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IIAS

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Encouraging knowledge and enhancing the study of Asia

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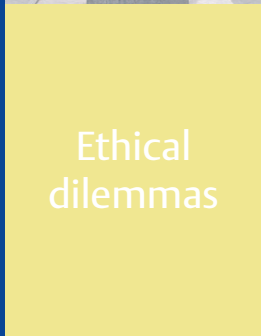
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Religious spaces



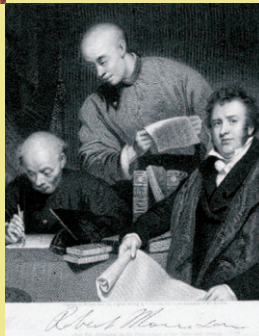
Moral authority



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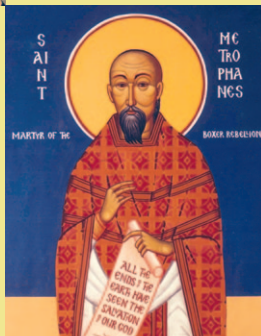


Secular monopoly



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Abrahamic tradition



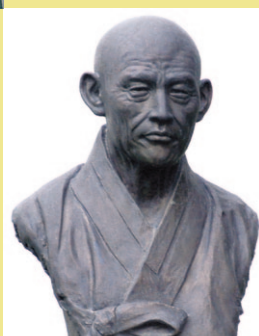
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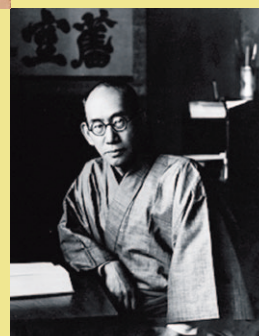
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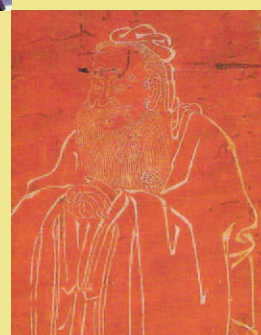


Comparing frameworks

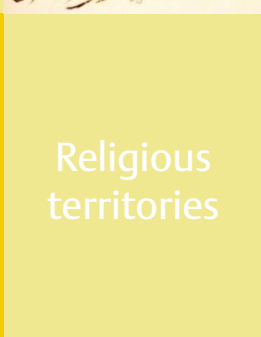
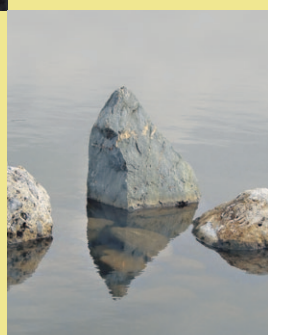
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THE FOCUS PAGES 17-32

Guest Editor Kiri Paramore brings together ideas of religion, power and identity in Asia in his theme Religion and Global Empire.

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Dr Philippe Peycam new Director of IIAS

TAKING OVER AS DIRECTOR OF IIAS, I have inherited an institute with a worldwide reputation for a wide range of activities. In the past 17 years, IIAS has offered opportunities to scholars from around the world and, I believe, created a new momentum for Asian Studies. I have my colleagues and predecessors to thank for handing over an outward looking and flexible institute with strong linkages to other institutions both at home and abroad.

Having only been in post since the beginning of April, my vision for IIAS is still taking shape, but I am convinced that the foundations are in place for IIAS to enhance its relevance by increasing its visibility and focus. Its position as an independent, flexible, small institution, built on a global network, collaborative partnerships and well-targeted quality services can earn IIAS the support of its various members, partners and stakeholders – its prime beneficiaries.

I believe we can do this through a range of well-targeted, mobilising, programmatic thematic clusters – in step with contemporary Asian currents. And we'll reinforce our networks by actively reaching out to new partners and starting new initiatives in Asia, Europe, the US and elsewhere.



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Iran: social revolt and prospects for change (part 2)



The outbreak of mass demonstrations following the elections of June 2009 created a 'revolutionary' potential for confrontation within the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). The regime responded with violence and repression, leaving no possibility for compromise. Iran's power structures have always been characterised by factionalism but the recent developments showed that contradictions and differences between groups have reached a tipping point. As conflict and contradiction intensify, so does the regime's instability. But what are the prospects for change? In the second of two articles on the current crisis in Iran, Mehdi Amineh examines the position of the oppositional forces in relation to the state.

Mehdi Parvizi Amineh

THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY Iranian civil society organisations and institutions developed gradually during the presidential terms of Rafsanjani and Khatami. These two periods transformed Iran from a fragile and fragmented society into one with more modern structures and civil society institutions. In the aftermath of the 2009 elections, the gap between society and the state began to increase rapidly, bringing millions of people onto the street. Unfortunately, the structures and civilian traditions in Iranian civil society are weak and lack the capacity to continue the movement and resist the violent suppression by the regime.¹

The Green Movement (the name given to the mobilisation of the people which occurred during and after the June 2009 elections) consists of various interest groups with different ideas and demands for democracy. The main leadership within the movement is conservative, believing that democratisation in Iran is only possible in the context of the Islamic constitution. This is one of the ideological paradoxes of the current movement. Both Mohammad Khatami and Mir-Hossein Mousavi have emphasised their loyalty to the constitution and the legacy of the Islamic revolution. Yet others believe that the current constitution of the Islamic regime is the main impediment to democracy and democratisation in Iran. Khatami's and Mousavi's loyalty to the constitution is perhaps understandable, because they want to show the ruling elite that their political activities and demands take place in the context of the constitution of the IRI, thereby protecting themselves against possible repression. At the same time, it sends a message to the regime that the role of oppositional leaders as an intermediate force between the demands of the people and the system is crucial for the survival of them all. The regime's response, however, has been clear. Namely, we do not need you as an intermediate group, if necessary we will deal directly with the people!

Is the reformist movement truly a reform movement, or is the movement actually striving for preservation of the system and the corresponding constitution with its fundamental contradictions? If leaders of the movement are to be loyal to the public demands for democratic transition in Iran, they have no choice but to distance themselves from the current political system and the legacy of the revolution. In fact, the current demands of civil society and the people are far more radical than the demands of the leaders of the Green Movement. The Iranian people believe that the reformist movement should be dedicated to gradual democratisation and democracy. It appears that there is a desire among the people to initiate some kind of 'velvet' revolution, something the leadership of the movement resists. As a result, there is a significant division between the leadership and the people engaged within the movement.

In addition, we observe that the regime has destroyed part of the opposition's mobilisation network and arrested key and influential elements of the oppositional forces. This does not mean, however, that the situation is beyond repair. Leaders of the oppositional forces try to manage the protest movements. At the same time some senior Ayatollahs, including Saneii, Dastqeb, Bayat Zanjani, Mousavi Ardebili, Makarem-Shirazi and Hadi-Ghafari are criticising the regime in a radical way. Before his death in December 2009, the Grand Ayatollah Montazeri issued a statement rejecting the outcome of the June elections, and declared in several other pamphlets that the regime no longer has 'Islamic' legitimacy. He justified the people's protest and was mobilising other senior clerics against the current political development in Iran.

The current dissatisfaction of the people can not be explained only in terms of economic crisis and the incapability of the regime. The history of mass movement shows that it is the canalisation of dissatisfaction which creates conditions for change in a country, rather than frustration with economic and political conditions alone. Political transformation depends on strong leadership.

What makes strong leadership?

The concept of leadership warrants further examination. Three main and interconnected dimensions of a revolutionary leadership have been identified, namely:

- (1) ideas or ideology
- (2) mobilisation or agitation, and
- (3) management.

Sometimes a leader might have all three qualities or dimensions. In the current situation in Iran the protest movement is not being steered by one single person; consequently, these three elements of leadership are not developing or merging into one leadership.

Ideas or Ideology

The Green Movement in Iran does not have a clear and coherent ideology. Rather, it can be considered as a democratic movement. The ideologies of protest movements can be offensive or defensive. A revolutionary movement usually has an offensive nature and strives to change the political system and socio-economic structures. A defensive ideology usually manifests the demands of unsatisfied peoples against the functioning of the system and its leaders. This type of movement is characterised by revolt rather than revolution, like the revolt of peasants, the revolt against taxes or the revolt against ethno-religious discrimination. The Green Movement in Iran is defensive in character and can be defined as a revolt against electoral fraud. To some extent, the current movement in Iran can be characterised as a movement for the *protection* of the existing constitution and a protest against a minority ruling elite protected by the military forces and in control of key economic institutions. The Green Movement is not yet revolutionary, in the sense that it has no clear aim to overthrow the current regime. The current revolt can be compared with the revolt of June 1963 under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini.² There is a possibility of turning this revolt into a revolutionary movement but to do so the Green Movement would need to distance itself from the theocratic principle of the existing constitution of the IRI. Unfortunately, the current leaders – former presidential candidates Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karoubi (arguably the only leader in the Green Movement with radical ideas) and their ally, former president Mohammad Khatami – appear to have no desire to end the current system.

Mobilisation and agitation

In the current atmosphere of brutal repression in Iran, the leaders of the Green Movement have no opportunity to create an offensive movement. The past months have seen weak civil society institutions and structures repressed further and their activities substantially curtailed. In the momentum of repression, the possibilities of mobilisation are diminished. Mobilisation of the people demands high political expenses and risks. In the case of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1978/9 the leader(s) in exile (and therefore without immediate threat to their lives) were able to criticise the regime and mobilise people against it. The current oppositional leaders are within the country and, it seems, are reluctant to take any risks under the current terror of the ruling elite.

Management

In most revolutionary movements, the leader of the movement plays a decisive role in two cases in the 'contexts of action': (1) When the repressive apparatuses of the regime are unable to function. (2) When the rulers or regimes hesitate to repress the people (as was the case during the revolutionary process in 1978 under the regime of the Shah).³ It is difficult for a regime to survive when it faces a deep-power crisis accompanied with an incompetence to control the situation. Therefore, a strong leader with a coherent idea and ideology is able to apply different political activities, mobilise people and, with this force, is able to confront the repressing forces and weaken the rulers. In the current situation a number of dissident political and religious figures (before his death, Grand Ayatollah Montazeri was seen as the main figure in this sense) can play a crucial role in managing political mobilisation and changing the power balance between the ruling elite and the oppositional forces.

Prospects for democratisation in Iran

The Islamic regime in Iran has continued – at least to some extent – the process of state-led authoritarian modernisation and therefore reproduced the same contradiction as pre-revolutionary Iran. The main causes of the current social revolt in Iran are indeed very similar to the classical ones, namely the breakdown of a modernising autocracy torn by internal contradictions between various processes of socio-economic modernisation. This gave rise to many new modernised economic and professional classes, but denied them any political autonomy, or any autonomous access to the political centre.⁴

To replace an authoritarian regime with democracy, two key interconnected factors need to occur: (1) The rise of a strong and independent middle class (2) the emergence of an autonomous private sector.

The Green Movement in Iran does not have a clear and coherent ideology. Rather, it can be considered as a democratic movement.

Both groups 'serve the process in two distinct ways: subjectively (middle classes) and objectively (private sector)'. Subjectively the middle classes spread ideals of self-determination, responsibility, activism and empowerment. They provide the crucial determinants for civil society to arise, yet they must have a certain level of autonomy and the organisational and financial means to invest in civil society organisations. Objectively, the private sector, amasses 'formidable economic muscle and organizational and financial strength of its own'⁵ to defect from an allegiance with the autocratic regime. According to Kamrava (2007) 'much, then, depends on the bargain struck between authoritarian state leaders and key social actors whose financial or organizational resources the state needs to co-opt for its own purposes'. If executed well, the authoritarian bargain with the private sector, civil society organisations and the middle classes can help to guarantee a relatively smooth transition towards democracy.

Thus, a successful capitalist modernisation is a pre-condition for development of civil society with corresponding forces. In such a situation, the upcoming modern social forces require the creation of a political system in which authoritarian rule is transformed through formal legal guarantees that permit the different social classes and groups to legitimately express their interests. This system should also place the struggle between contending political forces in a legal and constitutional framework made visible to all and guaranteeing public control over important decisions. This means that in order for modernisation from above to be successful, it must allow the civil society forces, created by modernisation, to act independently of the state. In bargaining with these social forces the state becomes less repressive and arbitrary in its actions and more rule-oriented and responsive to society's needs.

Two problems come to the fore in terms of the above-mentioned factors for change: In Iran, a large part of the middle class remains employed in the public sector or in state-owned companies. Because the oil and gas sector does not provide enough jobs, unemployment is skyrocketing.⁶ A huge public sector, state-owned companies and *bonyads* (foundations) created jobs for a great portion of the middle classes. As such, the middle class is dependent upon the state, and refrains from making demands for radical change (clientalism). At the same time, the size of the private sector is almost negligible. Most companies are state-owned or controlled by Islamic *bonyads*.⁷ Previous policies of Ahmadinejad to privatise state-owned companies resulted in passing private property into the hands of dominant political and, recently, military elite and institutions. The private sector is parallel to, and autonomous of, the government and is not strong enough to build up significant organisational and financial strength; conditions that would likely advance democratisation efforts exponentially.

To conclude, a revolutionary change in Iran is not probable as the current protest movement is defensive by nature and with no prospects of transforming into an offensive movement any time soon. Civil society structures and institutions are still immature and, as such, are not strong enough to continue the current movement and to realise a meaningful political transformation. Additionally, the current movement lacks strong leadership with a clear ideology and a strong organisation for mobilising the masses. At the same time, the regime and its main pillars, the coercive apparatus and the financial revenue (based on the income from oil and gas), enable the regime to survive.

That said, the current system is not sustainable as result of its fundamental contradiction, the lack of elite cohesion, and the nationwide social protests.

It seems three scenarios, (which I first introduced in 1999 during the student-revolt),⁸ are still relevant despite the fact that the situation has totally changed.

- The first scenario envisages that social unrest continues to exist, protest re-emerges and is violently suppressed by the current regime. In this scenario, the militarisation of the regime intensifies.
- In the second scenario, reforms are incrementally implemented by the regime in the form of a 'velvet revolution'. This scenario can only succeed if the constitution is altered in such a way that the principle of *velayat-e faqih* (governance of the jurist) is discarded.
- The third scenario is a change from below; a new social revolution. This is only possible if the current mass movement can create an alternative appealing ideology and an organisation with strong leadership able to challenge the current regime.

This last scenario is least likely for the reasons mentioned above. However, a new revolt or revolution for democracy in Iran in the future is not unimaginable, as Iranian history is full of examples of revolt and revolutions. A serious reform of the political system in the form of a 'velvet revolution' seems equally unlikely given that neither the Green Movement's leaders nor the conservative forces are prepared to abandon the principle of *velayat-e faqih*. It seems then, taking into account the latest developments, that Iran's immediate future will be one of continued suppression of the opposition and militarisation of the regime.

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References

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2. Bashiriye Ibid; see also Amineh, M.P. 1999 *Die Globale Kapitalistische Expansion und Iran – Eine Studie der Iranischen Politischen Ökonomie 1500-1980*. Münster, Hamburg, Berlin: Lit Verlag, pp. 465-469.
3. Bashiriye Ibid; Amineh Ibid, Ch. 13, (1999).
4. See Amineh, Ibid: ch. 13.
5. See Kamrava, M. 2007 'The Middle East's Democracy Deficit in Comparative Perspective', *Perspective on Global Development and Technology*, 6 (1-3): 199
6. Nomani, F. and S. Behdad. 2006. *Class and Labor in Iran-Did the Revolution Matter?* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
7. The foundations are estimated to account for 35 percent of Iran's total gross national product. They control over 40 percent of the non-oil sector of the Iranian economy (Saeidi 2004). The foundations have been a great financial burden to the Iranian economy and one of the main obstacles to economic reform in Iran. The foundations have been involved in propagating the ideology of the IRI and the social security programs. The foundations mobilize tens of thousands of people, from urban and rural lower classes, for demonstrations that support the Islamic regime. They have supported: the establishment of schools, universities, and research centers; the publications of books and journals; the production of films; the organization of art and book festivals; as well as the establishment of ideological museums. They, therewith, contribute to the indoctrination of a great number of young intellectuals into the Islamic political ideology, as it was developed by Ayatollah Khomeini. The foundations have become pivotal actors in the power struggle among different factions of the Iranian political elite, not only in terms of mass mobilization, ideological indoctrination and repression, but also as financial resources to the fundamentalist faction. This makes them not only economically important but also significant actors in forming the domestic policies in Iran. According to some estimation the *bonyads* to account for 35 percent of Iran's total gross national product. See E.P. Raketl (2007), "Conglomerates in Iran: The political economy of Islamic Foundations", in Jilberto, A.E.F. and Hogenboom, B. (eds.), *Big Business and Economic Development: Conglomerates and Economic Groups in Developing Countries and Transition Economies under Globalisation*. (Routledge, London and New York): 109-32.
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A successful capitalist modernisation is a pre-condition for development of civil society with corresponding forces.



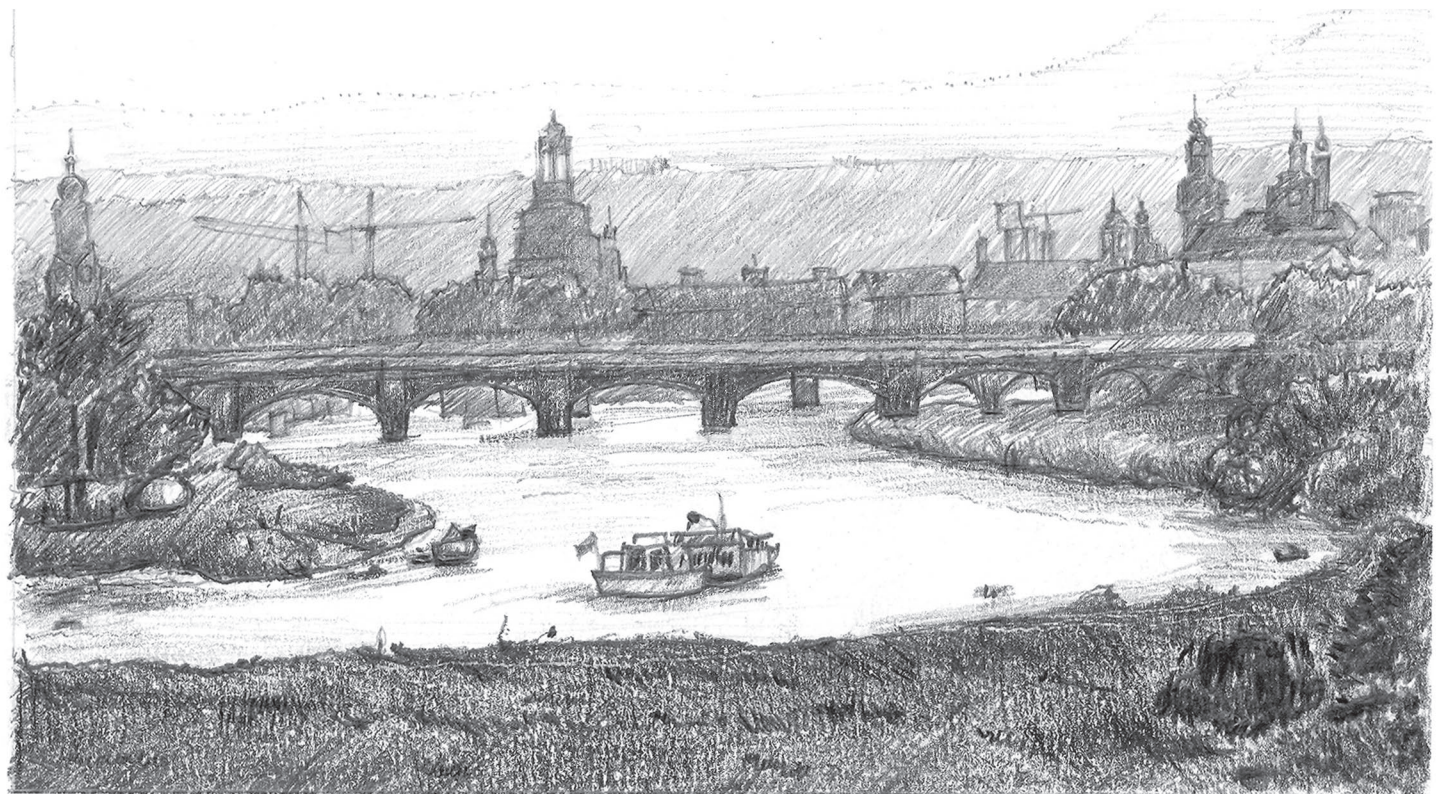
Votes can be silenced,
 But the voices behind
 them cannot.

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World Heritage site status: boon or bane?

The World Heritage Committee ('the Committee') has recently decided to remove Germany's Dresden Elbe Valley from the Unesco World Heritage List 'due to the building of a four-lane bridge in the heart of the cultural landscape which meant that the property failed to keep its outstanding universal value as inscribed'. According to the Committee, the construction of the Waldschoesschen bridge across the valley would tarnish the natural beauty of the area.

Ean Lee



Dresden Elbe Valley,
Germany.

EXTENDING SOME 18 KM along the river, from the Ubigau Palace and Ostragehege fields in the north-west, to the Pillnitz Palace and the Elbe River Island in the south-east, the Dresden Elbe Valley features low meadows, monuments and parks. It was recognised as a World Heritage Site in 2004. In March 2007, an administrative court in Bautzen ruled that the €160 million bridge project should proceed, in spite of the threat that the site would be struck off the World Heritage List. In negotiations, the Committee urged the German authorities to build a tunnel as an alternative and advised that the potential damage caused by such a project should be addressed, and that the property would be deleted from the List if work on the bridge was not stopped.

Dresden Elbe Valley, Germany

The Dresden Elbe Valley, an 18th and 19th century cultural landscape, was eventually removed from the list in 2009, and joins the Oryx Sanctuary as sites that have had their world heritage status rescinded.

Oman takes the dubious honour of being the first country to have an inscribed site removed from the list. The Committee took the unprecedented measure of de-listing Oman's Oryx Sanctuary in 2007, after Oman decided to reduce the size of the site's protected area by 90%, in contravention of the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention.

Oman's decision to reduce the area for protection, as well as the decline in the population of the rare Arabian Oryx from 450 in 1996 to 65 in 2007, was perceived by the Committee as damaging the outstanding universal value of the site. The Committee believed that Oman failed to fulfil its obligations in conserving the sanctuary and also by planning to proceed with oil drilling at the site.

As the natural sanctuary was a massive 27,500 sq km before the reduction, the viability and capability in preventing habitat degradation and the poaching of the Arabian Oryx have always been questioned.

While two sites have been taken off the list, many countries are vying to get their sites on it year after year, with the knowledge that inscription will galvanise tourism at their sites and benefits can be reaped. The long-term value of World Heritage Site status, however, has come under greater scrutiny.

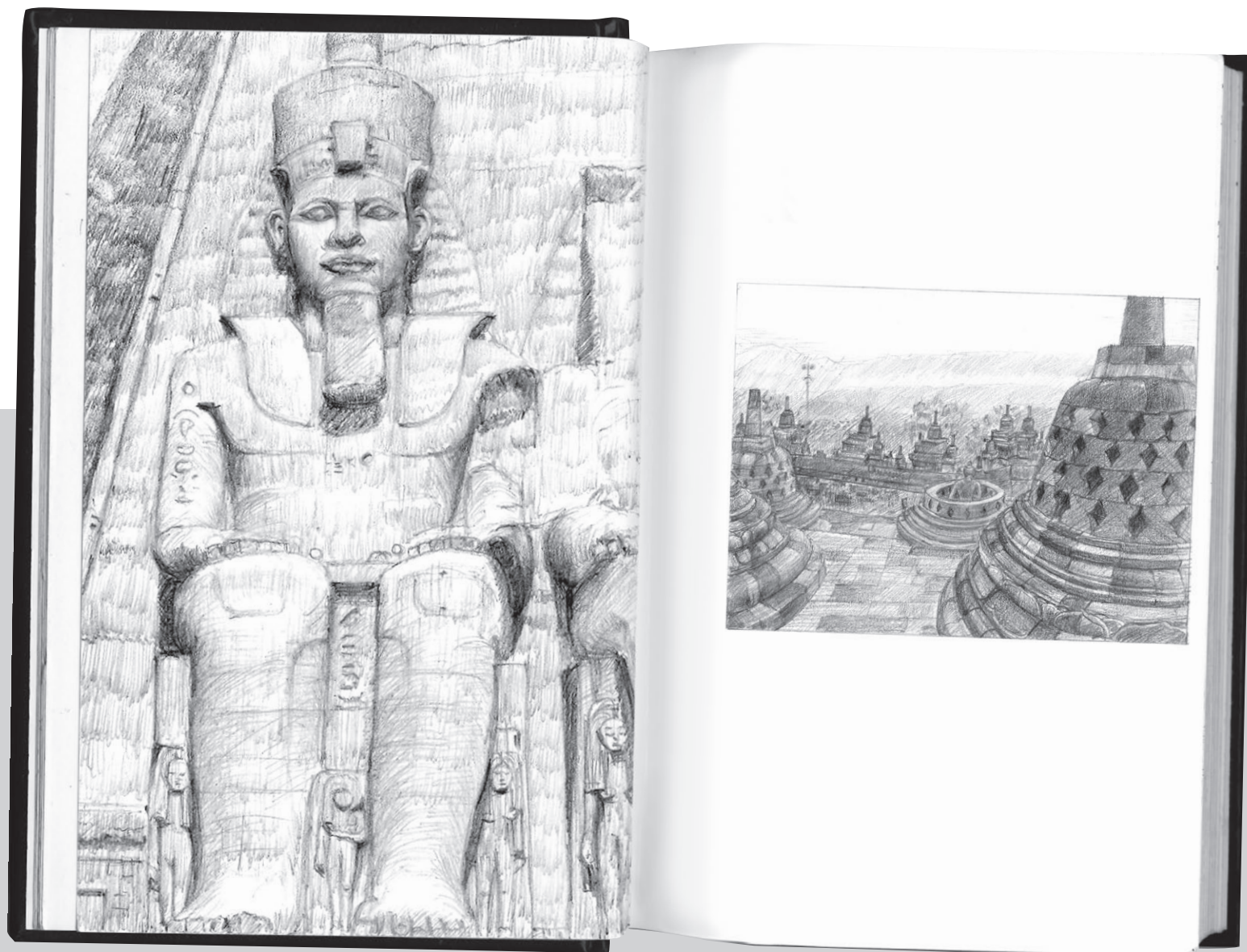
In a recent *Newsweek* article, 'To list or not to list', William Underhill suggests that the list should be restricted, and resources should be concentrated on the sites that demand assistance most. He writes that there is deepening concern 'the scheme, intended to preserve the world's greatest treasures, may actually be contributing to their demise'.

Conservation is not always the goal, and a world heritage listing 'represents a marketing tool that can turn obscure sites into must-see destinations', Underhill says. Referring to the ancient city of Lijiang in China, he notes that the number of visitors rose annually from 1.7 million to 4.6 million in the decade of it being listed. Similarly in Siem Reap, Cambodia, the annual number of visitors at the Angkor Wat temple complex currently stands at more than a million, while in 1992 the figure was less than 10,000 per year.

Underhill says that it is difficult to avoid these consequences of gaining the world heritage status, quoting a 2008 Unesco mission finding: 'Commercial interests have driven measures to facilitate large numbers of tourists, compromising the authentic heritage values which attracted visitors to the property in the first place.' He argues that Unesco, with limited funds and despite its moral authority, is unable 'to do much to help the swelling number of sites'.

Reservations

A few years ago, similar cautions had been expressed by *New York Times* journalist Seth Kugel in a provocative piece, 'Flip side of the world heritage status', which was published in the *International Herald Tribune* and other publications. In his article, he asks whether the World Heritage List's meaning has been watered down by its rapid expansion



Near Right:
Abu Simbel Temple,
Egypt.

Far Right:
Borobodur Temple,
Indonesia.



Left:
Moenjodaro
Archaeological Ruins,
Pakistan.

and if both tourism and development that are often left unchecked at listed sites can do more harm than good to places so anointed by the honour.

One of the major benefits of a site making it onto the list is the recognition which translates into tourism income, and a proliferation of travel websites and publications, as well as heightened interest, which business agencies are certainly well aware of. Consequently, how should the effects of increased tourism and development be dealt with?

As a focal point and coordinator within Unesco, the World Heritage Centre provides advice to states, organises international assistance, and coordinates the reporting on conditions of sites and emergency action undertaken when a site is threatened, including day-to-day management of the World Heritage Convention. Kugel points out that the main objective of the World Heritage Centre is to conserve sites for the next generation through international cooperation, but its official mission statement makes no reference to tourism and economic development. He questions whether the World Heritage Centre can effectively monitor the rapidly-expanding number of listed sites, and provide technical assistance on conservation.

In his Newsweek article, Underhill reports that the centre employs less than a hundred personnel, and that its annual revenue of about US\$20 million, including donations, can barely help developing countries in conserving their sites.

The World Heritage List has increased steadily since it was introduced in 1978, recognising 12 sites, with the number of properties on the List now expanded to 890, of which 690 are cultural, 175 natural and 25 mixed sites. Today, Unesco world heritage status is well established and promoted by travel agents and websites.

Like Underhill, Kugel wonders whether the award of world heritage status might be – to many applicants – ‘more an end goal than the beginning of conservation efforts’. He claims that, following the conclusion of the nomination process which takes 4-5 years, Unesco ‘generally doesn’t provide funds or technical assistance... [or] regular monitoring to ensure that the ambitious plans come to fruition.’ According to him, monitoring is the main difficulty encountered by the World Heritage Centre, which depends primarily on local governments to report on site conditions every six years.

Historical background

It was after World War One that the idea of initiating an international movement to protect heritage arose. The historical

background to the World Heritage Convention was an event in 1959 which was a major contributing factor: international concern aroused at that time by the decision to construct the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, which would have inundated the valley and destroyed a treasure of ancient Egyptian Civilisation, the Abu Simbel temples.

Abu Simbel temple, Egypt

Unesco initiated an international safeguarding campaign, following an appeal from the Egyptian and Sudanese governments. The temples were moved and reassembled in another area, with archaeological research expedited in the region that was later flooded. It was a successful campaign which cost an estimated US\$80 million, with about 50 countries donating some US\$40 million.

Borobodur Temple, Indonesia

The significance of shared responsibility and solidarity among nations in protecting prominent cultural sites inspired further efforts in the conservation of Italy’s Venice and its Lagoon; Indonesia’s Borobodur Temple; and Pakistan’s Moenjodaro Archaeological Ruins, leading eventually to the implementation of the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, as well as the establishment of the World Heritage Committee and Centre.

One of the major benefits of a site making it onto the list is the recognition that translates into tourism income, and a proliferation of travel websites and publications, as well as heightened interest, which business agencies are certainly well aware of.

World Heritage site status: boon or bane? (Continued)

Promoting tourism, preserving heritage

In 'Social Quality in the Conservation Process of Living Heritage Sites', author Ping Kong refers to the ratification of the Unesco World Heritage Convention in 1972 and observes that 'since then, both public and private sectors around the world have attached growing importance to the safeguarding and conservation of selected cultural and natural 'objects', focusing on physical, 'tangible' characteristics'. He also finds that 'World Heritage sites receive major publicity and as a result become notable attractions for large numbers of tourists from all over the world. However, in spite of the clear economic benefits and political prestige, this massive influx of tourists disrupts and in most cases, in the long run, destroys the social quality of the indigenous community. The deterioration of social quality could ultimately undermine the application of conservation policies'.

'The world's 'most outstanding' sites face threats from tourism, while the World Heritage listing does not offer much in the way of support to alleviate the threats,' writes Bart J.M. van der Aa in his 2005 book, 'Preserving the Heritage of Humanity? Obtaining World Heritage Status and the Impacts of Listing'. His research is an attempt to determine if the Convention has been effective in better preserving heritage sites; to examine whether inscription raises the level of preservation; and to determine whether the 'best' sites are selected.

The book also analyses the effects of tourism to see if they endanger a listed site, and asks whether the international community is willing to assist, and is capable of acting when sites are threatened, and if countries contribute financially through the Convention.

Among the major conclusions drawn from this study is one concerning outstanding universal value: there is doubt as to whether all inscribed sites meet the criterion. The research notes that with four cultural World Heritage sites for every natural site, and about half of the cultural sites located in Europe, questions are also raised regarding an imbalance in the list, and the willingness and capability of European countries to nominate (cultural) sites.

Aa says that there are no indications that the listed sites lose their outstanding universal qualities as a consequence of rapidly increasing visitor numbers after the World Heritage listing. He suggests that there could be a positive impact from the 'high visitor-induced pressure' at a majority of the listed sites in terms of site management, based on the presumption that visitors 'only continue to visit high-quality environments'. However, with an unlimited number of visitors having unrestricted access to almost any site or part of it, he says that 'World Heritage status has not had much influence on the site's visitor management'.

Writing for AP in 2008, Denis Gray said that an official count had revealed over 160 hotels and guesthouses providing accommodation in Luang Prabang (Laos), a World Heritage site. From interviews with Luang Prabang experts and residents in 2007, AFP reported on the changes, noting that 'World Heritage status has turned the former Lao Capital from a ghost town into a tourism hub, but too much of a good thing could soon prove the kiss of death'. Francis Engelmann, former Unesco adviser and resident, complained of the increase in cars and noise, and cautioned that the 700-year-old town might turn into 'a mono-industry where everything depends on tourism'.

Luang Prabang, Laos

The report said that the trendy mantras in Luang Prabang were concerned with sustainable and ethical eco-tourism as in other parts of Asia, but the operational plans of tourist officials in Laos pushed for 'more, more, more'.

Issues and debates

Heritage professionals have been debating the World Heritage scheme and its future. Tijana Rakic explores the subject in her 2007 paper, 'World Heritage: Issues and debates', focusing on the indefinite expansion of the list as a contentious issue among heritage professionals. According to her, Peter Skoberne, the then Assistant to the Director (Central Europe) of the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Natural and Natural Resources), was concerned that the list will include many high quality sites but will become too numerous to manage, with some sites not even meeting the criteria.

There are arguments for the list to be limited, with the warning that its significance might be lessened. Georgina Peard, a former programme officer at IUCN, was reported as saying that the credibility of the list is closely linked to the concept that it is not indefinite. To maintain credibility, Peard suggests that the priority should be on managing the existing sites rather than on inscribing new ones. She is supported in this argument by James Arnold, manager of the New Lanark Heritage site in the UK, who claims that inscription does not imply that sufficient funds will be offered for site preservation.

With unlimited growth of the list, Rakic cautions in her paper that there may be dilution in the value of the World Heritage site status, and doubts the abilities of Unesco and its advisory bodies in preserving listed properties, due to limited expertise and financial support for necessary conservation work.

In the afterword to 'Politics of World Heritage: Negotiating Tourism and Conservation' (2005), Michael Hitchcock writes that the Convention 'lacked an important provision from the outset, the need to conduct research on how well the convention was fulfilling its brief in scientific terms'. With reference to Hitchcock's point, Rakic says that despite its influence, Unesco 'has only an advisory role in World Heritage Site management since the Convention does not imply its direct intervention'.

The research by Rakic included a sample of 180 heritage professionals based in 45 countries, with each country represented by a World Heritage site manager, a cultural attaché, and a chairman or highly ranked representative of the IUCN and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). An overwhelming 92.3% of heritage professionals felt that World Heritage status 'had become more important for the purposes of the tourism industry than for conservation'.

Rakic notes that a few heritage professionals view the phenomenon of tourism, which accompanies the World Heritage status, as a contribution to a more rapid deterioration of sites. There are also references to the World Heritage status as a 'brand' or a 'trademark,' even though it was created to ensure conservation, implying that its popularity in tourism has led to its identity as 'an authenticity stamp for the heritage tourist'. She concludes that it is uncertain whether the World Heritage List will grow to be too big, and if the need of humanity to preserve the listed sites for future generations, or 'to 'consume' them in [the] present through tourism development' will prevail.

Acquiring the World Heritage label is neither necessarily an honour for the local population, nor a useful leverage for tourism and environmental organisations, as indicated by the discussion paper, entitled 'World Heritage as NIMBY? The Case of the Dutch Part of the Wadden Sea'. Relating to the trilateral nomination of the Wadden Sea by Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands, the paper was produced in 2002 by Bart J.M. van der Aa, together with Peter D. Groote and Paulus P.P. Huigen.

Discussion in the paper focuses on the growing 'opposition to handing over local or national heritage to all mankind, as represented by Unesco; the few benefits for local populations; and the avenues through which local stakeholders can challenge imposition of the World Heritage status'. It reveals that local stakeholders, in public consultation within the Netherlands, did not support the nomination, and seemed to have adopted the 'Not in my backyard (NIMBY)' approach to World Heritage inscription (the Wadden Sea has recently been inscribed on the list under the nomination of Germany and the Netherlands).

The paper examines the factors which affect the nomination process; opposition by locals, the tourism industry and environmental agencies; and interests at stake that complicate benefits and costs evaluation and the assessment of the World Heritage status from a rational rather than emotional perspective. It concludes by raising the possibility that 'far from being atypical, the lack of local support for the case of the Wadden Sea may be representative of a more general trend'.

As reported by Underhill in his article, Dresden city councillor Jan Mücke makes a strong point of it, giving attention to the locals, who supported the bridge plan in two referendums, and to whom 'ridding the city of choking traffic was more important than any accolade'. The city councillor said: 'In a democracy, we cannot have a dictatorship of a minority that, acting out of esthetic grounds, thinks they know more than the overwhelming majority of citizens'.

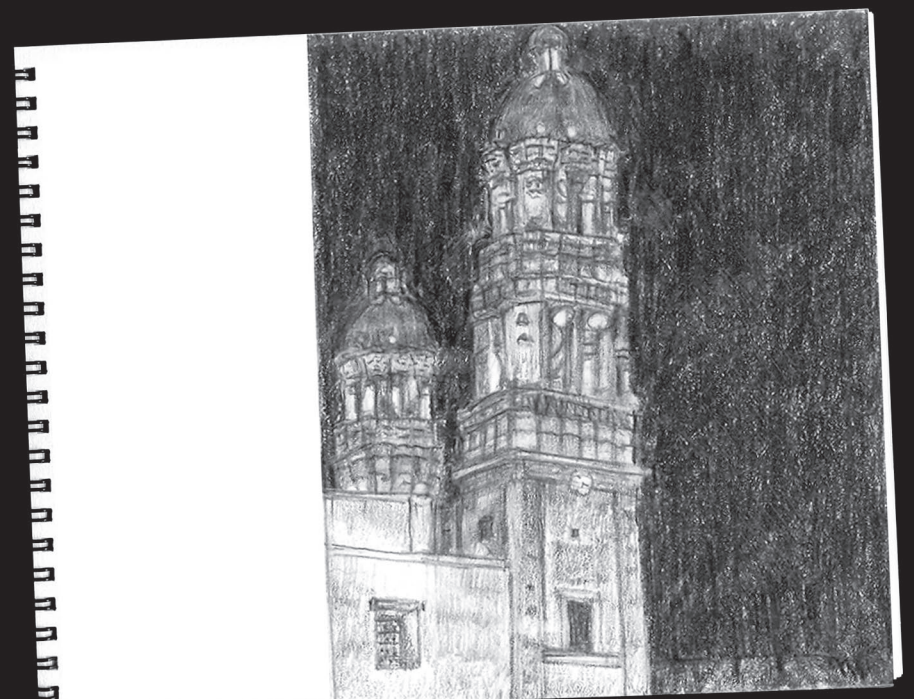
Local or international

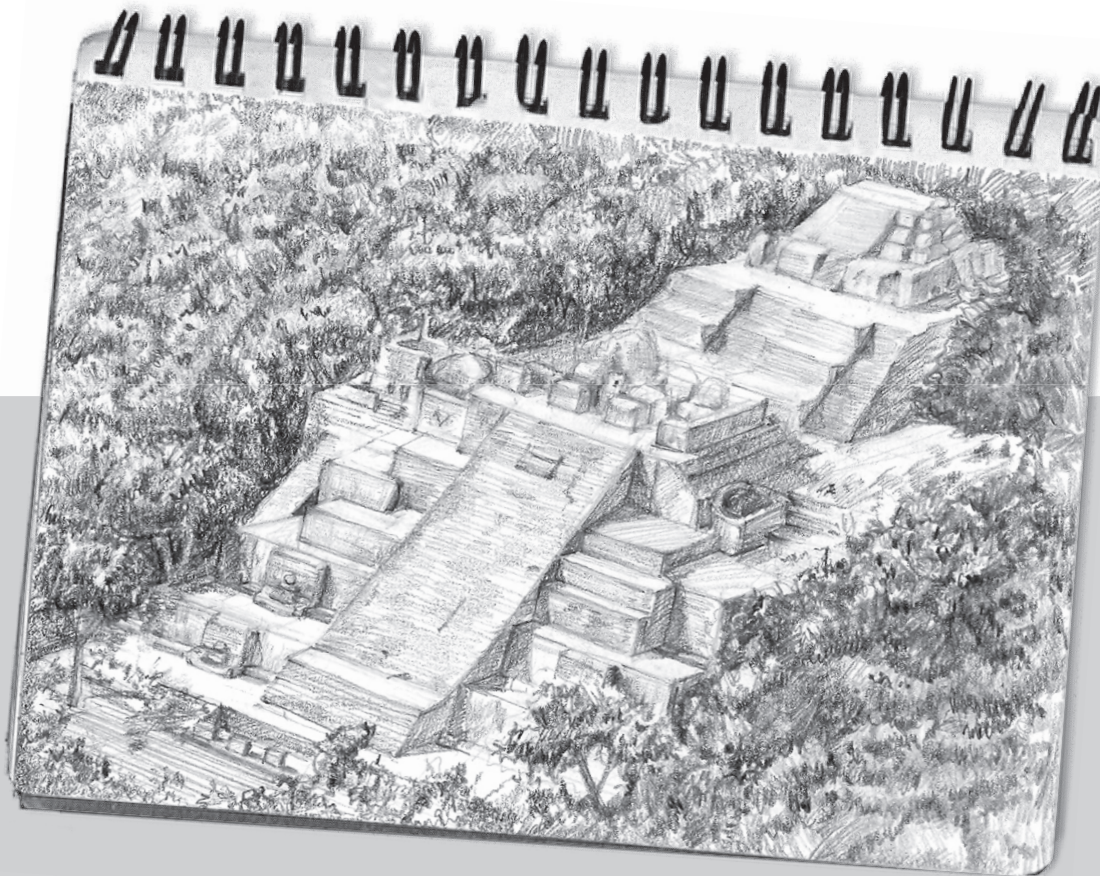
Exploring the issues in depth, the above-mentioned paper refers to the English site of Stonehenge, which dates to a time when identifiers such as 'English' or 'British' had yet to be developed. It says that the English should be prepared to share Stonehenge with the rest of the world as a legacy, but finds that the national organisation, English Heritage, which arranged the nomination for inscription, seems to want 'to keep it for themselves'. The sign at the site reads: 'Stonehenge belongs to the nation and falls under the guardianship of English Heritage'.

Despite the obligation that ensures international protection of a site following listing, the authors argue that tangible protection of the site must be carried out at the national level, making international assistance impractical, particularly since Unesco requires that a national World Heritage Act be implemented as a condition for inscription.

Underhill notes that some countries in the developed world may harbour resentment toward outside interference, and presents the US as an example. He points to the case of Unesco placing Yellowstone National Park on its endangered list in 1995 (after a private company proposed gold mining in the vicinity of the park) as a cause for American mistrust of UN interference, and a possible explanation of the absence of any proposal for new sites in the US to be listed.

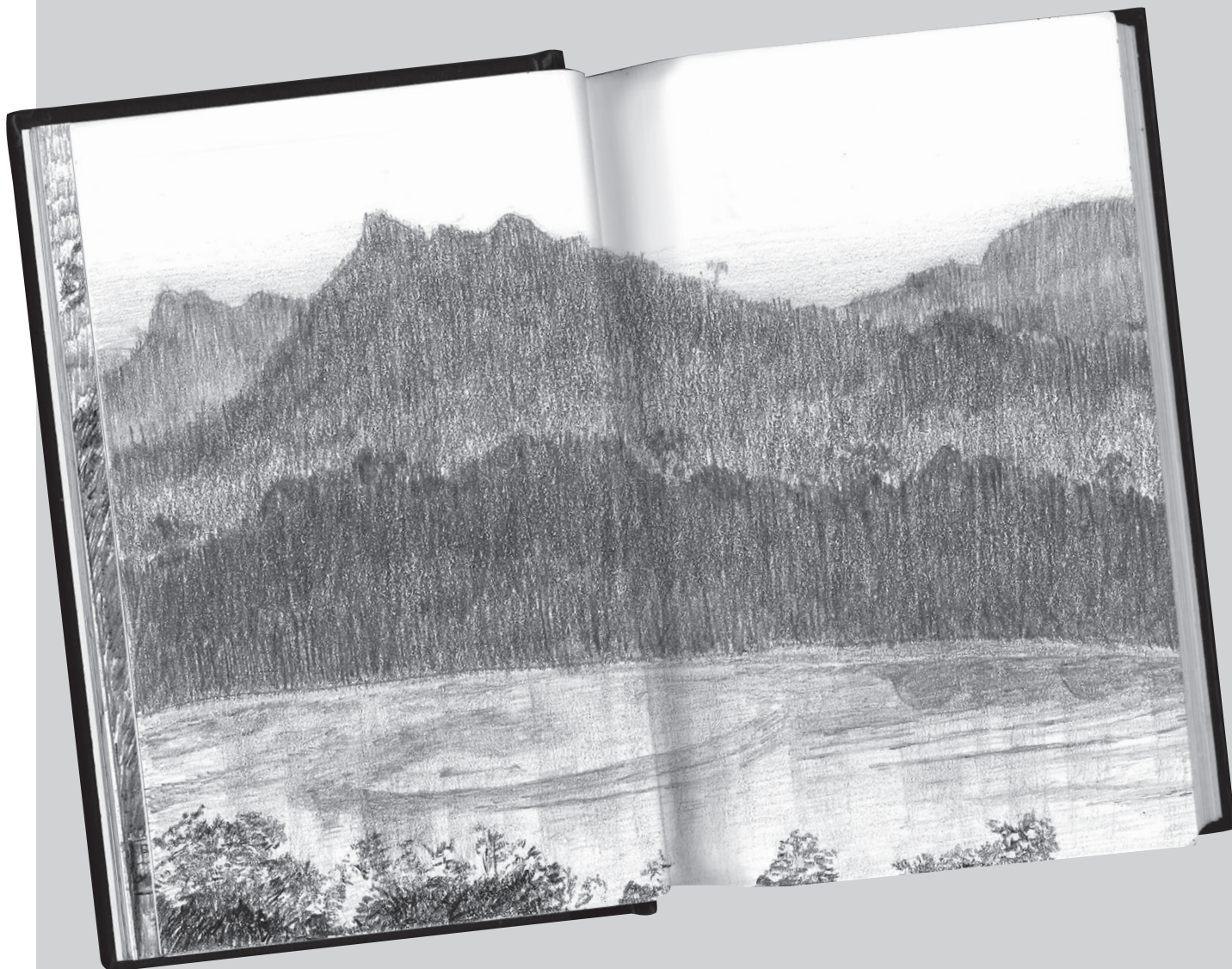
With unlimited growth of the list, Rakic cautions in her paper that there may be dilution in the value of the World Heritage site status, and doubts the abilities of Unesco and its advisory bodies in preserving listed properties, due to limited expertise and financial support for necessary conservation work.





Right:
Calakmul, Mexico.

Below:
Luang Prabang, Laos.



The Convention is a primary symbolic attempt to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of humanity at the international level, Aa observes in 'Preserving the Heritage of Humanity'. 'The step from national to global heritage is predominantly a symbolic one, as the World Heritage Convention hardly leads to a better preservation of listed sites', he says, adding that 'most actors involved in it –Unesco, countries and stakeholders of World Heritage sites –have been able to use the convention for their own purposes'.

While it is difficult to ascertain that tourism is a direct consequence of a World Heritage award, the fact remains that heritage sites are increasingly being commercialised through tourism development. Aa says that by putting a site under a 'spotlight' (through inscription), it is under great danger as it attracts a large number of tourists, and 'heritage preservation seemed to have a very problematic co-existence with tourism at most World Heritage Sites'.

Aa writes that the debates ranged from numerous management issues caused by 'high visitation numbers, such as managing the increased numbers of visitors, finding the balance between conservation and commercialization of the site, producing and implementing an appropriate management plan and implementing appropriate site monitoring systems'. He points out that cities, such as Zamose (Poland) and Zacatecas (Mexico) are both in dire need of renovation, but receive scant national or international financial support in their preservation efforts, and that 'the accolade ensuing from World Heritage designation is more often capitalized on by the tourism industry rather than accompanied by increased preservation efforts'.

Filling the gaps

Ultimately, as Underhill affirms, 'there is no question that Unesco can exert a positive influence', and the agency can help to avert the worst depredations.

In 2004, ICOMOS produced a study, compiled by Jukka Jokilehto, to provide quantifiable evidence in assisting the effort to ensure that World Heritage is adequately reflected on the list. Titled 'The World Heritage List: Filling the gaps – an action plan for the future', it contains an analysis on both the World Heritage and Tentative Lists that could be used for developing a global strategy for a 'credible, representative and balanced' list.

Addressing gaps in the list for cultural properties, this study proposes an action plan to redress the perception that several of these properties do not reflect 'the total corpus' of the world's cultural heritage, in all its diversity and complexity.

Certainly, after more than 30 years of implementation of the Convention, more critical assessments of its contributions toward preserving the world's most outstanding heritage properties are to be expected. Such assessments shall be beneficial in making the Convention more effective, such as by rendering more emphasis on the international rather than national in the selection of site and impact of listing; addressing the two major management issues of 1) reconciling conservation and commercialisation, and 2) dealing with an increased number of visitors to sites; and ensuring that the value of World Heritage status will not depreciate as more sites and properties are added to the list.

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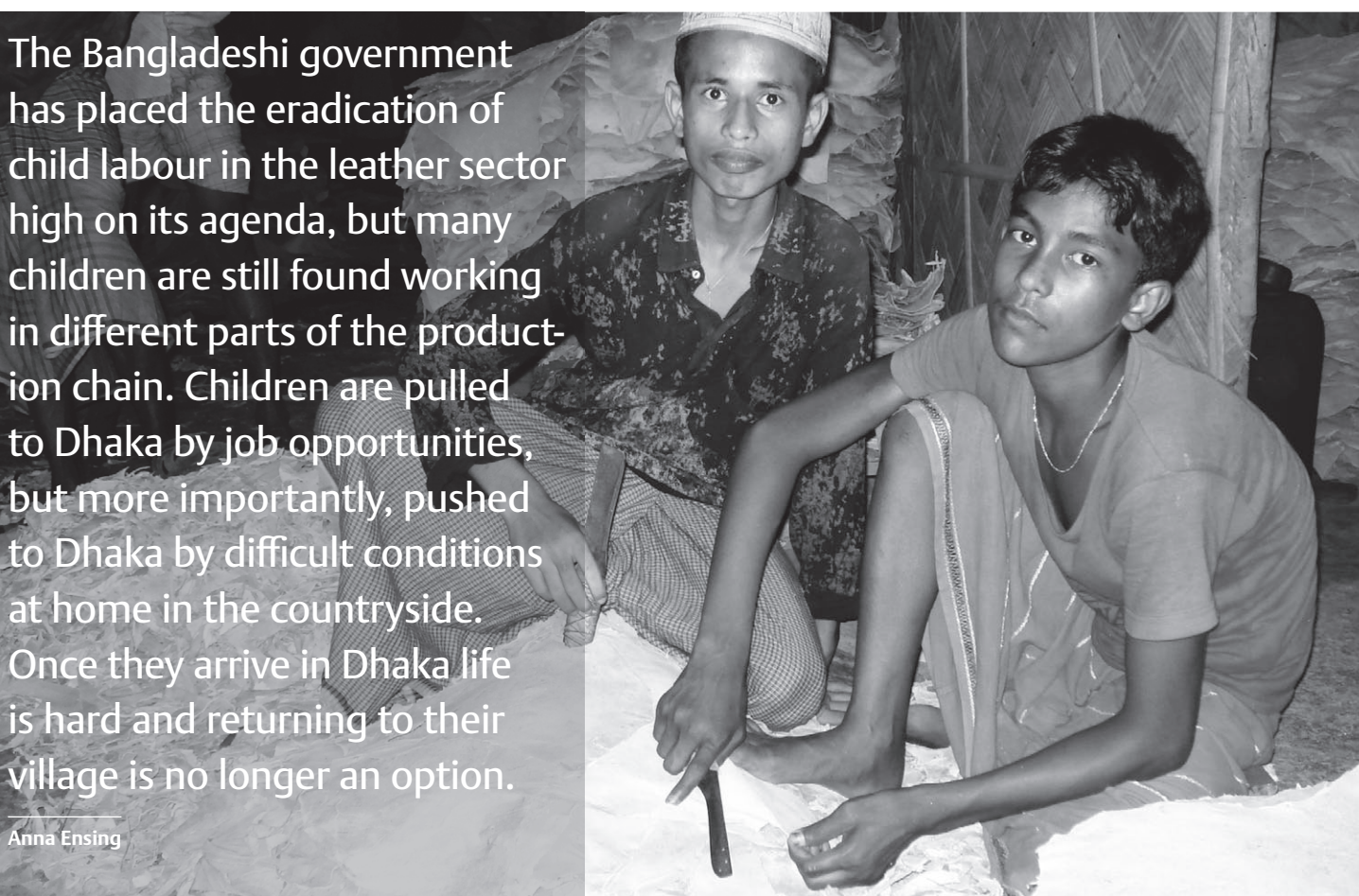
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10 The Study

Leather gloves and tiny fingers

The Bangladeshi government has placed the eradication of child labour in the leather sector high on its agenda, but many children are still found working in different parts of the production chain. Children are pulled to Dhaka by job opportunities, but more importantly, pushed to Dhaka by difficult conditions at home in the countryside. Once they arrive in Dhaka life is hard and returning to their village is no longer an option.

Anna Ensing



"I am from Noakhali and I migrated to Dhaka one year ago, together with my uncle and cousin. I finished primary school in my village and then stopped. My uncle asked me if I wanted to work in Dhaka because I wasn't doing anything. My father was ill, so I left. He died one month ago. My brother is a shaving operator in this tannery and he arranged the job for me. My job is to help iron the leather to dry it and make it flat. I work from 8am to 5pm and earn 2000 taka (€20) per month. After work I go to my cousin's house. I pay them 1300 taka each month to live in their house with three meals a day. I also send some money to my family". (Antu, 13, working in one of Dhaka's leather tanneries)

ABOUT 64 PER CENT OF CHILD LABOURERS in the world are in Asia. Bangladesh has more than five million working children, and has, second only to India, the most children between five and 14 years old working in South Asia. (ILO 2006, 2009; Lieten 2009)

This study sought out the presence of child labour in the production chain of leather and leather goods in Bangladesh. The three-month research took place in 2008, in the tanneries of Hazaribagh and in the small factories all over Dhaka, in which leather is turned into shoes, bags and wallets. Observations were made of polluted living and work areas in factories, tanneries and people's homes. Whenever possible, factory owners were interviewed about their employment of children, and parents about their children's work. The main part of the research, which involved talking to as many children as possible, found working in several sub-sectors of the leather industry. Many of these children are never reached by existing interventions.

Leather production in Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh has identified the leather industry as one of the 'highest priority sectors' because of its contribution to export and employment (ILO-IPEC 2007). Unfortunately, child labour is very much present in the leather sector. In 2007, ILO-IPEC counted approximately 260 children in leather tanneries, 3040 children in shoe factories and 320 children in the production of other leather products (ILO-IPEC 2007). In 2008, after several interventions, we still found several children, from 8 years old upwards, involved in a wide variety of activities throughout the production chain. Leather is produced by tanning and the final products of the process are manufactured into leather products. Children are mostly found in small-scale units producing for the domestic market, but they are also found working at home, producing outsourced work for factories, selling the finished products or in the processing of waste materials.

Who are the child labourers?

The leather industry is a male dominated sector and working children are also predominantly boys. The only stage of the production chain in which girls are involved is in the manufacturing of shoes and gloves. The age of the children in the production chain varies between workplaces and activities, but most children in this sector are 12 years and older.

A majority of the working children migrated from the countryside as a consequence of push factors. In the rural area, the children's families experience economic problems, often due to

debts or loss of land. Poverty, in combination with social problems, is the usual reason for moving away from the countryside to start a new life in the capital city. A father's second marriage is also often a reason to migrate.

Ten-year-old Shanto, was found toggling (pinning wet hides to the ground to stretch them flat whilst they dry) leather along the river bank. He migrated with his mother after his father had left them for a new wife. In Dhaka he, being the oldest son, started to work. I heard a similar story from 15-year-old Rupa. She was living in a little shack together with her mother in a slum area next to the river bank in Hazaribagh, which has become home to many new migrants. Her mother described their migration to Dhaka:

"We migrated from Ronpur, mainly because of poverty. Rupa is already 15, and people in the village say that we should marry her. But then we need to pay the dowry to the new husband. Rupa's father is unemployed and the relationship with him is not so good. To avoid the dowry and the social problems in the village, I migrated with Rupa".

Living at work

Migrant families usually move from poverty to poverty. The parents are often working in low income jobs, such as rickshaw pulling (fathers), garments or domestics (mothers). The income is often not sufficient for the entire household and children have to contribute. Other children have lost a parent, which results in a serious decrease in household income.

Some of the boys have migrated to Dhaka independently. They are expected to support themselves and also to send some of their income to their families. The boys usually end up working in a tannery or a factory since these workplaces also offer a place to sleep; some boys are able to live as a paying guest with a relative or a village neighbour. This is, the case for ten-year-old Mamun, who lives and works in a belt factory at the Bangshal market. Mamun is the only working child at the factory and describes his daily life as follows:

"My father, mother and brother are still in the village. I came to Dhaka with my uncle when I was very little. For the past two years I have been working in this factory with 12 other persons. We work from 10 in the morning to 12 in the night. We all sleep here, at the workplace, and take our food all together. I get 1000 taka a month".

Reasons for work

The first and most frequent reason children give for having to work is poverty. Rural poverty is widespread and may be aggravated by 'shocks' (death or illness in the family), which are often an immediate cause for children to start working. Children in the countryside, but also in urban areas, are aware of their poverty and feel responsible for supporting their family.

A second relevant explanation is related to education. Children not only stop school because they work, but many also appear to start working because they have not been enrolled in education or they have dropped out. In particular, the increase in costs when advancing from primary to secondary education

is a reason for parents to pull their children out of school. As a 16-year-old boy explained: 'The person with whom I arrived in Dhaka said to my mother: 'he is doing nothing in the village, shall I take him?' And my mother welcomed this because I was neither studying nor earning money.'

There are also pull factors that explain why children work in the leather industry. Big companies generally do not employ children directly, because of the need for skilled labour and quality products and because inspections are most likely to take place in their enterprises. Small and informal companies, however, do employ children. These entrepreneurs are not necessarily merciless exploiters of cheap and docile labour. Many originate from poor families themselves, some have even been child labourers. After years of low paid work, they have managed to save and make a small investment to set up their own business. Because of the low investments and production costs, their products are of relatively poor quality and only sold for the domestic market. They employ child labourers for social considerations, but at the same time, the economic benefit of hiring children instead of adults is quite substantial.

Some children work at home with their parents where, for example, they manufacture leather gloves. In these cases, the businessmen who give the parents a contract often have no knowledge of who exactly is doing the work. It is an example of subcontracting within the family. The reason parents involve their children in 'helping them', as they call it, is that they get paid per unit and the child's help increases the family income.

Working conditions

The working conditions of children vary per production stage and specific activity. In general, children work long days and have assisting tasks. Working schedules in tanneries and factories can be 14 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Work in a tannery leaves most children little time to play, or to travel to their parents in the villages. Most children don't use gloves, boots or masks and come into direct contact with chemicals and hazardous waste produced in the tannery (Gain 1998; Karim 2005). Children involved in toggling work outdoors and are much less affected by chemicals. The harsh aspects of this particular task are mostly related to the stooped position they must maintain during work, and exposure to the elements. In small-scale and informal manufacturing units, children work on the floor in crowded rooms. The room is often also the sleeping place. The children involved in working with waste materials burn and dry the discarded leather, which causes lots of smoke and produces an awful smell. The smoke affects children's lungs and burning leather releases harmful chemicals (K. Kolomaznika et al. 2008). By contrast, the children working at home do so under relatively good conditions. Most children in the sector never see a doctor and tend to trivialise their health problems.

Living conditions also affect the children's health and well-being. Hazaribagh is one of the most polluted areas in Dhaka. The inhabitants are exposed to health hazards created by the tanning process and other stages of leather production. Boys who also live at their worksite are affected 24 hours a day. More importantly, these boys have lost contact with their families, they have no leisure time and they don't go to school. If they were to quit their job, they would also lose a place to live. Moreover, as long as they are responsible for their families in the countryside, returning home is not an option. Since there is no alternative work, most of these boys end up working in the leather sector until they are adults.

This study was part of the IREWOC project 'Worst Forms of Child Labour in Asia', for which research was conducted in Nepal, Indonesia and Bangladesh. The project was financed by Plan Netherlands.

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\$#@% mak!: the oil in the multicultural machine

SCENE 1: A middle-aged Malay male walks out of my local barber shop run by a Tamil-Hindu proprietor. A few seconds later, he returns and points indignantly at hair stubbles on his chin that had somehow escaped the barber's blade. Before the bemused barber could react, he storms out dramatically and utters, 'pundik!' (Tamil for vagina).



SCENE 2: A few months later, I am at my local car accessories shop to purchase a button battery for my car keys. The Chinese male attending to me is not sure about something and he consults the shop manager, a young Malay woman. In response to his query, she punctuates her sentence with 'Soh hai!' (Cantonese for stupid vagina).



OBVIOUSLY, MALAYSIANS are not unique when they swear or utter obscenities. Like most of humanity across space and time, 'dirty words' are used during moments of intense emotions like anger, frustration or even during its apparent antithesis, elation. They convey the force of feelings when other words falter. But these same words can evoke quite different responses from their hearers under varying circumstances. For instance, when used in jest or playfully among lovers, friends, relatives and even newly found acquaintances, these words *connect* rather than alienate human relationships.

Swear words, together with slang, insults, slurs, oaths, blasphemies and curses, have not escaped the attention of scholars. While linguists might study them for their etymological origins and transformations over time, and psychologists for their cognitive and psychosexual sources, anthropologists usually direct their analytical gaze elsewhere.

Taboo

Despite hailing from different emphases, their foci, nevertheless, tend to be on the historical and social contexts in which the cultural meanings of these words are suspended. Simply put, they see language as part of this artefact called 'culture', not a thing in itself and detached from cultural activities. In this perspective, swear words are classified as 'taboo', that is as language that should be avoided from public hearing. Nevertheless, as a 'non-language' of things not said, they still shape and structure individual thinking and behaviour in quite tangible ways.

In polyglot and multi-ethnic Malaysia, swearwords—like the artefacts of cuisine, dressing and worldviews—are open to the forces of hybridisation. And they are also equally subject to the codes of appropriate public linguistic and social behaviour as powerfully mediated by the schooling system.

Yet, at the same time, there runs an undercurrent of contrapuntal education. For instance, while I was in lower secondary school, graphic 'dirty words' from the Malay, Chinese and Tamil lexicon were uttered with ease among male friends and foes without fear of intellectual property infringement. In as much as these words arguably worked to bridge ethnic and cultural domains, they also skirted the boundaries of supposed civic behaviour. As far as possible, they were out of the earshot of the figures of authority—teachers and prefects—to escape disciplinary retribution.

Not surprisingly, 'dirty words' were on abundant display in the private-not-so-private space of bodily exudation—the boys' toilet walls. Anonymously etched on them were Picasso-like and grotesque artistic renditions of the human genitalia and acrobatic coital positions. Sometimes, to make doubly sure that there is no doubt as to the target of their pieces of work, they would be eloquently captioned with the names of individuals, local and foreign.

For many in adult life, the spectrum of the polyglot lexicon of local swearwords has dwindled or lapsed through infrequent use. They have been overshadowed by English expletives popularised in commercial movies and pornography.

'Dirty words'

I interviewed friends and colleagues of both sexes and of different ethnic ancestries. I asked them to 'talk dirty' to me. I requested them to list all the swearwords that they know and describe how they would use them. Though most of my 'findings' were not novel, there were some surprises.

SCENE 3: I am working late into the night on a document that is due early the next day. I am tired and am not in an inspired mood given the last minute nature of the request. Suddenly, the computer screen turns pitch black, losing the hard intellectual labour of the last one hour. I raise my hands in exasperation with the expletive 'fuck!' exploding out of my mouth.

Yeoh Seng Guan



Firstly, a large proportion of 'dirty words' that they could remember in their own vernacular usually referred to human genitalia. Female genitalia (eg., Malay: *pantat*, *puki*; Tamil: *pundik* or *kitthe*; Hokkien: *cebai*) were far more readily recalled than those of the male's (eg., Malay: *butuh*; Tamil: *kottai*; Hokkien: *lang cheao*). If the male's genitalia are used, it would be to highlight its shortcomings and impotency.

Tamil slang has the additional feature of including pubic hair in the repertoire of insults. So, one can have the option of saying *pudungu mayiru* ('pluck your pubic hair') to get one's offensive point across. This is not surprising if one is familiar with the cultural grammar of hair still salient in South Asian cultural and religious practices. For instance, loose and unbounded hair is associated with brazen sexuality and the loosening of social control, whilst a shaven head signifies asceticism and order. By comparison, the Hokkien-Chinese equivalent seems to make great play on the bad odour of the female genital (*chow cebai*) as a metonym for the despicable character of the person intended. Clearly, the politics of olfaction (smell) is foregrounded here.

Another thread cutting through my interviewees' comments is one that would not be surprising to feminists. If the speaker's intention is to denigrate the hearer more sharply, he/she has the option of resorting to phrases highlighting the latter's mother's genitalia as a focus of attention (eg., Malay: *puki mak*; Tamil: *pundik amma*). By contrast, references to the father's genitals are less prevalent or even absent. Indeed, to launch a calculated verbal attack focusing on the hearer's mother is highly likely to elicit a robust retaliation, suggesting a gradation of 'dirty words'.

Yet another category of vernacular insults refers to the act of copulation. Again, the persona of the mother is a popular trope. In this regard, the Cantonese-Chinese version is quite potent combining the concoction of smell, genitalia and one's mother for derision. Interestingly, coital insults also suggest a suspension of sexual decorum with the mother acquiring whorish tendencies or, equally worse, turning into a victim of predatory rape. The force of these phrases, of course, is a suggestion of a gnawing uncertainty of one's blood or kinship ties. By contrast, when directed at males, the verbal accusation of sodomy reduces the hearer to an effeminate figure and an object of 'unnatural sex'.

Not all vernacular insults listed out for me were preoccupied with the human genitalia or copulation. There are phrases casting scathing dispersions at the listener's intelligence or

even humanity. In the former, for example, these would include Malay phrases like *sakai*, *prak* and *ulu*, which liken the victim to the putative simple-mindedness and primitiveness of indigenous peoples in the context of modern urban living. Similarly, one could invoke the words *monyet* (monkey) or *kerasumbang* (macaque) to suggest an absence of the distinctive qualities of a human being.

Finally, all my interviewees admitted to a familiarity with polyglot swearing, a bonus of living in racialised and multicultural Malaysia. Whether through active learning or by osmotic enculturation over the years they have acquired a working knowledge of a smattering of 'swear words' in different vernaculars.

For me, this suggests an arresting visual image. Picture on the surface a heavily invested Babel-like structure of a common language that supposedly facilitates intercultural communication and therefore unifies all speakers of diverse linguistic origins. Beneath and out of sight runs a subterranean network of intersecting tunnels (sewers?) laden with picturesque vocabularies that flow and mix in the heavy traffic of everyday interactions.

While all Malaysians might not be fully aware of each other's entire lexicon and the nuances in deploying them, what remains interesting, as a subject for anthropological research and for constructive engagement, are the unintended ways in which subaltern 'dirty words' have the power to shock, insult and disrupt as well as to connect forcefully and meaningfully across diverse cultures.

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COMMENT

Deep play with the forbidden

Multiculturalism is often understood as a collection of taboos: the things one must be politically correct about, whether one is convinced of them or not. Yet every catalogue of what to do also implies an unwritten and informal para-catalogue of what may be done despite politeness and correctness and, often, those breaches of fixed codes are the oil in the sometimes machine-style mechanisms of multicultural coexistence. In anthropology, we have the odd term 'joking relationships' (coined by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown) for such cultured breaches of taboos. The term is odd because a 'joking relationship', despite how it may appear superficially, is not about disrespect at all; on the contrary, it demonstrates a shared confidence that can breach and bridge the boundaries that politeness usually demands. Most of us know such 'joking relationships' as family matters: odd confidences with your grandparents (*psst: never tell your parents I told you that*), with your sister-in-law (again: *psst!*), or with the much-maligned mother-in-law or her daughter-in-law.

When such taboo breaches occur in public, they take on an extra dimension: they become cultural-structural. Of course they must hide their face, as they establish a bond of confidence against the reigning rules. So they seek refuge in the unspeakable or, to put it better, the unprintable. The favourite hang-outs and hide-outs of this informal multiculturalism are shared swear words, insults and even ethnic jokes. All of them play with obscenity, prejudice and even racism; but the point is, they *play* with them.

And play has a deeply human potential of sharing liberation from the sometimes all too serious life with another person who appreciates that momentary liberation from normal norms.

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Don't take it 'easy' in Indonesia

Yeoh Seng Guan is such a talented writer! Why isn't he more famous? I love the phrase 'osmotic enculturation' and will steal it for sure. Three Malay swear words I find particularly interesting are *butuh*, *pantat* and *gampang*. This is because all three words are perfectly innocuous in Indonesia, a country I used to live in. How did these differences come about? You don't have to be a social science professor to surmise that, symbolically, we in Malaysia have more taboos than the Indonesians.

I recall once in Jakarta, I was about to sit on a bench. A well-meaning bloke who noticed the bench was wet told me, 'Jaga-jaga! Nanti pantat basah!' (Watch out! Your butt/vagina (Indonesian/Malay) will get wet!). I was too shocked for words.

Malaysian audiences always snigger when someone in an Indonesian film *butuh* (needs) something. And as for *gampang*, it's not difficult to see how 'easy' in Indonesian can become the moral laxity needed to produce an illegitimate child.

Amir Muhammad
Writer, publisher and occasional movie-maker

This is a chapter from the book *The Malaysian Way of Life*, edited by Julian C. H. Lee (Shah Alam: Marshall Cavendish). It features over 30 contributions from authors including Janet Carsten, Bill Watson, Kees van Dijk, Joel Kahn, Alberto Gomes and Michael Billig. These contributions appeared in the Malaysian arts, culture and politics magazine, *Off The Edge*, over 2008 and 2009. The book is available from www.kinibooks.com

Sexuality and power



A very Dutch view of the 'submission' of the Javanese – Nicolaas Pieneman's (1809-1860) portrait of Dipanagara's capture at Magelang on 28 March 1830 entitled 'De onderwerping van Diepo Negoro aan Luitenant-Generaal De Kock, 28 Maart 1830' (1833). Photograph courtesy of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

'All Java knows this –how the Dutch allowed the *kraton* [of Yogyakarta] to be turned into a brothel and how [Prince] Dipanagara [1785-1855] has sworn to destroy it to the last stone'.¹

Peter Carey

Below: The mystic prince and his family. Coloured drawing of Dipanagara in exile in Makassar (1833-55) reading a text on Islamic mysticism (*tasawwuf*) accompanied by his wife, Radèn Ayu Retnaningsih, and one of his sons, 'Pangéran Ali Basah', who is having a vision of a Javanese spirit. Leiden Codex Orientalis 7398 (Snouck Hurgronje collection). Photograph courtesy of the Universiteits Bibliotheek, Leiden.



THE WORDS OF THE LEIDEN LAWYER, Willem van Hogendorp (1795-1838), then serving as a legal adviser to Commissioner-General L.P. du Bus de Gisignies (in office, 1826-1830), could not have been more blunt. Writing to his father Gijsbert Karel (1762-1834) during the second year of the Java War (1825-30), the 32-year-old Willem confided that the liberties that the Dutch government representatives in Yogyakarta had allowed themselves on the eve of the war 'could never see the light of day' and had 'rightly provoked Dipanagara's just rage' (Van Hogendorp 1913:40). Reflecting that it was not 'the war as such or the number of our enemies' which constituted his greatest concern for the future of Dutch rule in the Indies, but rather what he termed 'the spirit of the whole population of Java from one end to the other [...] They are fed up with us' (Van Hogendorp 1913:170). He then offered this pithy summary:

'The feeling of unrest is extremely great throughout Java [...]. As concerns the cause [of this] it is nothing else than that the Dutch Government [...] has made itself over the past ten years most vile in the eyes of the Javanese.' (Van Hogendorp 1913:142)

The Leiden lawyer's words were echoed by the Java War leader following his capture in Magelang on March 28, 1830. During conversations with his German officer escort, Lieutenant Julius Heinrich Knoerle (?1800-1833), at the time of his voyage into exile in Manado in May-June 1830, the prince launched

a torrent of abuse against the Dutch officials of the pre-war period and their inability to speak anything but market Malay, complaining that 'Chevallier [P.F.H. Chevallier, Assistant-Resident of Yogyakarta, 1795-1825, in office, 1823-1825] and other Dutchmen had trotted into our [Yogyakarta] *kraton* as though it was a stable and had shouted and called as though it had become a market' (Van der Kemp 1896:313-4). So offensive was the conduct of the Dutch in the eyes of the Javanese at this time that one of the prince's relatives, the chief *pengulu* (senior religious official) of Rembang, would later cite the sexual conduct of Java's post-1816 colonial masters as amongst the four key issues that would need to be addressed before the Java War could be brought to an end (Louw and De Klerck 1904, III:494).

Plus ça change?

But were these issues really so new? Surely, the behaviour of Dutch East India Company (VOC) officials in the 18th century had hardly been characterised by respect, especially when it came to relations with indigenous women? The Dutch Indies was a slave-owning society and would remain such well into the 19th century. In Surabaya, Semarang and smaller VOC posts outside Batavia, it was common to find Company officials maintaining harems of female slaves. Willem van Hogendorp's uncle, Dirk (1761-1822), like his nephew newly arrived in the Indies and then serving as *Gezaghebber* (Commissioner) of Surabaya and the Oosthoek (in office, 1794-98), expressed

Towards an intimate history of the consolidation of Dutch rule in early 19th century Java

his horror at the 'scandalous behaviour' of his superior Johan Frederik van Reede tot de Parkeler, the Governor of Java's Northeast Coast (1757-1802, in office, 1796-1801), who could be seen 'reading the Bible and praying in the midst of a dozen Makassarese and Javanese harlots who encouraged his lechery' (Bosma and Raben 2008:70). With the flow of European women cut off by the disruptions caused by the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-84) and the subsequent Revolutionary and Napoleonic conflicts in Europe, concubinage, or the sexual exploitation of local women, became increasingly the norm for VOC officials, especially for lower-ranking military personnel who were not allowed to marry (Bosma and Raben 2008:70).

Nor was it just amongst Europeans that such practices of concubinage and sexual exploitation were noted. The practice of allowing European and Chinese visitors to the Javanese and Balinese courts access to lower-ranking court women who functioned as prostitutes was apparently common in pre-colonial Indonesia (Andaya 1998:16; Creese 2004:70). In the mid 18th century, there is an interesting example of the use of such women to cement a political relationship between well-born Javanese and senior European officials. In the *Chronicle of the Fall of Yogyakarta* (1812-16), the princely author, an uncle of the third sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamengkubuwana III (reigned, 1812-1814), relates how his mother, a woman of Balambangan origin from the eastern salient of Java, came to the court of the first sultan, Mangkubumi (reigned, 1749-1792), as one of the ruler's wives. She had apparently been given to the sultan by the Governor of Java's Northeast Coast, Nicolaas Hartingh (in office, 1754-1761), in return for Mangkubumi's personal gift of his own favourite unofficial wife, Radèn Ayu Sepuh, whom the Yogya monarch had presented in recognition of the Governor's skill in brokering the Giyanti treaty (13 February 1755). The treaty had divided south-central Java between the courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, thus paving the way for the foundation of Mangkubumi's kingdom (Carey 1992:5-6).

Whatever one may think of the use of women as pawns in an elaborate system of exchange between powerful 18th century men, at least in this case a degree of respect appears to have existed between Mangkubumi and the Semarang Governor. In the years preceding the Java War such feelings were no longer evident. At the political level, the coming of Herman Willem Daendels (1762-1818), Napoleon's only non-French marshal, as Governor-General (1808-1811), and the subsequent British-Indian invasion of August 1811, ushered in a new era. Gone was the element of inter-dependency between Europeans and Javanese. When Daendels intervened militarily against the rump Banten sultanate in November 1808 and decreed its abolition, one of his war trophies was the daughter of the deposed sultan, Aliyuddin II (reigned, 1803-1808), who followed the marshal to his new palace at Buitenzorg (Bogor) as his 'lady-in-waiting' (Engelhard 1816:157; Bosma and Raben 2008:84).

The relationship between Europeans and the Javanese was now increasingly one of exploitation: the raiding of *kraton* treasuries and archives, which the British had down to a fine art when they stormed and gutted the court of Yogyakarta in June 1812, now had its counterpart in the raiding of the bodies of the *Raden Ayu* (court princesses). Tellingly, the only British officer to die in that assault had his throat cut by a court lady whom he had unwisely tried to carry away as booty.²

Right: 'Dutch dictator'. Herman Willem Daendels (1762-1818). Photograph courtesy of the Stichting Iconografisch Bureau, The Hague.



1994:49). The majority of these newcomers had no prior experience of the Indies (Van den Broek 1893:3). Indeed, 'instead of knowledge of Indies affairs,' one keen-eyed traveller wrote shortly after the hand-over, 'they brought over a numerous and needy progeny, and had no other intention [...] than to restore in the shortest possible time [...] their dilapidated affairs in the mother country so that, without having to trouble themselves further with the Indies, they could return home with their nests nicely feathered' (Olivier 1830, III:425; Van den Doel 1994:49). They also brought with them the values of post-Revolutionary Europe, what M.K. Gandhi would later describe as the 'moral righteousness which looks down on people outside Europe' (Gandhi 2000, V.22:158).

Such 'moral righteousness', however, went hand-in-hand with a permissiveness in sexual matters which the Javanese found highly offensive. The sexual mores of senior Dutch officials soon became a source of comment in the principalities, and nowhere more so than in Yogyakarta where Dipanagara and his *kraton* contemporaries were shocked by the behaviour of the new Resident, Major Huibert Gerard Nahuys van Burgst (1782-1858, in office, 1816-22), whom the prince described laconically as someone 'who [merely] enjoyed eating and drinking and the spreading of Dutch ways (*karëmanya mangan-minum lan anjrah cara Walandi*)' (Carey 2008:108). One of the new Resident's 'Dutch ways' was his maintenance of a curious *ménage à trois* in which both he and his deputy, R.C.N. d'Abo (1786-1824; in office, 1817-1823), shared the same woman.⁵ Another was his penchant for liaisons with professional women, such as the well-endowed 'dame de Pekalongan (lady from Pekalongan)' whom Nahuys described as making the *demie-mondaines* of the Palais-Royal entertainment centre in Paris look like amateurs (Houben 1994:108). The gallant major, though, never quite reached the level of his opposite number in Surakarta, Diderik Willem Pinket van Haak (1779-1840; in office, 1816-1817), a strong supporter of the former Franco-Dutch regime, who went through a whole series of relationships with Eurasian mistresses⁶ and left behind a bankrupt estate and ten illegitimate children by the time of his death in Surabaya in 1840 (De Haan 1935:558-9).

Eurasian mistresses and dalliances with the wives of junior officials were one thing, seducing and appropriating the womenfolk of well-born Javanese quite another. Yet this appears to have been increasingly the norm amongst Dutch officials in central Java in the years leading up to the Java War. In Willem van Hogendorp's words, 'the hatred and contempt' which the Javanese felt for Europeans in these years 'were certainly quickened by what both senior and junior officials permitted themselves with regard to native women: a number of Residents known [to me] by name forced the [Javanese] chiefs under their authority to surrender their legal wives [and daughters] to them' (Van Hogendorp 1913:40).

Reflecting on this event, the post-Java War Dutch Resident of Yogyakarta, Frans Valck (1799-1842, in office 1831-41), himself intimately involved with the sexual politics of the court in the 1830s,³ wrote that the decline in the morals of the women of the Yogyakarta *kraton* could be dated back to the British attack (Carey 2008:440). Although none of the Yogyakarta Residents during the British interregnum (1811-1816) appear to have taken advantage of their position to have such liaisons – the scholar-administrator John Crawford (1783-1868, in office, 1811-1814, 1816) and his military and civilian successors were either exemplarily uxorious or skilful in hiding their intimate affairs⁴ – this was not the case after the Dutch return in 1816.

The returned Dutch Administration 1816-1825

The period which followed the formal British handover of Java and its dependencies on August 19, 1816, witnessed a tide of former Napoleonic war officers and fortune seekers descending on Java to make a career for themselves (Van den Doel



Left: War Javanese style. Local sketch of the fighting between Dipanagara's followers and Dutch troops at the prince's cave retreat at Selarong in October 1825. Dipanagara's personal battle standard with his 'Just King' (*Érucakra*) symbol of crossed arrows and solar disc can be seen on the left. From Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (Leiden) Oriental MS 13 (*Buku Kedhung Kebo*), f.136r-v. Photograph courtesy of the KITLV, Leiden.

Sexuality and power (continued)

In the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Java War, the sexual conduct of the Dutch Resident of Yogyakarta Anthonië Hendrik Smissaert (1777-1832, in office, 1823-1825), and his senior officials—namely Assistant-Resident Chevallier, and the official Residency Translator, Johannes Godlieb Dietrée (1782-1826, in office, 1796-1825)—was cut from the same cloth. Aided by the Yogyakarta prime minister (*patih*), Danureja IV (in office, 1813-47)—a serial philanderer⁷—as well as Dipanagara's stepmother, Ratu Ibu (post-1820, Ratu Ageng) the mother of the fourth sultan, Hamengkubuwana IV (reigned, 1814-1822), and her lover, the commander of the royal bodyguard, Major Tumenggung Wiranegara, acted as 'procurers' of court women for European officials (Carey 2008:440); the senior representatives of the Dutch government in Yogyakarta engaged in a debauch.



Dietrée, an Islamic convert and according to one source pious about his religious duties (Carey 1981:260 note 106; 2008: 549), appears to have maintained clandestine relations with various women of rank in the court, amongst whom was a sister of Dipanagara's uncle, Pangéran Mangkubumi.⁸ When news of these affairs between the court *Raden Ayu* and the *patih* and the Residency Interpreter was relayed to Dipanagara by his stepmother, Ratu Ibu (Ageng), he is supposed to have told her, 'I do not wish to know anything about them, I leave them all to your ordering!'⁹ Chevallier, meanwhile, appears to have been driven by an erotic energy which bordered on the manic. His actions were rendered doubly abusive by his overweening arrogance and contempt for the 'inlander' (native) evident in all his contacts with the Javanese.¹⁰ A typical product of the brash new Europe of the post-Revolutionary era and with little understanding of Javanese society—like so many who made their way to Java in the post-1816 period—this former hussar officer and Waterloo veteran could perhaps be seen as a classic illustration of Ann Stoler's argument that sexual control was fundamental to the way in which colonial policies operated in the high colonial period (Stoler 2002:78). Except that in Chevallier's case unbridled lust rather than control seems to have been the essence of his dealings with the court *Raden Ayu*.

His superior, Smissaert, who later attempted to shift most of the blame onto him for the outbreak of the Java War—not so difficult given that he had conveniently died in the meantime—wrote that Chevallier had constantly engaged in love affairs with *kraton* princesses and the wives of Javanese nobles, stating that 'in general his conduct with numerous Javanese women and girls was not only extremely improper but sometimes even attended by insults.'¹¹ Interestingly, Smissaert himself admitted candidly to the Dutch monarch that although he had strictly eschewed love affairs with court women,

*'It would be hypocritical to pretend that in a land where it was generally known that there was more laxity over the rules of decency towards women than in the Netherlands, and where the [local] women themselves were not of the highest virtue, he [Smissaert] had excelled over his predecessors and contemporaries in his [sexual] conduct [...].'*¹²

As for Smissaert's deputy, it seems he even boasted of his conquests (Van Hogendorp 1913:143; Van Praag 1947:266), brushing aside all his superior's warnings about the dangers of relationships with the court princesses.¹³ According to a Javanese source, Chevallier had mistreated one of Dipanagara's

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Above:
The Resident who presided over a debauch. Jonkheer Anthonië Hendrik Smissaert (1777-1832). Portrait attributed to the Dutch artist W.G.F. Heymans. From the private collection of Baron van Tuyll van Serooskerken (Kasteel Heeze). Photograph courtesy of the Stichting Iconografisch Bureau, The Hague.

Right:
The Radèn Ayu as mystic warrior. Nyai Ageng (aka Radèn Ayu) Sérang (?1766-1855) of the Yogyakarta court led a cavalry squadron for Dipanagara in the Sérang-Demak area during the first months of the Java War and achieved fame as a woman of unusual spiritual power (*kasektèn*). Painting by Anyool Subrata (Institut Teknologi Bandung). Photograph courtesy of the late Radèn Mas Boedi Oetomo, Nataprajan, Yogyakarta (DIY).



sisters whom he had found bathing in a river and had lived for several months with one of the prince's unofficial wives.¹⁴ When the concubine (*sēlir*) in question had tried to go back to the prince's residence at Tegalreja, Dipanagara had apparently refused her entry because she had slept with a European. Chevallier himself is then said to have gone to see the prince to ask why she had not been admitted, to which Dipanagara had replied –understandably– that he did not maintain his *sēlir* for the pleasure of the Assistant-Resident, whereupon Chevallier had become angry stating that 'he would do what he liked with native women' and had hit the prince over the head.¹⁵ This report seems so outrageous that it would be hard to credit, but for separate evidence deriving from one of the prince's senior religious advisers, Kyai Gajali, that Dipanagara's treatment by Chevallier and the Residency Interpreter was quite unbelievably awful (Carey 2008: 550-1).

Conclusions

In the utterly altered epoch in which elite Javanese were living after June 1812, such sexual exploitation of their womenfolk by powerful Europeans may have seemed yet another humiliating aspect of their colonial status. But they might have reflected on the changes which had occurred since the late 18th

century when relations had been marked by rather greater reciprocity and respect, at least at the elite level. The reforms introduced by Daendels' Franco-Dutch regime (1808-11) and the subsequent British interim administration (1811-1816) may have changed the political face of Java forever, but it was at the personal level that their impact was most acutely felt. This was particularly the case in the aftermath of the Dutch restoration in 1816 when the racism and arrogance of post-Revolutionary Europe struck Indonesia with the force of an Asian tsunami. In the run-up to the Java War, the behaviour of the Dutch representatives in Yogyakarta proved to be a major contributing factor in the break with Dipanagara and the prince's decision to go to war in 1825.

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Right: Sketch from the life. Charcoal drawing of Dipanagara by his guardian Adrianus Johannes Bik (1790-1872) made during the prince's stay in Batavia (8 April – 3 May 1830) while en route into exile in Sulawesi. His *pusaka kris* (heirloom dagger), Kangjeng Kyai Bandayuda (Sir Duelling without Weapons) can be seen in his flowered silk waistband. Photograph courtesy of the Musium Kota (now Musium Fatahillah), Jakarta.



Below: Tensions boil over. Dipanagara hitting Radèn Adipati Danureja IV (in office, 1813-47), over the face with his slipper during an argument over the prime minister (*patih*'s) style of administration. A *sentana* (senior member of the sultan's family) looks on. From Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (Leiden), *Priental MS 13 (Buku Kedhung Kebo)*, f.55v. Photograph courtesy of the KITLV, Leiden.



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Notes

1. Nationaal Archief (The Hague), J.C. Baud private collection 177, Willem van Hogendorp, 'Extract rapport betreffende de Residentie Kedoe', 1827, 40, 143.
2. On Lieutenant Hector Maclean of the 14th (Buckinghamshire) Regiment of Foot, who took five days to die from his wounds, see Carey 1992: 414 note 78; Carey 2008:349.
3. Valck used his own position as Resident of Yogyakarta to force the fifth sultan, Hamengbuwana V (reigned 1822-1826, 1828-1855), to part with his favourite unofficial wife (*selir*) (Houben 1994:109) and, according to one hostile source, even to impose one of his own discarded mistresses on the young sultan as an official consort. Houben 1994: 199-200.
4. Willem van Hogendorp remarked that with regard to such sexual relations 'the British Administration [1811-1816] gives a completely different picture [when compared to the situation which prevailed after the Dutch return in 1816]', see Van Hogendorp 1913:40.
5. This was d'Abo's wife, *née* Anna Louisa van den Berg, whom Nahuys would later marry after she had divorced d'Abo in 1824, Van Hogendorp 1913:149; Carey 2008: 120, 438-9.
6. Naber 1938:45: 'Mr Pinket van Haak was a tall handsome man of about 30 years of age. He was unmarried, but had various Eurasian mistresses of whom there was always one sitting on a sofa in the rear gallery [of the Residency] [...]'. 7. According to a later Yogyakarta Resident, Johan Frederik Walraven van Nes (in office, 1827-30; 1830-31), the chief minister's conduct with the ladies of the court was 'improper', and he stated that he 'sometimes took women from the court to the villages to debauch them', Nationaal Archief, H.M. de Kock private collection 111, J.F.W. van Nes (Yogyakarta) to H.M. de Kock (Magelang), 16-12-1829.
8. Nationaal Archief, L.P.J. de Bus de Gisignies private collection 402, Van de Poll and Stavens, 'Verhoor Modjo', 11-10-1829, testimony of Kyai Rosali (Gajali), who spoke of Dietrèe seducing court women and princesses 'inside and outside the court'. See further Van Nes 1844:154 note 1.
9. Nationaal Archief, H.M. de Kock private collection 161, J.F.W. van Nes, 'Korte verhandeling' (for full title see note 8 above), 28-1-1830.
10. Nationaal Archief, Van Alphen Engelhard private collection (*aanwinsten* 1941) 28, 'Stukken Smissaert', A.H. Smissaert (The Hague) to King William I (The Hague/Brussels), n.y. (? 9-1828), who mentioned Chevallier's 'rude and unfriendly' (*ruw en onvriendelyk*) manner towards the Javanese on the many tours which he did with the *patih* through the countryside. He would also drink alcohol out in the open on these tours (Carey 1981:256 note 89).
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., Smissaert, reported that the incident with Dipanagara's sister occurred after the outbreak of the Java War in the period August-October 1825. Chevallier had forced the local *bupati* to bring her to him and had then given her a diamond ring presumably in return for services rendered. She had later reported the incident to Dipanagara.
15. Ibid.

The author is preparing an Indonesian translation of his *Power of Prophecy*, to be published in 2011 as *Kuasa Nujum: Pangéran Dipanagara dan akhir tatanan lama di Jawa, 1785-1855* by KPG (Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia).

Art collections in wartime in the Netherlands East Indies 1942-1945

In recent years, much has been written on the subject of art collections stolen during the German occupation of Holland during World War Two and the return of these artworks to the original owners or their heirs (such as the well-known collection of the Dutch art dealer Jacques Goudstikker). In occupied Europe works of art stolen by the Nazi's and bought at bargain prices were transported to Germany. But what of the art collections in the former Netherlands Indies during the Japanese occupation? Louis Zweers reveals their fate.

Louis Zweers

THERE WAS NO MUSEUM for modern art in the former Dutch colony in the Far East. However, there were a few private and public collections, one of which was the National Collection of Paintings in Batavia, the so-called *Landsverzameling Schilderijen*. From the 17th to the early 20th century, many oil portraits were made of high governmental officials; among them paintings of all the Governors-General, from Pieter Both to Lord Dirk de Graeff, by well-known portrait painters such as Raden Saleh and Hendrik Paulides.

During the war these valuable paintings were stored in wooden crates in a sugarcane factory in Klaten (Java). They were discovered by the Japanese and returned to Batavia. The collection's curator, Jan Frank, was temporarily released from an internment camp so that he could advise the Japanese about the paintings. Following the capitulation by the Japanese, the torn and water damaged portraits of governmental officials with broken frames were found in a storage space belonging to the Kodak film company in the centre of Batavia. Today, these paintings have been restored and are currently in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

The Dutch industrialist Pierre Alexander Regnault owned a couple of paint factories on Java. He organised exhibitions of works from his own private collection supplemented by works on loan and recent work by artists in the Batavian Art Gallery (*Bataviasche Kunstkring*). Regnault had a mission to introduce international modern art to the European colonials. Towards the end of 1939 the fifth Regnault collection was shipped to the tropical archipelago (in total 61 works). All contact with the Netherlands Indies ceased in May 1940 when the Germans occupied Holland. The Regnault collection stayed behind in Java. Friends took the care of the artworks, taking valuable top pieces such as six small oil paintings by Vincent van Gogh, including the *Strosnijdende boerin* and *Doodskopvlinder op een aronskelk*, under their wings. Van Gogh painted these last two paintings during his voluntary stay in 1889 in the psychiatric unit in Saint-Remy close to the French town of Arles. These paintings were the personal property of V.W. van Gogh, the nephew of Vincent van Gogh. There were other important modern works in the collection, such as *Rabbi with a scroll*, a gouache by the Russian-Jewish artist Marc Chagall and paintings by Massimo Campigli, Constant Permeke, Wassily Kandinsky and Maurice Utrillo. Because of the war threat the paintings were taken from their frames and stretchers and stored in wooden crates. The crated works of art were taken to the secure vault of the Javanese Bank in Batavia, the largest bank in the Dutch Indies.

Following the Dutch capitulation the Japanese took possession of and searched through the building of the Javanese Bank in Batavia. They found the crate with the paintings in the vaults and opened them. The canvasses were left alone for now. The six paintings by van Gogh with a pre-war estimated value of 30,000 guilders were also left untouched. Nearly half a century later Christies, the London fine art auction house, sold Van Gogh's canvas *Sunflowers* (1889) by public auction for the then record sum of 75 million guilders. The new owner is the Japanese insurance company Yasuda in Tokyo. However, in 1942 the Japanese were not interested in similar works of art. They were fixated by the 'lost gold' of the Javanese Bank.

After the war had finished, the Regnault collection was discovered in the Javanese Bank. The traced works of art, without glass or frames, had been substantially damaged by the tropical humidity. It took until March 1949 for the painting collection to arrive back in the Netherlands on the passenger-ship 'Sibajak'. The canvasses were returned after eight years.

Regnault wrote to V.W. van Gogh about the returned works: 'The condition of the shipment is heavily disappointing (...). Fourty works have suffered badly. This is not the case with your six canvasses, they are completely intact.' Other owners complained to Regnault about the serious damage to the returned



Above: Van Gogh, *Strosnijdende boerin*, 1889, oils, Saint Remy (40.5 x 26.5 cm) and *Doodskopvlinder op een aronskelk*, 1889, oils, Saint Remy (33 x 24 cm)

paintings. Some works were in a 'heavy state of decay' and 'in several places the paint had disappeared completely' Regnault had the canvasses restored and compensated the owners and art dealers. Through the negligence and disinterest of the Japanese occupiers many paintings were damaged; the six van Goghs, however, had survived the war relatively well. They were later donated to the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam.

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to find documentation about the Japanese confiscated private and public art collections. In the 1930s, the Dutch artist Rudolf Bonnet was one of Bali's most important painters and fine art collectors. He lived and worked for ten years in the small town of Ubud in Bali. During the night of the 18 February 1942 the Japanese troops landed. The island was taken without any real resistance. The Japanese soldiers took Bonnet and other Europeans quite quickly. Bonnet was imprisoned in Denpasar, the capital of Bali, along with the Dutch artist Willem Hofker and his wife and some governmental officials. After a few months, much to the artists' surprise, the Japanese marine commander of Bali released them with the remark: 'The Imperial Japanese Marine Force does not detain artists'.

In fact, the art loving Japanese commander payed a monthly contribution of 15 guilders in exchange for paintings of a tropical landscape or a portrait of a gracious Balinese woman. Other Japanese officers were also interested in the work of the detained Western artists. Only once or twice did they try to take drawings without due payment. For the rest, the artists were left in peace and allowed to work undisturbed. Their movements were restricted, however, to the area around Ubud. This relative freedom under the Japanese rule lasted for nearly two years.

However, their privileged position was lost at the end of 1943 with the appointment of another Japanese commander to Bali. Just before Christmas in that year both Bonnet and the Hofkers were seized from their homes by Japanese soldiers and detained in a Japanese internment camp in Paré-Paré (South-Celebes). Bonnet just had time to roll up and hide 20 drawings in an old

bedspread but he had to leave behind the majority of his artworks; expertly made portraits, figure studies and landscapes. His house was –as so many of the European houses in the Dutch Indies –emptied by the Japanese. His valuable possessions and art collection were housed in a warehouse in Denpasar. A couple of unknown drawings ended up in the hands of Japanese officers, including a charcoal drawing from 1940 of two young Balinese farmers on their way to the rice fields with a *patjol* (a soil cleaver). One of the farmers wears rattan headgear and the other one a scarf. In the background are the mountains, volcanoes, paddy fields and palm trees of tropical Bali. On the reverse of a photograph of this work *Balinese men with cleavers* Bonnet has written 'Lost in the war'.

Following the Japanese capitulation, Rudolf Bonnet was released in August 1945. He chose to stay on in Celebes (Sulawesi). He returned to Bali in April 1947 to find that much of his work had been lost. His art collection, however, which the Japanese had stored in a warehouse in Denpasar, had survived the war relatively well. During the chaotic *bersiap* period (Autumn 1945) this warehouse, full of treasures belonging to Europeans, was ransacked and robbed by the Japanese military. During my visit ten years ago to Bonnet's niece and biographer, Dr de Roever-Bonnet (who is in charge of his legacy), she showed me a piece of paper, handwritten by Rudolf Bonnet, with an incomplete inventory of his missing art works. The original list, dating from May 1947, had the heading 'Art collection of R. Bonnet taken and destroyed by the Japanese commandoes at Denpasar' and gave a short description of the pre-war value of each stolen artwork. The most important missing works of art are the six drawings by Bonnet, one of which is the previously mentioned charcoal drawing *Balinese men with cleaver*, two red chalk drawings with the title *Old man* and *Head of a man from Bali*, a landscape study and three figure studies from Rome. To give an indication of the value of these works, in October 2005 a Bonnet pastel drawing from 1949, *Two Balinese men*, raised US\$110,000 at Sotheby's in Singapore. Also missing are his carefully selected art collection of Tibetan paintings, old Chinese costumes and many art objects from Indonesia. Bonnet never –as far as his niece could recollect – submitted a claim for his stolen art works and he never spoke again about the loss of his art collection. He died in 1978.

As a result of negligence and indifference by the Japanese occupier confiscated paintings, drawings and gouaches have disappeared or have been heavily damaged. 'If the Japanese army had taken measures to protect the valuable Van Goghs during the war period then that would still have been world news today', said a journalist of a Japanese weekly. It seems, however, that the Japanese occupier was more interested in Far Eastern art objects such as statues and ceremonial creeses (a dagger with a wavy double-edged blade) and traditional Balinese paintings rather than modern paintings and drawings by European artists. On the whole, these works of art were left undisturbed. You could even say that they had ostracised Western art.

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Right: Rudolf Bonnet, *Balinese men with cleavers*, black chalk drawing, 1940, author's photo collection.

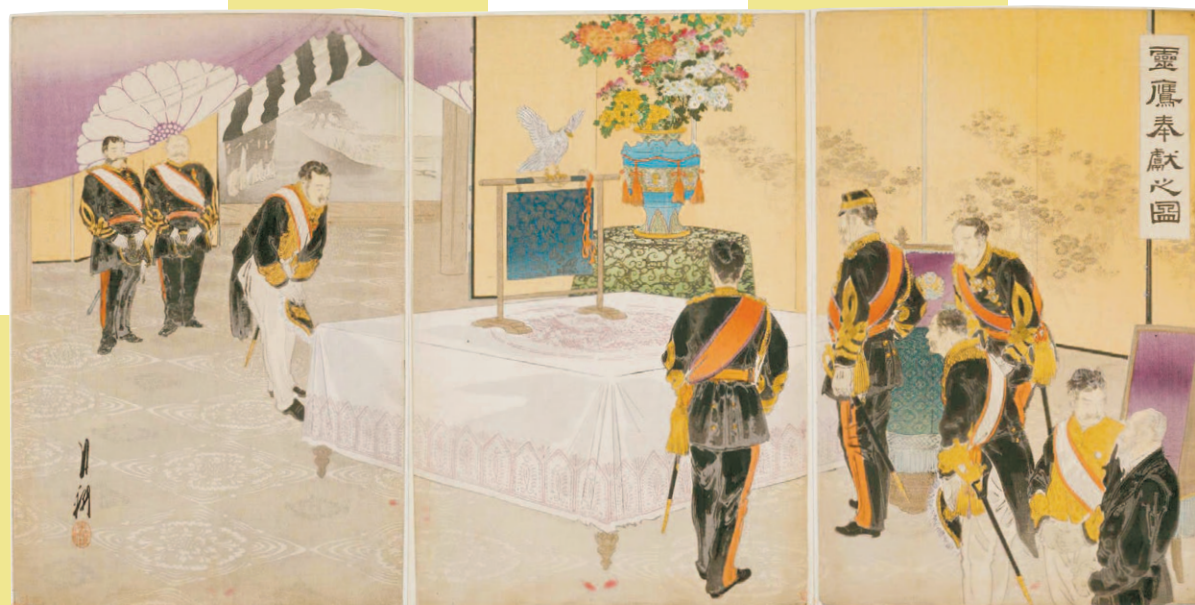
Pull-out supplement

theFocus

Religion and Global Empire

Scholars working on issues relating to the place of religion in Asia generally share two rather basic problems: 'religion' and 'Asia'. The tendentious nature of both of these categories as they have been used in the history of the modern academy, the Eurocentric origins of their formulations and the political background to their inventions intertwined with the history of 19th century imperial expansion are generally well acknowledged in the field. Research that looks to the relationship between religion and Asia also needs to confront the history through which these two categories have been interrelated and symbiotically manufactured in the modern academy.

Kiri Paramore



Top: Oguni Masa, 'Negotiations During the Visit of the Qing Peace Envoy' (1895). Japanese in the western style sit across the (unequal-) treaty negotiating table from Chinese Qing dynasty bureaucrats in the 1890s.

Middle: Ogata Gekkō, 'Presentation of the Auspicious Eagle' (1895). An 'auspicious eagle' is presented to the Meiji Emperor's military command. This eagle was said to have appeared on a Japanese battleship during

their engagement with the Chinese in the Yellow Sea recalling the auspicious visit of an eagle to the mythical ancestor emperor Jinmu in the formation myths of the Japanese nation used in state Shinto.

Bottom: Yōshū Chikanobu, 'Our army captures the Qing troops' base at Asan' (1894). The Westernized Japanese army crushes one of the Qing dynasty's elite units at Asan, south of Seoul.

All three pictures are from the Japan-Qing (First Sino-Japanese) War Woodblock Print collection of the National Diet Library of Japan.

Politics and religion in Asia: comparative frameworks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17 >

THE EMERGENCE OF 'RELIGION' as an academic category and indeed 'religious studies' and 'religious history' as disciplines, occurred partly through the imagination of a concept of Asia in 18th and 19th century Europe.¹ Asian religions themselves were used to construct the dichotomy of Asia as an oriental alterity, just as the academic concept of 'religion' was forming due to the impact of these same traditions in Europe.² The symbiotic relationship between the emergence of the parameters of the Western academy itself, and of the categories of 'Asia' and 'religion' within it has, thereby, made study in this field a conceptually complex venture.

This complexity is doubled when we focus on scholarship dealing with the relationship between religion and politics. The embedding of the religion versus politics dichotomy in modern academic literature – particularly through Weber, but also earlier in at least Marx – was necessarily preceded by the problematic categorisation of 'religion' alluded to above, and most famously deployed to denote a rupture between Western Europe and 'the rest' – notably Asia – in the canonical texts of Western history and sociology.³ The contemporaneous self imagination of 'the West' constructed by its academies included the idea inherent in modern academism that Western categories held an intellectual monopoly as universal standards of scholarly enquiry. It is important to note that this creation of a binary between an active West and passive East in the parameters of modern academic discourse was paralleled in the binary division between 'religion', as a discrete field of activity, and 'politics'. In the same way that cultures in regions other than Western Europe were rendered passive by being divorced from the agency associated with 'the West' as the origin of universal categories, so too was religion allocated a certain political passivity by being defined apart from the political realm in a specialised sociological category.

This construct underlay the cohesive visions of social development of many of the most influential Western thinkers, from Montesquieu to Hegel, from Marx to Weber. It thereby influenced the development of the entire gambit of humanities and social sciences disciplines. This had two effects which lethally debilitated the ability of the Western academy to study issues relating to the relationship between religion and politics in Asian societies. One was the fact that the construction of Asian alterity, even in assertively progressive and universalist Western academic streams like Marxism, basically categorised the experience of Asian societies out of the mainstream of sociological analysis, predetermining societies as diverse as Persia, India and China to be analysed in terms of orientalist and particularist categories like 'despotism'.⁴ Secondly, the fact that the category of religion was constructed both in a Christocentric (monotheistic) framework, and through the Western re-imagining of Asian religions like Buddhism and Confucianism as symbols of Asian alterity, meant that from the beginning the Western scholarly approach to religion in Asia became an over-determined product of the academy's own self-construction.⁵

Thankfully, the days of scholars quoting Hegel or Weber to describe the religious or political reality in China or India are over. The tendency to use such theoretical prisms in the analysis of social and political reality is, however, still present. This brings us to a problem much more difficult to overcome: how can research on religion in Asia based in real society then be reintegrated into broader discourses of the Western academy without conforming to the major theoretical and normative models of that academy – norms that include the exclusion of Asia from active universalist social models, and a reductionist construct of religion.

I would suggest there have been two major reactions to this over the past 20 years. One is simply to refer to new, more modern and less politically-laden Western theoretical literature in place of that condemned in the second half of the 20th century as orientalist. The rise of the use of postmodern theory to analyse Asian societies is a classic example of this reaction. Foucault and Derrida (to use just two examples) are as Eurocentric in the historiographical basis of their theories as anyone earlier (in fact, probably more so, as unlike Hegel or Marx, they did not even engage studies of non-European societies). Yet some have regarded it acceptable to use them as universalist norms in much the same way that Marx or Weber were employed earlier. This is why I refer to the postmodern trend in scholarship on East Asian history as 'neo-orientalism'. It forced a variety of human experience into limited theoretical constructs which were conceived only in relation to Western experience, while also aggressively denying the validity of alternative academic approaches, in a similar manner to the classic orientalism described by Said.

The problems inherent in the Western academic tradition of the study of politics and religion in Asia have also, however, been answered in a very different way by scholars who have approached the issue in a more transnational fashion. The systematic critique of what came to be called orientalism during the 1970s, led by the likes of Perry Anderson, and institutionalised by Said, led to scholars in the 1990s who sought to narrate a history which rewrote the role of both religion and Asia in the world, including in the global empires of the 19th and 20th centuries. Scholars like Peter Van Der Veer have challenged the very idea of being able to narrate a British history without India and vice-versa – thereby removing the basis of otherness which underlay the construction of Asia as an alterity. His positioning of religious experience to the centre of the workings of modern empires and nationalism similarly broke the chains that had formerly shackled the religious sphere to the realm of passive interiority.⁶

Most of the articles in this special issue follow this trend by showing how interaction between religion and politics was often affected by issues which crossed borders, not only in terms of interactions between colonised and coloniser, but also in the exchange and development of both secularist and state religious ideas between different countries and regions, including before the modern period.

In the first article in this collection, Peter Van Der Veer argues the necessity of looking through what he calls the archive of imperial knowledge to understand what he sees as the particular modern encounter that links the study of religion in Asia to modern, global structures of knowledge. The critical lens through which he formulates this 'archive' and the agency for different players around it is made clear through reference to what he sees as the common global experience of modernity. The subsequent piece by Prasenjit Duara, conversely, looks beyond modernity back to earlier periods of Chinese history. His paper confronts what he calls the 'Abrahamic tradition' with the history of religion and politics in pre-modern China. Instead of focusing on a 'modern encounter', he examines the development of the religion-politics relationship across a much longer breadth of history, employing and then significantly reforming Jaspers' 'axial age' theory in the process. The opening two articles thereby present us with an interesting methodological tension between approaches centring counter-narratives and critique on the globalised political context of a shared modernity versus those who want to also look at earlier history and therefore choose comparative frameworks which elicit parallels of experience.

There exist similar tensions in the next three articles, each of which span up to three centuries of history in examining the role of Christianity in indigenous political discourses of modernity in China, Japan and Korea, respectively. Ya-pei Kuo follows Van Der Veer in making modernity the centrepiece of her article on the encounter between Christianity and Confucianism in China. Kuo digs into the 17th century history of Christianity in China to formulate her analysis of the late 19th early 20th century. In doing so, however, she makes clear not only the parallels between the two, but also the completely different nature of the late 19th century as a world dominated, militarily and conceptually, by the apparatus of Western imperialism and its teleology. In contrast, although on the one hand acknowledging the critical role of 19th century imperialism on Japanese modernity, my own article seeks to locate the primary role of religion in modern Japanese politics in changes that occurred in earlier Japanese thought. By pushing the critical period of change back out of the 'encounter' of the 19th century into the 17th and 18th, I am searching for another model of development, one that acknowledges not only modern encounters, but also pre-modern parallels. Boudewijn Walraven engages both methods in a tour de force analysis of modern Korea's struggle with the place of religion in politics. He covers the pre-modern Confucian state of the Choson, the massive social role of Christianity and Buddhism in modernisation, and the new religions and practices which emerged from them. Walraven points out certain parallels to recent theories on secularism in the West, notably that of Charles Taylor, but ends his article with an intriguing comparison between the two Koreas, North and South, a comparison which invokes the pre-modern influence of Confucianism as much as the ultra-modernity of Marxist-Leninism.

The last four articles, all by PhD candidates, present more focused and empirical research on important issues relating to religion-politics relations in post-war Vietnam, pre-war fascist Japan, and Japanese occupied colonial Korea. Edyta Roszko looks into an intriguing recent example in Vietnam's attempt to mediate the place of local religion in the state through Marxist-Leninist frameworks. Aike Rots, by contrast, shows how a millenarian Christian group in fascist Japan employed Zionism to justify 1930s military expansionism. Dermott Walsh looks at the issue of dualism in the works of a Japanese philosopher of the same era – Nishida Kitarō. Rather than the usual focus on politicised Buddhism, Walsh instead uncovers a progressive Confucian orientation to Nishida's philosophy that offers something beyond the cliché of fascist nihilism within which this philosopher's work is so often read. Jung-Shim Lee likewise rewrites a Buddhist leaning history of the colonial period Korean nationalist novelist Han Yongun to uncover his advocacy of Confucian values – but in this case ultra-conservative ones. In doing so she illustrates disturbing parallels between Han and the Japanese colonial administration's own discourses on women, causing her in the end to reflect critically on the violence inherent in anti-imperialist nationalism.

In addition to the breadth of disciplinary and area speciality represented in this Focus section of the IAS Newsletter, an edited volume containing several papers with a more contemporary focus is currently being prepared in Tokyo. Expanded versions of at least six other papers presented at the conference are also currently awaiting publication in refereed journals.

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Religion



Identity



Power

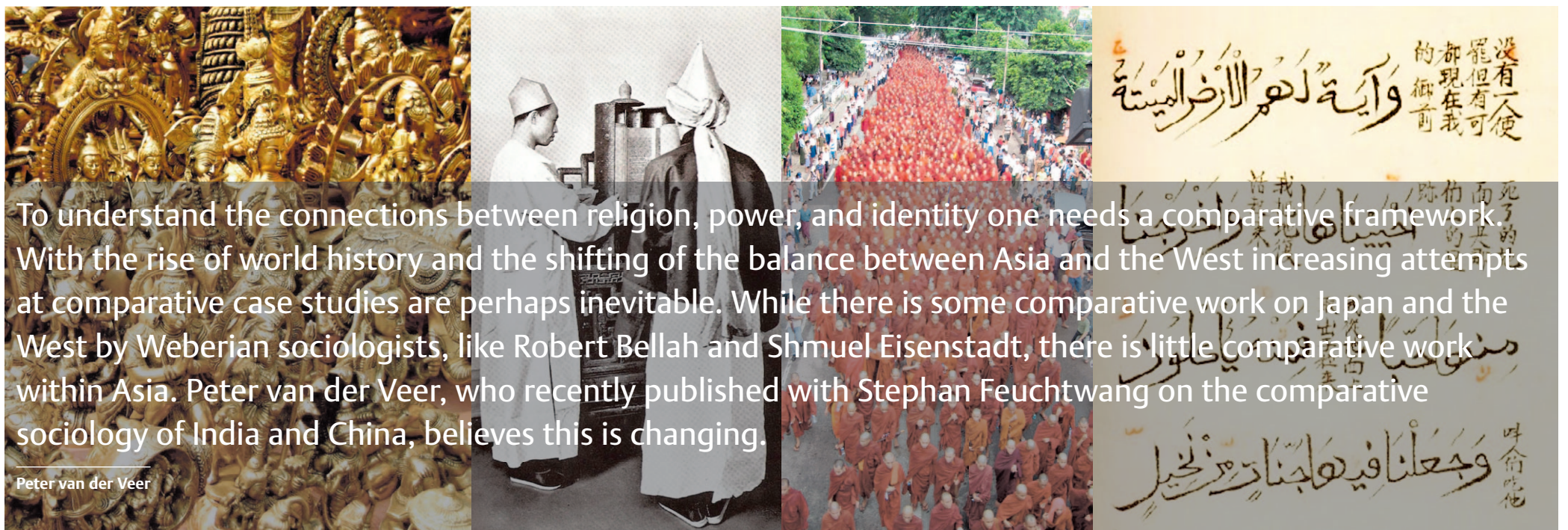


THE ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE of The Focus are based on papers given at the inaugural conference of the Consortium of African and Asian Studies (CAAS) held in Leiden 2009 on the topic Religion, Identity and Power. CAAS was established in 2005 through an agreement between Leiden University, SOAS University of London, INALCO Paris, The National University of Singapore (NUS) and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, and has since been joined by Columbia University. The conference was supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science International Training Program through the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Leiden University through the Leiden Institute of Area Studies and the Leids Universitair Fonds, as well as by INALCO and NUS.

The conference drew together scholars from six different disciplines, studying more than eight different regions of Asia. The theme was the relationship between religion and politics. The premise of the conference was to put the often assumed comparative referent of 'the West' in the theoretical work on this topic into perspective by offering a new comparative lens that confronted the experiences of different Asian societies with one another.

In addition to the authors of the articles that follow, I would like to thank for their support organising and hosting the conference Izumi Niwa from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and Rogier Busser, Maghiel van Crevel, Shinichi Douma, Barend ter Haar, Ab de Jong, Ethan Mark, Heleen Murre, Tak-wing Ngo, Judith Pollmann, Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, Ivo Smits, Guita Winkel and Henny van der Veere in Leiden.

The value of comparison



To understand the connections between religion, power, and identity one needs a comparative framework. With the rise of world history and the shifting of the balance between Asia and the West increasing attempts at comparative case studies are perhaps inevitable. While there is some comparative work on Japan and the West by Weberian sociologists, like Robert Bellah and Shmuel Eisenstadt, there is little comparative work within Asia. Peter van der Veer, who recently published with Stephan Feuchtwang on the comparative sociology of India and China, believes this is changing.

Peter van der Veer

RATHER THAN FOCUSING on the comparison of India and China, in this article I would like to discuss conceptual problems. When politicians in India or China say that they want to bring Hindu identity or Confucian harmony back into politics one may wonder whether these aspects of politics have ever been away. One can be certain that these politicians want, in fact, to bring about change instead of returning to the past. Similarly, when American politicians want to spread religious freedom all over the world one may understand this as part of a global expansion of human rights, but one can also be certain that it is connected to the political influence of evangelical networks in the US. At the most general level one might assert that there is a religious revival in many parts of the world, but not without wondering where religion has been all the time when it was not yet 'revived'. At the same time, one needs to be very cautious with the notion of the politicisation of religion, since religion is always political, always concerns power, including the definition of power. When Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka, Burma and Tibet take to the streets to resist the state they are 'doing politics'. I would suggest that it is wrong to see that as something that does not fit their renunciation, that is against their religion brought about by extreme circumstance. Rather, I would argue that Buddhism is just as political as all the other religions.

To understand the connections between religion, power, and identity one needs a comparative framework. In fact, our work is always within a comparative frame. However, in general there is not enough reflection on the extent to which our approaches depend on arguing and comparing with the already existing literature on a topic (my early work on pilgrimage was entirely framed by the comparison of my field results with those of Louis Dumont, Jonathan Parry and Chris Fuller), on the use of terms that have emerged in entirely different historical situations and thus carry in them implicit comparison (like middle class or bourgeoisie, like religion), and also on the ways in which those we study themselves are constantly comparing the present with the past or their situation with that of others. To claim, therefore, that one is a sinologist or indologist or africanist and think that specialisation in a region and subject, given sufficient linguistic and cultural competence, is enough to claim mastery over a subject—as if one is not standing constantly in a reflexive relation to both discipline and subject—gives perhaps a certain psychological fortitude, but is untenable.

A long history of interactions

Comparison is at the heart of cultural analysis. I see comparison not primarily in terms of comparing societies or events, or institutional arrangements across societies, but as a reflection on our conceptual framework, as well as on a history of interactions that have constituted our object of study. One can, for instance, say that one wants to study church-state relations in India and China, but one has to bring to that a critical reflection on the fact that that kind of study already presupposes the centrality of church-like organisations, as well as the centrality of Western secular state formation in our analysis of developments in India and China. That critical reflection often leads to the argument that India and China (and other societies outside the West) should be understood in their own terms, and cannot be understood in Western terms. However, Indian and Chinese terms have to be interpreted and translated in relation to Western scholarship. Moreover, such translation and interpretation are part of a long history of interactions with the West. In the Indian case it is good to realise that English is also an Indian vernacular and in the case of China it is good to realise that communism is not originating from the Song dynasty. This field of comparison has been widely democratised by modern media, so that everyone is in a mediated touch with everyone else and has views on everyone else, mostly in a comparative sense.

Comparison, as I understand it, is not a relatively simple juxtaposition and comparison of two or more different societies but rather, a complex reflection on the network of concepts that both underlie our study of society as well as the formation of those societies themselves. So, it is always a double act of reflection.

None of the terms used in the title of this Newsletter theme—religion, identity, power—are easy. Some scholars would argue that identity is a totally misleading concept (think of Jean-Francois Bayart's *L'illusion identitaire*) and some scholars argue that to, for instance, understand the politics of Indonesia one needs to reflect on the cultural specificity of the concept of power (think of scholars like Clifford Geertz and Benedict Anderson). Whatever one's view of those complexities, most scholars would agree that of the three concepts religion is the most elusive and at the same time most important. Religion is central to the analysis of civilisations, like those of India and China and everything that belongs to the cultural sphere of these great civilisations, like Vietnam, Thailand, Korea and Japan, to mention a few. At the same time, it is central to the analysis of their modernity. Yet it is very hard to understand exactly how the generic term 'religion' can be applied in the analysis of civilisation and modern societies.

It is precisely the emergence and application of the generic term 'religion' as purportedly describing—but in fact producing—a distinctive social field that shows the value of comparison or, perhaps better, the need for comparative reflection. It shows the central importance of the interactions between Europe and its civilisational Others in understanding the emergence of this social field. This is not an argument for the centrality of Europe in world history, but one for the centrality of the interactions between the West and its Others despite the obvious marginality of Westerners in Asia in terms of numbers and otherwise. What I am arguing for here is an interactional approach in which the interactions between Europe and Asia are seen as central to the emergence of modernity in both Asian and European societies. For our understanding of religion and identity politics this approach is fundamental.

In my view, the ideological demarcation and opposition between modern and traditional is very much a 19th century phenomenon, although it has a prehistory from the 16th century onwards and a post-history, in which we realise, to quote Bruno Latour, that we have never been modern. It is in the period of empire-building that the interactions between Europe and Asia are most significant and that the concept of religion comes to play such a central role in the understanding of modernity. In the 19th century, Asian religions like Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism and Hinduism are manufactured, constructed and invented in interactions between China and Europe, as well as between India and Europe. At the same time, Christianity and Islam are being re-imagined in their image. It is, of course, not the case that these civilisational traditions did not exist before, but that they are inserted in emerging global understandings and thereby fundamentally changed. In that sense, religion both in Europe and in Asia is a modern phenomenon, despite the long existence of the Catholic Church in Christianity and the authority of the scriptural tradition and its interpreters in all the other religions mentioned. All these religions are gradually nationalised and become part of national identity, as well as globalised and a part of world culture. This is a crucial aspect of becoming modern. Nationalism is an important social and political force everywhere that transforms the traditions that are found in the nation. As both a cultural and political force, nationalism is the most important connection between religion and politics.

Nationalism itself is never self-sufficient, but always relates to an emerging world order of nation-states, even in the imperial phase. The transformation of traditions in the construction of national identity is such a radical rupture in history that it justifies my suggestion that religion is a modern phenomenon. Religion and secularity are simultaneously produced as connected aspects of modernity. Previous scholarship has often opposed the secular and the religious as modern against traditional, but this perspective should be recognised as secularist ideology—as an ideological claim within a particular historical configuration. In that sense, it may have quite real and significant effects, not from the unfolding of a Rational World Spirit but as produced by historical movements and institutions like the state. The secularisation-thesis, a progressive history of the decline of religion and the gradual secularisation of society, does not pay attention to the deep connectedness of secularity and religion and thus cannot account for the contradictions in that progressive history and its lack of empirical evidence in most parts of the world. Still, like other elements of modernisation theory, it is still part of the worldview of modernising elites everywhere.

Religious encounters

The encounter of Western power with Asian religions in the modern period is one that has been preceded by pre-colonial missionary and political encounters, but also by a long history of the expansion and spread of religious formations within the Asian region. The presence of Christianity, Islam and Judaism in Asia long precedes European expansion. Moreover, there is a long history of expansion and spread of Asian religions, like Buddhism and Hinduism. One could, of course, mention that Judaism, Christianity and Islam, all originate in West-Asia and that they are also Asian religions, but then we would also have to ask from which period 'Asia' is a meaningful category. Obviously, the encounter of Christianity with Islam is of very long standing, as Pope Benedict XVI has recently reminded us when he referred to hostile comments made by a 14th century Byzantine Emperor about Islam, but the encounter of Hinduism and Buddhism with Islam is just as old. There is no objective reason to see Islam and Christianity as not indigenous in Asian societies as against Buddhism and Hinduism, although there is a strong nationalist urge in India, for example, to argue for such a fundamental difference. These ideological claims are far from harmless, as we know from the history of communalism in India as well as from the history of anti-Semitism in Europe.

However long and important the history of religious encounters in Asia may have been, the modern period of imperialism and nationalism provides a specific rupture with the past, because of the externality of imperial power and the ideological emphasis on the difference of modern society from both its own past and from other, so-called 'backward' societies. Comparison and an evolutionary perspective on difference became crucial in the high days of the empire. As Edward Said has rightly argued, the new scientific knowledge of Orientalism also provided the colonised with a new understanding of their traditions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism were discovered and evaluated by philologists, archaeologists and other historians while traders, missionaries and colonial officers tried to deal with the contemporary forms of these traditions. It is this apparatus of imperial knowledge that has created an archive that is still crucial for any understanding of Asian traditions. It is this archive that needs to be understood if one wants to understand the nature of the modern transformation of religion, both in Asia and in the West.

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Comparison is at the heart of cultural analysis. I see comparison not primarily in terms of comparing societies or events, or institutional arrangements across societies, but as a reflection on our conceptual framework, as well as on a history of interactions that have constituted our object of study.

The historical roots and character of Secularism in China

‘...unlike the West, which had to deal with a powerful Church for centuries, the Chinese had begun with a secular outlook that ensured that no Church could be established to challenge political authority.’*

Prasenjit Duara

*Quote from ‘Secular China’ in *Diasporic Chinese Ventures: The Life and works of Wang Gengwu*. Benton, Gregor and Hong Liu. 2004. Routledge. p.126.



Above: Qin Shi Huang, (reign: 246-221 BC) was the first Qin emperor. He was known for introducing Legalism and for unifying China. Qin Shi Huang outlawed Confucianism and is purported to have buried alive many of its scholars.

Left: Confucius statue at the Confucius Temple (Beijing, China). Photograph by Miguel A. Monjas. 2005.

Below: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism are one, a litang style painting portraying three men laughing by a river stream, 12th century, Song Dynasty.



PROFESSOR WANG GUNGWU’S observation and claim about Chinese religion is an important one. Prasenjit Duara argues that this statement is fundamentally correct for much of Chinese history. In this article, he explores the roots of this statement and the implications for our understanding of Chinese state and society. Note another related comment, this time from the 4th Century BCE text *Guoyu*, quoting a minister explicating cosmology to the king of Chu:

“Anciently, men and spirits did not mingle...(there were special men and women called xi and wu) who supervised the position of the spirits at the ceremonies, sacrificed to them, and otherwise handled religious matters... [But later] Men and spirits became intermingled, with each household indiscriminately performing for itself the religious observances which had hitherto been conducted by the shamans. As a consequence, men lost their reverence for the spirits, the spirits violated the rules of men, and natural calamities arose. Hence, the successor of Shaohao, Quanzhu, charged Chong, Governor of the South, to handle the affairs of heaven in order to determine the proper places of the spirits, and Li, Governor of Fire, to handle the affairs of the Earth in order to determine the proper places of men. And such is what is meant by cutting the communication between Heaven and Earth.”

Prof. K.C. Chang notes that this myth is the most important reference to shamanism and its central role in ancient Chinese politics in early China. He argues that the king himself was the most important shaman and he and his priests sought to monopolise access to the sacred authority of Heaven. (Chang, Kwang-chih. 1983. *Art, Myth, and Ritual: The Path to Political Authority in Ancient China*. Harvard University Press. 44-55.)

In other words, the emperor aided by his ritual specialists not only claimed monopoly of communication with sacred power with regard to other clergy or church but also with regard to the people. This modality of historical authority was very different from other Axial Age (AA) civilisations.

AA civilisation is a concept pioneered by Karl Jaspers who built on Max Weber and it was developed subsequently by S.N. Eisenstadt. It has recently become important once again in historical sociology. The period covers a thousand years from 600 BCE and concerns revolutionary developments in society, philosophy and religion across the geographical axis of China, India, the Middle East and Greece. Key thinkers and elite intellectuals sought the quest for human meaning beyond this world and beyond magic.

Key to AA is the split between transcendence and mundane. The goals of these civilisations were embedded in a divine transcendent realm. Although these goals were beyond human reach –including that of the state –all humans should aspire towards their realisation. Several Indian religions felt they could never be realised in this world and became other-worldly. A deep tension developed in the Abrahamic religions between transcendence and human effort to realise it, e.g. ‘City upon the hill’ (a phrase from the parable of Salt and Light in Jesus’ sermon on the Mount). He tells his listeners, ‘You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.’ In the Chinese religions, Heaven was transcendent, but its power, moral authority and ideals could be realised in this world. (According to Weber, it was not transcendent but immanent).

In all AA civilisations, professional clerical groups emerged (church, priests, monks, ulama) as institutionally separate from the state in order to interpret transcendence and limit the moral authority of the state. They thus dominated a public sphere autonomous from the state. As a consequence of the divergence between the transcendent goals and its practical achievement, AA religions have a built-in motor or propensity to challenge the existing establishment and seek new means of personal and institutional change to achieve the transcendent goals. (Note, for example, how in India, bhakti and oppositional movements evoked the transcendent in defying authority and create a wandering public sphere). But co-optation is an ever-present possibility.

In China, the institutional separateness of Confucianists and Daoists was never fully secured because the state claimed the monopoly of access to the transcendent. While the critique of the ruler based on Heaven’s authority was a recurring trend in China, co-optation was often the result. I see two basic reasons for this. The first has to do with the developed form of pre-Axial traditions of sacred authority in Shang China.

Anthony Yu has shown that there were always two forms of religious authority in China: Heaven and the ancestor. The emperor made two kinds of claim for his absolute sovereignty. One was in the cosmic realm of the relations between Heaven and Earth and the other was in the realm of human relations. The former derived from a transcendent Heaven and the latter from a less transcendent but no less powerful cult of the imperial ancestor who also had sacral potency. For instance, for punitive expeditions during the Shang, the emperor had to receive mandate from ancestor Di. (Yu, Anthony C. 2007. *State and Religion in China*. Chicago: Open Court. 30-40.)



Left: Hieromartyr Metrophanes (Metrophanes) Tsi-Chung Chang, Chinese priest of Peking, martyred in June 1900 (Boxer rebellion). The icon is painted by the sisters of the Holy Nativity Convent, Brookline MA, based on the original group icon of the Holy Martyrs of the Boxer Rebellion located at the dining hall of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery also in Brookline MA.



Left: Anonymous Chinese artist, 19th century: Ancestors gallery. Tempera paint on canvas, c. 185 x 98 cm. The rituals of the pre-Axial tradition of ancestor-worship – or what Yu calls ‘ancestor-making’, transform a kinsman into a symbol of divine power – that authorises the emperor to trump or pre-empt the transcendent power of Heaven.

Therefore, it is the pre-Axial tradition of ancestor-worship – or what Yu calls ‘ancestor-making’, whereby rituals transform a kinsman into a symbol of divine power – that authorises the emperor to trump or pre-empt the transcendent power of Heaven.

Yet this is not entirely true. There is always a mix of AA and pre-AA ideas. Confucius and Mencius sought to locate Heaven beyond the exclusive access and control of the ruler and create a morality that also subjected the ruler and every individual to it. Not only was there a learned Confucian elite and Daoist priesthood present for two millennia but also a Buddhist clergy seeking autonomy. In each case, however, the imperial centre was able to subordinate them to his power. Most famous was the first Qin emperor’s effort to exterminate Confucianism. In the Han period, Confucius was ‘made’ into a lineal descendant of the Shang. Thus, he was converted into an imperial ancestor which gave the emperor the greater right of ancestral access to his worship (Yu, 45–48).

From one perspective, the political history of China may be seen as a contest between imperial authority and elites seeking to claim the authority of Heaven or other forms of transcendence. The Confucians and the Buddhists were, of course, the most important claimants. The institutional history of imperial China documents the rise and fall of the autonomy of Buddhist monasteries and the changing role of Confucians in the court and in the opposition. However, it is also believed that with the Kangxi era (1661–1722), the right of Confucians to serve as an alternative authority outside the state – except under conditions of individual self-sacrifice – was extinguished and they were subordinated to imperial power for the last time.

From the perspective of Confucianism, the elite had to fight both the incorporation by imperial power as well as the challenge posed by the Buddhists (and to a lesser extent, the Daoists). Indeed, it is possible that by fighting the strong notion of transcendence of the Buddhists they were forced into an alliance with the state. Note also that ancestral worship and the lineage system (an instrument of attack against Buddhism) was one that joined Confucians with the imperial state as part of imperial ideology. But perhaps the most important instrument to co-opt the Confucian literati was the examination system.

The examination system was not merely a means to co-opt the successful candidates. It reflected the genius of the imperial state which used it to prevent the kind of destabilisation of the imperial system caused by the commercialisation that burgeoned after the Tang Song transition (10th century AD). In Europe this destabilisation ultimately led to the rise of commercial bourgeoisies that overthrew the imperial orders, but in China the rural and urban commercial elites were often co-opted into the imperial system.

Because of problems of control and management, the imperial bureaucracy was very small in relation to the society it governed. It had to rely on an ingenious model of local government without requiring too much of the imperial government. By the 19th century, there was one representative of the bureaucracy governing three to four hundred thousand people. The imperial state was able to govern by delegating the symbolic power of the government while at the same time keeping public funds out of the reach of those to whom it delegated this power. As is well-known, the literati or degree-holding gentry (*shenshi*) recruited through the examination system possessed the right and symbolic power to distinguish themselves as an elite by their formal access to officialdom. They were designated as community representatives who had the sanction of the imperial state to manage their own problems (perhaps the *fengjian* model of imperial times did have an influence). The gentry society model involved the entrustment of an ideologically state-oriented elite with the imprimatur of state power without expending fiscal and political power on social maintenance.

The co-optation of the elite in cosmological and institutional terms meant that the main challenge to the undisputed power of the imperial state emerged from popular culture and religion. With the periodic campaigns to sweep out popular religions that were not state-oriented or part of the state-cult, many of the ideas and practices related to alternative conceptions and popular access to Heaven were driven into popular culture where they mingled and often camouflaged themselves in the thicket of popular religiosity. Here it would be difficult to trace what the minister of the state of Chu had proscribed: ‘to cut the communications between Heaven and Earth’ so as to prevent ‘each household indiscriminately performing for itself the religious observances.’

Thus, there were even orthodox religious groups in popular society who invoked the gap between transcendent ideals and the present order. They were, as David Ownby has put it, ‘both against and from within the mainstream.’ For example, some of them condemned the Buddhist church ‘for having abandoned its own mission of self-abnegation and transcendence.’¹

Ownby’s study of the apocalyptic Way of the Temple of the Heavenly Immortals exemplifies how these societies mediated deeply orthodox or ‘fundamental’ values from Confucianism or Daoism with popular cultural traditions to reconstruct community along traditional, even utopian prescriptions.² These societies call on the ideals of transcendent authority to change the established order; as such they do evoke the momentum of AA tension to propel society to change towards the transcendent ideal.

Indeed, as many scholars have pointed out, popular rebellions through imperial Chinese history were often inspired by religious movements. These included the Daoistic Yellow Turbans, the Way of the Five Pecks of Rice and later, Buddhistic or syncretic movements such as those associated with the White Lotus and later still Taiping Christianity. Note even how the Boxers would perform ritual exercises to appropriate the superior power of Heaven to repulse the barbarian violation of the sacred lands. It is important to view these movements within the AA framework of tension between transcendent and practical order. While they rebelled because of historical conditions and opportunities, they were authorised and legitimated by transcendent ideals.

As organised religions became increasingly controlled by the state, intellectuals in popular society performed some remarkable syntheses from the variety of transcendent ideals that became available in Chinese society by Ming Qing times, namely from Daoist, neo-Confucian as well as Buddhist ideals. One of the most important was the synthesis known as the three-in-one or *sanjiao heyi*. While the trope of combining the three-in-one was almost universal in popular religion, different thinkers and groups performed different syntheses.

By and large, these movements were not violent or conflictual, but periodically Confucian orthodoxy and state repression led to opposition. There is a cultural logic to this opposition that continues to make the state afraid of religion as a cover for politics. At the core of it, however, is a cultural logic of access to transcendent power. Even if it does not apply to the state, the cosmology of religious believers tends to empower those with the right to access. By banning religious groups the state continues to favour this logic. Note the case of Taiwan when the democratising state began to legalise the popular sect *Yiguandao* (Way of Unity) and others. Without the pressure of repression these groups became relatively powerless and piety followed a civic religion model.

In contrast to Abrahamic traditions, where the conflicts emerged over the true God and the correct reading of transcendent truth, in China the conflict emerged over who had the right to access the will of Heaven. While the imperial state succeeded in co-opting and containing the elite traditions’ right to such access, notions of alternative means to access to achieve transcendence were driven underground where they were disguised in cultural forms which were accommodative and resistant. As a result, in the religious, cultural and political realm, the fault line in Chinese civilisations emerged as one between the state-elite versus popular culture.

In the West and other parts of the world following the Abrahamic traditions, this vertical division (which also existed, to be sure) was overcome by another lateral one. Here, transcendence and the individual’s proximity to it was forged around faith and belief in a monotheistic, personal God. The distance from transcendence was mediated by faith. While those who believed in the same God were theoretically equal and part of the community, those who did not were excluded. This idea of faith-based communal division was never always hostile or militant but it was potentially so, particularly since the state was located within the community and could drive hostilities when necessary. In the modern period, when faith-based communities became intertwined with competitive national identities, the potential for violence became much greater.

China has indeed been fortunate to not be possessed by faith-based communities because of the powerful role of the state in monopolising access to the transcendent. That said, the vertical division remains a volatile one and the state should look to incremental steps to dismantle the relationship in which it has become locked against communities to whom the older cosmologies and transcendence remain meaningful.

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The second encounter between Confucianism and Christianity

On June 19, 1898, in the midst of China's intense Hundred Days' Reforms, Kang Youwei, the leading advocate for fundamental changes according to the Western model, submitted a memorandum to the Manchu emperor calling for a state-sanctioned church (*jiaohui*) of Confucianism. The proposal never came to fruition. By the end of the summer, the conservative faction in the court re-established control, revoked all the directives of institutional change and divested the reform-minded young emperor of executive power. Kang Youwei fled to Japan and many of his associates were executed. As Ya-pei Kuo reveals, however, the idea of a state-sanctioned religion based on 'Confucianism' did not die.

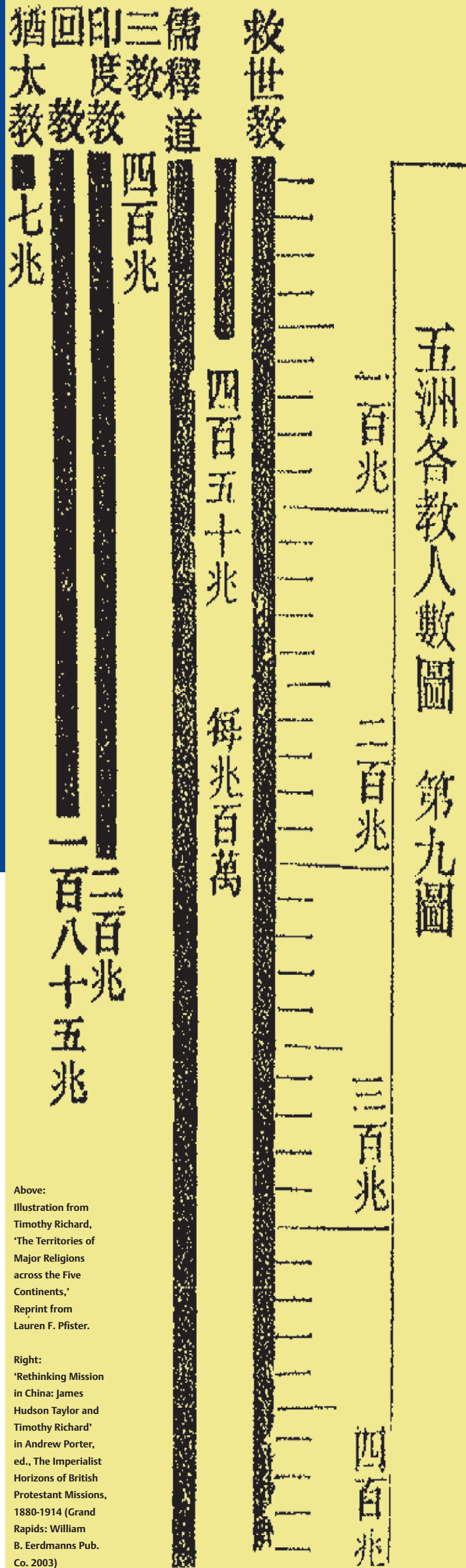
Ya-pei Kuo

IN THE NEW CENTURY, China continued to witness various political attempts to institute Confucianism as some sort of state religion. The Qing government's stipulation of the worship of Confucius at all levels of the new-style schools in 1904 and Yuan Shikai's revival of the state worship of the sage three years after the Republic was founded, were only two of the earliest examples. Meanwhile, remaining active and vital throughout the 1910s was the campaign led by Kang Youwei and his disciple Chen Huanzhang, petitioning for the constitutional acknowledgment of Confucianism as China's national religion.

Historians have explained these 20th century impetuses for giving Confucianism public and institutional recognition in two ways. First, and a more cynical approach, is to read them as a form of modern identity politics. Cultural symbolism allowed the powers that be to build a tacit rapport with the conservative constituency without compromising their forward-looking plans of socio-economic modernisation. The second approach places them in a larger historical context and sees them as part and parcel of the nation-building process. Cultural elements familiar to the population were transformed into national emblems and utilised for promoting group awareness and national solidarity among citizens, a phenomenon that was by no means unique to China.

These explanatory models, however, do not seem to be applicable to the late 19th century. Rather than strengthening the dynastic regime's constituency, Kang Youwei's reformist ideas alienated a large portion of the elite and provoked their most vehement protests. Neither were there indications of a consistent nationalistic thinking at this stage of Kang's career. Although his idea was visionary enough to prefigure upcoming developments, it was motivated by a totally different set of political concerns than those of later years.

To understand the historical forces that fuelled the idea of a Confucian Church, one should probably start with Kang Youwei's memorandum itself. In the document drafted in 1898, Kang made plenty of references to Christianity and left no doubt about his source of inspiration. As an institution,



Above:
Illustration from
Timothy Richard,
'The Territories of
Major Religions
across the Five
Continents,'
Reprint from
Lauren F. Pfister.

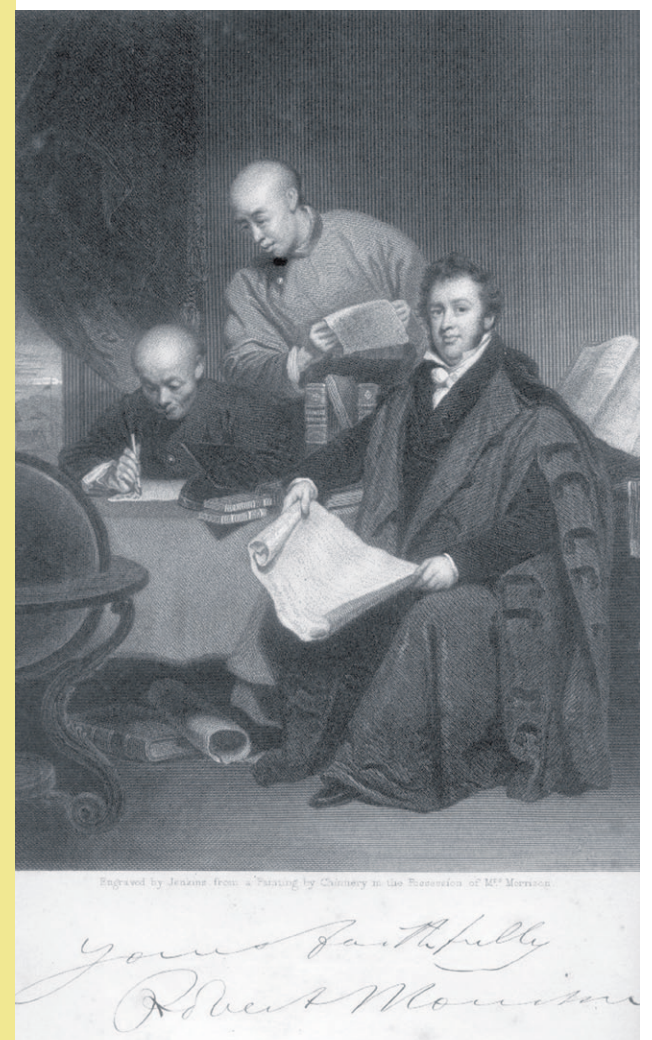
Right:
'Rethinking Mission
in China: James
Hudson Taylor and
Timothy Richard'
in Andrew Porter,
ed., *The Imperialist
Horizons of British
Protestant Missions,
1880-1914* (Grand
Rapids: William
B. Eerdmans Pub.
Co. 2003)

the Confucian Church was meant to be the Chinese equivalent of the Christian Church. The political purpose of its creation, as Kang clearly explained to the emperor, was to establish a church-to-church channel of communication between China and the Western countries, and to depoliticise religious tensions caused by the increasing presence of missionary activities in China, which in the second half of the 19th century had often led to diplomatic disagreements and even wars.

More than a device of diplomatic manoeuvring, the church organisation was also an administrative tool for ideological and religious streamlining. Kang's memorandum lamented the rampant practice of heterodoxy in Chinese society: people worshipped all kinds of spirits and gods, but ignored the temple of Confucius. The creation of a church network would provide a new apparatus for systematically re-educating the people about the sagely teachings and recreating a cohesively pious Confucian society. Kang blatantly admitted that this institutional mechanism was based on Western models. 'Their chapels spread all over the land. Every day during the week, Kings and ministers, men and women venerate their god and recite from their scripture. Although their doctrine (*jiao*) is shallow, their practice is methodical and orderly. In comparison, our doctrine is refined, but our practice has been crude.'

Kang Youwei's fascination with the religious practice of the West was not uncommon among those who bothered to learn about Christianity. However, placed in the whole elite stratum, they were the minority. The widespread anti-Christian sentiment among the socio-political leaders had its deep roots in the international conflict caused by Western expansionism. For most educated Chinese, Christianity, which had been illicit since 1724, could only be openly practiced on Chinese soil because of the Western powers' intervention. The Treaty of Tianjing, signed after China's military defeat by France and Great Britain in 1858, forced the Qing government to acknowledge that 'the principles of the Christian religion... have proven to lead people to good deeds,' and to warrant Christian missionaries the rights to travel and preach freely in China. Although historians nowadays are cognisant of the different social and ideological origins of the global mission activities emanating from Europe and North America and those of Western colonial imperialism, to the elite of 19th China, these were indubitably intertwined forces.

The numerous legal disputes involving Christian missionaries and converts in the mid and late decades of the 19th century further aggravated officials and elite members in China. Most of these legal cases were about confiscated church properties during the Christian proscription and civil conflicts between Christian and non-Christian communities. They almost invariably ended with the invocation of treaty rights by missionaries and the interventions of the foreign legations through China's bureau of international affairs, *Zongli yamen*. The process compromised the juristic power given to local officials and magistrates, leaving them with a bitter antagonism against the missionaries and their political backers.



'Religion' and the clash of civilisations in the 19th century

The implications of some controversies reached further than property disputes and community violence, touching upon bigger issues of Christians' civil obligations to their communities. In 1861, for example, the Franciscan missionaries in Shanxi sent forward a request for official exemption of Chinese Catholics from paying community levies for local temple festivals. Their argument ran as follows: A Christian, whose first and ultimate religious obligation was to his chapel, having paid his due to it, should not be forced to make further financial contributions to other religions, especially not to those deemed heterodox (*yiduan*) by his church. The Franciscans' request, once taken up and endorsed by the French minister, soon led to an imperial edict that exempted thousands in China from their conventional fiscal liability to local religious activities. In 1881, the exemption was extended to Protestant Chinese. Similarly, in 1866 the French legation filed an official complaint against the requirement that participants must bow in front of the image of Confucius upon entrance to civil service examinations. This requirement, according to the minister, constituted a political infringement upon Chinese Christians' conscience and deterred Catholics from participating in the examinations.

With their nationwide impact, legal cases like these revealed to China's ruling class an utterly different concept of religion from what they had been familiar with. Missionaries' protests against Chinese customs and conventions were often premised on an assumption that was unique to Christianity, i.e. a person could belong to only one religion. A Christian's choice of faith had to be absolute and exclusive. This emphasis on the fixed boundaries between various religions was in sharp contrast with the Confucian's attitude toward his religious others. Placing premium on the social and moral effects, a Confucian could generously extend endorsement to other religions as long as they conformed to basic ethic and ritual norms and did not pose a threat to the existent order. In late imperial times, a wide range of sectarian practices, many with Daoist and Buddhist roots, were tolerated, or even incorporated into the state cult, because they 'had proven to lead people to good deeds' – the same justification for lifting the Christian ban in 1858.

The far-reaching repercussions and sheer number of these legal cases involving Christians probably made many curious about the religion from the West. Introductory essays on Christianity and case collections started to appear in the 1870s-80s, attesting to the demand. Most of these texts gave basic information about the religion's origin, history, major branches and tenets, along with summaries of the Chinese government's rulings on important cases. Most authors/compiler also offered comments with personal insights on the on-going conflicts. One point that many of these texts repeated was Christianity's obstinate fixation with the community boundaries between the believers and non-believers. The unique Christian notion of religious exclusivity did not pass unnoticed by their Chinese observers.

For those who wanted to acquire more direct and educated knowledge about Christianity, missionaries themselves became the best source. Along with the arrival of Robert Morrison in China in 1823, Protestant missionaries in particular brought with them a deep conviction in the unique power of text and words, and generated a large body of print material in Chinese. Most of these publications were straightforward evangelistic, aiming to inspire Christian followers and provide ready material to those who cared to learn about the religion. But missionaries also went beyond the scope of spiritual texts and sponsored books and journals that covered Western secular subjects, such as history, law, education and natural sciences. In these texts, missionaries' prefaces and inserted comments often revealed a great deal about their worldview and informed the reader about how they saw their own religion in relation to other matters in the world.

Moral fabric and civil order

Although not every missionary would choose to present their religion in the same way, many shared the assumption that Christianity was not only a religion, but also a civilising and modernising force of the world. The 19th century West was the embodiment of its potency. The political might, social prosperity and technological advancement of European and American countries resulted from the moral discipline and strength that only Christianity could generate. Without Christianity, there would be no Western modernity. It follows that the West's expansion, by facilitating the spread of Christianity through colonial establishments, had the ultimate benefit of bringing modernity and civilisation to the non-Western world. The improvement of moral fabric and civil order under the Christian influence in the colonies of South and Southeast Asia, in their narratives, attested to the religion's civilising capacity.

Missionaries' narratives reflected the religious ideology that pervaded the 19th century West. No longer associated with church membership, Christianity was a signifier of the West's national and civilisational cohesiveness, with a vague reference

to the cluster of moral and cultural values that every exemplar citizen of Western society, even a non-churchgoer, could unwittingly share and embody. In 1858, when Queen Victoria announced to 'the Princes of India' that '[f]irmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects,' she used the term in exactly this broad and diffusive sense. Not only was Christianity invoked to signify the British state's internal coherence. The Majesty's use of religion to demarcate the West and its others in the world was also typical of her time.

As the fundamental engine of a civilisation's potency, religion became an important lens through which the global power structure was understood. In the early 1890s, Timothy Richard, a Baptist missionary from Wales, published a series of maps and charts that provided statistical information about the world. On a chart that compared the sizes of adherence to different religions, he listed Christianity, Confucianism, Islam, and Buddhism with respective numbers of their following. Not only did Christians outnumber (440 million) the followers of all other three religions (respectively, 70 million, 50 million, and 1 million) combined, they also had the widest area distribution. Richard deliberately noted that Christianity 'governed' (*xia*) all five continents of the Americas, Europe, Australia, and Africa,



Above: Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927).

Kang's memorandum lamented the rampant practice of heterodoxy in Chinese society: people worshipped all kinds of spirits and gods, but ignored the temple of Confucius. The creation of a church network would provide a new apparatus for systematically re-educating the people about the sagely teachings and recreating a cohesively pious Confucian society.

amounting to 80 per cent of the land on the earth. In contrast, Confucianism 'governed' only China, Islam the Arabic world, and Buddhism less than one-tenth of a percent of the globe. Other than informing his reader of Christianity's predominance, a chart like this forcefully inculcated the assumption of religious exclusivity into the reader's mind: one geographic area was 'governed' by only one religion. Populations in the Americas, Australia, Africa, or even in Europe, might have multifarious faiths and practices. Yet, diversity and complexity had to be suppressed in this projection of religious uniformity in each area.

Presentations like this also emphatically placed religion at the centre of the geopolitics of the 19th century. Richard's chart gave little attention to individual nation-states. Mentioning China and Thailand as the lands of Confucianism and Buddhism, it subsumed the identification of all state entities under larger religious rubrics, indicating the existence of a higher force than politics in shaping world events. W. A. P. Martin, an American Presbyterian missionary to China, when narrating Christianity's strength, also stressed its independence from the operation of political regimes. Judea was annexed by the Romans yet, in the end, the conquerors had to submit themselves to the religion that came from Judaism. After the Roman Empire fell to the barbarians, their Christian faith continued to prevail during the medieval period. Being cogent of these historical precedents, Christian missionaries, according to Martin, consciously maintained their political autonomy. They were funded exclusively by their churches and followed no state orders when deciding where they went.

Clashing civilisations

Eager to overcome the Chinese elite's anti-Christian sentiment, missionaries nevertheless had no control over how and by whom their narratives would be consumed and interpreted. Kang Youwei probably represented the most unfriendly consumer of missionaries' cultural products. Like many from a similar background, Kang started to educate himself about Christianity in the late 1870s and had read most of the available material on the subject by the early 1890s. His writings of this period made frequent references to Christian practices.

A growing proficiency and confidence can also be detected in his private and public comments on events related to Christianity. This familiarity, however, did not ease the emotional animosity. Christianity represented to Kang a vicious threat that the followers of Confucianism could not afford to ignore. In the principle of religious exclusivity, Kang particularly saw a voracious appetite for expansion. Christian evangelists would never be content with peaceful coexistence with other religions. Wherever they went, they sought to undermine others until their religion was in absolute domination. The sense of urgent crisis was further exacerbated by the assumption of correlation between a civilisation's potency and its representative religion's prowess. The confrontation between Confucianism and Christianity was more than a religious war; it constituted a crucial aspect of the total clash between two civilisations.

Reformers like Kang Youwei played up this sense of threat to justify changes. Confucianism needed to learn from its new rival, and Christianity's operational mechanism, in particular, could be appropriated to give Confucianism the needed modern edge. Kang started to Christianise Confucianism in the early 1890s. His major works from this period tried to portray Confucius as a prophet-like figure, and re-interpreted the Classics as nothing but the sage's revelationist message about human future. Institutionally, the church system, which he identified as the source of Christianity's unique propagandist and organisational efficiency, became the prominent object of emulation in his programme of reforms after 1895. Kang maintained that the adoption of these new measures would change only the outer form of Confucianism and give the ancient teaching new communicative capacity and social impact, without altering its moral content.

A more close analysis of reform ideas articulated around 1900, however, suggests that knowledge about Christianity probably had a more profound influence on its consumers than Kang Youwei would admit. In their search for the secret of Christianity's prowess, people like Kang started to gain a glimpse of the Western notion of religion and to project a new model for Confucianism. Underneath the strategic justifications for a church system in China, Kang's jealousy of the Christian form of pietism, demonstrating itself in his desire to replicate practices such as church attendance, bible reading, and ritual participation, was most palpable in his 1898 memorandum. The fascination with Christianity's ability to penetrate into its followers' minds and hearts, in the following decade, became more widespread. The Christian-inspired imagination of a society of religious purity prompted the elite to support a systematic overhaul of Confucian rituals and the hardening of the boundaries between Confucianism and other non-Confucian elements. An exceptional combativeness against popular religion ensued and became a characteristic of this time.

Confucianism as world religion?

Christianity also provided a new model for re-imagining Confucianism's relationship with the existent political structure. In its imminent confrontation with Christianity, Kang saw an opportunity for religious expansionism. Confucianism, with its supreme profundity, had the potential to become a true world religion. In overcoming the current Christian threat, it would achieve a global fame and enjoy unprecedented following from all over the world. In this fantastical projection of a future scenario, Kang indeed imagined a politically stronger China to aid Confucianism's expansion. Yet, Kang emphasized in a private letter, the ultimate objective of modernising the ancient teaching was to give it the ability to spread beyond the land of its origin, and transcend the ups and downs of its political patron. Like Christianity, Confucianism had a large part to play in human history and could not afford to seal its fate with merely one nation.

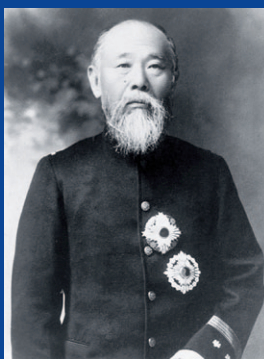
The recognition of religion as an autonomous force on its own constituted probably the most significant legacy of the 19th century re-encounter between Christianity and Confucianism. No matter how vague Kang's idea of a Confucian Church was, it expressed a clear vision of administrative demarcation between the religious and the non-religious in state affairs. Still seeking the state's backing, the proposed church was meant to be an institution independent from the other sections of state bureaucracy. Underneath the proposal for a Confucian church lay a new model for the relationship between Confucianism and the Chinese state. In its new form of 'state religion,' Confucianism required no 'Son of Heaven' to personify its religious and moral ethos and offered no theoretical underpinning for the state's cosmological claims. The centuries-old model of mutual embodiment gave way to a more precarious patron-client relationship. Religion remained an important aspect of politics, but the terms in which religious politics played out were fundamentally altered.

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Religion as practice, politics as mission

In 1888, leading Japanese government figures met to formulate what would become the first modern constitution of a non-Western country. One of the major issues they discussed was what role religion should play in the new state. In this article, Kiri Paramore examines both the role of Western state models, and Confucian political ideas in informing constructions of political modernity in 19th century Japan.

Kiri Paramore



Left:
Prime Minister
Itō Hirobumi
(1841-1909)

ITŌ HIROBUMI (1841-1909), the Prime Minister, opened the constitutional convention which drafted this first imperial constitution with the following words:

"If we wish to establish a constitution now, first we must look for a central axis for our nation, and establish what we should say that central axis is... In Europe... the existence of religion, and the employment of religion as a central axis, deeply embedded in the minds of the people, has ultimately unified the minds of the people. In our country, however, religion does not possess this kind of power... In our country the only thing that can be used as a central axis is the imperial house. Therefore, in the drafting of the constitution, we must focus our minds on using this point, raising up imperial rule, and striving that it not be restrained."¹

This quote concisely sums up the motivation for the creation of what would later be labelled State Shinto – the integration of the emperor cult into the modern Japanese political system. It explains the primary role given to religion in the late 19th century construction of the political and ideological structures of modern Japan as an attempt to replicate a Western model. The 'Western model' that the constitution aimed to emulate, however, could not have been further from the theoretically imagined model of the 'secular West'. Hirobumi's vision of the central political role of religion in the systems of Western empire is rather closer to that of recent academic analysis by the likes of Peter van der Veer.

'Modern Japan' and the 'Western model'

The Japanese case, however, represents more than just an example of 'Western impact'. Indigenous Japanese society and its political culture were not simply objects of Westernisation and modernisation. Conversely, they were primarily – through most of the 20th century certainly – agents of modernisation and Westernisation, embracing and advocating Western political systems and technology and imposing it on others (China and Korea notably) in the same manner as (other) Western empires. There had developed in Japan, well before the onset of Japanese modernisation, a complex awareness of Western social, political and scientific technology as both an object to absorb, but also to define national identity against.² The views of the likes of Hirobumi, and the way those views emerged in earlier political society, are therefore also of value in allowing us to understand the interactions and parallels between indigenous and westernising political traditions that foreshadowed late 19th century processes of modernisation in general.

Most scholarly attention to the discussion of the role of religion in Japanese political society pre-1868, however, has tended to focus on the individual case of Japan, dealing with the sources predominantly in terms of national history narratives.³ There has been comparatively little attention to where this fits into global historical developments in both the political theory and historical reality of the relationship between church and state, or religion and state, in the development of global paradigms on governance and society. A notable exception is the sometime scholar and populist writer Ian Buruma, who has integrated this aspect of Japanese history into explanations of global historical trends.⁴ Buruma refers to State Shinto as being based on 'a misunderstanding of the role of religion in the

West'. His argument is a wonderfully clear articulation of the dominant paradigms of liberal ideology today. Following the determined historical teleology of that ideology, Buruma assumes that religion and state were successfully separated in the West during the so-called 'enlightenment'. His rather uncritical (or perhaps politically conscious) embrace of the ideological standpoint of 'the enlightenment' determines his position that Hirobumi's analysis could only ever be a 'misunderstanding'.

It would be very easy to oppose Buruma's position by stating simply that Hirobumi's analysis was not a misunderstanding at all but rather, a good grasp of the reality of modern Western imperial states: an insight to be learnt from. After all, if we look at the nexus between Western empire and religion at this time, be it the use of Catholicism in Vietnam, or the complex relations between religious, national, imperial and colonial identities in India and Britain, or the phenomena of the Christian missions in China – all phenomena that Japanese leaders and thinkers were very familiar with throughout the 19th century – it is clear that interaction between religion and expansionist state activities existed.

To simply say that the Japanese conception of the role of religion in modern nations was a sharp insight, however, in some ways brings us to the same end-point as stating that it was a complete misunderstanding. Both positions are based on looking at the situations in Japan and Europe pre-1850s as if they were totally unrelated and foreign phenomena. A more interesting venture is to tease out commonalities between both Western and Japanese uses of religion in early-modern statecraft. In particular, to look at how these two interpreted each other when their political-judicial systems were (to an extent) standardised in the process of so-called 'Westernisation' or 'modernisation' in Japan in the late 1800s. Looking at this historical background allows us to go beyond narratives of 'reaction to the West' and rather, look at the development of political ideas in Japan in parallel with the plurality of experiences of other societies during this period.

18th-19th century Japanese Confucian political philosophy

By 1888, the greatest influence on the creation of frameworks of statecraft and governance by members of the Japanese elite like Hirobumi was undoubtedly the West. But leaders like Hirobumi were also influenced by a political tradition which had developed a role for what we could call religion in statecraft through a primarily (although not exclusively) non-Western tradition of Confucian political philosophy. This political philosophy emerged partly in reaction to circumstances in Japanese society (both economic and political) during the period of Tokugawa Shogunate rule (1603-1868). Although not primarily influenced by the circumstances or political paradigms of early-modern Europe, it perhaps demonstrated many parallels with them – a point I will come back to.

One particularly powerful work of Confucian political philosophy which deeply influenced Hirobumi and most other samurai who played central roles in the Meiji revolution was the 1825 work *New Thesis (Shinron)* written by the Mito domain samurai intellectual and Confucian Aizawa Seishisai (1782-1863). *New Thesis*, in a tradition of Confucian political

writing seen throughout the previous 200 years, called for reform and improvement of shogunal systems of government to bring them into line with the writer's vision of a Confucian ideal of governance. Seishisai's political philosophy standpoint was influenced primarily by the earlier Tokugawa Confucian thinker Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728) and nativist reactions to Sorai from the late 18th century. But Seishisai's views were explicated primarily in terms of a reaction to the threat of Western imperialism, sometimes even referring to the efficacy of elements of Western political practice in contrast to (from Seishisai's perspective) problematic elements of contemporary Chinese and Japanese governance.

In *Shinron* and supporting writing from the same 1820s period, Seishisai identified links between governance and religious practice as the key to maintaining the integrity of the Japanese state. Seishisai, following a number of earlier Tokugawa scholars, regarded the success of Western imperial expansion as being primarily due not to technology, capitalism or gunpowder, but to the incredible levels of political and social integration provided by the socio-religious systems of Western states.⁵ The key to those systems, and the chief difference with the declining Chinese and Japanese, was the West's use of Christianity. Seishisai saw in Christianity Western states' central deployment of the 'prerogative' or 'method' of what the Confucian political philosophical tradition he was writing from called 'rites and music' (Jp. *reigaku*, Ch. *liyue*).⁶ Twentieth century scholars have described this Tokugawa conception of the political utilisation of rites and music as 'religion', the deployment of religious practice in statecraft.⁷

The major intellectual influence on Aizawa Seishisai's conception of the central importance of rites and music, and indeed the major figure in the history of Tokugawa Confucianism, was Ogyū Sorai. One of Sorai's major philosophical positions was to equate the Confucian 'Way' (the means of achieving social harmony in line with nature) with the rites and music of the Ancient Sage Kings of a semi-mystical Chinese antiquity. For Sorai, unlike most other Confucians in East Asia at this time, Confucian truth was to be found not in moral prescriptions of earlier philosophers like Mencius and Zhu Xi (the Neo-Confucianism familiar to readers of Hegel and Weber) but in the historical truth of the rule of the 'Ancient Sage Kings' of Chinese antiquity – pre 700AD. This period, the Zhou dynasty and before, Sorai Confucianism's golden age, was a time when historically, as Sorai correctly points out, political structures in Chinese society were feudal – as they were in Sorai's Tokugawa Japan. Sorai's Confucian heroes were thereby feudal sovereigns and lords – practitioners of politics rather than their commentators.

According to Sorai, the Confucian Classics themselves were written for no other purpose than to instruct the ruling class (which for Sorai meant the samurai) in how to rule over society. For Sorai, the way to hold sway over society was not through Neo-Confucian self-cultivation – which Sorai labelled as 'selfish' and 'Buddhist' – but through the rites and music established by the Ancient Sage Kings in Chinese antiquity and revealed in the ancient texts. Sorai's rites and music concept, although proposed as the underpinnings of a political system, emphasised a practice that was clearly religious, even transcending the temporal world.

*Pervading heaven and earth, the substance of the rites reaches minute, subtle areas, giving everything its standard, and providing systematic order to irregularities. There is no aspect of the rites that the way does not penetrate. Princes study them, while the common people follow them... By following the rites, people are transformed. Once transformed, they follow the rules of the Lord on high (Jp. *tei*, Ch. *di*) unconsciously and unknowingly. How could there possibly be anything that is not good if the rites are thoroughly followed?⁸*

What had previously been referred to in Neo-Confucianism as absolute moral values such as benevolence and righteousness were instead interpreted by Sorai as manifestations of social relations demonstrated through the practice of rites and music.⁹

Sorai's original take on Confucianism became popular in his own lifetime and continued to hold sway as one of the dominant trends in Confucian political thought in Japan even into the modern period. Figures like Nishi Amane (1829-1897), for instance, a contemporary of Ito Hirobumi, one of the earliest Japanese experts on Western philosophy, and (after studies in Leiden) the initiator of many of the modern legal institutions of Meiji Japan, continued to show the influence of Sorai throughout his life.

Sorai's work was also possibly just as important as the provocateur of the growth of Japanese nativism or *Kokugaku*, one of the major intellectual currents linked to the growth of emperor-centric nationalism and the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Key early figures in *Kokugaku*, like Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), deliberately replaced Sorai's idealised ancient China with a set

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Pre-modern antecedents to the role of religion in modern imperialism



Above: Yu the Great, one of the legendary Three Sage Kings. As imagined by Song Dynasty painter Ma Lin (馬麟). Painting is located in the National Palace Museum, Taipei. Tokugawa Confucian thinker Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728) believed that Confucian truth was to be found in the historical truth of the rule of the 'Ancient Sage Kings' of Chinese antiquity—pre 700AD.

Below: Illustration of 'The Ceremony Promulgating the Constitution', Artist Unknown. 1890. Photograph courtesy of MIT Vizualizing Cultures.



The nature of Japanese political modernity then (what some would call its 'success'), was influenced not so much by the extent or lack of its conformity to Western models, as by the extent of parallel between political outlooks—something determined equally by the earlier parallel development of both societies and also informed and affected by their bordering regions.

of imagined traditions and customs of an 'ancient' Japanese past. Based on a sanctification of Japanese classical literature and invented custom, many of Norinaga's ideas were clearly searching for an indigenous rites and music. The *Kokugaku* of Norinaga, although originally conceived in direct opposition to Sorai's ideas, came to be, in part, integrated into some forms of Japanese Confucian political philosophy—notably that of Aizawa Seishisai.¹⁰

Japanese Confucianism's lens on Christianity as statecraft
Seishisai partly engaged and partly courted the popularity of *Kokugaku* ideas, not only through his clear Japanese nationalism but also through his disparagement of China and his positioning of the Japanese imperial line as objects of religious worship. To some extent, he conflated Sorai Confucianism with *Kokugaku* by advocating a system that, at its heart, basically inserted Japanese emperors in the place of the roles Sorai saw the Chinese Ancient Sage Kings playing in history.¹¹

Seishisai's view of the West's deployment of Christianity for social control was thereby coloured totally by Sorai's conceptions of rites and music—as delivered both through Sorai's own philosophy, and the bastardised nativist versions of it presented later by the *Kokugaku* movement. Seishisai analysed the Western imperialist deployment of religion through the Sorai constructed idea of rites and music. Of course, as Seishisai himself explained, what he saw the Westerners using were not the 'real' 'natural' rites and music of the ancient Sage Kings, but another kind of rites and music which functioned similarly. Both the Way of the Sages and the Way of the Barbarian Gods, China/Japan and the West, were described as worshipping Heaven or the Lord of Heaven and employing rites and music. The difference being that while in the Central Kingdom (China/Japan) Heaven was originally (by the sages) worshipped correctly through fathers and sovereigns, in the West the rites were used to worship a 'barbarian god' (Christ) who was set up to displace the natural social relations which underlay order. The Way of the Sages was contrasted against The Way of Barbarian Gods.

Normal human sentiment is to stand in awe of Heaven's authority. So the Sages revered Heaven. Serving Heaven was like serving their parents. Through their ancestors, they offered to Heaven. Serving their ancestors was also like serving Heaven. There were the appropriate rites and the appropriate music... In this way the masses came to have a mind to stand in awe of Heaven's authority, and thereby revere the sovereign. Heaven and sovereign were one. The masses were nurtured. This is the sages' great prerogative and method of governing the world and ruling the masses. The barbarians and their lackeys set up a foreign god, and using this they corrupt the stupid masses. Thereby they use the masses natural inclination to respect Heaven [their natural religious inclination] to get them to respect their rulers and betters.¹²

This later development of Confucian political philosophy on the role of religious practice as part of nation-state construction and national expansion, although on the one hand having clearly originated in Confucian political philosophy paradigms, can hereby be seen to have also interacted directly with observation of the employment of religion in Western imperial expansion. This was the writing that formed an important ideological underpinning of the Meiji revolution and the reform of government—especially in regard to the role of religion—which followed.

The key developmental background to this writing, however, was clearly the move in the 18th century away from a Neo-Confucian emphasis on morals to the Sorai inspired emphasis on rites and music. A move from justification of order on shared static moral norms, to one based on shared religiously inclined social practice. This movement clearly shares parallels with changes that occurred in a similar period in Western Europe—both in religious thought through the influence of Puritanism and Calvinism, and through related changes to political philosophy that emphasised social mores and behaviour over morals.

Some scholars have related these parallels in Japanese and Protestant religious thought to the concurrent rise of commercial society in both places. Japan from the 1600s, under Tokugawa rule, attained a level of market integration and commercialisation throughout the country which began to dwarf that seen in earlier pre-modern global history. This can be seen, for instance, in terms of the growth of urban centres, volumes of trade and development of financial institutions, growth trends that were only matched in Europe from the 18th century onwards.

The pre-modern basis of the 'modern encounter'
Itō Hirobumi in 1888 saw Christianity as an underlying part of the Western political construct of empire just as Aizawa Seishisai had 60 years earlier. But their understanding of the role of religion in modern Western empire was informed not only by observation. Simply looking at something does not enable understanding. There must be references, analogies and parallels from which to construct an understanding based on observation.

The parallel development of the role of religion in Confucian models of politics in Japan gave Confucian political thinkers like Seishisai and modernising politicians like Hirobumi that reference. The nature of Japanese political modernity then (what some would call its 'success'), was influenced not so much by the extent or lack of its conformity to Western models, as by the extent of parallel between political outlooks—something determined equally by the earlier parallel development of both societies and also informed and affected by their bordering regions. The history of the 'modern encounter' then, I would argue, needs to be understood not only in terms of the encounter itself but also through the history of earlier development which created the parallels for comparison.

The fact that the sort of changes in Confucian thought described in this paper did not occur in China at the same time is an important case in point. It is one reason that both the process of imperial encounter, and the development of the place of religion in modern Chinese society thereafter, played out so differently to Japan. To construct a transnational history, including that of the globalised world of empire, it is, I would argue, important to understand cross-regional parallels through which we can historicise agencies in the 'encounter' other than only the agencies of empire and modernity. To historicise a true encounter, it is necessary to provide a model for telling the histories of both sides of the interaction. This requires a parallel outlook, and therefore a focus on history before modernity. Serious study of immediately pre-modern (early-modern) history is the only way to truly understand the imperial encounters and thereby the history of modernity.

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Ultimate concerns: religion, the state and the nation in Korea

The summer of 2008 saw protests in Seoul against the perceived lack of *laïcité* of the administration of President Lee Myung-bak. A permanent protest centre was established in the city centre with panels informing the public about the transgressions of the government. The climax was a large demonstration in which as many as 200,000 people took part. However, as Boudewijn Walraven reveals, the protest was not inspired by Korean followers of Richard Dawkins and not at all directed against religion itself.

Boudewijn Walraven



IT WAS THE MAIN TEMPLE of *Chogye-jong*, Korea's most prominent Buddhist order, that hosted the headquarters of the protests and many, if not most, of the protesters were Buddhist monks and nuns who had come from all over the country to vent their anger. They judged, not entirely without reason, that Lee Myung-bak, a Presbyterian elder, condoned pro-Christian pronouncements by his officials that contravened the religious neutrality that might be expected from the state. Someone familiar with Charles Taylor's assertion that secularism in the West is an offshoot of Christianity,¹ would perhaps have expected things to be the other way around, with Christians, who have accepted a Western religion and with it many Western values, as the champions of secularism against the Buddhists. This prompts the question what meaning secularism has for Korea.

Until the end of *Koryŏ* dynasty (918-1392) Buddhism, then the dominant religion, was closely tied to the state. As Sem Vermeersch has stated '...political power was often articulated in terms of Buddhist symbols or ideas. Buddhism was especially invoked to justify the *Koryŏ* kings' right to rule: in a relationship of mutual dependence, the king relied upon the dharma, but the dharma also needed the protection of the king.'² At the same time, however, Buddhism did not enjoy a monopoly and one person could very well be a pious Buddhist as well as a staunch Confucian. The potential of a possible conflict between the two creeds only became a significant actuality when, at the end of the *Koryŏ* period, Neo-Confucianism, with its more ambitious philosophical or metaphysical claims, garnered a following in Korea. This heralded the 'Confucian transformation of Korea', which began in earnest in 1392 when a dynastic change put an end to the dominance of Buddhism and started a process that aimed to make Confucianism the only officially acceptable orthodoxy and a blueprint for the social order.³

There is no doubt that the Confucian view of the universe became the ultimate concern of the literati, who in their fervour did not hesitate to resort to iconoclastic violence to destroy shamanic and Buddhist temples. Nevertheless, Confucianism never managed to establish a true monopoly, except in the public sphere. There, by the second half of the *Chosŏn* period all other creeds and cults – whether shamanic, Daoist or Buddhist – had been eliminated, while everyone in the ruling elite was expected publicly to adhere strictly to mainline Neo-Confucian orthodoxy.⁴ In this respect, Korea was different from both China and Japan. The state tried to limit rituals to those that were acceptable to Confucians and attempted to prescribe exactly who was allowed to perform what rites. The result was a ritual structure that above the level of ancestor worship neatly coincided with the administrative structure, with the king at the apex, as the state's high priest.⁵ The sacred order, in other words, was immanent in the social order, and consequently completely centred on man. *Tongmong sŏnsŭp* (What Ignorant Youths Should Learn First), a popular primer of Confucian teachings in *Chosŏn* Korea, states this at the outset: 'Among the ten thousand beings between Heaven and Earth it is Man who is the most noble, and this is because only man possesses the Five Bonds [i.e. the values that regulate the most important human relationships]'.⁶

The humanism of Confucianism

It is tempting to compare the human-centred ideology of *Chosŏn* Confucianism with some of Charles Taylor's statements about the origins of secularism: 'I would like to claim that the coming of modern secularism in my sense [that is, as a state in which people have the conscious option to believe or not] has been coterminous with the rise of a society in which for the first time in history a purely self-sufficient humanism came to be a widely available option' and '...the general understanding of the human predicament before modernity placed us in an order in which we were not at the top.'⁶ Of course, Taylor aims to explain the genesis of secularism in the West and does not formulate a theory with pretensions to universal validity. It is possible, however, to see parallel developments in East Asia, albeit that the specific conditions were very different. It is my contention that in *Chosŏn* Korea Confucianism as the dominant creed created a very similar state of affairs, propagating an ideology of a 'purely self-sufficient humanism', in which man stood at the top and that, as in the West, a religious view that regarded the sacred as immanent in the worldly order was an essential step in the direction of secularism, if we take the term as denoting an order that was centred on man rather than the divine. Consequently, Confucianism as it flourished during the *Chosŏn* period also had a lasting impact on Korea's religious configuration even after it had gone into a decline itself, fundamentally influencing the way other religions were seen and are seen, even today. A tendency came into being to judge all religions in terms of the contribution they make to human society.

It is clear, though, that the humanism of Confucianism did not necessarily or immediately imply secularism in the full sense of the word. If theism was more important in Confucianism, I would be tempted to call *Chosŏn* Korea a theocracy, because its officials were also its priests. All rituals explicitly sanctioned by the state, except ancestral rituals, were performed by the king and his bureaucracy. By the end of the *Chosŏn* period, however, even before the dynasty formally ended, the legitimacy of the Confucian state and its sacred nature was undermined by external and internal challenges. To use Peter Berger's terminology, the 'sacred canopy' of Confucianism, so intimately linked to the administrative apparatus, lost its 'plausibility structure' due to the government's failure to find adequate solutions to the problems of the times. The nearly universal consensus that the Confucian state embodied the sacred order disappeared for ever.

The notion of the Confucian state as sacred disappeared, but not the idea that the nation embodied an ultimate, sacred value. Modern historians are often inclined to see the origin of the nation-state in Korea as something of recent times, after Korea had come into contact with the West. There is substantial evidence, however, that even before that a widely accepted concept of an imagined community already existed; a political unity with clearly delineated borders, a common history and common customs, in which all layers of the population had a stake. This concept was largely Confucian in origin and elaboration and as such, in the early *Chosŏn* period, had probably not yet filtered down to the classes below the *yangban* elite. For the second half of the *Chosŏn* period, though, there are good reasons to assume



Left: Portrait of Holy Mother Mary with Child Jesus in Korea. Painting by Jang Woo-Seong (1912-2005). The painting is displayed at the bishop's residence of the Myeongdong Cathedral.



Left: A Confucian ritual ceremony in Jeju, South Korea. Photograph by Joonghijung at Flickr.com

that Confucian values in general – and the concept of the nation in particular – reached more and more people, and touched even those who were completely illiterate. Songs sung during shamanic rituals, which were popular among the lower classes but abhorred by the elite, presented such a concept, and warmly supported Confucian values, including that of loyalty to the nation. The rapidity with which Korean nationalism developed, after the opening of Korea to the West in 1876, is much better explained by referring to the existing Confucian concept of the nation than only to the influence of the West. The nation was a Confucian heritage, as was the tendency to ascribe a sacred character to it. Confucianism left its mark not only on Korean nationalism, but also contributed to the nationalism of other religions, including the numerous new religions that emerged.

While Confucianism's sacred canopy collapsed, people's expectations of what a religion should be continued, to a large extent, to be conditioned by the past. The most obvious examples are seen in the peculiar category of what in Korea are called *minjok chonggyo* – 'national religions' – newly created religious groups that tend to place Korea at the centre of the universe and claim to protect the national spirit against foreign encroachment. The first of the *minjok chonggyo*, and in many ways the ancestor of many other new religions, was *Tonghak* – 'Eastern Learning' – dating back to 1860 and renamed the 'Teaching of the Heavenly Way' (*Ch'ŏndogyo*) after *Tonghak* ran into trouble in 1894 because of its association with a popular rebellion that expressed the discontent of the peasants. This religious movement had a national focus in its insistence that it countered the foreign influence of 'Western Learning', the *Chosŏn* term for Catholicism. It also developed the 'humanistic' notion that 'Man is Heaven', directing its view to activities in this world. *Ch'ŏndogyo*'s supreme deity has been described as 'the power we experience in ourselves to join with the rest of the universe to continue the process of creation and build a better, more harmonious world'.⁷



Nation-centred new religions

Perhaps the most striking example of a nation-centred new religion is Taejonggyo, the 'Teaching of the Great Progenitor', which was founded in 1909 with the overt aim of strengthening Korean national consciousness at a moment when Japan was in the process of annexing Korea. The Great Progenitor is Tan'gun, the mythical founder of the ancient state that is seen as the first Korean state (assumedly in 2333 BCE). As is common with many of these new religions, Taejonggyo spawned a whole series of new groups, some of which have been active in recent decades. One of these propagates the idea of the worship of Tan'gun as a kind of civic cult for every Korean, irrespective of religion: it is the duty of every citizen to honour the national progenitor, they insist. So much importance is vested in Tan'gun as the national ancestor that intellectuals of various religious backgrounds, including Christians, have made attempts to give Tan'gun a place in the teachings or theology of their own beliefs.

Among Christians, too, the idea of the close connection between ultimate (religious) values and society remained strong. The remarkable growth of Christianity in the 20th century distinguishes Korea most from its neighbours. Christianity's success has been such that, although distributed over several denominations, at present it is the dominant religion. Of major importance for its success was the fact that from the outset Christianity was presented as beneficial to society, as a remedy for social evils, as well as a pathway to modernity.⁸ Foreign missionaries introduced modern education and health care even before they were allowed to proselytise. Protestant missionaries also argued that the nation would only flourish if it accepted Christian faith, an argument they claimed was supported by the evidence of history.

In the colonial period, Protestants engaged in efforts for rural regeneration, trying to develop the social life of villages ('which would become demonstrations of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth'),⁹ and also provided modern education. Concern with this world also surfaced in activities that were directed against colonialism or aimed at preparing Korea for independence. At this time, Korean Christians often identified with the Ancient Israel of the Old Testament (as the Dutch had done in the 17th century when they fought Spain for independence), assigning religious significance to the nation. As Ken Wells has pointed out, at least some of their leaders – Yun Ch'ihō (1864-1945) and Kim Kyoshin (1901-1945) – had quite sophisticated views in this regard and are to be distinguished from secular nationalists.¹⁰ Wells also suggests, however, that Koreans' identification with the Chosen People was much more straightforward among the rank and file. He summarises Kim Kyoshin's view of Korea as follows: "Korea" and the 'Bible' were to be identified as Two Persons in One Body; national history was the expression of the nation's soul and the key to its development was providence. Since all Korean history was equally under the same divine direction, a complete identification of Christianity and the nation was apparently effected'. And: 'What Kim Kyoshin did do,..., was to answer the question whether God privileges the 'nation' over other categories very firmly in the positive'.¹¹

Perhaps the most striking example of a nation-centred new religion is Taejonggyo, the 'Teaching of the Great Progenitor', which was founded in 1909 with the overt aim of strengthening Korean national consciousness at a moment when Japan was in the process of annexing Korea.

In post-liberation Korea, Christians are divided over many denominations and a wide political spectrum, from ultra-conservatives – often ferociously anti-communist – to social liberals and left-leaning quasi-marxists. Obviously, this means that Christianity cannot be a monolithic force, which stands in the way of their exerting undue influence over the secular sphere and other religions. There is no doubt that Christians generally would like to increase their influence. One of the reasons the government ran into trouble last year was that the national chief of police had expressed support, on a poster, for an evangelisation meeting for police officers. It is also not unusual to hear pastors advocating the eradication of all Buddhist temples and shamanic shrines from the pulpit.

In his thoughtful book *Korean Spirituality*, Don Baker recently described the introduction of Christianity in Korea as an important paradigm shift, from 'ritual-based' to 'faith-based' religious communities, pointing out that the term that is usually translated as 'belief' (*shin*) changed in meaning from 'relying on/trusting' to 'believing in the existence of'.¹² I do not think that this paradigm shift is irrelevant to the problem of the relationship of religion, state and nation. In fact, it is behind Korean Christians' intolerance toward other faiths, which is the cause of recent Buddhist protests against the government, and occasionally has even induced Christian fanatics to set fire to Buddhist temples, threatening freedom of worship. However, a paradigm shift that is more crucial for the relations between state and religion took place in the *Chosŏn* period, when a system came to dominate that seamlessly merged liturgical structures with social and administrative structures, opening the way for an identification of ultimate concerns with concerns about this world and its social institutions. The collapse of *Chosŏn* Korea allowed the transfer of the ultimate Confucian values, which were embodied in the nation, to be further secularised, in the sense that belief became a free choice. Although some Christians might wish otherwise, the situation that prevailed in *Chosŏn* Korea, with one single creed – *in casu* Confucianism – as the backbone of a coercive national structure that was in a position to dominate all other existing religious strands, has little chance of a return under the present conditions of a pluralist society in South Korea (in which, it should be remembered, a sizable proportion of the population – 47% according to a 2005 census – does not identify with any religion at all).

On the other hand, the heritage of the past, when the sacred was embodied in the social order, endures in North Korea. If we consider Chuch'e (or Juche) philosophy the national religion of North Korea (as Eun Hee Shin does in her contribution to *Religions of Korea in Practice*), the situation in the North is comparable with that which prevailed in *Chosŏn* Korea.¹³ Chuch'e thought combines the 'philosophical principle that the human being is the master of everything and decides everything,' with rituals with strong religious overtones such as the worship of Kim Il Sung (whose death was followed by his apotheosis as the eternal leader). Kim Il Sung's statement that 'the people are my Heaven' echoes with Mencius's concept of the supremacy of the people, and the Chuch'e

insistence that it is Man's essential quality and value that he is a sociopolitical being ('Man/woman's life becomes noble when he is loved and trusted by the social collective; it is worthless when he is forsaken by it,')¹⁴ may be regarded as a modern translation of the first lines of *Tongmong sŏnsŭp* quoted earlier ('Among the ten thousand beings between Heaven and Earth it is Man who is the most noble, and this is because only man possesses the Five Bonds'.)

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Negotiation over religious space in Vietnam



From the 1950s, North Vietnam underwent anti-superstition campaigns in the name of the new socialist modernisation project. After the end of the Vietnam War this process included the South. In Vietnam, like in China and Soviet Russia, religion was considered a harmful superstition. In its ideological struggle the state aimed to build a 'new culture' that would substitute religion. A glimpse into the Government Gazette –*Công Báo*– displays the failure of this secularising agenda, its transformation over the years, as well as dissonance between the state's goals and their realisation in everyday life.

Edyta Roszko

ONE OF THE MAIN TARGETS of the new socialist modernising agenda of the Vietnamese government was to strip the traditional social order of its sacred character and mysterious aura in order to transform the Vietnamese people into a new and advanced society, with its progress based on education and rationality rather than 'Gods works'. The Party attempted to raise the masses' political awareness through instruction, in the hope that they would voluntarily abandon superstition without the need to reinforce it with a ban. In its efforts to make Vietnam a secular society, the government adopted Marxist-Leninist theory according to which religion will naturally disappear when humankind enters the period of Communism, and 'highly advanced material production, culture and science'. The Party ideologists blamed religion for the hardship and backwardness of the life of the masses, saying it wasted time and money that could be better spent on education or national agriculture production.

It is not without significance that the first task of the policy of 'separation of politics and religion' was a total restructuring of local village politics in which the two spheres were merged. It was believed that a systematic selection of 'proper' aspects of Vietnamese tradition would put an end to 'corrupt and feudal practice'. In light of such rhetoric, village festivals, life-cycle rituals and places of worship –the spaces that sustained old power and prestige –became targets of the state's campaign against superstitions. Following Marxist principles, religious buildings such as village temples, pagodas and shrines were defined in terms of class struggle and considered to be a hotbed of feudalism, ignorance and exploitation. The state, concerned with introducing a 'new culture' and a 'new way of life', undertook the task of turning religious buildings into spaces of secular rather than religious utility.

Nevertheless, implementation of the new ideological agenda was not always a peaceful process as the state had intended. In Northern Vietnam from the 1950s to the late 1980s, sacred spaces that, as it was believed, sustained unequal relationships and wastage of village resources were converted into granaries, storehouses and schools, while clergy were forced to cast off their robes and return to secular life. Spirit medium rituals were banned and ritual professionals were controlled by local authorities. Since 1975, this process has spread across the southern parts of Vietnam as well and lasted until 1986, when the state relaxed its enforcement of anti-superstitious law. The most severe persecutions of religion occurred in 1976-79, when the state attempted to pursue a policy of collectivisation in the South.

Religious building or exhibition hall? Debating religion

Various researchers working either on Soviet Russia, China or Vietnam describe the process of separation of politics and religion and of a total restructuring of local village politics as 'secularisation', 'desanctification' and the 'desecration' or 'disempowerment of the religious domain', or 'ritual displacement'.¹ I do not aspire to argue here which of these terms is the most satisfactory. Rather, my aim is rather to present the *emic* viewpoint, which gives us a sense of how this process is presented in official discourse. Comparing various issues of the Official Government Gazette –*Công Báo*– and local narratives, the gap between the official goals of a new usage of sacred spaces and their implementation and the people's feelings about it becomes evident. While for the state the ongoing process of transferring authority from religious communities to the state was an attempt 'to disenchant' the local landscape and to make it predictable and manageable, for the common people it was an abuse and profanation of spaces that had not ceased to have sacred status.

In official discourse, spots of scenic beauty, exhibition halls, cultural houses and schools were presented as better substitutes for sacred locations, as places of education and social life. It is worth pointing out that the state was selective in its acceptance of the ways of converting temples, in its view, into more functional, non-religious spaces. The analysis of the Official Gazette –*Công Báo*– from 1953 onwards reveals that the state had its own vision of how to make use of temples. In its rhetoric, the government proclaimed that although the 'communal houses, Buddhists pagodas, shrines, and temples, and imperial tombs have for centuries been exploited by feudal tyrants, who turned them into places giving them prestige in order to be close to all classes of people and to sow superstitions to captivate people'² they should be utilised in accordance with a new cultural project of building a modern nation.³ In reality, the state's concern was dictated by practical considerations to develop them as places of historical interest, cultural value or scenic beauty that the masses could visit as tourists rather than as places of religious activity. More importantly, this development aimed to replace superstitious beliefs with a new socialist creed. Thus, the fate of these places was not a trivial and unimportant matter since their new role was supposed to fill the spiritual void that the anti-religious campaigns had left and to serve the state machinery in building a new society. The Ministry of Culture, conscious of losing control over the management of temples and of the fatal consequences of anti-religious zeal, blamed its own followers for a 'lack of proper view'. In a self-critical mood, the *Công Báo*⁴ describes the temples' destruction:

Above: New Year Festival, Central Vietnam, 2007.

Following Marxist principles, religious buildings such as village temples, pagodas and shrines were defined in terms of class struggle and considered to be a hotbed of feudalism, ignorance and exploitation. The state, concerned with introducing a 'new culture' and a 'new way of life', undertook the task of turning religious buildings into spaces of secular rather than religious utility.

'...as a result of the need for material for building new projects, a number of the objects of our age-old architectural legacy (*di sản kiến trúc cổ truyền*) have been demolished; some of them have been used to support co-operative art or the production of oil lamps for meetings, others have been turned into shopping centres, storehouses and markets; while some of them remain in the hands of superstitious old ritual masters, the majority have no one looking after them; some people with little consciousness destroyed these places or used them as private houses.'

Then, it continues:

'It is prohibited to defile architectural monuments or to use them in illegitimate ways such as: making improper drawings on the walls, pillars, and statues, or on the objects of worship; raising chickens and ducks; piling straw; storing excrement in communal houses, pagodas, shrines, and temples, or imperial tombs; taking memorial plaques, tiles, wood, wooden panels with Chinese characters, or lacquered boards belonging to communal houses in order to demolish them or to make piers, plank-beds, or chairs or to bake lime.'

Yet, the public admission of shortcomings did not result in a lessening of the tension between popular religion and official ideology. The state continued contesting, taking over and re-fashioning ritual spaces according to its secular vision. Anagnost⁵ calls this process the 'politics of ritual displacement', a sort of 'uneasy accommodation' that engages both the local community and the state in a struggle over the symbolic meanings of temples. By removing sacred objects from temples, shrines and pagodas and turning them into functional buildings, the state attempted to divest these places of their sacred aura and show that local gods were nothing more than powerless effigies.

Despite the total restructuring of local sacred spaces, in the official discourse the tradition of preservation of communal houses, temples and shrines goes back to 1945 when *Hồ Chí Minh* issued a decree in the context of land reform on protecting national heritage.⁶ However, all these directives had been largely ignored. The Official Gazette of 1956, continued to lament the pitiful situation of destroyed sites of local cults not only by the communist guerilla, which had used well-tried scorched earth tactics in order to deny the enemy any space to quarter their troops, but also by people who demolished the buildings.⁷ Consequently, in the later issue of 1960, the state showed its disquiet over the popular reaction and feelings about the 'dilapidated situation of temples falling into ruins and with pieces lying about higgledy-piggledy', which might have resulted in a 'negative political impression among local visitors and foreign guests'. It recommended to provincial offices of culture and the People's Committees to remove all defacements from monuments and to beautify the local landscape by planting trees.⁸ Note that in the official discourse, these temples underwent a metamorphosis into places of historical and cultural interest. Thus, the state worried not about religious but, above all, about national spaces. To rectify all 'committed mistakes and shortcomings', local authorities were strongly encouraged to protect and preserve 'all old architectural and other locales of scenic beauty and to use them in an appropriate way without wastage'.⁹ The 'appropriate way' was understood as 'turning all places of worship into schools, exhibition halls, gathering places, and cultural houses'.¹⁰ However, the next six years did not bring a significant improvement in the situation and the Party had to sharpen its tone. Still in a self-critical temper, Prime Minister *Phạm Văn Đồng* reacted to the destruction of temples by pointing out the poor record activities of administrative committees (*ủy ban hành chính*) to 'preserve all places of historical interest, to teach people about their value and to transform them into museums'.¹¹ He stressed that these places have been lost and destroyed due to the lack of interest or even awareness of the official duty of preserving the historical heritage and, as a consequence, of the low level of training of local cadres.¹²

In 1973, two years before the end of the Vietnam War, the state, specifying its agenda towards Buddhist pagodas and the clergy, had to again remind local authorities of the policy of protecting all places of historical and cultural interest. The government directive¹³ called for 'preserving thoughtfulness and cleanliness' vis-à-vis Buddhist pagodas and forbade 'hurting the feelings and beliefs of the people' by destroying Buddhist sculptures and instruments or using them in an inappropriate way.

According to the government order, all sites of historical interest including sites of scenic beauty that could be Buddhist pagodas and temples are managed by local People's Committees (*ủy ban nhân dân*) and cultural offices (*sở văn hoá*).¹⁴ It means that any renovation and construction work in places of worship and of historical and cultural value must be officially approved by these bureaus. In the North, during the land reform (1956) and the time of budget subsidies, many Buddhist pagodas, like communal houses and local shrines, suffered extensive destruction as their

State rhetoric and realities of daily life

facilities and property were repossessed by village agricultural co-operatives or simply cleared of clergy and left empty. As a result, monks and nuns who depended largely on these properties were dissociated from the basis of their livelihoods.

Theoretically, the Buddhist clergy could count on official guarantees to continue their religious activities, if they voluntarily handed their land to the village co-operatives and joined common production. The co-operatives were expected to allot the monks and nuns to brigades based on practical abilities and their religious tasks in order to ensure their livelihoods.¹⁵ In reality, however, the clergy had little choice: the state recommended training the most suitable local clergy as tour guides. It was supposed that monks and nuns could help local cadres with instructing visitors on the history of pagodas and scenic sites.¹⁶ During the land reform, those pagodas that temporarily maintained their plot of land were taxed and their clergy were expected to work in its rice fields, shoulder-to-shoulder with common people instead of relying exclusively on the believers' labour.¹⁷ Although a campaign of agricultural collectivisation generally failed in the southern regions of Vietnam, many temples and pagodas lost their properties.

In reality, the Vietnamese procedures of converting temples into secular places did not differ markedly from those implemented in Republican and later in Communist China and Revolutionary Russia. Yang and Poon¹⁸ report that a large proportion of urban temples were turned into modern schools and exhibition halls and sacred objects were broken or smashed with a hammer. In Luehermann's¹⁹ analysis of desecuration in Post-soviet Russia, one can find examples of sacred groves in the countryside turned into parks or of cemetery churches used as public toilets. Malarney²⁰ also gives an account of what happened in the Thinh Liet commune of North Vietnam after the land reform in the mid-1960s. Smashing many symbols, destroying the structure of temples or turning them into private houses, granaries and the like was performed with such great vigour that it is remembered vividly by the villagers even today. Nonetheless, most of the villagers felt that the abuse of and irreverence towards temples and gods must, sooner or later, meet with supernatural punishment.

Yet as Poon²¹ illuminates, the shrinking and peripherisation or even desecration of religious space hardly led to a break with religious traditions. In Guangzhou City, the temples in their secular disguise as schools and exhibition halls still retained sacred status as people managed to preserve small deity images that they continued to worship. Yang²² gives an example of a temple located close to Shanghai where, in 1927, the young Nationalists beheaded the city god. The local people pulled the head from the gutter and put it on the altar, when the temple was restored. In Siberia, in the 1930s, even though all village churches were closed down people did not cease to gather at nights behind anti-religious activists and chant their prayers.²³ In Thinh Liet commune, as soon as anti-religious vigour subsided, the villagers resumed worshipping their deities.

Right: New Year Festival organised by local authorities, Central Vietnam, 2007.

In the last 20 years, one can observe a noteworthy upturn in the state's attitude to religious spaces: the temples' festivals have been revived...publications devoted to famous ancient Buddhist pagodas, temples and the national heroes who defended the country's sovereignty have flooded the bookshops and the restoration works and renovation of religious buildings have become an inherent part of the local landscape.

Revival and the changing discourse on religion

The recent liberalisation of the market in Vietnam fostered profound changes not only in the economic but also in the social sphere. In the last 20 years, one can observe a noteworthy upturn in the state's attitude to religious spaces: the temples' festivals have been revived as a glorification of the national culture after a long absence in village life, publications devoted to famous ancient Buddhist pagodas, temples and the national heroes who defended the country's sovereignty have flooded the bookshops and the restoration works and renovation of religious buildings have become an inherent part of the local landscape. Religion, previously excluded from the public sphere by the state, has been revived under new socio-political conditions. However, in opening up public space for religion, the socialist state neither admits limitations to its power nor resigns control over religious practices. Although the state no longer plays the strong ideological role in people's lives that it did before 1986, it still tries to standardise religious practices. The state has begun to promote a new rhetoric of harmony between ethical religious values and the ideology of the socialist system. In stressing this attitude, it utilised the architecture and art of pagodas and temples to be a symbol of the Vietnamese tradition. Villagers who want to re-claim their sacred spaces are encouraged by local state agents to apply for official recognition of the sites for which they can prove an artistic and historic value or the historical or cultural character of the residing deity. This has far-reaching implications for religious practice since remaking the identity of their gods and temples into state recognised ones required from villagers a kind of momentary and strategic conformity.

Conclusion

The study of the *Công Báo* reveals that through the 1950s and the 1960s the state faced difficulties in implementing its agenda. In reality, the local officials were little concerned with the new roles of village temples and used them as it was most convenient for them: as granaries, storehouses, private houses or for co-operative production. While earlier issues sound the alert over the miserable conditions of religious buildings, the late 1970s issues give up the self-critical tone and ignore the actual desperate state of the temples. This sudden silence is only broken in later editions which depict a landscape of mushrooming historical and cultural monuments across the country.

These days, the relationship between religion and the Communist state is presented in the public sphere as a harmonious institution in which the state is tolerant and helpful. At the same time, some of the religious traditions are seen as representations of Vietnamese culture and national identity. For example, the traditional cult of ancestor worship has been revived as a 'hero-centred political culture', since the state's focus is on the exemplary service of the ancestors. In theory, the Vietnamese state allows full religious freedom; in practice, it enforces its power on religion by patrolling and directing religious practices. Most of all, this guidance occurs at the rhetorical level. However, it sometimes happens that the state executes a more rigorous campaign against religious practices. Religious freedom is guaranteed in the 70th article of the Vietnamese constitution, but the article directly after warns that the state will not tolerate activities in opposition to the socialist programme. From the state's standpoint, all attempts to take advantage of religious freedom and to disturb peace, independence and unity of the country and to propagate superstitious practices are discordant with law.

While relations between the state and religion remain rather antagonistic, the state is not extremely repressive. At the same time, the state continues a functionalist attitude towards religion. Religion became a useful tool in the hands of the Communist Party to legitimise and carry out the socialist project of a national and cultural homogeneity. Moreover, religion linked to the politics of nationalism is seen by the state as a protection against the inundation of western culture in Vietnam and so-called social evils.

To end, the best summary would be that of Philip Taylor, whose analysis well captures the nature of the relationship between modern cultural policy and popular religion: 'Although Vietnam's military war with the United States was long over and economic hostilities ended with the lifting of the U.S trade embargo, Vietnam remained at war; and in this cultural battle such buildings and their associated rites and festivities were in the front line.'²⁴

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Left: Worshipping Ho Chi Minh, Central Vietnam, 2007.

Confucian thought in early Nishida

The work of the Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945) has come to be seen as an attempt to create a system that incorporates both Western philosophy and insights gleaned from the Zen Buddhist tradition. However, this interpretation fails to account for the variety of influences that lead Nishida to formulate his unique insights. In his early work Nishida refers extensively to the Confucian tradition as well as to Buddhism, a fact which becomes especially important when we turn to Nishida's interpretation of key problems in ethics.

Dermott Walsh



THE JAPANESE PHILOSOPHERS who have come to be known as the 'Kyoto School' are perhaps best known for their attempt to integrate Zen Buddhism and Western philosophical perspectives. While this is undoubtedly an interesting and unique aspect of their thought, it is certainly not the only avenue which is worthy of exploration. An investigation of other influences on the work of Kyoto School thinkers reveals interesting angles which have been largely ignored in English language scholarship. Especially notable is the influence of Confucianism on the early work of the foremost member of the Kyoto School, Nishida Kitarō.

The idea of Kyoto School philosophy essentially evolved from the work of Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945). The publication of his first work, *An Inquiry into the Good* (1911),¹ has been heralded as the beginning of Modern Japanese philosophy. The main concept of the book, the idea of 'pure experience' (*junsui keiken*), is often seen as the pivotal idea in Nishida's entire philosophical project. The general consensus among scholars is that while the phrase 'pure experience' was a direct translation of a term from William James, the content of the idea is generally believed to have been drawn largely from Nishida's experience of Zen meditation during the period from the late 1890's to 1906. Thus, the perception of Kyoto School philosophy as the 'merging' of Zen ideas with Western philosophy seems to find validation in the very origins of the tradition.

However, even a quick glance at the index of *Inquiry* is enough to indicate that such an analysis is simplistic. In the text, Nishida refers frequently to the Confucian tradition. I will show shortly that this is not merely incidental; rather, in order to understand properly Nishida's much ignored ethical project we must investigate thoroughly the Confucian roots of *Inquiry*. However, for now we must ask why this lacuna regarding Confucianism developed within Nishida scholarship in the first place? The answer can be found in the explicitly Buddhist orientation of subsequent Kyoto School philosophy. The philosophies of figures such as Nishitani Keiji (1900-1990) and Masao Abe (1915-2006) rely heavily on themes from Buddhist thought. It is inevitable, then, that they themselves should re-read such themes back into Nishida at the expense of other possible sources of influence. Nishitani's biography of Nishida provides a prime example of this tendency, as he consistently attempts to interpret the Zen significance of Nishida's thought, even if there is evidence to the contrary.² Thus, it is no surprise that subsequent Western scholars were equally inclined to focus on the 'Zenist' aspects of Nishida's thought. Such an approach has had an interesting and perhaps far from desirable impact on the direction of Nishida scholarship.

For example, the tendency to see Zen as the overriding influence on Nishida has led scholars to emphasise the metaphysical aspects of Nishida's thought and, thus, to overlook its ethical importance. The idea which 'pure experience' expresses, that of experiencing the world as a 'oneness' without the traditional mediums of subject and object, causes numerous problems for those engaged in philosophical analysis. We may legitimately ask how such an idea can be the basis of a philosophical system when it must necessarily be expressed through the dualistic medium of language. We may also ask whether such a 'oneness' is desirable at all, given that dualism is central to much of our

Above inset left to right: Wang-Yang Ming (1472-1529), Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945) and Confucius (551-479BC).

The tendency to see Zen as the overriding influence on Nishida has led scholars to emphasise the metaphysical aspects of Nishida's thought and, thus, to overlook its ethical importance.

reasoning, especially with regard to ethical issues, where distinguishing good from evil is the central question. With a concept such as 'pure experience' at its core, what happens to Nishida's moral philosophy? It seems we are left with a view of Nishida as a thinker who prefers abstract metaphysical reasoning to the practicalities of everyday ethical concerns. It is exactly such an accusation which is often levelled in the direction of Nishida by those who point to his culpability during the war period. The focus on 'pure experience' as a metaphysical or meditative experience of the world tends to reinforce the perception of dangerously abstract and antinomian 'ivory tower' philosophising, which is both out of touch with the real world and dangerously open to manipulation.

Tracing the Confucian influence on Nishida's early work is not intended simply to satisfy academic curiosity; nor is it an attempt to suggest that somehow Confucianism is more 'important' in Nishida than the Zen Buddhist influence. Both traditions, among others, played a role in the development of Nishida's thinking. However, the balance in favour of a Buddhist interpretation needs to be redressed somewhat in light of the ethical perspective Nishida expresses in *Inquiry*, a perspective which is often ignored in the rush to interpret 'pure experience' as a form of Zen experience. Just as with the Buddhist interpretation, we can look towards Nishida's biography for evidence of the Confucian influence on his thought.³ We see a thinker clearly knowledgeable about this tradition, in particular the work of Wang-Yang Ming (1472-1529). Nishida seems to have been fascinated by one doctrine in particular, that of the 'Unity of Knowledge and Action' (Chn. *chih hsing hoi*, Jpn. *chigyōdōitsu*),⁴ which suggests that one cannot have purely theoretical knowledge, that in fact once one knows something, this knowledge will inevitably manifest itself in action. Bridging the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge was, for Nishida, the key to overcoming the ethical dilemmas which had plagued Western philosophy for centuries.

In *Inquiry*, Nishida would re-formulate Wang's insight as 'Conduct' (*kōi*). 'Conduct' can best be interpreted as 'pure experience' manifest as action. An example of what 'Conduct' means in real terms is provided by Nishida in the last chapter of *Inquiry* entitled 'Knowledge and Love', which was an earlier essay appended to the text. Here Nishida refers to the famous story from *Mencius* 2A:6 about the child about to fall into the well and the fact that anybody witnessing this action would act instinctively to save the child (*Inquiry* p.174/ Jpn. p.244). For Nishida, this is how 'pure experience' becomes manifest as 'Conduct' in the ethical sphere. In *Inquiry*, one of Nishida's key criticisms of what he calls 'Rational Theories' of ethics in Western philosophy is the idea that somehow one can be in possession of an abstract idea of 'the good', that one can 'know' an ethical truth solely via the intellect. For Nishida, following in the footsteps of Wang, such knowledge is impossible. The fact that there must be a concurrent manifestation of knowledge as action is the key, which Nishida felt, distinguished his ethics from thinkers in the Western tradition, such as Kant and T.H. Green. If one is in possession of such knowledge of 'the good', there would be no doubt, since ethical action, such as saving the boy from the well, would result. This stance also has implications from an epistemological perspective, as it rebukes the idea of ethical knowledge

as a purely private issue; rather, any ethical knowledge must inevitably become manifest as a public act, which is open to scrutiny and criticism. Such a stance is in direct contrast to what happens when we interpret Nishida's understanding of 'pure experience' as a Buddhist idea. With such an interpretation, the very private nature of the experience results in the impossibility of proving its veracity in the public sphere, leaving any recourse to 'pure experience' as an explanatory concept open to objections from the fallacy of the 'argument from authority'. One cannot claim universal truth for a concept on the sole basis of the authority of one's own experience of the said concept. There has to be a means to provide proof to a wider community, otherwise such claims from experience become authoritarian assertions. Nishida's idea of 'Conduct' as the manifestation of 'pure experience', drawn from the Confucian tradition, takes the concept beyond the purely personal, and into the public, ethical sphere.

While I have focused on the influence of Confucianism on the early Nishida, it is clear that this particular influence waned as Nishida's career progressed. Nonetheless, 'pure experience' remained key to much of Nishida's subsequent philosophical development, despite metamorphosing into numerous different guises. While there is no agreed manner of dividing Nishida's philosophical thought into 'phases', it seems fair to suggest that the idea of 'pure experience' becomes less a psychological or metaphysical concept as Nishida's thought develops. He seems to want to interpret 'pure experience' as a kind of logical concept, which can somehow transcend the subject-object dualism which is inherent in language. This leads to a distinctly 'Zen' undercurrent in many of his later works, culminating in the explicitly Buddhist orientation of his last published texts.⁵ To my mind, it is a shame that Nishida's thought did not continue to move in the direction of the ethical issues highlighted in *Inquiry*. The suggestion of an inter-subjective practical ethics, which functions beyond the duality of subject and object, and indeed of good and evil, is a fascinating prospect, the possibility of which is enough to justify further investigation of the significance of Nishida's ethics.

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Japan, the Jews, and divine election: Nakada Jūji's Christian nationalism

In late 19th and early 20th century Japan, several popular religious movements and ideologies emerged combining nationalist notions on the divine nature of the Japanese people and country with millenarian beliefs in the imminent replacement of the current world order by a perfect new world. 'New religions' such as Ōmoto and Sōka Gakkai drew on existing Shinto and Buddhist notions, reinterpreting them in the context of modern Japanese society. Other movements and religious leaders at the time used millenarian and nationalist notions in their attempts to reconcile an imported Christian belief system with their Japanese identity.¹ Aike Rots examines one of these leaders, the evangelist, theologian and missionary Nakada Jūji (1870-1939).

Aike P. Rots

NAKADA JŪJI CO-FOUNDED the Japanese Holiness Church and wrote extensively on a number of topics, including the relationship between the Japanese nation and the Jews. This article gives a brief introduction to Nakada's life and thought – a creative combination of evangelical millenarianism, Japanese nationalism, political Zionism and Japanese-Jewish common ancestry theories – with particular emphasis on its political subtexts.²

Nakada Jūji was born in 1870. He grew up in the town of Hirosaki, present-day Aomori prefecture, where he was a member of the local Methodist church. In his twenties, he moved to the US, to study theology at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. This institute was founded by Dwight Lyman Moody (1837-1899), one of the most influential 19th century American evangelists. Moody advocated a literal or 'fundamentalist' interpretation of the Bible, the experience of sanctification or 'holiness' (the experience of being washed away from sins by the grace of Christ), missionary activism and, significantly, a radical pre-millennial eschatology. These ideas became the point of departure for Nakada's theology. Back in Japan, he founded the Oriental Missionary Society (*Tōyō Senkyōkai*), together with two American missionaries, in 1905. However, despite the initial similarities in belief systems, tensions between Nakada and his partners soon grew. In 1917, Nakada founded his own independent denomination, which he called the Oriental Missionary Holiness Church (*Tōyō Senkyōkai Hōrinesu Kyōkai*). He himself assumed the role of absolute, charismatic leader.

In the course of the late 1920s and early 1930s Nakada's thought became increasingly nationalistic and anti-Western. In 1932, he delivered a series of six lectures on what he thought were Biblical prophecies concerning Japan; these lectures were published as *Seisho yori mitaru Nihon* ('Japan seen from the Bible').³ Shortly thereafter, he published the strongly millenarian *Kokumin e no keikoku* ('Warning to the Nation'),⁴ in which he repeated the conclusions of *Seisho yori mitaru Nihon*, predicted an apocalyptic final war and stressed the urgency of collective Japanese action. These ideas were further developed in a series of short articles and sermons. This development in Nakada's thought met with much resistance within his own denomination and culminated in the schism of 1936. From that moment, Nakada's branch of the Holiness Church continued under the name Kiyome Kyōkai. Meanwhile, the Japanese government had become increasingly intolerant towards the religious movements it considered potentially subversive, and



Above: Nakada Jūji (1870-1939).

As with other millenarian ideologies, despite claiming that the ultimate goal is world peace, violence played an important part in Nakada's eschatology.

large-scale persecution followed in the early 1940s. Nakada himself did not live to experience this, however, as he died on 24 September 1939.

Jewish heritage and Zionism

Nakada strongly supported the Zionist case and considered the restoration of Israel to be a prerequisite for the Second Coming of Christ. This does not mean Nakada was pro-Jewish, or philo-Semitic, as one scholar has labelled him.⁵ In fact, his stance towards the Jews was much more ambivalent. While he condemned the increasing persecution of the Jews, he also apologetically stated that it was a result of their own sins, and part of God's plan to bring them back to the Holy Land and ('re-') establish the State of Israel.⁶ Nevertheless, they did play an important part in his origin narrative, as well as his millenarian scheme of events, as God's original chosen people. The identification of the Japanese with the Jews was used by Nakada to justify his assertion that the Japanese nation was divinely elected, as we shall see below.

In the course of his life, Nakada came to perceive nations as absolute primordial entities, which all had their particular part to play in God's divine plan. Even his soteriology became nationalistic and he came to consider salvation as something given to entire nations, rather than individuals. Furthermore, in line with nationalist discourse at the time, which was closely connected to notions of origins and 'race', Nakada was looking for an origin myth that would legitimise his identification of true Christianity with the Japanese nation, and allow him to lay claim to the 'empowering heritage'⁷ of 'original' Christianity, not only ideologically but also genealogically.⁸ Unsurprisingly, Nakada was very interested in the common ancestry theories that had been developed by Saeki Yoshirō (1871-1965) and Oyabe Zen'ichirō (1867-1941). These scholars had re-appropriated the centuries-old European myth of the Lost Tribes of Israel,⁹ by suggesting that the Japanese were the descendants of God's chosen people, the original Jewish tribes and, therefore, shared a common ancestry with the contemporary Jews. Following their ideas, Nakada provided ample historical 'evidence' for the Jewish migration to Japan. For instance, he stressed the apparent similarities between Japanese and Jewish traditions, such as religious festivals and shrine architecture, which he considered unmistakable proof of the shared heritage.¹⁰ Nakada went further, creatively combining the Japanese-Jewish common ancestry theories with European myths of racial descent and arriving at the conclusion that the Japanese were the only people in the world 'composed of' all different races.¹¹ This myth of the unique genetic make-up of the Japanese people not only identified the Japanese with the Jews, thereby suggesting that they were also the descendants of God's chosen people, it also implicitly stated the racial superiority of the Japanese.

Divine election and imperialism

Nakada believed that the Japanese nation had a crucial part to play in the End Time, and the preparation for the Second Coming of Christ. This claim was further legitimised by his Biblical exegesis. He saw any Biblical references to the east and the rising sun as prophecies regarding Japan and its divine mission. Examples include the angel coming up from the east mentioned in Revelation 7:1-4, and the rising of the sun mentioned in Psalms 50:1 and 113:3. Moreover, the 'unknown nation' that, according to Isaiah 55:5, would come to the aid of Israel, was identified with Japan.¹²

Nakada stated that the divine responsibility of the Japanese people was to earnestly and collectively pray: for the imminent arrival of Christ, for the Jewish people, and for the restoration of Israel. According to Nakada, God had chosen the Japanese people to perform this task because, he believed, they were only nation in the world that had never done any harm to His chosen people, the Jews. As he stated firmly, the Japanese people were divinely elected to save the Jews from their persecutors, and support them in the creation of their own state.¹³ Nakada's condemnation of Western anti-Semitism fits well with his attempts to discredit the West and its corrupted interpretations of Christianity; and, accordingly, to create a binary opposition between, on the one hand, the nations of the East (including Japan, the Jews, and the other 'Asian' nations), and on the other, the morally degraded West, which was presented as responsible for the corruption of Christianity and the suffering of God's people.

However, the divine mission of the Japanese people was not limited to harmlessly praying for the Jews, or donating money. As with other millenarian ideologies, despite claiming that the ultimate goal is world peace, violence played an important part in Nakada's eschatology. The increasing militarisation of Japan was wholeheartedly supported by Nakada, who perceived the great war that was about to happen as providential and as a requirement for the collapse of this world order and the establishment of a new one. In concrete political terms: the British occupation of Palestine at the time was interpreted by Nakada in the light of his radical East-West dichotomy, according to which the British were a morally corrupted colonial power occupying

the Holy Land, and it was part of God's plan that the Japanese army would 'save' the Jews from this oppressor.¹⁴ Thus, according to Nakada, the Japanese army, while not being aware of it, were in fact serving God. Eventually, supported by the prayers of the nation, the Japanese army would rescue the Jews from the Western powers – which were in name Christian, but actually represented the Antichrist – and help them establish the State of Israel. Hence, despite his condemnation of the Western oppression of the Jews, Nakada was strongly supportive of Japanese. Unsurprisingly then, according to Nakada's exegesis, even Japan's military rise and intervention was prophesied in the Bible: 'Isaiah 46 says 'from the east I summon a bird of prey'. This 'bird' refers to airplanes. The surprisingly powerful airplanes rising up from the country in the east will meet with the Antichrist and rescue the troubled nation [the Jews].'¹⁵

It can be argued that Nakada used the Jews to legitimate his own nationalist agenda, in which the dominant Other were not so much the Jews, but the West. As they had long constituted 'the Other's main Other', the creation of this imagined alliance between the Jews and the Japanese was part of a strategy for the differentiation between East and West. Moreover, as the Jews had always carried the ambivalent label of being the 'chosen people' in the dominant European religious ideology, this identification served to create a divine justification for the moral, religious and racial superiority of the Japanese people. The Jews, however, were denied any agency – they were presented as completely passive victims of the corrupted Western nations' persecution, dependent on the Japanese nation to rescue them. Eventually, Nakada's theological project developed into a myth of differentiation between East and West, and a Christian-Zionist ideological legitimisation of Japanese militarism and imperialism. Despite its radical conclusions, it was firmly embedded in contemporary religious and political discourses and drew on a variety of ideological sources (Evangelical millenarianism, pan-Asian imperialism, and theories of ethnic descent), which it combined creatively. As such, it can be seen as a peculiar but genuine attempt to re-appropriate Christian ideology in such a way that it could be made compatible with Japanese national identity.

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Women, Confucianism and nation-building in Han Yongun's novel *Death*

Han Yongun (1879-1944) was a Buddhist monk, an ardent Korean nationalist and a great poet, active during the colonial period (1910-1945). Buddhism is generally seen as the underlying ideology of his spiritual, nationalist and literary practices. It is often held that his nationalism and literature could remain morally and politically pure, original and non-compromising thanks to its grounding in profound Buddhist philosophy. But Buddhism was not his only religious belief. Nor was it the only political instrument of anti-Japanese resistance and Korean nationalism. Jung-Shim Lee reveals a more complicated and heterogeneous relationship between religion and politics in Han's writings than is often assumed.

Jung-Shim Lee



THE FACT THAT HAN YONGUN was a Buddhist monk has led many scholars to limit their scope of enquiry to Buddhism and ignore the possible influences of other religions. I will argue, however, that it was Confucianism rather than Buddhism which inspired his political critiques. Han tellingly opposed the subservience of Buddhism to narrow nationalist or political goals by proclaiming its fundamental and universal characteristics. He was also very familiar with Confucian learning, which had formed the basis of his education in the first half of his life. Internalised Confucianism had a long-lasting influence on his political thought. In particular, he formulated his vision for nation-building based upon a Confucian-inspired politics of gender. He shared this perspective with many other Korean male nationalists, as well as with the Japanese colonial masters. It is a trend that can be observed in his novels, where virtuous and self-sacrificial models of women are invoked from the Confucian tradition and Confucian impositions upon women are romanticised. His novel *Death* (*Chugŭm*, 1924) is an example of one of the earliest and most-sustained nation-building efforts of Han Yongun.

A love triangle

Death was written not long after Han Yongun was released from prison in 1922. He had been one of 33 national representatives who led the anti-Japanese March First Movement (1919). The March 1 protests were brutally suppressed and Han Yongun was imprisoned by the colonial authorities for three years. The Korean society he returned to from prison had changed completely. A new group of educated women called *sin yŏsŏng* (New Women) had emerged, proclaiming a new age which they characterised with the word *yŏnae* (free love). *Yŏnae* was a newly translated Western import that reached colonial Korea through Japan or China. It became popular among young people, and was put into practice as the hottest cultural trend. Stories on free love and marriage, love affairs, the overthrow of female chastity, the failure of love, divorce, re-marriage, and love-induced insanity and suicide filled the newspapers of the 1920s. This historical atmosphere became the background for the plot of Han's novel *Death*.

The novel deals with a love triangle involving *Yŏngok* and her two suitors, *Chongch'ŏl* and *Sŏngyŏl*. *Yŏngok* and *Chongch'ŏl* are in love. They are freed from traditional customs of early and arranged marriage, experiencing instead free choice in love and marriage. The passion of *Sŏngyŏl* – the rejected suitor – is supposed to represent many married men who also look for ardent romance outside their (loveless) marriages. In particular, *Sŏngyŏl*'s insistent talk of 'the sanctity of love', 'fluid chastity' and 'absolute freedom of love' correspond to the lexicon of the contemporary free love movement. In this way, Han brought into focus one of the most controversial issues of the time:

the fact that many highly-educated women were becoming mistresses or concubines. The writer's view of this social phenomenon was neither sympathetic nor supportive. Free love is only discussed under the rubric of decadence. Its various implications from the struggle for women's emancipation, individual self-realisation and the consumption of modernity, to confrontation with traditional customs as well as the diverse voices and experiences of social actors are neglected. The advocates of free love are condemned either as prostitutes or libertines. Of particular note is the fact that all blame and responsibility is shifted to women. Han was not alone in this view, most Korean male intellectuals of the period shared a similar outlook. They regarded female students as being sick with vanity. They lamented and condemned free love practices, such as concubinage and prostitution, as women's moral degeneration.

The reinvention of Confucian chastity

In reaction to the decadent tendencies of free love, Han Yongun reinvented Confucian moral injunctions of chastity, decency and fidelity and portrayed them as ideal conduct for women living in the 1920s. In his novel, he directly articulates that a woman could not be fully happy without receiving the love of a man but that men only give pure and undying love in exchange for women's 'pure chastity'. Thus, unchaste women never achieve true love and happiness. The heroine *Yŏngok* is depicted as a traditionally virtuous woman who observes female chastity and thinks it is a woman's duty and honour to serve a husband. Such Confucian femininity and the underlying gender hierarchy are explained as intrinsic parts of the nation-building process for colonial Korea. This is one reason that the role of motherhood for women is stressed. The woman's body is claimed primarily in relation to child-bearing. This negates the body itself, its sexual nature and its role in romance and pleasure. According to Han, women's bodies conceive, raise and sustain members of the (Korean) nation who will construct future Korean society. Women's role in educating children would properly determine the future of Korea. It follows then, that chaste love and marriage form the way to create the identity of the pure nation. Love void of chastity (*yŏnae*) becomes 'anti-national' behaviour and can ruin the sacred project of nation-building. By depicting the death of the heroine's (nationalist) father in the novel, Han indeed showed how chaste and unchaste women determine the success or failure of the national undertaking.

'Good wife, wise mother'

Han's gendered vision of nation-building very much resembles that of the colonial master, in particular that of the Japanese Meiji state at the end of 19th century. The Meiji government embarked on a programme of modernisation to construct

a strong nation-state. For that goal, Shinto and Confucian ideology were reinvented to enforce the Meiji's hierarchical social order. Its feminine ideal of 'good wife, wise mother' became a crucial element in political discourses on the family and women. Ironically, Meiji women had to be traditional, Confucian-inspired, submissive, self-sacrificing mothers and wives in order to modernise their nation. The non-traditional Japanese New Women who violated feminine norms were considered as dangerous, threatening, and corrupted by Western ideas of love and individualism. This early Meiji version of gender politics became the object of criticism when Japan entered the new period of Taisho Democracy (1905-1932). Yet, the hierarchical view of gender and women was still used for colonial domination. In a colonial relationship, the Japanese coloniser defined itself as a strong, masculine, rational grown-up man whereas the colonised Korea was regarded as a weak, innocent, emotional woman. The feminised Koreans were required to be submissive and self-sacrificial to the colonial ruler, as a woman does to a man. The gendered vision in Meiji nation-state building and in its colonial venture in Korea was not challenged or inverted by Korean male nationalists such as Han Yongun during the 1920s. Rather, it was translated and reworked for their own effort to construct Korean identity and community.

Nation-building in colonial Korea

Ironically, in attempting to create a modern sense of Korean identity and to oppose the imposed vision of Korea generated by the Japanese, Han Yongun reproduced the coloniser's vision of Confucian-inspired, gendered nation-building. The example of Han Yongun blurs the lines between coloniser and colonised, resistance and collaboration, tradition and modernity and sheds light on a more hybrid and heterogeneous Korean nation-building plan. Han's nationalist effort was not simply a copy of Japanese discourses. In his novel he also emphasises other, distinctive features of his imagined Korean nation-building process. One example is the awareness of the colonial experience seen in his vision of Korean nationalism. The Korean struggle to build a unified and independent community was described in terms of its conflict with the colonial power's attempt to seduce and enforce Koreans towards a different identity – that of colonial subjects. This set Korean nationalism apart from the Japanese experience. The love triangle in the novel was conceived of as a metaphor for this kind of political relationship, and thereby to express the political struggle of the Koreans.

The chaste love between *Yŏngok* and *Chongch'ŏl* is designed to show pure Korean identity and society in the future but it is constantly disturbed by another man, *Sŏngyŏl*, who symbolises the Japanese coloniser. This is alluded to through the *Sŏngyŏl*'s strong connections with Japan (Waseda University and the colonial governmental newspaper). *Sŏngyŏl*'s sexual desire to make the heroine his concubine reveals the political desire of the Japanese coloniser to transform the Koreans into colonial subjects. Han showed the female body as being subject to another man's temptation through sweet talk and money, and to his coercive power through sexual harassment, false rumour and, ultimately, through the killing of her husband. This depiction alludes to the political experiences of Korea whose autonomous attempt to build a strong nation-state is interfered with and frustrated by the colonial authorities. The end of novel, where the faithful heroine keeps her loyalty to the deceased husband and punishes the murderer rather than becoming subject to him sends a strong message. Han is saying that despite the loss of the country (colonisation), the process of nation-building will go on and eventually counteract colonialism.

Han Yongun's novel remained unpublished and therefore his vision of nation-building woven within it was not able to reach contemporary readers. Nonetheless, this unpublished manuscript is important as historical source material for re-evaluating his approach to nationalism. His nationalist vision revealed in the novel is divergent from the habitually assumed Buddhist nationalism characterised by anti-Japanese resistance. Han shared Confucian masculine imagery with the colonial authorities and resisted the advocates of free love as did the Japanese authorities. He repeated the colonial discourse in order to run counter to it. Hence, his nationalist effort cannot be considered a pure form of nationalism, but should be better understood as a complex process characterised by ambivalence and hybridity. Han cannot avoid being subjected to post-colonial critiques which have emphasised the violence of Korean nationalism. To achieve political freedom from Japanese colonialism, Korean nationalism turned out to have exercised the same controlling oppressive power over the colonised (in particular women) and have deprived them of their individual freedom. It should not be overlooked that such nationalist violence was very much part of his vision of Korean nation-building.

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Above left:
Han Yongun.

Above middle:
A newspaper illustration depicting a dating scene between a 'modern girl' and a 'modern boy'. (*Chosŏn ilbo* 1927).

Above right:
The 1920s 'new women' were critically seen by the male intellectuals as ill with vanity, beauty, and money. (*Chosŏn ilbo* 1929).

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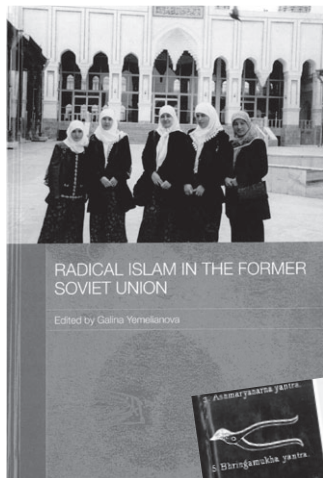
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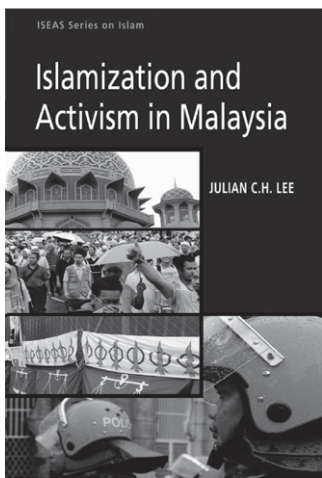
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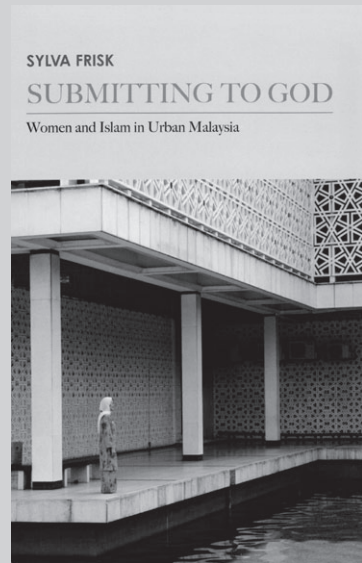
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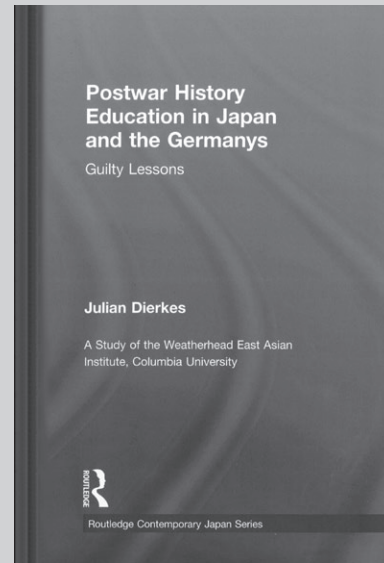
Submitting to God: Women and Islam in Urban Malaysia



By Sylva Frisk
NIAS Press, 2009
ISBN 978 87 7694 048 5

IN RECENT DECADES, Malaysia has been profoundly changed both by forces of globalisation, modernisation and industrialisation, and by a strong Islamisation process. Some would argue that the situation of Malay women has worsened but such a conclusion is challenged by this study of the everyday religious practice of pious women within Kuala Lumpur's affluent, Malay middle class. Here, women play an active part in the Islamisation process not only by heightened personal religiosity but also by organising and participating in public programmes of religious education. By organising new forms of collective ritual and assuming new public roles as religious teachers, these religiously educated women are transforming the traditionally male-dominated gendered space of the mosque and breaking men's monopoly over positions of religious authority. Exploring this situation, the book challenges preconceptions of the nature of Islamisation as well as current theories of female agency and power.

Postwar History Education in Japan and the Germanys



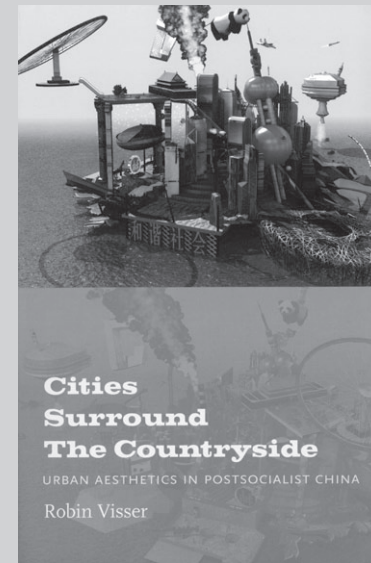
By Julian Dierkes
Routledge, 2010.
ISBN 978 0 415 55345 2

HOW DID East and West Germany and Japan reconstitute national identity after the Second World War? Did all three experience parallel reactions to national trauma and reconstruction?

History education shaped how these nations reconceived their national identities. Because the content of history education was controlled by different actors, history education materials framed national identity in very different ways. In Japan, where the curriculum was controlled by bureaucrats bent on maintaining their purported neutrality, materials focused on the empirical building blocks of history (who? where? what?) at the expense of discussions of historical responsibility. In East Germany, where party cadres controlled the curriculum, students were taught that the Second World War was a capitalist aberration. In (West) Germany, where teachers controlled the curriculum, students were taught the lessons of shame and then regeneration after historians turned away from grand national narratives.

This book shows that constructions of national identity are not easily malleable on the basis of moral and political concerns alone, but that they are subject to institutional constraints and opportunities. In an age when post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation has become a major focus for the parallel revision of portrayals of national history and the institutional reconstruction of policy-making regimes.

Cities Surround the Countryside: Urban Aesthetics in Postsocialist China



By Robin Visser
Duke University Press, 2010.
ISBN 978 0 8223 4728 6

DENOUNCED as parasitical under Chairman Mao and devalued by the norms of traditional Chinese ethics, the city now functions as a site of individual and collective identity in China. Cities envelop the countryside, not only geographically and demographically but also in terms of cultural impact. Robin Visser illuminates the cultural dynamics of three decades of radical urban development in China. Interpreting fiction, cinema, visual art, architecture, and urban design, she analyses how the aesthetics of the urban environment have shaped the emotions and behaviour of people and cultures, and how individual and collective images of and practices in the city have produced urban aesthetics. By relating the built environment to culture, Visser situates postsocialist Chinese urban aesthetics within local and global economic and intellectual trends.

In the 1980s writers, filmmakers, and artists began to probe the contradictions in China's urbanisation policies and rhetoric. Powerful neorealist fiction, cinema, documentaries, paintings, photographs, performances, and installations contrasted forms of glittering urban renewal with the government's inattention to liveable urban infrastructure. Narratives and images depicting the melancholy urban subject came to illustrate ethical quandaries raised by urban life. Visser relates her analysis of this art to major transformations in urban planning under global neoliberalism, to the development of cultural studies in the Chinese academy, and to ways that specific cities, particularly Beijing and Shanghai, figure in the cultural imagination. Despite the environmental and cultural destruction caused by China's neoliberal policies, Visser argues for the emergence of a new urban self-awareness, one that offers creative resolutions for the dilemmas of urbanism through new forms of intellectual engagement in society and nascent forms of civic governance.

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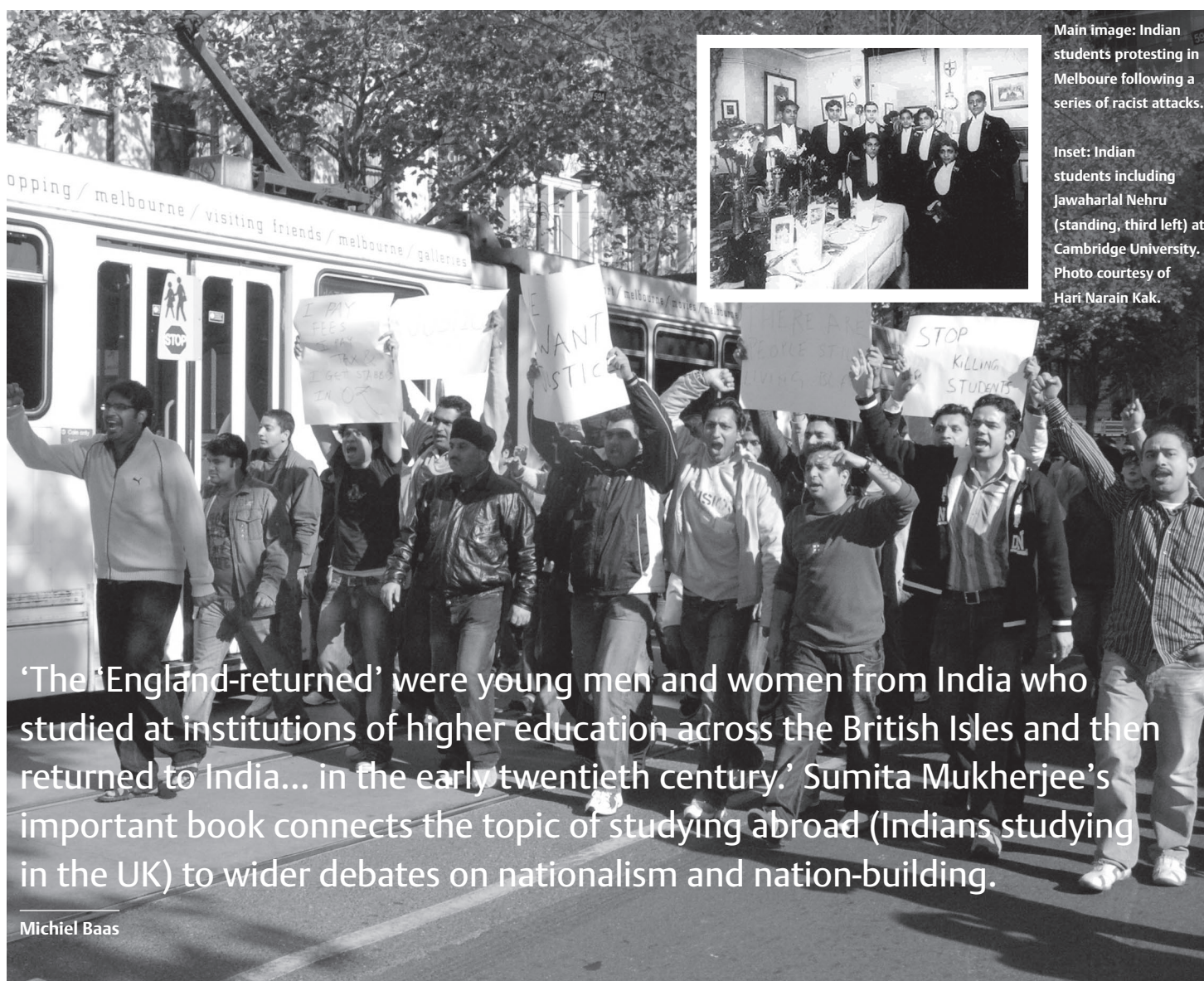
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Indian students back home and abroad



Main image: Indian students protesting in Melbourne following a series of racist attacks.

Inset: Indian students including Jawaharlal Nehru (standing, third left) at Cambridge University. Photo courtesy of Hari Narain Kak.

‘The ‘England-returned’ were young men and women from India who studied at institutions of higher education across the British Isles and then returned to India.. in the early twentieth century.’ Sumita Mukherjee’s important book connects the topic of studying abroad (Indians studying in the UK) to wider debates on nationalism and nation-building.

Michiel Baas

Mukherjee, Sumita. 2010.

Nationalism, Education and Migrant Identities: The England-returned.

London and New York: Routledge. Viii + 181 pages.
ISBN 978 0 415 55117 5

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU, India’s first prime minister, is the most famous person of all to have studied in the UK and then return to make a definite impact on India’s struggle for independence and the subsequent building of a new nation. However, the kind of elite life Nehru lived while studying at Cambridge University was certainly not replicated by most Indians who went to the UK at that time. There are many stories of upper-middle class upbringings, the odd alienation that living abroad brings with it, as well as other factors closely associated with studying abroad, such as the (disappointing) quality of education, making ends meet and trying to meet and get to know the locals. Yet what stands out in most of these stories, and in Mukherjee’s retelling of them, is how familiar they sound today.

Mukherjee’s book could not have been published at a more pertinent time. Studying abroad, and in particular Indian students studying abroad, has recently become headline news following a series of racist attacks in Australia. Mukherjee’s book comes at a time when studying abroad (by Asians, and in particular by Chinese and Indian students) has been discovered as a new and even newsworthy topic. This has a lot to do with the fact that studying abroad has increasingly become connected to the idea of migration. As I have shown myself in recent publications on the topic of Indian students in Australia: many are (also) migrants. As skilled migration programmes and the business of making money out of offering education to foreign students become ever more entangled, both at the level of the state and the individual, a complex new debate has arisen on the place of students and (temporary or permanent) skilled migrants in society.

Mukherjee’s book, interestingly, deals with the opposite. It takes the lives of students who studied in the UK but then returned to India as a central element of analysis. Historically, this was pretty much how things usually went. In general, students who came to a particular country for a number of years to study – either privately funded or on some kind of scholarship – often returned home with a particular purpose, such as helping the development of a freshly independent nation.

The ‘thing’ to do

From the 1870s onwards, small numbers of Indian students found their way to Oxford and Cambridge. This was partly the result of the British opening up their examinations for the Indian Civil Service. Besides preparing for these

examinations, in some prosperous Indian families, studying abroad had become the ‘thing’ to do. Initially, studying abroad was something only the upper-middle and upper class could afford. You needed a certain amount of influence and connections but, most of all, a considerable sum of money to be able to send your offspring overseas.

After World War Two, the idea of studying abroad, and who would be able to do so, changed considerably. Many countries in South and Southeast Asia became independent and confronted with the ‘threat’ of communism – certainly after the communists took over mainland China in 1949 – and the Cold War brought shivers to the West. Western countries approached this problem in various ways. One way of dealing with it was by concluding security pacts and forming military alliances with countries, for instance, in East Asia. Significantly, however, these countries had reached the conclusion that in order to contain the spread of communism they had to face up to the reasons why this had occurred in the first place. Western countries realised that the political stability of many former colonies was highly dependent on social and economic development. Besides the obvious humanitarian and economic reasons, it was also the political context that triggered western countries to provide aid in order to make sure economic and industrial development could take place in the developing countries. Consultants and advisors were sent, recommendations given and finances provided for the establishment of institutions for the training of scientists, engineers and administrators. In addition, some developed countries agreed to educate and train a certain number of students in their own institutions and at their own expense. Educational and scholarship opportunities were also opened up to unsponsored students from developing countries. It was, of course, made clear that these students had to return home after completing their studies so that they could assist in their countries development.

What was started in the fifties continued in the sixties. Overseas students were seen as important ‘interpreters and translators’ for the United States; they would one day go home and explain to their fellow countrymen what the US or the ‘West’ stood for and, hopefully, this would be a cheerful tale of progress and freedom.

Change in the air

From the mid 1960s onwards, the narrative on studying abroad shifts to the issue of non-return by overseas students and, connected to this, the issue of brain drain. Publications at this time clearly reflected this worry. At first, the overseas student was a guy who would help out his country and, in addition, promote the message of capitalism and freedom; now, he was slowly starting to be perceived as a person who failed in both fields: the risk that he might not return to his home country meant he

wouldn’t be able to help his country develop and progress and, at the same time, he would not be able to bring home positive tales of having befriended Americans and how much he had enjoyed living a capitalistic lifestyle among them. In fact, by the late 1960s, that second reason had already largely disappeared from the pages. Speculating about the reasons for this make little sense without elaborating on, for instance, how the Cold War was developing, where the Vietnam war was heading, how the Flower Power movement had gained momentum and how public opinion generally was changing on war and peace related matters. Yet change was in the air and the decades to come certainly showed a whole new approach to offering education to overseas students.

Current debates on foreign students can clearly be connected to the commodification of higher education which started in the 1980s. At the time, budget cuts in various countries led to a feverish period of education reform. Universities were encouraged to recruit foreign students who would pay full tuition fees and thus present themselves in the form of net income. Mukherjee’s study does not deal with this – as her study deals with the period of 1904-1947 – yet it can be placed in the wider historical context of studying abroad, which does not necessarily need to end where she stops. The book typically shows the kind of thinking that came with studying abroad, underlining all the more how much has changed since then. The sources that Mukherjee uses for her research have played a central role in the building of modern India. However, they were also a difficult category of people, often faced with feelings of alienation when they returned to India, sometimes even finding themselves ostracised from mainstream society, to which they no longer seemed or were considered to belong. They returned to India frequently inspired by political discussions on independence, Marxism and communism, yet also coming from ‘that world’ – where the coloniser was from – and having left behind dreams/memories/idealizations of an Anglo-Saxon world that had never materialised in reality when they were there. Yet back in India, they were clearly associated with that world. What were they now? At the beginning of her book Mukherjee asks: ‘why Britain, who was making this voyage? How did their lives change? Did their opinions, outlooks or ideologies change?’ Obviously they did. Yet paradoxically whereas the whole idea of studying in the UK had been designed to create a particular ‘interpreting’, ‘translating’ middle class, which would communicate and execute the colonisers’ desires, instead they became all the more aware of India’s potential, because of exposure to new ideas, as well as because of disappointment in who the coloniser-at-home really was.

The desirable ‘other’

The way studying abroad is sold in India now – whether it concerns studying in Australia, Canada or the US – is all about using images and slogans which communicate the desirable ‘other’; a place where one needs to be. In Australia, in recent years, this was also about creating a migration-desire; in countries such as the US and the UK this was less so. Yet whereas in colonial days the Isles reached out to its jewel in the crown in terms of offering education to what was understood as the future middle class – one that would guarantee the continuation of the colonial empire – current day international education is much more about money, making sure that the countries in question can support their own educational structures. A cynic would wonder: what’s new? The money that the West requires still needs to be generated in the East. Yet, I would argue, with one notable difference: increasingly students from India know exactly what kind of transnational journey they are about to embark on.

Australia has recently introduced a policy change making it almost impossible for foreign students to obtain permanent residency rights after graduation. This possibility had previously created a boom in overseas students’ enrollments from the year 2000 onwards. Other countries, such as Canada, who are keen to step into Australia’s shoes, as leading recruiter of international students, have already announced policy changes making it easier to stay onwards after graduation. At the same time, the UK has issued new regulations again making it harder. The place where education and migration meet remains a puzzling business and situation. Yet the most important thing we can learn from Mukherjee’s study in perspective to current developments in the world of education and migration is that the state’s intentions in terms studying abroad or the recruitment of overseas students does not always result in the desired outcome. What the international media is reporting on the Australian case in terms of newness – in the sense of there never having been a situation before where overseas students do not turn out to be the solution for a country’s national problems (skills gap) – can thus be understood as a regularly repeating phenomenon. If only we would remember our history lessons.

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Southeast Asia and the great powers

The latest offering from the prolific and much-respected historian, Nicholas Tarling, is an epilogue to his trilogy of books *Imperialism in Southeast Asia* (2001), *Nationalism in Southeast Asia* (2004) and *Regionalism in Southeast Asia* (2006). Tarling felt he had devoted too much space to the role of outside powers in Southeast Asia in the first two books and insufficient attention in the final book. This epilogue attempts to re-dress this balance and 'examine what had interested great powers in the region in the past and what had involved them there'. (p.2)

Ang Cheng Guan



Above: French political cartoon from the late 1890s. A pie represents China and is being divided between the UK, Germany, Russia, France and Japan.

Tarling, Nicholas. 2010.

Southeast Asia and the Great Powers.
London and New York: Routledge. 272 pages.
ISBN: 978 0 415 55238 9

TARLING ADDRESSES the interests and involvement of outside powers in Southeast Asia by posing a series of questions: How substantial were those interests? How continuous were they? How were they defined? How were they pursued? To what extent were they grounded in Southeast Asia or imported? (p. 8) The author adopts what he calls a 'novel' approach in the writing of this book, combining both the theoretical ('partly') and the historical ('largely'). By theoretical, Tarling refers to the need to address the nature and dynamics of the inter-state system, which he does so only rather briefly in his introductory chapter. There is really no serious attempt to engage in the debates and issues of international relations theory. The strength of the book, however, lies in the historical. Whereas most international relations accounts provide only a general historical background, *Southeast Asia and the Great Powers* weaves stories that cover two centuries. A long-term account, as Tarling explains, 'indicating change and providing context and comparison, may enhance explanation of the recent and the contemporary. It may point to influences and traditions that affect the views of the leaders and those they lead, and help to validate the suggestions the book offers' (p.8). Among these suggestions is the notion that since the late 18th century, the interest of the great powers in Southeast Asia has been largely limited. Interest could, however, be boosted or restrained depending on the changing priorities and relationships of the powers in the region. In turn, interest could become intervention if local opportunities present themselves - such as division or among states in the region which might seek help, support and security vis-a-vis neighbours, hegemon or other outside powers. (p.8) Tarling describes this best with regards to the evolution of British interests in Southeast Asia. Initially, Britain's priority was to sustain the balance of power in Europe. She was therefore willing to exercise restraint and tolerate Spanish, Dutch and French interests in Southeast Asia, in which she had 'little intrinsic interest'. However, as Britain's commercial interest (intra-Asian trade/the trade route to China) in Southeast Asia grew, so did the tensions in Anglo-Dutch relations and the potential influence on the region of her French rival. Consequently, the British took measures to actively boost, protect and advance its own interests in the region. That the British were able to extend its influence in certain Malay states was largely a result of the willingness of local elites/authorities to make use of British power to back their interests. Another example is the involvement of the external powers during the Cold War particularly in IndoChina. Tarling also posits that post-independence, Southeast Asian leaders are aware that to prevent external intervention, they must deal with and manage their own intra-regional differences amongst themselves.

For this book, Tarling adopted a country-by-country approach beginning with India, followed by Britain, France, Japan, Russia, the US, China and ending with Australia and New Zealand (together in one chapter). Aside from clarity, there is a logic to arranging the countries in this order as Tarling hopes to show how these major powers reacted to each other and to Southeast Asia. In fact, each chapter stands rather independently and can be read on its own. The book is more a series of survey essays cemented by a common theme. Together they form a collage of Southeast Asia and the great powers over two centuries. The downside to this approach is that those interested in the policies of the regional countries may find the narrative rather segmented and occasionally repetitive. However, the focus of this book is principally on the Big Powers. I concur with the author who himself concedes that it is perhaps controversial to include a chapter on Australia and New Zealand. The book ends somewhat incongruously with an account of New Zealand and the region. Tarling justifies this, however, by stating that these two countries, small as they maybe, are closer to Southeast Asia than most of the other powers discussed in the book.

Limited intrinsic interests

The inclusion of India as a Big Power also raises questions. In the chapter on the sub-continent, the main point highlighted by Tarling is the 'striking disparity between its cultural influence and its political role' (p. 41). In the chapter on Britain, Tarling shows that Southeast Asia was of little intrinsic interest for the British. It was important in so far as it was connected to the inter-state rivalry between the British, Spanish, Dutch and the French. There was an element of commercial interest but ultimately, Tarling concludes, it was 'strategic interests that were most responsible for Britain's interests in Southeast Asia' (p. 82). Similarly, in the shortest chapter in the book, Tarling says of the French venture in Indo-China, while it might have led to a major military struggle, 'its intrinsic interest in Vietnam was never strong'. (p. 92) As for Japan, Tarling thought that Tokyo might not have conquered Southeast Asia if not for the impact of the war elsewhere and the Japanese really had no coherent policy for the region. Russia too had only 'limited and intermittent interest in the region' and its entry into the region was due to the Cold War. Throughout the Tsarist period, for example, Russia had no direct interest in Southeast Asia at all. Like Russia, the US only became interested in Southeast Asia during the Cold War and its involvement in the Vietnam War. In the late 18th and 19th centuries, American interests in the region 'had always been limited and largely indirect' (p. 136).

The chapter on China stands out and this attests to my earlier observation that the chapters can all be read individually and separately. Tarling starts the chapter on China with a very contemporary observation that the 'rise' of China at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries has led to much speculation about its future role in the world and

in Southeast Asia. It is the only chapter that starts this way and is in sharp contrast to the chapter on India, the other old civilisation, which begins with a narrative on the 18th century, mentions Southeast Asia only in passing and goes on to describe India-Indonesia relations in the 1950s. Tarling's China, however, is 'geographically proximate, historically, it (China) has always been in some sense a Southeast Asian power...' (p. 164). He poses the question, is history a useful guide for the future? Tarling's own response to this is that history is unlikely to provide clear guidance. In his words, 'Looking to the past with such a purpose in mind had, after all, always to be done with caution: it is likely at most to tell you what is unlikely, to remind you of what to consider rather than what to conclude'. I find that, having read a well summarised account of the period from 1949 to the end of the 1970s, Tarling's China narrative lurches rather quickly towards the mid-1990s, leaving perhaps too much about the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s unsaid.

Tarling is able to summarise and distill the key elements and issues of the 18th and 19th century very well and eloquently. However, his treatment of the later part of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is somewhat patchy and less satisfactory. I get the sense that he is unsure of when the appropriate ending point/year for each country he has surveyed should be. To be fair, it is not easy to cover more than two centuries of history in a short chapter and in a book that covers nine countries/powers, (not to mention the ten Southeast Asian states).

Tarling decided against a concluding chapter choosing instead to end with a survey of Australia and New Zealand. In the last paragraph of his book, however, he reiterates that, for the most part, the interest of the great powers towards Southeast Asia 'was limited' and that 'their interests elsewhere frequently took priority', and that 'their rivalry in the region or in the larger world often intensified their involvement in the region, though occasionally lessening it'. The history lesson to be learnt from this book is that 'if Southeast Asian states avoided divisions within and among themselves that gave great powers opportunity or invitation, they increased their chance of constraining intervention' (p. 221).

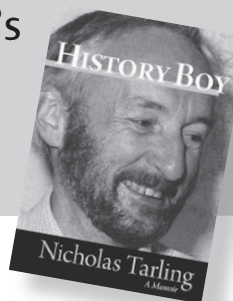
My conclusion is that this book, rather than being an epilogue, is more of a companion volume to *Regionalism in Southeast Asia* (2006). It is definitely an erudite and stimulating survey that we have come to expect from Nicholas Tarling. I cannot think of a similar book by a historian. Most books on this subject are written by political scientists and international relations specialists. It is a certainly a valuable contribution to the historiography of the international history of Southeast Asia.

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In our third age

In our third age, whether we like it or not, the past catches up with us and demands that we face it. It is a time in which memories that lay dormant for 50, 60 years unexpectedly leap to life; that skeletons spring from their closet and we have to deal with indecisions that cast their shadow over our lives. Gracefully, if we have faced up to our frustrations, grudges have dissipated and the past may, accordingly, become a storytelling friend; a pleasant companion – as is apparent from Nicholas Tarling's *History Boy: a memoir*.

Niels Mulder



Tarling, Nicholas. 2009.

History Boy; a memoir.

Auckland: Nicholas Tarling, through Dunmore Publishing Ltd., Wellington. 277 pages. ISBN 978 1 877399 45 9

WHILE STILL IN THE FIELD, I crashed into the wall that separates the second, or the working stage of our lives, from the third, the age of retirement, reflection, and recollection. It came abruptly and decidedly; all of a sudden, I was through; I knew I did not want to do any new research; the things that had preoccupied me during 35 years of professional life lay behind me. I would retire, somewhere around the Mediterranean; Southeast Asia was over and done with.

Even Amsterdam, the town that had always been like a warm womb in which I would relax after a stint of high visibility 'in the field', didn't agree with me any longer. In between exploring a few cities at a good distance from the harsh northerly

winter, I still wrapped up my remaining findings in an ultimate academic title, *Southeast Asian Images*. Upon its conclusion, I was free to indulge in writing about how I had gained my insights and evolved from young dog in the mid-1960s to professional stranger at the end of the 1970s. It opened the gate through the wall. The gate, though, turned out to be like Alice's mirror as it landed me in a place where prospects had gone topsy-turvy and where time stood, as it were, in reverse.

The point is not whether we should deal with the past or not; with our lives willy-nilly revisiting us, we have little to choose from. The point rather is how we deal with the inevitable *temps perdu*. Some of us write about it to exorcise and be through with it; others visualise the evolution of their lives and personality in a *Bildungsroman* that may offer something of interest to people who have never known them; certain scholars, most memorably Clifford Geertz with *After the Fact* and 'An Inconstant Profession', write intellectual biographies that visualise the origin and evolution of their celebration in the context of contemporary theorising and history; quite a few produce a memoir that relates the way they went to their offspring. Tarling's is within this latter category, but in the absence of marriage and children, his privately published memoir is presumably addressing an audience of former students, friends, relatives and colleagues.

The recounting

As a fellow Southeast Asianist preoccupied, first, with my field biography and, currently, with the adventure of growing old and older still, I am interested in the relations of others, and so I solicited to do a review. As a result, and for fairness' sake, I had to read through a 277-page soliloquy devoid of inner tension, plot or action in which hundreds of names are dropped and not a single character comes to life. Even the author remains a shadowy figure. Whereas it is clear that he holds his Mum dear – the biography draws heavily on their letters – no personality appears. We get to know the names of his siblings but nothing about the author's relationship with them. At the end, we know that Tarling has no affinity with dogs, the army and sports; that he is a reticent person, sticking to himself and books, a perennial bachelor, a keen student and a successful academic; noisy dorms, colleges, flats, hotels, and neighbours (three to four score mentions) get on his nerves, at the same time that he finds relief in the concert hall and in listening to his records – he hints at two to three hundred performances and compositions. He also likes to watch theatre and, especially in

his later career, to act on the stage, but also there we have to do with listings that, in the absence of context or setting, fail to enliven the narrative. In a way the author anticipated that his would not qualify as a Bildungsroman or even as an intellectual biography when he warned the reader that he has no real aptitude for 'original' or 'imaginative' writing (p.47).

For the outsider, the interest of the book is in fleeting remarks about one or the other of some one to two hundred place names that occur in the text, such as Singapore as a China town in the late fifties and Hong Kong without high rises, or about certain historical conditions, such as World War Two, postwar scarcity, the novelty of having a radio, sea travel to Australia, and occasional opinions on the academic curriculum, but like with the names of persons referred to, it all remains perfunctory.

Intellectual biography

We need scholarly memoirs that show us the origin and development of ideas, and so I sympathise with the urge of describing our course in retrospect. The challenge, though, is in producing an enjoyable text. As eggheads, we usually have no experience with creative writing; the texts we produced were written in an entirely different mode, and with close to 20 books to his name, Tarling will be remembered as a prolific historian of Southeast Asia. To give the intellectual background of that enterprise would have provided us with a significant contribution to historiography-in-action. With *History Boy*, however, we have no more than a boring, linear progression from station to station, from student to renowned scholar, then from dean to vice-chancellor – in brief, an extremely personal account that holds little of interest for his fellow Southeast Asianists.

Niels Mulder

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Mulder, Niels. 2008. *Doing Thailand; The Anthropologist as a Young Dog in Bangkok in the 1960s*. White Lotus Press.
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Inventing ourselves as Filipinos

Despite myth and ideology, the US is a multicultural society that, because of its segregationist tendencies, nurtures 'primordial' identity feelings. As one of the biggest Spanish-speaking countries, this is obvious enough among the Chicanos and variant Latinos, but other second and third generation descendants of original immigrants are also stimulated to keep their ethnic identity alive. Over time, such identity is increasingly rooted in group- and generation specific rituals and other invented traditions. Identities evolve over the years and, at the personal level, even over one's life time.

Niels Mulder

Gonzalves, Theodore S. 2010.

The Day the Dancers Stayed; Performing in the Filipino/American Diaspora.

Philadelphia: Temple University Press. xii + 215 pages. ISBN 978 1 59213 729 9 pbk.

GONZALVES PARAPHRASED his book's title from 'The Day the Dancers Came' by the Filipino American writer Bienvenido Santos. In that story, an old-time 'indentured' labourer eagerly anticipates reviving his youth, his nation, his origin, through watching a Philippine cultural show that has come to town – and that does not evoke any recognition. He has outlived his roots as it were, and so he realises that he is an outcast, without identity, and no better than refuse.

The audience of the performances the author describes is as different from our pariah as the other face of the moon. It consists of the children (and grandchildren) of post-war, mainly middle-class immigrants who currently study at colleges and universities and who organise, for their own benefit, the yearly Philippine Cultural Nights that are the proper subject of the monograph.

A national repertoire

In order to trace the evolution of the shows' contents, the author takes us back to the 1930s, when contemporary cultural expressions were emulating the example of American popular culture. At that time, educators Jorge Bocobo and Francisca Reyes Aquino felt that the country, on the eve of commonwealth status and impending independence, needed to develop a cultural repertoire rooted in the pre-Spanish past. In order to do so, they sought inspiration in the folklore (costumes, music, dances) of the groups that had withstood the Iberian intrusion and retained much of their own. Subsequently, they invented and developed a national repertoire that, in the 1950s, culminated in the internationally acclaimed pageant of the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company. According to a foreign critic, this troupe presents 'an ethnic dance culture which has gone beyond simple preservation and into creative growth', while becoming the government's Official Cultural Mission to the Americas and Europe (p.72).

Whereas it may be expected that, in the course of its adaptation to theatre and stage, and in its development as a world-class dance company, the original sources of inspiration 'up there in the hills' get distorted or even become unrecognisable, the rise of Bayanihan (and similar groups) coincided with a time of a deep cultural crisis in which the nation seemed to be deprived of identity and purpose. In this way, Bayanihan filled a void and became a primary icon of 'Philippine culture.'

This iconisation of folklore-derived 'culture' that exists as it were without identifiable culture bearers moulded the yearly Philippine Cultural Nights at a variety of campuses. Then, the second and third generation student-children of Filipino immigrants celebrate an idealised origin in dance and display à la Bayanihan, interspersed with a standard repertoire of

historical skits. Whereas the participants commit much effort and pride to the perfection of these shows, they have, from the 1970s and into the present, acquired such a rigidity as to become standardised 'rites of passage' that, of course, with each following generation of students will be understood in different ways. Be this as it may, as a staple ritual the PCNs have become an easy target for satire (ch. 5) that has, however, not made a dent in the programming.

The crux is the performance

The author is a musician, composer and theatre performer who, as an academic, focuses on Filipino American and performance studies, and so it is not strange that 'performance' takes the centre stage. This results in straightforward descriptions of shows, countless names, and a collage of dates and historical tidbits that fail to evoke the forest that has gone lost for the trees. What has become clear, however, is that the PCNs are there to stay as a ritual marker of belonging to the Filipino community in America, comparable to celebrations of those of Irish, Italian, Mexican, or Chinese descent. In this context, the author has used the idea that participation in a PCN serves as a rite of passage, presumably on the way to becoming a fully fledged Filipino American [?], with the rite itself evoking nostalgia, or the desire to obliterate history and to turn it into a private or collective [presumably identity-confirming] mythology (pp.142-3).

Whereas this interpretation sounds plausible, I dearly miss the subjective experience of the audience and, largely, of the performers, too. By stating that the PCNs are an expression of diasporic identification, we still remain in the dark about what the performances trigger off at the individual level. What are the images and illusions of the Philippines evoked? Do these play any role in one's identity feelings or in the way one shapes one's life? How are these things being talked about? etc. But perhaps, in this day and age, simulacra à la Baudrillard substitute, or 'surrogate' as Gonzalves calls it, the real thing without question and render research into the personal moment superfluous.

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The Indonesian Reader

The Indonesian Reader provides an introduction to the world's largest archipelago. The fourth most populous country in the world, encompassing nearly 18,000 islands, Indonesia has a larger Muslim population than any other nation. This title, aimed at the traveller, student, and expert alike, includes journalists' articles, explorers' chronicles, photographs, poetry, stories, cartoons, drawings, letters, speeches, and more, conveying a sense of the history, culture and diversity of this extraordinary land.

Laura Noszlopy

Hellwig, Tineke and Eric Tagliacozzo. Eds. 2009.
The Indonesia Reader. History, Culture, Politics.
Durham and London: Duke University Press. 536 pages.
ISBN 978 0 8223 4424 7

WHEN I FIRST picked up this book I was sceptical about how its editors would manage the enormous task at hand. The attempt, however 'imperfect and incomplete,' to 'show some of the arc of Indonesia's histories and societies over the centuries, from geographic, cultural, political, economic, and religious points of view' (p.ii) is audacious, to say the least. But I believe the editors, an historian and a literature scholar, have done a fine job of it.

The book is divided into ten distinct parts, arranged thematically into a loose chronology. Each part contains up to a dozen pieces drawn from primary and secondary sources; political, commercial and literary materials; written by men and women; indigenous and foreign authors. Much of the material has been translated into English (and I wonder if the series editors left in something of a Dutch 'flavour' to the English style).

A cornucopia of sources

It really is an extraordinary cornucopia of sources that illustrate some of the pivotal and unique moments in Indonesia's life. Opening with excerpts from the 5th century Kutei Inscriptions, the region's earliest known examples of writing which were found on stone pillars in eastern Borneo, the Reader then takes off with its own trajectory across time and the islands. In between, the materials track the growth of Islam, the colonial experience (for both the colonisers and colonised), independence, and modernity. Aptly, the book ends with two illuminating notes - and very typical of the contemporary scene - from the Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and Jakarta-based journalist Desi Anwar, respectively. SBY discusses Indonesia's reaction to the 2005 controversy surrounding the publication of a cartoon of the Prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper; he appeals for tolerance and understanding in the world's most populous Muslim nation. In some contrast, Desi Anwar discusses the potentially far-reaching privations that may be imposed following the ratification of the so-called 'anti-pornography bill' by the Indonesian parliament. Snapshots like these demonstrate the real tensions at the heart of contemporary Indonesia.

Below: Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, also known as SBY.

Below right: Borobudur. Photograph by Heng Phang.

While there is an implicit focus on power shifts, politics and authority, it seems that the pieces have been carefully chosen for their individual perspectives on the greater events and trends. There is a general balance between civilian and military writers, for example, and insiders and outside observers to the event or moment in question.

An educational literary journey

My only real qualm about this book relates to the Reader's proposed readership. The authors state that 'the Reader is a primer for anyone who wants to know why Indonesia looks the way it does today' (p.ii). For me and for previous reviewers, the carefully selected content held together, made sense and even elicited awe at times. But I tried to put myself in the shoes of a newcomer to Indonesian or even Asian Studies, an undergraduate student perhaps - the kind of nonspecialised reader I suppose the editors envisaged - and I wondered how they would make sense of it, in all its breadth and detail. Would they indeed be able to glean an understanding of this fascinating nation in at least some of its historical, social and cultural complexity? After all, it was an educational literary journey, even for someone reasonably well-versed in Indonesian matters.

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Epistemic anxieties and colonial common sense

Along the Archival Grain attempts to illuminate both the processes of colonial administration in the Dutch East Indies through their archival records and the processes of historical research in untangling these narratives. Stoler goes through the personal letters, as well as the official reports of particular civil servants, painting a broader picture of their world-view and life in the Indies. She traces the evolving attempts to classify and control the different groups in the Dutch colonies, which was particularly marked by ambivalence towards Indies-born Dutch, and concern about those raised in the Indies.

Katrina Gulliver

Stoler, Laura Ann. 2009.
Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense.
Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
314 pages. 978 0 691 14636 2

THE PLASTIC TERM *Inlandsche kinderen* was applied variously to those of mixed ancestry, those of Dutch parentage born in the Indies and those whites (wherever they were born) living in poverty in the Indies. Beliefs about the type of people these *Inlandsche kinderen* were, their predilections and limitations (a continual tension, given that no firm definition to the term was ever made, let alone a category to allow such essentialism) shaped official efforts to regulate society.

The European Pauperism Commission of 1901 sought to establish precisely who these liminal figures were, and codify clearly who was European-born, Indies-born Europeans, and the mixed race who were 'European only in name' (p.158). This involved intrusive questioning of those who fell below a specific household income. They were asked about things like alcohol

and opium use, gambling, and prostitution. More broadly, their lifestyle was assessed to see if it conformed to European standards. Their children's Dutch fluency was included in this assessment.

Understandably evasive

The attempt to carry out this survey revealed that there were far more 'Europeans' living at this income level than had been previously assumed. Given the nature of some of the questions ('Was your mother a prostitute?' 'How many illegitimate children do you have?') it is not hard to imagine some evasiveness on the part of the subjects, as well as reluctance on the part of the questioner. The assumption of moral decline in tandem with fiscal limitation was particularly insulting, and racially coded. As Stoler points out, a major shortcoming with the scheme was that the definition of poverty assumed very different standards of living for Europeans and Asians:

'Most embarrassing to all, and especially to the ruling elite, were the numbers of subaltern civil servants in government offices whose own incomes were lower than the level at which pauperism was calculated to start. The commissioners lamented this

'misunderstanding' and misconstrual of their intention by those questioned, among whom were lowly clerks in those very offices charged to carry out the investigation'. (p.162)

This clearly indicates that it was less about poverty in absolute terms, and more about whites whose lifestyles were seen as unsuitable, and particularly unbecoming for Europeans in a colonial environment. The simplistic assumption of financial need on the part of those who lived in a local style also demonstrates the reluctance of the official view to understand those who may have chosen such an affinity. The pretence of despising such people could not completely hide the concern and even fear that the existence of those who had 'gone native' elicited among administrators.

Sending sons to Europe

The issue of the *Radikaal* (the qualification required for a career in the colonial service, which was only offered by the academy in Delft) brought to a head the tensions between the Indies-resident Dutch and the colonial administration. The costs (both financial and personal) of sending sons to Europe for a decade or more of schooling caused strains for families in the Indies, which were met with condescension from the authorities in the Netherlands. Most poignant of all are the disjunctions between what was seen, and known, by administrators in the Indies, and what refused to be seen or accepted by their bosses.

Attempts were also made with new schools in the colonies to improve (particularly mixed-race) children, to raise them as an ideal artisanal class in the Indies. These schools included agricultural colonies, designed both to improve, and limit the aspirations of, those enrolled. These agricultural colonies, based on French models, were of limited success. However, they demonstrate a growing anxiety about the role of the Eurasian community and how these people should be classified in colonial society.

Through these studies of individual instances, which demonstrate different facets to the administrative challenge of the Indies, Stoler also demonstrates the challenge of the historian to read through the 'partial understandings, epistemic confusion' (p.185) of the records left by various civil servants. This is a densely written and researched account, which illuminates Stoler's long research in Dutch archives. It is certainly a useful addition to the historiography of Dutch rule in the Indies, but more broadly for those studying colonial administration anywhere.

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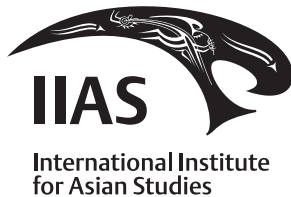
IIAS News

IIAS Fellow Symposium

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE for Asian Studies held its latest Fellow Symposium on Wednesday 9 June 2010. Three IIAS researchers presented their work in progress to their professional colleagues in the Netherlands. Each presentation was followed by the comments of a discussant. The symposium was open to all: MA and PhD students, researchers and lecturers.

Manuela Ciotti talked on Political agency and gender in India: Women, Dalits (ex-untouchables) and subalterns between the nation and its 'others'. Juliana Abdul Wahab presented on Reality TV and Globalization and Alexander Stolyarov talked about his work on The database of Early Medieval North Indian Copperplate (CP) Grants.

As part of the same event IIAS together with Amsterdam University Press launched: *South Asian Partition Fiction in English: From Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh* by Rituparna Roy and *Retro-Modern India: Forging The Low-Caste Self* by Manuela Ciotti.



In memoriam

Prof. Frans Hüsken (1945-2010)

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden death of Professor Frans Hüsken on 28 April 2010. Frans Hüsken held the chair of Cultural and Social Anthropology at Radboud University of Nijmegen since October 1990. He was born in 1945 in Nijmegen and studied Non-Western Sociology at the Radboud University where he developed his interest in Indonesia.

He was a passionate scholar with research interests in historical and political anthropology and the history of anthropology. His fieldwork focused on socio-economic, political and cultural transformations, particularly in rural Indonesia.

Prof. Hüsken's publications include his major monograph on the socio-economic history of a Javanese village: *Een dorp op Java. Sociale differentiatie in een boerengemeenschap, 1850-1980* (1988, Indonesian translation appeared in 1998); *Cognition and Social Organization in South East Asia* (co-editor Jeremy Kemp, 1989); *Reading Asia. New Research to Asian Studies* (co-editor Dick van der Meij, 2001); *Violence and Vengeance. Discontent and Conflict in New Order Indonesia* (co-editor Huub de Jonge, 2002); *Rope Walking and Safety Nets. Local Ways of Managing Insecurity in Indonesia* (co-editor Juliette Koning, 2005).

Before his appointment at Nijmegen, he was a senior lecturer at the University of Amsterdam, fellow at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies and Professor at the University of Berne (Switzerland). Frans Hüsken was actively involved in boards and committees of several scholarly organisations including the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden and WOTRO Science for Development. From 1992 until 2001 he was President of IIAS.

Our thoughts are with his wife Cora Govers and his son Joris.

Gerard Persoon becomes IIAS Professor



Gerard A. Persoon

GERARD A. PERSOON has recently taken up a position as IIAS Professor at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology at Leiden University. He will be in charge of research and education in the field of Environment and Development. His research will focus in particular in relation to the position of indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia.

His PhD research dealt with processes of change among a number of tribal groups in Indonesia. Over the past 23 he has worked at the Department of Environment and Development of Institute of Environmental Sciences at the same university. For the last 12 years he was the head of this department which implemented an interdisciplinary research and education programme with a focus on rural environmental problems in developing countries. A lot of research of the programme took place at the two research stations in Northeast Luzon (the Philippines) and North Cameroon. In both cases hundreds of master students of various disciplines were able to conduct their research in an interdisciplinary and intercultural setting. During the same period he has been involved in numerous development and nature conservation projects in Southeast Asia. He is also a member of several committees and boards of organizations active in this field.

Prof. Persoon's first task as IIAS Chair was to convene the workshop 'Indigenous Peoples in Southeast Asia and Pacific Islands. New laws and discourses. New Realities?' on 18-19 May 2010. This was a joint workshop with IIAS, the Center for Asia-Pacific Areas Studies (CAPAS) and Academia Sinica, Taipei.

In the course of the two days, the workshop discussed the present position of indigenous peoples in Southeast Asian countries and the Pacific Islands from a legal and social perspective. It also reviewed the impact of recent national and international laws and conventions on the every-day realities and examined the region's indigenous peoples' movement from a sociological perspective.

At the moment he is supervising PhD students from the Netherlands, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Cameroon.

His publications deal with natural resource management with a focus on rainforests in Southeast Asia, the position of indigenous peoples and a number of methodological issues. He has also published extensively on the island and people of Siberut (West Sumatra) in Indonesia which is one of his long term research interests.

ICCR and Leiden University sign MoU for Chair for the study of Contemporary India

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Leiden University, The Netherlands signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on June 3rd, 2010 to establish a long term Chair for the study of Contemporary India at Leiden University. The Chair will function under the aegis of Leiden University's Faculty of Humanities and the visiting professor will have an office at IIAS. The MoU was signed by His Excellency Mr Manbir Singh, Ambassador of India in the Netherlands, on behalf of ICCR, and Prof. Mr. P.F. Van Der Heijden, Rector Magnificus and President on behalf of Leiden University.

Under the terms of agreement, ICCR, in consultation with the University, will appoint a suitable Indian academic to hold the Chair for a period of two years. During his/her term, the Chair will contribute to academic life at the university by engaging in teaching, research and mentoring at various levels. The Chair will commence from September 2011. The MoU will remain valid for five years until June 2017.

Leiden University is the oldest institution of higher learning in the Netherlands with over 18,000 students. Leiden University has a unique combination of excellence in the fields of international law, political science, and a specialised department of South Asian Studies with a focus on India through the unique Kern Institute. It has an international reputation as a leading research university. This makes Leiden University an ideal Dutch partner to host an India Chair in the politics and economy of modern India. The establishment of a Chair of Contemporary Indian Studies is an important step in furthering ICCR's wider mandate of fostering and strengthening educational and cultural bonds and towards enhancing academic knowledge and awareness about India through academic exchanges.

Opinion

What do Chinese negotiators think? Lessons from Copenhagen

The Climate Change Global Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009 provoked strong responses from commentators, activists, politicians and country leaders. There was a palpable sense of disappointment at the watered down accord issued at the end of so much effort and talk. Perhaps most remarkable, however, was that the world's largest carbon emitter – China – was singled out as the biggest impediment to reaching a full agreement with specific targets. Much has been written about why China refused targets and what its objectives were. Less has been said about what the Copenhagen process shows about China's negotiating behaviour. What happened in December was deeply revealing and understanding it might aid any future international negotiations involving China.

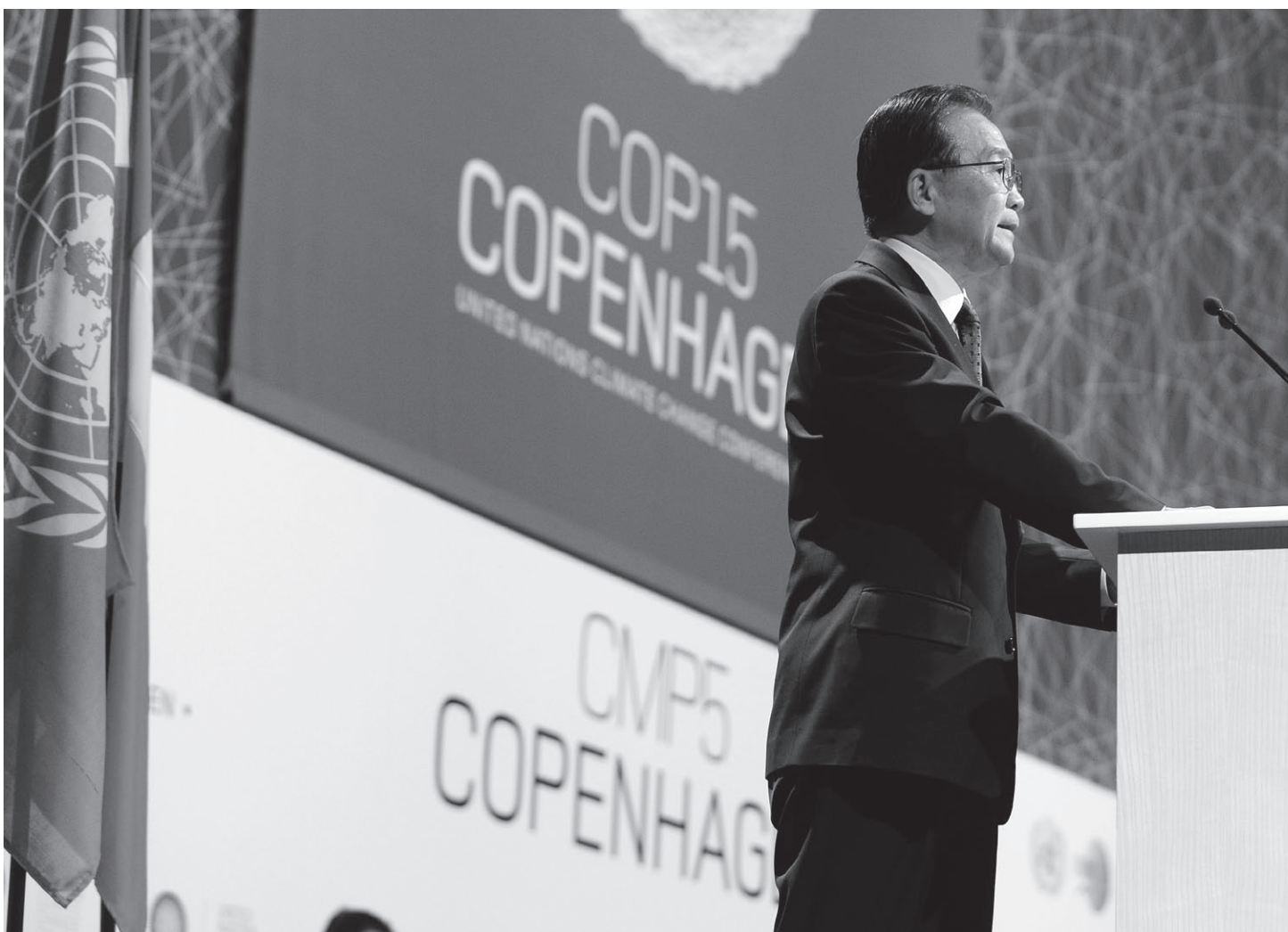
HOWEVER FRACTIOUS BATTLES to forge consensus amongst the political elite in Beijing have been in the past, there has usually been a clear leadership figure or, at the very least, a leading group made up of the Party Secretary and Premier. In the 1980s, the era of Deng Xiaoping as paramount leader, the whole Opening Up policy was dependent on Deng's political support. Without this, nothing happened. Even in 1992, with clear opposition in the party to greater opening up, Deng was able – at the age of 87 – to undertake his Southern Tour and reaffirm the Chinese government's commitment to greater economic reform. In the 1990s, Jiang Zemin as Party Secretary and Zhu Rongji as Premier and Head of Government, pushed through tough state-owned enterprise reform and secured China's entry to the World Trade Organisation, despite internal opposition. They faced down issues over relations with the US and the policy on Taiwan, and reined in the People's Liberation Army in 1998 by divesting it of commercial interests.

The Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao era has been defined by power in consensus building. The period of the 'big, powerful leader' dominating the landscape is over. Maoist and Dengist

centralised power was partially discredited by the Cultural Revolution of 1967 to 1976 and the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. Unlike their predecessors, Hu and Wen do not possess the immense political capital to unilaterally force issues through. They have turned this into a strength, however, by creating a more modernised sense of the exercise of power. They patiently build wide agreement within key departments of the state and the party. There are no longer all powerful Godfathers.

Had there been such a Godfather, however, Copenhagen might have been easier. Hu and Wen have been pretty open about the absolute priority of economic growth for their legitimacy and the hold of the Communist Party on power. Without solid GDP growth, China will be swamped with unemployment. It will run out of wealth to address some of the issues it has put on hold – the building of social infrastructure, equality and, most relevant to Copenhagen, environmental sustainability. The current Chinese government has made it clear that this, at heart, is their key red line. For Hu and Wen to choose to fight over this would be political suicide.

Below: Chinese premier Wen Jiabao addressing the COP15 climate change talks in Copenhagen, December 2010.



Chinese leaders are predominantly from a scientific background. Seven of the current nine members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, the summit of decision making in China, are technocrats. Hu is a water engineer, and Wen a geologist. They are more scientifically literate than the vast majority of their western counterparts. In the last five years they have shifted from their position of regarding scientific evidence for man-made climate change with scepticism. Their own scientists have gathered evidence, which appears to accord with what the rest of the world is saying. The impediment of an elite in Beijing regarding the need for caps on emissions, etc. as yet another western originated plot to stifle their growth is now largely gone. That, at least, is progress.

Just as in Western societies, there are a wide spectrum of views within society about climate change, carbon emissions and how to deal with it. Chinese leaders getting out of step with public opinion and signing up to deals which could be interpreted as not in China's interests would be incendiary. Hu does not want to go down in history as the second Zhao Ziyang, unceremoniously turfed out of power for selling out China's interests, especially at a time when China is about to attempt its first ever truly peaceful leadership transition from the Fourth to the Fifth generation of leaders, something that needs to happen by October 2012.

In the run up to Copenhagen, an immense debate took place within China's 29 central ministries, and within its 31 provinces and autonomous regions, with hugely complicated calculations about what each could contribute to the overall climate change package. That process ended at the beginning of December last year, when the central government, after its own cogitations, issued a statement on its position before the summit. Foreign ambassadors were summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing and told, in some detail, where China stood. They reported back to their capitals and their heads of government and foreign ministers and chief negotiators were informed. So far, so good.

Once in Copenhagen, however, two separate narratives emerged. They need to be carefully distinguished. The political elite – epitomised by those sitting on the Standing Committee of the Politburo – had taken their position. For domestic consumption, however, there was a need for China to be seen as asserting itself at Copenhagen. Reports of China's obstructive behaviour were probably prompted by this and other orders demanding a more assertive presence. Added to this mix is increasing confidence on the part of China in the face of the implosion of Western financial and moral credibility since the start of the global financial crisis in 2007. China's initial behaviour was, unsurprisingly, interpreted as arrogant and unhelpful. Perhaps less expected was the increasing anger from developed world countries, in the form of the G77, who started to detect real evidence of brute Chinese self-interest taking a precedence over collective ones.

Running parallel to this narrative, was a second one, of the elite themselves, whose consensus on such a complex, new, and central issue had been hard found. For them, China's position was not the issue that was up for negotiation; it was the need to bring the rest of the world closer to China. Wen Jiabao was there not, as he stated to one leader, to 'negotiate' but to simply assert. Attempts to push him into negotiation were doomed. He had no power base or authority to make any changes to China's position. Had China really expected to negotiate at Copenhagen they would have sent Hu Jintao himself. For two days, Wen suffered the indignities of being importuned and begged and pressured into a negotiation he believed he had no need to enter into and which he had no locus to become involved in.

Climate change is a unique issue and the demands that it makes on policymakers in China particularly complex. But this issue and China's approach to it are not going away. So what can we learn about Chinese negotiating behaviour from Copenhagen? Consensus is hard won and once reached, tough to shape or move. There is no powerful figure in contemporary Chinese politics that can assert a position and then carry public opinion with them. Instead, there is a delicate and complex symbiosis between opinion and leadership, involving a process of negotiation which is ill understood and opaque. And finally, China's negotiation tactics and positions on these 'global issues' are linked with the needed reform of its own decision-making and administrative systems. Their lack of accountability and transparency impact on China's position on outward-looking issues like climate change and economic reform. Until they change, China's stance is unlikely to shift.

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News

Indonesian social case studies and sociographic data: a longitudinal treasure trove

The University of Sydney's Fisher Library, has placed 59 Indonesian social case studies dating from 1959-60 on the internet. The studies were produced by anthropology and anthropology students at the University of Indonesia and Gajah Mada University under the supervision of Professor Mervyn Jaspán.



Indonesian shadow puppet.

MERVYN JASPAN (1926-1975), originally from South Africa, gained sociology and anthropology degrees from Natal and Oxford. In 1955 he was appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, and in 1959 he was appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Padjadjaran University, Bandung. He later taught at the Australian National University and at the University of Western Australia, before relocating to Hull University where he died in 1975.

While teaching in Indonesia, Dr Jaspán supervised the theses of a vast number of anthropology and sociology students at both the University of Padjadjaran and Gajah Mada University. The theses provide a rich sociographic record of Indonesian village life in 1959-1960 and contain information on education, wealth distribution, politics, religion and social structure. A few of the theses have an urban focus.

When he came to Australia, Dr Jaspán arranged the microfilming of 59 of the social case studies of his Indonesian students. These materials have now been digitalised and are easily accessible on the internet. There are 37 village studies spread throughout Java (14 in West Java, 14 in Central Java, and 9 in East Java).

There are also a number of ethnic studies carried out in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara and Sulawesi. There are also sociological studies of such diverse social groupings as academic staff at a unit of FKIP Bandung, an adult education committee in Karees, orphan children in a Tasikmalaya institution, an urban fire brigade, shoe factory workers, the Chinese community of Magelang, manual workers at a Bandung Home for the Blind, and lottery ticket vendors in Bandung.

These materials lend themselves most immediately to village longitudinal studies, using the original data, in order to examine social, economic and political change over the past 50 years. They could be used by undergraduate students studying individual villages for their final year theses, and also by higher degree students and scholars who might focus on a number of such villages to develop comparative analyses. Quantitative data from 37 of the villages on Java is already available in a comparative form in the appendices of my MA thesis: R. A. Witton, *Schooling and Adult Education in Rural Java: A Comparative Study of 37 Villages*, M.A. dissertation, University of Sydney, 1967, and is available on the internet at: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/1761>.

In Appendix 1 of that study there is a short description of each of the 37 villages including its geographical location. The study also lists the names and authors of the 37 Java village studies at pp. 383-6.

A community of scholars already interested in the re-study of the villages and communities has been developed under the creative leadership of the University of Indonesia's Professor Iwan Pirous (iwan.pirous@gmail.com; pirous@ui.ac.id). The scholars interact through the internet group he established (datadesa@yahoo.com) which is open to new members. It is designed to ensure that the planning for, and eventual results from, further studies of the villages are disseminated among the group and within the Indonesian academic community generally.

A full listing of the studies, and .pdf files of the original studies, will be found at: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/5935>

Ron Witton
rwitton@uow.edu.au

News (continued)



Folk gods, memorial stones, pastoral communities and temples – the digitisation of Günther-Dietz Sontheimer's slide collection

In 1977 Günther-Dietz Sontheimer (1934-1992) became a professor of the Religious History of South Asia with a special emphasis on Hinduism at the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, where he also taught traditional law, Marathi language and literature. During his thirty years of research in India he made more than 22,000 slides portraying the everyday life and rituals of ordinary people, peasants, pastoralist communities and ethnic minorities.

Edeltraud Bienek & Sonja Stark-Wild

THE OLDEST OF THESE PICTURES were taken in the late 1950s, the latest shortly before his death in 1992. When Sontheimer died, the library of the South Asia Institute obtained this collection alongside with his tape recordings, films and manuscripts. Now, after more than 15 years and funded by the Cluster of Excellence 'Asia and Europe in a Global Context – Shifting Asymmetries in Cultural Flows', the whole collection has been digitized and is now accessible through the image database HeidICON.

Sontheimer's major concern was to make evident the continuity, interrelation and mutual impact of classical high and folk culture. He used art, art history, archaeology, modern languages and dialects, written records as well as oral traditions to understand the culture and religious life of the 'common people', especially the pastoral communities of the Deccan plateau. Aiming to preserve the oral traditions endangered by India's modernization, he recorded, transcribed and translated songs, myths, legends and folk tales often with the help of then-modern media such as film and photography.

The slide collection can be divided into five areas, four of which reflect Sontheimer's major research foci:

1. 'Folk gods' of Maharashtra (and the surrounding states) and their origins, evolution and forms of worship. A major part of the collection – around 4.000 slides – is dedicated to the god *Khandoba* and his main temple at *Jejuri*. Other pictures show different places of worship and gods such as *Mhaskoba*, *Biroba*, *Dhuloba*, and *Vithoba*.
2. The everyday and religious life of semi-nomadic pastoral communities, particularly the Dhangars, their habitat, wanderings, religious feasts, ancestors and gods.
3. The dissemination, meaning, diversity and beauty of *memorial stones* for ancestors, heroes and *satis*.
4. Tribal communities of Madhya Pradesh, particularly in the district of Bastar, their religious feasts and practices, including different kinds of ancestor-, hero- and religious worship.

5. Temples, shrines, landscapes, towns and people in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa and Goa.

The collection with its portrayals of rituals and religious feasts, pilgrimages, devotion and possession is of special interest for Indologists, anthropologists and scholars of comparative religion. Of iconographic importance are also bronzes, insignia, and depictions of gods, people, animals, plants, temples, shrines and memorial stones.

Search overview:

Please use the guest login of the database HeidICON in order to search the collection. Choose 'EXC Asia and Europe > EXC Sontheimer' from the drop down menu. After this one can make a free keyword search. The category 'title/object' is useful for specific search queries, such as places, festivals and years, names of deities, the date of a festival according to the South Indian lunar calendar as well as subject headings.

The following lists are also useful for searching the Sontheimer Collection in HeidICON:

- Alphabetical Index of Place Names in the Sontheimer Slide Collection
- Catalog to the Sontheimer Slide Collection in Numerical Order
- List of Deities depicted in the Sontheimer Slide Collection
- Front door of HeidICON
- Direct link to EXC Sontheimer in HeidICON
- EXC Sontheimer introduction and contact information

For further information contact:

Dr. Sonja Stark-Wild
Library, South Asia Institute
University of Heidelberg
sonja.stark-wild@urz.uni-heidelberg.de

Read it!

A poem for writers

read again your Words

a Stranger to Yourself, with Best Intentions

discover the Relationships

Unintended Offspring, Orphan Facts

and Broken Promises

sleep on it

your Unmade Bed

let Dreams come, welcome Serendipity

avoid Pointless Flirtation

acknowledge Friends and Sources

Contradiction and Failure

can make You strong

face Them fairly, use Them well

Respect may foster

Unexpected Resolutions

imagine Future Readers

be remembered well, if at all

find your Own Way, with Words

then read it, again, and again

before The Letting Go



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ICAS

Update

AAS and ICAS joint meeting 2011 Hawai'i

It is our pleasure to inform you that the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) have a special joint meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i from 31 March to 3 April 2011. This marks not only the 70th AAS Annual Meeting and the 7th edition of ICAS but will create a new and inspiring platform for Asia scholars from all disciplinary and regional backgrounds.

Must attend event

We have no doubt that this will be a 'must attend event'. We expect between 3000 to 4000 participants to convene at the Hawai'i Convention Center. The meeting will connect with the city of Honolulu by way of an Asia Arts Festival which will be held simultaneously.

Call for Papers

The Call for Panels and Papers is online <http://www.asian-studies.org/annual-meeting/index.htm> The Deadline is 5 August 2010.

If you wish to contact colleagues to collaborate on a panel proposal, you may post a short announcement on the AAS website, at www.asian-studies.org/panel-links.htm. Please send an e-mail to Jon Wilson at jwilson@asian-studies.org to have your announcement included (or removed). We strongly encourage the formation of organized and institutional panels.

ICAS Book Prize

The ICAS Book Prize (IBP) seeks to honour the best of Asian Studies. The IBP 2011 is awarded for outstanding Asian Studies English-language works in the fields of the social sciences and humanities. We now invite all publishers / authors with Asian Studies books (with copyright dates running from July 2008 to July 2010) to compete. Prize money consists of 2500 euro for each category. Deadline 15 August 2010.

The deadline for sending in PhDs in the fields of the humanities and social sciences defended between July 2008 and July 2010 is the same as for the IBP. The prizes consist of the publication of the thesis in the ICAS Publications Series and / or a fellowship at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS).

For more information on the IBP, its rules and regulations, previous prize winners and editions please visit www.icassecretariat.org

ICAS Publication Series

For information on all titles published to date please visit www.iias.nl/publications

AAS Publications Series

For information on all titles published to date by the Association for Asian Studies please visit www.aasianist.org/publications/index.htm

On behalf of the ICAS Team,

Dr Paul van der Velde
Chief Executive Officer ICAS

HONOLULU, HAWAII
2011

A special joint meeting of the
Association for Asian Studies and the
International Convention of Asia Scholars
in celebration of
70 Years of Asian studies

Photos: David Cornwell, Hawaii Tourism Association(HTA)/Tor Johnson, Hawaii Tourism Japan (HTJ)

Mark your calendar!
March 31-April 3, 2011

Association for Asian Studies

International Convention of Asia Scholars

Call for Papers will be available April 2010. Check www.asian-studies.org for further details.

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conflict
ethnicity
ethnography
business
conflict

Announcements

Conference on Migration and mobility in a global historical perspective

26–28 August 2010, Taipei, Taiwan

THIS IS THE THIRD of a series of conferences on Global Migration History. This third conference, in Taipei, focuses on major migration flows in the last millennium and categories, worldwide, in particular in Asia. The first two days will be devoted to new evidence on the long term history of world migrations, with a particular stress on Asia. On the third day we will combine these new insights with the topic of the second conference on settlement processes, nurtured by the papers on diaspora, exile, identity and creolization. This will enable us to conclude the Taipei conference with a comprehensive conclusion on migration and settlement in a global long term perspective.

The programme can be viewed at: <http://www.iias.nl/events/conference-migration-and-mobility-global-historical-perspective>

Convenors: Prof. Nora Chiang, National Taiwan University and Prof. Leo Lucassen, Leiden University.

Sponsors: International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) at Leiden, the Netherlands and the Taiwan National Science Council (NSC) in Taipei.

For further information contact:
Ms. Martina van den Haak
m.c.van.den.haak@iias.nl

Nippon Foundation book donation 2010

THE NIPPON FOUNDATION is pleased to announce that the Book Donation Project 2010, '100 Books for Understanding Contemporary Japan', is now calling for applications. University and public libraries around the world are invited to apply for a donation of up to one hundred highly informative books on contemporary Japan. Please send required application materials to The Nippon Foundation by **July 31, 2010**.

For further information, please visit: <http://www.nippon-foundation.or.jp/eng/ReadJapan/Top.html>

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1-2-2 Akasaka, Minato-ku,
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bookproject@ps.nippon-
foundation.or.jp

Youth innovation competition on global governance

2010, Shanghai, China

STUDENTS ARE INVITED to the 4th Youth Innovation Competition on Global Governance (YICGG), which will be held at Fudan University, Shanghai, China, this summer.

Youth Innovation Competition on Global Governance (YICGG) is initiated by the School of International Relations and Public Affairs (SIRPA) of Fudan University, which is open to university students worldwide. In this competition, participants are called upon to design projects regarding global governance, which provides them the opportunity to show their originality, creativity and a sense of initiative.

All three previous competitions held, respectively, in Fudan University (Shanghai, China, 2007), Tor Vergata University (Rome, Italy, 2008), Ilija Chavchavadze State University (Tbilisi, Georgia, 2009) attracted hundreds of young people all over the world. YICGG is designed to encourage participants to attend to global issues, stimulate their innovation, enhance global civic awareness, and shoulder their responsibility for a common future of humanity.

'Glocalization' is the theme of YICGG 2010: nowadays, globalization is a major factor for the success of global governance. However, some different understandings on global governance have recently appeared, and one of them is glocalization. The word 'glocalization' is the combination of 'globalization' and 'localization', which implies one

mode of global governance: to think globally and act locally.

This competition will be a 5-day event in the summer of 2010. As in previous years, YICGG 2010 will be a three-phase competition. The first phase requires each team to submit an original case study to support their point of view on glocalization, either for or against. The qualified teams are encouraged to present their projects in the second phase. In the third phase, all the participants will be regrouped into different 'world teams', and a final proposal will be submitted by each World Team, explaining the design of their project. We look forward to witnessing the birth of creative and ambitious blueprints or projects through this competition.

This year, participants will not only enjoy the opportunity to speak out their new ideas, receive face-to-face guidance from world top-rank scholars in global governance field, meet young elites worldwide and build their social network, but also have the excellent opportunity to visit magnificent World Expo in Shanghai.

Dear friends, join us! We are looking forward to meeting you here at Fudan University.

For more information,
please visit our website:
www.cgg.fudan.edu.cn

Conference on Sun Yat-sen, Nanyang and the 1911 Chinese Revolution

25–26 October 2010, Singapore

CONFERENCE ORGANISED by Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Chinese Heritage Centre and National University of Singapore

In view of the 100th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution in China, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Chinese Heritage Centre and National University of Singapore plan to co-organise a two-day bilingual (Chinese and English) conference on Sun Yat-sen and the Nanyang.

The 1911 Revolution, known in Chinese as Xinhai Geming or Xinhai Revolution, was a watershed event in the history of modern China. It began with the Wuchang Uprising on October 10, 1911 and concluded with the collapse of dynastic rule in China that stretched back more than 2,000 years. It in fact led to the establishment of the Republic of China, Asia's first republic.

The 1911 Revolution was led by Sun Yat-sen and the Zhongguo Tongmenghui, which was first established in Tokyo in 1905 and followed by the formation of a branch in Singapore and then other branches in Southeast Asia. Sun Yat-sen tirelessly traveled around the Southeast Asian region drumming up support for the nationalist movement in China. Indeed the Zhongguo Tongmenghui

movement received massive support from the "overseas Chinese" communities, especially the Nanyang communities. The latter contributed morally and financially to the 1911 Revolution and in that way played an instrumental role in the establishment of modern China.

Extensive research has been conducted and voluminous literature produced in the last few decades on many aspects of Sun Yat-sen and the 1911 Revolution. However, they have tended to focus on developments and events in China. This conference hopes to contribute to the scholarship on Sun Yat-sen by focusing on Sun Yat-sen, Nanyang and the 1911 Revolution in China.

Scholars and researchers are invited to submit paper proposals on one of the following themes:

- Sun Yat-sen in the Straits Settlements
- Colonial Archives on Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Overseas
- Reformist and Revolutionist Chinese movements in Southeast Asia
- Xinhai Revolution and Southeast Asian Nationalism
- Colonial Governments and the Overseas Chinese Nationalism
- Sun Yat-sen and Prominent Nanyang Chinese
- Nanyang and Financing Chinese Revolutions

- Sun Yat-sen and the Emergence of Modern Nanyang Education
- Sun Yat-sen and the Emergence of Chinese Modernity
- Revisiting the Study of Sun Yat-sen in the Nanyang

Proposals on other themes related to the conference are also invited.

Paper proposals can be in either English or Chinese. Proposals should include a working title, a 300 word abstract, and a short biography of the applicant. Proposals which are selected should submit a full paper by **15 September 2010**.

Selected papers from conference will be published in 2 books, one English and one Chinese, and the books will be officially launched on 10 October 2011 in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution.

The organizers are pleased to be able to provide all participants with local accommodation for three days. Financial support for an economy-class return airfare, especially from Asian countries, will be kindly considered.

Proposals should be submitted to:
Dr Lee Lai To
leelaito@iseas.edu.sg



Crossing Borders in Southeast Asian Archaeology

27 September – 1 October 2010, Berlin

The 13th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists brings together archaeologists, art historians, and philologists who share a common interest in Southeast Asia's past from prehistory to the historical period. Its aim is to facilitate communication between different disciplines, to provide a survey of present work in the field and to stimulate future research.

Colleagues who wish to participate in the conference can register online: <http://euraseaa.userpage.fu-berlin.de/>

All participants are requested to pay their registration by **1 July 2010**. Please note that it will not be possible to register at the conference. Conference registration is priced at €160 (students €70).

The website is regularly updated. Please check this for announcements, hotel booking and later publication information. Please note the button on the menu register 'registration/payment'. A list of hotels is found on <http://euraseaa.userpage.fu-berlin.de/venue.htm>

For all queries and further information please contact:
Free University of Berlin
Prof. Dr. Dominik Bonatz
Institute of Near Eastern Archaeology
Hüttenweg 7
D-14195 Berlin, Germany
Fax 0049 30-838 52106
euraseaa@zedat.fu-berlin.de



'China: a world Superpower – mirage or reality?'

July 3–10 2010, Prague, Czech Republic

THE SUMMER SCHOOL is organised by Prague's Centre for Public Policy (Centrum pro veřejnou politiku – CPVP), an experienced organiser of spring & summer schools and conferences since 2004.

The Summer School 'China: A World Superpower – Mirage or Reality?' is a week-long academic programme that brings together around 30 undergraduate and graduate students of various nationalities and academic backgrounds (political science, international relations, economics as well as any other social sciences) from all parts of the world to enjoy their summer holidays in a unique academic and cultural environment.

The programme will analyse China's internal and external policies to help its participants understand Beijing's position in the current world and where the country is headed in the near future. Students will learn about and discuss topics such as China's economic policies, the communist regime's attitude toward human rights, democracy and political change, relations with other countries, and the major opportunities and challenges that the Middle Kingdom is facing on the road to becoming a world superpower.

We invite you to visit our website <http://china.cpvp.cz/> to discover all the details about the Summer School. The website contains up-to-date information about the Summer School, application process and online application.

Should you have any questions regarding the Summer School or application process, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Summer School on China
Center for Public Policy
Vyjezdova 510
190 11 Prague 9
Czech Republic
Tel: +420 737 679 605
Fax: +420 281 930 584
<http://china.cpvp.cz/>
cpvp@cpvp.cz

IIAS Research

Programmes

IIAS CENTRE FOR REGULATION AND GOVERNANCE

The IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance in Asia, is engaged in innovative and comparative research on theories and practices and focusing on emerging markets of Asia. The Centre serves as a focal point of collaborative research between European and Asian scholars. Its multidisciplinary research undertakings combine approaches from political economy, law, public administration, criminology, and sociology in the comparative analysis of regulatory issues in Asia and in developing theories of governance pertinent to Asian realities. Currently the Centre facilitates projects on State Licensing, Market Closure, and Rent Seeking; Regulation of Intra-governmental Conflict; Social Costs, Externalities and Innovation; Regulatory Governance under Institutional Void; and Governance in Areas of Contested Territoriality and Sovereignty. **Coordinator: Tak-Wing Ngo** t.w.ngo@hum.leidenuniv.nl

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 work-shops 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 and Harm Beukers (Scaliger Institute, Leiden University) h.beukers@hum.leidenuniv.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@ias.nl**

PLANTS, PEOPLE AND WORK

This research programme consists of various projects that study the social history of cash crops in Asia (18th to 20th centuries). Over the past 500 years Europeans have turned into avid consumers of colonial products. Production systems in the Americas, Africa and Asia adapted to serve the new markets that opened up in the wake of



the 'European encounter'. The effects of these transformations for the long-term development of these societies are fiercely contested. This research programme contributes to the discussion on the histories of globalisation by comparing three important systems of agrarian production over the last 200 years. The individual projects focus on tobacco, sugar, and indigo in India and Indonesia. **Institutes involved: University of Amsterdam, International Institute of Social History (IISH, Amsterdam) and IIAS.** **Coordinators: Willem van Schendel h.w.vanschendel@uva.nl and Marcel van der Linden mvl@iisg.nl**

SENSHI SOSHO

This project, funded and coordinated by the Philippus Corts Foundation, aims to translate a maximum of 6 official Japanese publications of the series known as 'Senshi Sosho' into the English language. From 1966 until 1980, the Ministry of Defense in Tokyo published a series of 102 numbered volumes on the war in Asia and in the Pacific. Around 1985 a few additional unnumbered volumes were published. This project focuses specifically on the 6 volumes of these two series which are relevant to the study of the Japanese attack on and the subsequent occupation of the former Dutch East-Indies in the period of 1941 until 1945. **Coordinator: Jan Bongenaar ias@ias.nl**

ASIA DESIGN

This programme consists of individual projects related to graphic design and architectural design in Asian megacities. **Institutes involved: IIAS, Modern East Asia Research Centre (MEARC), Delft School of Design (DSD).** **Sponsored by: IIAS and Asiascape.**

Asia Design: Translating (Japanese) contemporary art Takako Kondo focuses on (re)presentation of 'Japanese contemporary art' in art critical and theoretical discourses from the late 1980s in the realms of English and Japanese languages, including artists' own critical writings. Her research is a subject of (cultural) translation rather than art historical study and she intends to explore the possibility of multiple and subversive reading of 'Japanese contemporary art' in order to establish various models for transculturality in contemporary art. **Coordinator: Takako Kondo t.kondo@hum.leidenuniv.nl**

Asia Design: The post colonial global city This research examines the postcolonial cities of South, East and South-East Asia, and how some of them have made the successful segue from nodes in formerly colonial networks to global cities in their own right. This is intended to be an inter-disciplinary approach bringing together architects and urbanists, geographers, sociologists and political scientists, as well as historians, linguists and anyone else involved in the field of Asian studies. The research concentrates on cities that have successfully made the transition from colonial to postcolonial nodes in the global network (e.g. Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai). A key factor in the research is architectural typology. Architecture is examined to see how it can create identity and ethos and how in the postcolonial era these building typologies have been superseded by the office building, the skyscraper and the shopping centre, all of which are rapidly altering the older urban fabric of the city. **Coordinator: Greg Bracken gregory@cortlever.com**

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**

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@ias.nl**



ABIA SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY INDEX

The Annual Bibliography of Indina Archaeology is an annotated biblio-graphic 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 Post-graduate 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 biblio-graphies, published in a series by Brill. The project receives scientific support from UNESCO. **Coordinators: Ellen Raven and Gerda Theuns-de Boer e.m.raven@ias.nl www.abia.net**

IIAS offers an award for the best MA Thesis in the field of Asian Studies, written at a Dutch university

National MA thesis prize

The award consists of:

- The honorary title of Best MA Thesis in Asian Studies
- A maximum 3 month stipend (€ 1,500 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; in the humanities or social science
- Only MA theses which have been marked with 8 or above are eligible
- The thesis must have been evaluated in the period 1 August 2009 - 1 October 2010
- Both students and their supervisors can apply
- Please submit 4 hard copies of the thesis and a covering letter including the grade awarded and your contact details

Deadline: 1 October 2010, 9.00 am

International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) www.ias.nl ias@ias.nl



Submissions should be sent to:

Secretariat
International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS)
P.O. Box 9500 • 2300 RA Leiden
ias@ias.nl

IIAS Fellows

CENTRAL ASIA

DR HOSSEIN AZADI
Environmental Science Research Institute, Shahid Beheshti University, Iran, Centre for Development Studies, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands.
Global Land Grabbing for Food and Biofuels: Consequences of China Rise on Developing Countries.
1 May 2010 – 31 Aug 2010

MS MA'SOOMEH FOROUZANI
Department of Agricultural Extension and Education, Shiraz University, Iran.
Agricultural Water Poverty: The Impact of Knowledge and Technology.
1 Jul 2010 – 30 Sep 2010

DR IRINA MOROZOVA
Moscow State University, Russian Federation
Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam & Leiden.
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 2010

EAST ASIA

DR MEHDI P. AMINEH
Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam & Leiden
Programme Coordinator of Energy Programme Asia (EPA)
Sponsored by KNAW/CASS.
Domestic and Geopolitical Energy Security for China and the EU.
1 Sep 2007 – 1 Sep 2010

DR GREGORY BRACKEN
Delft School of Design, TU Delft, the Netherlands
Sponsored by IIAS.
Urban Complexity in Asia.
1 Sep 2009 – 1 Sep 2011

DR RICHARD BOYD
IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance.
Rent Seeking and Development in East Asia.
16 Nov 2009 – 16 May 2010

PROF. DENNIS CHENG
Department of Chinese Literature, National Taiwan University.
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Corrigendum

Corrigendum to 'Ancient glass from the silk road', IIAS Newsletter #53, p.37.

An error occurred in the above article in paragraph 3.

The correct text should read:

'He suggests the few early finds of potassium pronounced alkali glass (500-400 BCE) originate from Central China. More detailed quantitative analyses would be welcome for future research in this regard.

(2) The second period (400 BCE -200 CE) reveals the characteristic

Chinese lead-barium glass production generally thought to be located in the Yangzi River valleys and a potash glass which prevailed in the southern and southwestern regions during the Han period (206 BCE-220 CE).'

The editor apologises to readers for this mistake.

Colophon

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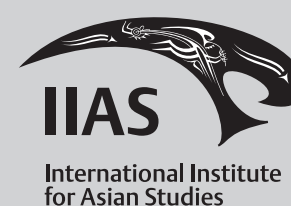
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Simply a sari?

The sari has become a global image. Worn by Indian women of diverse religious and cultural groups from the north of India to the island of Sri Lanka in the south. Women proudly wear saris in countries as far apart as Suriname, Britain, South Africa and Indonesia as a statement of their Indian origins.

THE ORIGINS OF THE SARI are believed to date back to the 2nd century BC. One reason for the continued popularity of this form of draped clothing is a long established belief by (elite) Hindus that cut and sewn cloth was impure. As a result, the cloth used for saris is neither stitched nor tailored. The various types of sari reflect India's diverse climate and geography, and its wide range of urban, village and nomadic life. The sari embodies India's multicultural society, its economic and trade contacts, religious groups, artistic traditions, and much more.

Renowned for their colour and beauty, saris are made in diverse ways, reflecting their region of origin, the person wearing them and the occasion. There are hundreds of different forms, including printed, painted, woven and embroidered versions, or indeed a combination of these techniques. Their beauty is further displayed by the many forms of draping that can be used; sometimes traditional, others regional and more recently there are the styles derived from the Indian film industry, Bollywood.

A sari is long length of material of between 4 to 8 metres in length, and 100 and 120 cm in width. A good quality example is usually longer and broader than a less expensive version. The basic layout of a sari consists of three areas: end piece, the field and the side or longitudinal borders.

Saris are one of the most elegant garments worn by women, but they do require experience to drape and wear them to their best advantage. Basically, a sari is worn by wrapping the material around the waist, then pleating the material at the front to create a wide, skirt section, then the remainder of the material is draped over the shoulders or head. In general, wealthier women, especially those in northern and central India, tend to wear silk saris, while poorer women or those in the south of the country opt for cotton versions.

Throughout the centuries a wide range of decorative techniques have been developed for saris. Some of these techniques are regionally linked, others can be found throughout the country. In the northwest of India, for example, painted and printed saris are common, while in the northeast woven forms are more widely available. In the last 50 years many of the regional variations have started to vanish as more and more mills have been set up to produce saris on a large scale.

Colour and motif symbolism plays an important role in Indian life and this is reflected in the motifs and styles of decoration found on many saris. Certain colours are associated with particular groups. The Brahmins (priestly caste),

for example, are associated with white, which is seen as a pure colour. Some groups regarded white as the colour of mourning and so white saris are worn by widows. Red is seen as the colour of fertility and emotions and as such it is often worn by brides and young married women. Green is associated with fertility and growth, and so a woman wishing a child might wear a green coloured sari. Yellow is seen as a religious colour and associated with religion and asceticism. It is often worn by women who wish to express their desire for a more spiritual way of life. Dark blue and black are regarded by many in India as negative colours and impure and so few traditional saris can be found in these colours.

An ancient floral motif that appears on saris is the lotus, which is regarded as symbolising spiritual power, good luck and fertility. Throughout much of India the tree is regarded as a symbol of both fertility and protection, and as a result

it is often included in some form on a sari. Another very popular motif is the kalga design, which is an elliptical, floral motif with a curved point at the top. This design has become known in the West as the Paisley motif after the motifs woven on 'Kashmir' shawls in the Scottish town of Paisley during the 19th century.

Saris from the southern parts of India often have a line of triangles of various sizes along the inner edges of the side borders.

Collections: Textile Research Centre, Leiden (www.trc-leiden.nl) and Volkenkunde Museum, Leiden

Far left: handwoven jamdani sari from West Bengal (green with red, stylised flowers).

Middle: handwoven jamdani sari from West Bengal (turquoise, geometric).

Right: brocade sari, Assam.

Inset from top to bottom: wedding sari from Kerala, Tamil Nadu. Silk *kadi* sari. Silk batik sari.

Photography: Joost Kolkman www.joostkolkman.nl

