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IIAS

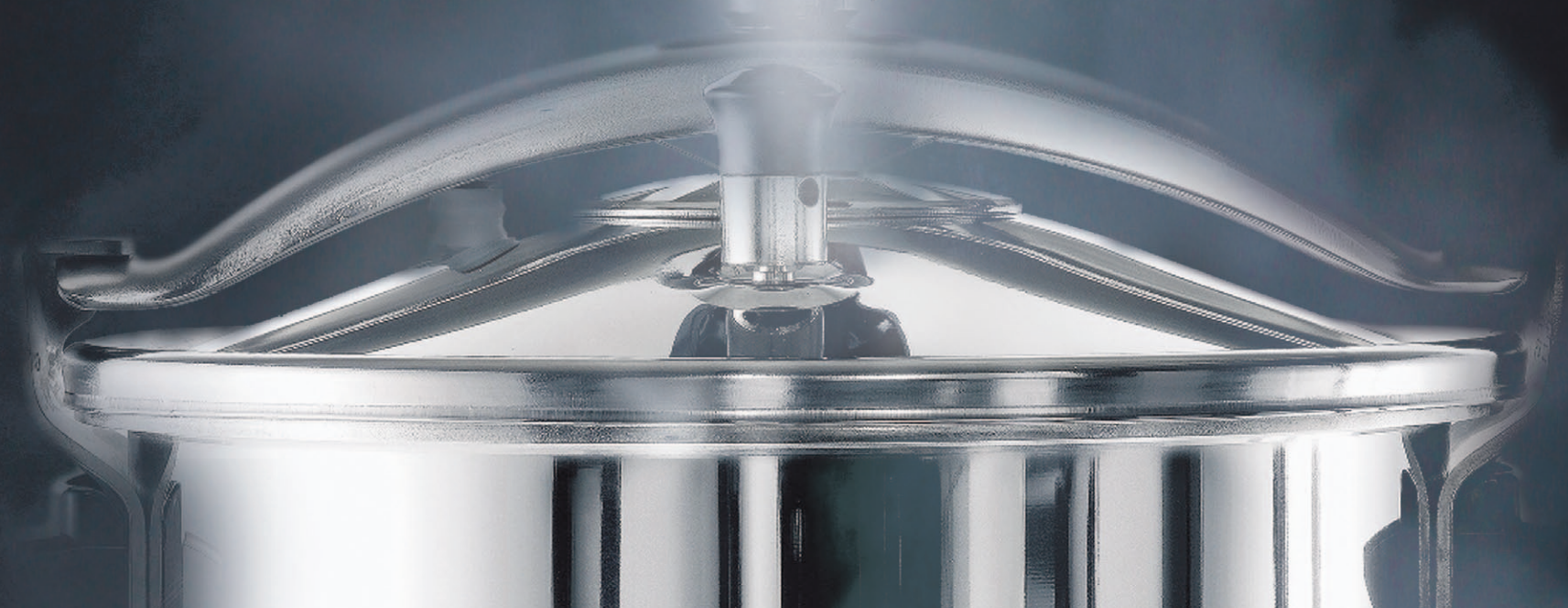
International Institute
for Asian Studies

theNewsletter

Encouraging knowledge and enhancing the study of Asia

Supplementary
Education in Asia

Buxiban tutoring
Exam prep
Shadow education
Competition
Hagwon
Cram schools
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Credentialism



The Focus pages 13-28

Mark Bray and Julian Dierkes introduce the theme of supplementary education by showing how it has become a huge enterprise, occupying significant proportions of the time of students and the budgets of their families.

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guest editor



The Focus Supplementary education in Asia

PAGES 13-14

Mark Bray and **Julian Dierkes** introduce the theme by showing that supplementary education has become a huge enterprise, occupying significant proportions of the time of students and their families, providing substantial employment, and generating large revenues.

PAGE 15

As **Chung Prudence Chou** and **James K. S. Yuan** point out, teenagers in Taiwan attend *buxiban* due to a mixture of exam anxiety, peer-group pressure, and high parental academic expectation – unlike their western counterparts who favour extra-curriculum activities such as sports or games.

PAGES 16-17

Although Korea has ranked highly on international achievement tests such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, **Jin Lee** asserts that when examined more closely, maybe this is the result of parents' tremendous education zeal and investment, not of public education.

PAGES 18-19

The crux of the problem explored by **Walter Dawson** revolves around the issue of whether Cambodian teachers are practicing corruption in consideration of their role as educational representatives of the state and exploiting the potential for economic gain when they offer essential after-school tutorial sessions.

PAGE 20

While Hong Kong families with adequate incomes have long invested in supplementary tutoring to help their children keep up with their peers, **Ora Kwo** and **Mark Bray** show that during the last decade this 'shadow education' has spread and intensified – and has become more commercialized.

PAGES 21-23

Martin Forsey relates how the Schools First program, an awards program focused on enhancing school community partnerships throughout Australia, has been implemented and has affected life inside and outside the classroom in the far north mining town of Karratha in Western Australia.

PAGES 24-25

On **Julian Dierkes'** visits to *juku* over the past five years, he has seen much that has been inspiring and admirable, and some aspects that are disturbing. The fieldwork has also yielded insights into how small operators in an industry that is increasingly dominated by corporate actors, position themselves and their industry as it evolves.

PAGES 26-27

One recent and growing feature of the Vietnamese education system, writes **Hai-Anh Dang**, is a 'shadow' education system existing alongside mainstream education, where students attend extra classes (*đi h cthêm*) to acquire knowledge that they do not appear to obtain during their hours in school.

PAGE 28

Thirty years ago, under a strict socialist regime which prohibited private-sector activities in education and other sectors, China was very different from its capitalist neighbours in East Asia. Now it increasingly resembles them, says **Wei Zhang**, and the scale of shadow education is among the similarities.



IIAS in 2011

IIAS is starting the year with a number of new initiatives planned under the aegis of our three new thematic clusters – Asian Cities, Politics of Culture and Heritage, and Asian Intra and Global Connectivities – while we will continue to reinforce the Institute's capacities to meet the numerous challenges I highlighted in my previous note.

Philippe Peycam

ONE SUCH INITIATIVE is a Summer Programme on Cultural Heritage which will be held in Leiden this June. The idea of a summer school took shape following the very successful roundtable on cultural heritage organized by IIAS and the Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF) in Amsterdam last September. This unique event brought members of academic communities together with cultural practitioners from Asia and Europe to openly discuss the philosophy and politics of cultural heritage with a view to proposing new approaches and policies. Among the ideas discussed by the participants from 17 nationalities ranging from Pakistan to Denmark, was that of setting up a high level training platform that would enable scholars and practitioners to develop "situational" methodologies in cultural heritage. This is how the idea of

a specialized summer school reserved for young M.A. students and Ph.D. scholars from the world over came about. Prof. Michael Hertzfeldt from Harvard University and Prof. Nira Wickramasinghe from Leiden University are the co-organizers of the programme. The training initiative will be developed in collaboration with Leiden University's Asian Modernity and Tradition Profile. With over 200 applicants for 25 fully-funded positions, we believe the upcoming summer school will represent a milestone in the field of cultural heritage theory and practice. We expect to conduct similar high-profile training sessions for promising young scholars annually on a major topic relevant to Asia and Europe.

2011 will also see IIAS organize a series of exciting meetings following the same interactive format as that of the Amsterdam roundtable. In July, we will work with the Indonesian federal and local authorities and the Pacific Rim Council on Urban Development to address the critical issue of rising sea water levels and the impact on the social fabric of Indonesia's coastal cities. This roundtable, part of our urban cluster, will aim at recommending policies while inaugurating what we see as a regular dialogue between local officials and experts together with social science scholars and their institutions. In October, IIAS and the Nanyang Technology University in Singapore will co-organize a roundtable addressing the longstanding interactions existing between the different scientific traditions of the Eurasian continent, from Europe to East Asia, including traditions from South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and the Mediterranean world. Finally, with our European Alliance colleagues at the Institute of Political Sciences in Paris, we are currently preparing a series of targeted dialogues on post-colonial legacies.

These will touch on a number of still-sensitive issues such as the writing of a common history, the construction of post-colonial identities in both Europe and its former colonies, and the complex social configurations born out of colonization and decolonization processes. The aim of these dialogues framed in a comparative model is to reinforce mutual understanding and the appreciation of the complex imaginary, political and social constructions still existing in ex-colonizing and ex-colonized societies.

In all these activities, IIAS's vision remains clear and echoes the points outlined in my first note: IIAS wants to play a role not only as a clearing house between Europe and Asia, but also between the established fields of humanities and social sciences and the fast transforming societies of Asia. In this way, IIAS can contribute to the debate on the renewal of "Asian studies". With an agenda espousing some of the main contemporary issues affecting Asia, IIAS hopes to strike a balance between topics and interests of immediate social relevance and those calling for reflections and actions anchored in the long intellectual tradition of exchange between Europe and Asia.

To strengthen this vision, IIAS is embarking on a number of changes in its regular support activities. With our fellowship programme, we will invite the first group of candidates from all over the world to join one of the Institute's thematic clusters of their choice. An additional fellowship position, the result of an original collaboration between IIAS and the Nalanda-Srivijaya Centre at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, focuses on intra-Asian connectivities in the age of the European colonial presence. This latter initiative reflects IIAS's new interest in the constitution of strategic partnerships with our Asian friends.

Another new activity in the making is the institute's Communication Department. This includes revamping our website to enable easy access to a considerable list of materials and information generated by IIAS over the last two decades. We hope to turn the site into a free resource for whoever "thinks Asia" or does research on the region. The website will grow in symbiosis with the present Newsletter so as to enhance the latter's role as the main electronic and printed link between "Asianists" around the world. Other new ideas include the development of special rubrics, sometimes worked out in collaboration with our Asian partners and aimed at rendering a diverse expression of what is being done in the field by local researchers and cultural leaders. As in the past, the Newsletter will continue to focus on specific topics and highlights. Not surprisingly, they should increasingly reflect the new areas of interest chosen by IIAS while the periodical will continue to be home to contributions and information on a variety of topics.

I will end my note with some words on the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS), because the present Newsletter will appear in conjunction with the upcoming AAS-ICAS Convention taking place in Hawaii at the end of March. As the host of ICAS's secretariat, IIAS is proud to be involved in such a major undertaking in collaboration with our partners from the Association of Asian Studies (AAS) in the United States. The vision and tenacity of my colleagues, previous and current, made sure that ICAS not only succeeded as the first Asia-based global network on Asian studies, but that it is now seen as a partner to the long-established model set by AAS. The Hawaii Convention is the result of such an undertaking. Thinking ahead, IIAS is determined to pursue this effort, by further anchoring the ICAS network in Asia in a way that it reflects the fast transformations that are taking place there – with a new generation of scholars and specialists emerging from the major powerhouses that are China, Japan and India, and the less well-known efforts achieved in smaller and often poorer countries of the vast continental ensemble.

We will make sure readers are kept informed about these exciting new developments. In the meantime, we urge you to keep promoting the cost-free IIAS Newsletter among circles of friends and colleagues both in its electronic and its printed format.

Thank you for your enduring support of IIAS. We look forward to continuing to help you in your work on/in Asia.

Philippe Peycam
Director of IIAS
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A Yao Script Project

—We know that the state (nhà nước) has an interest in this, but this is our class. We did this on our own.

Đặng Văn Cao, Educator, Lào Cai Province

Bradley C. Davis



IN 2006, THE FORD FOUNDATION, through their former Hanoi Office, began funding a project that combined the establishment of an educational network with an effort to account for texts conserved by members of the Yao (Dao) ethnic group in Vietnam.¹ An act of cross-institutional co-operation took place that, over the next two years, resulted in a project that combined textual collection with education in the northern Vietnamese province of Lào Cai. A Yao script project was managed by Trần Hữu Sơn of the Office of Culture, Sport, and Tourism, Philippe Le Failler of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient in Hanoi, and myself in an attempt to forge a new context for a traditional form of literacy.

Following some brief historical background to the Yao ethnics in Vietnam and a consideration of “culture” in contemporary Vietnam, this article will discuss some details of the Yao Script and Education Project, an ongoing collaborative effort in Lào Cai Province.

The Yao/Mien ethnics

From a historical perspective, the Sino-Vietnamese term *Dao* (獠, although also written 瑶 in the PRC), pronounced “Yao” in standard Chinese, provides a clear example of administrative ethnogenesis.² It first appeared during the Tang Dynasty (618-905) as a label indicating exemption from corvée labor service and liberty of movement in the hills of southern China.³ Originally an “imperial political designation,”⁴ Yao also became a term of self-reference for communities negotiating their position relative to state authority.

In China and Southeast Asia, these communities have a history of migration in reaction to catastrophic events. Many Yao migrations into territory that is today governed by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam resulted from the political and economic changes in China. Researchers in the People's Republic of China recently reconstructed Yao migrations out of China on the basis of linguistic changes that indicate the approximate time and area from which Yao communities traveled.⁵ In Vietnam, historians and ethnologists have portrayed these migrations as direct results of social disruptions in southern China.⁶ Within contemporary Yao communities themselves, oral and literary traditions record stories of hardship, flight, and resettlement compelled by circumstances beyond their control.⁷ During the early 20th century, ethnographers in China noted that many Yao communities kept written records of their historical status of corvée exemption along with lineage histories of migration.⁸

As Fan Honggui has noted with respect to other non-Han communities, linguistic reformers in China attempted to strip the labels of certain groups of their epithetical content. Consequently, Yao communities in southern China were officially referred to as 瑶 rather than 獠, the latter transmitting denigration via the inclusion of an initial marking (also known as a classifier or “radical”) that meant “dog.”⁹ The official name for the Yao in southern China thus became written with a character that meant “pure” or “precious.”¹⁰

Official terminology for national ethnic minorities in Vietnam inherited a somewhat different legacy from the distant past. Although the “dog” marking in reference to non-Việt (or non-Kinh) populations appears in administrative records, royal chronicles, and other texts detailing the history of Vietnam before French Colonial Rule, the last legal documents to mention communities that we would today refer to as “Yao” or “Dao” employed the term “Mán”. Usually written as 蠻, *Mán* described communities that, conceptually, resided outside the realm of lowland, sedentary civilization and, administratively, existed on somewhat remote terms with the state's routines of taxation. In the 19th century Nguyễn Imperial Code, *Mán* became an administrative label applied to groups that, according to 21st century categories, would include the Hmong and the Yao in Vietnam.¹¹ However, as Jonsson has noted for other parts of Southeast Asia,

the term Yao often carried more or less exact connotations.¹² In the case of Nguyễn Vietnam, for instance, the *Đông Khánh Descriptive Geography* glosses Yao as the name of a group formally classified as *Mán*.¹³ Imperial tax regulations established during the Nguyễn Dynasty, however, lacked what Thongchai Winichakul, writing about 19th century Siam, has referred to as a detailed “differentiation of subjects.”¹⁴

Enthnology and ethnography

In an institutional sense, *ethnology* or the field of study concerned with ethnic groups (*dân tộc học*) did not take shape in Vietnam until the French Colonial Period and only formally became known as *dân tộc học* after 1954.¹⁵ In terms of the, at the time, related field of *ethnography*, the military official turned university professor Bonifacy published his *Cours d'Ethnographie Indochinoise* in 1919.¹⁶ As Jean Michaud reminds us, much of the foundational work that supported the professional effort to establish ethnology and ethnography as discrete fields of knowledge was “incidentally” carried out by missionaries.¹⁷

With the establishment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) in 1976, the contemporary ethnological vocabulary of Vietnam began to take shape. In 1979, Decision 121 eliminated the term *Mán*, which retains the sense of “savage” or “barbaric” in contemporary Vietnamese (*Mán Di*). The Yao communities in northern Vietnam became officially known as “Dao”, the Sino-Vietnamese pronunciation of the same character employed by most Yao people to refer to themselves in a multicultural context.¹⁸

Perhaps the most significant element of cultural life in the Vietnam for the Yao was the language of political power: Vietnamese. Yao speakers traditionally, and for some presently, employ a character-based writing system that would be familiar to readers of Classical or Modern Chinese. The official language of Vietnam, Vietnamese, features a Romanized script (*Quốc Ngữ*). Although a similarly Romanized script was developed for recording the sound of spoken Yao (*tiếng Dao*), education and government business is primarily conducted in Vietnamese.¹⁹

At a time when the language of power had eroded traditional literacy, our project attempted to contribute to the continuance of the Yao script. We soon became concerned with a larger and more difficult issue: contrasting and competing notions of culture.

Notions of culture

In the Vietnamese-language paperwork involved with the planning and implementation of this project, the word “văn hóa”, conventionally rendered as “culture” in English, appeared with great frequency. While a full historical and socio-cultural treatment of this term and its English analogue lies well beyond the scope of this essay, in terms of our project văn hóa and the strategy of its translation warrant a brief discussion.

A Sino-Vietnamese term, *văn hóa* appears quite frequently within the titles of state institutions at multiple levels in Vietnam. From Hanoi, the Ministry of Culture and Information (*Bộ Văn Hóa Thông Tin*) and the Ministerial Department of National Culture (*Vụ Văn Hóa Dân Tộc*) supervise the work of provincial-level offices dedicated to issues of culture.

Specifically regarding ethnic communities such as the Yao, these central state institutions of culture in Vietnam express their mission in terms of conservation. In 2005, a conference hosted by the Department of National Culture focused on the issue of popular festivals among ethnic minorities. For the participants of the conference, the “cultural life” (*đời sống văn hóa*) that such festivals nourished has increasingly come under threat since the initiation of economic reforms in the late 1980s.²⁰ Elements of cultural life, according to these institutions, must be “conserved” (*bảo tồn*). Culture, from this perspective, is in a precarious state.

Left: Bridge on road to village school. Photo by the author. Right: Yao script class. Photo by the author.

Participants in our Yao script project, whether administrators, advisers, or students and teachers, repeatedly made reference to Yao culture (*văn hóa người Dao, cái văn hóa người Dao, văn hóa dân tộc Dao, di tích văn hóa Dao*). Yao culture, in this sense, described a set of practices that differentiated one group from others. For the Lào Cai Office of Culture, Sport, and Tourism (*Sở Văn Hóa Thể Thao, Du Lịch*), culture was something of vital importance. It represented both an officially-defined concept and an endangered, distinctive ethnic minority “cultural life”.

Rather than adhering to a conservationist approach towards culture or viewing culture as an ossified set of attributes under assault from the homogenizing tide(s) of modernization, nationalism, or state standardization, our intention was to provide a new context for Yao culture and Yao cultural practices in contemporary Vietnam.

An “educational network” and Yao texts

Our project established an “educational network” (*mạng lưới giáo dục*) consisting of locally-managed classes in Yao script and the educators that managed them. With the invaluable assistance of the late Hoàng Sĩ Lực, a literary scholar and expert on both the varieties of spoken Yao and the idiosyncrasies of the character script, we assembled a curriculum development panel. Leaders of Yao script classes were able to meet and exchange ideas and experiences.

The educational network also involved field evaluations. During the first year of the project, due partly to the rhythms of administration in Lào Cai, the establishment of classes in villages and communes occurred at a glacial pace. However, by 2008 we were able to conduct several evaluations of active classes. Following are excerpts from evaluations of two classes in Bảo Thắng District.

In Xuân Quang Commune, Bàn Văn Thanh leads a 26-student class that convenes three times a week in the evening. He emphasized that the Yao community in the surrounding area valued the opportunity to teach the traditional script in a formal setting. Bàn Văn Thanh, speaking in Vietnamese, also expressed his satisfaction that lessons about “proper living” (*sống hiền*) and “maturity” (*trở thành người*) that appear in traditional texts can now be read directly by Yao youth, without the medium of phonetic transliteration. The students in Bàn Văn Thanh's class noted their enthusiasm for learning the traditional script. One young student remarked that she intended to study at the Hán Nôm Institute in Hanoi, which also has occasional programs on character scripts used by ethnic minorities. Such an education, she hoped, would enable her to further the revival of traditional literacy in her community.

Also in Bảo Thắng, Lý Văn Hòa and Đặng Á Cao led an independently established class of 18 students meeting six nights a week. As did the previous educator, these two teachers stressed the connection between moral education and traditional literacy. Lý Văn Hòa and Đặng Á Cao also included singing as part of their curriculum, commenting that this is a vital skill for weddings and other ceremonies.

“Before this project,” Hòa stated with some enthusiasm, “we did not dare teach these kinds of classes.” Taught the character script by their fathers, both Hòa and Cao felt obligated to renew the convening of classes for the youth of the community. Despite their excitement for receiving assistance from the project, which involved consulting with members of the Lào Cai government, both instructors remained adamant about the autonomy of their classes. As Cao asserted, “we know that the state has an interest in this, but this is our class. We did this on our own.”

The fact that their class was independently established (*tự lập*) indicated a larger trend in Lào Cai Province. By the end of 2008, we had accounted for sixteen independently founded classes out of a total of nineteen. When we consulted with the provincial and commune-level authorities, we learned that many Yao

“Culture”, Texts, and Literacy in Contemporary Vietnam

communities had begun setting up classes on their own without the involvement of the project or the local government. For these independent classes, the project was a convenient source of classroom supplies, but the impetus came from within the communities themselves.

Although generally shy, some students in Hòa and Cao's class volunteered to discuss their experiences. One young student remarked that, within his own family, only his grandparents still remember the character script. His education in the class had facilitated a closer relationship with his grandparents, he claimed. Also, he found himself developing an improved ability in reading contemporary Chinese, an ability that, as he savvily reminded us, the Vietnamese government currently attempts to cultivate among its citizens.

A Yao text corpus

Coupled with the educational network was a cooperative attempt to account for Yao texts. Using flashless digital photography, we recorded texts in the traditional character script that members of Yao communities willingly shared. Although many people were keen to permit their texts to be recorded, on several occasions members of the project were politely denied permission. The collection of texts, as a principle, was a strictly voluntary effort. At the end of 2008, we had accounted for over 11,000 texts.

These texts covered a wide variety of subject matter related to Yao communities. Contents included songs for children, epic poems, lineage stories, guidelines related to customs and cultural practices, traditional handicrafts, weather forecasting according to traditional methods, and animal husbandry. Other books discussed matrimonial customs, descriptions of ceremonies, rites to be performed to ensure a felicitous marriage, family mores, and funerary practices. A specific category of text dealt with disease prevention, remedies for illnesses, and recipes for folk medicines. While some of these 11,614 books each addressed only one subject, the majority of books were compilations that contained chapters dedicated to different topics.

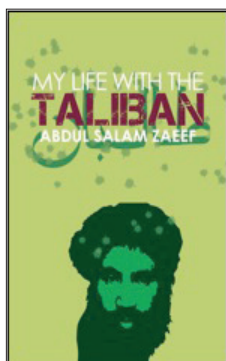
Currently, we are developing an analytical index for the digital collection as well as pursuing plans to publish the entire corpus on CD format. We hope to contribute to the body of knowledge about Yao cultural practices, religious culture, and history with a widely-accessible resource. Our relatively small effort will supplement the excellent work already done by the Yao Texts Project at Munich University and other projects currently underway around the world.

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Notes

- 1 In the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the ethnonym “Dao” refers to any one of seven ethnolinguistic subgroups the members of which all speak a mutually intelligible Sino-Tibetan language. They share this ethnolinguistic orientation with other communities in the Peoples Republic of China (Yao), Thailand (Mien), as well as other peoples living in France, French Guyana, Réunion, and North America. Within Vietnam, while the *standard* Vietnamese pronunciation of Dao has an initial consonant similar to the English z or the German s in *Sie*, most people who fall under this administrative label pronounce the term “Yao,” a reading that coincidentally resonates with Vietnamese as it is spoken in the southern region of the country. Depending on the particular subgroup, people officially known as “Dao” might also refer to themselves as “Mien” or “Mun.” For the sake of clarity, I will use the term *Yao* except when quoting Vietnamese language terminology, in which case I will use *Dao*.
- 2 For approaches to ethnogenesis in historical and anthropological research, see James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. pp238-282.
- 3 Ralph A. Litzinger, *Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. pp9-10.
- 4 Ibid. p10. For historical studies of the Yao, see also Jacques Lemoine and Chao Chien (ed), *The Yao of South China: Recent International Studies*. Paris: Pangu, Editions de l'AFÉY, 1991; and Richard Cushman, “Rebel Haunts and Lotus Huts,” Ph.D. Dissertation (Yale University, 1970.) In Chinese, some important studies include: Huang Yu and Li Weixin, *Guangxi Yaozu shehui lishi diaocha*. Nanning: Guangxi Minzu Chubanshe, 1983; and Fan Honggui, “Yaozu Cong Zhongguo Jinru Yuenan Qiantan” in Fan Honggui (ed), *Huanan yu Dongnan Ya Xiang'guan Minzu*. Beijing: Minzu Chubanshe, 2004.
- 5 Fan Honggui, “Yaozu Cong Zhongguo Jinru Yuenan Qiantan” in Fan Honggui (ed), *Huanan yu Dongnan Ya Xiang'guan Minzu*. Beijing: Minzu Chubanshe, 2004. pp 278-288 and
- 6 For instance, Bế Viết Đăng “Dân Tộc Dao” in Nguyễn Văn Huy (ed), *Bế Viết Đăng: Dân Tộc Học Việt Nam, Định Hướng và Thành Tựu Nghiên Cứu 1973-1998*. Hà Nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 2006. pp331-373.

- 7 A recent volume contains examples of these stories in the form of song. “Thơ Ca Thiên Di” (A Song of Displacement) in Tran Huu Son (ed), *Thơ Ca Dân Gian Người Dao Tuyền*. Hà Nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Dân Tộc, 2005. pp275-316.
- 8 Litzinger, *ibid*.
- 9 Fan Honggui, “Fengjian-Zhiminde Shidaide Yuenan Minzu” in Fan Honggui (ed), *Yuenan Minzu yu Minzu Wenti*. Nanning: Guangxi Minzu Chubanshe, 1999. pp1-3.
- 10 R.H. Mathews, *Chinese-English Dictionary*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000. p1090, entry 7288. Entry 7287 defines the older Yao appellation as “the name of a tribe.” (*ibid*)
- 11 Viện Sử Học (edit), *Khâm Định Đại Nam Hội Điển*. Huế: Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa, 1993. quyển 44. pp312-339
- 12 Hjørleifur Jonsson, “Does the House Hold? History and the Shape of Mien (Yao) Society,” *Ethnohistory* 48:4 (Fall 2001), pp613-654.
- 13 Ngô Đức Thọ, Nguyễn Văn Nguyên, Philippe Papin (ed); *Đống Khánh Địa Dư Chí [同慶地輿志]*. Hà Nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới, 2003. Hưng Hóa section, 63A-B
- 14 Hội Điển and Thongchai Winichakul, “The Others Within: Travel and Ethno-Spatial Differentiation of Siamese Subjects 1885-1910,” in Andrew Turton (ed), *Civility and Savagery: Ethnic Identity in Tai States*. Richmond, Surrey (UK): Curzon Press, 2000. pp38-62.
- 15 Pelley, *ibid*. pp87-111.
- 16 Lieutenant-General Bonifacy, *Cours d'Ethnographie Indochinoise: professe aux élèves de l'École Supérieure d'Agriculture et de Sylviculture*. Hanoi: Impremiere d'Extrême-Orient, 1919.
- 17 Jean Michaud, *“Incidental Ethnographers:” French Catholic Missions on the Tonkin-Yunnan Frontier, 1888-1930*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- 18 For a succinct summary of “Decision 121,” see Patricia M. Pelley, *Postcolonial Vietnam: New Histories of the National Past*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002. pp103-112.
- 19 “Tiếng Dao” has been used to document songs and epic poems, thus making them somewhat more accessible to a Vietnamese-speaking audience. However, linguists in the SRV have engaged in extensive research using the International Phonetic Alphabet. See Đoàn Thiện Thuật and Mai Ngọc Chừ, *Tiếng Dao*. Hà Nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 1992.
- 20 Bộ Văn Hóa Thông Tin and Vụ Văn Hóa Dân Tộc, *Báo Tôn Lễ Hội Dân Gian Các Dân Tộc Thiểu Số Thời Kỳ Đổi Mới*. Hà Nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Thông Tin, 2007. p7.



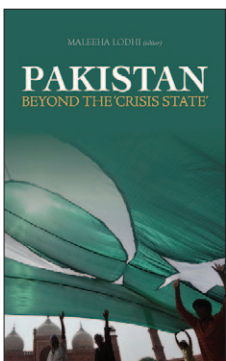
MY LIFE WITH THE TALIBAN

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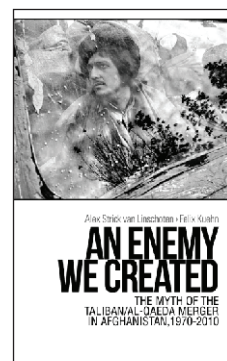
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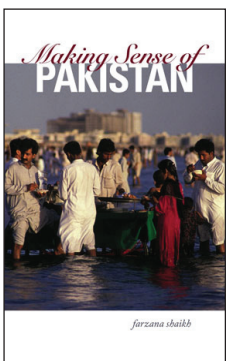
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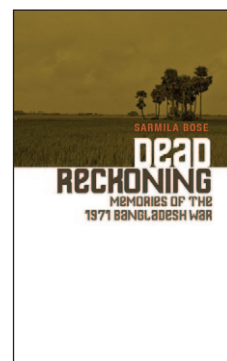
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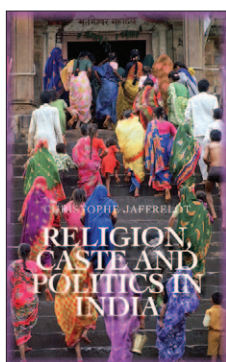
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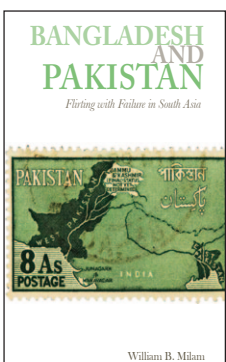


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The crown jewels lost and found

What really happened with the valuable objects and jewelry appropriated during the Japanese occupation of the Netherlands East Indies? The Japanese took over the use of 'warehouse services' during the occupation. In these occupied warehouses were kept not only the goods and property handed over to them, but also the valuable objects they confiscated, such as jewelry and antique book collections belonging to interned Dutch citizens.

Louis Zweers



The young Sultan of Pontianak, Mohammed Alkadri, with his white golden crown set with large diamonds on his *songkok* (a rimless hat). In his left hand he holds the Dutch State sword with lion and crown. 1937-38, Pontianak, West-Borneo (West-Kalimantan). From the collections of the Wereldmuseum, Rotterdam.

MOST OF THE DOCUMENTATION in the National Archive in The Hague is not about such individual cases, with the exception of the confiscation of the crown jewels of the Sultan Mohammed Alkadri of Pontianak in West-Borneo (1895-1944), who was killed by the Japanese military. An old photograph (above) from the 1930s shows the young Sultan Mohammed Alkadri, who collaborated with the Dutch-Indies government, wearing his white golden crown set with large diamonds on his *songkok* (a rimless hat). In his left hand he holds the Dutch State sword with lion and crown. Some years later, in 1941, an unknown local photographer captured for eternity the annual ritual washing of the sultan in West-Borneo (top-right). In this photograph, we see a group of young women in traditional dress and with golden crowns perched on their heads. They are holding golden ceremonial creeses and swords from the collection of the aristocratic family. As an eastern monarch, the Sultan is sitting bareheaded on his throne. A servant holding a ritual silver dish has just washed him. Directly behind him stands a Dutch government official in a white tropical suit filming the scene with a simple Kodak-camera. Never before had permission been given to film or photograph this private ceremony in the palace (*istana*). This was not only the first, but as it turned out also the last, time that this annual ceremonial ritual was captured on camera.

Pontianak, the capitol of West-Borneo, was bombed on the 19th of December 1941 by enemy Japanese airplanes. By late January 1942 the Japanese had occupied this coastal resort on the Kapusi river. A few weeks later, the entire Dutch East Indies archipelago was taken over by the Japanese troops. In the spring of 1944, Sultan Mohammed Alkadri of Pontianak along with all the male family members of the royal house (28 relatives in all) were beheaded by the Japanese occupation force, having been charged with a so-called conspiracy plot. The Japanese had the influential indigenous elite in West-Borneo murdered. Only the Sultan's son Hamid II (1913-1978)

escaped the murder party because he was staying in Java at that particular moment. After the war, Sultan Hamid II, who was educated at the Breda Royal Military Academy, held an important position in the Dutch-Indies state organization and became head of the federal state of West-Borneo.

Hamid II considered it his duty to retrieve the crown jewels that had been stolen by the Japanese during the war. He notified General MacArthur, the American Chief of Staff in Japan, in writing about this painful issue, emphasizing that the collection of crown jewels had been in the possession of his family for generations. He pointed out that the jewels were of great importance "not only for their actual value, but also as symbols of a long and proud tradition of self-government". Unfortunately, documents containing a precise description of the objects as well drawings and photos were destroyed by the Japanese military. Later, hitherto unknown photos of the crown jewels and the golden ceremonial creeses belonging to the sultan emerged. Hamid II composed a temporary inventory of the collection, which consisted of one ceremonial sword, eight golden creeses, a tiara in the shape of a crown, several golden crowns, a *pusaka*-ring of gold, and many other jewels and precious stones.

General MacArthur gave an immediate order for the recovery and identification of the traditional family jewelry belonging to the Sultan and his staff undertook an intensive investigation into the theft of the Sultan's properties. Only a few of the precious items were traced and restitution of these became difficult because of a Japanese declaration stating that these jewels had been a gift. It is true that the crown jewels had been offered to the Japanese officers by the wives of the interned Sultan and his family members to prevent their execution. This had been in vain, however. They were all killed. Here was a clear case of giving up the rights of possession under duress, so the valuables did

qualify for subsequent restitution. In the summer of 1947, the head of Foreign Affairs in Batavia handed over to the pro-Dutch Hamid II the valuable tiara, a crown made of white gold encrusted with a large number of diamonds. This restitution had a political and symbolic significance, but the great majority of the crown jewels, including the golden creeses and the ceremonial sword, were never found.

How can it be that so few valuable objects and jewelry could be found and returned? It is clear that the Dutch-Indies government was completely preoccupied with the fate of the Dutch interns, the recovery and rebuilding of the archipelago, and later with the colonial war against the Indonesian Nationals. The investigation into stolen art objects and jewelry did not have a high priority. However, in 1946 an organization called the Commission to Return Dutch-Indies Properties Abroad (*Comtieb*) was set up to deal with these matters. The office of the Dutch Military Mission (NMM) in Batavia also concerned itself with the requisition of stolen goods and objects.

The goods discovered in Japan that originated from former occupied territories were handled by the American SCAP (*Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers*) where a special department was in charge of the investigation of claims. SCAP was very strict and declared that the claims were very often accompanied by insufficient information. It was necessary to have documents, proof of ownership, drawings and photos available for the unambiguous identification of the stolen goods and objects in Japan, but very often such information was not available because they had been lost or destroyed during the war. It was also a requirement that the circumstances surrounding the loss of valuables were written down in detail, preferably including the names of persons and organizations implicated in the theft and transport to Japan. Most of the Dutch citizens who had been interned during the Japanese occupation found themselves unable to answer

Hamid II emphasized that the collection of crown jewels had been in the possession of his family for generations. He pointed out that the jewels were of great importance "not only for their actual value, but also as symbols of a long and proud tradition of self-government".

Right: Sultan Mohammed Alkadri during the annual ritual washing in the palace (*istana*). He is surrounded by women in traditional dress and with golden crowns perched on their heads. They are holding golden ceremonial creeses and swords that belong to the collection of the aristocratic family. In 1944, the Sultan was beheaded by the Japanese military and they had also looted his valuable crown jewels and creeses. 1941, Pontianak, West-Borneo (West-Kalimantan). From the author's collection.



these questions. Their homes had also been robbed, and they possessed neither documents nor photographs of the missing valuables and art objects. This bureaucratic attitude presented a clear disadvantage for many Dutch-Indies citizens.

The Dutch Military Mission made a list of reclaimed properties in Tokyo at the end of 1948. This mainly concerned stolen supplies of raw materials (such as rubber and tin), precious metals and diamonds with an estimated total value at the time of eighteen million US dollars. These goods were either returned or sold with the proceeds converted into dollars. Furthermore, there were objects less easily dealt with, such as three pianos, fifteen American Packard sedans in poor condition, six crates filled with books on geology, and a sack containing rare seeds from the Plantation Garden of Bogor. The important prehistoric skull of the *Homo Soloënsis*, the Javanese Neanderthal fossil excavated in the thirties on the bank of the river Solo on Mid Java, was rediscovered in Japan and given on loan to an American museum.

In the spring of 1949, the final deadline for submitting restitution claims to SCAP for stolen properties expired. An American survey demonstrates that in total nearly twenty million dollars' worth of Indonesian raw materials, precious metals and luxury goods were returned. Not a bad score in comparison to the situation other countries that the Japanese had occupied, but still only a fraction of what had been stolen. Still, the question remains: what are the current whereabouts of the art collections, the collections of Chinese porcelain, of antique books and of jewelry that disappeared during the Japanese occupation and the turbulent *bersiap* period?

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Above: Dutch governmental official with his wife and the *ulama* (Islamic preacher, here in white dress) Mohammed Saleh pose before the entrance of the palace (*istana*). Next to them are standing (left from the preacher) the *pangeran* (crown prince) Adipati, *pangeran Agung* and *pangeran Muda*. These crown princes were also beheaded in 1944 by the Japanese military. 1941, Pontianak, West-Borneo (West-Kalimantan). From the author's collection.

De Engel van Kebayoran



Na de soevereiniteitsoverdracht van Nederlands-Indië in december 1949 vertrekken bijna 200.000 (Indische-)Nederlanders met passagiersschepen naar het moederland. In de zomer van 1951 reist de achttienjarige Lily, studente aan het Utrechts Conservatorium, tegen deze stroom in naar Indonesië. Ze gaat naar haar man, de adellijke Amir.

Al snel neemt de antiwesterse retoriek van Soekarno steeds heftiger vormen aan. Nederlandse bedrijven en fabrieken worden genationaliseerd, de Nederlandse consulaten worden gesloten.

Lily woont met haar man en kinderen in een villawijk in Bandung waar ze steeds geïsoleerder raakt. Haar wispelturige en licht ontvlambare echtgenoot is gecharmeerd van de kosmopolitische Soekarno.

In de loop van de tijd zetten Lily's kinderen zich steeds meer af tegen hun 'blanke' achtergrond. Lily's kleindochter Lativa, 'de engel van Kebayoran', trouwt met de zoon van een zeer vermogende minister uit het Soeharto-regime. Haar zoon Guntur daarentegen raakt aan lager wal en woont in een stadskampong van Jakarta.

De engel van Kebayoran gaat over familie en liefde, verlies en angst in het turbulente postkoloniale Indonesië.

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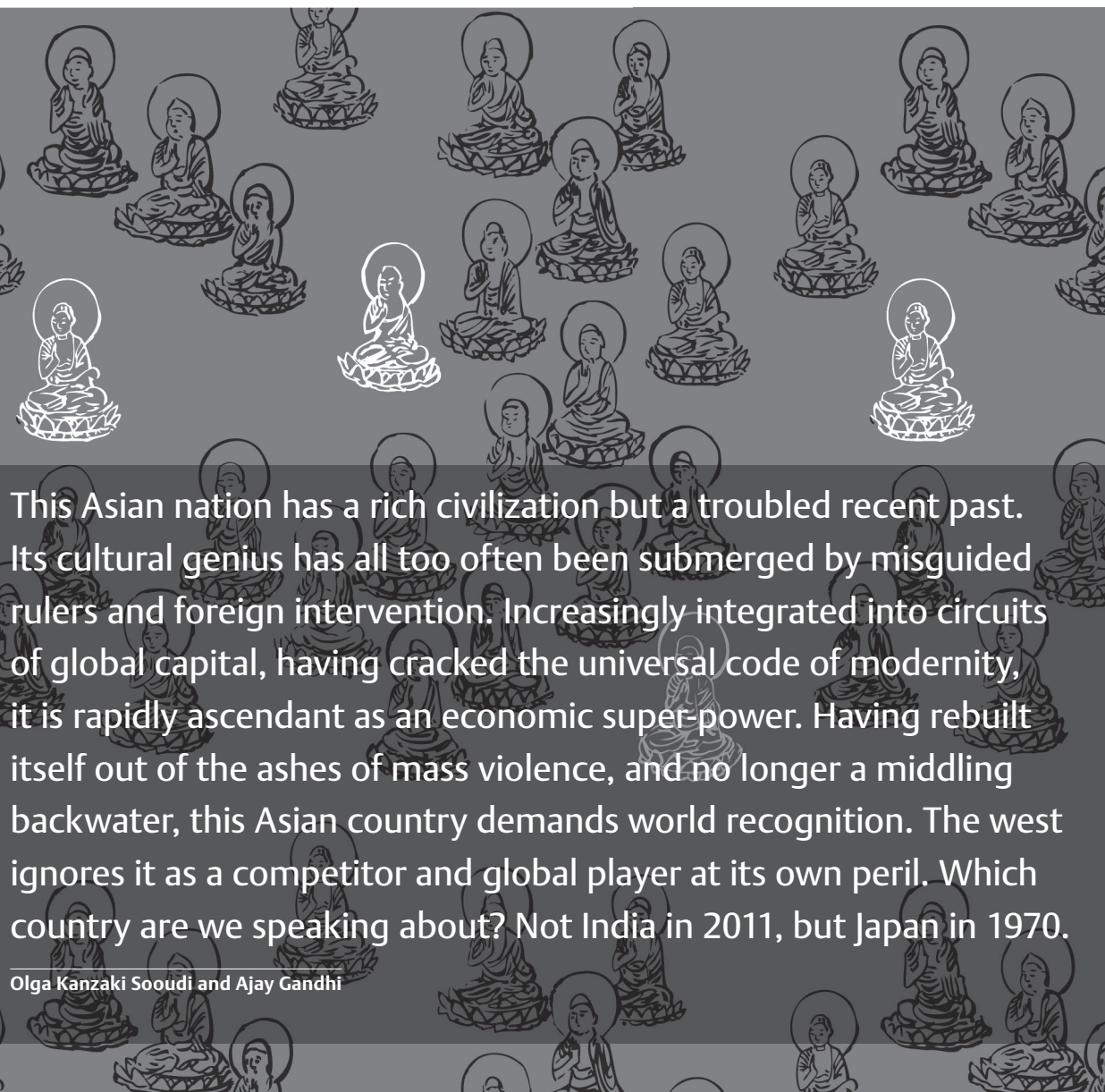


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Olga Kanzaki Sooudi and Ajay Gandhi

IN EVERYDAY PARLANCE, capitalism and modernity are separated from culture and tradition. At best, tradition is understood to be diluted by modernization; at worst, it is feared that cultures may be obliterated by the onslaught of global capitalism. These domains are opposed to each other, becoming imaginary poles in between which one makes sense of change. This familiar shorthand often crops up in discussions of globalization. For example, McDonald's and MTV are seen to flood every corner of the world, and thereby disturb pre-existing pathways.

Yet in the case of modern India and Japan, we encounter an alternative alignment of these ideas. Culture, be it in the form of aesthetic inclinations or latent hierarchies, is not simply the innermost sanctum that capitalism must colonize. Culture also enables the modern mastery of entrepreneurship and zeal for consumption.

The result is a distinctively Indian or Japanese capitalist modernity. One has only to peruse newspapers, business manuals, and popular tomes to see a multitude of such examples for India; a few decades ago, a similar set of ideas was disseminated for Japan. In this essay, we attempt to highlight how culture is a foil counterpoised to capitalist modernity. Culture, in other words, simultaneously enables and hinders its mastery in both India and Japan. We may begin to illustrate our thesis using some contemporary examples from both countries.

The eternally new India

India, it seems, is everywhere: Bollywood films are routinely screened simultaneously in American metropolises as well as domestic ones; Indian companies avidly buy up African oil fields and set up branch offices in Eastern Europe. The world is also increasingly in India: software code to be used in global mobile phones is designed in Bangalore; American treasury bills and Italian handbags are hawked to its elites. Indeed, the ubiquity of India abroad—whether as outsourcing menace or hoped-for market for multinational profit—seems only to be matched by the overwhelming presence of the outside world in India, in joint manufacturing ventures and middle-class fashions. India's fate seems increasingly intertwined with that of the larger world, its assimilation into a universal modernity a foregone conclusion.

All the more striking, then, how this process is explained, in everything from consultancy reports to self-help guides. India's ever-increasing modernization is often understood through its culture. Why is Indian governance so riddled by innumerable controversies? It is the country's accommodat-

ing Hindu ethos which invariably results in tumultuous dialogue. Why do makeshift arrangements and last-minute haste mark the completion of manufacturing contracts and service tasks? It is the culture's ingrained habit of spontaneous improvisation and deferred action. Why do Indians succeed so well in mathematics, science, and engineering? A genius for numbers is latent in the people—they invented the numeral zero, after all.

Indian culture is evoked in paeans to self-invention and entrepreneurship; yet simultaneously, it is blamed for stymieing development. For example, books by Indian business gurus in recent years have stressed that the moral lessons within ancient Hindu epics such as the *Mahabharata* can aid Indian corporate decision-making. The case that even more prosaic elements of Indian culture may buttress capitalist growth was found in a 2009 report by the consulting firm, McKinsey. The report highlighted the north Indian term *jugaad*, which can be translated as 'makeshift arrangement' or 'hasty improvisation'. The term has a range of usages, and can refer to both unsavoury acts of corruption and admirable examples of craftiness. McKinsey's use of *jugaad* was decidedly upbeat, as proof of Indians' innately entrepreneurial talent. A less flattering presence of *jugaad* was evident during the belated preparations for India's Commonwealth Games in 2010. Seeking explanations for why such a showpiece project of world-arrival was riddled with corruption and mismanagement, Indian commentators dwelt on the culture's emphasis on spiritual and metaphysical concerns over materialistic and time-dependent ones. In all of these examples, the nation's interior tradition and civilizational depth is affirmed; India's particularity is elevated even as it seems to be subsumed by placeless malls and anywhere subdivisions.

These narratives emphasize the novelty of Indian cultural pre-eminence to explain its global arrival. Yet they often reveal little that is specifically Indian or that is about the present moment. If we widen our focus, geographically and historically, we see uncannily similar notions employed when other Asian countries experience capitalism and modernity. An instructive example is provided by comparing India's recent liberalization with Japan's post-war economic rise.

Boom-time Japan

Japan, like India today, was from the 1950s onwards understood to be on an unprecedented modernization drive. By the 1970s, commentators rushed to explain Japan's acceleration as a manufacturing rival, exporting hub, and consumer market. Along with the islands' Toyota cars and Sony walkmans, a growing fear of Japanese economic domination also landed

up on the U.S.'s shores, resulting in 'Japan-bashing' in the 1980s. Business volumes extolled industrial techniques and managerial practices seen to be simultaneously hyper-modern yet rooted in Japan's ancient past and cultural specificity. In Japan, such writings, whether foreign or native-born, were part of a booming genre: *nihonjinron*, or discourses of Japaneseness. This genre bundled together notions such as cultural distinctiveness, historical arrival, national self-discipline, and innate entrepreneurial talent. While *nihonjinron* has older roots, it blossomed in the post-war period, peaking in the 1970s.

A presupposition of many *nihonjinron* narratives was that both the secrets of, and obstacles to, successful Japanese modernization were due to culture itself. The modern salaryman was the inheritor of the feudal *samurai*, carrying his discipline and aggression into the world of modern capitalist work. In the vast constellation of culturalist tenets about Japan, groupism and hierarchism are among the most enduring. These national traits were precisely what enabled Japan to become the world's post-war economic miracle and second-largest economy. They underwrote the Japanese company, and enabled utter devotion and loyalty to the firm, producing workers who were apparently untroubled by extreme overwork and enforced workplace conviviality. The same was true for the very young. The ferocious academic competition and cram schools of the Japanese education system were upheld as a culturally unique cornerstone of national prowess.

Yet in parallel interpretations the same traits had quite the opposite effect. From the mid-twentieth century, Japanese businessmen were often called 'economic animals' to describe aggressive, impersonal business behavior. Aggression and discipline similarly echoed descriptions of Japanese imperial incursions across Asia, just a few decades previous, bringing to mind images of Japanese soldiers who treated colonial subjects and prisoners of war with notorious cruelty and brutality. In this sense, the Japanese corporate salaryman, who carried out his work with selfless discipline and precision, on whose back the successes of post-war Japan were forged, is also the descendant of a violent, and shameful history. The prolific use of terms like *samurai*, *hara-kiri* (ritual suicide), and *kamikaze* pilots to describe Japanese business culture and society in general at the time attests to the assumption of a direct inheritance from the past to the present.

In other words, culture is simultaneously the source of 'character flaws' that perennially threaten Japan's international ambitions, epitomized by Japan's *shimaguni* or 'island-nation' mentality. This latter term is frequently deployed in Japan to explain various social shortcomings, such as Japanese hierarchism, suppression of individual creativity, and why Japanese are bad at self-expression and frown upon people who stand out. Thus Japanese culture must be a foil for both the mastery of capitalism and modernity as well as the seemingly irrational failure to adapt. Accordingly, in recent years, reports of Japan's aversion to immigration, despite a looming demographic crunch, have located the inability to manage coming labour shortages in the exceptionally strong hold of an especially homogeneous culture. As we shall see, such discourses of cultural exceptionalism are a highly seductive means of presenting and legitimizing the Asian on the global stage. Yet, as we argue, their inevitable effect is a depoliticization of the notion of culture itself.

The paradox of culture

Juxtaposing these narratives of India and Japan, we see an irresistible paradox: in either place, at many points in recent history: cultural particularity becomes both the source of, and the hurdle to, modernization. Unlike Europe or America, these Asian countries, howsoever much they are suffused with gadgets and fashion, irrespective of their export of factories and films, retain their essential selves. In the following sections, we sketch a modest genealogy of the assertion of Japanese and Indian cultural particularity in the context of modernization. The stock narratives of recent decades are set against a longer history of thought, stretching back to the nineteenth century, of how these places relate to the wider world. In so doing, we maintain that the seeming novelty of Japanese and Indian entanglements with capitalism and modernity elides a longer pattern of similar thinking.

As we will show, this analytical move is not merely an intellectual trend to be deconstructed; such narratives have consequences. For example, an emphasis on distilled cultural markers and civilizational histories obscures conscious political choices. Moreover, though the culture that is spoken about is leached of politics, it usually affirms state-approved notions. Inconvenient signs which may upset the culturalist frame—heterogeneous rather than homogenous ethnic roots, the messy legacy of historic in and out migration, shifting borders of the putative nation—tend to get jettisoned.

The fetish for culture In India and Japan

Our task, then, is not simply to place contemporary discourses within a longer, geographically-bounded history within both countries. To do so would restate the position that we seek to critique: that India and Japan relate primarily through their cultural particularity to the global and modern, as if in discrete, self-contained silos. Instead, we emphasize that Japan and India –howsoever complicated and distinct their trajectories in the wider world have been –are united by a shared affirmation of cultural particularity. This recourse to culture to explain a nation's success or failure at modernity, despite its appearances, often fails to impart an empirical description of a specific place. Indeed, the picture of Indian or Japanese culture that frequently emerges remains flat and obscure. Culture becomes not an explanation for how capitalism and modernity have remade Japanese cities and Indian selves; it is often an anti-explanation.

The fact remains, then, of culture's longevity as a default explanation in studies of modernizing Asia, as well as in Asian self-narratives. What we attempt to foreground is that the emphasis on culture grows stronger, not weaker, as India and Japan are integrated into forms of universal modernity. Globally, India and Japan are ubiquitous whether in migrant communities or restaurant fads. Yet howsoever much modernization or capitalism take hold, the culturally particular stubbornly persists. Contrasting examples of the failure of Japan and India to successfully adapt to capitalist modernity –coded in terms of certain inefficiencies or predispositions –are likewise culturalized, unlike similar processes in Germany or America.

Historic Japan

Japan's culture would strike many as so different from India's so as to be incomparable; yet upon closer inspection we find many of the same narrative strands. By examining the history of the culture trope in discussions about Japan and Japaneseness, we may see how culturalist notions have been used to forge an unchanging cultural essence that has underwritten modern nation-building and yet continues to over-determine all things Japanese.

One previous incarnation of the stereotypes that proliferated in Japan's economic heyday are found in American anthropologist Ruth Benedict's (in)famous 1946 book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Benedict encapsulated Japanese national character in a pithy dichotomy: one face was cruelty and aggression, the other, a unique aesthetic sense and appreciation of beauty. Benedict's study was commissioned by the American government, as part of an effort to understand enemy behavior in the Second World War. Here, Japanese are a paradox: both 'loyal and treacherous', 'militaristic and aesthetic', 'aggressive and unaggressive'. The book has had a huge influence on studies of Japan since, especially in the U.S. Though abundantly critiqued and lambasted by scholars as an example of antiquated anthropological ethnocentrism, Benedict may have had the last laugh: Japan continues to be understood in terms of the poles of aesthetic refinement and hostile defensiveness.

Aesthetics are, of course, an important domain of any society. Both Japan and India are well-known for their aesthetic productions, and art, fashion, and craft are deployed as important national ambassadors for popularizing the countries abroad today. In the case of Japan, the idea of a distinctively Japanese aesthetic sense as the core of cultural essence has a long history. Cherry blossoms, geisha, kimonos, and the tea ceremony, as well as their fresher-faced counterparts, like *anime* and *manga* figures, and the clean 'zen'-like lines of Japanese fashion, are all part of the all-too-familiar iconography of Japan abroad. Yet this was not always the case. Arguably, in Japan, the creation of a thing identifiable as 'Japanese culture' was part of nation-building itself. The Meiji Restoration in 1868 saw the end of the feudal period and a transition into modern forms of governance and unprecedented levels of nationalization. Over the next decades, language and education were standardized, industrialization proceeded apace, and urban centers boomed. At the same time, the state had high ambitions for the new Japan to meet the apparent demands of a modern nation-state and growing empire.

The work of many prominent Japanese thinkers in the early twentieth century often sought to outline a cohesive Japanese identity that was both unique and modern, that is, on par with the west. For instance, in a famous speech he delivered to students in Tokyo in 1914, the novelist Natsume Soseki lambasted the Japanese for following all things western 'blindly', and exhorted young men to not parade about in these 'borrowed clothes' but embrace their Japaneseness instead.

What was this Japaneseness? One compelling version was put forth by the philosopher Kuki Shuzo in 1930. After spending nine years in Europe, he penned his famous treatise on

Japanese aesthetic sensibilities, *Iki no kozo*. Kuki's main argument is that Japaneseness can be encapsulated in a specific aesthetic and philosophical concept he develops, called *iki*. Given its cultural specificity, there is no translation for this term; similarly, it is not imitable by non-Japanese. *Iki* finds expression in a huge range of things –from colors to textile patterns to certain bodily postures and even attitudes towards life. While lacking clear definition, *iki* is the enduring cultural essence that distinguishes Japan(ese) from everything else, and makes it special in the modern world. Reading almost like a manual in taste, Kuki's work was part of drawing a particular kind of 'culturescape' in 1930s and 1940s Japan, wherein culturalized aesthetics was linked to the nation-state. Aestheticized representations of the state were a key part of ultranationalist ideology in imperial Japan.

We see echoes of Kuki's ideas in more contemporary mainstream Japan and abroad. Pioneering Japanese fashion designers working in Europe from the 1980s like Hanae Mori, Yohji Yamamoto, and Rei Kawakubo, became famous as 'Japanese designers', meaning that their creative productions were inevitably defined by their national origin. While this use of culture may enable the Japanese artist to successfully market themselves in the global economy, it is an ambiguous burden. As frequent remarks about the imitative nature of Japanese (and Asian) mastery of western cultural forms like classical music imply, Japanese people and products are often doomed to be only that –Japanese, failing to achieve acceptance in more universal terms.

Historic India

Contemporary Indian commentators often express qualms about the breakneck speed of modernization. Changes since India's socialist, state-planned economy was unwound in the early 1990s –a rapidly expanding housing market, opportunities in information technology, the avid pursuit of social distinction through personal consumption –are often greeted positively. Yet unease remains: will crass materialism blot out India's civilizational inheritance in music and poetry; has the zeal for self-invention and facility with the foreign unmoored Indians from their culture?

As it happens, despite the novelty of privatized skyscrapers and the democratization of car ownership, this anxiety –that capitalism and modernity are eclipsing or extinguishing culture –is now new. Indeed, such worries might be understood as the latest iteration of a recurring preoccupation dating to the nineteenth century.

Then as now, a highly-educated and self-consciously national intelligentsia looked askance at the forces unleashed by foreign investment. Of course, by the late nineteenth century, the height of British colonialism, these issues took on a decidedly political and moral cast. Industrialization and technocratic governance, in their extracting and disciplining functions, were seen as an unwanted impingement from elsewhere.

An abiding interest, then, was to mark out the institutions and ideals by which Indians could eventually steer their destiny. The problem was in recalibrating such terms: by the modern period, destiny, and related terms such as fate, were bywords for Indian cultural group-think, dooming natives to timeless backwardness. Indeed, as the British consolidated their rule on the subcontinent, they catalogued indigenous rituals, folk traditions and religious pathways –and usually found them degraded and irrational. Indian culture, whether couched in appreciative, exoticist terms, or condescending, retrograde tones, was invariably counterpoised to modern planning and capitalist efficiency. Karl Marx, in the nineteenth century, may have been especially upbeat, though he was hardly alone, in foreseeing the imminent extinction of Indian feudal habits and cultural morays through capitalism.

The response, by a wide swatch of Indian intellectuals, religious reformers, and nationalist cadres, was to conceive of an inner cultural domain that was simultaneously rational and untainted by an exterior modernity. Culture could provide a vocabulary for authentic institutions in the contemporary world; simultaneously, it was the core vault which modernity could not unlock. To this effect, a two-pronged strategy was in evidence: to streamline cumbersome beliefs and reform antiquated institutions, and use these modernized forms of culture to underwrite political self-determination and industrial policy.

For example, by the late 19th century, the *Arya Samaj*, a prominent Hindu revivalist movement, initiated educational institutions which sought to recover and disseminate religious teachings, in a regimented and nationalist setting. Seeing Indian culture as coterminous with Hindu epics and ancient Sanskrit had political effects, even in domains that were avowedly non-political. Prominent reformers and nationalists identified Indian Muslims as well as British colonializers

as enemies of cultural purity. A less militant version of the fetish for culture came in the nationalist *swadeshi* movement. Popularized in the early twentieth century, it privileged local manufacturing over foreign goods. *Swadeshi* fused an exalted place for culture with the exhortation to productively work for the nation.

The *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*, in the mid-twentieth century, further glorified a timeless culture via modern techniques of organization and discipline. This Hindu nationalist organization conjoined physical drills and spiritual education with an ambitious platform of community service and political activism. A recurrent presence in communal clashes between Hindus and Muslims after independence, it helped achieve a near-monopoly for seeing Indian culture as Hindu culture. A more prosaic example of how culture came to underwrite capitalist modernity came in the mid to late twentieth century government policy of import substitution, whereby foreign consumer goods were to be mimicked domestically. A descendent of the *swadeshi* movement, import substitution was an often inefficient and derivative industrial policy. Nevertheless, it ideologically contrasted India's nobler society vis-à-vis a rapacious western capitalism.

As in Japan, the ongoing production of a depoliticized notion of Indian culture unwittingly echoes the intellectual undercurrents of nation-building. The modernization of India from the 19th century onwards –as expressed in reformist movements and the proliferation of nativist theories of governance –was then, as now, accompanied by the talk of culture. This culturalist discourse did a political job a hundred years ago and continues to do so today: incarnating select groups included within the rubric of the people, targeting others as traitorous, and, most of all displacing such self-conscious choices onto the stony edifice of culture.

Asian cosmopolitan?

This essay has explored the enduring fetish for culture as a foil for capitalism and modernity in commonsense, everyday understandings of Asia. In contrast to some understandings that make a strict separation between these domains, we have sought, using contemporary and historical examples from India and Japan, to show that culture is frequently seen to both enable and frustrate the triumph of globalization. We have sought to historicize the contemporary elevation of culture as an explanation for myriad ills and successes, and by doing so, have argued that culture invariably becomes a black box, masking political choices and often offering obscure explanations for social predicaments. The surge of narratives fixating on, and elevating, India's culture as the source and the impediment to greater rationalization, trade and consumption, we have argued, does not differ in this respect from that accompanying the post-war boom years in Japan.

A reminder of the endurance of such narratives, and the depoliticizing effect of them, is in Japan's latest globalized incarnation is as a 'cultural superpower'. The Japanese government recently began the 'Cool Japan' initiative, which seeks to re-brand the nation as exporter of the arts and Japanese 'cool'. This year (2011), the government plans to pump over US\$230 million into the creative industries, in the hope that culture will resuscitate a flagging economy. In this state-led vision, *anime*, *manga*, fashion, and urban subcultures are ironically rehabilitated from their more popular and diffuse roots as part of nation-building. Japan is represented as wellspring of the creative avant-garde, quirky, edgy, and ahead of the curve. Yet, as this essay has suggested, how much of this is really new? Japan is once again synonymous with culture, in slightly different, more high-tech garb.

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Bibliographic note

Given the historical and geographic sweep of the topic, the public readership of the newsletter, and space limits, we have not given direct citations in this essay. Our observations are informed by ethnographic fieldwork in Japan and India, and many popular media sources. We have also drawn from the writings on India of Bernard Cohn, Partha Chatterjee, Manu Goswami, Thomas Blom Hansen, Ronald Inden, Andrew Sartori, and Thomas Trautmann; and on Japan the writings of Kuki Shuzo, Harry Harootunian, Leslie Pincus, Dorinne Kondo, Ezra Vogel, Natsume Soseki, and Ruth Benedict.

“Love travels downwards”

...or the role of compassion in the exchange of support between elderly Sakhalin Koreans and their children.

Dorota Szawarska



IN THE YEAR 2000 a 978 strong group of Sakhalin Koreans moved into a newly built apartment complex in Ansan, a 40 minute drive from Seoul. They were welcomed with banners, speeches and celebrations. This was a moment of great joy, yet tears poured down the lined faces. They were returning to Korea after about 60 long years of absence. In the crowd of Sakhalin Repatriates, there were no young faces and no children. Only the first generation was permitted to return. Their apartment complex, called the ‘Home Village’, was to be a retirement community.

The returnees are former forced labourers, their wives and elderly children. The men were initially ‘encouraged’, but eventually forced, by the Japanese government to move to Sakhalin Island in the 1930s and 1940s (Naitou 2006, 93-4). Following the Second World War, these Korean labourers were trapped on the island, by then under the control of the USSR. Japan was not interested in recovering its former citizens of Korean descent, and the Soviet Union needed workers on Sakhalin. Despite earlier attempts and campaigns, it was not until the 1990s that Japan and South Korea initiated and co-funded a limited repatriation program, which included only those Sakhalin Koreans born before the end of the war in 1945; as a result, only the first generation was permitted to resettle in South Korea, effectively leaving children and grandchildren behind on Sakhalin (for further details of the repatriation, see Choi Ki-Young 2004). But why did the repatriates choose to accept this rather drastic condition and leave their families behind in Russia? And what does this tell us about the intergenerational relations amongst Sakhalin Koreans and perhaps also in South Korea itself?

The residents of the Home Village received a living allowance that at the time of my fieldwork (2005-6) was equivalent to US\$700 per month per couple, or US\$400 for a single person. Despite being forbidden to take up formal employment, many of the younger elderly continued to work. Often a large proportion of the earnings was sent back to Russia to support adult children and grandchildren. Even where the elderly were not working, they saved and economised in order to have something for the grandchildren. Their help took many different forms depending on individual circumstances, but was at times very substantial. The repatriates sent money that contributed to the purchase of a house or a flat or that enabled grandchildren to attend university; they helped to pay bank credits and provided money that made the survival of unemployed or underemployed children possible. Even when children had well-established careers, money was given in order to make their lives easier.

Within the English language material on elderly parents and intergenerational support in Korea, the focus is usually on the norm of filial piety. The main focus is its impact and its various forms in Korean society past and present, how it is maintained, how it changes, and how individuals occasionally fail to live up to the ideal. While recently the rhetoric of exchange of support might have changed from that of Confucian values and duties to negotiation (e.g. Cho Mi-Kyeong 2003), the flow of support is seen as mainly flowing from the younger generations towards the elderly (though for a notable exception, see Lee *et al* 2008). The impact of the elderly as providers of child care and other support is of course recognized, but in terms of moral norms governing support exchange between the elderly and the young, the duty of the young to support the old still takes

precedence in the discussion. It is not my aim here to question the importance of filial piety. Rather, having observed the extensive efforts of the Sakhalin Korean elderly to support the younger generations, I want to explore another dimension of intergenerational exchange of support.

Given that the children and many of the grandchildren were adults with families, households and earnings of their own, I enquired about the rationale of this generosity. The explanation that I expected to hear was one stressing family solidarity, where the elderly found themselves obliged to provide support in the common interest of the family. But in fact the repatriates saw themselves as having few obligations towards their adult children. Rather, they found themselves compelled to give out of compassion and love. Unsurprisingly, compassion was usually felt most for those in greatest need. Consequently most support was given where future material reciprocity was least likely. Consider the story of Grandfather Yuri (73):

— I have three children, two sons and a daughter, but I guess I help the daughter and her daughter the most. I mean, take the granddaughter. She is studying in Moscow, in one of the best universities in the country. I know that she is studying very hard, and that life in Moscow is very expensive. And you know, now in Russia some people are very rich, but not my granddaughter. So when I imagine that other female students are dressed in new, fashionable clothes and my girl can't afford to buy a new scarf or whatever, my heart bleeds. It hurts to imagine such a thing. So I have to help her!

In the year preceding my fieldwork the daughter received US\$5000 from her parents, whereas her brothers received US\$1000 each. Grandfather Yuri was not too keen to give money to his sons. The youngest was deemed irresponsible (and besides, he had already received the family house), and the eldest was a very successful businessman who had little need for the money. But the daughter was a widowed nurse, who worked hard and struggled to support herself and her daughter, so of the three children she was in the greatest need of help.

While shared identity with one's children and grandchildren and notions of family solidarity were elements of this rationale for exchange of support, it was the language of compassion rather than duty that was chosen to explain it. There was more going on here than simple provision of support. Compassion was the idiom of interconnectedness with the distant children. One could not simply stand by and watch one's children suffer. One had to do something. This was not just because the children were seen as suffering, but because parents suffered with them; support, growing out of compassion and co-suffering, alleviated suffering on both sides. The condition of one generation was reflected in the other (see Tapias 2006), and compassion compelled the repatriates to act. In their explanations, compassion served both as a mechanism and a justification for their actions. It was a medium through which being a parent was practised.

While compassion contained within itself a strong element of compulsion, actions stemming from it were spoken of as being evidence of the inner goodness of a person. To simply fulfil duties and obligations would not make one a good person. While compassion was spoken of in terms of compulsion to act, it was recognised that the elderly parents chose through kindness to follow that compulsion. Being compassionate meant being compelled to do good while not formally obliged to do so.

Support given out of compassion transcended notions of formal, material reciprocity. Help was given where it was seen as most needed, and apart from acknowledgement, no future reciprocity was expected. Help was given by those able to give, to those in need. Thus in the above example, future assistance was most expected from the eldest son – the child who received the least from his parents – and not from the daughter who was receiving the most current support. Where compassion was concerned, there was no give or take, and no reckoning of deeds past or future. Compassion was very much a personal inclination that surpassed social obligations. If any notion of gratitude was at work, it was the notion of gratitude of caring: “where the gratitude involves a personal relationship associated with love and bonding, and it is different in that giving benefits and receiving benefits are mutually supportive: Literally, the more you give, the more you get” (Buck 2004:101).

Compassion for one's children was also part of the motivation for returning to Korea. The repatriates did not want to burden their children with looking after the elderly. They were afraid that their growing needs, both financial and practical, would be a strain and a source of worry to the children. And so one of my informants, Anna Nikolayevna (65), having just helped her adult son to purchase property in Moscow, balked at the idea that her son should look after her in the future.

— No way. He has a family of his own - a baby daughter and a wife. They already demand a lot of effort and attention. To expect help from him, to demand it, it would be like hanging a heavy rock around his neck that would weigh him to the ground. That would be wrong. In any case, I would probably need his wife's assistance at some point and that would just be too uncomfortable for both of us. We never lived together, I hardly know her. So now that the flat is almost paid for, I will still carry on working. So that we have money to visit Russia, but also to save for the future, just in case one of us becomes sick, and there are medical bills or a carer to be paid for. But it would be wonderful if they gave me their daughter to look after, if only for a couple of years!

Here compassion played a role in the exchange of support in two ways. Firstly, it contributed to the wealth and harmony of the children's household. Once the elderly moved to Korea, there was little need for the children to worry about their parents, in either financial and practical matters, as the living allowance in Korea was adequate and the living conditions more appropriate to their age. Secondly, and more importantly, through their decision to move to Korea, the elderly created a situation where in most cases the adult children could not and did not have to support the elderly much. Because the decision to migrate was that of the elderly, the children could not be seen as defaulting on their obligations towards their parents. Their parents' decision to migrate enabled the children to remain good people in the eyes of the community and to get on with their everyday lives – though the repatriation did not of course release the children from the obligation to attend their parents' funerals or visit their parents when the situation absolutely demanded it.

Sakhalin Koreans were influenced by Russian culture in their practices. As often in Russia, the focus of the family effort was on the youngest members of the family, and the elderly sidelined their own needs for the sake of the children and grandchildren (Caldwell 2004, Barsukova 2006). However, this also fits with Korean notions of the parent-child relationship. To speak of sacrifice for the sake of the children and strong identification with their interest in the context of Korean culture is not new. However, usually it is spoken of in the context of much younger children and much younger parents, for example in terms of sacrifices needed for children's education (Park So-Jin 2007) or the purchase of property. But being a parent does not cease when the children reach adulthood, and the parental care-giving role is not necessarily easily transformed into one of care-receiving (Lee Dong-Ok *et al* 2008). Where in the context of supporting one's children, Sakhalin Korean spoke of compassion, perhaps South Koreans would speak of love travelling downwards. But one thing appears to be clear. The discussion and understanding of morality and the practice of intergeneration exchange of support between elderly parents and their children should be extended beyond the discussion of the norm of filial piety and the assumption that the elderly are always the net recipients of support.

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Above: Photo by Dorota Szawarska.

An international-scale language library to open in Paris

Francis Richard

BULAC

[វិទ្យាស្ថាន] [جامعية] [மொழிகள] [十:0o]

Bibliothèque universitaire
des langues et civilisations

The *Bibliothèque universitaire des Langues et civilisations* (BULAC) (Languages and Civilisations University Library) is to open its doors in Autumn 2011 in the new premises of the languages and civilisations centre, in what is now referred to as "Paris's new Latin Quarter", in the 13th *arrondissement*. The BULAC is making this location its new home—close to the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* and the new campus of the *Université de Paris Diderot*—with the *Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales* (INALCO) (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations).

The BULAC is a radically modern library which will be open to students and researchers, with seating for 360 persons in the research area, and more than 200,000 volumes freely available. The rooms can be booked for small groups as well as for individual use, and will be available for use by researchers 24 hours a day. The aim was to create a tool suited to the particular needs of people conducting research from France and other parts of the world, providing them with comprehensive documentation on languages and civilisations at a single location.

BULAC's administrative status itself makes it a unique establishment as it is a collaboration of eight partners,* bringing together universities, libraries and research centres which have consigned their document collections to the library. After its opening to the public, the second phase of the project will focus on opening premises close to the library to be used exclusively by research working groups.

The collections housed by the BULAC make up around two million documents, 60% of which are in their original languages. The number of languages represented is far greater than the hundred or so languages taught at the INALCO, totalling, as it does, around 350. As well as these works in and on different languages, the documents concern social sciences and cultural studies. All collections are envisaged to grow through purchases, donations and exchanges. Provisions are being made for a gradual increase in digital resources.

We are confident that BULAC will prove to be a vital resource for researchers, first of all through its Russian collections, but equally for its materials on Indian, African, Japanese and Chinese studies, as well as for a variety of language-related areas which are not covered by other libraries in France. BULAC will also become the home of an important collection of periodicals, including a number of old and very rare journals.

The old books, including the historic collection of the *École des langues orientales* (School of Oriental Languages), and the rare manuscripts and documents, will be available for reference in a specially fitted 'Reserve' room, and will be assigned to areas not open to the public. The BULAC collection is hugely valuable for the history of the study of languages and that of oriental printing methods.

BULAC, which will be open to both researchers and to the general public, will endeavour to meet the increasing need for documents pertaining to linguistic fields which are unavailable in most other French libraries. It is currently drawing up agreements with several important establishments in France, including the BnF (National Library of France), but it is also desiring to establish partnerships and work together with Europe's biggest libraries with similar areas of interest.

Francis Richard
Scientific director at the BULAC
www.bulac.fr

Note

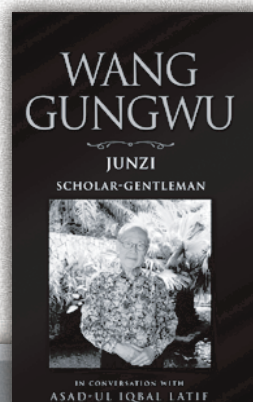
Among the libraries consigning their collections to the BULAC are the *Bibliothèque interuniversitaire des Langues orientales* (BIULO) (Inter-university Library of Oriental Languages), which is the biggest contributor, the *Bibliothèque d'études iraniennes J. Darmesteter* (Iranian Studies Library), the Indian collections of J. Bloch, M. Biarreau and C. Vaudeville from the *École pratique des hautes études* (EPHE) (School of Advanced Studies), the library of the Centre d'études slaves (Slavic Studies Centre), the Sorbonne, and the Korean collections from the *Université Paris Diderot*. The BULAC collections will also comprise other major oriental collections from, among others, the *École des Hautes études en sciences sociales* (EHESS) (School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences), and the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFEO) (French School of Far East Studies).

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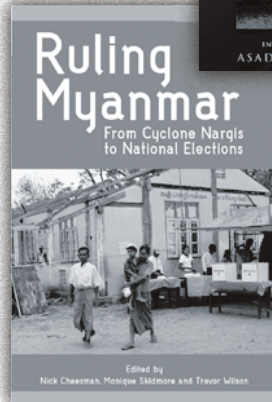
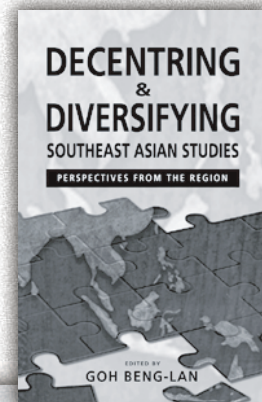
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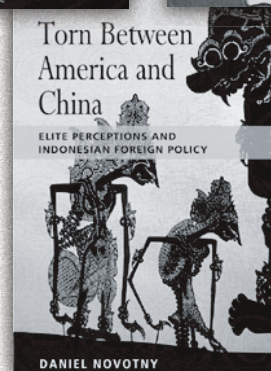
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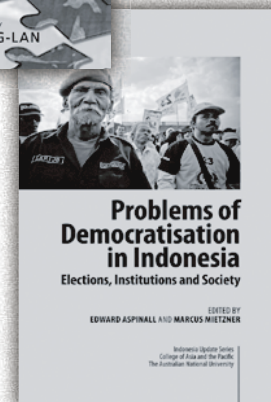
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Book publishing in Cambodia

Kheng Pytou Kethya

WHEN THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT opened the country to a free market in 1993, new possibilities emerged for authors to transform their manuscripts into printed books available for sale on the market, but the manuscripts that emerged were mostly fictions. Educational materials in the humanities and the social sciences were lacking. The country was suffering from a near total absence of academic human resources as a result of the past civil conflict, while the few communist-era materials and literatures available were, for the most part, obsolete.

The kind of academic materials needed were only available in foreign languages. Books in English or French books were too expensive and beyond the abilities of most Cambodian readers to understand. In addition, the existing capacities in publishing and translation in Cambodia were—and still are—scattered and fragmented. Until a few years ago, no real translation capacities existed for academic publications. The country suffered from a chronic lack of publishing houses, editors, writers and authors, particularly at the academic level. This situation had a negative impact on the fast-growing population of undergraduate and graduate students and academics flocking to the newly opened universities.

There are still many specific difficulties that keep the Cambodian publishing sector today very fragile and, in comparison with neighboring countries, very expensive:

- Most of the printing materials are imported from other countries; not even paper is locally produced
- The highest possible market price is US\$7 per copy
- The pool of professional editors and translators is very limited
- The national distribution systems remain erratic
- Many Cambodians still see no need, or lack the means, to buy books

Nokorwat Publishing

Nokorwat Publishing was established in July 2010 under the management of the Nokorwat Media Center, which combines a group of experienced Cambodian professionals originating from different local academic and cultural (often non-profit) publishers such as Sastra Publishing, Nou Hach Journal, Center for Khmer Studies, Reyum Institute, and the Buddhist

Institute. The parties came together with the shared vision of filling the need for good quality books in the Khmer language published in Cambodia. Their objective is to work closely with authors and publishers, publishers and the readers. Nokorwat Publishing's mission is:

- To provide education services that allow all readers to experience learning successes and become life-long learners and contributing members of society.
- To publish social sciences and humanity materials that are useful and valuable for advanced research in Cambodian higher education.
- To produce books with a high technical publishing quality, at prices that are accessible to common researchers.
- To encourage authors to write manuscripts about Cambodia in Khmer and English.
- To improve reading habits among Cambodian peoples.
- To promote a full-scale development of book publishing activities in Cambodia, from writing through production to distribution.

We aim to act as a strong and capable private institution, cooperating with local professionals and responding to Cambodia's development challenges.

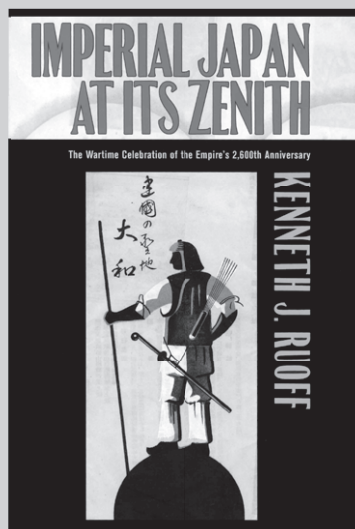
Nokorwat publishing is a relatively big publisher that can produce variety of materials: children's books, comics, fiction, non-fiction and research documents. Beside those publications we also offer a selection of high quality materials translated from foreign languages into Khmer, although this is difficult because of the high cost of translation work.

We are confident that the vision of Nokorwat Publishing will continue to transform the Cambodian publishing environment. In this way, we hope to contribute to making Cambodian society a learned one, able to adapt to the information and knowledge challenges in the world of today.

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Bookmarked

Imperial Japan at Its Zenith *The Wartime Celebration of the* *Empire's 2,600th Anniversary*

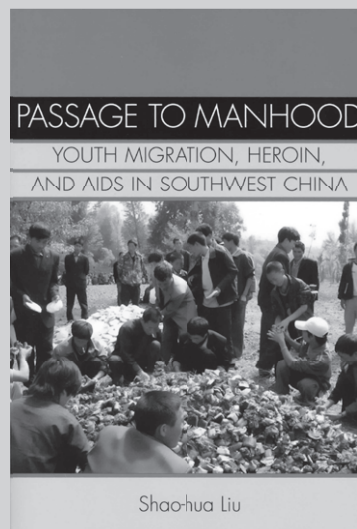


By **Kenneth J. Ruoff**
Cornell University Press, 2010
ISBN 978 0 8014 4866 9
xv + 238 pages, hardback

IN 1940, JAPAN was into its third year of war with China, and relations with the United States were deteriorating, but it was a heady time for the Japanese nonetheless. That year, the Japanese commemorated the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Empire of Japan. According to the imperial myth-history, Emperor Jimmu, descended from the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, established the 'unbroken imperial line' in 660 BCE. In carefully choreographed ceremonies throughout the empire, through new public monuments, with visual culture, and through heritage tourism, the Japanese celebrated the extension of imperial rule under the 124th emperor, Hirohito.

These celebrations, the climactic moment for the ideology that was central to modern Japan's identity until the imperial cult's legitimacy was bruised by defeat in 1945, are little known outside Japan. *Imperial Japan at Its Zenith*, the first book in English about the 2,600th anniversary, examines the themes of the celebration and what they tell us about Japan at mid-century. Kenneth J. Ruoff emphasizes that wartime Japan did not reject modernity in favour of nativist traditionalism. Instead, like Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, it embraced reactionary modernism. Ruoff also highlights the role played by the Japanese people in endorsing and promoting imperial ideology and expansion, documenting the significant grassroots support for the cult of the emperor and for militarism.

Passage to Manhood *Youth Migration, Heroin and* *AIDS in Southwest China*



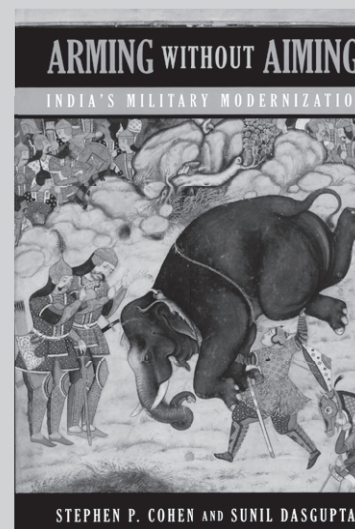
By **Shao-hua Liu**
Stanford University Press, 2010
ISBN 978 0 8047 7025 5
xiv + 232 pages, paperback

MODERNITY, THE GRAND NARRATIVE of the twentieth century, has provided the backdrop for sweeping global changes unforeseen in human history. China has been a particularly tumultuous arena of diverse modernization projects. *Passage to Manhood* examines the local ramifications of China's modernity drive in the lives of the minority Nuosu people in the Sichuan province of southwestern China.

The book addresses the intersection of modernity, heroin use, and HIV/AIDS as they are embodied in a new rite of passage among young men. Through a nuanced analysis of the Nuosu population, this book seeks to answer why the Nuosu have a disproportionately large number of opiate users and HIV positive individuals compared to others in Sichuan. By focusing on the experiences of Nuosu migrants and drug users, it shows how multiple modernities, individual yearnings, and societal resilience have become entwined in the Nuosu's calamitous encounter with the Chinese state and, after long suppression, their efforts at cultural reconstruction.

This ethnography pits Nuosu youth adventures, as part of their passage to manhood, against the drastic social changes in their community and, more broadly, China over the last half century. It offers material for courses on migration, globalization, youth culture, public health, and development at both undergraduate and graduate level.

Arming without Aiming *India's Military Modernization*



By **Stephen P. Cohen and Sunil Dasgupta**
Bookings Institution Press, 2010
ISBN 978 0 8157 0402 7
xvi + 224 pages, hardback

INDIA'S GROWING AFFLUENCE has led experts to predict a major rearmament effort. The second-most populous nation in the world is beginning to wield the economic power expected of such a behemoth. Its border with Pakistan is a tinderbox, the subcontinent remains vulnerable to religious extremism, and a military rivalry between India and China could erupt in the future. India has long has the motivation for modernizing its military—it now has the resources as well. What should we expect to see in the future, and what will be the likely ramifications? In *Arming without Aiming*, Stephen Cohen and Sunil Dasgupta answer those crucial questions.

India's armed forces want new weapons worth more than US\$100 billion. But most of these weapons must come from foreign suppliers due to the failures of India's indigenous research and development. Weapons suppliers from other nations are queuing up in New Delhi. A long relationship between India and Russian manufacturers goes back to the cold war. More recently, India and Israel have developed military trade ties. Now, a new military relationship with the United States has generated the greatest hope for military transformation in India.

Against this backdrop of new affluence and newfound access to foreign military technology, the authors investigate India's military modernization to find haphazard military change that lacks political direction, suffers from balkanization of military organization and doctrine, and is driven by the pursuit of technology free from military-strategic objectives. The character of military change in India, especially the dysfunction in the political-military establishment with regard to procurement, is ultimately the result of a historical doctrine of strategic restraint in place since Nehru. In that context, its approach of arming without strategic purpose remains viable as India seeks great-power accommodation of its rise and does not want to look threatening. The danger lies in its modernization efforts precipitating a period of strategic assertion or contributing to misperception of India's intentions by Pakistan and China, its two most immediate rivals.

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Supplementary education in Asia

The theme of this issue of the Newsletter, supplementary education, embraces lessons beyond school time in domains that relate to the official school curriculum. The focus is on programmes that charge fees and are operated by the private sector. Japan's *juku* and South Korea's *hagwons* are major manifestations of this phenomenon. In some countries, teachers provide extra lessons for their students in exchange for a fee. Other forms of supplementary education include one-to-one tutoring by university students for secondary students.

The existence of supplementary education may be contextualised within wider patterns. Education has become increasingly central to national self-perception and public discourse. Some of this prominence has been stimulated by UNESCO's Education for All (EFA) agenda and by the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Some policy themes and research foci – such as accountability, choice, and excellence – have spread globally and serve as cornerstones for public debates and understanding. Yet despite this attention, the growth and spread of supplementary education has generally escaped public scrutiny. The phenomenon deserves more attention, in Asia as much as in the rest of the world, especially since some of the most securely institutionalized systems of supplementary education can be found in Asia.

Julian Dierkes and Mark Bray



Supplementary education in Asia

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13 >

A variety of contexts and patterns

The societies examined in this Focus section represent a variety of cultures and income levels. Value systems and other dimensions of cultures in Japan are very different from those in Vietnam, which in turn are very different from those in Australia. Cultural contexts are important because, in combination with economic and other forces, they provide much of the explanation for the scale and form of supplementary education. Related factors include perceptions about the rewards for success in education systems, and the extent to which success can be enhanced through supplementary activities.

The articles in the Focus include examples of three common types of supplementary education. One type, prevalent in East Asia, is structured by entrance examinations and aimed mainly at high achievers. Much of this tutoring is provided by companies of various kinds. Another type, more common in low-income countries of Central, Southeast and South Asia, is tutoring provided by teachers on their own initiative to supplement their wages. A third type, exemplified by dominant patterns in Australia, is more concerned with study skills, self-confidence and widening of horizons.

Scale of the phenomenon

Supplementary education has become a huge enterprise, occupying significant proportions of the time of students and their families, providing substantial employment, and generating large revenues for individuals and corporations. A few indicators for the Asian region (see Bray 2009: 18-21) include:

Bangladesh

National survey data indicate that in 2005, 31.0% of primary school students were receiving tutoring (28.2% in rural areas; 51.73% in urban areas).

China

The 2004 Urban Household Education and Employment survey covered 4,773 households. It indicated that tutoring was received by 73.8% of primary, 65.6% of lower secondary, and 53.5% of upper secondary students.

Hong Kong

Government statistics suggest that 34% of primary and secondary pupils received tutoring in 2006. A 2004/05 survey of 13,600 households suggested that among pupils at each level, proportions receiving tutoring were 36.0% at primary, 28.0% at lower secondary, 33.6% at middle secondary, and 48.1% at upper secondary education.

India

A survey of 6,948 secondary school students in four states found that 41.3% were receiving private tutoring. In the top grade, the proportion was 53.8%.

Japan

A 2007 survey found that juku served 15.9% of Primary 1 children, that this proportion rose steadily in later grades, and that it reached 65.2% in Junior Secondary 3. In addition, 6.8% of Junior Secondary 3 pupils received tutoring at home, and 15.0% followed correspondence courses.

Vietnam

In a 2001 sample survey of 72,660 Grade 5 pupils in 3,639 primary schools, 38% of pupils indicated that they were receiving tutoring. In 2002, tutoring was said to have consumed about 20% of household education expenditure. The figure peaked at 29% for pupils preparing for university entrance examinations, and was especially high in urban areas.

In financial terms, the most reliable figures on the size of this industry are available for South Korea, where household expenditure on private tutoring in 2008 was estimated at US\$24 billion, or 2.9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product.

South Korea probably has the highest per capita expenditures; but other societies are moving in the South Korean direction. During the last decade, tutoring has expanded significantly throughout the region. Australia is perhaps at the other end of the scale from South Korea; but among the companies headquartered in Australia is one, Kip McGrath, which operates in 10 countries on four continents. This shows that tutoring is not just a local or a national phenomenon, but that it has attracted large multinational companies. Kumon, headquartered in Japan, claims to have four million students studying in 26,000 centres in 46 countries.

Public attitudes to private tutoring

Supplementary education as a for-profit activity generally relies on a relatively liberal marketplace. The most prominent exception is South Korea, the government of which has attempted to contain the runaway household costs associated with tutoring in order to reduce inequalities of access to education.

The operation of supplementary education as a business raises questions about government regulation. Not all jurisdictions require registration of tutoring businesses, and even fewer have regulations on the qualifications of teachers or the content of classes. The growth of supplementary education thus represents a return to the pre-modern forms of private education over state-run or state-supervised instruction.

In most settings, a whiff of illegitimacy adheres to various forms of tutoring. The terminology of 'cram schools' suggests an activity that has a questionable teaching method. The term 'shadow education', which is also common in English-language discourse, may also have a negative flavour. While many Asian societies value educational attainment and emphasize effort as a necessary ingredient for success, the teaching-to-the-test that is frequently offered and perfected by supplementary education is not widely seen as a form of education per se. Such matters raise major questions both for policy makers and for academics.

Attention from researchers

One reason why researchers have neglected the topic of supplementary education is that it does not fit squarely in the perceived mandates of Colleges of Education and similar bodies. The topic is a new one for researchers in almost all contexts. Institutionally in-between several subdisciplines (not school-based, but not adult or lifelong learning either) and eschewed by policy-makers, few projects beyond those included or referenced in this collection shed light on the shadow education system in Asia.

However, patterns are beginning to change. PISA and other studies of educational attainment are prompting a renewed interest in comparative studies of education. Also, the global 'fashion' for promoting market mechanisms in education is according a new status to some forms of supplementary education in the marketplace.

These factors were among the foci of a 2010 workshop on "The World-Wide Growth of Supplementary Education" held at the University of Waterloo, Canada. The event, which received funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, led to some of the articles presented here. The workshop was co-organized by Janice Aurini (University of Waterloo), Scott Davies (McMaster University) and Julian Dierkes (University of British Columbia). Presentations at that workshop about patterns in Asia focused on Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam. The workshop also brought perspectives from North America and Europe for instructive comparative analysis. This is just one example of the growing attention to the theme, which is much to be welcomed.

The groundwork for closer attention

With these remarks in mind, the present issue of the Newsletter aims to stimulate further attention to supplementary education. The phenomenon needs closer attention from a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, trade unions, teachers, community bodies, and parents' associations. The research community may contribute with data and analysis from many angles. The articles in this Newsletter mainly take macro-level perspectives, but equally important are micro-level perspectives that draw on the disciplines of sociology, pedagogy, psychology and other domains. We invite readers to get in touch with us to share insights and perspectives on this domain.

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Bray, Mark. 2009. *Confronting the Shadow Education System: What Government Policies for What Private Tutoring?* Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). Can be downloaded from www.iiep.unesco.org.



Cultural contexts are important because, in combination with economic and other forces, they provide much of the explanation for the scale and form of supplementary education.



Buxiban in Taiwan

If you stand in front of Taipei's main train station, you will see many *buxibans* (補習班, or 'cram schools') along the road. Each day after dark, a large number of students flood into these *buxibans*. Seeing this overcrowded street scene, full of anxious students, teachers, and parents, you will recognize how prevalent supplementary education is in Taiwan.

Chuing Prudence Chou and James K. S. Yuan



IT IS BELIEVED that the majority of secondary students attend this kind of for-profit institute to seek supplemental drilling and practice after a long day at their regular schools. Unlike their western counterparts who favour extra-curriculum activities such as sports or games, teenagers in Taiwan attend *buxiban* instead due to a mixture of exam anxiety, peer-group pressure, and high parental academic expectation.

Why are cram schools so common in Taiwan?

Taiwan shares an important trait with other East Asian cultures: a high respect for academic study and for intellectuals, influenced by Chinese Confucianism. Most parents believe that if their children can enter a higher-ranked high school or university, they will have a better career in the future. In order to achieve this goal, most parents do not hesitate to send their children to cram schools for extra instruction if they can afford it. Taiwan's Ministry of Education has launched a series of education reform programs, including a new version of curriculum guidelines and textbooks, in an attempt to relieve student's exam pressure and to combat rote-memory studying. Moreover, a multi-track school entrance plan has been established so that students with other talents can still enter good schools even though their academic test scores are not so high.

However, these reform efforts not only have not succeeded in alleviating students' stress, but instead they have increased the number of students attending cram schools. Students nowadays are not only studying their exam subjects, but also cramming for skills and talents, hoping to equip themselves with more qualifications for university entrance. As a result, cram schools have boomed unexpectedly, and the number has roughly doubled across the country. In 2001, Taiwan had 5,891 registered cram schools and the number has been growing rapidly since then. More than 18,300 registered cram schools are currently active in shadow education, with 15,248 schools centered on traditional school subjects like Chinese and English language, and sciences. Taipei has the greatest number of cram schools compared to the rest of country (2,786 schools), and the area surrounding Taipei is a close second with 2,672 schools. According to a national survey in Taiwan, most cram schools target elementary school and junior high school students, and indeed these groups have made up almost 84 percent of the total cram school enrollment since 2005.

The structure of the cram school industry

There are two categories of cram schools in Taiwan: academic cram schools and those offering non-academic subjects. The academic ones include those who only focus on the core school subjects Chinese, English, Math and Sciences which are included in high school and college entrance exams. In these *buxibans*, a single teacher often provides a group of students with materials and instructions for subjects taught in regular school. Most academic cram schools require that teachers hold at least a bachelor degree. In fact, nowadays many of these teachers hold a higher academic degree. Some cram school teachers are paid a very high salary if their teaching style is deemed interesting and effective, and they usually teach at several cram schools.

The number of students in each class varies with the size of the cram school. In the case of a large cram school, some classes might include more than one hundred students. Sometimes several LCD projectors are needed for teaching such a large class. In these classes, students take notes on the teacher's lecture. If they have any questions, they can either ask the teacher during class or afterwards.

Another kind of supplementary education institution, known as *an-chinban* (安親班), employs teachers or supervisors whose main duty is to look after a group of children (usually at primary school level) and to help them with their homework and assignments after school until the parents are free to pick them up.

In non-academic cram schools the teaching program is not directly related to the regular school curriculum. Some common types are talent and skills classes, where a teacher provides a group of students with a program designed only for a specific subject or course, such as a foreign language other than English, music, art, dance, sports or other talent-oriented activities. Some cram schools, especially those focused on foreign languages, became so popular that they set up national chain-schools with branches spread throughout the country. Some have even expanded into the mainland Chinese market. In general, large language cram schools have their own administration system, separate teacher training programs, and individual curriculum design. Some cram schools co-exist with regular schools and have even prospered into multi-million education enterprises, not only charging high tuition fees from students but also benefitting from charging licensing fees from their chain schools.

Above:
Buxibans, Taipei.
Courtesy Flickr
(Taekwonweirdo).

Below:
The lobby of a
buxiban is a busy
place as students
hurry to their
next classes.

Photos by the
authors.

Reform efforts not only have not succeeded in alleviating students' stress, but instead they have increased the number of students attending cram schools. Students nowadays are not only studying their exam subjects, but also cramming for skills and talents, hoping to equip themselves with more qualifications for university entrance.

Serving many needs

What are the reasons behind the success of Taiwan's cram schools? According to some research studies on *buxiban* in Taiwan (Chen 2007, Huang 1981, Hsu 2002, Lei 1999), students seek out supplementary education for the following reasons:

1. To enhance their academic performance: The stated purpose of cram schools is to improve students' academic performance, especially their test scores. Students who fall behind academically at school will choose to attend cram schools in order to have extra instruction.
2. In response to the very high social value placed on acquiring a college degree – so-called credentialism: Parents send their children to *buxiban* to meet the needs of exam-driven practices and drilling which they feel regular schools might not be sufficiently focused on.
3. Parents' high expectations for children: Parents who expect their children to achieve highly will never be content with their children's grades, and are very likely to send their children to cram schools to improve their performance.
4. Public schools cannot satisfy students' needs to enhance their academic performance: Even though Taiwan has a well-established public education system, the quality of its teachers does not always meet parental expectations in areas such as teacher attitudes, teaching skills, etc.
5. It is also argued there is a gap between what students learn at school and what is covered in the school entrance examinations, so students feel that they must attend exam-oriented cram schools in order to achieve high grades.
6. Students overestimate cram schools and blindly follow others: Many Taiwanese students believe that cram schools are better at teaching, so expect that attending cram schools will help them understand course materials better.

Questions and concerns

Since cram schools are so prevalent in Taiwan, some resulting problems deserve attention.

1. Teaching in cram schools progresses at a faster pace than in schools, causing students to disrespect and disregard their teachers' instructions at school.
2. Students tend not to work at school but rely entirely on cram schools.
3. Students have to mind school and cram schools at the same time, which increases stress.
4. Students lose their ability to explore knowledge due to an exam-driven pedagogy.
5. Teachers at cram schools do not have teacher certificates and are not qualified personnel, which may have a negative impact on student learning attitude and educational value.

There is no doubt that cram schools are a very significant part of supplementary education in Taiwan in core academic subjects as well as in broader education. Nevertheless, the prevalence of cram schools brings about some reflections on the education system among parents. Mixed feelings about the existence of cram school have been expressed. If cram schools are sufficiently competitive to help students to improve their academic performance and succeed in the college entrance exam, the competitiveness of public schools will be in great doubt.

Buxiban do not operate for free but charge significant fees which places a financial burden on parents. Poor families cannot afford to send their children to cram schools. Can public schools provide competitive education quality to meet the needs of students from less advantaged background?

If the existence of cram school in Taiwan is unavoidable, how can we improve the quality of public schools, alleviate the pressure on students from entrance exams, and convince parents not to over-load their children and to respect their talents more widely instead of focusing only on academic performance? These are questions yet to be answered.

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The policies on supplemental education in Korea

– Children complain that school teachers are ineffective in comparison to instructors at supplemental education institutions who teach in an engaging and interesting manner... Students do not have high expectations of teachers and schools... While school is a place to sleep, “hagwon” is a place to learn... Schools do not take responsibility for their students. Supplemental education is not the problem; so called “failing” or “failed” schools that push students into markets for supplemental education is the bigger problem.¹

Jin Lee

BLAMING PUBLIC EDUCATION for many social woes is becoming a habit in many nations throughout the world. Although Korea has ranked highly on international achievement tests such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, when examined more closely, maybe this is the result of parents' tremendous education zeal and investment, not of public education. Dependence on markets for supplemental education is growing as parents are becoming more dissatisfied and frustrated with schools. In this context, what the Korean government can and should do is to either let schools outperform the market for supplemental education or let public education embrace the market.

A short, but intense history

The Joseon dynasty which lasted for about five centuries was characterized by a rigid Confucian caste system severely restricting educational opportunities coupled with a pronounced emphasis on learning. In the early 1900s, the colonial era brought some change towards a modern education system not based on birth and gender. After the Korean War in the 1950s, the newly established government in South Korea emphasized a system in which people's positions and responsibilities in society depended on their intelligence and abilities, not on their parents or wealth.

In such a situation, education became the key to social mobility. University entrance exams have been regarded as the most impartial and fairest way to guarantee better educational opportunities and social success. Notwithstanding the growing interest in education, conditions in the 1970s were hopeless in that the number of students per class numbered about 70 and the annual expenditure per student in public education amounted to only US\$10 to US\$30. Supplemental education came into the spotlight in this context to give students further instruction in various subjects and help them prepare for college entrance exams.

Two forms of supplemental education dominate in Korea, private tutoring (과외, 課外) and hagwon (학원, 學院). One form of supplemental education is taking private tutoring. In Korea, everyone who wants to teach can be a private tutor for individuals or small groups. Because there are no regulations and guidelines for private tutoring concerning time, location, method or tuition fees, the government cannot obtain relevant information on private tutoring. Another form of supplemental education is enrolment in hagwon. After school, students go to school-like hagwon where they are taught by qualified and experienced instructors. Unlike schools, students can choose which hagwon they will attend, if at all, and tuition differs between hagwon.

To stop the steadily increasing dependence on supplemental education, the Korean government in 1980 prohibited students from taking part in any kind of supplemental educational service for purpose of test preparation. A person who notified the government of students, parents or tutors who were taking part in supplemental educational services received a reward, and the reported people were punished by the law. This prohibition did not allow even students who really needed remedial learning to take supplemental education. Only graduates who failed in the previous year's university entrance exams and were preparing for the next chance and a very few students who needed arts and physical education could legally use supplemental educational services. In conjunction with this policy, the government abolished several entrance exams, changed the school curriculum and national standards, and established diverse schools.

Despite these efforts, nothing has changed. The demand for supplemental education services has been increasing until now, and the expenditure and participation rates have been pushed up fast. Furthermore, the Supreme Court in 2000 ruled that prohibiting supplemental educational services was unconstitutional. As a result, the number of hagwon

and private tutors has drastically increased, and almost all students are using and willing to pay for their services; no longer are supplemental education services just for the rich.

Facts about supplemental education

The number of hagwon—legally private, for-profit entities—increased from 1,421 in 1970 to 67,649 in 2007.² About 66 percent of total supplemental educational institutions are concentrated in the metropolitan areas such as Seoul, and in total they employ over 180,000 tutors. Still, taking account of the difficulty involved in collecting data of private tutoring, the actual number of people working for supplemental educational services is estimated to surpass 200,000. This implies that a significant share of human resources with university degrees is concentrated in supplemental educational services. In Korea, school teachers—government employees holding a teacher's certificate—should not have another job, and therefore cannot be either private tutors or instructors in supplemental educational institutions. Unlike teachers who are paid on the official salary schedule, tutors' earning in markets for supplemental educational services depends on their expertise and reputation. Similar to a merit pay system, this market structure is attractive enough to draw job seekers (see figure 1).

Almost 80 percent of registered supplemental education institutions offer test preparation and subject areas for K-12 students. 75 percent of primary and secondary school students have used their services.³ However, according to another study conducted in 2009, 95.5 percent of K-12 students in Korea had experienced supplemental education.⁴ As supplemental education becomes more popular, students begin to take supplemental education at an ever younger age. For this reason, elementary school students in Korea are taking part in private tutoring and hagwon more often than high school students, who spend more time in school (see figure 2).

A survey of 624 households in 2010 showed that among the main reasons expressed by parents and students for using supplemental education were the governments' failed educational policies and dissatisfaction with schools.⁴ With the notion that excessive competition in entrance examinations will result in demand for supplemental education, the government has been steadily and deeply involved in entrance examination policies in many different ways. For instance, the government varied admissions criteria not limited to test scores, and changed required courses and tests for university entrance. In order to improve the quality of public education, teacher evaluations and school choice programs have been introduced.

Yet, parents regard the government's policies as makeshift rather than fundamental solutions. One interesting point is that parents recognized their responsibility for the excessive expansion of the supplemental education to some extent. Motivations such as “my child must be better than the others” and “if that student goes to a hagwon, my child also has to go” are seen as some of the causes for the growth in supplemental education (see figure 3).

Cost and expenditure

The cost of supplemental education has been a contentious issue throughout the 1980s and 1990s until today. While the number of students using supplemental educational services is higher in primary schools than in high schools, the average monthly expenditures for high school students are higher. In 2007, the officially reported monthly expenditure of supplemental education per family by the National Statistical Office in Korea approached US\$210 (equivalent to about 240,000 Won in Korea), while the average monthly expenditure per student ranged from US\$30 to US\$250. Total expenditures nationwide were estimated at US\$19 billion, almost 3 percent of GDP. This almost equaled the public sector expenditure on education, which was 3.4 percent of GDP.

Figure 1: Number of institutions offering supplemental educational services.²

Note: The prohibition on supplemental education services by the government was initiated in 1980, and the Supreme Court ruled that the prohibition policy was unconstitutional in 2000.

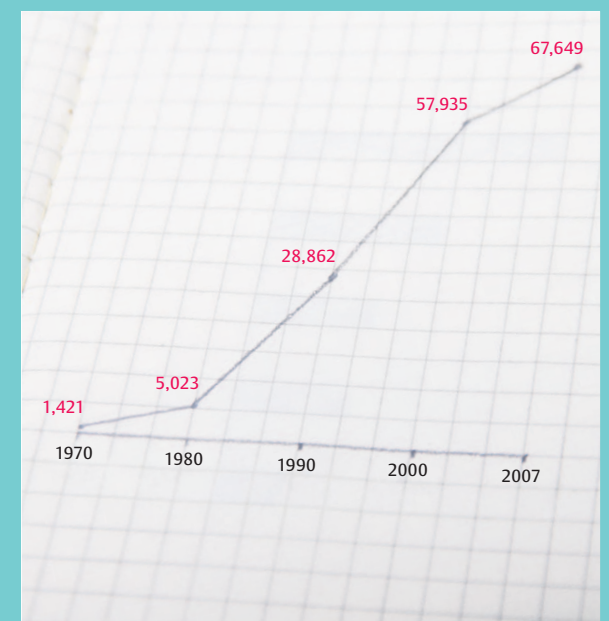


Figure 2: The participation rate in supplemental educational services in the selected years by school level.⁵

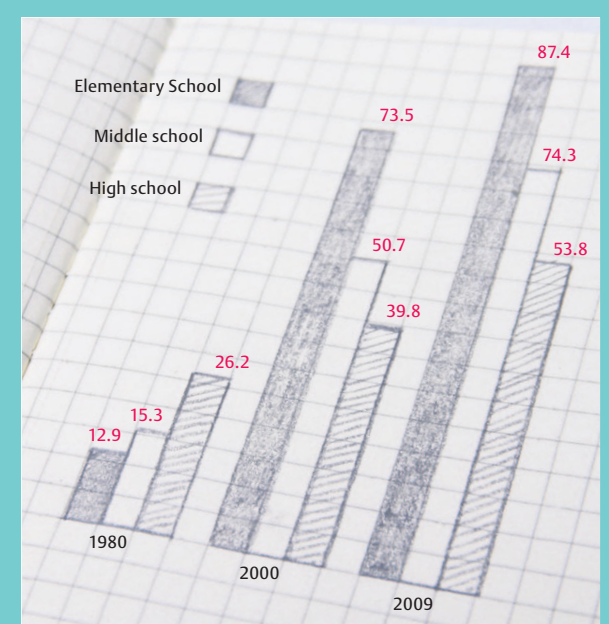
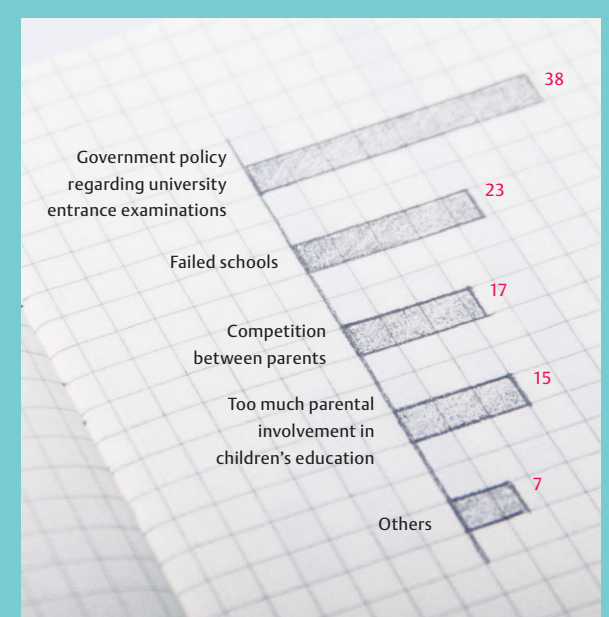


Figure 3: The reasons given by parents for participating in supplemental educational services.⁴



A tug-of-war between government and market

However, another study by a non-profit organization estimated the average monthly expenditures per student to be US\$345.⁴ Moreover, families with income over US\$50,000 spent 2.5 times more on supplemental education than families with incomes below US\$30,000. Considering that annual earnings for high-income families were 1.7 times higher than for low-income families, the difference in expenditure on supplemental education by income level should not be overlooked. This study also estimated the size of the markets for supplemental education to be around US\$34.8 billion, about 3.8% of the GDP in 2010. Based on this information, we can easily understand why some Korean parents are working two jobs to pay for their children's *hagwon* and private tutoring costs.

As shown in the two studies, there is a non-negligible discrepancy between government-initiated and independently conducted studies. Of course, the inconsistent findings of research on supplemental education may be rooted in definitions of key terms and the survey methodology. Yet, the largest reason is the ripple effect of supplemental educational services on Korean society. Since private tutoring and *hagwon* have long been considered to be social problems regardless of their initial purpose and contribution, the government tends to underestimate the size and cost of supplemental educational services.

In contrast to the past when *hagwon* were usually localized and small in scale, several *hagwon* have been franchised and expanded on a larger scale since the late 1990s. Due to the public's negative view of private tutoring and *hagwon*, large corporations are reluctant to be involved in markets for supplemental education. Though few large corporations begin to show an interest, their concern is limited to related businesses such as the printing industry, not directly to managing *hagwon*s and private tutors. Instead, existing institutions are expanding their business across the country. In 2000, online tutoring institutions, such as Megastudy and Etoos, were established. Some tutoring institutions with a long history, such as Daesung Academy, expanded their businesses nationwide and came to own various companies in the printing and broadcasting industry. In addition, other tutoring institutions like Jongro Academy and VitaEdu have expanded their businesses toward boarding facilities that can replace the role of home and family.

The government's new approach: The After School Program

The government has reacted to markets for supplemental education by regulating them. At the same time, the government has tried to apply the advantages of these markets to the school systems, e.g. through school choice programs based on competition and choice. The growing concern with an increasing financial and psychological burden associated with supplemental education and failing schools has spurred policies driven by the central government. Rather than taking account of diverse local contexts, educational policies at the national level have been preferred by the public. For this reason, the government's policies toward supplemental educational services have the following broad objectives:

1. To reduce the cost of supplemental educational services
2. To decrease the reliance on private tutoring and *hagwon*
3. To realize equal opportunity in education
4. To improve the quality of public education, and
5. To dispel a deep mistrust of schools

Governments in many countries generally exclude private schools from school policies. Even though the public school system in Korea distinguishes public schools from private schools *de jure*, there is no *de facto* difference between public and private schools. That is because most private schools (which account for over 15% of total schools) are run on government funding. Although a non-public entity, a private school is still governed by public funding. Since private schools are operated by the government not independently with its funding and regulation, students cannot choose whether to attend a public or a private school, and private schools cannot select their students. Hence, the government's policies to decrease supplemental education are targeting every student, whether in public or private schools.

Recently, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology placed greater emphasis on After School Programs (방과후 학교, 放課後 學校) by revising the existing educational policies in 2004. The basic idea was to meet the demand for supplemental education on site at school. Each school would design a curriculum, hire instructors either within or outside of the school, and charge a small tuition fee from students who registered in the program. In other words, the government tried to absorb the demand for supplemental educational services into public education rather than regulating and prohibiting these services. Initially, the government did not allow schools to make contracts with for-profit institutions for After School Programs. However, the government has now expanded the range of providers of for-profit, supplemental educational institutions for the schools.

For a long time, the Korean government has struggled to narrow the gap of access to supplemental educational services by income level in several ways through regulating private tutoring and *hagwon*. Where dissatisfaction with schools leads to a dependence on supplemental education outside of the school system, After School Programs are expected to decrease the cost of supplemental educational services by creating an alternative to *hagwon* and private tutoring.

In essence, After School Programs are operating on the basis of the fees that students pay. Of course, it is difficult for a school to run high quality After School Programs solely with a small tuition fee from students. For this reason, the government supports a shortage in operating funds for After School Programs. Nevertheless, After School Programs must be distinguished from current educational policies operated without additional user payments. The first reason for charging a tuition fee is to avoid the creation of moral hazard that free program brings. As students pay extra charge for After School Programs, they take the responsibilities of the programs. Yet, looking at After School Programs in greater depth, you can easily see that schools are trying to follow market principles. Just as with *hagwon* and private tutoring, students as consumers can select what course they want to take and pay a small tuition fee.

The downside to After School Programs

Unfortunately, the potential pitfall of After School Programs is that the main agents and organizers are schools that are already seen as failing or failed. Schools have disappointed students and parents by not achieving their core task of teaching the official curriculum. As well, students and parents have thought that schools lacked the preparation for university entrance exams based on the official curriculum. As noted above, many parents chose private tutoring and *hagwon* because of their dissatisfaction with schools. In this context, how can we expect After School Programs designed and operated by these schools to succeed? In order to solve the problems of supplemental education, the government is burdening failing schools with more and more roles.

To provide students equal access to supplemental educational services, the After School Programs emphasize three key strategies: vouchers for disadvantaged students, support for students in rural areas which have fewer supplemental educational institutions, and daycare services at the primary school level. 53 percent of students participated in the After School Programs in 2008, and participating students paid an average of US\$24 (equivalent to about 26,000 Won) a month. Families with incomes below US\$30,000 stated that the After School Programs helped them reduce their expenditures for *hagwon* and private tutoring.⁴ Still, there is no clear and reliable evidence showing how much the After School Programs



Right:
A late night in the Hagwon. Photo courtesy of Flickr, Oceandsetoiles.

contribute to realizing equality in education and decreasing the reliance on supplemental education. Because of the relation between politics and evaluation, studies about After School Programs present different findings depending on who initiated the evaluation and who was involved in the research.

Furthermore, parents tended to regard After School Programs as just another type of supplemental education rather than an alternative to *hagwon* and private tutoring.⁴ After School Programs definitely help low-income students to access cheap supplemental education services. However, high-income students who can afford to take private tutoring or *hagwon* count After School Programs as an extension of classes in school. While the view persists that After School Programs are inferior to private tutoring and *hagwon*, the demand and supply of supplemental education services will remain. Instead, the government's After School Programs contributes to the growth of supplemental educational services by allowing them to flow into the school system. Contrary to the past where supplemental education was a taboo subject in Korea, the change in attitude towards public education institutions offering supplemental educational services facilitates corporations' interest and participation in this market as a highly profitable business.

Never-ending tug-of-war

Basically, the government has neither the right nor any duty to restrict or encourage students in attending *hagwon* or private tutoring. Compared to publicly funded education, so-called private education including private tutoring and *hagwon* is a matter of personal choice. The market structure for supplemental education services follows the law of survival of the fittest. Whether or not an institution and a tutor succeed depends on their competence.

Nonetheless, the never-ending tug-of-war between the government and supplemental education providers started with conflicting popular demands. Because parents and students' choice of supplemental educational services are constrained by their income, supplemental education leads to unequal education opportunities. As *hagwon* and private tutoring become increasingly popular, lower income families feel more deprived. Irrespective of the discussion of how qualified providers of supplemental education are, supplemental education may present an excellent opportunity for students because private tutoring and *hagwon* can provide what every student most needs, whether remedial classes or test preparation classes. However, this opportunity is not afforded to every student. Consequently, the public and media criticize *hagwon* for charging high tuition fees and exacerbating the problem of inequality in education. To redress this inequality caused by the financial burden of supplemental education fees, the government revises policies on supplemental education every year.

On the other hand, as found in many surveys regarding supplemental education in Korea, the demand for *hagwon* and private tutoring emerged from students and parents' simple need for a better education than what schools offered. Of course, what a 'better' education means remains open. One certainty is that parents want their children to get higher scores than others, to enter a well-known university, and to get a job with high earnings. Students want to be taught differently according to their interest and ability. Korea does not have a flexible school system and varied options for success, so any student's future depends on the results of competitive college entrance exams. In this context, a 'better' education implies attending cram schools for entrance exams. Since students and parents cannot choose which school the student will attend, the only option for them is supplemental education.

Although supplemental education is a big social problem in Korea, it is not desired that all schools become cram schools in order to decrease the cost of supplemental education. Schools are not there just to prepare students for university entrance exams. Even though parents and students seek specialized schools to pass entrance exams, schools do not neglect their duties in a society. In schools that fail to balance public benefits and private interests, subjects such as democratic values and citizenship are disregarded by parents, and increasing suicide rates and bullying at school are reported as a side effect of failing public education.

Like the conundrum of the chicken and the egg, there is no exact answer to say whether dissatisfaction with education creates a demand for supplemental education or whether the excessive demand for private tutoring and *hagwon* causes public education to fail. At least, schools in Korea are trying to provide more equitable opportunities for supplemental education, and at the same time are struggling to compete with supplemental education services. As long as the negative effects of supplemental education are not resolved, the Korean government will keep a weather eye on *hagwon* and private tutoring by creating and modifying relevant policies.

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Supplementary education in Cambodia

— *The tricks of the teacher... that's the way we force the students to study in private tutoring. The teacher says the new math formulas are only introduced in private tutoring.*

Cambodian elementary school teacher

Walter Dawson



THE QUOTE ABOVE was taken from my 2008 study of supplementary tutoring and teacher corruption in Cambodia (see Dawson 2009, Dawson 2010). The case of supplementary education in Cambodia presents an interesting case involving the politics and economics of corruption; however, it is difficult to ascertain whether this case has 'Asian characteristics' or rather 'post-socialist' characteristics. Nevertheless, my hope is that by discussing the various factors which seem to drive the phenomenon of supplementary education in Cambodia, we may be able gain a better understanding of the supplementary education phenomenon within the particular context of Cambodia and elsewhere.

Supplementary education in Cambodia involves state teachers conducting private tutoring for their own students. This is not a phenomenon which is unique to the education system of Cambodia. In fact, this practice is well documented and not unusual in many developing countries such as Cyprus, Indonesia, Lebanon, Nigeria, and Russia (Bray, 1999: 37). The crux of the problem revolves around the issue of whether these teachers are practicing corruption in consideration of their role as educational representatives of the state and exploiting the potential for economic gain in relation to their inadequate salaries. The practice has further implications for equal opportunity for education and the global movement for Education for All (EFA).

The vagaries of war and politics

In order to understand the existence of this 'shadow education' system in Cambodia, it is useful to know something of the political climate of the nation. Prime Minister Hun Sen and his Cambodia People's Party (CPP) have enjoyed a 23-year term of continuous rule, representing the longest current period for a politician in Southeast Asia, as a result of the strong national network of the CPP and the web of corruption which it supports.

The Cambodian education system has long been at the mercy of the political system resulting in repeated failures with tragic consequences for the Cambodian people. Cambodian education reached its peak of development in the 1960s, at which time teachers and civil servants were well paid, honoured and respected. However, this peak in educational expansion was devastated by the civil war of the 1970s and then destroyed by the policies of the Khmer Rouge who eradicated the pre-existing system and executed 75 percent of the country's teachers and intellectuals. The end of the Khmer Rouge

period with Vietnamese occupation (1979-1989) saw an attempt to implant a new brand of socialism. Cambodia's emergence into a post-socialist future with the UNCTAD elections in 1991, places the age of Cambodia's fledgling democracy at approximately the same as the post-socialist states of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and further raises the question of whether to view Cambodia's political and economic system as Asian or post-socialist.

The origins of the political system and its effects on educational development have been well documented by Ayres (2000) who attributed the failings of past regimes to expand education in Cambodia to the political culture and the conflict between tradition and modernity. My research has sought to move beyond this cultural explanation to point to multiple economic and political micro-processes which lead to teachers being the agents behind this shadow economy of private tutoring.

The shadow economics of teacher corruption

The shadow economy of private tutoring is a formidable obstacle to Cambodian's achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and especially those goals related to education for all (EFA). Access to a free primary education is a right included in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, to which Cambodia is a signatory. Therefore, one could argue that the Cambodian government has an obligation to eliminate this corrupt practice in order to ensure these rights; however, it is quite difficult to lay the onus of blame on teachers.

The issue of corruption in Cambodia is not restricted to the education sector. Transparency International rated Cambodia 166th out of 180 countries on its Corruption Perceptions Index within which lower ranked countries display higher degrees of corruption. In 2006, government graft in World Bank infrastructure and water sanitation projects in Cambodia led the World Bank to threaten to cancel those projects worth US\$64 million and to demand repayment of misused funds.

The state of education has improved in Cambodia despite these challenges and the nation's dependence on outside sources for education funding. Total education spending from outside sources in 2002 amounted to US\$44.6 million, which consisted of funds from the Asian Development Bank (31.9 percent), the World Bank (16.8 percent), UNICEF (14.0 percent), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency

(12.4 percent) (Bray & Bunly, 2005: 17). Corruption is a clear drain on the education budget in Cambodia as indicated in the 2005 CSD Corruption assessment which found that corruption in the public education sector accounted for US\$37 million per year, making up about 55 percent of the total corruption in public services in Cambodia (EIC, 2006: 7).

In the summer of 2008 I carried out a study on supplementary tutoring in elementary schools in Cambodia within which I visited four schools in Phnom Penh, two schools in Kampong Cham, and two schools in Ratanakiri Province. I administered written surveys to 197 parents and interviewed 72 teachers. Teachers reported in my study that about half of their students attend their private tutoring lessons. When asked why they were offering private tutoring, fully four out of five teachers mentioned their low salaries and a need to increase their income. Teachers report an average monthly income of US\$61.16 from private tutoring. A European Commission study (World Bank, 2008) estimated teachers' monthly salary at about US\$44. A World Bank report (2008) states that teachers in Phnom Penh earn a salary equivalent to approximately 1.8 times the per capita poverty line and as sole income earners with children would likely live in poverty if they relied on salary alone (p. v). For this very reason, some researchers hesitate to call the practice corruption and lay the blame on teachers.

"We have no choice"

To address the problem there have been several large salary increases. The situation was much bleaker in 1993 when the average official teacher's salary was US\$6 per month. In 1994 a 20 percent pay raise was granted in addition to a 'prime pédagogique' of US\$8 per month for teachers and education officials. In 1998 an additional raise of 20 percent was put into effect (Bray & Bunly, 2005: 20). Nevertheless, the pace of salary increases is outstripped by the increase in market prices and cost of living in Cambodia. As ambitious as these increases may sound, it may be too little, too late. The danger is that national and international actors have missed a window of opportunity to increase salaries earlier to avoid the institutionalization of corruption throughout the national civil service.

Chhinh (2003) in his study on teacher satisfaction referred to encountering two teachers breastfeeding their babies at school. When he asked them why they did not take maternity leave, they replied that if they did not come to school they would "starve to death" (7). In the EIC Study one teacher stated that teachers "feel ashamed and guilty to do so, but our children need rice to eat...Thus, we have no choice" (20). While one can sympathize with the plight of underpaid teachers, it is important to understand the complexity of their varied responses to their lack of income.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) Report of 2005 refers to teachers who withhold curriculum content important for examinations in order to persuade their students to pay for private tutoring. This corruption does have important ramifications for the perception of teachers in Cambodia. The Cambodian word for teacher, *kru*, derives from the Sanskrit term *guru* and affords a great deal of respect (Ayres, 2000: 41). However, unless that respect is reflected in adequate teacher pay, the position of teachers in Cambodian society will remain a precarious one.

Reflections on fees and curriculum

One interesting aspect of the payment of tutoring and other fees is that it is a daily ritual in schools. Teachers reported varied success with collection of fees on a monthly or term basis. They seemed to settle on collecting fees from students' pocket money which led them to collect the equivalent of about a nickel (200 riel = US\$0.05) from students on a daily basis. Including the various unofficial fees, parents bear a significant burden of the cost of schooling in Cambodia. According to the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) October Report, a family in Phnom Penh has to pay US\$157 to send one child to school which represents 8.1 percent of the family's annual income. While the figure is lower at US\$48 in a rural province such as Takeo Province, this figure still represents 6.8 percent of annual income for a family. The costs are put into perspective once one considers that an average family in urban areas has 5.7 children while rural families have 5.3 children (NEP, 2007B).

There are numerous fees in addition to tutoring such as registration and enrollment fees (officially abolished in 2001), water and energy fees, contributions for school ceremonies, gifts for teachers, bicycle parking fees, and any number of bribes to teachers. Students may pay teachers to receive attendance booklets, to purchase passing or higher grades, to buy notes, to buy exams in advance, to buy the right to cheat on an exam, or even to skip a grade. There appears to be no end to the list of fees that teachers and administrators

The facilities may be rather basic and the education system riddled with problems, but at least the students are keen and eager. Photos this page and next by the author.

can dream up to fill their wallets and school coffers. One could argue that the system of levying of fees in an economy like that of Cambodia where the taxation system is largely not functioning acts as *de facto* taxation. This characterization is interesting when we consider that several teachers in my study explicitly referred to the practice of allowing students from poorer families to attend private tutoring free of charge.

— *We do not charge them (poorer students) in private tutoring class because we understand their poor situation and we are also poor.*

'Baby-sitting' or exam prep?

Cambodian families have numerous challenges; therefore, the demand for private tutoring as 'baby-sitting' is not surprising or unique to the Cambodian case. Bray gives an example of a study in Malta which found that many working couples wanted supplementary tutoring for their children who they could not care for during after-school hours (Bray, 1999: 66). Bray further states that, "Supplementary tutoring provides a structured framework for young people to spend out-of-school time" (84).

Beyond economic factors, parents and teachers are concerned about children's safety in society at large. Cambodia is a society where child exploitation in prostitution and industry is a grave concern. Children are also vulnerable to violent and sexual crime as well as traffic accidents if left unsupervised. About 20 percent of parents in Phnom Penh mentioned the safety of their children as a reason for wanting them to attend private tutoring lessons. This can be attributed to the fact that children are the targets of physical and sexual violence in Cambodia and the high incidence of traffic deaths in the larger cities. Parents referred to proximity to home and studying with a teacher they are familiar with, preferably their own public school teacher, as factors which influenced them in making private tutoring choices.

Teachers referred to the "tricks of the teacher" such as withholding curriculum content in order to force students to attend private tutoring. Researchers also refer to teachers' efforts to "slow down their pace of delivery in order to ensure that they have a market for the after-school supplementary classes" in countries such as Bangladesh, Egypt, and Cambodia (Bray, 1999: 55). The results of this study showed that exactly 50 percent of the teachers referred to insufficient time to cover curriculum content as a reason for providing private tutoring. While Bray argues that these teachers have "an incentive to describe the curriculum as too full" there are other cases such as that of Morocco where teachers do offer private tutoring because of insufficient curriculum time (Bray, 1999: 55). There are clear cases where time is insufficient such as at three-shift schools in Phnom Penh where teachers must cover four hours of curriculum content in three and a half hours.

The MoEYS has diffused a "five-step teaching pedagogy" which includes: classroom management, review, new lesson, problem-solving, and assigning homework. This must all be accomplished during a 40-minute lesson and many teachers stated that it was not possible for them to complete the five steps in this time frame. One teacher explained the difficulty as follows.

— *We teach based on the schedules set by the MoEYS, but we cannot complete all the subjects accurately. For example, we must teach three subjects per day, but if we follow the five steps, we can only do one subject.*

Teachers take their own initiatives to expand the curriculum and the school year. The Head Start Program in the US represented a national program initiated by the Lyndon Johnson Administration to provide preschool education to students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and rural areas. In my study I used the term 'false head start' to refer to the practice of providing private tutoring for the grade level content of primary education during the 2-month vacation, from August to September, before that grade actually starts. Private tutoring undoubtedly puts students with a 'head start' at an advantage in comparison to non-attending students and thereby creates demand and anxiety in the latter group.

Teachers reported in my study that about half of their students attend their private tutoring lessons. When asked why they were offering private tutoring, fully four out of five teachers mentioned their low salaries and a need to increase their income.

The importance of exams

High-stakes exams also play an important role in driving demand for private tutoring. The NEP October Report indicates that "those who cannot afford to pay for these extra classes often fail examinations and are required to repeat the grade" (26). Several scholars starting with Ronald Dore have decried the prevalence of the 'diploma disease' and the requisite examinations in developing countries (Bray, 1999: 67). As a result many examinations, such as the 6th grade leaving exam in Cambodia, have been eliminated in efforts to remove barriers to access and promote EFA. While increases in enrollments and promotions are lauded, the resultant effect on the quality of education is often not addressed. As two teachers from Phnom Penh related:

— *When they had the exam, they worked really hard to pass.*

— *The number of students who go to private tutoring has decreased since the elimination of the exam because they know that they must be promoted and because the MoEYS wants 100 percent of students in Grade 6 to be promoted to lower secondary schools.*

The promotion of EFA must be examined as it affects policy regarding shadow education, examinations, and quality of education in a country striving toward universal primary enrollment such as Cambodia. Nonetheless, with the elimination of the Grade 6 exit examinations, teachers are concerned that automatic promotion will lead to a decrease in the quality of education.

A hierarchy of corruption

The level of government corruption throughout the education sector in Cambodia must be considered as it contributes to the practice of private tutoring in Cambodia. Teacher salaries are determined by the government and low salaries keep teachers at the bottom of a bureaucratic hierarchy within which they must pay bribes to principals who in turn pay bribes to higher officials in the education bureaucracy.

The World Bank 2008 report shows that three out of every four teachers pay a 'facilitation fee' (informal cash payment) to receive their salary. The average fee of this type is 3,500 Riel or approximately 2 percent of their base salary. Despite this pay-off to school directors, almost 58 percent of teachers report never receiving their salary in full (53). One teacher in this study also reported that teachers are forced to pay 1,000 Riel to the school director every day, either from the fees they collect from students or from their own pockets.

At the next level up in the bureaucracy, about 64 percent of school directors report having to pay a facilitation fee to the district education office (DEO) officials in return for the disbursement of PAP 2.1 funds (EIC, 2006). It is apparent that there is a 'trickle-up' distribution of bribes starting with students and flowing all the way up to the district level, if not possibly higher levels of the government. In the USAID Cambodian Corruption Assessment, the "petrified" political system of government corruption is described as a "pyramid" within which "payments go up the system, generally becoming larger as they are passed to a few senior leaders" (USAID, 2004: 5). Teachers are forced to be complicit in this shadow economy of bureaucratic bribery which lowers their social status in society. Whether dedicated or complicit members of a corrupt system of education, teachers and parents raised the question of the effect that such a system has on the education of future generations. The nature of that education can be worrisome.

Students take part in a daily ritual of paying bribes to teachers from the age of 6 years old when they enter the primary school cycle in Cambodia. The NEP October report expressed community concerns about students learning from an early age that they must pay these bribes to have access to education. One parent expressed his consternation in saying, "how are we going to build a strong society on foundations like this?" (29). However, the fact remains that teachers cannot survive on insufficient salaries. As one said,

— *I have private tutoring because I am poor and the salary provided by the government is too low to support my family.*

The web of corruption in the education sector in Cambodia is a social structure which is not easy to uproot after many years of inattention by national and international actors. Some research presents a more alarming trend in showing that despite efforts to eliminate bribery, the fees collected at the school level appear to actually be rising rather than falling (NEP, 2007A: 1). While the system of 'informal school fees' was initially permitted as a temporary measure to meet shortfalls in school funding after the civil war, two decades later the system has become commonplace and accepted by all stakeholders in education (NEP, 2007B: 30). In such an

environment, stakeholders and policymakers may have missed the window of opportunity for eliminating the practice before it became an institutionalized shadow economy of the Cambodian public school system.

Unsound foundations

In my research I have attempted to situate private tutoring in the Cambodian public school system within the wider political context of the web of government corruption. In order to do that, it was necessary to problematize the characterization of the practice as 'corruption' with consideration toward the grossly inadequate income of state teachers and the problems inherent with curriculum time, content, and teaching methods in the system. Wider societal issues such as the market economy were included in the treatment as they affect the school and work lives of parents and teachers to explain the varied pressures which contribute to the practice. Dominant discourses on shadow education emphasizing political culture and global trends were also challenged in examining the failures of primary schooling in Cambodia to provide a coherent curriculum, a situation which defies defining private tutoring as either 'remedial' or 'supplementary'.

A portrayal of the political web of corruption in the education system has been presented to explain the widespread political and economic origins of private tutoring and its role in sustaining an education system which stands on unsound foundations. Further research is necessary to understand this political system if national and international actors intend to commit themselves to systemic reform in order to move beyond quantitative targets and aim toward quality education for all children in this war-ravaged nation as it comes to terms with the Khmer Rouge genocide.

A cruel irony of the Khmer Rouge period is that Pol Pot, and other early Khmer Rouge leaders who were state teachers, attracted followers to their cause because they were perceived to be above the petty corruption rampant in the Cambodian government (Ayres, 2000: 61). The tragedy which followed their ascendance to power is well documented and those historical memories and scars must not be forgotten in any efforts to reform the Cambodian political system as it moves toward further development and consolidation of democracy.

After 15 years of both domestic and international calls for the creation of an anti-corruption law, on March 11th of 2010, despite concerns expressed by the UN about lack of transparency, Hun Sen's CPP rushed through a law which ensured CPP control of a prime minister-appointed anti-corruption unit, which lacks public disclosure of politicians' assets, and which affords increased protection to Cambodia's corrupt political elite. It is apparent that future efforts to prevent corruption in education must develop from wider efforts to move Cambodia toward increased transparency in government and rule of law to bolster progress toward democratization.

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Facing the shadow education system in Hong Kong

The pressures faced by Hong Kong families have increased in competitive society. The so-called shadow education system of supplementary tutoring has spread in influence and intensity. For both parents and their children, it is difficult to find the right balance.

Ora Kwo and Mark Bray



A RECENT EDITORIAL in Hong Kong's major English-language newspaper, the *South China Morning Post*, was entitled 'The lesson that all parents need to learn'.¹ It commenced:

— Children need to know there is life outside the classroom. Playing, exploring, making friends and developing new hobbies should be as important as schoolwork. But in our scholastic-obsessed culture, school study takes up a disproportionate share of a young person's life.

The editorial highlighted a study by the University of Hong Kong which indicated that 58 percent of parents paid for private tutorial classes. The newspaper pointed out that such costs were a financial burden. For many children, it added, "they impose a heavy psychological toll" and that "a byproduct has been a shadow, parasitic tutorial industry that exploits the insecurity of parents and students".

An intensifying issue

Families with adequate incomes have long invested in supplementary tutoring as a way to give their children extra help to keep up with their peers. Some families have also long used tutoring to stretch their children's learning to domains not covered by mainstream schooling. However, during the last decade the shadow has spread and intensified. It has also become more commercialized.

Some indication of the scale may be provided by a pair of studies 14 years apart:

- In 1996, a telephone survey organised by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups estimated that 45 percent of primary school students (Grades 1-6) were receiving tutoring.² At lower secondary school the estimate was 26 percent, in middle secondary it was 34 percent, and in senior secondary it was 40 percent.
- In 2010, a social welfare body estimated that 72 percent of lower secondary students were receiving tutoring.³ In middle secondary the figure was 82 percent, and in senior secondary it was 85 percent.

Neither of these surveys should be considered statistically robust. However, they match the general public perception that the shadow had expanded.

Demand-driven or supply-driven?

Private tutoring is of course a service which would not exist if there were no demand. Among the ingredients shaping demand in Hong Kong are social competition in an urban environment and a Confucian-style work ethic that emphasizes effort.

The growth of demand also reflects new opportunities. Thirty years ago, local university education served only 2 percent of the age group. It was thus out of reach for most families. Now, local universities serve 19 percent of the population, and alongside them are many other post-secondary opportunities. When these opportunities are within reach, families consider ways to access them.

However, tertiary education remains stratified, with some institutions and programmes considered much more prestigious than others. Families compete to get into the best institutions and programmes, with an eye on the job market not only locally but also elsewhere in the region and beyond. To some extent, the growth of shadow education results from both the opening of opportunities through increased access to tertiary education, and the geographic expansion of the labour market.

The growth of the tutoring industry has also been supply-driven. Balances within the sector have shifted significantly as major companies have expanded their operations. They advertise in residential areas and on the back of buses with slogans such as "Lead the Future". Young people with fashionable hairstyles project a 'cool' image to appeal to the intended clients. As noted by the *South China Morning Post*, these companies "advertise so-called tutorial kings and queens who cultivate an aura of stardom". Worse, in the view of the newspaper:

— These hipsters boast about their millionaire status, and perpetuate a youth culture that prides high exam scores over genuine knowledge. Unfortunately, many youngsters look up to them as role models, or at least admire their earning power. What should clearly be unacceptable has become an accepted or even necessary part of schooling in Hong Kong.

Noting another ingredient of demand, the newspaper added that "some teachers in mainstream schools even tell parents to send their children to private tutorials to avoid lagging behind classmates".

Government perspectives

Amidst this growing phenomenon, some parts of the government machinery have operated as if the shadow education sector did not exist. They have devised reform packages to stress whole-person development and have focused only on the school sector.

Other parts of the government machinery do recognise the shadow system. The Education Bureau has issued regulations on tutorial centres, setting ceilings on class size and requiring fire escapes and other basic facilities. The Bureau has also issued a guide to parents on how to select tutorial services. However, in general the government has preferred to pretend that the sector does not exist. "It is not necessary," stated a senior government official to one author of this article, because "our educational provision is already adequate".

Yet clearly a considerable number of parents and pupils do not agree. And at least some families feel that the tutoring centres are more client-oriented than the schools. Yes, good teachers can be found in the schools; but so can mediocre teachers. And yes, poor teachers can be found in the tutoring centres; but so can good ones. And, more importantly, the students can have a choice over who becomes their tutor while they have no choice over who becomes their teacher.

Advertisements for supplementary education. Photos by Mark Bray.

The pressures on families

Returning to the *South China Morning Post*, the newspaper certainly put its finger on an issue of major concern to many families and to wider analysts of social development in Hong Kong. "Schoolwork is important", it declared. "But a child's whole life should not revolve around it, letting it affect even family relationships. It is not worth the sacrifice of a happy childhood."

However, the newspaper also showed that families are to some extent trapped. When the majority of their classmates receive tutoring, students worry that they will be left behind. Teachers to some extent rely on tutoring to reinforce parts of the curriculum and to provide individual attention that they cannot themselves offer. And parents are led to consider tutoring part of a normal form of family support without which they might be neglecting their children's future. The *South China Morning Post* recognised this with the remark that

— Intense competition inside the classroom is driving many parents to pay for tutorials outside school. Most are afraid that their children will fall behind if they don't take extra classes; some wish to give them an edge over others.

Seen from a broader angle, the developments in Hong Kong are part of a global shift from the school as the only significant formal centre for teaching and learning to a situation in which the shadow sector is a major component and an essential support. This changing balance needs much wider awareness, and much greater recognition by schools and governments. The shadow education sector is unlikely to diminish in the near future. The task ahead is to promote dialogue and interaction. Schools need to consider why parents are sending their children to tutorial institutions, and what the pupils gain in those institutions that the schools themselves are not providing.

The *South China Morning Post* described the shadow as a parasitic industry. Yes, it has parasitic elements; but there is more to it than this. And meanwhile, the newspaper should not over-simplify "the lesson that all parents need to learn". This is a complicated domain, and it is not easy to be either a parent or a student in contemporary Hong Kong.

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When the majority of their classmates receive tutoring, students worry that they will be left behind. And parents are led to consider tutoring part of a normal form of family support without which they might be neglecting their children's future.

Living on edges: Supplementing education in an Australian mining town



Closer to Bali than to the Western Australian state capital of Perth, the township of Karratha is officially 'remote'. It is also booming as never before in its 42 year history. From pastoral station to economic hub, there is a dramatic story to tell, but this article relates a humbler tale, one that begins with an award, a grant gifted to a school that sits in the heart of a 'red dirt' town in the far north of Western Australia. Photo courtesy of flickr (ArtGra).

Inset:
The outback, boomtown mentality is evident in this bumper sticker aimed at the thousands of so-called FiFos, staff who fly in to work almost continuously for a period and then fly out again for an extended period off. Photo by Martin Forsey.

Supplementing education through public-private partnerships is a much lauded government strategy in contemporary Australia. One such partnership in the far north town of Karratha in Western Australia, between a mining conglomerate and secondary schools, has shown some encouraging results. Australia has come through the recent global financial crisis relatively unscathed, thanks in no small part to the resource companies supporting educational improvement such as that in Karratha. Contemplating the decades ahead, which many an economist believes will continue to be bountiful for resource-rich nations, questions arise about the sorts of educational practices and outcomes Australian society wishes to pursue in the still 'lucky country'.

Martin Forsey

AUSTRALIA HAS WITNESSED A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT away from government schooling towards the non-government sector in the past two decades. This trend is especially pronounced when students move to secondary schools, with more than 40 per cent of Australian school students currently enrolled in either Catholic or Independent schools (Forsey 2008). Reflecting these realities in some small ways, Karratha has two secondary schools, a government high school spread across two campuses and St Luke's Catholic College, a school with some 400 enrolments.

It takes a village to raise a child

In its publicity materials, St Luke's proudly declares itself to be the only private school in the region called the Pilbara, and it was this school that won the award at the heart of the story related here. If you were to walk into the staffroom of the school, you may notice on the sprawling noticeboard an A3 poster congratulating the school as a 'Winner of the 2009 Schools First Local Impact Award'.

Schools First is a national awards program focused on enhancing school community partnerships throughout Australia. "You've heard it before: it takes a village to raise a child", they declare on the website –well, "Schools First builds on the increasing recognition that the task of raising young people who are resilient, enquiring, adaptable and well-adjusted, rests on the shoulders of the entire community". The programme aims at increasing student engagement, improving school attendance and retention, and enhancing academic performance. As part of the conditions for eligibility, all prize-winning schools are partnered in some way to a local community group or business. Interestingly, a recent survey conducted by the Australian Education Union indicates that a majority of schools rely upon fundraising of various sorts to pay for classroom and sporting equipment, software and even textbooks (ABC News 2010). A cynical reading of the Schools First Award is that the state is really aiming at encouraging schools into partnerships with private bodies to help defray the cost of education. Supplementing education in various ways now appears to be the order of the day, at least in Australia.

As one of the 68 inaugural recipients of a Schools First 'local impact' award, St Luke's received AU\$50,000. Their partner is The North West Shelf Venture, a conglomerate of companies that constitutes Australia's largest oil and gas resource producer which pumped a significant amount of money into the school in the first year of the project. The partnership, initially named the Karratha Education Initiative (KEI), concentrated on enriching the school's educational program in a variety of ways, improving student retention rates and their academic results. The benchmark set by St Luke's was equivalence with high quality schools in the state's capital in tertiary entrance exam results. Upon receiving the Schools First Award, the principal of St Luke's pledged to use it to further evaluate the partnership and for developing a model of school-community partnerships that could be used in other remote communities. This was my point of entry into the school. I was the happy recipient of the funds given as prize; the one charged with the task of evaluation and model development.

Before going any further, let us first understand a little more of the context, the conditions leading up to the school receiving this award.

Contexts

At the time of writing, the Australian Dollar briefly achieved parity with the US Dollar, the first time it has done so since it was floated in 1983. This is significant to the story told here because it is the commodity-led currencies that are proving strongest against the weakening US currency.

As pointed out already, Karratha is a 'red dirt town', a colour indicative of an iron-laden soil. Framed by a low range of hills to the South, it sits on a mud flat that reaches out into the turquoise Indian Ocean. If one looks hard, it is possible to imagine the giant platforms sitting nearly 125 km away on the North West Shelf pumping up the masses of oil and gas that are heating the houses and firing the furnaces of Western Australian and parts of Asia. There is a constant movement of ships as they gather the iron and the gas, the salt and the fertilizer waiting for them in the custom built vats near the ports of Dampier, some 20 kilometres to the east of the township. Twelve-hour shifts are the order of the day; it truly is a town that never sleeps.

Living on edges *continued*

Karratha is essentially a processing centre for the iron and gas industries. It is also the administrative centre for the Shire of Roebourne, which is one of four local government provinces in the Pilbara region, which covers an area of some 400,000 km². If you go to the Roebourne Council website, you will find banner statements circulating through it declaring the Pilbara to be the nation's most productive region, contributing AU\$7.1 Billion to Commonwealth taxes and royalties, 45 percent of Western Australia's export income and 23 percent of the State's gross product. According to the latest national census conducted in 2006, labour force participation in Karratha was higher than the national average by a massive 17 percentage points (82 percent compared to 65 percent). Median wages were 34 percent higher than the national figure in this period, while unemployment was less than half the national average. The level of unemployment has risen in the town over the past four years, but is still below the state and national averages. An interesting measure of economic wealth, evoked by locals quite frequently, is the number of recreational boats in the town. Walking around the streets of the Karratha it does appear as though there is a boat in every second driveway, a striking feature of which is their large size.

As the biggest town in the region, Karratha sits in the midst of a resources boom that is feeding the steel mills of China, Korea, Japan and India with iron ore and energy. The Global Financial Crisis of 2008 certainly affected the town, the ships stopped coming and many a miner was laid-off in the aftermath of the 'meltdown', but going there today, you would find little, if any, evidence of the depression. Total resource output from Karratha-Dampier increased by 16 percent per annum from 2004 to 2009 (Lawrie, Tonts & Plummer in press). Investment in the energy industries associated with the township remains strong, with newly constructed gas projects costing a combined AU\$55 billion (Department of Mines and Petroleum & Department of State Development 2010). One of the strongest indicators of the financial buoyancy of the town is its property prices. Unlike townships in most other parts of the state, where housing prices have stayed relatively flat, in Karratha from the first quarter of 2007 to the corresponding period in 2010, average property prices increased by 45 percent.

Australia has emerged from the global financial crisis relatively unscathed, or so government politicians and many an economist, like to tell us. While a 'system of prudential regulation' of financial institutions has been a key component of this (Garret 2009), the economic activity centred around Karratha is emblematic of Australia's 'great escape'. But while the town as a whole is doing well – and let us not forget that economic booms never touch all people in equally beneficial ways – this does not mean that people want to stay in Karratha indefinitely. Many factors call them away – the heat, the pull of family, boredom to name but three – but education is an important factor, especially in families with aspirations of a university education for their teenaged children.

Sustaining a workforce

– *Karratha is not the sort of town you can arrive in and think, 'oh this is a lovely town, I could live here for the rest of my life'. I don't think so.* Parent of two, currently living in Perth.

Current estimations posit the resident population in Karratha to be around 13,000 persons. There is a significant number of non-resident workers in the town at any one time due to the practice of 'fly-in, fly-out' employment that sees workers, invariably associated with the mining industry, contracted to work for a set period in the town and to then fly home for an extended break, before resuming again. These 'fly-in, fly-out' workers, known colloquially as FiFos, are housed in small rectangular units, called dongas, that are erected in temporary camps on the borders of the township. Official estimates as to how many persons are accommodated in these camps vary quite wildly from 2,000 to 6,000, and in casual conversations with various people it was not unusual to hear estimates of up to 10,000 FiFos working around Karratha at any one time.

A recent government report considering land supply issues in the township, commented that Karratha had a higher than usual 'resident churn factor', reflecting the fact that the number of people staying in the town for less than five years is more pronounced than in many other parts of Western Australia. The report states that at the time of the 2006 national census "approximately 56 and 24 per cent of Karratha residents lived at their current address one and five years ago respectively, compared to 75 per cent and 48 per cent for the State" (Government of Western Australia 2010).

One of the factors driving the earlier mentioned Karratha Education Initiative (KEI) was a concern identified by the partners of the North West Shelf Venture (NWSV) regarding

The supplementary education plan developed with the North West Shelf Venture was a grand plan for anywhere, but for a town like Karratha on the edge of nowhere, to push it to the edge of greatness like this was inconceivable to many. A budget of AU\$1m per year was requested, and in the first year St Luke's received more than this.



Photo by Claire Malavaux-Forsy.

their high staff turnover, which in the late 2000s was thought to be costing up to AU\$15m annually. Company surveys conducted at the time indicated quality of education to be a major cause of this 'employee churn', with key issues identified as teacher quality, student academic performance and curriculum choice, particularly in upper school (Years 11 and 12) when students begin their preparation for university entrance examinations.

Apprenticeship or tertiary education?

The transition to high school is a touchstone time for parents deciding whether to stay or leave the town. Significant numbers apparently choose to exit because they didn't trust the secondary schools, although it is difficult to locate any exact figures assessing the validity of this local piece of commonsense. For these reasons, the town's two secondary schools do not necessarily feel the same population pressures as the primary schools, although a number of parents with primary school children expressed concerns to me about the waiting list at St Luke's.

Many of the parents and teachers I have spoken with readily acknowledge that Karratha offers extraordinary opportunities to students seeking to take up a trade when they leave school. The apprenticeship system available through organisations such as the NWSV is of high quality and many a person I spoke with mentioned how easy it is for young people, in tones that go something like this: "you do the apprenticeship for three years and then you can earn big bucks working for a mining company".

One parent I spoke with describes what she calls 'the Karratha mentality', where "basically everything's provided on a plate if you are an industry family... a lot of these kids have gone through their whole schooling at Karratha and get an apprenticeship with one of the big companies. They think

everybody earns \$100,000 a year". A former student of St Luke's, who is currently studying medicine in Perth, spoke in similar ways, describing how his peers "all get into the same kind of mentality – they work in the day and are in the pub at night and they get into this routine. They've got a lot of money, but they are spending it as well, they go and spend four week's pay on a week in Bali or something like that".

The general feeling seems to be that these apprenticeships are readily available, but as one parent commented, the desirable apprenticeships with the NWSV are highly competitive. "They are readily available for a select few", she argued, suggesting that it had as much to do with personal networks as academic results. According to this particular woman, "the big businesses only want the cream of the crop" and the 'average child' struggles to find anything suitable.

Whatever the realities of the apprenticeship opportunities, the popular belief that it is relatively easy to access an apprenticeship in Karratha impacts significantly on the sorts of educational decisions parents make, particularly if they are part of the 'professional class', the 9.3 per cent of the population who have a tertiary degree. They are more concerned than most about the range of educational opportunities available to their children in the 'boomtown'.

"This is what parents want to know about"

As may be apparent by now, the research I am currently conducting, whilst field based, is constructed mainly around interviews; interviews with parents, teachers, students and former students of the high schools in Karratha. One group of parents I have been meeting with lately are those who have lived in Karratha and have recently moved to Perth. In seeking to find out why they left, concerns about high school education keep emerging as a key theme. As a mother of two primary school children argued, whilst reflecting on

the ways in which Karratha attracts people looking to earn a lot of money in a short period of time, “without a doubt the well educated people coming up for a stint in the town, come up while the kids are young. And that’s before they’ve seen the high schools”.

The same woman also expressed the opinion that the secondary schools are not going to attract the children of these ‘well educated people’ as long as they are not able to guarantee a critical mass of able students completing school and sitting the Tertiary Entrance Examinations at the end of Year 12. As she put it, “you are not going to get TEE (Tertiary Entrance Examination) results unless you have got students sitting Year 11 and 12. And you are not going to get students sitting Year 11 and 12 unless their parents who are tertiary educated feel encouraged and reassured that what’s on offer is good enough”. It is a view shared by all of the tertiary educated parents I have interviewed to this point.

At a local weekend festival held annually in Karratha, which draws a high proportion of the town’s population, there is a pavilion accommodating stalls promoting the vast majority of boarding schools located in the State’s capital some 1,500 km south of Karratha. In the recent past, the North West Shelf Venture (NWSV) has financed the stalls set up by the two local secondary schools, Karratha Senior High School (SHS) and St Luke’s Catholic College. They were there to remind the people of Karratha that they had local schooling options and to assure them that these offered a quality education.

In 2010 St Luke’s placed two small posters on their pin-up-board. The first made a pointed comparison between the fees they charged (AU\$4,450 p.a.) and those charged by some of the 13 schools represented in the pavilion (between AU\$18,000 and AU\$40,083). The second poster reported various measures of academic improvement achieved by the school in the past four years – graduation rates were up, and final-year exam results were looking stronger. The posters started the weekend in an obscure corner of the overall display. When one of the teachers noticed this he moved them to the front of the kiosk, muttering as he did so that, “this is what parents want to know about; this is *the* important message”. The message was very much one of reassurance for the parents of the town. The school is keen to let the potential clientele know that things are getting better and that aspirations for a university education could be, and are being, met, at St Luke’s.

The Karratha Education Initiative –encouraging and reassuring the educated classes?

The improvements in academic results reported by St Luke’s with such pride coincide with the implementation of the Karratha Education Initiative (KEI), which began in the school in 2008. For various administrative reasons it was not available to Karratha SHS until 2009, but one of the reasons why it was launched at St Luke’s was that the Principal at that time was intimately and vigorously involved in the development of the project.

A business case for what became the KEI was developed in 2007. With the assistance of a consultant with experience in strategic planning in a broad range of educational settings, an Education Model was developed that focused on enhancing and developing five key strategic areas:

1. Academic standards and subject choice
2. Co-curricular enrichment and choice
3. Personal growth and development
4. International specialisation
5. Excellence in teaching and learning

The Model advocated the development of a range of initiatives to address these needs. A cornerstone was the setting up of a Centre for Online Learning. Requiring a significant enhancement of the school’s computer facilities,

Right:
Home away from home –here, the phrase refers to school, but it could just as easily be applied to the town of Karratha itself, which is a temporary home for most of those living and working there. Photo by Martin Forsey.



the Centre would provide leading-edge interactive learning modules for all students in the town, including those at the government high school. Extension and revision classes for students preparing for the TEE examinations were also proposed, as was support for after-hours tutoring provided by the teachers in the school. Acknowledging the lack of ‘cultural activities’ such as music, theatre and visual arts and the requisite experts in these arenas, it was proposed that St Luke’s become a centre for music education, for the performing arts and the visual arts in the township. The proposal also included visits to Perth to take part in significant cultural and sporting activities for all of the school’s students.

Other initiatives linked to the proposed KEI included strengthening the professional development offerings for teachers, and addressing teacher accommodation shortages faced by the school since its inception. Eight houses were proposed, two of which were to accommodate expert musicians to be employed in the school as part of the plan to enrich the cultural life of the school and the town.

The consultant to the project was particularly keen for the school to take the lead from some of the prestigious schools in Perth in differentiating itself in the education marketplace by establishing St Luke’s as a Centre for International Studies. Mindful of Karratha’s position on the edge of Asia (or closer to the boundaries than Perth at least), the argument was put to the NWSV, given their status as some of the major players on the world stage, that an international outlook is essential for the resource companies and their staff. The proposal included initiatives such as language courses, public lectures from acknowledged experts, films, performances, even culinary events, utilising the expertise available in the partner companies of the NWSV. It was an ambitious plan indeed.

Abundant funds and initiatives

The supplementary education plan developed with the North West Shelf Venture was a grand plan for anywhere, but for a town like Karratha on the edge of nowhere, to push it to the edge of greatness like this was inconceivable to many. A budget of AU\$1m per year was requested, and in the first year St Luke’s received more than this. The money paid for the installation of a school-wide WiFi system, 250 laptop computers, a total refurbishment of science laboratories, and electronic whiteboards installed in every classroom. Various national and international trips were organised for groups of students, including one trip to Costa Rica. The school also purchased canoes and trailers for outdoor education activities, and teachers attended a variety of in-service activities.

Improving the university entrance exam results of final year students was a key focus of the KEI in its first year; this was always going to form the main means of measuring the success of the programme. The various measures funded for by the KEI included paying teachers to tutor students in core subjects outside of normal classroom times, access to a programme called My Tutor allowing students in all years to access online assistance with their schoolwork from registered tutors.

In addition, during the first semester holidays the KEI funded trips to Perth for any final year student who wished to attend exam revision courses held at a Perth university. Interviews I conducted with students who had attended these seminars attested to their success. Not only did they benefit from the exposure to teachers and teaching methods beyond their normal experiences, being around a university for a week further inspired them to aspire to go to university. A little later in the year, tutors were brought up to Karratha to run weekend ‘cramming sessions’ just before the students sat the TEE. “They flew up a bunch of teachers and ex-TEE markers every second weekend”, commented one of the former students I interviewed. “They just crammed everything into one day. Like we did physics one day and over eight hours they taught us everything that we needed to know.”

The results were impressive. In 2008 for the first time in the school’s history, they achieved a 100 per cent graduation rate. Overall grades increased by an average of 3.5 percent over the previous year and the proportion of students achieving TEE scores in the top 10 percent of the state doubled from the previous year. Similar results were achieved in 2009, with four students achieving grades good enough for acceptance into medicine, the most competitive university course in the State. These results could be random variations of course, time will tell, but as was probably the case with the results achieved so far, much will depend upon who is persuaded to stay in the town over the next few years and who chooses to leave. There is something circular in the reasoning at play here, but schools clearly play a part in the outcomes of such decision making.

Supplementing education in the far north

The supplementary education program developed in Karratha over the past three years reflects much broader concerns in the national community regarding educational standards and the choices available to parents. As I have argued elsewhere (Forsey 2008), parents in contemporary Australia often feel like they have ‘no choice but to choose’ and are anxious to ensure that their child gets the right sort of opportunities to succeed as they should in and through their schooling. In a remote town like Karratha, these anxieties are magnified for many, particularly those who have ambitions of tertiary education for their child.

The KEI was developed in order to assuage these concerns and as the students who benefited from this programme were keen to point out to me, it was appropriate that they received the sorts of support they did as they did not receive the sorts of benefits brought by fine libraries, a wide range of courses, classes large enough to be run in their own right rather than by correspondence, a more competitive atmosphere, and so on. But in a boomtown it is of course much more likely that money is made available in useful proportions through industry partnerships than might be the case in a farming town, or in a dwindling coal mining village.

The broad ambitions of the original proposal are languishing. Predictably, the focus has shifted to ‘the pointy end’ of the education process, to the measurable final results that most people pay attention to, especially anxious parents. The idea of St Luke’s becoming a Centre for International Studies has not been seriously broached and it seems unlikely that it ever will. For one thing, the money made available to all schools this year diminished and it is unclear if the KEI will continue into the near future.

In a world of ‘proposal economies’ (Stern & Hall 2010) that are part of the reality of the sorts of public-private partnerships demanded by the Schools First project, there is little incentive or ability to build long-term, ambitious and perhaps ultimately more effective programmes when all too often they depend upon the energy of charismatic, energetic individuals. And, like so many enterprises dependent upon the vagaries of monies granted to them on a proposal-by-proposal basis, rather than through guaranteed, adequate budgets, St Luke’s is ultimately more likely to sit on the edge of nothingness than on the edge of the sort of greatness promised by the Karratha Education Initiative. Yet, it is an ambition I am sure many would hope that all schools could strive for, or at least something approximating it.

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Left:
One of the stalls set up by Perth boarding schools to promote their offerings in the boomtown. Photo by Martin Forsey.



Supplementary education in Japan

For the past five years or so, I have answered questions about my research interests in Japan very simply: “*juku*” (塾). Generally, this is met with a surprised look, so that I specify further: “academic *juku*” (学習塾), but that only seems to resolve this puzzle to a small extent.

Julian Dierkes



IT SEEMS STRANGE to many Japanese interlocutors that any scholar would concern himself with supplementary education (*juku* being the catch-all term for the various forms of schools within the supplementary education industry that parallel conventional primary and secondary schools), even though virtually all of these same interlocutors would concede that their children—if they have any—are attending or have attended *juku*. The existence of *juku* is taken for granted to an extent in Japan that no aspects of this industry are questioned by scholars, and *juku* and supplementary education more broadly are still marred by the whiff of the slightly illegitimate, along the lines of “It’s too bad *juku* exist, but it can’t be helped.”

In the course of my research (funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) I have visited over forty *juku* in Tokyo and its surrounding prefectures, in the Kansai area (Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe), in Hiroshima, as well as in Shimane, a rural prefecture directly to the west of Hiroshima toward the southern end of Honshu. I have been able to visit many of these *juku* through a snowball sample emanating outward from Tokyo where I met a group of activist *juku* operators very early on in the research. In other locations, I have been able to either contact *juku* directly (especially in Shimane Prefecture) or to rely on contacts through my growing network of *juku* operators. In addition to direct visits to *juku*, I have met over 100 *juku* operators in a variety of contexts, primarily through meetings of various associations and study groups associated with education and with supplementary education more specifically.

On my visits to *juku*, I have seen much that has been inspiring and admirable, and some aspects that are disturbing. As with any attempt to capture aspects of an entire industry through targeted visits to a very small percentage of the industry players, I can make few claims as to the representativeness of my observations except for some niches within this large industry. At the same time, my fieldwork has given me some insights into how small operators in an industry that is increasingly dominated by corporate actors, position themselves and their entire industry as it evolves.

My initiation to *juku*

Although I had been visiting one particular *juku* (focused on teaching young school children use of the abacus, no less) for over a decade and a half, my first visit to a Tokyo-area *juku* came in October 2006. Subsequently, I have visited Inaho-juku most often over the years and have developed a friendship and research partnership with the operator of the *juku*, Mr. Hirabayashi. The *juku* is located in an industrial area between the large commuter station of Shinagawa at the industrial city of Kawasaki in Tokyo’s Ota-ward, close to Haneda Airport. Ota-ku is a part of Tokyo that is rarely visited by researchers or tourists unless they have a particular interest in industrial downtown (下町) areas of Tokyo.

From the train station it is about a 15-20 minute walk deep into this Shitamachi neighbourhood to reach the *juku*. Along the way, every other building seems to be a small industrial workshop. Large bins with discarded metal bits seem even more common than the ubiquitous vending machines.

After crossing a major thoroughfare, I reached the *juku* itself. Despite my attempts to keep an open mind about *juku*, I approached this first visit with the term ‘cram school’ echoing in my mind and associated images of young children stuck in neon-lit classrooms having their brains forcefully injected with useless factoid knowledge. The *juku* is housed in the bottom floor of a residence, a common arrangement for owner-operated *juku*. It is in a small side-street off a larger, though not major, road. The name of the *juku* is advertised in a neon-lit sign, though the sign was clearly installed some time ago. There are no other forms of advertisements (flyers, brochures, posters, etc.) offered, which many other *juku* commonly present to interested passers-by.

As is also very common, the front door opens to a typical, tiled entrance area that is lined with an oversized shoe/slipper shelf where students and visitors exchange their outdoor shoes for slippers to be worn in the *juku* itself. After stepping up into the *juku*, the first impression is of scholarly chaos. Bookshelves everywhere, the walls are lined with posters announcing a standardized English test (英検), the furniture could easily fill several hipster apartments with 1970s retro chic. This cramped, slightly dilapidated atmosphere is one that I have seen in many slight variations since then.

But the real surprise awaited me when the students arrived. Inaho-juku—as is the case across *juku* in the 23 wards of Tokyo—focuses on the upper primary grades. Over the past 20 years the prestige hierarchy among schools has been reversed; while public high schools were perceived as the apex of this hierarchy, now it is private middle schools where the entrance examinations are most competitive. Following this shift, *juku* instruction is now most intensive in preparation for middle school entrance examinations. This trend has been largely limited to Tokyo, however, and its impact does not seem to extend even into the surrounding prefectures.

As I watched a group of fifth-graders (10-11-year olds) file in for their Japanese (国語) class, I was expecting pale, harrowed faces. Instead, I saw deep tans acquired in the summer and lingering into fall. Even more surprisingly, I saw many skinned knees. This may have been the romantic German humanist in me speaking too loudly, but children who enough play outdoors to have bloody knees was not what I had been expecting in an urban, industrial area ‘cram school’ in Tokyo.

The history and roots of supplementary education in Japan

There is no doubt that the widespread existence of *juku* is rooted in deep and long-standing traditions and pedagogical preferences. Clearly, *juku* are a version of Confucian education

at some level, however immeasurable to the social scientist. The general focus on knowledge rather than understanding in Japanese schooling is a symptom of the same orientation. The importance of standardized examinations may be yet another aspect of this orientation.

There are also some significant historical roots of contemporary *juku*, certainly linked to the term ‘*juku*’ itself. The most prominent example that comes to most Japanese interlocutors’ mind are early Meiji educational institutions like Fukuzawa Yukichi’s Keio Gijuku, now Keio University. Clearly, over 150 years ago the term ‘*juku*’ also denoted a private educational institution that existed under the tutelage of a charismatic and respected teacher and outside of what became state-sponsored education.

To many observers, including operators of *juku* themselves, this vague link with Confucianism and the continuous use of the term ‘*juku*’ suggests that *juku* are an indigenous form of education with a long and unbroken history.

While such observations have a point when it comes to common behavioral patterns that make Japanese parents consider private supplementary education as an obvious option to help their children face challenges in conventional schools, these claims to a continuous history seem to be somewhat specious. In many conversations with *juku* operators, it has come to light that *juku* were quite rare prior to the ‘*juku* boom’ of the early 1970s. In fact, not only were *juku* rare, but they were clearly lacking in legitimacy, leading to challenges to *juku* entrepreneurs in terms of the financing of expansion plans and in terms of facing prospective parents-in-law who were skeptical about the financial viability of supplementary education. ‘*Juku*’ as a term competed with other terms like ‘勉強室’. This is not to say that *juku* did not exist at all, but they appear to have been very rare in the pre- and postwar era prior to the 1970s.

The *juku* boom of the 1970s quickly established supplementary education as an important element in the Japanese education system. The roots of this boom can be found in a combination of factors. The Japanese total fertility rate dipped below 2 for the first time in the early 1970s, signaling the rapid shrinking of Japanese families. The fast-paced economic growth of the Japanese economy in the 1960s and the parallel national income doubling plan began to have an impact on individual incomes in the early 1970s, a trend that became even clearer with the dissolution of the Bretton Woods system in 1971. These two factors combined to give families some disposable income by the early 1970s.

Higher education had been expanding in Japan throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s. While only about a quarter of Japanese high school students were planning to attend post-secondary institutions in the 1960s, this proportion

Highly institutionalized, yet in flux



Small urban juku have withdrawn deep into neighborhoods, far away from the transportation hubs that the corporate and franchise juku have staked out as their territory. Many of the long-time small juku operators rely exclusively on word of mouth in recruiting new students. These small juku are now teaching approximately half the number of students that they enrolled in the mid-1990s.

had risen to nearly half by 1975. Not only did the aspirations for higher education rise, but actual enrolments and even the number of tertiary education institutions rose massively in this period. Most of this expansion occurred through the growth of private universities.

The final factor that contributed to the *juku* boom, at least in Tokyo, was the availability of entire cohorts of university graduates to become *juku* operators. While the Japanese student movement in the late 1960s was neither as far-reaching nor as violent as it was in North America or Europe, it did lead to significant turmoil on some campuses and involved a substantial number of students, particularly at the most prestigious universities like the University of Tokyo and Waseda University. For many of the student radicals involved, their activism spelled doom to any traditional career. They would be blacklisted from public service jobs, and most private corporations at the time did not hesitate to hire investigators to check on an applicant's past and would not have been keen to hire a (former) radical. Yet, these were graduates of universities at the pinnacle of the rigid prestige hierarchy of Japanese universities, and they were highly motivated to have an impact on the world. For at least some of them, the concurrent occurrence of the *juku* boom represented an attractive job opportunity where their credentials were an asset.

The case for *juku*

As any observer of Japan notices, the country has been in a funk since the bursting of the economic bubble in the early 1990s. While many cross-national measures make Japan seem like a paradise of safety, stability and a high quality of life, the past two decades of economic stagnation – albeit on a very high plateau of wealth – have cast a pall across all areas of social relations in the eyes of many domestic observers.

Education has not been immune to this atmosphere of doom and gloom. Although neo-liberal criticism of Japanese education was prominently instigated by Prime Minister Nakasone in the confident 1980s, this perspective has become more prevalent in recent years. The generally negative attitude toward public education in the media and among pundits has been exacerbated in the past decade by some of the mishandling of educational policy by the Ministry of Education, MEXT. When the rapid development of the internet economy in the United States reinforced some of the doubts about a lack of creativity and entrepreneurialism raised by the 'lost decade' of the 1990s, MEXT responded with a so-called liberalization of education that introduced some elements of choice and a greater project orientation to secondary schools while reducing overall content and eliminating Saturday classes.

While some of these changes had been demanded by parents and educators for years, MEXT introduced them at best half-heartedly, as evidenced by the lack of teacher training associated with the '*yutori kyoiku*' reforms.

This half-heartedness has subsequently contributed to a renewed boom in supplementary education in that it has reinforced (often mistaken) notions of a 'decline of academic abilities'. What seem like terrific results in cross-national comparisons (e.g. the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment, even in 2006) have become causes for moral panics as minor changes in results have been magnified in populist discussions. The various social ills that seem to have befallen Japanese education (bullying, truancy, etc.) only add to this sense of crisis. Japanese media discussions around the PISA results of 2009, released in December 2010, have been somewhat more positive, but a sense of losing in competition, especially with Asian neighbours, pervades these discussions.

In this atmosphere of crisis, many observers continue to praise the virtues of a marketized education system and thus of *juku*. A visit to a large Japanese bookstore can quickly lead to a shelf filled with books of *juku* and *juku*-related punditry exhorting the virtues of the introduction of competition and choice into the educational system. The gist of the argument of such punditry is echoed by *juku* operators in the interviews I have conducted. In fact, these interviews are so uniform in some of the claims that *juku* operators make that they almost seem to follow a standardized script.

The main argument for *juku* hinges on two tenets:

1. A strong functionalist interpretation of the existence of *juku*, and
2. A surging emphasis on being responsive to individual needs.

—If *juku* didn't work, they wouldn't exist!

There is a certain persuasive logic to this functionalist argument. Just as it is hard to argue with someone who fervently believes that *juku* exist because Japan is a Confucian society, so it is hard to question the taken-for-granted nature of a claim that if it exists, it must be working. This logic generally infuses answers to questions about the existence of *juku* in Japan on the systemic as well as the organizational level:

— *Juku exist so they must be fulfilling some need among parents/students.*

— *This juku exists so it must be good at supplementing conventional education.*

Answers along these lines point out that *juku* are addressing some shortcomings of conventional schools. When *juku* focus on remedial education, then the argument points out that students who have fallen behind are not well served by the large classes common in conventional schools and by the 'salary-man' mentality typically ascribed to contemporary teachers. Likewise, *juku* that focus on accelerated tuition point out that there is no streaming or tracking in Japanese schools and that they are meeting the demand for such differentiation.

This functionalist logic is also applied to competition between *juku*. Virtually every *juku* operator points out that their students are under no obligation to attend and will therefore leave the *juku* if it is not delivering results. The results that are expected are somewhat amorphous, of course. While remedial tuition may produce satisfaction simply because of an improvement in the understanding of subject matter by the student, or an improvement in the student's grade, accelerated teaching ultimately is not tested until the student takes an entrance examination. However, the equally large test-taking industry provides students with ample opportunities to test their abilities against scores of other students to produce standardized results.

In the context of the ever-present threat of students voting with their feet, *juku* operators emphasize that all students in urban regions have a plethora of alternatives to choose from. This is true for the vast urban landscape of the Kanto region as much as it is for a major city like Hiroshima. Even in the rural towns of coastal Shimane, students do not hesitate to take a forty minute train ride to a neighbouring town to attend a *juku* there. Technology has opened new channels for teaching and learning to students in rural areas, so that almost all operators see themselves as being under threat from competitors.

Technological advances and investments

It is clear that large, corporate and franchise *juku* are all operating in a highly competitive market that has become even more so due to the corporatization of this industry. Marketing budgets are immense, as attested by the ubiquitous ads for *juku* everywhere from Tokyo's subway to Shimane's rural bus service.

Technology and infrastructure investments are equally large. When I visited Up's newly-constructed main facility near Nishinomiya train station in Kobe in October 2007, the scale of the building and the obvious investment in infrastructure were stunning. Up is a very large regional player in the *juku* market with a total of over 20,000 students. Nishinomia is a bustling train station and the new Up building is sitting in a prime location very close to the station.

After showing us some of their satellite operations in a nearby mall, including the franchised Lego Lab that introduces elementary school children to engineering tasks, an Up manager took us to the new building. We ascended to the 7th floor (!) of the building for a tour of some of the technology investments. What I saw there surpassed anything I have seen in all but the most technology-driven university facilities in Asia or anywhere else. Flat screen monitors everywhere (now a commonplace, but a fairly awesome sight to me 3 years ago), and a whole battery of studios where instructors could teach in real time with several students at once distributed across the country or even internationally.

For users of WebCT or similar software on North American campuses, the proprietary Up software clearly offered so many more features that this looked like a clearly viable delivery method. Up managers confirmed that they see delivery method as the area where they can most easily distinguish their teaching from that of conventional schools and other *juku*.

Small-scale strategies

None of this is even remotely possible for the vast number of owner-operated *juku*, of course, unless they choose to franchise teaching systems from one of the larger corporations and off-load technology investments onto their customers. But owner-operated *juku*, like the large corporate *juku*, do not really compete on price; there seems to be a common national rate for the basic *juku* package (two school subjects taught twice a week at around ¥6-7,000, or US\$75-85) that varies little and is not overtly undercut by any of the players in this industry. While several *juku* operators suggested that they gave some steep discounts, quasi-scholarships, to deserving families, this was never mentioned as a competitive strategy. In fact, small *juku* do not seem to actively engage in competition with other *juku*, not even those nearby.

Geographically, small urban *juku* have withdrawn deep into neighborhoods, far away from the transportation hubs that the corporate and franchise *juku* have staked out as their territory. Many of the long-time small *juku* operators rely exclusively on word of mouth in recruiting new students and some recalled common incidents of having to turn away prospective students to limit the total number. Typically, these small *juku* are now teaching approximately half the number of students that they enrolled at their peak, usually in the mid-1990s. While a typical size for urban owner-operated *juku* is now around 100 students, many of them had close to 200 students 15 years ago.

When I explicitly asked operators what the annual turnover rate among their students was, many suggested levels under ten percent. While operators may have been low-balling their estimates, or may in fact have been offering instruction of outstanding quality, this strikes me as rather a low rate in a consumer market characterized by large advertising budgets and myriad choices for consumers. Along with many other indicators, this low turnover rate points to the important social functions that small *juku* are fulfilling, from simple, but seen-to-be-safe child-minding for single parent households, to providing opportunities to meet neighborhood friends and former classmates.

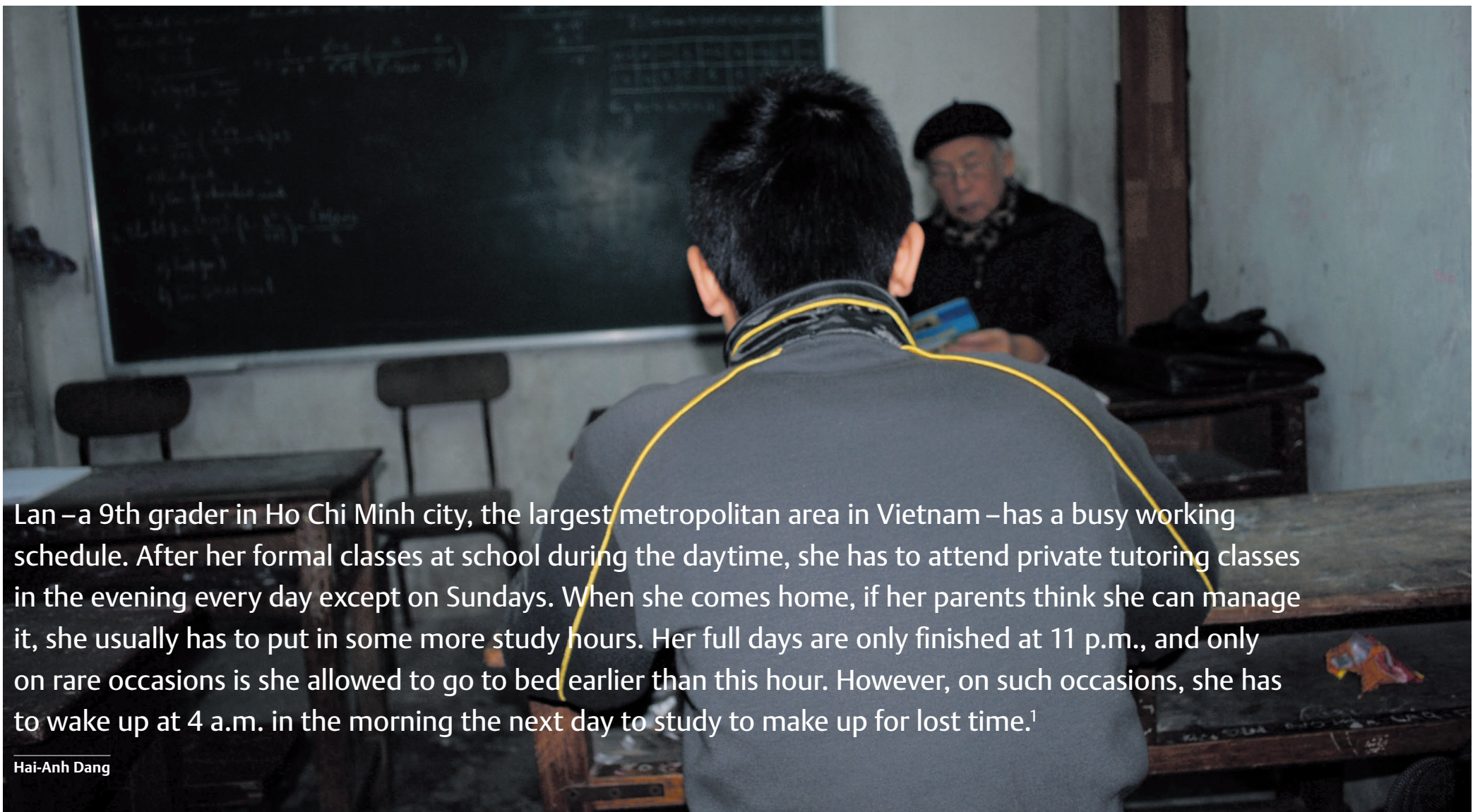
Juku today

In addition to the shifts in delivery methods brought about by technology, a number of changes loom on the horizon for the *juku* industry. For owner-operated *juku*, the absence of successors coupled with the keen competition for customers represented by franchise and chain *juku* suggests an uncertain future. In contrast, the increasingly formal role that *juku* play in the education system, for example through contracts with school boards to provide tuition in public schools, may offer significant growth opportunities. Likewise, an expansion into international markets may also promise such growth, at least for larger players.

Despite some of these changes, however, the *juku* industry is firmly institutionalized and few doubt that it will continue to be a major element in the education of Japanese children and youth for some time to come.

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A bird's-eye view of the private tutoring phenomenon in Vietnam



Lan – a 9th grader in Ho Chi Minh city, the largest metropolitan area in Vietnam – has a busy working schedule. After her formal classes at school during the daytime, she has to attend private tutoring classes in the evening every day except on Sundays. When she comes home, if her parents think she can manage it, she usually has to put in some more study hours. Her full days are only finished at 11 p.m., and only on rare occasions is she allowed to go to bed earlier than this hour. However, on such occasions, she has to wake up at 4 a.m. in the morning the next day to study to make up for lost time.¹

Hai-Anh Dang

HOA IS ANOTHER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT who was faced with two options from her parents: either staying at home and getting married after finishing high school or attending private tutoring classes in the big city to prepare for her university entrance examinations. Hoa took the latter option.

Lan's and Hoa's situations are not exceptions among many of their peers in Vietnam. One recent and growing feature of the Vietnamese education system is a 'shadow' education system existing alongside mainstream education, where students attend extra classes (*dihocthêm*) to acquire knowledge that they do not appear to obtain during their hours in school. These extra classes or private tutoring sessions have become widespread throughout Vietnam with a current enrolment of more than 30 percent and 50 percent of primary and secondary students respectively. Private tutoring also accounts for a considerable share of household budgets allocated to education. Our calculation using the latest household survey data in Vietnam shows that among those households that send their children to private tutoring classes, more than half (55 percent) spend between one and five percent of their total budget on these classes, and certain households spend up to 20 percent of their total budget.

Some characterizing features of tutoring

There are many forms of private tutoring in Vietnam. Private tutoring can be organized by students' parents, by teachers, by schools or by private tutoring centers. This can range from selective classes for just one student at either the student's or the teacher's home to very large classes of 200-300 students in private tutoring centers. Teachers teach such large classes by using a microphone in large theaters, in which case private tutoring classes resemble college classes. The diverse forms of private tutoring classes seem to be equally matched by the various types of private tutors, who can include both full-time tutors and part-time tutors such as college students, retired school teachers, university professors, poets, and writers.

Private tutoring is available for almost all subjects that are taught and assessed at school. The most popular subjects are those tested on the university entrance examinations and upper secondary school graduation examinations: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Literature, English, French, Russian, Chinese, History, Biology, and Geography. Of these, Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry are the most popular subjects for private tutoring, since around 60 percent of students are reported to take examinations in these three subjects for their university entrance examinations.

The impact of tutoring

Private tutoring is interesting to study not just because it is a widespread phenomenon, but also because of its potentially significant impact on student academic performance. Private

tutoring is found to decrease the probabilities that students have poor or average GPA (Grade Point Average) rankings, and is found to increase even more the probabilities of students achieving good or excellent GPA rankings. These results are obtained from our careful analysis of household survey data in Vietnam and are robust to different modeling specifications and control characteristics.

However, private tutoring has unintended consequences as well. One common concern is that private tutoring can deepen the social inequalities between rich and poor and between urban and rural areas. Some poor families in Vietnam are reported to either borrow money at high interest rates or even take mortgages on their property in order to send their children to private tutoring classes. Furthermore, many students from rural areas have to go to urban areas to attend private tutoring lessons, since these lessons are not usually available in their areas. The resulting costs to these students (e.g. transportation costs to and living expenses in urban areas) can be a financial barrier for poor families.

Another concern is that too much private tutoring not only occupies a considerable amount of student time, but it may also have harmful consequences for student health. A recent survey of 38 schools in Ho Chi Minh City implemented by the Institute of Education Research at Ho Chi Minh City Teachers' College found that 76 percent of parents think that private tutoring leaves their children no time to study on their own, and 49 percent of parents say that private tutoring decreases their children's physical and mental health.

What factors determine private tutoring attendance?

A natural question then arises: why do parents send their children to private tutoring classes? Given the current evidence in Vietnam, there appear to be a number of factors that can explain the rise of this phenomenon. These factors can be considered from both the macro and micro (economic) perspective. Macro-level factors that affect private tutoring may include the level of development of the economy, the education system, and cultural values. Factors at the micro level may include the different characteristics of individuals, households, schools, and communities.

Macro factors

First, private tutoring can be regarded as a form of private and supplementary education which is a good, or more precisely an educational service, that is purchased in a free market. The growth of the Vietnamese economy from a centrally planned economy towards a market-oriented one in recent years has brought about a variety of new services that almost seem not to have existed before. It appears that tutoring classes are among these.

Above:
A tutor and his student. Photo by Bich-Nga T. Nguyen.



Above:
Students hard at work in the shadow education system. Photo by Ban-Mai H. Dang.

Second, the current education system in Vietnam is rather inflexible, especially at the tertiary level. Until recently only a few universities were multi-disciplinary, while the majority was devoted to a single discipline. Once admitted to a university, it was not easy for students to transfer to another school or even to change their major (within the discipline) at the same school. Furthermore, entrance examination scores are the single most important factor for student admission to a university. Thus practically, students have limited choices and they have had to try their best in every possible way to get into the schools that they want, including using private tutoring lessons in the hope of enhancing their academic performance.

To make matters worse, the growth in educational demand appears to exceed that of supply. Between 1995 and 2004, while gross enrolment rates almost doubled from 41 percent to 73 percent at the secondary level, and more than tripled from 3 percent to 10 percent at the tertiary level, the number of secondary schools and colleges respectively increased by only 27 percent and 111 percent.

Last but not least, cultural values can be an important driver behind the growth in private tutoring. In countries influenced by Confucianism such as China, Korea or Vietnam, there existed for hundreds of years the imperial examination system by which the ruling officials were selected based on their examination results. The education system had been mostly an elitist system where only a privileged minority could have access to education and could advance through educational achievement. This situation remained largely the same even when Vietnam was a French colony from the middle of the 19th century to 1945. In this period, it is reported that only 3 percent of the population enjoyed access to schooling and the major purpose of the education system was to train foremen, secretaries and low-level officials for the French colonist regime.

Coupled with a high-stakes testing system, this cultural heritage seems to have clearly left its mark on today's current attitudes and aspirations towards good performance in examinations in Vietnam and the (perhaps subconscious) pressure on parents to do everything they can to guarantee success for their children, including using private tutoring.

Micro factors

From a micro perspective, the variables that most influence the consumption of private tutoring at the household level are household living standards (as measured by household expenditure), household size, parental education, and urban location. Richer households spend proportionally more on private tutoring classes than poorer households do, with households in the richest quintile of the consumption distribution spending almost 14 times higher than in the

poorest consumption quintile. Households with more children spend significantly less on tutoring classes per child than households with fewer children. Higher parental education levels are positively associated with more expenditure on tutoring. And not surprisingly, urban households have higher spending on tutoring classes than do rural households.

At the student level, it is notable that the closer students are to the last grade in their current school level the more they spend on private tutoring. One year nearer to the last grade brings a 30 percent increase in spending on private tutoring at the primary level and a 66 percent increase at the lower secondary level. This clearly reflects households' concerns over student performance during the final grade of each level of schooling and in the subsequent examinations.

Policy makers' viewpoint on private tutoring

There has been much public debate about private tutoring in Vietnam. While some policymakers think that private tutoring has negative impacts on students, both on their academic performance and their childhood life, others believe that private tutoring can improve the quality of education. Therefore, while some argue that private tutoring should be banned altogether, others think that private tutoring should be encouraged, at least to some extent. The debates on private tutoring have been ongoing and heated, and they have been heard not just in the media, including newspapers and television, but also during the Minister of Education's presentations to the National Assembly.

The latest regulation at the ministerial level on private tutoring was issued by the Ministry of Education and Training in early 2007. According to this legal document, organizations and individuals can provide private tutoring only if they are granted a permit by the local authority, and it is forbidden to offer private tutoring to students who already study two sessions (two shifts) of formal schooling per day. Most remarkably, it is also stipulated that violation of the regulation can be prosecuted. This is, in fact, the first time that such strict punishment for abuses of private tutoring has been stipulated by the Vietnamese government. This also shows the Vietnamese government's determination to control private tutoring.

Remaining issues

While there has been some evidence collected on the consumers of private tutoring (i.e. students), not much is known about the producers of tutoring (i.e. teachers) in Vietnam. A number of questions remain unanswered about their profiles, motivations, and tutoring methods. For example, there have been anecdotes in newspapers in Vietnam that to raise income, some teachers force

their own students to take their tutoring classes. Students that do not attend these classes may suffer from bad grades or being blacklisted by their teachers. However, to date there is no data to support these claims.

Clearly, more understanding of private tutoring will help policy makers regulate this educational choice better. This should be all the more important given households' limited resources in developing countries such as Vietnam.

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Notes

The author is a post-doc consultant with the Development Research Group of the World Bank. The findings and interpretations in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Bank or its executive directors.

This article is based on the author's own or joint work, either completed or ongoing, with other colleagues on private tutoring in Vietnam including:

- Dang, Hai-Anh (2007). "The Determinants and Impact of Private Tutoring Classes in Vietnam", in *Economics of Education Review* 26(6): 684-699 (Special Issue).
- (2008). *Private Tutoring in Vietnam: An Investigation of its Causes and Impacts with Policy Implications*, VDM Verlag Dr. Mueller Publishing House: Saarbrücken, Germany.
- (forthcoming). "Private Tutoring: A Review of Current and Little Explored Issues in the Context of Vietnam", in Janice Aurini, Julian Dierkes and Scott Davis (eds) *Out of the Shadows: What Is Driving the International Rise of Supplementary Education?* Springer Press.
- Dang, Hai-Anh and Halsey Rogers (2008). "The Growing Phenomenon of Private Tutoring: Does It Deepen Human Capital, Widen Inequalities, or Waste Resources?" in *World Bank Research Observer* 23(2): 161-200.

These publications have more detailed treatment of the issues covered in this article and contain all references for the numbers cited. I would like to thank Julian Dierkes for useful comments and Marie Lenstrup for editorial help on earlier drafts of this article.

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Some poor families in Vietnam are reported to either borrow money at high interest rates or even take mortgages on their property in order to send their children to private tutoring classes.



Right:
The quality of facilities varies quite widely.
Photo by Bich-Nga T. Nguyen.

Shadow education with Chinese characteristics

Thirty years ago, under a strict socialist regime which prohibited private-sector activities in education and other sectors, China was very different from its capitalist neighbours in East Asia. Now it increasingly resembles them. The scale of shadow education is among the similarities. But China still has some distinctive characteristics.

Wei Zhang

WITH 208 MILLION CHILDREN in primary and secondary schools, China's education system is the largest in the world.¹ Like the country as a whole, the education system has undergone radical shifts in the last three decades. One dimension has been the nationwide emergence of the shadow system of supplementary private tutoring.

In some respects, the shadow education system in China resembles that in its East Asian neighbours. However, China has some distinctive ingredients in the dynamics of change. First is the dramatic economic growth of the last few decades, which has given families disposable incomes beyond their greatest dreams. Second is the one-child-family policy, which means that parents can concentrate their increased incomes on just one child. And third has been the emergence of new avenues for social mobility, which have increased competition between families. Add to that the traditions of a Confucian culture that value learning and diligence, and the stage seems to be set for massive growth of private supplementary tutoring. And that is precisely what is occurring.

Indicators of scale

Although data on the scale and intensity of private tutoring in China are scarce, a few studies have provided indicative numbers. For example:

- China's 2004 Urban Household Education and Employment Survey indicated that 55 percent of students surveyed were receiving private tutoring.²
- A 2008 survey of 827 pupils in Gansu, Hunan and Jiangsu Provinces showed that 74 percent of Grade 9 pupils received tutoring.³
- In 2009 the *Beijing Evening News* reported that 56 percent of 9,380 urban households in 18 prefectures including Beijing were investing in private tutoring.⁴

These surveys provide some numerical foundation to a phenomenon which has become clearly evident even to casual observers. The reception areas of tutorial centres are typically filled by long queues of obedient students. Not all of the students in these queues look happy or excited.

A stratified society

As in the other countries, such as Japan and South Korea, private tutoring in China has been stimulated by the major status differences in school and university rankings and by high-stakes entrance examinations.

As a result of the expansion of higher education, a university degree no longer guarantees a decent job or a high standard of living. Many parents recognize that their child's future is likely to be brighter if it is underpinned by a degree from a prestigious university; and tickets to those universities are mostly offered by elite high schools. Every transition point is a battle for advantageous positions in high-ranking schools or universities. Tutoring is a weapon to help children to win on this battleground.

The expansion of tutoring can also be linked to curriculum reform. Reductions in school hours have allowed more free time for both pupils and teachers to participate in tutoring. The central government has recently launched a new round of curriculum reforms to alleviate the burden of learning on pupils. But so long as the system remains competitive, parents are unlikely to slow their pace.

The dual role of mainstream teachers

In some countries, the bulk of private tutoring is provided through commercial firms, some of which operate in multiple cities and operate franchises. China does have a few market leaders, and corporate provision is increasingly evident. However, most private tutoring is provided by mainstream teachers. Some of these teachers tutor pupils for whom they are already responsible in mainstream schools. The 2008 survey of Gansu, Hunan and Jiangsu Provinces indicated that 72 percent of surveyed pupils were tutored by mainstream teachers; and 45 percent of the pupils received tutoring from their own teachers in the mainstream classes.⁵

The dual role of teachers has been the focus of some public criticism. However, it can be defended. Teachers' salaries have been modest compared with other professions; and trained teachers may be better at tutoring than untrained university students and others. Many teachers try hard to help their students in both school and tutoring hours. The time available for formal schooling may not be enough to cover the entire curriculum, to meet the needs of every student, and to produce high admission rates to high-status institutions at the next educational level. Parents seem to have confidence in teachers who are qualified and already know the children.

On the other side of the coin, this type of tutoring could reduce the teachers' incentive to teach well during school hours. Some teachers may 'save' parts of the curriculum during the school day in order to keep it for the private lessons and thereby gain extra earnings. Some teachers may even coerce students to take their extra classes.

English and mathematics teachers are major players in the secret market, since these subjects weigh heavily in entrance examinations. Teachers who make a name in the mainstream system have many clients. Their tutees include students from the schools where they are teaching, students from neighbouring schools, and even students from other cities who are attracted by their reputations.

The nature of tutoring by mainstream teachers varies according to the demand. One-to-one tutoring usually takes place at the teacher's or the tutee's home. Tutoring may also be in small groups at the teacher's house or in the home of one of the tutees. Parents sometimes arrange venues to accommodate larger numbers of students. Some teachers provide tutoring on school premises, but this is increasingly frowned upon by the school authorities. In some extreme cases, the students live in the teachers' houses so that they can be tutored whenever there is a need.

The nature of corporate provision

Despite the competition, different providers of tutoring in China seem to 'feed' each other very well. Private companies could hardly survive at their early stage of development without the support from mainstream teachers and university students. Recruitment of mainstream teachers and university students seems more economic and effective than investment in training of full-time tutors. Most leading companies in the market started with this type of cooperation, later expanding by recruiting and training their own tutors.

Many tutoring centres advertise by highlighting the number of in-service teachers, and particularly the prestigious ones. One large company in Beijing is called Giant, and has 10 branches in other cities. Its website declares that:



“Supplementing tutoring or supplementing income to his pocket?”

— We have a strong team of elite tutors comprising prestigious teachers, professors, researchers and experts of overseas education. Approximately 500 education experts and 6,000 part- and full-time teachers work in our Centre.⁶

The prestigious teachers are called *ming shi*. They usually have rich experience in formal education, detailed knowledge of the entrance examinations, and long lists of former students who have entered elite universities. Eminent university professors are also hired as tutors or consultants. These names are well recognised, and the professors are among the most strongly sought-after tutors.

Government responses

Most local governments have chosen to ignore the existence of tutoring. The central government has also avoided the issue, though has recently recognised the pressures on pupils and has taken steps to raise teachers' salaries and thus to remove the economic pressures on teachers.

However, now that the culture of tutoring has arrived, it will be very difficult to reverse. Teachers who have found that they have the time and ability to earn extra incomes are likely to hold onto these new possibilities; and parents of single-child families will not risk the futures of their offspring. The local and central governments do have some levers to steer the tutoring industry; but they must recognise that it is a vibrant force which is increasingly entrenched.

When devising government policies, a starting point must lie in better inventories of the scale, nature and impact of tutoring. The corollary of the fact that China has the world's largest education system is that the country is diverse. Much better data are needed to map the geographic and other variations in tutoring. Securing the data is a role for university-based researchers as well as for the various arms of government.

Wei Zhang

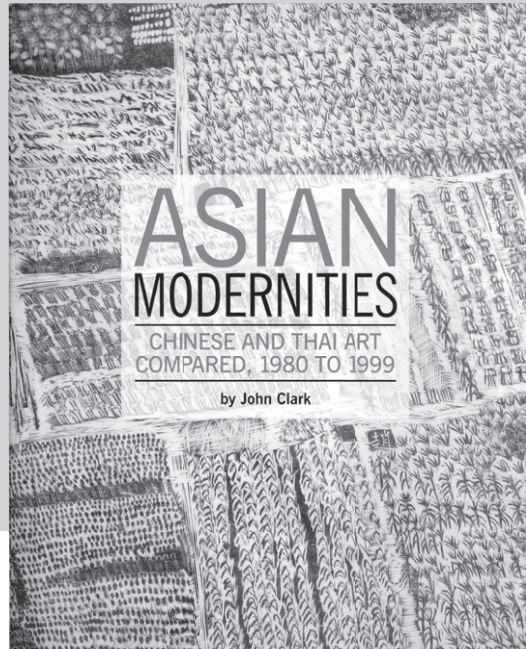
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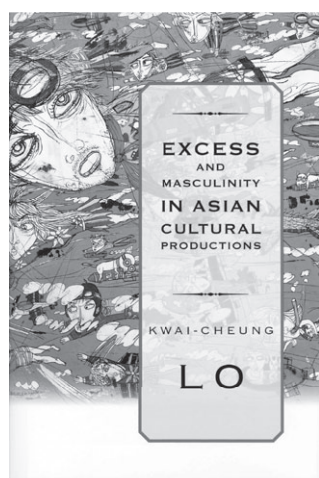
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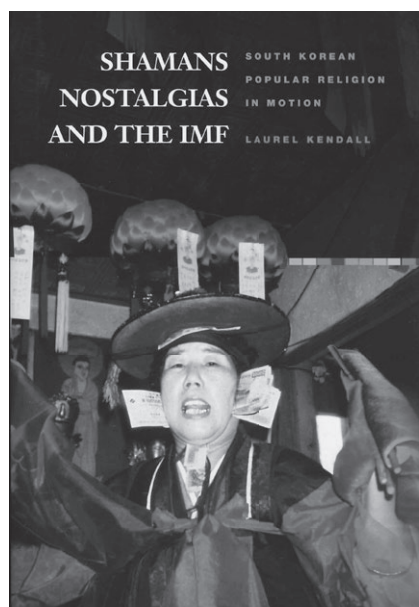
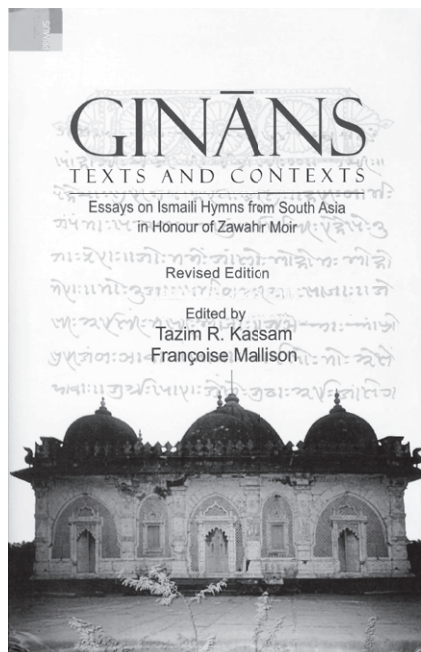
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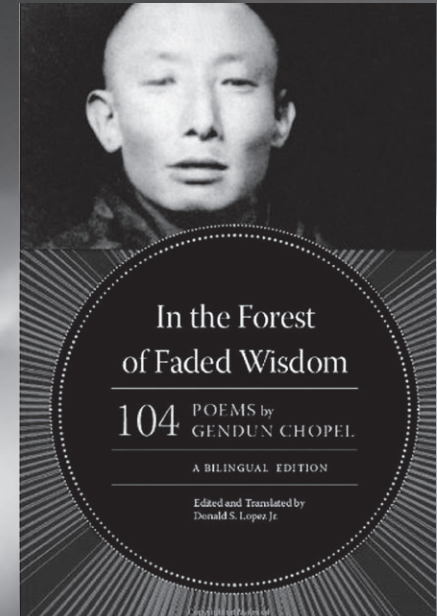
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Gedun Chopel, 20th century Tibet's finest writer



This bilingual edition of the poems of Amdo Gedun Chopel (1903-1951),¹ *In the Forest of Faded Wisdom*, is a welcome addition to the ever-growing corpus of writings by and on the most outstanding, controversial figure of 20th century Tibet.

Heather Marie Stoddard

Donald S. Lopez Jr., editor and translator, 2009.

In the Forest of Faded Wisdom, 104 Poems by Gedun Chopel. A Bilingual Edition.
University of Chicago Press, 199 pages,
ISBN 978 0 226 10452 2.

PROF. LOPEZ'S PREVIOUS STUDY and translation of Gedun Chopel's commentary on Nagarjuna, *The Madman's Middle Way (MMW)*, 2006, is the first analysis in English of the Amdo scholar's notorious philosophical commentary, *The Middle Way. An Ornament on the Thought of Nagarjuna (dBu ma Klu grub dgongs rgyan)*. In that book, Lopez gives an overview of the life of Gedun Chopel, followed by a literal translation of this brilliant philosophical treatise – the most controversial piece of writing to emerge from modern Tibet, and a superbly written text.

In the Forest of Faded Wisdom (FFW) is quite a different kettle of fish. This too is a pioneering work. Lopez has put before us a selection of previously untranslated 'poems', many of which contain difficult classical and vernacular references. The introduction provides a biographical context to some of the texts, as well as a short literary analysis of classical Tibetan 'poetry'. The selection is presented in a convenient bilingual form for students of Tibetan language and literature, and since Gedun Chopel has the reputation of being the finest poet of 20th century Tibet, this in itself is a major initiative.

Lopez's lofty goal in publishing the book is entirely laudable. His aim is to open up the field to a broader public. However, going through *FFW*, this reviewer would like to challenge several fundamental issues with regard to Gedun Chopel's life, the nature of the original texts and the act of translation, particularly the translation of fine 20th century Tibetan poetry into English.

The title and the contents

The cover and title of the book *'In the Forest of Faded Wisdom'* leave the reader with a sense of gloom. It is true that Gedun Chopel had a tragic destiny, facing in the latter fifteen years of his life considerable hardship, indeed the whole gamut of indignities: poverty, abandonment and exploitation, then false accusation, treachery, the whip, imprisonment,

alcoholism, and an untimely death immediately following the Chinese PLA invasion in the summer of 1951. All this began when he left Tibet in 1934, gaining in intensity after his return in 1946 when he underwent what was well-nigh a political assassination on the part of his own government. This was just after he had begun to write the first modern political history of Tibet, from a critical point of view and armed with a clear understanding of what research is all about. 'Faded wisdom' clearly does not refer to Gedun Chopel, nor is it an appropriate term – from the reviewer's point of view – to describe the intense and often partisan thicket of philosophical debate from which he emerged.

In contrast, what struck me when I was doing research on the life of the 'Amdo Beggar' in the 1970s and 1980s was the mischievous delight that emanates from his writings, the roars of appreciative laughter of his audience when reading or reciting his work, and the endless humorous anecdotes I was told about him by all and sundry during my decade of research on his life.² There is also a clever and haughty side to Gedun Chopel – as a brilliant dialectician from the great Gelukpa monastery of Labrang Tashikyil, he had a biting wit, a humorous jesting spirit, an 'habitual tendency' towards exaggerated scathing mockery of the adversary, but rarely was he sad. He could beat anyone in philosophical debate, wrote sublime poetry and drew extremely well. He was a great traveller and adventurer, a wry observer of human nature and society, a would-be encyclopaedist of India and Sri Lanka, a Sanskrit-Tibetan translator of great talent, a lover of women and wine, Tibet's first modern historian, and an intellectual with a strong social conscience. Yet all these qualities seem to disappear into the dark cover of the book.

The number 104 is a puzzle too. The classical Buddhist auspicious number is 108. So in presenting "all the poems of Gedun Chopel that I have been able to locate" (*FFW*, p. 16), is Lopez attempting to avoid the cliché? Gedun Chopel was a great one for that, but even a cursory analysis of the contents of *FFW* shows that there are several more poems than 104, and, as Lopez himself admits, the 'poems' included in the last theme 'Precepts on Passion' are just a few extracts taken from Gedun Chopel's famous 100-page *Treatise on Desire ('Dod pa'i bstan bcos)* written entirely in 'poetry', or to be more precise, in 'metrical verse'.

The mood

In the *FFW*, as in *MMW*, Lopez uses words like bitter, caustic, melancholy and cynical to describe Gedun Chopel's writings and his attitude to life.³ One wonders if these terms echo reactions from the orthodox Gelukpas who wrote counter-attacks to *The Middle Way*, objecting, with considerable panache (Doyi geshe Sherab Gyatso, Gedun Chopel's own teacher, early 1950s) or with great vulgarity (Dzemey tulku, 1970s), and indeed with deep disdain, to the Amdo Beggar's mocking words?

Let us examine an example of what Lopez considers as Gedun Chopel's 'bitterness', in one of his oft-cited alphabetical poems (*FFW* 31, *ka bshad: Ka ye kho bo gzhan du song rjes su...*). Lopez had already used this word in *MMW* (p.9), with regard to the same context, i.e. Gedun Chopel's departure in 1926 from Labrang Tashikyil (in the far northeast of the historic Tibetan province of Amdo, Chinese Qinghai, Xiahe). But Lopez's interpretation appears to the reviewer to be a misunderstanding of the poem which is full of light humour and ribald mockery against the labyrinth of Gelukpa orthodoxy, protector deities (here referring to Nechung, main protector of Labrang) and the illiterate, roving trader monks, who were part and parcel of the rich and vital monastic scene in Tibet, especially in the context of the great monastic universities.

On the contrary, Dorje Gyal gives quite a different reason for his departure, affirming that since "he knew Tibetan, Chinese (sic!) and English and was very clever, the famous warlord of Qinghai (Amdo), Ma Pufeng, wanted to take him on as private secretary. This was not a career that the Amdo scholar would relish".⁴ Be this as it may, there were more ordinary reasons for leaving Labrang and going to Central Tibet. As Gedun Chopel remarked before he left, "A big fish like me cannot fit into a soup ladle!" and "How can a cuckoo stay amongst crows?"⁵ Like many aspiring young men from the territories all around the high plateau – whatever their geographic, ethnic, sectarian or religious affiliations – the 'Amdo Beggar' wanted to move on to pursue higher studies by joining one of the three great monastic universities around Lhasa: Drepung, Ganden or Sera.

Moreover, if he had been ejected from Labrang by the 'doctors of divinity' for his famous attack on the Manual of Study, would he have gone straight to Drepung Gomang College, where the Manual was mandatory and where its author, Jamyang Sheba

(1648-1721) the founder of Labrang, had been a famous student? Would Gedun Chopel have chosen Geshe Sherab Gyatso, an ardent and orthodox defender of the Manual, as his main teacher in Drepung? And if he had no choice in the matter, does this not suggest a certain rigidity in the system?

The uncertainty

It is also the organisation of the book that is being questioned here. In Lopez's presentation of Gedun Chopel's life, writing and philosophy, emphasis is laid on the theme of 'uncertainty' with regard to 'everything' about him. This theme first appears in *MMW*: "A Middle Way that calls *everything* we know into question, because of, rather than in spite of, the enlightenment of the Buddha" (p. xi) and: "Having given an account of the *uncertainties* of his life, now I turn to his text on *uncertainty*" (*MMW* p. 46).⁵ The same jesting—which may be interpreted as a means of avoiding the task of actually sitting down and constructing a proper timeline—continues in the organisation of *FFW*. With regard to this approach, Lopez makes two somewhat contradictory statements: "much of Gedun Chopel's verse is autobiographical" (*FFW*, introduction p.1), and "the circumstances and the composition date of a given poem are rarely known". Thus, he writes, the 'poems' are "organised rather crudely by theme" (*FFW* 17). This would be fine if the themes were coherent and certain are, especially the last three, but these account for only the last 30 pages, whereas the first three 'themes' are vague and cover 120 pages, i.e. the major part of the book.

Indeed, with regard to chronology, although the exact day, month and year of a text may be difficult to establish, the specific period and context in which many of the verses were written is often clear. Thus if they are mostly 'autobiographical' as Lopez suggests, then surely it would be reasonable—given the fact that this is the first attempt to present the poems of 20th century Tibet's finest writer to the Western public—to provide the background context from which each one emerged, and the date or period when this is known. It is true that a number of them are put into context in the introduction and some notes are useful, but the majority are simply bibliographical references.

Verse v. poetry

Another aspect of the book is the aim to present Gedun Chopel's widely scattered 'poems' in the form of a previously uncollated corpus. Lopez queries the omission as if it were unusual: "Gedun Chopel did not gather his poems into a single volume, nor have they been gathered since his death in 1951. The largest group (30 poems) was published in Tibet in 2005, in vol. 5 of his *Collected Writings*, in a chapter entitled 'On Poetry' *snyan rtsom gyi skor*." (*FFW* p.16)

What is meant by 'poems' here, and indeed how many Tibetan poets have gathered their poems together into one book? Is Lopez referring to the opposition between traditional or classical 'genre' and new categories that have emerged over the last half century (and more), with the advent of contemporary Tibetan literature? 'Poetry' *snyan rtsom*, as it appears in the above-mentioned title, is one of the new terms for 'poetry' in the Western sense. This is certainly relevant with regard to an ongoing discussion amongst Tibetan intellectuals as to whether Gedun Chopel belongs to the classical or to the modern world (and of course he belongs to both). Yet, in spite of the use of this term and the examples presented in context in the introduction, no mention is made of the modern period, nor of the nature of modern Tibetan poetry in Lopez's analysis.

If Gedun Chopel is indeed the greatest poet of 20th century Tibet, then surely it would be appropriate to explain why. How did he express himself? Is it possible to make an appraisal of the language of his 'poems'? Of the different styles he used? In what ways was he modern and/or classical? Furthermore, it is essential to address the question of Gedun Chopel's widespread and intimate use of 'alternating of verse (*tshig su bcad pa*) with prose' (*lhug rtsom*), since this forms a genre in itself, known as *bcad lhug spel ma*, found already in Dandin's *Mirror of Poetry* (Tib. *Me long ma*), translated into Tibetan by Shongtön (ca 1270). This genre needs to be discussed, as well as Gedun Chopel's use of it. According to Jangbu, another term for it is 'verse-and-prose' or 'both verse-and-prose' or 'neither verse nor prose' (*tshig ma lhug*), referring to a deliberate and polished literary strategy in which the verses that surge in the midst of a text, or at the end of a chapter, are called 'intermediary verses' (*bar skabs kyi tshig su bcad pa*).⁷ They are considered to be a welcome 'pause' (*bar skabs*), a moment of rest (*ngal gso'i tshig su bcad pa*), of suspended 'responsibility' (*'gan bskur med pa*), allowing the author and the reader to get beyond the 'prosaic' nature of prose. It is a moment when the author can sublimate thought, express the essence of the text in a lofty, elegant fashion, or simply let the tension go a little within the general framework. Alternation is a vital aspect of this genre, and

it was part and parcel of Tibetan literature at least from the 13th century—but one day some scholar made an especially approving remark about its effect, and from then on the genre developed as authors competed to produce ever more remarkable verses to complement and alternate with their prose.⁸

In Gedun Chopel's case, this is a key element in many of his works. A certain theatrical *mise en scène* is involved and although these versified asides are often moments of self-expression, of delight, admiration, humility etc., in Gedun Chopel's case they are used more to express self-justification or 'pride' with regard to the new ideas he is setting down, as well as teasing mockery of tradition and orthodoxy.

104 poems or 22?

According to the contemporary Tibetan count there are twenty-two or twenty-three real 'poems' in Gedun Chopel's corpus that stand by themselves, including the poetic chessboard games (*kun-bzang 'khor-lo*, *FFW* 15), the acrostic, alphabetical poems ka-bshad (*FFW* 31, 53, 54, 61, 74, 79), and the satirical lampoons (*FFW* 35 v3, 58 v1, 59 v3, etc.). Thus the 'prose-and-verse' genre is much more important than the few fine independent 'poems' from his pen. It is the latter that fall more clearly into the realms of modernity in that they are imbued with a new expression of deep personal feeling. The poem 'Wealth in this World - Mist on the Pass' (*Srid pa'i 'byor ba la kha'i na bun*), dedicated to a beloved friend who had just died, is no doubt the finest example (*FFW* 33 and Lopez's note).⁹

Gedun Chopel's 'White Annals' (*Deb ther dkar po*), on the political history of the Pugal Empire of Tibet (7th-9th centuries), uses the 'verse-and-prose' genre to present spirited remarks at the end of each chapter. One well-known and oft cited example is found on the last page of his unfinished work. In the second verse, each of the four lines begin with the word 'rang', using its different meanings: *our* (people) / (my) *natural* (heart) / *my* (land), and *my* (ability), expressing seriously and sincerely the author's motifs in proposing such an unorthodox version of Tibetan history.

Such asides are truly 'versification', for the Tibetan language is particularly elastic and eminently suited to transposition from one mode of writing into the other. A few particles or semantemes added or subtracted here and there, and presto, we have a 'verse' or a piece of 'prose', using the same vocabulary, basic structure and content. Similarly, verses of praise or a comment may be added to an original work by the reader after having finished a book, or by the artist when signing a painting. In two cases, in 1927 and 1928, Gedun Chopel did precisely that.

Thus, to isolate verses from their original context, as is largely done in this book, without giving any indication of the original, in place or time, in context or meaning, beyond a thematic attribution, appears as a modernist misappropriation of the original source, based on the widespread opinion of Gedun Chopel as a great poet.

Vernacular

Another aspect of Tibetan literature and of many great literary traditions is the subtle interweaving of the spoken vernacular with the classical literary language in both poetry and prose. To comprehend a major literary text in Tibetan requires a range of competences including a good knowledge of poetics, of the spoken language, and in Gedun Chopel's case a certain familiarity with monastic life and philosophical terms, as well as some knowledge of the dialect and society of educated Amdowas from northern Tibet. In this regard, in *FFW* as in *MMW*, a number of Lopez's translations may be queried, apparently due to unfamiliarity with the spoken vernacular. On top of all that, Tibetan verse is often extremely dense, precise and technical, needing as many as double the number of syllables to express the same meaning in English. Thus the hapless translator is obliged either to abandon the strong rhythmic structure of the original or to leave out some of the essential semantemes. In either case, betrayal of the original is on the agenda. But this, anyway, is the usual lot of the translator of poetry.

Lampoons and social comment

One of the widespread popular verse forms in Tibetan is the satirical lampoon, sung and written as a six-syllable four-line verse—in much the same vein as *The Sixth Dalai Lama's Love Songs*. Taking the form of jottings or musings, they were before 1959 sung out loudly in the streets of Lhasa early in the morning for all to hear, by the water-carrier women who worked for the well-to-do families of the holy city. They sang outrageous, scandalous gossip at the tops of their voices with full impunity (an exercise which may cost one's life in the PRC today), this being one way in which ordinary people could let off steam with regard to the misdoings of their lay or ecclesiastical masters. These lampoons certainly stood by themselves, most often as single verses, outside any adjacent literary context. They were an integral part of social discourse, and once sung out loud they were learnt by heart, repeated and modulated on with relish,

expanding the repertory of satirical verses with which almost any Tibetan was, until very recently, richly endowed. Yet again, these short one-verse songs belong to a highly specific insider context. Several of Gedun Chopel's most widely known verses are of this kind. To quote them simply as 'poems' without giving the context, time and place, to join them together as if they were part of one single composition—as some re-editions of Gedun Chopel's works are now doing—is misleading.

Take for example Lopez's poem 35. This is presented as one 'poem' made up of four verses. Of verses 1 and 2 the latter in particular appears as a weaker, modified version of verse 7 in 'Sad Song' *sKyo glu* (poem 32), written no doubt in Bengal probably not too long after Gedun Chopel's arrival in 1935 (*FFW* 68). Verses 3 and 4 are of different origins. Verse 3 is a lampoon that was circulating in Lhasa from the time of Gedun Chopel's return from India *before* his arrest (1946-47). This affirmation comes from the lion's mouth, since Chief Minister Surkhang (interviewed in Taipei 1974) wrote down the poem for the reviewer in a shaky hand, declaring forcefully that the Amdo Beggar deserved his imprisonment, since he wanted to bring about a "French-style Revolution" and cut the heads off all the Tibetan nobility. The fourth verse belongs to the period *after* his release from prison (1950-51). It is a reply to his noble friends and Amdo buddies who were trying to stop him from drinking himself to death. Thus, this one 'poem' in fact consists of material from at least three distinct contexts and periods, ranging over fifteen years or so. Other similar collages may be found. Thus, 'poems' 58 and 59 form an uneasy association of five distinct 'verses', from five different contexts, not two 'poems', as Lopez actually admits in the notes.

One last remark, though much more could be said. Lopez is at present translating *The Plain of Gold Dust* (*gSer gyi thang ma*), the four hundred pages written by Gedun Chopel during his sojourn in India (1935-1945). This rich source is a complex, wide-ranging, unpolished collation of research notes that demands careful, well-informed and elegant translation. It is much easier to criticise than to do, but it is useful to have an attentive critic. Lopez has the considerable merit of presenting us with preliminary translations of Gedun Chopel's *Treatise on the Middle Way*, as well as many of his well-loved verses, lampoons and a few poems. This is a useful beginning and it is to be hoped, in view of the Amdo Beggar's reputation, that a golden goose will emerge, a true poet in English who is familiar with the living Tibetan world, with the vernacular and with the classical texts, and with the different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, who will be able, like André Gide did with Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali*, not just to translate but to transpose Gedun Chopel's superb prose-and-verse into fine literary English (or French, or German, etc.)—and put them into context.

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- 1 Here I shall use the phonetic rendering 'Gedun Chopel' according to his own Amdo pronunciation, without the nazalisation between the syllables of the two parts of his name, as found in his early English correspondence. The earliest known to the reviewer is: 'Gytun Chhephel' (in a letter to Rahul Sankrityayan, 1934). In the *Madman's Middle Way* (p. 3) Lopez enumerates an astonishing eighteen phonetic versions of the name. This is due not to incompetence on the part of Western scholars, but rather to the large number of Tibetan dialects that are still very much alive today, with many nuances in pronunciation. In Wiley transliteration (as in written Tibetan), whatever the dialect may be, the spelling comes out as *dGe' 'dun chos 'phel*, illegible for anyone but a Tibetologist.
- 2 See H. Stoddard 1985, *Le Mendiant de l'Amdo*, Société d'ethnographie, Université de Paris X, Nanterre (in French, 395 pp.), for a comprehensive life of Gedun Chopel.
- 3 *FFW* p. 7.
- 4 rDo rje rgyal, 1997. *dGe 'dun chos 'phel (Biography of Ge Dun Qu Pel)*, Gansu Nationalities Press, p. 18. It is widely held that Gedun Chopel began to study English and clock mechanics with the American missionary Griebenow who was stationed in Labrang from 1922-1949 and who enjoyed debating with the monks in Tibetan.
- 5 The cuckoo is a sacred bird in the Tibetan Bon religion, and here it is no doubt its melodious call (his own verbal virtuosity) that Gedun Chopel is comparing with that of the crow.
- 6 See also *MMW* pp. 1, 2, 3, 46.
- 7 See *dGe 'dun chos 'phel gyi gsum rtsom, deb gsum pa, Gangs can rig mdzod*, 1990, vol.12, p. 235.
- 8 Thanks to Chenaktsang Dorje Tsering, *alias* Jangbu, for this whole section, 14.9.2010.
- 9 Thanks again to Jangbu for this information, 21.9.2010.

Scientific instruments in pre-modern India and the global circulation of knowledge

No comprehensive and authoritative history of science and technology of India has till today been written that would be even remotely comparable to the achievement of Joseph Needham (1900-1995) for China, through his still continuing series *Science and Civilisation in China* or SCC (1954-). One of the reasons is no doubt that much substantial spade work on the history of science and technology in India remains to be done before such an encyclopedic project can be undertaken.

Saraju Rath

Sreeramula Rajeswar Sarma, 2008.

The Archaic and the Exotic: Studies in the History of Indian Astronomical Instruments
Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 319 pages.
ISBN 978 817304571 4.

JUST AS MUCH OF HIS OTHER RESEARCH, the present work of Prof. Dr. Sreeramula Rajeswar Sarma would provide a reliable basis at least for important sections of an SCC-like history of science and technology of India. This also applies to a still ongoing project of Prof. Sarma's, a descriptive catalogue of "all extant Indian instruments in all private and public collections in India and abroad, with historical surveys of the development of each instrument-type, its use and geographic spread, and a full technical description of each" (Sarma, *The Archaic and the Exotic* [AE], p. 27).

Sarma's AE contains fifteen chapters divided over four parts. The author explains the title as follows: "The history of astronomical instrumentation in India is dominated by two mutually contradictory –yet complementary– currents: on the one hand the resilience of certain archaic instruments that held sway for long even after they had become obsolete; on the other, Indian astronomers' receptivity to exotic instruments from other cultures. Hence the title of the volume: *The Archaic and the Exotic*" (AE, p. 13).

The 'Needham Question' and India

With regard to China, the 'Needham Question' has been discussed on several levels: Why did advanced science and technology emerge in the West and not in China (esp. in the light of the high level of science and technology China had in comparison to Europe till the seventeenth century)? The question has been extended to India, as India, too, possessed a high level of science and technology in comparison to Europe. This problem area has been defined by Samuel Huntington as "The Great Divergence".

With regard to the dimensions of economy and state organization, Kenneth Pomeranz (in *The Great Divergence*, Princeton Univ., 2000) formulated a reply to Needham's (and Huntington's) question according to which the question itself is asked on the basis of wrong presuppositions. The entities compared –Europe and the Orient: China, Southeast Asia, India, etc. –had never been truly independent as there were important similarities and pre-existing connections. Similar doubts arise with regard to science and technology. Because of its importance for the ongoing 'Divergence' discussion (see, for instance, Benner and Isett in *Journal of Asian Studies*, 61.2 (2002): 609-662 for an attempt to refute Pomeranz), I will continue with a brief discussion of a topic in Sarma's book that is particularly relevant to the pre-modern global circulation of knowledge.

The Design of Perpetual Motion Machines in India: Lynn White Jr.'s thesis

A perpetual motion machine (Latin *perpetuum mobile*, Sanskrit *ajasa-yantra*), in the words of Sarma (AE, p. 64-65), "is a device that is supposed to perform useful work without any external source of energy or, at least, where the output is far greater than the input. The idea of constructing such machines and of employing the power generated by them has fascinated the minds of many inventors in Europe since the Middle Ages. Modern science says that it is impossible to construct such machines and ridicules the attempts as mere flights of fantasy."

Lynn White Jr., to whom Sarma refers, had pointed out (*American Historical Review*, vol. LXV: 522) that a "significant element in Europe's thinking about mechanical power" had been supplied to Europe from India: the concept of perpetual motion. White attributes this concept to "the great Hindu astronomer and mathematician Bhāskara" who, writing around C.E. 1150, "describes two gravitational *perpetua*

mobilia." Somewhat simplistically, White (ibid. 523) believed that in India the idea of a *perpetuum mobile* "was consonant with, and was probably rooted in, the Hindu belief in the cyclical and self-renewing nature of all things."

White could see that Bhāskara's idea of a *perpetuum mobile* "was picked up in Islam, where it amplified the tradition of automata, inherited from the Hellenistic age". An "Arabic treatise of uncertain date", but which "in the manuscript collections is associated with the works of Ridwan (ca. [C.E.] 1200), contains six perpetual motion machines, all gravitational. One of them is identical with Bhāskara's mercury wheel with slanted rods, whereas two others are the same as the first two perpetual motion projects to appear in Europe: the architect and engineer Villard de Honnecourt's wheels of pivoted hammers and of pivoted tubes of mercury of about 1235. In an anonymous Latin work of the later fourteenth century we find a *perpetuum mobile* very like Bhāskara's second proposal, that is, a wheel with its rim containing mercury. We may thus be sure that about [C.E.] 1200 Islam transmitted the Indian concept of perpetual motion to Europe, just as it was transmitting at the same moment Hindu numerals and positional reckoning: Leonard of Pisa's *Liber abaci* appeared in 1202." The reception of the idea of perpetual motion in thirteenth-century Europe, according to White (ibid. 523), stood in a marked "contrast to India and Islam", as in Europe there are "indications of intense and widespread interest in it, the attempt to diversify its motors, and the effort to make it do something useful".

Two parties of opposition against Lynn White's thesis

Lynn White's thesis which attributes the idea of perpetual motion and hence the foundations of modern power technology to a 12th century Indian text by Bhāskara was, as Sarma points out, "contested from two sides, one holding that such machines were known to the Arabs long before Bhāskara's time, and the other claiming that both the Indian and Arabic accounts owe their inspiration to China".

In their *Islamic Technology: An Illustrated History* (Cambridge Univ., 1986), Ahmad Y. Al-Hassan and Donald R. Hill argue (p. 68) that the Arabic technical descriptions and the illustrations found there are quite elaborate and constitute a single approach. Hence, the occurrence of one or two perpetual motion wheels in the Indian text would not have implied a case of transmission from one culture to another. Al-Hassan and Hill do accept, however, that there was an important transmission from the Arabic descriptions to the West.

Joseph Needham represents the other party of opposition to Lynn White's view. He praises Lynn White, judging that in his study on sources of Western medieval technology he "has done a good service by pointing out that in correct historical perspective, the idea of perpetual motion has heuristic value" (J. Needham in SCC vol. IV part 2:54). However, Needham wants to derive the idea of a perpetual motion machine from "Indian monks or Arabic merchants standing before a clock tower such as that of Su Sung and marvelling at its regular action" (J. Needham in SCC vol. IV part 2: 540). Not surprisingly, Lynn White was not impressed by the reference to the 11th century astronomical clock tower of the Chinese polymath Su Sung (based on a water clock of the outflow type) and dismissed Needham's suggestion as "lacking in any evidence" (AE, p. 69).

Neglected textual evidence regarding the perpetual motion machines

Having indicated the outlines of White's thesis and the opposition it received, Sarma continues: "The astonishing thing about this debate –like many other debates concerning India's past –is that it is conducted on the basis of just two Sanskrit texts which happen to be available in English translation, ignoring all other texts. Lynn White traces the idea of the *perpetuum mobile* to twelfth-century India on the basis of Lancelot Wilkinson's translation of the Siddhāntaśiromaṇi, while Needham's comments emanate

from his perusal of Ebenezer Burgess's rendering of the Sūryasiddhānta. The passage cited by Needham does not even discuss the *perpetuum mobile*." Even Lynn White's sources are characterized as insufficient: "No doubt, Lynn White's conclusions are highly perceptive even with the limited sources available to him, but in history of technology there are no shortcuts. One has to study all the relevant original texts, and the material remains if there are any, and interpret the data in the correct space-time framework." In the present case, Sarma shows in the sequel to this chapter that "a study of the original texts not only upholds Lynn White's view, but even strengthens it further".

The crucial evidence of the Sanskrit sources pertains to two kinds of automatic devices, "both called *svayam vaha yantra*, 'self-propelled machines'. In the first variety, an outflow type of water clock causes a solid sphere to rotate around its axis once in 24 hours, thus simulating the apparent motion of the great circles in the heavens" (AE, p. 70). It is a teaching instrument described for the first time by Āryabhaṭa, about the beginning of the sixth century C.E.

It is the second variety, however, that can be regarded as a (hypothetical) *perpetuum mobile* that is supposed to turn for ever without any external input. Sarma finds that evidence for this is much older than White thought and than was accepted by Al-Hassan and Hill or by Needham: the *perpetuum mobile* had been described for the first time not less than half a millennium earlier. Brahmagupta, another great mathematician and author of the *Brahmasphuṭasiddhānta*, completed in C.E. 628, gave the "first systematic treatment of the construction and use of a large number of scientific instruments" including the *perpetuum mobile*. In the words of Brahmagupta, its description is as follows: "Make a wheel of light timber, with uniformly hollow spokes at equal intervals. Fill each spoke up to half with mercury and seal its opening situated in the rim. Set up the wheel so that its axle rests horizontally on two [upright] supports. Then... the wheel rotates automatically for ever" (AE, p. 70; see figure 1).

Here it is to be noted that Brahmagupta's mercury wheel is much earlier also than Su Sung's clock tower (C.E. 1090). The question of any Chinese or Indian monk transmitting the knowledge of Chinese automatic clocks to Indian astronomers like Brahmagupta therefore does not arise, "contrary to what Needham would like to believe" (AE, p. 73). On the other hand, Brahmagupta's work is known to have been transmitted to the Islamic world in the second half of the eighth century.

Categories of scientific instruments

The list of categories of Indian scientific instruments which Sarma envisages for his catalogue in preparation and discusses in his book (AE, p. 27) gives a good impression of the varieties of Indian instruments available in- and outside India: water clocks (outflow and sinking bowl type) and sand clocks, Indo-Persian and Sanskrit astrolabes (such as that in Figure 2), and ring dials and celestial globes (as in Figure 3). Of the *perpetuum mobile*, not surprisingly, only designs are available, no experimental models.

Sarma's work is a goldmine of well-researched historical information, of sound judgements, of references to primary sources (especially in Sanskrit and Persian), on the history of science in India and of references to specimens of Indian scientific instruments in India and abroad. And as I have briefly indicated here, Sarma's work is of direct importance for the 'Divergence' discussion. In short: it is a must for all historians of Indian science and for anyone interested in the global history of science and in the circulation of knowledge in pre-modern Eurasia.

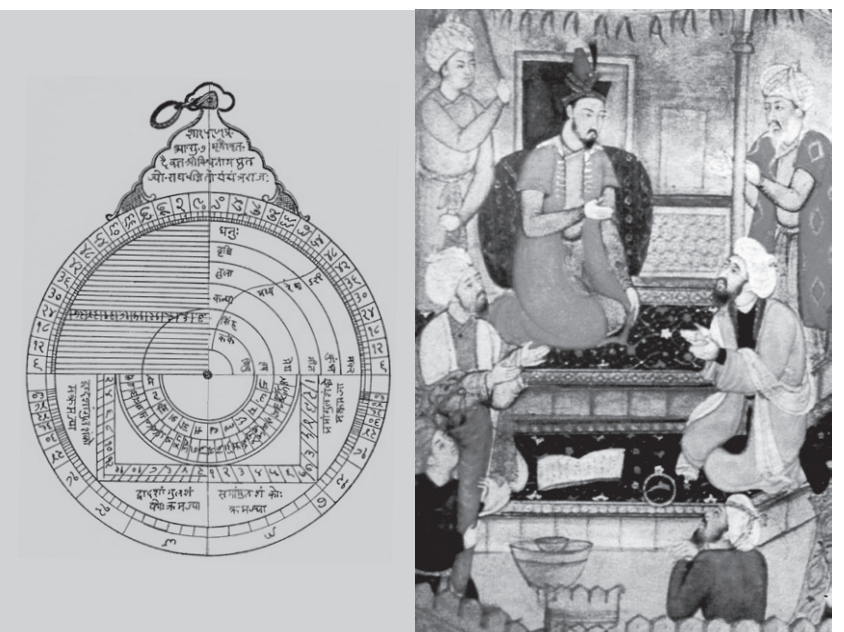
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Figure 1, above
The *perpetuum mobile* according to Brahmagupta (after AE, p. 65).

Figure 2, below left
Drawing of Sanskrit astrolabe manufactured in 1688 (after AE, p. 253).

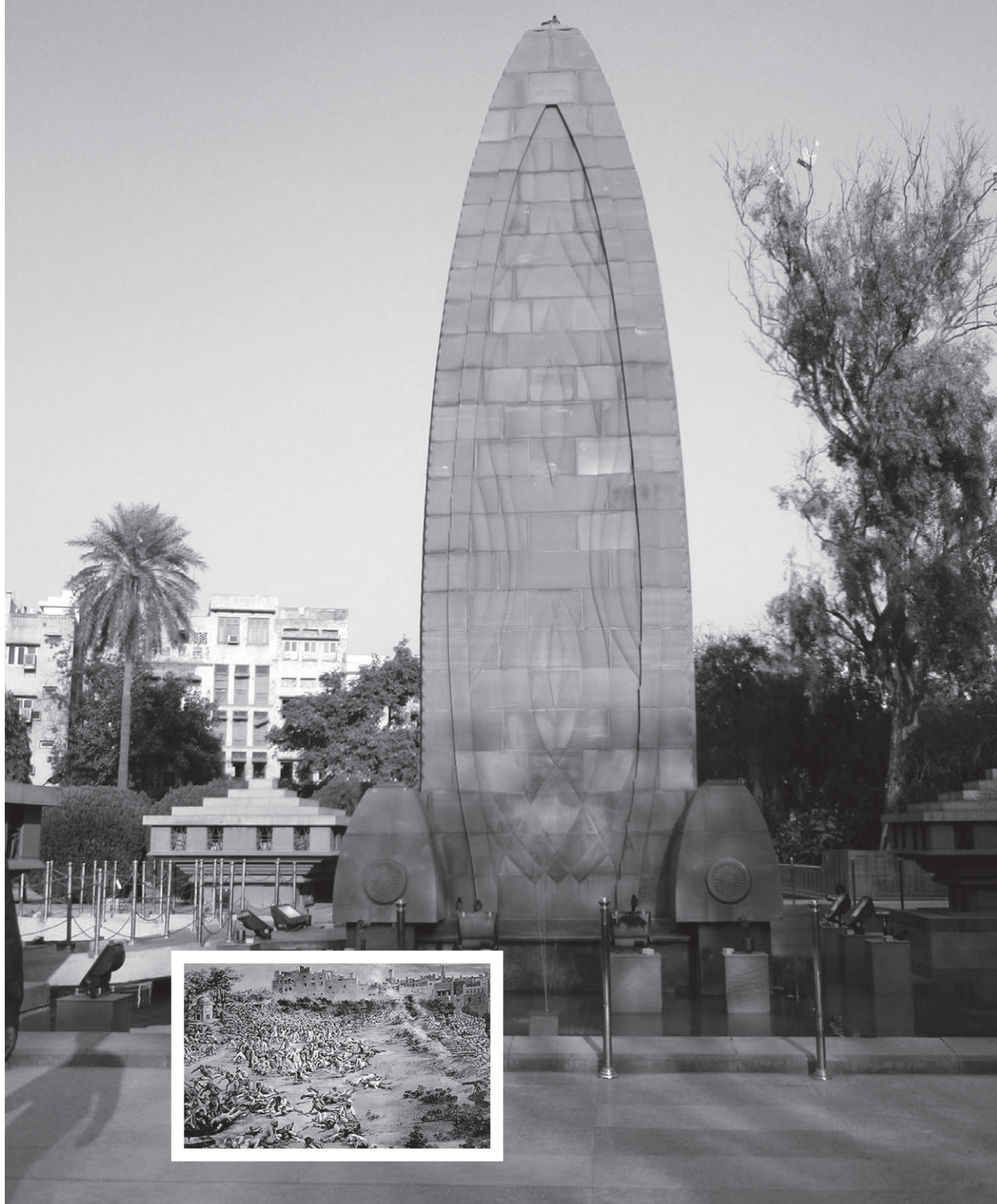
Figure 3, below right
"Astrologers explaining the horoscope to the king" with water clock (sinking bowl type) and ring dial in front (from the Akbarnāma, © The British Library Board. (Ms. Or. 12988, folio 20b); AE p. 111)



Crime as punishment

In her book *State Violence and Punishment in India* Taylor Sherman explores the different coercive techniques that the Indian state used against the population, both in the late colonial era and in early independence, specifically from 1919 to 1956.

Annette van der Hoek



Next to formal imprisonment, a whole body of penal measures arose, many of which involved physical violence – though, as with imprisonment, the use of physical violence varied according to the recipient's class, caste and colour.

Eight unrests

The well-known and infamous massacre at Jallianwala Bagh in 1919 is among the eight unrests and violent confrontations between state and population that Sherman treats. Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 and started touring India and talking about non-violent non-cooperation. The 1915 Defence of India Act provided the government with extra powers during the First World War to detain 'revolutionaries' without trial. After the war this act was extended into the Rowlatt Act that met with great opposition from Gandhi and other political leaders.

As, in these trying times, a large body of people gathered in an enclosed compound near the golden temple in Amritsar, General Dyer decided that this was a 'conspiracy against the government'. He ordered some fifty soldiers to fire at the crowd, without warning. The shooting continued for more than ten minutes and it is said that the firing was so precise and deliberate that almost as many people were killed as bullets were used: men, women and children. Understandably, it is precisely this atrocity that has become synonymous with British Rule in India to many minds. Was it indeed so emblematic, Sherman asks?

Sherman argues that though imprisonment and (collective) fines were possible means of punishment, the judiciary often decided against those and choose corporal punishments instead – the idea being that prison corrupts a man and fines are a burden on his family, so a public flogging might be in his best interest.

Though the central administration was divided over these measures, exemplary public punishments weren't rare. One might say that the old English public school tradition in which boys would be collectively punished for offences committed by one of them was transposed and expanded onto the larger canvas of Indian unrest. Indeed, measures such as firing into crowds to disperse them and public humiliations such as making Indian barristers work as coolies or force people to cross certain streets on all fours were applied before the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919.

General Dyer's single-handed decision to fire at a crowd, as an exemplary arbitrary punishment without resorting to ordinary legal measures and without warning, was not all that extraordinary, Sherman concludes. What sets Dyer apart is the scale of his action, the number of deaths it caused and the fact that – precisely because of that scale and those numbers – he was subject to both official and unofficial criticism and condemnation.

Conclusion

After also considering the non-cooperation movement (1920-1925), the civil disobedience movement (1930-1934), stances on communal violence (1929-1938), hunger strikes (1929-1939), the Second World War and India's coercive movement (1939-1946), India's partition and transition (1947-1948), police action in Hyderabad and the making of the postcolonial state (1947-1956), Sherman does indeed come to the conclusion that it is time we depart from the notion (should we have had such a notion) that 'some colonial penal tactics violated a legal order that was otherwise just'. Rather – Sherman quotes African theorist Achille Mbembe here – 'the colony is [...] a place where an experience of violence [...] is lived, where violence is built into structures and institutions'.

Sherman furthermore suggests that her study points towards new directions of research. Shouldn't this reassessment of India's coercive network open up renewed research into punishment and state violence across the colonial and postcolonial world at large? Speaking of which, isn't India's postcolonial coercive network heavily influenced by the example of the colonial era? And when policemen take sides in communal riots, or commit encounter-killings (extra-judicial killings where police shoot alleged gangsters and terrorists), isn't that strongly reminiscent of the autonomous, local level officers of the colonial era who resorted to violence while knowing full well that they had the implicit liberty to do so?

Though Sherman's suggestions may seem very broad and general, I do see immediate possibilities and practical applications for the latter suggestion. Because indeed, a country that – in spite of its colonial past – is becoming increasingly prosperous in many ways would also do well to ensure that its governing systems leave no citizens feeling that their own country is a place 'where violence is built into structures and institutions'.

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ACCORDING TO THE PREFACE of the book, most studies on punishment have focused on the practice of imprisonment whereas in fact large-scale unrest was tackled through a whole range of practices, imprisonment not being the most important amongst them. Sherman seeks to correct this one-sided view by researching the extent of coercive practices implemented in various situations. In eight chapters she describes eight well-known riots and disorders in Indian society and the cocktail of countermeasures implemented by the state: from firing on crowds, bombing them from the air, and demanding collective fines to corporal punishment and dismissal from work or study. Furthermore, Sherman investigates the ways in which these coercive practices reflected on the state itself. Instead of supposing that the state was a rather fixed entity that could use police, military and bureaucracy at will, Sherman's study attempts to show the 'return-effects' of the coercive practices on the state. Revolutionaries and nationalist activists used the law and its enforcement for negotiation and confrontation: everyday state in twentieth century India was a fluid and vulnerable affair.

The changes that the state underwent during this period (1919-1956) are grouped into several themes by Sherman.

The first theme is that of *diversity of penal tactics*. Next to formal imprisonment, a whole body of penal measures arose, many of which involved physical violence – though, as with imprisonment, the use of physical violence varied according to the recipient's class, caste and colour. And for those who were able to come out of the judiciary system unscathed and had somehow escaped conviction, detention without trial or banishment could still be inflicted as punishment.

A second theme Sherman distinguishes is that of the *use of violence*. Although officially the government subscribed to a minimum use of violence – whipping or firing on crowds being allowed only in certain circumstances – daily practice tended to become more and more violent when British rule started to have to give way to the rising popularity of the nationalist movement. Non-violent protesters were met with batons (or worse) rather than being taken to court; police-transgressions of the official stance on violence were tacitly permitted.

The third theme Sherman sees is that the varying forms of punishment and violence provide an *insight into the nature of the Indian state*. A unique system of ruling in which much of the power rested at local levels – with local government servants often autonomously deciding whether to implement central government rules or not – makes for interesting reading in local newspapers, vernacular literature and in banned and private papers of the time, which is exactly where Sherman has obtained a wealth of information for this present study.

Above:
The memorial in Amritsar for the Jallianwala massacre.
Photo by Rachel Hendrick.

Painting (inset):
Scene of the Jallianwala massacre in 1919 in Amritsar, India.
Artist unknown.

Opinion

LICENSE TO LEAD

There are big cultural differences in the way leadership is exercised from country to country. In some places, there are historic patterns of strong, personal leadership. Others prefer consensual forms of power, where, if there is a prime minister or president, they are at best only 'first amongst equals.' Some political cultures have strong aversions to the kind of rhetoric-loving, ostentatious country heads that one sometimes gets in the west.

Kerry Brown



ASIA CONTAINS EXAMPLES of almost all of these approaches. The diversity of its political models must be the most extensive in the world. Even the ten members of the Association of South East Asian Nations encompass liberal democracies, monarchies, and outright dictatorships. The Asian region extends from robust, new democracies like Indonesia, to trenchant one party states like North Korea and China, to any number of systems in between. Democracy in Japan has only recently seen an opposition party gain real power, after almost half a century of dominance by one party. In the Philippines, there remain plenty of questions of just how much benefit the oldest democratic system in the region has delivered to its people, in terms of economics, accountability and stability.

Countries need their own path. This is something asserted almost across Asia. Nationalism sits just under these issues of types of leadership. Sovereignty and non-interference in the affairs of others remain the key mantra, even in the age of globalisation. So it is not surprising that there is plenty of evidence recently of countries going through key leadership transitions having to approach these in very different ways. The two most striking current examples are of China and North Korea. While the ruling Parties in both remain utterly unchallenged in their monopolies on power, the imminent leadership changeover in late 2012 for the Chinese, and the health issues around supreme leader Kim Jong Il in North Korea have both posed issues. For China, it is simply one of how to manage a major changeover right at the top of the Party which gathers public support, and manages to satisfy the complex constituencies within the CCP. The lack of a presiding dominant political figure like Deng Xiaoping who can broker compromise only complicates things. While a public outbreak of spats in the coming two years is unlikely, the possibility of some fierce backstage horse trading remains very strong. And at the moment, it remains very unclear how disagreements about who gets what slots at the top are going to be resolved, if and when this happens.

For North Korea, the situation is even more opaque. Kim Jong Il, as he showed during his two appearances in Beijing on visits earlier this year, and during his public showing after the Korean Workers Party Congress in late October, is in poor health. There is very little knowledge about the various leadership groups around him that might have some influence on the direction of the country should he die suddenly. The one thing we do know is that it was finally deemed necessary to promote his third son to a raft of army and party positions, giving every indication that he is on track to be the successor in the coming years, when Kim either retires or simply dies.

Democracies are faring little better at managing their leadership issues. Japan has had four prime ministers in as many years, with the latest, Nato Kan, hastily put in place after the fall of Hatoyama earlier this year because of the loss of faith in him by his own party. Kan almost immediately faced a challenge by Ichiro Ozawa, a member of his own party. He saw it off, but at a time when the country remains mired in a deep recession, and when it is being challenged by both China and Russia, this shows an ominous lack of focus on the part of governing elites.

Strong men exist in Asia, still. Hun Sen maintains an iron grip on power in Cambodia, after being in power for almost two decades. But the norm is now more for leadership circumscribed by qualifications and anxiety. Elites are being challenged in political cultures as diverse as the Philippines and Malaysia, and though the response from place to place differs, it is clear that very few leaders can refuse to engage with their constituencies in a more consensual, calibrated way. Expectations towards politicians are rising. Demands for greater accountability are also increasing. Even in China now, the new Five Year Programme, which is due to run from 2011 to 2015 and was released in October, talks of delivering efficient governance, allowing greater participation in decision making, and creating more balanced, equal growth.

Are we heading towards an era of weak leadership in Asia? A Japan, India or China distracted by internal leadership issues might cause big problems. Their importance in the world political and economic system now is too great for them to become introspective. The problem, at least for China, is that these leadership changes may well create doubt and uncertainty during a critical period when the country's voice to the outside world needs to be consistent and clear. Despite all the cultural differences, therefore, the surprising thing is that, pretty much whatever the system, the preoccupations of leaders remain to satisfy the basic demands of their constituents, and those who, whatever the differences in their systems, put them in power. And balancing these against their international interests and obligations remains a huge challenge, whatever kind of system one is working in.

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Kerry Brown is the author of 'Ballot Box China', published by Zed Books in April 2011.

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IIAS News

IIAS strategic cooperation with Singapore

IIAS is very pleased to announce some new and some renewed cooperation agreements with various academic partners in Singapore.

Geographies of Knowledge (NTU)

FROM 19-22 OCTOBER 2011, IIAS and the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will organize a joint roundtable on knowledge systems and their interactions entitled "Geographies of Knowledge", activating the networks of scholars in Europe and Asia in the area of the history of scientific knowledge production.

The roundtable will emphasize the mechanisms of knowledge transfer, the role of personal contacts, and the relation to power. Furthermore, there will be room to discuss the dynamics and scientific curiosity within societies and cultures outside the West.

The aim of the roundtable is to identify the theoretical weak spots in the global history of scientific knowledge transfer, for which possibilities for joint research projects will be explored. The roundtable will be hosted by Leiden University.

Coordinators:
Prof. Liu Hong (NTU)
Dr Manon Osseweijer (IIAS)

More information:
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IIAS-ISEAS Fellowship Programme

WITH THE INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES (IIAS-ISEAS) IIAS invites applications for a Postdoctoral Fellowship for commencement after September 2011. This fellowship is part of collaboration between IIAS and the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre at ISEAS, Singapore.

This one-year fellowship offers the fellow the opportunity to be based for six months in Leiden (The Netherlands) and six months in Singapore to work on an important piece of research in the social sciences or humanities. The proposed project should relate to the ways in which Asian polities and societies have interacted over time through religious, cultural, and economic exchanges and diasporic networks. *The theme for the 2011-2012 year is intra-Asian interactions during the colonial period (16th-20th centuries).* Approaches that focus on interactions between disciplines, social practices, and regions are encouraged.

For terms and conditions as well the application form, please see www.iias.nl and www.iseas.edu.sg/nsc

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For over 45 years, *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* has been a meeting ground for scholars whose concerns span diverse cultural and political themes with a bearing on social and economic history. It is the foremost journal devoted to the study of the social and economic history of India, and South Asia more generally.

Articles with a wider coverage, referring to other Asian countries but of interest to those working on Indian history, are also welcomed, as are papers with an explicit comparative content. Bibliographical surveys of material both in English and other Asian and European languages are an occasional feature. The journal is also periodically organised around a specific theme as a special issue. While the principal concern of the journal is economic and social history, papers with a broad sweep addressing cultural and political themes with a bearing on economic and social history are also published in the journal.

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IIAS News continued

Round the table with IIAS

IIAS will organize two roundtables in the context of its thematic clusters 'Asian Cities' and 'Global Asia'

ROUNDTABLE
CLIMATE CHANGE AND CITY
DEVELOPMENT: COPING WITH
SEA WATER RISING
July 2011, Palembang, Indonesia

This roundtable will be developed and coordinated by IIAS in collaboration with the Pacific Rim Council on Urban Development (PRCUD), the Indonesian city of Palembang, and in consultation with the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). It aims to address the problem of climate change in the urban context – particularly coastal cities threatened by sea levels rising.

The method used by this roundtable is original: to function as an *in situ* interactive event bringing together European and Asian scholars and policy practitioners on urban studies and management to discuss the problem faced by eight Indonesian cities, all threatened by the problem of water levels. Bringing together a panel of water management specialists, urban planners, social scientists and policy makers, the objective of the roundtable will be the exploration of a pluri-disciplinary, multifaceted approach to undertake urban planning and revitalization, taking into account the interwoven social, economical, cultural and environmental conditions prevailing in most Asian and European cities. We anticipate that this roundtable will produce an original methodological blueprint to be shared between various actors in urban matters.

The event will take place in the coastal and historical city of Palembang, Java, Indonesia and will bring together scholars and experts from Europe (IIAS, Dutch Water Management Agency, Delft Technological University, Ecole d'Architecture Paris-Belleville, Development Planning Unit of University College London and Darmstadt University) and Asia (PRCUD, Universitas Indonesia, URDI, Consortium of Indonesian Javanese Coastal Cities, the City of Palembang, National University of Singapore and ASEF). Representatives from the World Bank and the University of Southern California will also participate.

ROUNDTABLE
CLEARING THE AIR: FOSTERING
A NEW POSTCOLONIAL DIALOGUE
November 2011, National Library
Bibliothèque François Mitterrand,
Paris, France

This roundtable will be developed in collaboration with the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Leiden University, Amsterdam University, KITLV, African Studies Centre, SEPHIS, University of London and the Asia-Europe Foundation.

It will explore ways to go beyond lingering negative perceptions existing between European countries and their former Asian and African colonies – perceptions that continue to frame European countries negatively, especially when opposed to the "new", "colonial" nations of Canada, the United States or

Australia. Regular internal debates in Asia and Europe over unresolved colonial legacies (e.g. the French 2005 law on "the positive aspects of colonization" or the polemics in the Netherlands over the date of Indonesia's independence, to mention just two recurrent themes of contention in Europe alone –without referring to the rise of xenophobic movements in these same societies), show the extent to which a more serene appreciation of a shared (if sometimes painful) history between European nations and vis-à-vis their former colonies, if dealt constructively, can contribute to foster better understanding beyond often *façade* diplomatic "friendship".

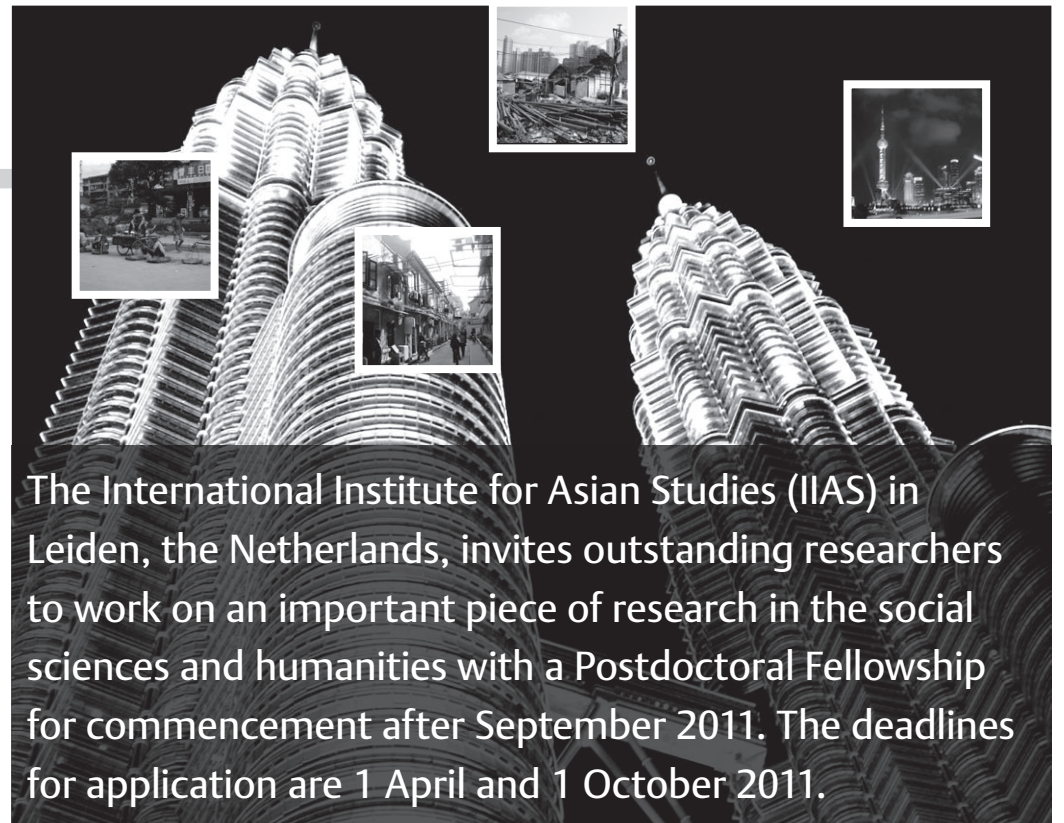
If framed constructively, intervention of scholars and civil society representatives of various disciplinary backgrounds and experiences, with a core component originating from former colonizing and colonized countries in Asia, Africa and beyond, should enrich this critical debate by exposing its inherent complexity while seeking to explore the potential for reconciled identities in today's global world. In today's age of "globalization", this event will be an occasion to build bridges between these experiences, in the spirit of moving beyond existing political and epistemological boundaries between (ex)colonizers and (ex) colonized. The ultimate objective of this roundtable is to inform European policy-makers on the importance of postcolonial legacies and ways to move beyond them.

A series of "burning" themes or unresolved subjects of contention pertaining to the colonial legacy will be addressed:

- Can we teach a common (post)colonial history in the South and the North?
- Who frames the canons of knowledge of the "other"?
- What factors lie beyond the politics of cultural and religious difference?
- Who are the "marginals"/losers/under-classes of the (post)colonial experience?
- What is the impact of the colonial legacy on the relation between Europe as a global partner and her former colonies?
- Is there a "shared" cultural heritage, material and immaterial, common to Europeans and their former colonies? How to appreciate and promote this heritage while addressing the historical imbalances and suffering it often invokes?
- To what extent have (post)colonial social arrangements consolidated socio-economic inequalities or become a cover for them – especially in ex-colonies?
- How have liberation movements and sometimes wars configured cultures of political legitimacy and control in (post)colonial states?
- Are (post)colonial diasporas /immigrant populations in a position to bridge the (post)colonial "fracture"?

More information:
www.iias.nl

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The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, the Netherlands, invites outstanding researchers to work on an important piece of research in the social sciences and humanities with a Postdoctoral Fellowship for commencement after September 2011. The deadlines for application are 1 April and 1 October 2011.

WE ARE PARTICULARLY LOOKING for researchers focusing on one of the Institute's three thematic clusters: 'Asian Cities', 'Heritage and Social Agency in Asia', and 'Global Asia'. However, some positions will be reserved for outstanding projects in any area outside of those listed.

The Asian Cities cluster deals with cities and urban cultures with related issues of flows and fluxes –of ideas and goods, cosmopolitanism, *metisage* and connectivity at its core, framing the existence of vibrant 'civil societies' and political micro-cultures in the materiality of the city. The Heritage and Social Agency in Asia cluster explores the notion of heritage as it evolved from a Europe-originated concept associated with architecture to incorporate a broader diversity of cultures and values. The Global Asia cluster addresses issues related to multiple, transnational interactions within the Asian region as well as Asia's projection in the world's economy of knowledge production and circulation. Historical experiences as well as more contemporary trends will be addressed.

Research projects that can contribute to new, historically contextualized, pluri-disciplinary knowledge, with the capacity of translating this into social and policy relevant initiatives, will be privileged.

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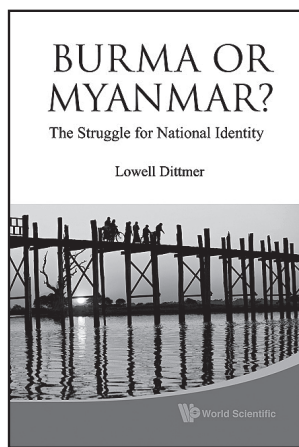
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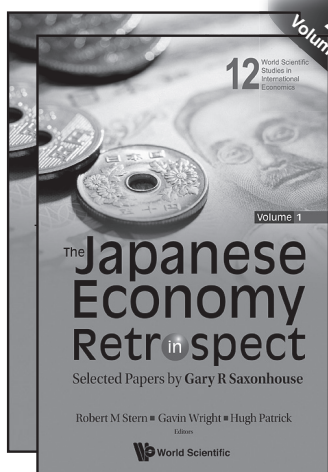


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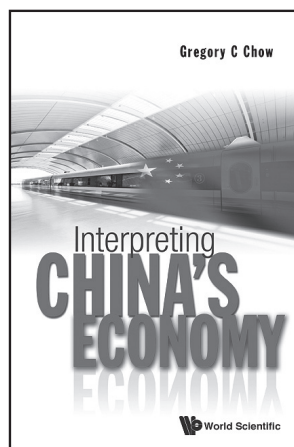
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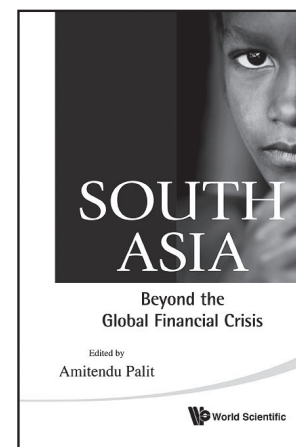
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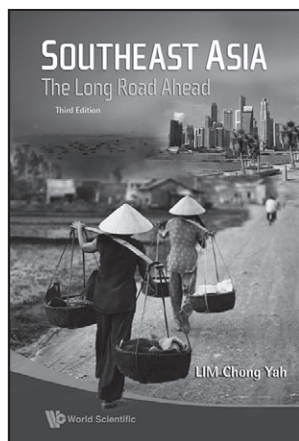
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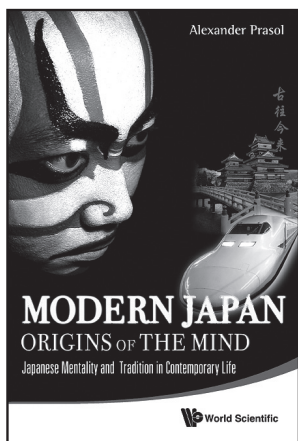
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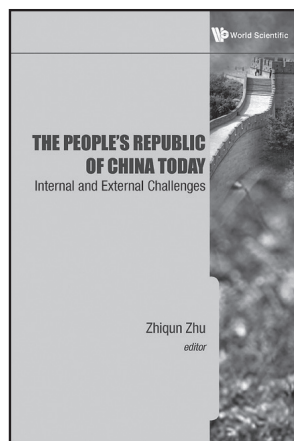
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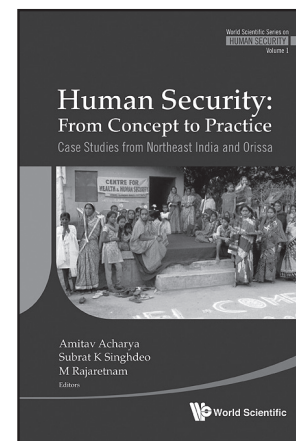
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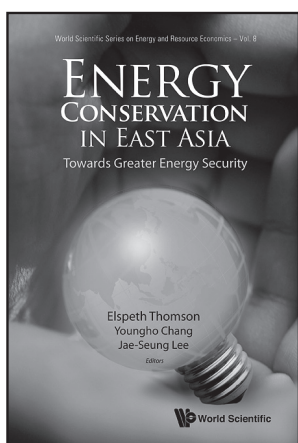
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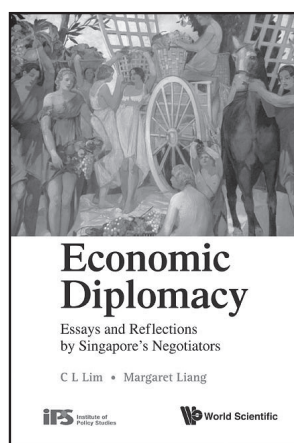
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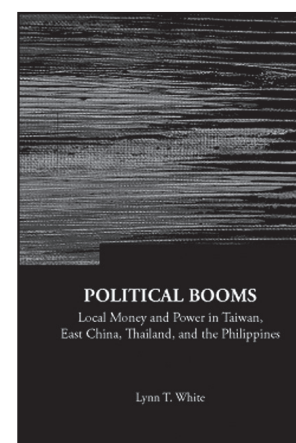
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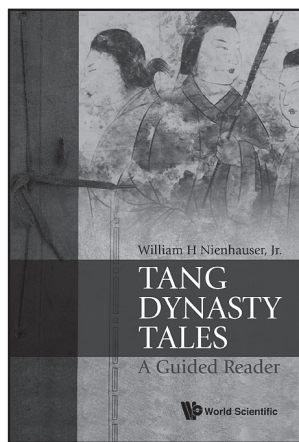
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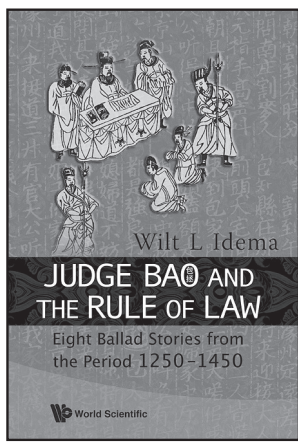
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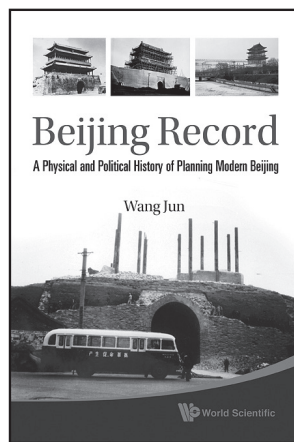
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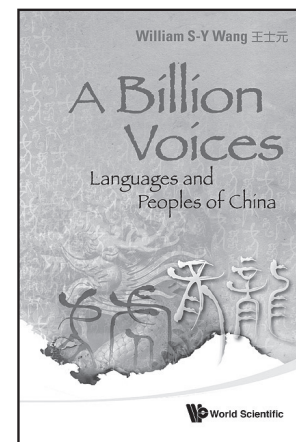
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IIAS Research

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** (c.cullen@nri.org.uk) and **Harm Beukers** (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@iias.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 Cortis 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** iias@iias.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@kortlever.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 Risseuw** c.risseuw@iias.nl



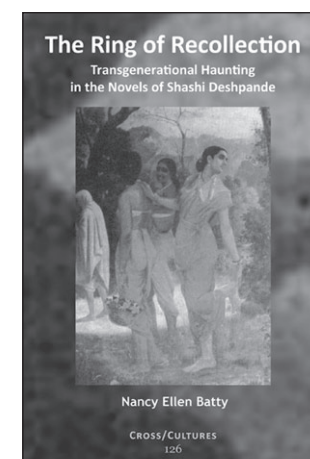
ABIA SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY INDEX

The Annual Bibliography of Indina Archaeology is an annotated bibliographic database for publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. The project was launched by IIAS in 1997 and is currently coordinated by the 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 bibliographies, published in a series by Brill. The project receives scientific support from UNESCO. **Coordinators: Ellen Raven and Gerda Theuns-de Boer** e.m.raven@iias.nl

The Ring of Recollection

Transgenerational Haunting in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande

Nancy Ellen Batty
Foreword by Jasbir Jain



In *The Ring of Recollection*, Nancy Batty challenges the critical orthodoxy that Shashi Deshpande's fiction is transparently realistic and narrowly focused on domestic and women's issues. This study shifts attention towards the labyrinthine structure and modernist style of most of Deshpande's writing. Features hitherto viewed as deviations from her realism, or even as flaws, are re-situated in the light of a gothic poetics that works to uncover a structural trope of transgenerational secrecy, beginning with Deshpande's early detective fiction and extending to her most recent work.

Linking a fourth-century Sanskrit play by Kalidasa (*Shakuntala*) and the psychoanalytic theories of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, Batty offers in-depth

reinterpretations of five of Deshpande's major novels, published over a period of twenty years (1980–2000): *The Dark Holds No Terrors*; *That Long Silence*; *The Binding Vine*; *A Matter of Time*; and *Small Remedies*. These novels have established Deshpande's critical reputation as a 'woman's' writer whose major concern is to break the "long silence" of Indian women. Batty shifts the ground of analysis by establishing that Deshpande's fictional world encompasses more than just female characters, and that the trope of silence extends not only to her male characters but also to communities, in a society where silence about shameful past events can control the destinies of entire families. Thus we see in her novels characters whose lives are disturbed, haunted, and sometimes even controlled not just by traumatic events but also by transgenerational family secrets to which they often do not have access. Moreover, the breaking of silence – the revelatory opening of family crypts – can have devastating consequences. Restoration of memory may have the power to reorganize the past and change the future, but it rarely possesses the magic required to reunite lovers or to restore wholeness to shattered lives.

The Ring of Recollection offers a major reappraisal of one of India's most prolific and respected contemporary writers.

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2010. XLII, 305 pp.
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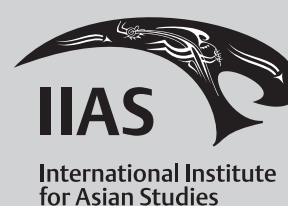
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Three Sanskrit Collections at the Danish Royal Library

The very notion of a library is one that is changing. With an increasingly rapid speed, the technological means in our electronic age are decisively influencing this change. At the level of interface between libraries and their users, it is a change which concerns particularly the means of access to a given library's collections, as well as the diversity of materials accessible at a modern library.

Hartmut Buescher

LIBRARIES ARE INTERCONNECTED within regional, national and global electronic networks. The specific geographical location of any given library thus decreases in significance for the ordinary user. Given the virtual possibility of almost unlimited access to information, another aspect is the matter of restriction, of finding a balance between preventing misuse and retaining individual freedom, thus of an optimally qualified control of the access to information. Given that, seen in a global historico-cultural perspective, the power relations between political control and intellectual freedom have more often than not been extremely precarious, and academics feel naturally stimulated to hermeneutically reflect the aporia "blessing and/or curse" when looking into the future.

But libraries, not least the Royal and National Libraries in Europe, as well as older university libraries, frequently have interesting histories. That is, histories in terms of the constitution and organic growth of their individual collections. The Danish Royal Library (Det Kongelige Bibliotek) is no exception in that respect. The initial acquisitions of various parts of its Asian collections are associated with the more or less adventurous lives of pioneer researchers. To focus in the following on some of this library's Sanskrit collections, the names of two remarkable scholars immediately come to mind: Rasmus Rask (1787-1832) and Nathaniel Wallich (1785-1854), both of whom brought Sanskrit manuscripts to Denmark in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Rasmus Rask and Nathaniel Wallich

A linguistic genius and one of the founders of comparative linguistics, Rasmus Rask was driven by his pioneer research interests when in 1816 he left Copenhagen to undertake a long journey, travelling via Sweden, Finland, Russia and Persia to India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Though troubled both physically and psychologically by the occasionally rather uncomfortable travel conditions in those days, surviving a shipwreck, penury problems as well as mental breakdowns, he almost constantly engaged in studying new languages and in collecting manuscripts before he finally returned to Denmark in 1823. Covering various literary and religious genres (including epics, narrative literature, poetry, eulogies and much more), most of the Sanskrit manuscripts collected by Rask are written in either Bengali, Telugu or Sinhalese script.

Quite another story is that of the collection reaching The Danish Royal Library due to the efforts of the surgeon and botanist Nathaniel Wallich, who (with interruptions) spent several decades of his life in India. Wallich arrived at Serampore (at that time a Danish outpost called Frederiksnagore) in 1807, but in the course of events he joined the British East India Company's service. In 1814, he founded the Oriental Museum of the Asiatic Society, which is the oldest museum on the subcontinent and subsequently changed its name to The Indian

Museum. As a botanist, Wallich permanently took charge of the Botanical Garden of Calcutta in 1817 and developed it until his retirement in 1846. Besides his multiple tasks at the Botanical Garden itself, he undertook numerous botanical expeditions, collecting specimens and partly cataloguing them in valuable publications, his *Tentamen Flora Nepalensis Illustratae* (1824-26) and *Plantae Asiaticae Rariores* (1830-32) being the most important ones.

Given Wallich's education in medical sciences and his residential position in Calcutta, it is not surprising that this background had some influence on the Sanskrit material he was interested in – the genre of Āyurveda, the traditional Indian medical science, being a prominent field, but also, for instance, traditional Indian law, grammar and lexicography may be mentioned – and on the manner in which he made it available, first to himself and subsequently to the library. Just as he employed Indian artists for drawing and painting the plant specimens he had collected, he was able to get a number of texts copied by Indian scribes in Bengali script on locally produced paper cut in the format of large notebooks and subsequently leather-bound in European style.

The Nepal Collection

Larger than both the previous ones, and altogether different in character from these, is the library's so-called Nepal Collection, a collection acquired in Nepal by the cultural anthropologist Werner Jacobsen (1914-1979). Jacobsen frequently travelled in various parts of Asia, both as a member of official Danish expeditions and privately. He spent the years 1957-59 in Nepal from where he returned with a large collection of archaeological, ethnographic, photographic and other materials, including a collection of Sanskrit texts.

Subsequently the leader of an ethnographic department at the National Museum of Denmark, Jacobsen's interest was not that of a specialist in either Nepali, indological or buddhological literature. Rather, the somewhat haphazard nature of the Nepal Collection of literary documents may perhaps be taken as likewise revealing the focus of a curator of an ethnographic museum, a curator with an eye for somewhat curious objects which, in the course of time, might prove suitable for being attractively exhibited. Fragments of a delicate and carefully calligraphed manuscript of a Prajñāpāramitā text from the 11th century sit side by side with a sort of local magician's handbook, written (though hardly displaying any knowledge of orthography and grammar) in a gross script on thick paper, with the remains of ritual substances (such as feathers and animal hairs, once ingredients employed in magical rites) still sticking to the outermost sheet.

Among the texts collected by Jacobsen we find rare and precious codices of interest mainly to philologists, there are Buddhist and Hindu texts, Sūtras, Tantras and Dhāraṇīs, texts related to various branches of traditional science as well as mythological materials, but also



Above: The Danish Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Left: Subtle body of a Yoga-puruṣa, the symbolic representation of an ideal Yogi, including the representation of subhuman states at the bottom and of transhuman states at the top.

Below: Illuminated folio 1 of an Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā text produced at Nālanda, North India, at the end of the 11th century.



a good number of quite ordinary *stotras* and ritual texts awaiting the focus of more anthropologically inspired forms of research. Further, there is a comparatively large quantity of valuable materials illuminated by drawings and miniature paintings that will find greater appreciation if properly elaborated by historians of art and iconography.

The essential value of collections

A fairly extensive analysis and description of these three of the Danish Royal Library's Sanskrit collections may now be found in the recently published *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts: Early Acquisitions and the Nepal Collection* (Copenhagen, 2010), which forms volume 7.1 of the *Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts, Xylographs etc. in Danish Collections* (COMDC). The catalogue is illustrated with 78 photographic reproductions to supplement the textual information with rather splendid visual impressions, some of which are reproduced on this page.

Given that diversity and alterity, multidimensionality and open-ended profoundness are conceived as constituting aspects of the essence of humanity, to the extent that library collections are made accessible to stimulate the responsible funding of critical research they act as important witnesses against culturally biased and uninformed agendas (un)consciously ready, it seems, to eliminate this humanity on a global scale by mechanically promoting and controlling increasingly narrow versions of human functioning within predefined standards – conceptual prisons, even – of absolutized normativity.

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