerged from parts of the students' movement which brought down Suharto, heavily emphasises the importance of modern information communication technology if it is to decolonise the proposed futures of 'the imperialistic Western world'. But not all Indonesian Muslims are equally defensive nor do they all share the anti-Western attitude of the PKS. Hefner (2003) has argued that, whereas the growth of new intellectual Muslim discourses in other countries has tended to lead to radical extremism, in Indonesia so far it has resulted predominantly in a new, more moderate Islam. To many the face of this more moderate Islam has been the self-styled Muslim preacher and TV celebrity AA Gym. Gym has proven to be a successful entrepreneur who has published scores of Muslim self-help books, comics, pop music and soap serials. He is also one of the first to have launched a Muslim content for mobile phones and his Manajemen Qolbu Foundation makes heavy use of the Internet[4] in much the same way Christian televangelists do in other parts of the world. He is not the first to do so. The history of Indonesian public Islam in the last four decades coincides strongly with developments in information and communication technologies (cf. Watson 2005). Gym has been particularly successful in blending his Sufi wisdom with global business management tactics and, although he is now on the wane, others such as Opick (a former rock star now manifesting himself as pop preacher) and Ustad Jefri Al Buchori are already lining up to become Islam's next celebrities. None of these 'poster preachers' has had a traditional religious training nor indeed either an extensive knowledge of Arab language or of the Koran. Members of the Indonesian poster preacher generation are exponents of a public Islam which has been around ever since the Iranian Revolution of 1970, but which is now reaching its zenith in the wake of the diffusion of Information Technology in the Muslim world. Not surprisingly, this new restyled techno savvy popular culture does not

escape controversy and conservative and Islamists groups especially have blamed it for what is now called either Market Islam, 15 minute Islam or Islam Lite as selling out or even of being the Devil in disguise. Various Muslim groups are now battling for the Islamic future, but in all of these futures information and communication technology is playing a decisive role.

An imagined future of spiritual technology
The purpose of this contribution has been to start unravelling some of the dynamics of Muslim futurist thinking in Southeast Asia, especially where these touch the role of technology in it. While Indonesia's 15 minute Islam or Malay Muslim techno nationalism are locally particular, they are not unique in the Muslim world and there is plenty of proof that one of the unexpected outcomes of the use of information technology by a young generation of Muslims especially is the emergence of a more moderate forward looking Islam. Whereas today's Information Society was once a utopian ideal on both sides in the Cold War era, it is continuing to be an ongoing ideological battle for following generations in other parts of the world. As we speak, Muslim technocrats and intelligentsia are reinventing information society for tomorrow's *ummah*: an imagined future of fair Islamic economics, just governance and sustainable communities bound by information technology. However, part of this future has already arrived in the Muslim world, surprisingly fast, too fast even for some, considering some of the controversies surrounding the present-day use of ICTs particularly by young Southeast Asian Muslims. Explicit religious use of Internet-based technology or mobile phones has brought such new challenges for young Muslims to face as Islamic capitalism, the superstar status of mobile Muslim evangelists, but also confronts them with questions related to the form and function of what Islamic technology ought to be. Is technology religious simply because it is made and used by Muslims (what I call the 'Made in Mecca scenario') or should it come with a carefully developed spiritual etiquette which breaks with Western antecedents of science and technology? And what does technology, once used, do to religion itself? The future has yet to teach us to what extent ideas about the *cyber ummah* are so very different from now dominant views of Information Society and to what extent this utopian vision will have an impact on Muslims using information technology in the present.

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Notes

1. But see the World Futures Studies Federation, a global network of futurists of which both Inayattulah and Sardar, progressive Muslim intellectuals, are member, or Muslim Futures Network (http://www.wnf.org)
2. The IAS Tunis Declaration on Information Technology for Development in the Islamic World also calls for Muslim countries to extend free trade agreements with developing countries and open up their markets to software being developed in the Third world
3. http://islamic-world.net/plan.php, Last accessed June 2008
4. See http://www.cybermq.com/, Last accessed June 2008

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Chinascape moving beyond the People's Republic

The PRC Internet is exciting not just its middle-class users in China, but the legions of Chinese language speakers who access the Chinese Internet outside of the mainland. It's sparking media interest not just in China but in the West too and there appears to be a common understanding that the Internet is an essential part of China's modernisation and opening up to the world. But what exactly characterises Chinese Internet use? Jens Damm goes in search of the borders of Chinese cyberspace.

Jens Damm

Fig 1 (top left) Internet via mobile, Shanghai. Photograph by 'Shanghai Sky'. Courtesy of Flickr.com.

Fig. 2 (centre left) Chinese internet cafe sign warning users not to publish anti-social material online by 'EYG'. Courtesy of Flickr.com.

Fig. 3 (below left) Chinese Cybercops.

ANY MENTION OF THE CHINESE INTERNET is generally a reference to the Internet of the People's Republic of China (PRC). With more than 250 million users, the PRC has become the 'number one' if comparisons are drawn with other countries and users present on the World Wide Web, although the relative Internet penetration rate in the PRC (19,1%) is still slightly below the world average (CNNIC, 7/2008).

There are, however, other reasons for the prominence of the PRC in discussions on the Chinese Internet: The great success story linked with building an impressive infrastructure (Clark & Harwit, 2006) and the rapid 'informatisation' of Chinese urban society, the rapid growth in users who access the Internet via broadband (84.7%) and the 73.05 million users who access the web with mobile phones. In the context of infrastructure and technical figures, China has been very successful in implementing measures to improve the Net, for example, in building fibre networks to Tibet and other less developed regions in the West. There have also been several ambitious projects in the big cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, the Digital City Zhongguancun, and also in the coastal regions, such as Zhejiang, Guangdong and Fujian. China's international bandwidth – which reached 312,346 Mbit/s in 2007 – and the number of registered domains which now stands at 14.85 million shows that China is fast approaching its goal of becoming the number one in the global Internet.

Not surprisingly, the positive effects of the Internet and ongoing 'informatisation,' are frequently mentioned in the PRC's mass media and in a growing number of academic publications on the importance of the Internet for the development of China. These positive effects include the introduction of e-governance on a wide scale, which has been effective in promoting good governance and anti-corruption measures (Damm, 2006), the possibility of 'leap-frogging' an industrial development phase via informatisation (Xie, 2006), and the impact of the new interactive Web 2.0 applications (Ma, 2007).

The PRC Internet also excites the interests of the Western media, but mostly in relation to issues of censorship and control (Damm, 2007). The different opinions regarding the 2008 Olympic Games may serve as the best example to date: While mainstream journalists described China as an authoritarian and inhumane regime, representatives of the academic world reminded us of the difference between Maoist China and China today. As far as Internet research is concerned, the Western academic world is only slowly moving towards describing a broader and much more multi-faceted picture of the PRC's Internet. At this point I would like to mention, in particular, the efforts of the annual Chinese Internet Research Conference and also of some journalists who have been based in China for longer periods on topics concerning the way the Internet is used in China – whether there are any special characteristics, whether user behaviour differs from 'global' usage and to what extent the Internet has changed Chinese society, despite the existing controls – are seldom mentioned, at least in the West.

This raises a second issue: the lack of attention paid to the large number of people who are accessing the Internet in the Chinese language from outside the PRC and the question of how ethnic Chinese world-wide use the Internet. First, I will outline the topics which could be subsumed under the term 'Chinese Internet' in order to move away from a PRC-centrered view. Secondly, I shall examine some specific characteristics of the usage of the 'Chinese Internet' in specific regions; and, finally, I shall evaluate the findings to decide whether it is useful to talk about a common 'Chinese Internet;' whether there are Chinese characteristics (*Zhongguo* or *Zhonghua*) pertaining to Internet use, or whether the geographical boundaries extend so far into cyberspace that to speculate about a culturally defined Chinese cyberspace makes no sense.

Defining 'Chinese cyberspaces' is problematic. The term may refer to cyberspaces which are defined either by language, being either Chinese, English, or any other language of the Chinese diaspora, or by content, that is, cyberspace dealing with cultural questions of Chineseness, history, and – very broadly defined – identity. With respect to language, we encounter the problem that the Chinese world does not employ Chinese as the sole language: while Chinese characters are normally used in the PRC, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, (albeit in two different versions), in Singapore and Malaysia, where Chinese is widely taught within the Chinese community, English is normally used online. The situation within the diaspora varies considerably. There are also huge differences between the language use of the new migrants *(xin yimin)* and the old diaspora. New migrants tend to employ Chinese in their specific blogs and BBS (Bulletin Board System) which restricts the audience to their own group and users coming from the homeland. Websites and blogs of the older Chinese diasporas, however, tend to employ English and/or the respective language of the new homeland, thus reaching out not to a wider, more general audience in the place of settlement.

In terms of Chinese cyberspaces in the 'homelands,' Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao are – to varying degrees – forerunners in the new information and communication technologies. Emigration destinations of the 'new migrants', such as North America, Australia, and the Anglo Saxon world in general are among the most wired places on earth. In the case of China, national boundaries and 'Internet boundaries' are separate issues: Within the PRC, there are *de facto* 'national' boundaries which separate the mainland from Hong Kong and Macao, but totally different structures and policies exist in the context of Internet policy. Taiwan a *de facto* independent nation, due to the common international one-China policy, encounters many difficulties with regard to joining international organisations. However, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) assigned domain names such as '.hk' to Hong Kong and '.tw' to Taiwan as this body officially recognises 'countries, territories, and separate economies.'

Case 1: PRC
According to the latest bi-annual survey carried out by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNIIC), which was published in July 2008 and refers to data from 2007, several particularities can be observed. Regarding the demographic structure of PRC netizens, the number of females among users has increased to 46.4% of the total, considerably narrowing the gap which has long existed between male and female users. Compared with the other 'Chinese places,' and also with international trends, most of the users in the PRC are young. They tend to be aged 30 and under, which amounts to 68.6% of the netizens in China, and exceeds two thirds of the total number of netizens. This age structure also influences specific behaviour patterns prevalent on the PRC Internet, reflected in, for example, the great importance of entertainment. It would therefore be well worth researching new developments and trends to see whether these patterns remain unchanged as young people grew older and still use the Net. Regarding education, the PRC Internet is still very much dominated by better educated users, but here also the gap has become significantly smaller and, for example, less well educated migrants in the urban areas are using the Internet to stay in contact with their families in the hinterland. Also noteworthy is the rather low number of domestic computers accessible for Internet users in China: this stands at only 84.7 million, which means that many people still either access the Internet via cyber cafes – CNNIC puts this at 40% – or that an increasing number access the internet via mobile phones, which in turn has consequences with regard to how the Internet is used.

Entertainment and communication dominate usage patterns and are the frequently visited content of the Net. Users surveyed by CNNIC replied that online music played the most important role (212 million users), while other often mentioned usages were online videos, search engines, email and online games. Online games come seventh in the ranking of Internet applications in China; in June 2008, this was 58.3%, and the number of users reached 147 million. By way of comparison, the online game-using rate in the US in the same period was 35%.

Instant messaging use is much higher than the worldwide average, but China still lags behind with regard to e-business and e-commerce. Global instant message providers, such as MSN, are popular, but there is also the unique Instant messaging application QQ which is popular in the PRC and almost nowhere else. (Nevertheless, large numbers of Chinese users has made QQ the third largest Instant messaging system worldwide). 77.2% of all Chinese users use Instant Messaging, compared with a figure of 39 % in the US.

Another interesting factor is the increasing number of blogs. This phenomenon may well account for a whole new understanding of news media in China, particularly when considering the strictly censored official news outlets. As one journalist at the annual Chinese Internet Research Conference, which took place at the University of Hong Kong earlier this year commented: In the US when you hear a rumour about an earthquake you start watching TV; in China, nobody bothers to watch CCTV because everybody is convinced it will take hours for them to broadcast the news. People use SMS and go online. A good deal of interest, both in the PRC and the West, has been directed towards the use of blogs and personal space. This new development in China could radically alter the power between state and users, as users are becoming increasingly empowered.

Case 2: Taiwan
In Taiwan, the Taiwan Network Information Center (http://www.twnic.net) provides some specific surveys which not only cover statistical data regarding users and broadband access, but which also look into user behaviour. While these surveys are undertaken on a more ad hoc basis than those of the PRC/CNNIC, they are very well documented and offer valuable insights into the methodology and the research. The last two surveys – partly in Chinese, partly in English – dealt in particular with users employing either broadband or wireless access to

'Instant messaging use is much higher than the worldwide average, but China still lags behind with regard to e-business and e-commerce'

Fig. 7 (Right)
Zongchuangchun Plaza.

Fig. 4 (left)
Chinese youths on internet.

Fig 5 (above)
Chinese internet cafe in Shanghai. Photograph by 'Exo'. Courtesy of Flickr.com.

Fig. 6 (below)
www.qq.com

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the Internet (TWNIC, 7/2008, 2007). 79% of households in Taiwan owned computers, 71% of households had Internet access, 69% of households had broadband access and 96% of online households were using broadband connections. Thus, a rather impressive two thirds of Taiwanese are netizens. Mobile phones also play an important role and the penetration rate in Taiwan is 105%. In general, the user behaviour of Taiwanese netizens, resembles international user behaviour. For example, the use of search engines (searching 57.48% and browsing 46.76%) plays an important role and the use of email (26.96%) is more common than the use of instant messaging (17.41%). Online games are played by one fifth of Taiwanese users, which is more or less the global average.

Unlike their PRC counterparts, Taiwanese users are less dependent on the Internet for getting news. Only 11.76% of the users read online news and blogs are also less important (5.18%). One explanation for this, of course, could be the free and uncensored media in Taiwan. E-shopping – an area in which the PRC lags behind places such as the US and the EU – is much more popular in Taiwan, while e-communities play a significantly lesser role.

Case 3: Hong Kong
Hong Kong is, as a city-state, hardly comparable to Taiwan and the PRC. An e-infrastructure is usually much easier to establish in areas with a high population density. Thus, the household broadband penetration rate (February 2008) was 76.7%; while the mobile phone penetration rate (February 2008) reached 154%. And, as is the case with Japan, mobile devices play a very important role in enabling Web access: a quarter of the time spent on the Internet is via mobile devices. A recent survey (2008 Digital 21 Strategy http://www.info.gov.hk/digital21/eng/statistics/stat.html) of Hong Kong users found that the most important features were communication with others 83.3% and browsing/surfing web pages (excluding Government websites) 81.3%; users also cited features such as searching for and downloading information online (excluding Government information) 60.3% and reading magazines / newspapers online 55.9%. Lower than the global average was the use of electronic business services online 37.8%, while online digital entertainment 37.5% played a significant, but not really outstanding role.

Conclusions
Firstly, it has been shown that the Chinese Internet, however this may be defined, is much larger than the PRC Internet. Secondly, there is certainly a large minority of Chinese speakers

using the Internet outside the PRC proper. Regarding the mutual possibilities of accessing the Chinese Internet especially across the Taiwan strait, a contradictory observation can be made: despite the obvious censorship and blocking measures of the PRC, the Chinese language Internet can be widely accessed in both directions, that is, the Chinese language Internet outside the PRC is accessible to users from the PRC, while the PRC Internet is open to all users from outside the PRC. However, the technical limitations and laws present obstacles to a free and borderless Internet: the PRC, in particular, hinders communication between either side of the Taiwan Strait by blocking not only all the official Taiwanese websites, but also the Taiwanese pro-communist websites engaging in cross-Strait issues. Sensitive and political issues and discussions simply do not travel across the Taiwan Strait. Thirdly, cultural boundaries seem to exist: people surf the places where they feel comfortable. Empirical research carried out in Taiwan (Liu, Day, Sun, & Wang, 2002) mentions the fact that 85% of Taiwanese users remain almost exclusively within the Taiwanese cyberspace, and that the number of users visiting foreign websites (English and Japanese) is still greater than the number visiting other Chinese cyberspaces (5.9%). This questions the results of earlier research on the Internet and the Chinese Diaspora and, for example, Long Wong's claim that 'The Internet has become a new global phenomenon, enlarging new democratic discourse and has helped to foster new empowerment and learning experiences' (Wong, 2003) cannot be substantiated. Fourthly, regarding the specifics, the picture is very mixed: the PRC Internet is shaped, in particular, by interactive formats and a high degree of entertainment, while in Hong Kong mobile access plays a very significant role. Taiwan, on the other hand, follows international trends much more closely than the other two regions.

In sum, the existence of a Chinese cyberspace without borders or boundaries cannot be confirmed. My analysis reveals the deficiencies in existing theories, such as the once popular proclamation of the Internet as a borderless space (Cairncross, 1997; Rheingold, 2000). While in many respects the Chinese cyberspace is global and reaches out, to some extent, beyond national borders, it is characterised by various constraints (Lessig, 1999), such as PRC censorship and by different patterns of usage.

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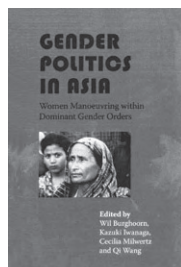**jens.damm@fu-berlin.de**

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Bookmarked

Creating the 'New Man'. From Enlightenment Ideals to Socialist Realities
Yinghong Cheng
University of Hawai'i Press. 2009.
ISBN 978 0 8248 3074 8

THE IDEA OF ELIMINATING undesirable traits from the human temperament to create a 'new man' has been part of moral and political thinking worldwide for millennia. During the Enlightenment, European philosophers sought to construct an ideological framework for reshaping human nature. But it was only among the communist regimes of the 20th century that such ideas were actually put into practice on a nationwide scale. In this book Yinghong Cheng examines three culturally diverse sociopolitical experiments – the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin, China under Mao, and Cuba under Castro – in an attempt to better understand the origins and development of the 'new man'.

This book's fundamental concerns are how these communist revolutions strove to create a new, morally and psychologically superior, human being aqnd how this task paralleled efforts to create a superior society. To these ends, it addresses a number of questions: What are the intellectual roots of the new-man concept? How was this idealistic and utopian goal linked to specific political and economic programmes? How do the policies of these particular regimes, based as they are on universal communist ideology, reflect national and cultural traditions? Cheng begins by exploring the origins of the idea of human perfectibility during the Enlightenment. His discussion moves to other European intellectual movements, and then to the creation of the Soviet Man, the first communist new man in world history. Subsequent chapters examine China's experiment with human nature, starting with the nationalistic debate about a new national character at the turn of the 20th century; and Cuban perceptions of the new man and his role in propelling the revolution from a nationalist, to a socialist, and finally a communist movement. The last chapter considers the global influence of the Soviet, Chinese, and Cuban experiments.

Creating the 'New Man' contributes greatly to our understanding of how three very different countries and their leaders carried out problematic and controversial visions and programmes. It will be of special interest to students and scholars of world history and intellectual, social, and revolutionary history, and also development studies and philosophy.
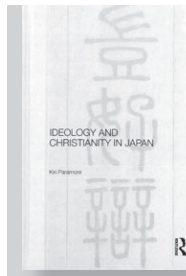
Ideology and Christianity in Japan
Kiri Paramore
Routledge/Leiden Series in Modern East Asian Politics and History. 2009
ISBN 978 0 415 44356 2

IDEOLOGY AND CHRISTIANITY in Japan shows the major role played by Christian-related discourse in the formation of early-modern and modern Japanese political ideology.

The book traces the historical development of anti-Christian ideas in Japan from the banning of Christianity by the Tokugawa shogunate in the early 1600s, to the use of Christian and anti-Christian ideology in the construction of modern Japanese state institutions at the end of the 1800s. Kiri Paramore recasts the history of Christian-related discourse in Japan in a new paradigm showing its influence on modern thought and politics and demonstrates the direct links between the development of ideology in the modern Japanese state, and the construction of political thought in the early Tokugawa shogunate.

Demonstrating hitherto ignored links in Japanese history between modern and early-modern, and between religious and political elements, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Japanese history, religion and politics.
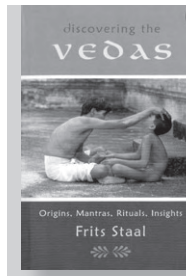
Discovering the Vedas. Origins, Mantras, Rituals, Insights **Frits Staal**
Published by Society for Japanese Arts; Penguin Books India. 2008
ISBN 978 0 14309 986 4

IN THIS UNPRECEDENTED guide to the Vedas, Frits Staal, the celebrated author of Agni: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar and Universals: Studies in Indian Logic and Linguistics, examines almost every aspect of these ancient sources of Indic civilization.

Staal extracts concrete information from the Oral Tradition and Archaeology about Vedic people and their language, what they thought and did, and where they went and when. He provides essential information about the Vedas and includes selections and translations. He sheds lights on mantras and rituals that contributed to what came to be known as Hinduism. Significant is a modern analysis of what we can learn from the Vedas today: the original forms of the Vedic sciences, as well as the perceptive wisdom of the composers of the Vedas. The author puts Vedic civilization in a global perspective through a wide-ranging comparison with other Indic philosophies and religions, primarily Buddhism.

For Staal, originally a logician, the voyage of discovering the Vedas is like unpeeling an onion but without the certainty of reaching an end. Even so, his book shows that the Vedas have a logic all of their own. Accessible, finely argued, and with a wealth of information and insight, Discovering the Vedas is for both the scholar and the interested lay reader.

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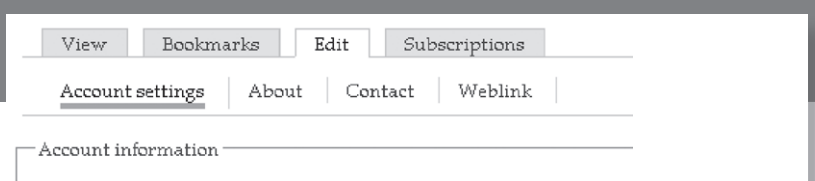**Thomas Voorter, info@newasiabooks.org**
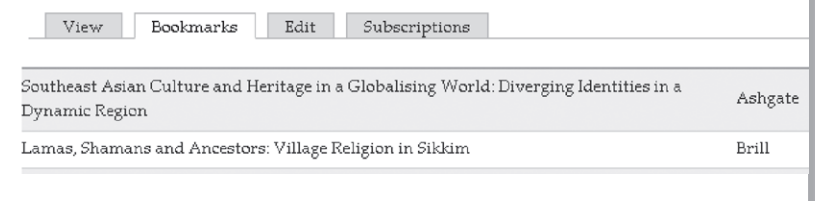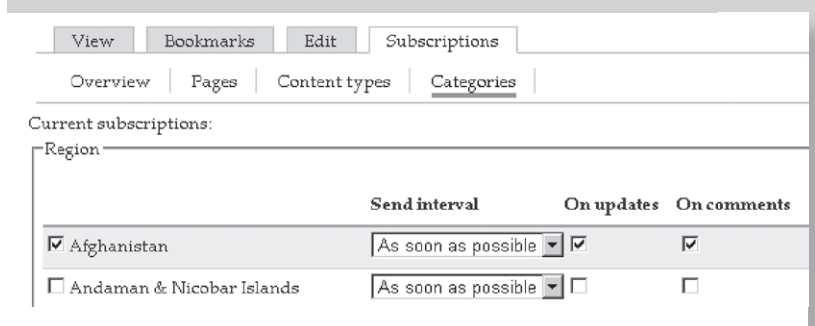

Fig. 1.

Bookmarks for Thomas
Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

New Asia Books

Mind, mayhem and money

The poets of mainland China have been far busier writing and wrangling over their work during the past 20 or so years than scholars from beyond China have been in analysing it. While research on this body of poetry has begun to fill out in recent years, no single piece of scholarship makes a contribution equal to that of Maghiel van Crevel's *Chinese Poetry in Times of Mind, Mayhem and Money*. This is an ambitious book. Its 13 chapters move from an extensive introduction on through a dozen 'case studies' that cover, in roughly chronological order, the work of about 11 important poets. Where the individual chapters provide focused, meticulously detailed considerations of poetry and discourse on poetry, the book as a whole presents a timely overview of the development of Chinese avant-garde poetry since the mid-1980s.

Distinctly individual voices

Mind does many things. Perhaps its most important goal is to explode reductive understandings of contemporary mainland Chinese avant-garde poetry. Too much is missed, van Crevel argues in his extensive first chapter, when critics and even poets themselves superimpose sociopolitical context, linear development narratives, biographism, or catch-all labelling of trends and camps on top of the inherent complexity of poetic texts. Instead, he invites readers to take this poetry on its own terms through the practice of close reading. Only careful attention to questions of poetic form and content, van Crevel insists, can bring forth the distinctly individual voices within the clamour of puffery and polemic that many of these poets tend to discharge so effusively.

Except for the chapter on Yu Jian, which hews to a focused and perceptive explication of Yu's poetry, chapters two through eight affirm the distinctiveness of the individual poetic voice against certain biases of accepted critical wisdom. The bleak beauty of Han Dong's poetry, for instance, is ill-served by its categorisation as merely a 'post-Misty' intervention. Readers of Haizi's poetry must look beyond the impact of his suicide to get the most from his intense, idealistic poems. The literary sophisticate Xi Chuan is something more than the grand saviour of pure poetry in the age of economic reform. And, contra his commentators, Sun Wenbo's poetry owes as much to formal poetic qualities as to 'narrativistic' content. Other chapters compare quite different poets under a shared theme. Chapter

Shen Haobo, 2006. Photographer unidentified.

Yan Jun, 2007. Photograph by Qiaoqiao.

Four gathers the poetries of Yang Lian, Wang Jiaxin, and Bei Dao together under the problematic of exile, while Chapter Six speculates on the evasive nature of prose-poetry while comparing Yu Jian, standard-bearer of the 'popular' *(minjian)* camp, and Xi Chuan, recognised as the consummate 'intellectual' *(zhishifenzi)* poet. The back five chapters of the book move from poetry itself into more meta-poetic concerns. Chapter nine examines a self-conscious poetic movement: the in-your-face Lower Body *(xiabanshen)* poetry that emerged around 2000 and its two best-known practitioners, Yin Lichuan and Shen Haobo. Chapters ten and eleven speculate on constructions of poethood by taking on the meta-poetic writings of first Xi Chuan and then the pairing of Yu Jian and Han Dong. The book's final two chapters offer, in turn, a meticulous reconstruction and analysis of the rancorous popular-intellectual polemic that raged for several years after 1998, and a relatively brief coda whose introduction of Beijing-based poet-musician-critic Yan Jun opens the way toward exploring interfaces between poetry, music, and other artistic forms.

'The Elevated and the Earthly'

Singly and in concert, all these chapters highlight the rich and vibrant texture of poetry, personalities, and disputation that constitute the Chinese poetic *avant-garde*. But while giving the poets their due, *Mind* also allows certain conceptual frameworks to grow out of its detailed analyses. The most prominent - but in fact least important - of these frameworks is the literary-historical narrative suggested by the book's title, *Chinese Poetry in Times of Mind, Mayhem and Money*. *Mind* refers to the cultural-intellectual fever of the 1980s, mayhem to the far-reaching disruption of June 4, 1989, and money, of course, to the ascendance of the economic imperative in the 1990s and beyond. However, given van Crevel's refusal to reduce poetic development to any neat linear sequence, such periodisation ends up tangential to other unifying schemes, making the title something of a red herring. The book's true contribution lies in its sifting out of conceptual categories immanent to the *avant-garde* poetic field itself. The first of these is the aesthetic dichotomy of the Elevated and the Earthly, which according to van Crevel describes not fixed, reified oppositions, but 'coordinates in a multidimensional body of texts.' What this means is that China's poets and critics tend to comprehend themselves in terms of pairings such as heroic vs. quotidian, sacred vs. realist, Westernised vs. indigenous, and intellectual vs. popular. While these categories function synchronically at any particular moment, there is also a narrative here: over the past several decades, van Crevel notes, *avant-garde* poetry has gravitated toward the Earthly end of this scale.

'Poethood'

The other major conceptual category, which van Crevel calls 'poethood,' in fact unifies the poetic *avant-garde* across the manufactured splits between the Elevated and the Earthly. Poethood refers to all these poets' intense and persistent concern that who they are and what they ought to be regarded as an essential, unique, and authoritative element of culture and society. The idea of poethood, van Crevel insists, has donned many guises, but cuts across the historical lineage of the post-Mao *avant-garde* all the way from the canonised sententiousness of some Misty poets, to the acrimonious debates at the turn of the last century, to the foul-mouthed insurgency of the Lower Body's angry youth.

If *Mind's* discoveries add much to current scholarship on China's contemporary *avant-garde* poetry, its shortcomings may be taken as points of departure for renewed critical perspectives. For instance, the book directs much of its critique at apparent deficiencies in Chinese critical discourse on contemporary poetry. In addition to over-reliance on biographism, content bias, and the imposition of ready-made categories, van Crevel also points to a general shortage of reader-oriented critical discourse, and even an apparent dearth of what he calls 'close writing' - that is, poems able to support sustained, sophisticated interpretation. Chinese poets and critics are certainly not the only ones guilty of such malfeasances. But what if, instead of the implied prescriptive approach undertaken in *Mind*, these tendencies, too, were understood as inherent to the values and dynamics of the local literary field? Such a shift in perspective would build naturally upon the immanent categories van Crevel uncovers in the book and might carry further his observations on topics like these poets' constant and intense interest in constructing the field of contemporary *avant-garde* poetry. It might also force revision of the book's rather traditional close readings of poetry - an area where uneven rigour and a sometimes stiff division between 'content' and 'form' frustrates expectations as often as it satisfies them. That said, the book's concluding chapter on Yan Jun, with its promise to explore the interfaces of poetry and performance media, seems to suggest just such a change in course, from focusing inward on the poetic text itself toward poetry's opening outward into the world. Given the prolific inventiveness van Crevel demonstrates in *Mind*, we may not have long to wait before seeing the results of just such a project.

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Yin Lichuan, 2004. Photograph by Martin de Haan.

Haizi, late 1980s. Photographer unidentified.

All images from Chinese Poetry in Times of Mind, Mayhem and Money. Maghiel van Crevel. 2008. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

The rise of China Balancing influence and engagement

A welcome addition to the burgeoning literature surrounding China's international rise, the immediate thing noticeable about the book *China's Rise* is its subtitle 'balance of influence in Asia'. Whilst there are a plethora of books dealing with the balance of 'power' in Asia, there are few dealing with the wider and softer concept of 'influence'.

David Scott

THIS BOOK 'analyzes the Asia-wide implications of China's rapid and largely unanticipated emergence as an economic, political, and military power' (p. 5). Economics and China's peaceful rise is prominent; 'the central theme of this book is to examine the hypothesis that Beijing's vision of China's peaceful rise represents a practical and realistic path for the protracted and intricate global ballet to which China's vast and prolonged economic boom provides a remarkable overture' (p. 4). The book also has particular American resonances, 'an animating concern of this book is apparent US disengagement from Asia at a time when China is recapturing its historical role as a great power, and positioning itself as a leading state in global affairs' (p. 5). Its methodology is eclectic, 'it employs a comprehensive, multidisciplinary analysis of the changing balance of influence in Asia' (p. 5)

Overlapping economic interests

Part 1 reveals the economic dimensions of China's rise. Some of the material is well trodden, namely the chapters by Loren Brandt dealing with The International Dimensions of China's Long Boom, and by Joseph Fewsmith on The Politics of Economic Liberalization. Brandt argues that 'looking beyond short-term friction over trade balances and currency valuations, we see substantial overlap between China's economic interests and those of the United States' (p. 44). She goes on to say that 'China is emerging as an improbable tribune for open flows of commodities and direct foreign investment, objectives long espoused by the United States. As a big importer of natural resources, China, like the United States, will benefit from and may actively seek to promote stability in the Middle East and other resource-rich regions' (p. 44). The counter-argument is that China's increasing appearance in the Middle East, Iran and Central Asia for energy resources is spurring competition and something of a new Great Game between China and US companies-strategic planners. Brandt argues two interesting wider points: Firstly, that international engagement is a 'driver of domestic reform' (p. 41) in the political as well as economic arena within China. Secondly is her caution that China's goals encompass 'prestige and national honor as well as economic growth' (pp. 45-6).

Fewsmith emphasises resistance to political reform, with the PRC experimenting with economic reform but 'repressing the emergence of opposition forces' and 'vigorously asserting the ruling position of the party-state' (p. 94). The implications of this prognosis within the democracy = peace international relations

(IR) axiom perhaps deserve more explicit evaluation in the book. Other chapters deal with less well known areas of China economic rise; namely Ellen Frost's *China's Commercial Diplomacy in Asia,* and William Keller and Louis Pauly's *Building a Technocracy in China: Semiconductors and Security.* Keller and Pauly's chapter is interesting for its focus on what they term techno-nationalism. They posit that 'what remains extremely difficult to imagine, however, is conscious acquiescence on the part of the American government, and American society more generally, to a secondary position in key industrial sectors like microelectronics' (p. 72). They also ask, perhaps less reassuringly, 'is China not inherently too big, too complex, and potentially too powerful to be steered by other countries?' (p. 72).

Influence rather than power

Part 2 deals with 'influence'. This is subtly distinct from just dealing with 'power', but a greater analysis of China's soft power credibility by Joshua Kurlantzik and others would have been merited. Ross' contribution on Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China deals with responses by others in East Asia, through the prism of accommodation and balancing by other secondary states, in the light of Chinese and US positions. Ross brings in economic factors, but argues that traditional balance of power theory remain an appropriate mechanism for understanding regional dynamics in East Asia. Ultimately Ross sees continuing balance between China's growing land superiority on the Asian mainland and US maritime superiority in the Pacific Waters off Asia, 'if the United States remains committed to maintaining its forward presence in East Asia' (p. 145). That 'if' is perhaps the biggest policy implication. Economics is to the fore in Segal's study of Chinese Economic Statecraft and the Political economy of Asian security. Conceptually, he reveals the 'overlap between security and economic concerns' (p. 147), with economic levers used vis-à-vis Taiwan (relatively unsuccessfully he argues), ASEAN and Korea. Segal makes an interesting point that 'the trick for Beijing (and in some parts Tokyo) is to balance nationalist public sentiment – feelings that are often nurtured by government propaganda – with the need to maintain stable economic relations' (p.156).

Ravenhill's chapter on *China's Peaceful Development and Southeast Asia* is tellingly subtitled 'a positive sum game'. A rather technical contribution, perhaps not suited to the general lay reader, Ravenhill sees China's economic rise, and attractiveness in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), as complementary to ASEAN countries, rather than zero-sum competition. It is perhaps fitting that he argues that China's proposal to ASEAN for an early free trade agreement (FTA) 'was a diplomatic masterstroke both for its effects in assuaging ASEAN concerns about China's peaceful rise and in putting Tokyo on the defensive' (p. 192). This points to the final contribution, Keller and Rawski's treatment of *China's Peaceful Rise,* subtitled 'Road Map or Fantasy?' They stress long term trends on the growth and internationalisation of China's economy. Ultimately a positive enough consensus is pointed to, that 'China shows no signs of initiating an arms race with the United States' (p.198) and that 'China's future economic security will rest more on international cooperation and commercial diplomacy than on military strength or force projection capabilities' (p. 199).

With the US in mind?

Ultimately the book and its conclusions have a policy direction for the US. Three competing worldviews are suggested by the editors, 'America as hyperpower (neoconservatism): a return to Cold War realism (ideological confrontation);

and economic interdependence (liberalism)' (p. 202). The thrust of the book is towards the third, reflected in the recurring presence of economic patterns and its ultimate prognosis that the US should remain engaged with the PRC. The book cover's pointer, that the writers have 'a shared goal of converting the image of China in the minds of the American policymakers to that of a mature, stable, constructive leader in the international economy of Asia and the entire world' is true enough in terms of direction of argument of the book. However, one might also consider how certain is China's internal socio-economic stability in the future, given the scenarios painted by people like Gordon Chang in The Collapse of China (2002). China may be playing a constructive role in the international economy, but does this apply to non-economic areas of security, and will it be applicable in the longer-term?

A question still remains. The logic of Peaceful Rise remains persuasive for China, and indeed for others, during the first half of the 21st century. However, as people like Avery Goldstein argue, Peaceful Rise is ultimately a strategy of transition that says little about what China will, or is likely to, do once she has risen. There could have been more treatment of China's Grand Strategy (and strategic culture) and longer-term post-rise dynamics. Certainly the book leaves open the question of what a post-rise China would be like. The book makes the case for pursuing engagement, yet as the only policy for US policy makers this remains incomplete, and not the whole story. In contrast, deliberate strategic hedging seems to be where others in Asia like Japan and India, as well as the US seem to be heading. The US is already following a mix of engagement (advocated by the book), internal balancing through building up its own military forces at Guam, and soft balancing through strengthening bilateral alliances with countries like Japan and established flexible strategic understandings with countries like India. This three-fold hedging is likely to be the ongoing response towards China, by the new American administration.

China's Rise is a structural yet also perceptual term. China's use of the term Peaceful Rise is intended as a reassurance term. One of the ironies, not really dealt with in this book, is the way in which Peaceful Rise was rolled out as a priority term in 2003 by the influential foreign policy advisor Zheng Bijian, and was adopted by the Chinese leadership during that year. Yet within a year, it had encountered criticism from within China over precluding force *vis-à-vis* Taiwan, and from the outside world concerned with the implications of any China 'rise' inherently meaning other's 'fall'. As a term, Peaceful Rise is itself a reflection of the interest, and challenges, surrounding China's growing presence in the international system.

Overall this book contains a good and interesting collection of essays. They are worth reading for bringing out the varied economic, and sometimes overlooked, aspects of China's rise more into light. The style is clear and coherent, suitable, in the main, for the intelligent layperson, as well as for the academic arena.

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The cartography of self-assertion

Travel is about time and space, faith and ideology, constructs and concepts, about who we are and how we see the world. It is, as Laura Nenzi states in the introduction to her book on recreational travel in early-modern Japan, 'an activity through which life itself could be defined' (p.1). In this fine study Nenzi amply demonstrates that the investigation of mobility and movement is indeed an excellent way to explore the structures and evolution of a society.

Anna Beerens

Malleable spaces

Nenzi's argument departs from the premise that spaces are malleable. The first part of her book ('Re-creating spaces') is devoted to showing how officialdom, religion and the discourse of culture and education conceptually organised landscape and provided the traveller with information about where he or she should or should not go. The official post towns, relay stations and checkpoints of Japan's major highways defined landscape in much the same way as the rules concerning sacred space. However, whereas for the utilitarian or official traveller the destination was more important than the road (p.1), the role of the pilgrim enabled the traveller to (temporarily) craft a new identity. This aspect of re-creation was also crucial to the lyrical traveller who visited the landscapes evoked in art and literature, thereby identifying with the cultural icons of the past. By putting 'their own spin on spaces', travellers were able to bypass 'protocols imposed upon the landscape' (p.14). Through the experience of the road, but also through a multitude of texts and images, travel enabled members of one segment of society to appropriate the space of another. In this way travel functioned as 'a convenient platform to question and alter' parameters of status and gender (p.2). In the second part of her book ('Re-creating identities') Nenzi elaborates on the process of personal interaction with landscape; the third part ('Purchasing re-creation') places this interaction in the context of recreational travel as a commodity.

A travel industry

The true breakthrough of what Nenzi has masterfully termed the 'cartography of self-assertion' (p.2) took place in the second half of the Tokugawa period, which was characterised by a booming print industry and a rise in literacy rates. Elegance and self-cultivation were no longer the prerogatives of courtiers, warriors and scholars. Commoners too acquired knowledge about famous places and their literary or historical associations. Nenzi states: 'Those who learned to connect the past and present of certain sites could, like members of the social and intellectual elites, look down on the unsophisti-cated...[and] take a symbolic step up the social ladder' (p.109). She explains in what manner a vast amount of published materials about travel and landscape revealed to commoners that 'most spaces were open to them and, as a consequence, that the (alleged) rigidity of officialdom and certain branches of religious discourse almost always came with suitable alternatives' (p.122). Moreover, economic growth created an atmosphere where 'money eclipsed status' (p.109), allowing an expanding class of wealthy townspeople to, literally, encroach upon the terrains formerly reserved for the educated elites. In this age of high commercialism a travel industry developed that not only spawned images, travelogues and guidebooks, but also tourist accommodation, a souvenir market, and numerous places where the traveller could eat, drink and be merry. Local food and drink, prostitutes ('transformed into local specialties', p.174), baths and hot springs enabled the traveller not only to re-create his or her identity, but also to regenerate his or her body. Enjoying 'the geographies of pleasure' (p.174) became yet another means for commoners to assert themselves.

Women on the road

Throughout the book special attention is given to female travellers 'not only because they have thus far been relatively neglected...but also because looking at gender most forcefully highlights the disjunction between modes of control on one side and practices on the other' (p.4). Because 'a woman

detached from her designated social niche...was interpreted as a threat to stability' (p.48), both government policy and general ideology were directed at keeping women immobile, often, however, to no avail. Nenzi shows how temples and shrines, driven on the one hand by 'the laws of compassion' and on the other by economic considerations ('donations, after all, knew no gender'), allowed visitors of *both* sexes into their precincts and thus helped to topple barriers set up by official-dom (p.66). To women of high status, however, travel rarely offered an alternative to the invisibility their lifestyle required. Whether on the road in the context of the system of alternate attendance in the shogunal capital of Edo *(sankin kōtai)*, for religious reasons, or going to hot springs for their health, they invariably travelled in closed palanquins that kept them inside while being outside (p.80). Female travellers of commoner status would be less restricted; peasant women and women from fishing villages travelling to city markets, for instance, were a perfectly acceptable phenomenon (p.75). Transferring one's authority within the household and becoming a mother-in-law would likewise enable the commoner woman 'to leave the house more often and for longer periods of time' (p.85). In general, Nenzi argues, marginality meant freedom; those who had 'lost all strategic value as a pillar of order and producer of a family line' (p.84), like elderly women, widows, nuns, or such rootless figures as itinerant performers and prostitutes, would be allowed to take to the road without much interference.

Maps and guidebooks

Nenzi uses a wide variety of sources ranging from diaries, poetry and official directives to guidebooks for red-light

districts and board games. Her book's illustrations are very much part of the narrative; indeed, the introduction of visual representations of space is indispensable for a proper discus-sion of 'the manifold ways in which spaces were interpreted, assigned specific meanings, re-presented, and, ultimately, exploited' (p.8). Nenzi focuses on the visual representation of Mount Fuji, and her discussion of the various ways in which the depiction of this most Japanese of landmarks reveals discourses and their agendas is particularly enlightening.

The book has a slight tendency to be repetitive, but one could contend that a regular re-expounding of the main elements of the argument was a necessity in view of the complexity of the subject. This complexity is very real, even for a book that has no ambition to be 'a comprehensive social and cultural history of travel', but seeks to present 'a selection of themes in the hope of generating debate and stimulating further inquiries' (p.6). It was her intention, Nenzi states, to depart where Constantine Vaporis' *Breaking Barriers: Travel and the State in Early Modern Japan* of 1994 leaves off (p.6). Vaporis' work is mainly on the institutional side of travel but in his concluding chapter he makes a first move to draw the attention to the leisurely traveller and the fact that the Tokugawa authori-ties consistently failed to recognise his existence. Nenzi set out to explore the motives and experiences of this type of traveller and the (far-reaching) repercussions of his movements. In doing so she has produced a truly inspiring book.

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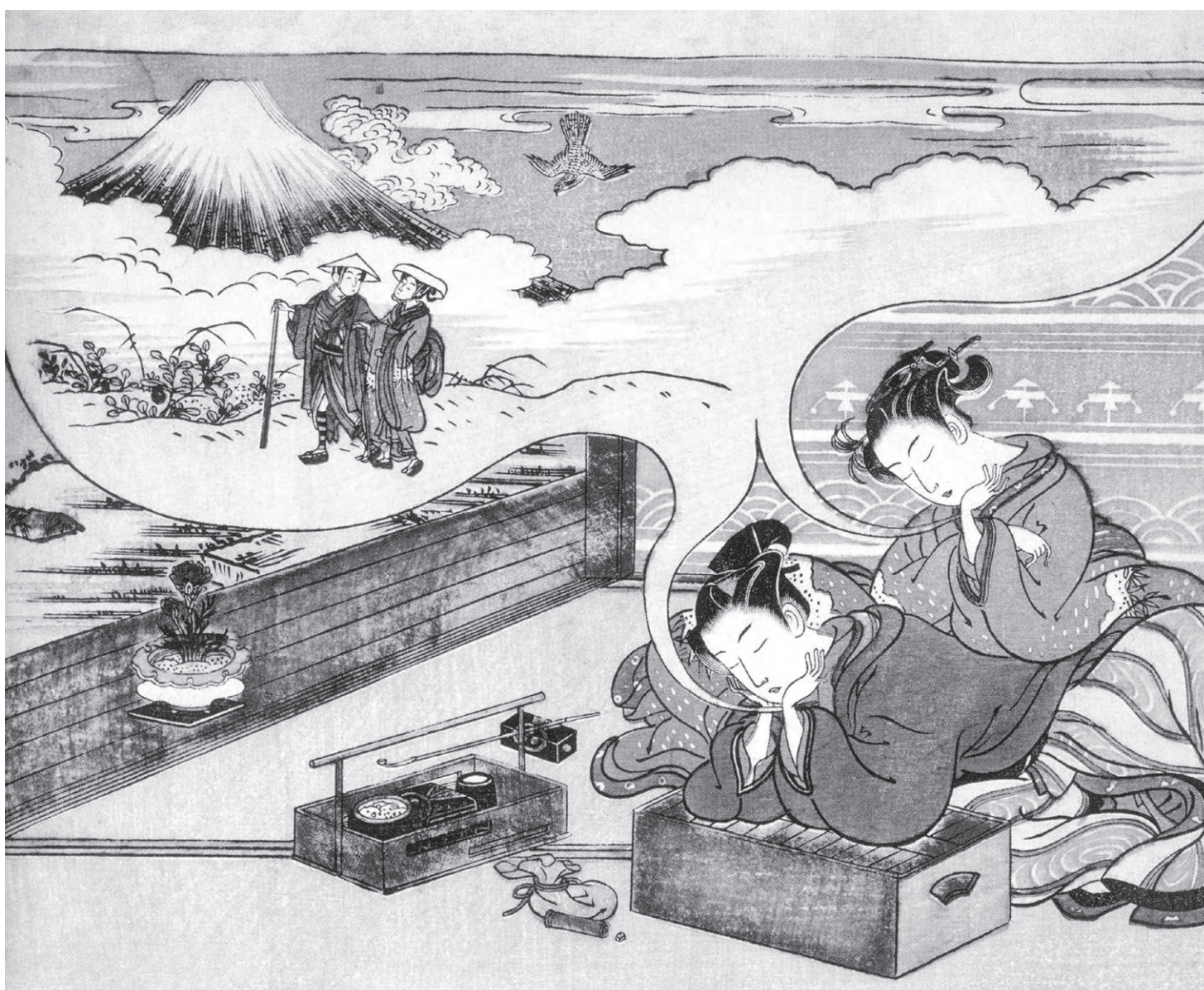
A Japanese Bestiary from 1700 to 1950

A Brush with Animals; Japanese Paintings 1700-1950, is the companion volume to an exhibition that opened at the Kunsthal in Rotterdam in 2007 as a celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Society for Japanese Arts. The Society is an international organisation with a distinguished history of publishing articles, books and catalogues on a wide array of topics in Japanese art in all media.

Elizabeth Horton Sharf

THE BOOK IS IN ESSENCE a loving probe of the subject of Japanese animal imagery using Society collections; individual and institutional members contributed all of the works exhibited and many of those used to illustrate the text. Most of the artists featured work in the tradition known as *Shijō* (or *Maruyama-Shijō*). Others have adopted elements of the *Shijō* style - a poetic, naturalistic mode of painting that originated in Japan's Edo period (1615-1868).

Soft and lyrical style

Shijō artists, following the lead of the celebrated painter Maruyama Ōkyo (1733-1795), incorporated elements of imported Western pictorial methods but nonetheless elected to remain faithful to traditional Japanese media, formats, and subjects. They further refined Ōkyo's achievement by incorporating a brushwork-oriented aesthetic derived from Japanese literati painting (*nanga or bunjinga*) to evolve a style, often described as soft and lyrical, so appealing that it continued to reverberate in paintings throughout the Meiji (1868-1912), Taishō (1912-1926), and Shōwa (1926-1989) periods. In these later periods one often finds the *Shijō* style dovetailing in a single work with freshly encountered European techniques such as watercolour painting. One also finds the style evolving into *Nihonga* – works by innovative artists interested in creating a national style in opposition to a contemporary movement that was overtly tied to European pictorial methods (Yōga).

Yet although the *Shijō* aesthetic is a thread uniting many of the animal paintings one encounters in the volume, it is not the sole subject of discourse by the book's contributors, nor is it the only school of Japanese painting represented. Notably earlier or disparate works such as 'Falcons', attributed to Kanō Tsunenobu (1636-1713), 'Quails and flowering chrysanthemums', attributed to Tosa Mitsunari (1646-1710), and 'Elephant' by Watanabe Kakushū (1778-1830), are also included in the Catalogue section. A variety of works – *netsuke* (miniature sculptures used as toggles of old), prints, and painting albums – also illustrate the text and add interest.

This is not a book featuring style, however; the purpose of its four main essays is to retell the story of pictorial animal imagery in Japan.

Challenging perceptions

Daniel McKee begins by challenging the notion that the Japanese have an innate affinity with nature, a notion that is often repeated uncritically in modern accounts of Japanese painting. McKee quotes Howard Stern, who opens his classic catalogue, *Birds, Beasts, Blossoms, and Bugs: The Nature of Japan,* with the statement: 'Nature and Japan sound alike to the initiated, and to these enlightened people they are synonymous.' McKee counters that it is not until the coining of the word *shizen* (nature) in modern times that the Japanese begin to tout their sympathetic intimacy with the natural world as a national characteristic. He thus links Stern's declaration to the nationalistic tradition of *nihonjinron*, or 'discussions of Japaneseness' (although he does not use the term). But he has far more to say than this. McKee guides readers to the Japanese patrons themselves to see which animals have been chosen for depiction and display, and *why*. It is not surprising to find that, especially in the pre-modern period, members of different social classes in Japan had specific preferences. For example, for courtly patrons 'only select animals of elegant appearance and gentle demeanour – cranes, deer, pheasants, ducks, oxen and domesticated horses – are allowed as subjects.' Likewise, painters serving the warrior elite favoured energetic portrayals of birds of prey, tigers and other fierce animals. Middle-class

merchants preferred the symbolism of the humble rat, whose presence underscored an excess of rice (wealth) at hand. It is only with the 'new, industrial definition of nature as a world of resources distinct from the human' in modern times that animals lose their symbolic ties to certain social classes. We moderns have to remind ourselves of these links when looking at early paintings.

Turtle-frogs and demon-monsters

The next two essays, by Willem van Gulik and Arendie Herwig-Kempers, do just this by providing a handy reference to Japanese animal lore. Van Gulik's essay highlights the animals of the 12-year zodiac cycle: rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, snake, horse, sheep/goat, monkey, cock, dog, and boar. He briefly introduces the Chinese, Japanese, and Buddhist origin myths for the zodiac (literally, *circle of animals*) and then recounts for each sign the best-known stories. Arendie Herwig-Kempers' enjoyable overview of supernatural creatures – animals still, but ones that can bring good luck, trick, bewitch, terrify, or otherwise exercise magical powers – continues in this vein. Her subjects include all the animals of the zodiac, (who, except for the dragon, are rather ordinary but nonetheless have uncommon influence over human beings), and truly fabricated beings such as the unicorn (*baku*), phoenix (*hō*), turtle-frog (*kappa*), half-human creatures (*tengu*) and demon-monsters (*oni*). The illustrations are appropriately lively, and are often of *netsuke* (miniature sculptures), which make a good comparison as they feature many of the same animal subjects. Indeed, the authors of her most venerable sources, T. Volker's *The Animal in Far Eastern art and especially in the art of the Japanese Netsuke* and Henri Joly's *Legend in Japanese art*, were inspired in part by *netsuke* to compile their animal lexicons.

The fourth essay by Henk Herwig, a self-described 'biologist interested in Japanese art,' happily addresses the history of avian imagery, with special reference to an anonymous scroll depicting dead birds. Bird-and-flower painting (literally, flower-and-bird painting; *kachōga*), has a long history in East Asia and is a natural subject for inclusion in this volume. The author surveys the vast topic of bird imagery from ancient to modern times. Echoing McKee, Herwig concludes that, 'by this time [early 20th century] *kachōga* were no longer advertised as sophisticated artefacts full of emblematic connotations that could be valued only by the well educated... [they] were now accessible to a wide audience that appreciated *kachōga* as romantic and peaceful representations of nature.' Herwig argues that this anonymous scroll may have been executed by an amateur bird lover-cum-painter indebted to earlier artists interested in documenting nature – and in collecting exotic birds too – following European precedent. It is fortunate that this scroll survives to document a new, ornithological interest in birds.

This brings us to the beautiful catalogue, which features many works that, although they seem typically and traditionally Japanese at first glance, also incorporate European achievements in the visual rendering of the natural world. For example, Meiji-born Watanabe Seitei's dreamlike image of two crows in flight, reproduced in crystalline detail on the book jacket, is a striking black-on-gold vision dependent in part on the artist's training in Western techniques. In choosing this image for the cover, the designer, Robert Schaap, graphically captures the purport of the book's title; 'a brush with animals' and connotes a brief encounter, unexpected and perhaps vaguely alarming, with animals in the wild. The cover image and title in turn evoke yet another dreamy reverie, one of ink morphing into animal shapes via skilful brushwork. Indeed, the artists featured in the book draw on the most powerful and popular techniques of their time for wielding brush, ink and colour in the avid pursuit of their subjects. The sheer variety of what they are able to achieve is of tremendous interest.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the ambitious nature of the book, I must mention some minor omissions and failings: I should have liked a few sentences about each contributor (I found this at the Brill and the Society for Japanese Art

websites); a few works illustrated with their mountings would highlight the age and context of the material and better incorporate the final technical essay on the Japanese hanging scroll (Andrew Thompson); easily avoidable typographical errors often disrupted my enjoyment of the book; two essays give no citations; Japanese sources, although evidently consulted, are rarely included in the notes or bibliography.

As for larger concerns, I was uncomfortable with the overlap between the van Gulik and Herwig-Kempers essays, where variant accounts of the same story of a given zodiac animal make the reader do the work of consolidating the information. More unfortunate, McKee's sensitive and in-depth account stops short of delving into the *Maruyama-Shijō* tradition and its legacy. The informative catalogue entries return the reader to our knowledge of later painting circles via artistic lineage biographies

and other insights specific to individual works (Robert Schaap). Yet little beyond these entries and a few paragraphs in the McKee and Herwig essays guide the reader in his or her appreciation of the central styles and social contexts of the paintings in the volume.

Not quite ideal
Is *A Brush with Animals* the ideal book of Japanese animal imagery on silk and paper? Not quite. It is not intended to be. We must remember that this is a compendium of imagery from later times, imagery now in foreign collections, and so, although standard works such as the 12th century *Chōjū giga* (known as the 'Scroll of Frolicking Animals') are mentioned, the intent is not to feature celebrated, monumental masterpieces of Japanese animal painting. Is it a true Japanese bestiary? Not so. Deer are featured in McKee's discussion but never illustrated, for example. Again, deer were emblematic of the ancient Japanese court and not as important a subject in later times. Is it a handy reference – a good jumping-off point for Westerners who want to delve more deeply into the subject? Yes. Is it a beautifully crafted volume that rewards repeated opening? Absolutely. High-quality colour reproductions accompany

the 74 catalogue entries and five essays, including some beautiful details. 85 reference works, also reproduced in colour and amply sized, are appended. The design of the book is superb, the selection of images admirable, and the whole – from the cover image to the choice of fonts – sensitively conceived. The essays provide a wealth of material essential to understanding the meaning and function of the later Japanese animal depictions featured in the book. And the final, technical essay on the traditional Japanese hanging scroll reminds us that the interval under review – 1700 to 1950 – was one still strongly tied to the time-honoured vertical format of the East Asian hanging scroll.

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Fig. 1 (far left):
Takeuchi Seihō
(1864-1942). Lion.
Annemiek & Eric
van den Ing,
The Netherlands.

Fig. 2 (left):
Mori Ippō
(1798-1871).
Spiny Japanese
lobster.
René van der Sar
& Jan Dees,
The Netherlands.

Fig. 3 (right):
Watanabe Seitei
(1851-1918).
Two crows in flight
(detail).
Gert-Jan van Gaalen,
The Netherlands.

Cambodia's religions, in ashes and in ink

The image on the cover of Ian Harris's new history of religion is both familiar and unexpected: in place of the towering stone shrines that adorn so many Cambodian guidebooks, we see instead the fragility of a modern Buddha statue, cast in concrete. It was smashed to pieces and later re-assembled, with its steel structure now exposed, as bones laid bare.

Eisel Mazard

Harris, Ian. 2008.
Cambodian Buddhism, History and Practice.
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
(Paperback). 368 pages. ISBN 978 0824 83298 8.

Sweeping away errors of old
The monumentality of Cambodia's ancient history and the bewildering brutality of its more recent past have inspired many Western scholars to be highly inductive and imaginative in spinning narratives out of the evidence available to us. Almost any new work in the field can thus earn a degree of praise for sweeping away the errors of the old.

In this new work from Ian Harris, gone are the wild socio-logical speculations based on the types of hats worn in various Angkorian stelae, gone are the imaginary revolutions of an ancient, 'Buddhist Bolshevism'. There is, in short, much to be praised in what this new volume omits from earlier attempts at writing history.

The volume opens by explaining, with explicit humility, that a large part of the material constitutes a re-statement (in English) of findings that are already available in French. I would add that it also presents some major new English-language research that (as yet) languishes in the semi-published state of the PhD thesis; the works of Penny Edwards and Anne Hansen deserve special mention in this respect.

Unfortunately, the subject matter does not lend itself easily to a survey of secondary sources without access to the primary texts. The errors of fact and judgement found throughout the volume left me with deep misgivings as to the viability of 'Buddhist Studies' in the absence of the strictures that define the disciplines of philology, history, and religious studies.

Gender-bending errors
As an example, there is a gender-bending cluster of errors on p. 68, made more troubling by a misleading citation. We are told a story of a layman who regards a monk (namely, Kaccāyana) with '…a desire to make the monk his wife, upon which the monk turned into a woman.' Anyone acquainted with medieval Sinhalese karma-theory would know immedi-ately that this can't be right at all: in fact, the layman's desire results in his own transformation into a woman (as a 'karmic punishment' of sorts). Even without recourse to better sources, it could not make sense within the logic of the story for the monk to change gender instead of the prurient layman. The author could have found this folktale readily available in English translation, even on the internet; conversely, if he was misled by a particular source (without checking against others) he does not cite it.

While it seems impossible to believe that this error could have come from the study of primary sources, Harris directly cites the original Pali with the abbreviation 'DhA' (no translation is mentioned on p. 68, nor on p. 239); moreover, we are told that the story is from 'Pali canonical sources.' Even for an astute amateur, it should be self-evident that this is quite wrong: the final '-A' of the citation indicates that the source is not canonical, but commentarial. This distinction entails a difference of a thousand years and the opposite side of a small ocean. While sloppiness of this kind is common in Buddhist Studies, this is not a trivial error; would anyone reviewing the history of a European religion overlook the conflation of Solon with Justinian?

In composing the book, no attempt whatsoever was made to transliterate any of the Asian languages by any logical scheme. This is excused in the preface (p. xiv) as consistently reflecting the inconsistencies of his various forebears in the field, '…in order to avoid confusing readers who may wish to consult these important sources' (p. xv). The ensuing mess of diacritics does much to make us doubt the author's credibility. We are told that the Cambodian word *Bayon* is from 'the Pali *bejayant*,' (p. 245, n. 70) but if we were to seek the latter in a lexicon it would instead be found under *vejayanta*. I dare say that a few specialists would know to find it there (as Harris or his editors should have done) but for the vast majority of readers this 'approximate spelling' is an insuperable obstacle. Would this be acceptable for Greek, Latin, or Hebrew sources? If not, it is unacceptable here for the same reasons.

Even more disappointing than the indifferent mix of Pali and Sanskrit, the Cambodian names and titles of works are given only with inconsistent and vague Romanisations (neither truly phonetic nor following any transliteration scheme) making it even more difficult to pursue such sources further. The reader's sole recourse would be to stand before a librarian in Phnom Penh, attempting to guess the pronunciation (to peals of laughter, I must suppose) or else writing out all of the possible vowel combinations in Khmer script before striking on the correct one (to the librarian's exasperation). We are thus left at a scholarly dead-end, and one that was entirely eluctable; the ever-increasing ease of typing in modern Khmer deprives us of the excuse of bygone generations.

Fine cracks
Such fine cracks along the surface of the work, though they may be small, are many, and may indicate a deeper problem. The fable of *Chao Fa Ngum* is reported as historical fact (p. 25), and an array of traditional Cambodian chronicles are employed with few indications as to just how unreliable these have been proven to be, over several decades of outstanding philology by Michael Vickery. Puzzled by this, I studied the bibliography, finding some crucial omissions. While there are various works listed by Vickery, Olivier de Bernon, and Peter Skilling, many of these authors' most salient arguments seem to have been ignored in the construction of this history. The timeline of Cambodian Buddhism could have been improved (or perhaps challenged) by the archaeological findings discussed by Skilling (1997 & 2002), whereas Harris's theory that 'Vandalism during the Khmer Rouge period as a cause for the disappearance of ancient texts may not… be quite as significant as once thought' (p. 84) would seem to be directly refuted by the hard facts set down by de Bernon (2004), specifying that 'As a result of the devastation of the protracted war… an estimated 98 percent of the manuscripts, have been completely destroyed.' (*op. cit.* p. 310). Curiously, both Skilling and de Bernon are thanked for their personal 'criticism and wise counsel' in Harris's preface (p. xiv).

The failure to consider some of Vickery's most important contributions to Cambodian history seems equally inexplicable (e.g. Vickery, 1979 & 2004 – many more could be listed); his work has changed many fundamental assumptions of earlier histories (such as the timeline of Thai invasions in the 14th-15th centuries).

While I am tempted to offer criticisms of Harris's approach to more recent history, too, it could be said (reasonably enough) that the book cannot rise to the standards of political science, nor, perhaps, those of social anthropology. The question must be asked: what standards apply? What is 'Buddhist Studies' if it is not based on the study of primary source texts (viz., Pali or vernacular Cambodian) nor adheres to the standards of the other disciplines mentioned? These disciplines exist to prevent precisely such errors as arise from an uncritical survey of secondary sources.

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Don't forget to remember me

No matter how many books one reads about a country and its inhabitants, or how many photographs one has seen, there is no better way of experiencing a far-off land than by watching a film. Movies, dramas, documentaries, and even tourist propaganda pictures offer a much more deeply felt insight into another people than any amount of print is able to provide. Documentaries usually have a specific aim in mind and are geared to a clearly delineated audience and are therefore edited in such a way that the message comes across as clearly and mono-dimensional as possible. Despite all the audio-visual means we have at our disposal at present, the written word is still the most employed vehicle for the dissemination of thoughts and ideas.

Dick van der Meij

"We tend to forget the importance of every-day life but once it's forgotten, it's gone forever"

Novel outlook
The KITLV is known, of course, for its enormous output of just that: printed letters on paper. Some CDs with music have been added to earlier publications but they were in support of the written word and not intended to stand on their own. That is to say, this was the situation up until 2008. The DVD under discussion is therefore a lucky exception and proves the institute's novel outlook.

The materials shown in the DVD were recorded between 2003 and 2006 and show snapshots of daily life in Jakarta, Kawal (Bintan Island), Payakumbuh (West Sumatra), Delanggu (Central Java), Sintang (West Kalimantan), Bittuang (Central Sulawesi), Ternate (Northern Moluccas), and Surabaya (East Java). Unfortunately, no information is provided on when the filming of individual scenes in these various places took place and so at times it is not easy to understand where we actually are. Some scenes seem to link up to the previous one and would have us believe we are still at the same place, but sometimes we appear not to be there anymore. No information about the reason why we are looking at what we see and not at other things is given and this is a pity because it may lead to a distorted picture of what daily life in Indonesia really is.

Of course, daily life in a country as big as Indonesia is a fluid and fragmented notion. What do we want to show?, Deciding what daily life entails for a big metropolis such as Jakarta is of course much more difficult than for a small place in Central Sulawesi, although the daily reality of the people there is also extremely difficult to understand. The host of anthropological materials on many Indonesian sites sufficiently attests to that.

Hard realities
For me the film shows expertly how hard daily life in Indonesia is for many people; how incredibly hard the people labour to make ends meet; and how small the scale of life for many people is. We need only reflect on the life of the smith who makes the tools for tilling the rice fields. He works on his metal tools from six in the morning until six in the evening, day in day out. And what about the people who process the ice

needed to preserve fish, who have to deal with heavy, cold material and yet again day in day out, we cannot but marvel at the dexterity of these men. The film reveals the importance of motorbikes and other means of transport and gives us the daily reality of the becak drivers who literally live in and with their bike taxi. The film also shows us the importance of small-scale industry and the role of street side restaurants in sustaining life. It reveals the variability of daily life in the various places but also the similarities over the vast area of Indonesia.

It is interesting to look at places other than those where most tourists tend to go. Not looking at beautiful Bali but rather at the harsh conditions in the ice factory is an important contribution to our perception of the country. Fun in daily life is also clearly shown and the short interview with the man whose photograph adorns the case of the DVD clearly shows that no matter what, Indonesians are able to enjoy life under the hardest of circumstances. The sparkling eyes of this person will be remembered long after many other scenes will have sunk into the dark recesses of our memory.

Islamic life
The part on Islam is also quite interesting. The restaurant owner who has already been to Mecca four times and who is planning his fifth trip with his family reveals the deep religious feelings of Indonesian Muslims. The large photograph in his restaurant made in Malaysia of the Nabawi Mosque in Medina which can be made to show the mosque at various times of the day and which has a device to sound Quranic verses also attests to his deep religious sentiments. The small children learning to recite the Quran on the second floor of a mosque and the way this instruction is provided is also very interesting.
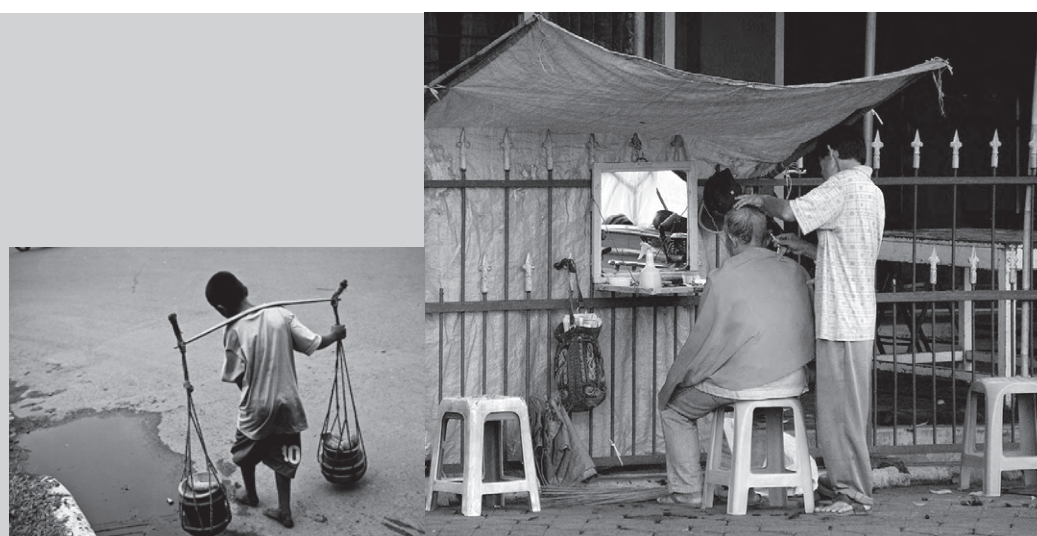
Fig. 1 (top right)
Street Barber by Flydime. Courtesy of flickr.com

Fig. 2 (top left)
Boy with water by Henri Ismail. Courtesy of flickr.com

Fig. 3 (middle)
Loading boat by Andre Pipa. Courtesy of flickr.com

Fig. 4 (bottom)
Tuk Tuk. Courtesy of flickr.com

Sometimes I would have liked to jump into the film to ask questions. For instance, the little 10 month old (sebelas bulan jalan is unfortunately wrongly translated as 11 months old) boy from Ternate with the name Shevchenko leaves me begging for more information on the choice of this unexpected name. I would also have loved to interview the Muslim man I mentioned above who has been to Mecca four times already for the reasons why he feels the need to go there so often, etc.

This is no doubt a very important document and I sincerely hope that other DVDs that will show us other parts of the archipelago and other religions, industries, schools and a host of other fragments of this fascinating country will soon follow it. However, it is to be hoped that in future little more professional attention will be paid to the end product. The quality of the shooting varies, sound quality varies too, and some scenes seem rather too long while others are far too short. The document has only one chapter and returning to specific scenes is therefore not easy. No list of contents is provided and this makes it hard to find one's way into the materials. No information as to the reason for publication is given nor any justification for choosing the areas provided or for the particular scenes we watch. This is on one hand its strength, but on the other hand a major weakness. Because no information is provided it makes one wonder what the intended audience for the DVD is. As a first start to this novel kind of visual scholarship I have enjoyed it immensely but I do expect more in future.

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IIAS News and comment

Europe-Asia Policy Forum

IIAS received a grant from the European Commission to establish the Europe-Asia Policy Forum. The project will contribute to engagement between Europe and Asia for effective bi-regional co-operation in addressing policy issues of common concern, in particular those related to the Millennium Development Goals. From 2009 through 2011, the project will implement activities in four priority areas:

1. An internet platform on academic research and exchanges on Asian issues for an enhanced communication and dissemination of European expertise, this will include EUforAsia Brussels briefings on contemporary Asian issues.
2. A multi-stakeholder dialogue on sustainable development issues;
3. A think-tank dialogue on regional integration processes; and
4. An expert policy dialogue on Europe-Asia cooperation on governance and conflict management

Partners in this project are: the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in Singapore, the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) in Brussels, and the Singapore Institute for International Affairs (SIIA). Project Manager: Paul van der Velde www.euforasia.eu

The official launch of the Europe-Asia Policy Forum will take place in Brussels on the 29th April 2009.

Europe-Asia
policy forum

Visiting scholarships

The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) has granted three researchers a scholarship to stay at IIAS:

Dr Laura Nozlopy
Royal Holloway, University of London for a visit of six weeks to the Amsterdam Branch Office to work on the biography of John Coast and the project *'Indonesian performance in transnational and post-colonial contexts',* together with the Department of Drama and Theatre (University of Amsterdam).

Dr Oscar Amarasinghe
Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Ruhana, Sri Lanka for a period of three months to on work on his research *'Cooperation in the context of a crisis: Public-private partnerships in the management of small-scale fisheries in South Asia'.* Dr Amarasinghe collaborates closely with Dr Maarten Bavinck of MARE (Centre for Maritime Research, University of Amsterdam).

Dr Ya-pei Kuo
Department of History, Tufts University for a period of 11 months to work on her research *'Culture, Identity, and History: The Critical Review and Conservatism in Modern China, 1922-1933'.*

Energy Programme Asia

The project 'Domestic and Geopolitical Challenges to Energy Security for, China and the European Union', led by **Dr Mehdi Amineh,** has been extended for another year with financial input from the KNAW China Exchange Programme. The counterparts for this IIAS project are the Institute of West Asian and African Studies (IWAAS)-Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in cooperation with the Institute of Industrial Economy-CASS.

Fritz Thyssen Foundation

IIAS fellow and former Rubicon researcher Dr Birgit Abels received a grant from the Fritz Thyssen Foundation for her project *'Of Islam, Ancestors and Translocality in Borderlands: Identity negotiation and the performing arts among the Sama Dilaut of Southeast Asia'.* Dr Abels is also guest researcher at the music department of the University of Amsterdam.
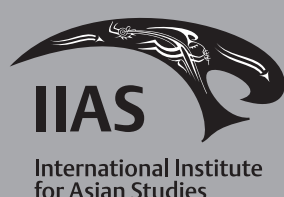
National MA Thesis Prize

IIAS seeks to honour the best of Asian Studies by offering an award to the Best MA Thesis in the field of Asian Studies, written at a Dutch university.

The award consists of:
- The honorary title of Best MA thesis in Asian Studies
- A max. 3 month stipend (€1500 per month) to come to IIAS to write a PhD project proposal or a research article.

Criteria:
- The MA thesis should be in the broad field of Asian Studies; both humanities and social science topics are eligible.
- Only MA theses which have been marked with 8 or above are eligible.
- The evaluation of the thesis should have taken place between 1 August 2008 and 1 August 2009.
- Both students and their supervisors can apply.
- Deadline: 1 September 2009.
- Submissions should be sent to The Secretariat, IIAS, PO Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden.

IIAS
International Institute for Asian Studies

President Barack Obama is unusual and unique, not just because he is the first African American US president, but also because he is the first to take office having spent some time in Asia. His years in Indonesia while he was growing up and his links there mean he comes to his current job with some genuine experience of a region that is almost certain to take up a great deal of his time. While offering no stark immediate choices like the Middle East, dealing with the diverse, and in some cases troubled and troubling, countries in Asia will offer plenty of challenges in the short to mid term. Beyond that timescale, in this unpredictable part of the world, it is impossible to venture.

Kerry Brown

A history of 'miscommunication'
The fallout from the statement by nominee for Secretary of the Treasury Tom Geitner during his confirmation hearings that China was 'manipulating its currency' is only a taste of what might lie ahead. China protested, and Obama had to make a phone call to President Hu a few days later, saying that it was critical the two sides worked together, especially at the moment, and that they maintain the good relations built at the end of the Bush era when the Special Economic Dialogue was set up. Even Secretary of State Hilary Clinton came out and said that relations between the two countries needed to be seen in broader terms than just the economy. Chinese and US 'miscommunication' during the early periods of new presidents' tenures has form. Presidents Bill Clinton and Jiang Zemin clashed in the 1990s, culminating in the arguments over the visit by then Taiwanese President Li Denghui to the US in 1995. Bush had teething problems too, with the Hainan spy plane accident, though September 11th 2001 brought the two countries closer together. The reaction to Obama so far in China seems to be a mixture of intrigue and apprehension. Last December one Chinese official told me that there was a feeling Obama would be 'unpredictable', despite the fact that being a new face means in many ways he has no choice but to be a largely unknown quantity.

One big mistake Bush made was a failure to designate a key member of his administration as the leading point person on China for the first few years. China now regards itself as a major power, and in economic terms, it certainly is. It has even been provoked by the recent piracy in Somalia into, for the first time ever, sending ships there to protect its interests. That the Chinese government had no one specifically to speak to in the US, to show ownership over policy towards them, was a problem. Condoleezza Rice was largely busy with the Middle East. Her deputies Christopher Hill and Thomas Christiansen focussed on the DPRK and Taiwan respectively. Vice President Dick Cheney only did domestic US policy. Only with the arrival of Hank Paulson as head of the Special Economic Dialogue in 2006, did the Chinese feel that they had someone to channel all their key messages through back to the US. This special treatment went down well, even though it was clear that, for the US at least, the main objective of the dialogue was largely to bring about a devaluation of the renminbi. Who Obama appoints as the link person with China over the next few weeks will matter, as will how he chooses to continue the dialogue.

Nasty surprises ahead?
The DPRK will almost certainly start to raise its own issues before he gets too comfortable in his new job. Already the North Korean government have walked away from an agreement with the South Koreans. Rumours that Kim Jong Il had a stroke at the end of last year have roused the usual speculation about who will succeed him when he goes. His first son, disgraced a few years back when he was discovered visiting Disneyland Tokyo on a non-DPRK passport, has declared during a recent visit to Beijing that he is out of the picture. The second eldest son is still under 30. Christopher Hill did heroic work as Assistant Secretary of State, patiently working on the Six Party Talks with the DPRK, resurrecting them from almost nothing on a number of occasions. But now it looks like North Korea is demanding more time and attention, and may well live up to its reputation for being one of the most maverick nations in the world, able to deal out nasty surprises. There will be no honeymoon with the new President here.

Japan too will be expecting attention. Suffering from a further bout of recession, this time derived from external influences, it is also in the midst of internal political problems, with the era of weak, short lived prime ministers returning after the years of relative stability under Koizumi. Japan will remain the US's key strategic partner in the Asia Pacific region, and may well expect a bit more from the relationship now than the ability to host US troops.

Domestic vs. international
Most US Presidents come into office on the back of their promises to fix domestic issues, and then become increasingly involved in international issues. For Obama, the terrible problems in the US economy compound this. Getting over-involved with issues beyond US borders will not help him in facing a US electorate who feel that the Bush years have destroyed their economic prosperity. Even so, Obama and the key people around him can hardly separate domestic and international issues. Protectionism aimed at the Chinese, for instance, will mean the drying up of cheap imported goods, and that will have an adverse knock on effect on some of the poorest people in the US, as well as impacting on the economic well being of many workers in China. Bush never managed to explain why US jobs had disappeared not because of Asian factories and manufacturing prowess, but simply because of a change in the patterns of global trade, and the creation of a higher value economic model in the US. Obama has proved he is a great communicator. If he can get this message across, and stop trade barriers falling, then he will be doing the US and Asia a great service. Whatever he does end up doing, he will need every second of his experience as a young man growing up in Asia to fall back on.

Kerry Brown is senior fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, London.
bkerrychina@aol.com

Savifa – the portal to South Asia

Savifa, the virtual library South Asia, offers centralised access to information and literature from and about South Asia. Online since 2006, Savifa is implemented by the Library of the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg (SAI), in cooperation with Heidelberg University Library. Today Savifa has grown into a valuable search tool for students and scholars; furthermore scholars are invited to contribute to the development of the virtual library by using its infrastructure.

The steady increase and utilisation of digital resources, alongside new technical developments in the field of information and communication have changed the information needs of the scholarly community. Libraries were well prepared for these changes and in their wake introduced a range of new electronic services. Against this background the German Research Foundation (DFG) initiated the development of so-called 'Virtual Libraries' in 1998. Virtual Libraries are intended to function as centralised repositories by extending the efforts of collection development to the realm of digital information. Virtual Libraries are expected to offer access to print publications, to freely accessible internet resources as well as to digital resources offered by publishers in a homogenous search environment. With a four-year funding by the DFG, the library of the SAI and Heidelberg University Library began to implement Savifa in 2005.

Now in its fourth year, a range of electronic services are active on Savifa:

1. SavifaDok – open access digital repository
SavifaDok, the open access digital repository of the virtual library South Asia, offers the possibility to publish research papers, dissertations, books or even recorded talks easily and for free. SavifaDok guarantees long-term availability and visibility of the documents in library catalogues and search engines by using standardised addresses and metadata. Furthermore, scholars are also invited to publish series on SavifaDok, either as editors or as authors. So far there are eleven series available on SavifaDok, including:
• *Südasienwissenschaftliche Arbeitsblätter* under the editorship of Prof. Peter Rahul Das, University of Halle-Wittenberg
• *South Asian Visual Culture Series* under the editorship of PD Christiane Brosius, University of Heidelberg, and in cooperation with Tasveer Ghar, the digital archive of South Asian Visual Culture
• *Kleine Schriften* by Prof. Michael Witzel, Harvard University
• *Lectures on South Asian History* under the editorship of Prof. Gita Dharampal-Frick, University of Heidelberg
• *20th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies* (ECMSAS) – Conference Papers

2. E-Toc-Alert service
The free E-Toc-Alert service regularly informs users about new content from 83 selected academic journals with a focus on South Asia. With the publication of a new issue, subscribers receive an e-mail containing table of contents as well as information on access and library holdings within Germany. Scholars interested in this service may subscribe to E-Toc-Alert via the subscription form on the Savifa site.

3. Thematic Portals
As interactive scholarly places, the thematic portals highlight clearly defined areas of research and provide more detailed information on these subjects. Thematic portals could include the following sub-items: a collection of links to thematic websites, online publication series, digitised literature, image databases or multimedia documents. At present there are two

thematic portals on Savifa available:
• *Varanasi Displayed* tries to bundle the manifold (in)sights of this vibrant city on the river Ganges with a photo gallery presenting views on Varanasi, digitised historical literature, a selection of freely accessible internet resource as well as a selected filmography.
• *Health and Healing in South Asia* deals with questions such as 'How do people in South Asia deal with health and illness?' or 'What are the theories behind the indigenous health systems of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani?'
With academic support from Prof. William Sax and Dr. Gabriele Alex (Dept. of Anthropology/South Asia Institute, Heidelberg) this thematic portal offers access to online resources, a publication and lecture series as well as information to a master degree in 'Health and Society in South Asia'.

Scholars are invited to contribute to already existing thematic portals or to become partners with full editorial responsibility for new ones.

4. Online Contents SSG-South Asia
The database currently offers access to table of contents of 280 journals relevant to studies and research on culture, politics and languages of South Asia. The journals are generally indexed back to the year 1993. Thus, the database contains c.150,000 records of journal articles and reviews. The database is a subject oriented selection of bibliographic data from the Swets Database Online Contents. It is regularly enlarged by table of contents data from additional periodicals from the special collections of the Library of the South Asia Institute at Heidelberg University.

5. SavifaGuide – collection of internet resources
The subject collection is a hand-picked assemblage of websites and resources, that meet certain quality standards and are selected by subject specialists and organised into browseable hierarchies by subject, region and language, allowing users to explore the collection by clicking from the more general to the more specific. Apart from various browsing options users can also choose between simple and advanced searches for more specific queries. Up to now c.3,000 resources have been catalogued and annotated in SavifaGuide; mostly in English, but also in many Indian languages. (There are c.145 Urdu resources, 142 Bengali websites, 145 Hindi and 95 Tamil websites).

6. Directory of South Asia Scholars
The Directory of South Asia Scholars promotes the communication and exchange of information among the scientific community. It contains information on scholars as well as research projects. Various search and browsing options allow for a specific search for persons and research topics. At the moment, the database contains c. 240 entries. Every scholar is welcome to contribute to the database by uploading a research profile through our web form.

7. Digital Collections
Among the 265,000 volumes held by the Library of the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg are some rare and valuable titles from the 18th to the early 20th century. The Library offers access to digital full text versions of selected works of these historical publications and makes them available on the Internet. So far there are the works of several leading indologists available, including Otto von Böhtlingk and Richard von Garbe, as well as travel accounts from the 17th to the 19th century and historical literature on Indian religion and philosophy. The digitisation department of the University Library of Heidelberg is in possession of newest digitisation technology and has gained considerable expertise through various projects in handling fragile material.

To find out more about using the Savifa services please visit:

www.savifa.de
Nicole Merkel
Library, South Asia Institute
University of Heidelberg
merkel@sai.uni-heidelberg.de

ICAS Book Prize 2009

On 30 January the longlists for the ICAS Book Prize (IBP) 2009 for the Humanities and Social Sciences were uploaded to www.icassecretariat.org. The members of the IBP Reading Committee were split in two groups to review the 89 books entered for the prize. The first group dealt with the 42 submissions to the Humanities category, and the second group reviewed the 47 Social Sciences entries.

Paul van der Velde

Of the 24 publishers who submitted books, the names of 14 appear on the longlists. Two publishers, Duke University Press and the University of Washington Press, have three entries on the lists, while the University of California Press and Princeton University Press managed to have two of their books selected. The ten other publishers are represented with one book.

Reading Committee criteria

Often we hear the question 'What criteria are used to draw up the longlists and shortlists?' There are several criteria which determine what is a good book: originality in the treatment of the topic; the depth of the research; opening up a new field of research; providing a definitive study on a certain topic; being well written or making clear arguments. The 20 books on the longlists reflect one or more of these criteria and all are possible prize winners. Inclusion on the list is a significant achievement and means that the author belongs in the top tier of Asia scholars. The six books eventually selected for the shortlists all possess a significant number of the criteria mentioned, and the prize winners clearly have that little extra something which ultimately convinces the whole Reading Committee that their books should win the prizes. The shortlists of the IBP, including the one for the best PhD, will be uploaded onto the ICAS website on 15 April. The prizes will be awarded during the opening ceremony of ICAS 6 on 6 August 2009.

Voting Positioning System

For the 2009 Colleagues Choice Award we have set up an online voting positioning system to facilitate the voting process and point you in the direction of books you might want to vote for. Simply ticking buttons on topics, themes and regions leads you to the books you are interested in. The virtual polling booth will be accessible from 26 March, the first day of the Annual Meeting of the AAS in Chicago and will be open till 15 July 2009. Cast your vote by selecting a book from the full list of 89 titles submitted.

Everyone can follow the voting process at www.icassecretariat.org. We hope that authors will mobilise their networks to gain votes for their books. The Colleagues Choice Award is all about involving as many Asia scholars as possible in the voting process. The winner of this prize will be someone who knows how to interest other people in his or her writings: a quality indispensable for any scholar in the increasingly competitive globalised field of Asia studies!

Longlists announced

Longlist Social Sciences
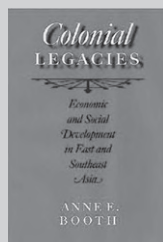
Colonial Legacies: Economic and Social Development in East and Southeast Asia
by Anne E. Booth
Published 2007 by University of Hawai`i Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-8248-3161-5

Doing Business in Rural China: Liangshan's New Ethnic Enterpreneurs
by Thomas Heberer
Published 2007 by University of Washington Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-295-98729-3

Creating Market Socialism: How Ordinary People Are Shaping Class and Status in China
by Carolyn L. Hsu
Published 2007 by Duke University Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-0-8223-4036-2
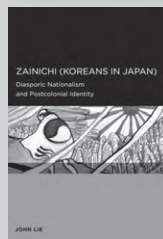
Zainichi (Koreans in Japan): Diasporic Nationalism and Postcolonial Identity
by John Lie
Published 2008 by University of California Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-0-520-25820-4

Securing Japan
by Richard J. Samuels
Published 2007 by Cornell University Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-0-8014-7490-3

Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India
by Sanjay Seth
Published 2007 by Duke University Press
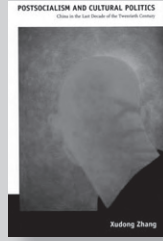Paperback, ISBN 978-0-8223-4105-5
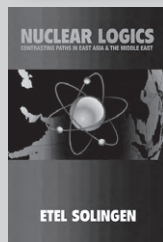
Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East
by Etel Solingen
Published 2007 by Princeton University Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-691-13147-4
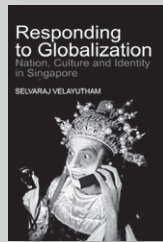
Responding to Globalization: Nation, Culture and Identity in Singapore
by Selvaraj Velayutham
Published 2007 by Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
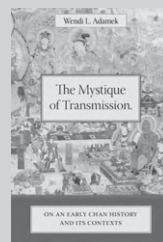Harcback, ISBN 978-981-230-421-6

Global "Body Shopping"
by Biao Xiang
Published 2007 by Princeton University Press
Hardback, ISBN 0-691-11851-5

Postsocialism and Cultural Politics: China in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century
by Xudong Zhang
Published 2008 by Duke University Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-0-8223-4230-4

Longlist Humanities

The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Context
by Wendi Adamek
Published 2007 by Columbia University Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-231-13664-8

Voices Raised in Protest: Defending North American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry, 1942-49
by Stephanie Bangarth
Published 2008 by UBC Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-0-7748-1416-4
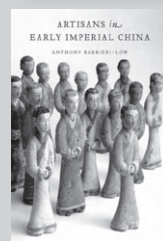
Artisans in Early Imperial China
by Anthony Barbieri-Low
Published 2007 by University of Washington Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-295-98713-2

Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920
by Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben
(Translated by Wendie Shaffer)
Published 2007 by NUS Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-9971-69-373-2
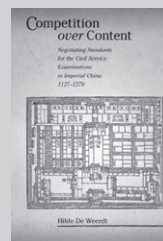
Competition over Content: Negotiating Standards for the Civil Service Examinations in Imperial China (1127-1279)
by Hilde De Weerdt
Published 2007 by Harvard University Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-674-02588-2

The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918
by Kees van Dijk
Published 2007 by KITLV Press
Paperback, ISBN 978-90-6718-308-6
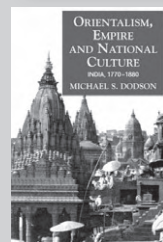
Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture
by Michael S. Dodson
Published 2007 by Palgrave Macmillan
Hardback, ISBN 978-1403986450

Tears from Iron: Cultural Responses to Famine in Nineteenth-Century China
by Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley
Published 2008 by University of California Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-520-25302-5
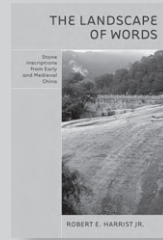
Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China
by Robert Harrist Jr.
Published 2008 by University of Washington Press
Hardback, ISBN 978-0-295-98728-6

The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China
by Joan Judge
Published 2008 by Stanford University Press
Hardback, ISBN 0-8047-5589-2

Announcements

27– 28 June 2009

Rethinking Humanities in the Age of the 'Visual'

International Conference on Humanities in 21st Century. C PRACSIS, Thrissur, Kerala, India.

Call for Papers
'Rethinking Humanities' interrogates how the future of humanities can be traced and interpreted from various academic and philosophical perspectives and the ways in which interdisciplinary endeavours in humanities, social sciences and sciences respond to this problematic. Visual culture, one of the major paradigms which re-organized almost all disciplines including social sciences in the last century, has been crucial in designing the theme of this conference. It is important to examine how the paradigm of the 'visual' has interrogated and destabilized the methodological and canonical framework of traditional Humanities.

The age of the 'visual' with its alteration of the priorities of modernity and the privileging of the spectacle signals that the Humanities are to be reread in relation to the specific contexts of cultural practices of 21st century. The search for new methodologies to redefine humanities must conspicuously be characterized by a spirit of interdisciplinary inquiries.

Keynote address: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. For a list of themes to be discussed at the conference and more information visit: www.cpracsis.org/Humanities.htm

C PRACSIS invites papers for presentation in the proposed conference on the topics related to the themes listed on the website.

Deadline for abstracts: 20 April 2009
Send to director@cpracsis.org or csbijustc@gmail.com

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15 – 18 July 2009

The First Conference of Jogjakarta Wayang Tradition.

Gadjah Mada University, Jogjakarta, Indonesia.

The theme of this conference is Iravan: Origin and Transformations in South- and Southeast Asia. The conference is convened in collaboration with The Kraton of Jogjakarta, the Public Radio of Indonesia. This event will include the Javanese Ruwatan (Exorcism) and the Wayang Kulit Performance will present the story: The Birth of Iravan.

For more details contact:
Dhiyan Prastiyono:
dresanala@yahoo.co.id,
Manu J. Widyaseputra:
bhismawicara@yahoo.com,
**hp: 6285868137575.**

July – September 2009

Kazakh Craftswomen of Mongolia's 'Rich Cradle'

Brunei Gallery, School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

This exhibition of Kazakh craftswomen and their textiles intends to create awareness of a little-known, rich and dynamic Inner Asian craft tradition. It contributes novel ways of representing 'ethnographic artefacts' by emphasizing the craftspeople who make and use these crafts and the processes involved in their craft practices.

On display will be embroidered, woven and felt textiles made by the Kazakh minority living in the Altai Mountains of the western-most province of Mongolia, Bayan-Ölgii (meaning 'Rich Cradle' in Mongolian).

A fully-furnished yurt will be erected within the exhibition space to show the home environment for which these textiles are made, and which in turn is a source of inspiration for craftswomen in their daily lives.

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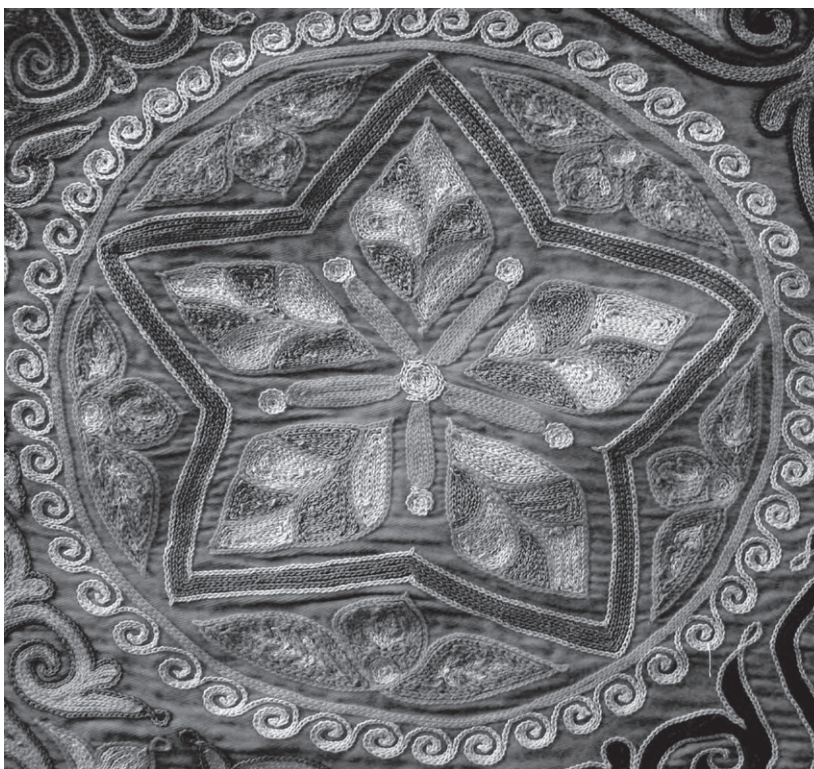
11 – 13 September 2009

25th ASEASUK conference

Swansea University, United Kingdom.

Call for Papers from the panels:

Environment, sustainability and livelihoods
Chris J. Barrow *Swansea University*
c.j.barrow@swansea.ac.uk
Becky Elmhirst *Brighton University*
R.J.Elmhirst@bton.ac.uk

Creating resilient tourism in Southeast Asia
Janet Cochrane *Leeds Met*
J.Cochrane@leedsmet.ac.uk

Theravada Buddhism and culture of the Tai of the Shan States and south-west China
Susan Conway *SOAS* susanmconway@hotmail.com, sc66@soas.ac.uk

Creativity and gender in Southeast Asia
F. Hughes-Freeland *Swansea University*
f.hughes-freeland@swansea.ac.uk

Malay/Indonesian manuscripts
Annabel Gallop *British Library*
Annabel.Gallop@bl.uk

Preliminary Ottoman/Turkish-South-East Asia findings (British Academy funded project: ASEASUK and the British Institute in Ankara)
Michael Hitchcock *Chichester*
m.hitchcock@chi.ac.uk

Emerging scholars panel
Fiona Kerlogue *Horniman Museum*
FKerlogue@horniman.ac.uk

Migration and security
Alan Collins *Swansea University*
A.Collins@swansea.ac.uk
Nicola Piper *Swansea University*
N.Piper@Swansea.ac.uk

New insights into human-environment histories in Southeast Asia
Dr Monica Janowski *Sussex University*
M.Janowski@sussex.ac.uk
Dr Chris Hunt *Queens University Belfast*
c.hunt@qub.ac.uk

Contesting the state: violence, identity and sovereign practices in Southeast Asia
Dr Lee Wilson *Cambridge University*
lw243@cam.ac.uk
Drs Laurens Bakker *Radboud University*
l.bakker@jur.ru.nl

Health, knowledge and power: providers, seekers and places of health care in Southeast Asia
Dr. Claudia Merli *Durham University*
claudia.merli@durham.ac.uk

For more details about the panels and the conference:
http://aseasuk.org.uk/?page_id=27

Please send abstracts (200-500 words) to the panel convenors or contact them directly if you have any enquiries about your proposed paper.

Deadline: 1st April 2009. Conference organiser: Dr Felicia Hughes-Freeland F.Hughes-Freeland@swansea.ac.uk

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30 September – 3 October 2009

Local Modernities? Articulating transnational ideas in South Asia

German Anthropological Association (GAA) Conference 2009, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Call for Papers
Scientists and 'local' actors tend to perceive transnational ideas at work in South Asia as forming dichotomies with local conceptions. In this conference, instead of opposing the 'local' to the transnational, we wish to reverse the focus and, by juxtaposing ethnographic examples, ask which interdependences and connections between differing 'local' or transnational ideas help constitute and uphold these apparently hybrid settings.

We invite proposals for papers based on anthropological case studies in urban as well as rural settings, concentrating on the articulation of transnational ideas. We will focus on (but are not restricted to) transnational ideas of past and present such as 'liberty', 'love marriages', 'citizens' rights', and 'terrorism'. We will analyse the enactment of these imaginations through concepts of cultural appropriations by including a focus on hybridities of differing values, foregrounding the connectivities of transnational ideas with persisting and newly introduced 'local' values as a crucial part of their ongoing and vivid expression.

Deadline for abstracts: 31st May 2009

Abstracts (max. 300 words) to mail@bhoegner.de or mschleiter@yahoo.com

Convenors: Bärbel Högner, Institut für Ethnologie, Frankfurt am Main Markus Schleiter, International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden. http://www.tagung2009.dgv-net.de/workshop_42.html

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18 – 22 November 2009

Chinese and East Asian music: The future of the past

14th International CHIME Conference.

Call for Papers

Musical Instruments Museum (MIM), Brussels
What are the prospects for numerous musical genres (and instruments and stylistical traits) from China and East Asia's past? This theme will be explored at the 14th international conference of the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research (CHIME). This scholarly meeting is open to anyone interested in Chinese and East Asian music. We invite 20-minute papers and 90-minute panels on a broad range of issues such as:
- Development, preservation and reconstruction of musical instruments
- Preservation and continuation of traditional and 'folk' music
- Reconstruction or re-emergence of historical genres
- Continuation of elements from the past in reinvented traditions and new music
- Conservation and use of recordings, fieldwork materials and collected objects
Send abstracts (max. 300 words) for individual papers and panels (detail the focus of the panel and add individual abstracts for each contribution) by email to chime@wxs.nl. Deadline 15 April 2009.

For all practical questions please contact Claire Chantrenne, claire.chantrenne@mim.fgov.be

Musical Instruments Museum (MIM) 1 rue Villa Hermosa B-1000 Brussels Belgium

Folk musicians in Southern Jiangsu, China

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17 – 19 December 2009

Conference on South East Asian languages

CLI, CERLOM (INALCO, Paris), Formal Linguistics laboratory (UMR 7110, Université Paris Diderot).

Call for papers
This conference is in two parts:
A. Thematic session on serial constructions
B. General session gathering communications addressing the syntax, semantics, as well as the (morpho-) phonology and phonetics of these languages in either a synchronic or diachronic perspective.

Proposals for papers (English or French) should be sent in an anonymous abstract of less than two pages, including examples and bibliography, in view of a 35 minutes communication (plus 10 minutes for discussion).

The name of the first author should be the subject of the message, followed by the word «abstract». In the message quote the authors' name, affiliation and address together with the title of the abstract. Attach the anonymous abstract as a Word or PDF document.

An author may submit one single and one joint abstract. In case of joint authorship, designate one author as the contact person.

Deadline: 15th June 2009
Send to:
denis.paillard@linguist.jussieu.fr

IIAS research programmes and networks

Programmes

Science and History in Asia

The complex links between science and history in Asian civilisations can be studied on at least two levels. First, one can focus on the ways in which the actors have perceived those links; how, on the one hand, they have used disciplines that we now categorise as sciences, such as astronomy, for a better understanding of their own past; and, on the other hand, how they have constructed the historicity of these disciplines, giving them cultural legitimacy. Secondly, one can reflect on historiographical issues related to the sciences. How can the sciences be incorporated into historical narratives of Asian civilisations? This question is crucial, given the dominant 19th and 20th century view that science is a European invention, and that it has somehow failed to develop endogenously in Asia, where 'traditional science' is usually taken as opposed to 'Western' or 'modern science'. This project will address various approaches to the issue by organising five international workshops in Cambridge, Leiden and Paris.

Sponsored by: NWO Humanities, Needham Research Institute, Recherches Epistémologiques et Historiques sur les Sciences Exactes et les Insitutions Scientifiques (REHSEIS), and IIAS.

Coordinators:
Christopher Cullen
(Needham Research Institute)
c.cullen@nri.org.uk
Harm Beukers
(Scaliger Institute, Leiden University)
h.beukers@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Asia Design

This programme consists of a number of individual projects related to graphic design – from classical graphics in art and communication to the rapidly emerging fields of cyberculture (New Media, videogames, etc.) and animanga (anime and manga) in East Asia - and architectural design in Asian megacities. The projects address both the physical and social aspects of design.

Institutes involved: IIAS, Modern East Asia Research Centre (MEARC), Delft School of Design (DSD). Sponsored by: IIAS and Asiascape.

Coordinators:
Chris Goto-Jones (MEARC)
c.goto-jones@let.leidenuniv.nl
Greg Bracken (DSD)
gregory@cortlever.com

Illegal but licit: transnational flows and permissive polities in Asia (IBL)

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.

Sponsored by: NWO and ASiA.

Coordinator: Willem van Schendel
h.w.vanschendel@uva.nl

Energy programme Asia (EPA)

Established in September 2007, this programme addresses the domestic and geopolitical aspects of energy security for China and the European Union. The geopolitical aspects involve analysing the effects of competition for access to oil and gas resources and the security of energy supply among the main global consumer countries of the EU and China. The domestic aspects involve analysing domestic energy demand and supply, energy efficiency policies, and the deployment of renewable energy resources. Within this programme scholars from the Netherlands and China will visit each other's institutes and will jointly publish their research outcomes.

Institutes involved: Institute of West Asian and African Studies (IWAAS) of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). Sponsored by: KNAW China Exchange Programme and IIAS.

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

Gender, migration and family in East and Southeast Asia

Developed from an earlier research project on 'Cross-border Marriages', this project is a comparative study on intra-regional flows of migration in East and Southeast Asia with a focus on gender and family. It aims at studying the linkage between immigration regimes, transnational families and migrants' experiences.

The first component of the project looks at the development of the immigration regimes of the newly industrialised countries in East and Southeast Asia. The second component looks at the experiences of female migrants in the context of the first component. To investigate these issues, this project will bring together scholars who have already been working on related topics. A three-year research project is developed with an empirical focus on Taiwan and South Korea as the receiving countries, and Vietnam and the PRC as the sending countries.

Coordinators: Melody LU (IIAS)
m.lu@iias.nl
Wang Hongzhen (Graduate School of Sociology, National Sun Yat-Sen University, Kaoshiung, Taiwan)

Socio-genetic marginalization in Asia (SMAP)

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.

Sponsored by: NWO, IIAS, ASSR.

Coordinator:
Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner
m.sleeboom-faulkner@sussex.ac.uk

Searching for sustainability in Eastern Indonesian waters

The threat of biodiversity depletion calls for the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), especially in rich natural environments like the marine space of eastern Indonesia. Most approaches to the establishment of MPAs, however, are science-based. Several interconnected developments demand a constructive analysis of the societal impacts of a predominantly technical and science oriented approach to the establishment of MPAs around the world. This new programme focuses on MPAs in eastern Indonesia (Wakatobi, Komodo, Derawan, Raja Ampat) and will facilitate the exchange of Dutch, Indonesian, German and Austrlian researchers. The aims of the programme are to (1) engage in a methodological training workshop for the three Indonesian partners plus six of their colleagues/staff members and (2) to collectively write a research proposal (2009-2013) on the social-economic and governance conditions of Marine Protected Area development.

Sponsored by: KNAW, IIAS, Wageningen University, Australian Research Council, Center for Tropical Marine Ecology Bremen (ZMT), Germany.

Partner institutes: Wageningen University, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), The Nature Conservancy, Murdoch University (Perth, Australia), ZMT (Bremen, Germany).

Coordinator: Leontine Visser
(WUR/IIAS)
leontine.visser@wur.nl

Networks

Ageing in Asia and Europe

During the 21st century it is projected that there will be more than one billion people aged 60 and over, with this figure climbing to nearly two billion by 2050, three-quarters of whom will live in the developing world. The bulk of the ageing population will reside in Asia. Ageing in Asia is attributable to the marked decline in fertility shown over the last 40 years and the steady increase in life-expectancy. In Western Europe, ageing populations developed at a slower pace and could initially be incorporated into welfare policy provisions. Currently governments are seeking ways to trim and reduce government financed social welfare and health-care, including pensions systems, unleashing substantial public debate and insecurity. Many Asian governments are facing comparable challenges and dilemmas, involving both the state and the family, but are confronted with a much shorter time-span. This research programme, in short, sheds light on how both Asian and European nations are reviewing the social contract with their citizens.

Research network involved: Réseau de Recherche Internationale sur l'Age, la Citoyenneté et l'Intégration Socio-économique (REIACTIS). Sponsored by: IIAS.

Coordinator: Carla Risseeuw
c.risseeuw@iias.nl

ABIA South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology index

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

Coordinators:
Ellen Raven and Gerda Theuns-de Boer
e.m.raven@iias.nl
www.abia.net

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

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

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

Asia-Europe Workshop Series 2010

The European Alliance for Asian Studies and the Asia-Europe Foundation welcome proposals for workshops to take place in 2010

Deadline:
1 July 2009

For detailed information visit
www.iias.nl
or contact
iias@iias.nl

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Call for panels
The sixth EuroSEAS Conference
26-28 August 2010
Gothenburg, Sweden

The venue of the conference is the School of Global Studies at Gothenburg University
—

All scholars with an interest in Southeast Asia are cordially invited to propose panels for the conference. In line with previous EuroSEAS conferences, the meeting in Gothenburg will cover a wide range of topics in all fields of social sciences and humanities. There are no limits concerning topics with Southeast Asia as a focus.

Dead line for panel proposals:
1 June 2009.

For practical information, please have look at our website www.globalstudies.gu.se

Send your proposals to:
jorgen.hellman@globalstudies.gu.se

IIAS Fellows

Central Asia

Dr Irina Morozova
Moscow State University,
Russian Federation. Stationed
at the Branch Office Amsterdam
& Leiden, and GIGA, Hamburg.
Sponsored by the Alexander
von Humboldt Stiftung.
*Conflict, Security and Development
in the post-Soviet Era: Towards
regional economic Cooperation
in the Central Asian Region.*
24 Apr 2003 – 31 Dec 2009

East Asia

Dr Mehdi P. Amineh
Stationed at the Branch
Office, Amsterdam & Leiden.
Programme Coordinator of
Energy Programme. Asia (EPA).
Sponsored by KNAW/CASS & IIAS.
*Domestic and Geopolitical Energy
Security for China and the EU.*
1 Sept 2007 – 1 Sept 2010

Prof. Wim Boot
Leiden University,
the Netherlands.
*Japanese and Korean
Languages and Literatures.*
1 Sept 2006 – 1 Sept 2009

Mr Gregory Bracken
Delft School of Design,
TU Delft, the Netherlands.
Sponsored by IIAS and DSD.
Urban Complexity in Asia.
1 Sept 2009 – 1 Sept 2011

Dr Mo Chen
Institute of West-Asian and
African Studies, Chinese Academy
of Social Sciences, Beijing,
China. Research fellow within
Energy Programme Asia (EPA)
Sponsored by CASS/KNAW.
*Domestic and Geopolitical
Challenges to Energy Security
for China and the EU.*
15 Sept 2009 – 15 Oct 2009

Prof. Chistopher Cullen
Needham Research Institute,
Cambridge, United Kingdom.
Sponsored by NWO/NRI/REHSEIS
*History of Chinese Science and
Medicine.*
1 Sept 2008 – 31 Dec 2010

Prof. Shi Dan
Energy Economic Research
Centre, Chinese Academy
of Social Sciences, Beijing,
China. Research fellow within
Energy Programme Asia (EPA).
Sponsored by CASS/KNAW.
*Domestic and Geopolitical
Challenges to Energy Security
in China and the EU.*
21 Sept 2009 – 7 Oct 2009

Prof. Yang Guang
Chinese Academy for Social
Sciences, Beijing, China.
Stationed at the Branch Office
Amsterdam. Researcher within
Energy Programme Asia (EPA).
Sponsored by CASS/KNAW.
*China Energy Security towards
the Middle East and Africa.*
24 Sept 2009 – 15 Oct 2009

Prof. Robert I. Hellyer
Department of History, Wake
Forest University, Winston-
Salem, United States of America.
*Tea in Nineteenth-Century
Global Trade Networks.*
21 Jul 2009 – 14 Aug 2009

Prof. Hsin-chuan Ho
National Chengchi University,
Taipei, Taiwan. IIAS Professor,
holder of the European
Chair of Chinese Studies
Sponsored by BICER and the
Ministry of Education Taiwan.
*The Debate between Liberals and
Neo-confucians in the Modern
Chinese-speaking World.*
1 Sept 2008 – 1 Sept 2009

Dr Zhao Huirong
Sponsored by CASS/KNAW.
Researcher within Energy
Programme Asia (EPA).
*Energy Policy of China towards
Kazakhstan concerning Energy
Supply Security and its Impact
on EU-energy Security.*
1 Aug 2009 – 15 Nov 2009

Dr Catherine Jami
REHSEIS, Paris, France. Science
and History in Asia. Sponsored
by NWO/NRI/REHSEIS.
*Circulation of scientific
Knowledge between Europe and
China, 17th and 18th Centuries.*
1 Sept 2008 – 31 Dec 2010

Dr Masae KATO
Leiden University, the
Netherlands.
*A comparative Study on Socio-
genetic Marginalisation: Japan
in 'Asia' in relation to the 'West'
as a Reference Group.*
1 May 2008 – 1 September 2009

Prof. Hui-wen Koo
Department of Economics,
National Taiwan University,
Taiwan. Sponsored by NSC.
*The Deer Hunting License and
Its Impact in Taiwan under the
Dutch Rule.*
1 Aug 2008 – 30 Jun 2009

Dr Ya-pei Kuo
Sponsored by NWO.
*Cultural Wars: Conservatism in
Early Twentieth Century China.*
1 Feb 2009 – 31 Dec 2009

Dr Xiao-hua Li
Sponsored by CASS/KNAW.
Researcher within Energy
Programme Asia (EPA).
*China's Renewable Energy
Policies and Development.*
30 Jul 2009 – 30 Aug 2009

Prof. Shao-li Lu
Department of History,
National. Chengchi University,
Taiwan. Sponsored by NSC.
*Homo Alchemy: Japan's
Chemical Industry and the
Transformation of the Culture
of Body in Colonial Taiwan.*
1 October 2008 – 1 March 2009

Dr Melody Lu
Sponsored by MEARC and IIAS.
*Gender, Migration and Family
in East and Southeast Asia.*
1 Feb 2006 – 1 Sept 2009

Prof. Tak-Wing Ngo
Faculty of History and Arts,
Erasmus University, Rotterdam,
the Netherlands. IIAS Extra-
ordinary Chair at the Faculty
of History and Arts, Erasmus
University, Rotterdam.
History of Asia.
1 May 2008 – 1 May 2012

Prof. Carla Risseeuw
Leiden University,
the Netherlands.
Ageing in Asia and Europe.
1 Jan 2008 – 1 Jan 2010

Prof. Yang Shen
Department of Chinese Studies,
Peking University, China.
China Exchange Programme.
Sponsored by KNAW.
10 Jan 2009 – 10 Mar 2009

Dr Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner
Programme Coordinator of the
Socio-genetic Marginalisation
in Asia Programme (SMAP).
Sponsored by NOW and IIAS.
*Human Genetics and its
political, social, cultural and
ethical Implications.*
17 Sept 2001 – 1 Sept 2009

Dr Takayo Takahashi
Waseda University, Japan.
*Ethnic Identity of Okinoerabu
Islanders in Japan.*
1 January 2008 – 31 March 2009

Prof. Xiaohong Tao
Department of History,
Central China Normal University,
Wuhan, China.
*A Comparative Study on Women's
Position in Modern China and India.*
10 Jul 2009 – 10 Sept 2009

Dr Yen-Fen Tseng
Department of Sociology,
National Taiwan University,
Taiwan. Stationed at the Branch
Office Amsterdam. Sponsored
by NSC and IIAS.
*New Patterns of Migration in
and out of Taiwan.*
10 Jan 2009 – 10 Apr 2009

Prof. Youngsoo Yook
Chung-Ang University, Korea.
IIAS Professor, holder of the
European Chair of Korean
Studies. Sponsored by the
Academy for Korean Studies.
20 Aug 2009 – 20 Aug 2010

Prof. Guoqing Yu
Chinese Academy for Social
Sciences, China. Researcher
within Energy Programme Asia
(EPA). Sponsored by CASS/KNAW.
*Chinese Energy Diplomacy in the
Middle East.*
10 May 2009 – 10 Aug 2009

South Asia

Dr Nyima Woser Choekhortsang
Sponsored by NWO.
*'The Three Pillars of Bon':
Doctrine, 'Location' & Founder –
Historiographical Strategies and
their Contexts in Bon Religious
Historical Literature.*
1 April 2009 – 30 April 2009

Dr Silvia d'Intino
Collège de France.
Instituts d'Extrême Orient,
France. Sponsored by the
J. Gonda Foundation.
*The Skandasvāmibhāsya on
the Rgveda. A critical Study (II).*
1 Apr 2009 – 31 May 2009

Mr Kalsang Gurung
Leiden University,
the Netherlands.
Sponsored by the
J. Gonda Foundation.
*The Founder of Bon:
The Birth of a Myth.*
1 Jan 2009 – 1 Jul 2009

Prof. Jan Houben
Ecole Pratique des Hautes
Etudes, Paris, France.
*Vedic Ritual in Asian-European
Context.*
1 Jul 2008 – 31 Dec 2009

Ms Bertine Kamphuis
University of Amsterdam,
the Netherlands.
*Development and Security in
conflict-affected Afghanistan.*
1 Sept 2008 – 1 Sept 2009

Mr Tsewang Lama
Sponsored by NWO
*'The Three Pillars of Bon':
Doctrine, 'Location' & Founder –
Historiographical Strategies and
their Contexts in Bon Religious
Historical Literature.*
1 Apr 2009 – 30 Apr 2009

Dr Alex MacKay
School of Oriental and
African Studies, London
University, United Kingdom.
*The History and Culture of
the Indo-Tibetan Himalayas.*
1 Oct 2000 – 1 May 2009

Dr Ghulam Nadri
Georgia State University,
United States. Sponsored by
the Georgia State University.
*A History of the Commercial
Dye: Indigo Industry and Trade in
Pre-colonial and Colonial India.*
25 Jun 2009 – 9 Aug 2009

Dr Prasanna Kumar Patra
Research fellow within the
Socio-genetic Marginalisation
in Asia Programme (SMAP).
Sponsored by NOW and IIAS.
*Cross-cultural comparative
Study of genetic Research in
India and Japan.*
15 Dec 2005 – 1 Sept 2009

Dr Saraju Rath
*Scanning, Preservation, and
Translitteration of Selected
Manuscripts of the Taittirya
Tradition.*
5 Jan 2004 – 1 Jan 2010

Dr Ellen Raven
Leiden University,
the Netherlands
Researcher within the
South and Southeast Asia Art
and Archaelogy Index (ABIA).
Sponsored by the
J. Gonda Foundation.
*Art, Material Culture
and Archaeology of South
and Southeast Asia*
1 Oct 1996 – 31 Dec 2011

Dr Markus Schleiter
Sponsored by the Fritz
Thyssen Stiftung.
*Localized Statehood: Social and
Cultural Practices of a 'Tribal'
Development Project in India.*
1 Apr 2008 – 30 Sept 2009

Dr Lhundup Sherpa
Sponsored by NWO.
*Research Assistant within the
Programme 'The Three Pillars
of Bon': Doctrine, 'Location'
& Founder—Historiographical
Strategies and their Contexts
in Bon Religious Historical
Literature.*
1 Apr 2009 – 30 Apr 2009

Dr Lidia Sudyka
Institute of Oriental Philology,
Jagiellonian University,
Poland. Sponsored by the
J. Gonda Foundation.
*History and Society as depicted by
South Indian Poetesses: Gangādevi,
Tirumalāmbā, Rāmabhadrāmbā
and Madhuravānī.*
15 Jun 2009 – 31 Aug 2009

Dr Shilpa Sumant
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth,
Pune, India. Sponsored by
the J. Gonda Foundation.
*A Joint Edition of the First Section
of Śrīdhara's Karmapanjikā
(General Paradigms of Ritual)
with Arlo Griffiths.*
1 Oct 2008 – 31 Mar 2009

Ms Gerda Theuns-de Boer
Leiden University,
the Netherlands.
Researcher within the
South and Southeast Asia Art
and Archaelogy Index (ABIA).
Sponsored by the
J. Gonda Foundation.
*South and Southeast Asian Art
and Archaelogy Index.*
1 Nov 2002 – 1 Jun 2011

Mr Vincent Tournier
Ecole Pratique des Hautes
Etudes, Paris, France. Sponsored
by the J. Gonda Foundation.
*Enriching an Ongoing Study on
the textual History of Mahāvastu
I.1-338 and the Settlement of
a specific Conception regarding
the Career of Bodhisattva.*
1 Dec 2008 – 30 Apr 2009

Dr Dominik Wujastyk
Wellcome Centre for the
History of Medicine at University
College London, United Kingdom.
Sponsored by the
J. Gonda Foundation.
*A Sanskrit Polemical Tract on
Medical Science: Vireśvara's
Rogārogavāda, edited, translated
and discussed.*
1 Mar 2009 – 1 Aug 2009

Southeast Asia

Dr Birgit Abels
Ruhr University Bochum,
Germany. Stationed at the Branch
Office Amsterdam. Sponsored
by Fritz Thyssen Stiftung.
*Of Islam, Ancestors, and
Translocality in Borderlands:
Identity Negotiation and the
Performing Arts among the
Bajau Laut of Southeast Asia.*
1 Oct 2008 – 1 Feb 2010

Dr Dedi Adhuri
Research Centre for Society
and Culture, Indonesian Institute
of Sciences, Jakarta, Indonesia.
KNAW-SPIN. Sponsored by
KNAW and IIAS.
*Searching for Sustainability
in Eastern Indonesian Waters.*
1 Apr 2009 – 15 May 2009

Ms Rili Djohani
The Nature Conservancy
Indonesia, Indonesia. KNAW-SPIN.
Sponsored by KNAW and IIAS.
*Searching for sustainability in
Eastern Indonesian coastal Waters.*
1 May 2009 – 15 May 2009

Dr Michele Ford
The University of Sydney,
Australia.
*In the Shadow of Singapore:
The Limits of Transnationalism
in Insular Riau.*
1 Jan 2008 – 1 Jan 2010

Dr Katrina Gulliver
Pembroke College, Cambridge,
United Kingdom. Stationed at
the Branch Office Amsterdam.
Sponsored by the British
Academy.
*Historical Geography of
Colonial Malacca.*
1 May 2009 – 31 Jul 2009

Ms Yetty Haning
Centre for Studies & Advocation
of Human Rights of Nusa
Cendana University, Indonesia.
Timor Sea Border Issues.
1 Sept 2008 – 1 Sept 2010

Dr Nico Kaptein
Leiden University,
the Netherlands.
*Islam and State in the Netherlands
East Indies: The Life and Work
of Sayyid 'Uthmân (1822-1914).*
1 May 2006 – 1 May 2009

Dr Jennifer Lindsay
Southeast Asia Centre,
The Australian National
University, Australia. Stationed
at the Branch Office Amsterdam.
*Performance and Politics in
Indonesia.*
1 Apr 2009 – 1 May 2009

Dr Lenore Lyons
Centre for Asia Pacific
Social Transformation Studies,
University of Wollongong,
Australia. Stationed at the
Branch Office.
*In the Shadow of Singapore:
The Limits of Transnationalism
in Insular Riau.*
1 Jan 2008 – 1 Jan 2010

Dr Dipika Mukherjee
*Negotiating Languages and Forging
Identities: Surinamese-Indian
Women in the Netherlands.*
1 Dec 2006 – 1 Jun 2009

Dr Laura Noszlopy
Department of Drama and
Theatre, University of London,
United Kingdom
Sponsored by NWO.
*Popular Culture and Arts in
Colonial Indonesia.*
15 Jan 2009 – 1 Mar 2009

Prof. Oscar Salemink
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
the Netherlands. Stationed at
the Branch Office Amsterdam.
*Sacred Canopies in Vietnam:
Religious and ritual Sacralizations
of everyday Practice.*
1 Feb 2009 – 31 Aug 2009

Dr Arif Satria
Center for Coastal Marine
Resources Studies, Bogor
Agricultural Institute, Indonesia.
KNAW-SPIN. Sponsored by
KNAW.
*Searching for Sustainability in
Eastern Indonesian coastal Waters.*
1 May 2009 – 15 May 2009

International conference Agenda

March 2009

The First World War and the End of Neutrality Conference
Amsterdam, Netherlands.
Organized by Netherlands Institute for
War Documentation & UvA.
6 March 2009
contact: S. Kruizinga
s.f.kruizinga@uva.nl

2009 AAS Annual Meeting
Sheraton Chicago, United States.
Conference organized by The Association for Asian Studies.
26–29 March 2009
contact: www.asian-studies.org

April 2009

Indonesia's cultural history, 1950-1965
Leiden, Netherlands.
Workshop organized by KITLV.
7–9 April 2009
www.kitlv.nl

The Cultural Politics of the Life Sciences in Asia:
Opportunities, risks and the changing body
Leiden, Netherlands.
Conference convenor(s): Dr Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner.
Organized by IIAS.
10–11 April 2009
Contact: Martina van den Haak
m.c.van.den.haak@iias.nl
www.iias.nl

'Achieving Global Goals Through Innovation'
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, United States
6th Annual Global Health & Development Conference.
Conference convenor(s): Yale University New Haven,
Connecticut.
Organized by Unite for Sight.
18–19 April 2009
www.uniteforsight.org/conference

May 2009

Fourth Annual Tamil Studies Conference
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Organized by University of Toronto.
21–23 May 2009
tamilstudiesconference@gmail.com
www.tamilstudieconference.ca

Confucianism and Modern Society workshop
Leiden, Netherlands.
Convenor(s): Prof. Hsin-chuan Ho and Prof. Axel Schneider.
organized by IIAS.
28–29 May 2009
contact: Martina van den Haak
m.c.van.den.haak@iias.nl
www.iias.nl

3rd Gender Asia Network Conference Gender,
Mobility and Citizenship
Helsinki, Finland.
Conference convenor(s): Institute of Asian and African
Studies organized by University of Helsinki.
28–30 May 2009
contact: Mikako Iwatake, Ph.D.
www.genderingasia2009.niasconferences.net

June 2009

Conflict Prevention in the Multimedia Age
Bonn, Germany.
Conference organized by DW - Media Services GmbH.
3–5 June 2009
contact: conference secretariat
gmf@dw-world.de
www.dw-world.de/globalmediaforum

Texts and Practices of South Asian Art
Vilnius, Lithuania.
Conference organized by Centre of Oriental Studies,
Vilnius University.
4–6 June 2009
contact: Valdas Jaskunas
valdas.jaskunas@oc.vu.lt

24th AKSE Conference
Leiden, Netherlands.
Conference convenor(s): Dr Koen de Ceuster.
Organized by Centre for Korean Studies,
Leiden University/IIAS.
18–20 June 2009
www.iias.nl

National and Transnational Crises and
Conflicts in South-East Asia
Vienna, Austria.
Conference organized by University of Vienna.
19–20 June 2009
contact: Mag. Christian Wawrinec
christian.wawrinec@seas.at
ww.seas.at

Rethinking Humanities
Kerala, India.
Conference organized by C PRACSIS, THRISSUR.
27–28 June 2009
contact: director@cpracsis.org
www.cpracsis.org

August 2009

ICAS 6
Daejeon, Republic of Korea.
Convention organized by Chungnam National
University (CNU)/Center for Asian Regional Studies
(CARS). In co-operation with the ICAS Secretariat.
6–9 August 2009
www.icas6.org

September 2009

25th ASEASUK Conference 2009
University of Swansea, Wales, UK.
Conference convenor: Association of Southeast
Asian Studies, UK.
11–13 September 2009
Contact: Dr Felicia Hughes-Freeland
Email: f.hughes-freeland@swansea.ac.uk

Women and Politics in Asia: a Springboard
for Democracy?
Hildesheim, Germany.
Conference convenor(s): Institute of Social Sciences.
Organized by University of Hildesheim.
30 September–2 October 2009
contact: dr. Claudia Derichs
derichs@uni-hildesheim.de
www.uni-hildesheim.de

Local Modernities? Articulating Transnational
ideas in South Asia
Frankfurt, Germany.
Conference convenor(s): Bärbel Högner,
Institut für Ethnologie, Frankfurt am Main & IIAS.
Organized by German Anthropological Association (GAA).
30 September–3 October 2009
mail@bhoegner.de or mschleiter@yahoo.com

November 2009

Chinese and East Asian Music:
The Music of the Past
Brussels, Belgium.
14th International CHIME Conference.
Convenor: CHIME, European Foundation
for Chinese Music Research.
18–22 November 2009
chime@wxs.nl

www.iias.nl

IIAS
International Institute
for Asian Studies

Silk Stories Taishō Kimono 1900-1940

Within the scope of the 400 year jubilee of Japanese-Dutch trading relations (1609-2009) the Kunsthal Rotterdam presents the exhibition Silk Stories, focusing on the various fabrics, hand made decorations and new techniques associated with the development of the kimono.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

THE WORD KIMONO is a collective term for a variety of traditional pieces of clothing and can be translated as 'thing to wear'. For the first time ever in the Netherlands, over 120 kimono, several haori (short jackets) and obi (broad brocade waist bands) provide an overview of Japanese fashion from the period 1900-1940, and the Taishō period in particular. Attention is paid to the specific role of the kimono within every day Japanese life. Central to the exhibition are the fascinating stories that are often portrayed on the inside of the luxurious silk.

Taishō Culture

As a result of increasing prosperity in the Taishō period – the reigning period of Emperor Yoshihito (1912-1926) – more and more people could afford an expensive kimono. Artists were hired by department stores to design artistic patterns, resulting in an incredibly rich and high-quality supply. Characteristic of Taishō culture are the traditional representations of flowers, cranes, samurai and geishas, coupled with a keen and vivid interest in Western patterns. After the devastating earthquake of 1923 the production of kimonos experienced a boom. The destroyed cities of Tokyo and Yokohama were rebuilt as new metropolises, where big department stores dictated what was fashionable. The 'meisen' kimono, a ready-made and seasonal kimono, became immensely popular because it was cheaper than the very expensive traditional kimono. As a consequence production increased enormously, and with it the development of patterns and decorations. Geometrical designs based on Art Deco were introduced to the world of kimono fashion.

Stories in Silk

A kimono consists of ten to twelve metres of silk fabric. Putting on a kimono is serious business, and the choice of extra pieces of clothing such as an under-kimono, a short jacket or brocade waist band is also of major importance. Men's kimono are made of plain silk; only the under-kimono and the linings of the jackets were completed with decorations that were therefore hardly ever visible. The representations often have some story-like character. Representations of tea ceremonies, horse races, base ball or the upcoming war show the personal interests and beliefs of the kimono wearer. Women's kimono often show more poetic designs. Thus, the jacket 'Parting at Dawn' represents a romantic rendezvous on the outside, while on the inside it is a cock crowing as a sign of the parting that is to come. New trends were mostly introduced by geisha, for whom the kimono is an important aspect of her mysterious appeal. All pieces in the exhibition belong to the collection of Jan Dees, expert in Japan and Japanese Culture.

Kunsthal Rotterdam. www.kunsthal.nl
Opening hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10am-5pm,
Sunday and public holidays 11am-5pm
Telephone +31 (0)10 440 03 01

All kimonos pictured are from the Jan Dees collection.

Fig. 1 Three Friends, 1910-1920. Woman's furisode, black crepe silk, embroidery, gold foil, hand-painted, yūzen technique.

Fig. 2 Spinning Tops, 1920-1940. Girl's kimono, blue crepe silk, stencil-printed.

Fig. 3 Wild carnations, 1920-1940. Girl's kimono, violet gauze crepe silk, hand-painted.

Fig. 4 Abstract pattern, 1960-1980. Woman's haori, fine crepe silk.

Fig. 5 Parting at Dawn, 1920-1940. Woman's haori, black fine crepe silk, embroidery, hand-painted.

Fig. 4

Fig. 5