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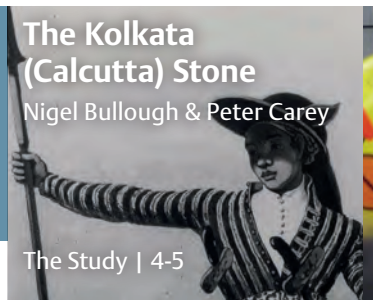

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IIAS
International Institute for Asian Studies

theNewsletter

Encouraging knowledge and enhancing the study of Asia

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Memory and commemoration in Central Asia

Across Central Asia, heritage sites and commemorative practices have become visual protagonists of a nationalist rhetoric. This special issue analyses cultural memory practices used by former and current Central Asian elites as a tool for boosting ethno-nationalism. Multiple commemorative sites serving as visual representations of the past are used to foster a sense of belonging and national pride among the multi-ethnic population. Guest editor **Elena Paskaleva** asks, how can these practices and local historical contingencies provide a better understanding of the search for national and religious identities in modern Central Asia?

The Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue, Tsonjin Boldog, Mongolia. Photo reproduced under a creative commons license courtesy of Marco Fieber on Flickr.

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Fostering interactions

The Spring of 2016 at IIAS has been marked by the unusual conjunction and demands of developing three major grant proposals. Two of them seek to contribute, in different ways, to the renewal of urban studies by further contextualising its practice, and by engaging more with the local human ecologies. The third proposal, more ambitious, seeks to set in motion a connected humanities platform aimed at fostering new research and educational opportunities, built on an inclusive international and trans-regional network of scholars and social cultural actors.

Philippe Peycam

THESE APPLICATIONS, IF SUCCESSFUL, will determine many of our activities for the next four years. The process of application writing, not unusual in the life of an institute, is an important exercise because it forces us to reflect on what we have been doing, what is worth pursuing and strengthening, and more generally, to see where the institute is heading in terms of a broader direction and vision.

All three initiatives share one major inflection: the effort on our part to devolve activities and agendas. This means not only that IIAS-earmarked events take place in Asia (and sometimes Africa, Europe and America) with local partners, but also that research agendas themselves, and their subsequent developments, may now also emerge locally. The proposals have been written through a bottom-up process, in which knowledge is framed by a multiplicity of socially and culturally 'experienced' practices. This effort of further decentralising research means that traditional Western 'area studies' researchers may not always be the exclusive mediators determining terms and agendas of area-based projects. The involvement of these specialised scholars will, however, be essential for culturally 'translating' research outcomes and for providing them with new significance beyond their places of origin.

The three envisaged programmes will indeed be insistent on locating regionally framed phenomena in their multiplicity of connections and on seeking their potential universal significance, mainly through comparative analyses. IIAS is ideally positioned to serve as a trans-regional facilitating platform for activities that, if grounded locally, have connections, ramifications and significances regionally and throughout the world.

Another feature of these projects in the making is that their research schemes, in both their development and expected outcomes, hold the potential to generate transformations in education development, network building and local capacity building. The three programmes contain provisions for participants to engage with multi-sector actors, and by extension, to contribute to local developments. Ultimately, the objective is to support academic institutions by fostering new methodological and pedagogical models.

Reaching out to other sectors means to widen the scope of the programs' social impact while engaging a broader constituency of stakeholders beyond the traditional community of scholars, students and other educators, who, taken separately, are always vulnerable to changes determined 'from above'.

This effort of a decentralised, connected, trans-sector knowledge-making process must be considered against a context, in which not just 'regional studies' but humanistic knowledge in general is under threat due to the corporatisation of higher education. The recent decision of the Japanese government, for example, to close down social science and humanities programs is a case in point. The current dismantling of regional studies at the Australian National University is another one. These developments reflect a growing gap in aspirations and views between those governing and those who are governed in many societies in Asia, Europe and elsewhere. Humanistic intellectual pursuits that seek meaning through comparisons, connections and correlations give sustenance for multi-vocal realities of the world they represent. They often find themselves in contradiction with the prevalent discourse of socio-economic 'relevance'.

The critical question remains: what is the significance and implication of a research-led initiative, not just in terms of conveying new meaning, but also in its potential to instil change (by way of questioning and challenging)? We don't know yet how far the programmes for which we hope to receive support will help us to push our agenda of fostering genuine transcultural interactions with and within Asia. What I am sure of, however, is that in the process of developing them, we have experienced first-hand a desire for new approaches beyond traditionally delineated methods. In the deepening of inter-personal ties with colleagues and friends, from all walks of life, we have caught glimpses of what an enduring collaborative network can do to push the frontiers of knowledge production. This is a unique gift, made possible by IIAS and its global inter-connectedness.

Philippe Peycam, Director IIAS

The Newsletter and IIAS

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a post-doctoral research centre based in the Netherlands. IIAS encourages the multi-disciplinary and comparative study of Asia and promotes national and international cooperation.

The Newsletter is a free periodical published by IIAS. As well as being a window into the institute, The Newsletter also links IIAS with the community of Asia scholars and the worldwide public interested in Asia and Asian studies. The Newsletter bridges the gap between specialist knowledge and public discourse, and continues to serve as a forum for scholars to share research, commentary and opinion with colleagues in academia and beyond.

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The Kolkata (Calcutta) Stone

The bicentennial of the British Interregnum in Java (1811-1816) provides the occasion to contemplate a lost opportunity to right some of the wrongs perpetrated by Sir Stamford Raffles and his light-fingered administration. Salient here is the fate of the two important stone inscriptions – the so-called 'Minto' (Sangguran) and 'Kolkata'(Pucangan) stones – which chronicle the beginnings of the tenth-century Śailendra Dynasty in East Java and the early life of the celebrated eleventh-century Javanese king, Airlangga (1019-1049). Removed to Scotland and India respectively, the article assesses the historical importance of these two inscriptions and suggests ways in which their return might enhance Indonesia's cultural heritage while strengthening ties between the three countries most intimately involved in Britain's brief early nineteenth-century imperial moment in Java: India, Indonesia and the United Kingdom.

Nigel Bullough and Peter Carey

ON 4 AUGUST 1811, a 10,000-strong British expeditionary force, composed mainly of Indian troops *(sepoys)* principally from Bengal, but with a handful of specialist troops (horse artillery and sappers) from the Madras (Chennai) Presidency army, invaded Java to curb the expansionist plans in the Indian Ocean of the Emperor Napoleon (reigned 1804-1814, 1815). Through his military appointees, Marshal Herman Willem Daendels and Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens, who had served successively as governor-generals of Java between January 1808 and September 1811, Napoleon had instituted a Franco-Dutch Government in Java.

The British force landed at Cilincing just to the north-east of Jakarta (then Batavia) and swiftly captured the old town (Kota) of Batavia (8 August). Just over a fortnight later they stormed Daendels' great redoubt at Meester Cornelis (Jatinegara) (26 August), a bloody victory which took a heavy toll on the defending Franco-Dutch who suffered more than fifty percent casualties (12,000+ out of their 21,500 troops enlisted were killed during the course of the six-week campaign), a death toll forever commemorated in the Jakarta place name – 'the swamp of the corpses' *(rawa bangké)* – where the British flung the dead from the Cornelis battlefield.

The Governor-General of India, Lord Minto (in office, 1807-1813), who had accompanied the expedition from Kolkata in part to use his Masonic connections to ensure a swift political rapprochement with senior Dutch inhabitants,[1] immediately issued a proclamation. This promised the inhabitants of Java a new era of enlightened government. Meanwhile, Minto's protégé, Thomas Stamford Raffles, formerly Secretary (1807-1810) to the Pinang Government, was appointed (11 September) Lieutenant-Governor (in office, 1811-1816), marking the beginning of what is commonly referred to as the British Interregnum (i.e., interim administration) in Java.

It might have been expected that the 200th anniversary of the victory of the British-Indian force at Meester Cornelis and the establishment of Raffles' five-year interim administration, would have been the occasion for a number of ceremonies and historical memorial events, providing an opportunity for the staging of exhibitions and conferences focussing on the British period in Java. The humanitarian reforms of Minto and Raffles, in particular Minto's abolition of slavery and judicial torture under the terms of the 1807 abolitionist legislation, might have been celebrated in such a bicentennial, and this in turn might have helped to strengthen Anglo-Indonesian relations and quicken an interest in Indonesian history and culture. Sadly, none of these expectations have come to pass. There is seemingly no interest in the history of the short-lived British Interregnum in Java either on the part of the British or the Indonesians. This is strange indeed given that Indonesians daily experience the long-term effects of the British occupation by driving on the left and buying snacks from '*pedagang kaki lima*' ('five-foot' food peddlers – the number referring to Raffles' instruction that all pavements should be five-foot broad). This year, on 19 August 2016, the 200th anniversary of the formal return of Java and its dependencies to the Dutch, the bicentennial will have passed.

India's contribution during this period was crucial for without the presence of the Bengal and Madras troops, who constituted two thirds of Minto's force, the British could never have undertaken such a bold military operation. Furthermore, it took place under the aegis of the British East India Company and was coordinated by the Company from its seat of governance in India in Calcutta (Kolkata), hence Minto's presence in the expeditionary force. Many of the Bengal and Madras troops remained in Java throughout the period of Raffles' government and some even beyond that: the Indonesian national hero, Prince Diponegoro's (1785-1855), personal physician was an erstwhile Bengal Muslim sepoy, and former Bengal Presidency Army troops fought on both the Dutch and Javanese sides during the Java War (1825-1830).[2] The fact that the entire island of Java had been pawned by the returned Dutch colonial government in 1824 for a 300 million Sicca Rupee loan (£2.000.000.000 in today's money) on a private Kolkata bank, Palmer & Company, made the bank's owners particularly anxious not to lose their investment – hence the offer of Bengal sepoys to the beleaguered Dutch.[3]

Above: Boats from HM Sloop *Procris* attacking and capturing six French gunboats off the coast of Java at Indramayu on 31 July 1811. Engraving by Charles Rosenberg (flourished mid-19th century) after a painting by the celebrated naval artist, William John Huggins (1781-1845). Courtesy of the British Library, London.

Left: A light infantry *sepoy* of one of the Bengal Volunteer Battalions that took part in the British invasion of Java in August-September 1811 and the 20 June 1812 assault on the Yogya *keraton* (court). They became the core of Britain's military establishment throughout their five-year rule (Williams, J. 1817. *An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Native Infantry from its first formation in 1757 to 1796*, London: John Murray)

and the bicentennial of the British Interregnum in Java, 1811-1816

In October-November 1815, some forty years before the great Indian war of independence of 1856 – known to the British as 'The Indian Mutiny' – and nine years after the Vellore (Arcot) Mutiny of 10 July 1806, Bengal soldiers stationed in south-central Java staged their own insurrection. Inspired by the Hindu-Buddhist rituals of the Surakarta court and the remains of Java's great temple structures at Prambanan and Borobodur, they planned to kill their British officers, destroy the foundations of European power in Java and institute their own Bengal sepoy administration with one of their Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) as the new Governor-General.[4] It might thus have been especially appropriate for the bicentennial of the British Interregnum in Java to be celebrated jointly by its three principal participants: Indonesia, India and Britain.

Proposed restitution of the 'Kolkata Stone'

The Javanese king Airlangga (reigned, circa 1019-1049), is a well-known and much loved figure in Indonesia. He has even been compared to the Pandawa hero Arjuna in 11th-century court poet Mpu Kanwa's famous *kakawin* (Old Javanese court poem), *Arjunawiwāha* ('The Marriage of Arjuna'), the very prototype of Javanese classical poetry. By attaching to his lord and sovereign the timeless qualities of the sage-hero, the poet ensured that Airlangga's reign would serve as an outstanding example for his royal descendants.

Such is the mythical aspect. For an accurate historical account of Airlangga's reign we are dependent upon a large inscribed stone bearing the Śaka date 963, equivalent to 6 November 1041. Known to historians as the charter of *Pucangan,* this inscription is unique in that it is the sole known documentary source that provides both a chronological account of Airlangga's achievements, and a clear genealogy stretching back four generations. Inscribed in two languages (Sanskrit and Old Javanese), the charter describes the destruction of the kingdom ruled over by Airlangga's predecessor, Dharmawangsa (d. 1016), and the sixteen-year-old Prince Airlangga's subsequent retreat into the wilderness to undergo a period of severe asceticism. This was then followed by his consecration as king and a seven-year struggle to re-unite the land of Java. In short, the inscription provides us with Airlangga's life story. Without it, we would know almost nothing about the details of this remarkable king's reign. Ironically, however, this valuable item of Indonesian cultural heritage is not readily accessible to those for whom it holds the greatest value since it is currently housed in the Indian Museum of Kolkata. For that reason, it has come to be known as the 'Kolkata [Calcutta] Stone'; an object about which Indonesian schoolchildren are familiar only by name.

Exactly how and when the charter of *Pucangan* found its way to Kolkata is not entirely clear. All that we know is that it is one of two important Javanese stone inscriptions that were sent to India during the period of Raffles' administration. Both stone inscriptions were collected by Colonel Colin Mackenzie (1754-1821), chief engineer officer to the British-Indian forces in Java (1811-1813) and subsequently Surveyor-General of Madras (1813-1821), during his brief sojourn in eastern Java early in the year 1812. Concerning the discovery of these inscriptions, we have the following information.

The 10th-century stone of *Sangguran* was removed from the hill region of Malang and shipped to Kolkata on the East Indiaman *Matilda* in April 1813, as a gift from Raffles to his patron, Lord Minto. Minto ended his term of office in December of that year and took the stone home with him to Scotland, where it was placed at his ancestral seat in Roxburghshire in the Scottish borderlands. There it has remained to this day, and is popularly known as the 'Minto Stone'.

As for the Kolkata Stone, we know even less, as the precise details of its discovery and shipment still remain uncertain. It seems probable, however, that Mackenzie came across it during an excursion to the region of present-day Mojokerto/Jombang in March 1812, and had it transported to Surabaya by way of the Kali Mas river. The details of its shipment to Kolkata are as yet unknown, but the inscription was quite conceivably among the items that accompanied Mackenzie on his return to India in July 1813 on the *Matilda*.

Raffles showed a keen interest in the history of Java and instructed Mackenzie to search for "well preserved specimens of the country's ancient letters"; a mission which the latter fulfilled with admirable zeal. What neither Raffles nor Mackenzie could possibly have known at the time, however, was that the two 'well preserved specimens' procured by Mackenzie in 1812 were unique historical documents in their own right. Indeed, it was not until the early 20th century that the contents of both inscriptions were published in their entirety, and it was only then that their importance for our knowledge of ancient Javanese history became apparent.[5]

The 'Minto Stone' is the last known recorded document issued by the Śailendra rulers of ancient Mataram (8th-10th centuries), while the 'Kolkata Stone' provides detailed information about the King Airlangga, hitherto known only in myth and legend. Taken together, both inscriptions have helped to establish a coherent chronology linking two important historical periods. Whereas the *Sangguran* inscription refers to the prince named Sindok, who was to found a new dynasty in eastern Java in the year 929, after the move of the Śailendra monarchs from central Java, the charter of *Pucangan* was issued to commemorate the re-unification of Sindok's kingdom by his great-great-grandson, Airlangga.

Comparing the fates of these two important stone documents, it would seem that the 'Minto Stone' has fared slightly better than its counterpart in India. The first Earl of Minto, after all, was true to his word and – although he died on his way home (at Stevenage, Hertfordshire, 21 June 1814) – saw that the inscription was taken to his ancestral seat in Roxburghshire, following Mackenzie's advice: "On the banks of the Teviot [the inscription] might some day afford to British Orientalists an object of pleasing and useful speculation of Asiatic Literature …" At the very least, it shows that Minto valued the item and took the trouble to have it transported to his estate in Scotland, despite the fact that it weighed more than three tons. The 'Kolkata Stone', on the other hand, was stored in the Indian Museum where it is now almost forgotten. If the former Governor-General had expressed his hope that the gift from Mackenzie might "at some day tell eastern tales of us", the only tale that the 'Kolkata Stone' can tell is one of apathy and neglect.

In reality, of course, the present position of both stones is inappropriate. One – the Minto Stone – has been reduced to the status of a garden ornament in a remote and barely accessible border region of Scotland, while the other has suffered a degraded existence as a minor curiosity trapped in the godown of a foreign museum as though by historical accident. The clarity of its inscription has also been severely degraded by the current deplorable conditions in which it is kept as we can see from the recent photograph taken by the Leiden-trained Sanskritist, Professor Arlo Griffiths, currently of the École française d'Extrême Orient, in January 2011.

The current Lord Minto (VII), who is the legal owner of the *Sangguran* charter, has for some years been aware of the importance of his unique heirloom inherited from his ancestor. He wholeheartedly supports the idea of the 'Minto Stone's' repatriation. It would be a fine thing if this spirit of generosity found its echo in a sympathetic gesture from the Indian Government. In this way two outstanding Indonesian national treasures could return home after 200 years in exile, to be enjoyed and appreciated by the descendants of the people for whom they were initially erected in early medieval Java. The placement of both stones in the National Museum of Jakarta, through the joint participation of the three major participants in the British Interregnum in Java: Indonesia, India and Britain, would surely be a fitting way to mark the bicentennial. Even if such a return cannot be negotiated in time for the end of this 200-year commemoration on 19 August 2016, one possible intermediate step would be for a temporary loan of both these stone inscriptions to be contemplated by the Indian Government and the Minto trustees respectively. In this fashion a vital part of Indonesia's pre-colonial history can be restored.

Above:
The 'Airlangga Stone' (Pucangan Inscription, 1041) in the storeroom (godown) of the Indian Museum in Kolkata (formerly Royal Asiatic Society collection), January 2011, photograph courtesy of Professor Arlo Griffiths, École française d'Extrême Orient, Paris.

Left:
'Javanese war chief' (T.S. Raffles, *History of Java,* London: Black, Parbury & Allen, 1817, I, p.90).

Below:
The 'Minto Stone' in the grounds of the tied cottage on the current Lord Minto's estate. Photograph courtesy of Nigel Bullough (Hadi Sidomulyo) 2006.

Nigel Bullough (Hadi Sidomulyo) is an independent researcher domiciled in Bali who has since 1972 written on the pre-colonial history and culture of East Java. In November 2015, Nigel won the prestigious Borobodur Writer's Sanghyang Kamahayanikam Award for his lifetime achievement, in particular his recent researches on Majapahit archaeological remains on Mt Penanggungan.

Peter Carey is Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College, Oxford, and Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta. His new book is on corruption in the perspective of Indonesian history.

Special thanks to Professor Arlo Griffiths (EFEO) for the images of the Airlangga Stone in Kolkata.

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Reminiscent of 'The Age of Partnership': VOC diplomatic letters from Batavia

The collection of VOC diplomatic letters that belonged to Governor-General Johan van Hoorn (1653-1711), travelled from old Batavia, to Amsterdam, to St. Petersburg. These gold-leafed Malay letters are a reminder of the expansion of European maritime trade in Asia. The letters, written and addressed to van Hoorn in different languages and scripts, are not only exemplary of the fine art of Malay letter-writing, but also of the diplomatic rituals of that time.

Irina Katkova

THE FAMOUS RUSSIAN academic and antiquarian Nicolay Petrovich Likhachev (1862-1936) wrote that the lives of extraordinary people determine the fates of their collections after their deaths. During his own life, as an outstanding scholar and collector, Likhachev collected various rarities, among them some diplomatic letters of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), dating back to the 17th-18th centuries. The letters had travelled with their owner Governor-General Johan van Hoorn (1653-1711) from old Batavia to Amsterdam in 1710, and then to St. Petersburg in 1910.[1] Almost all of the fifty-four gold-leafed Malay letters were written between the years of 1682-1710, by captains and indigenous rulers from various Malay states, and addressed to the Governor-General in Batavia. These years fall within, what Dutch historian F. de Haan has observed in his monumental work Oud Batavia, as Batavia's period of prosperity (1690-1730).[2]

Batavia and ceremonial displays of courtesy

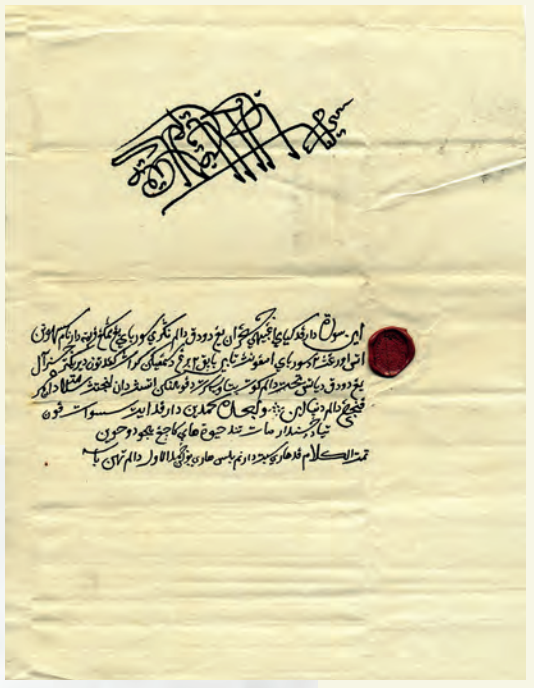
Batavia was established as the VOC headquarters in 1619; it resembled a typical colonial castle with a European-planned rectangular town behind the castle's walls. The famous traveler Valentijn, who visited the town at the beginning of the 18th century, called it the *Koningin van het Oosten* [Queen of the Orient] in his description of the prosperous new ports in the China Sea region, along with Canton and Nagasaki.[3] The town was crisscrossed by canals and bridges reminiscent of Holland, and the most exquisite buildings in Batavia were situated on the beautiful *Tijgergracht* [Tiger Canal]. Batavia was inhabited by several groups, including Dutch, *Mardijkers* (Asian Christians), Mestizos and Chinese. It is interesting to note that in contrast to Manila, where there was a clear segregation between Spaniards and Chinese settlers, in Batavia the Dutch, Asian Christians and Chinese residents lived within the walls of one and the same town, served by a large number of domestic slaves from different parts of the Malay Archipelago, who comprised half the town's population. Residents with other nationalities, such as Balinese, Bugis, Madurese, Ambonese and Moors, were concentrated in their own kampongs in the so called *Ommelanden,* the countryside outside of town.

Batavia became a powerful trading capital and practiced diplomatic relationships with its regional neighbors. Envoys from abroad were regularly received with much pomp; upon arrival they were accompanied to Batavia Castle, where the presentation of letters to the Governor-General and the councilors of the Indies took place. The ceremonial interchange of gold-leafed letters, accompanied by the exchange of gifts between Governor-General and the envoys, was exemplary of the great value given to the diplomatic relationships. In Malay culture the writing of such diplomatic correspondence achieved high artistic forms; it was a competition in courtesy. The colonial administration of the VOC also took part in the elaborate rituals and wrote letters in Arabic, Persian, Malay, Portuguese, Spanish and Chinese.

Chinese community and learned circles of Batavia

The VOC established well-organized civic structures in Batavia, again reminiscent of the homeland. The High Government, with the Governor-General at its head, appointed *kapiteinen* [captains] among the population, who functioned as mediators between the Governor-General, the VOC administration and the inhabitants. Significantly, the VOC treated the Chinese community as almost equal economic non-indigenous partners, providing them with comparable facilities such as a well-equipped hospital, Chinese temples and cemeteries, etc. The Chinese in Batavia were also granted special privileges with regard to trade. Batavia at that time was as much a Chinese city as a Dutch colonial one. The Chinese lived there in accordance with their own customs and with their own headmen, or captains, who in turn were subject to the colonial Dutch administration. The houses of the Chinese were scattered throughout the town. This relatively harmonious relationship lasted for a considerable period of time, until the Chinese massacre in 1740.[4] The relationship was never restored after this tragedy, so a special Chinese town was built beyond the city walls.

The American historian H. Furber in his study "Rival Empires of Trade" characterized European activity in Asia in the 16th-18th centuries as 'The Age of Partnership', because during this period the VOC managed to collaborate with indigenous populations and Chinese settlers on the Malay Archipelago. Due to this Dutch collaborative policy, Batavia became a capital of regional power in the Java Sea. Dutch historian L. Blusse investigated Chinese sources and archives, and concluded that the VOC was a "strange company".[5] Significantly, some VOC officials were clearly seeking something more than material profits in Asia. There was a great interest in the treasures of ancient Oriental knowledge, cultures, medicine and languages, but also in scientific discoveries, and this period saw a large number of individual fieldworkers travel into the world arena of exploration. Many of them came to Asia as VOC servants, supported by the outstanding learned personality of that time, burgomaster of Amsterdam Nicolaes Witsen (1641-1717). He maintained a correspondence with many people serving in the Indies, including his distant cousin J. van Hoorn. Thus, in spite of its commercial intents, the VOC also became a channel of 'knowledge transference' about the Orient. There existed a circle of learned Dutch in Batavia among the Company's elite, distinguished by their passion for Asian cultures and languages.



Above:
OIC 17 Banten Letter, Likhachev's collection.

Left:
Batavia 1656, F. de Haan Oud Batavia Special Collections of Leiden University Library, Mi577.

Johan van Hoorn is undoubtedly an interesting historical figure, not only as Governor-General of Java (1704-1709), but as a personality who possessed vast amounts of knowledge about the Javanese and Chinese cultures, and who contributed much to the transference of knowledge. His interest in Chinese culture was closely connected to his father Pieter van Hoorn, who was sent as VOC Ambassador to the court of the Chinese Emperor in 1665, accompanied by his young son. Pieter van Hoorn was famous for being a connoisseur of Chinese civilization. In 1675 he published the translation of the Chinese teaching, "The Ode to Confucius".[6] In 1704, when J. van Hoorn became the Governor-General he began to put into action the ideas of his father. Both his private and business interests were closely intertwined with the Chinese community, in which he was greatly respected. Van Hoorn became famous in Batavia for his collaborative policies and close relationships with Chinese residents, even more so than with the indigenous population. A Chinese account of Batavia[7] and Valentijns' memoirs both tell of the Chinese doctor *Tsebitja,* who was bestowed the privilege of staying in Batavia's castle and who treated Van Hoorn's family. He later accompanied the retired Governor-General J. van Hoorn to Amsterdam on board the ship *Sandenburg* in 1710.[8]

Van Hoorn's collection of letters

Van Hoorn maintained a vast correspondence with captains, local rulers and aristocracy during his service in the VOC administration (Head of the Chamber of Orphanage, President of the Extraordinary Councilor of the Indies, Director-General in 1691 and Governor-General 1704-1709). One of the most intriguing features of the Van Hoorn/Likhachev's collection is their linguistic and geographical diversity. Van Hoorn selected fifty-four letters to take along to Amsterdam. In this collection one can find a variety of scripts used for diplomatic correspondence at that time, namely Malay *(Jawi),* Javanese *(Pegon, Carakan),* Spanish, Old Dutch and Chinese. Moreover, the collection contains samples from almost all locations with which the VOC administration in Batavia had diplomatic and trading relationships, including from the Malay states Palembang, Japara, Malacca, Tallo, Gowa, Bima, Banten, Cirebon, one letter from Agra in India and a dozen from China.[9] Most of the documents are written by prominent historical figures like Sultans, Princes, Governors and religious leaders representing a great variety of seals and signatures. Some of them contain important data with regard to VOC diplomatic relationships, linked to the life and service of J. van Hoorn. His choice of correspondence was most likely not accidental, but rather motivated by his exceptional knowledge of Oriental cultures, tremendous diplomatic experience and his fidelity to the ideals of his lifetime: collecting and transferring knowledge to Europe. The Malay letters, written and addressed to him in different languages and scripts are not only exemplary of the fine art of Malay letter-writing but also of the diplomatic rituals of that time, and are thereby an important primary source for the study of the political and economic history of the Dutch East Indies.

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Globalized economy and the Chinese national oil companies

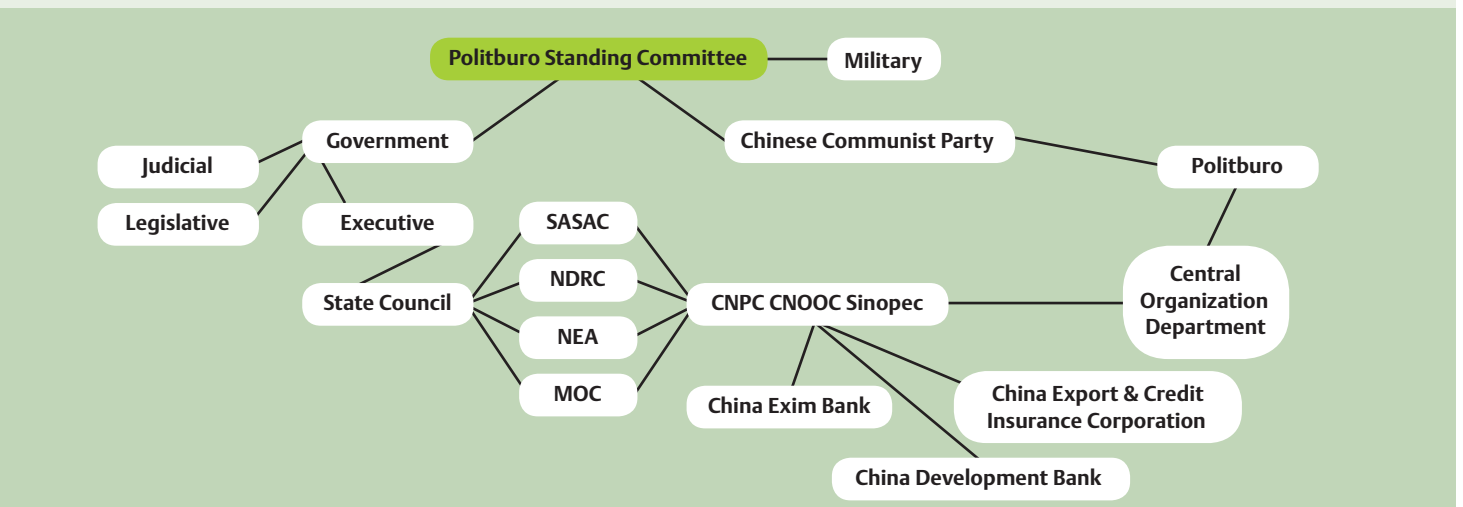
In recent years, with the successful implementation of the Going-Out policy, Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have made great progress in participating in the global market and competing with international companies. Among the SOEs, two Chinese national oil companies, China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), were ranked in the global top five companies of 2015, in terms of assets and revenue.[1] The rationale behind the expansion of the cross-border activities of China's national oil companies (NOCs) is mainly China's energy security, prompted by China's resource scarcity and growing energy demand.

Changwei Tang

THE CROSS-BORDER ACTIVITIES of Chinese NOCs have raised a debate regarding the role of the state in the transnational activities of its national oil companies. A majority of scholars contend that Chinese NOCs are of a hybrid type, since they only partly resemble international oil companies (IOCs) that independently conduct cross-border activities; but this article argues that the Chinese government can in fact override all NOC decision-making, and Chinese NOCs can therefore better be characterized as state-led companies. The state retains the authoritative power in managing not only the domestic development of the NOCs, but also their cross-border activities in other resource rich countries. It is assumed that these activities are part of China's 'statist' globalization, whereby the state creates access to energy resources in other countries for the NOCs, and the NOCs help to project power, realizing the state's political and economic objective.[2] The successful trans-nationalization of Chinese NOCs shows that they are more capable of obtaining oil resources across the global range than international oil companies, but it also demonstrates the success of the Chinese government's control.

From 1904 to 1948, oil production in China was only 2.8 million tonne, while oil import was 28 million tonne.[3] With the successful exploitation of the Karamay and Daqing oil fields in the 1950s, oil production notably increased, making China an oil self-reliant country. In 1955 the Chinese government established its Ministry of Petroleum Industry (MPI), which was responsible for managing oil-related assets, planning oil exploitation projects and enacting national oil strategy. In 1982, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) was established from the offshore assets of MPI. In 1983, the Sinopec Group was created from the downstream assets of MPI and MCI (Ministry of Coal Industry and Ministry of Chemical Industry); in 1988, the China National Oil and Natural Gas Corporation was established to enhance onshore and upstream oil and gas production, which was later restructured into CNPC.[4] Moreover, CNPC was assigned to take over the assets and tasks of MPI. This partial corporatization signifies that CNPC would not only be in charge of oil exploration projects, but more importantly, also enact national energy policy and coordinate the regional development of oil industry.

It is against this background that China's NOCs were established. Compared to other International Oil Companies (IOCs), China's NOCs can be characterized as quasi-governmental organizations, which disputes the assumption that Chinese NOCs are of a hybrid type. To better comprehend the nature of Chinese NOCs, it is rather important to concretize the intertwined relations between the NOCs and different government bodies.



Above:
Major government decision-making bodies for Chinese NOC's. (Chinese Government Websites, NOCs website and annual reports)

Governance of Chinese NOCs

The corporate structure of Chinese NOCs is similar to many IOCs, however, the de facto decision-maker for NOCs is the Chinese government. In China, neither a moral order nor a legal system has been sufficiently internalized in order to regulate the behavior of state officials, which makes it difficult to understand China's governance of the society and SOEs. Externally, different government departments are responsible for setting up macro-economic and social policy, while internally, the Communist Party of China (CPC) is embedded into the elite network of all government departments, which results in a more intransparent decision-making mechanism. Historically, the Chinese nomenklatura system stipulates that the Communist Party of China is omnipresent in managing and controlling the society in every field such as government, military and business.

The Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) is the top decision-making body in China. Currently, PBSC consists of seven members elected by the Central Committee, and who include President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Keqiang. However, in practice PBSC members are chosen by current leaders and Party elders, who ensure their interests are protected and allies well-chosen. As a consequence, the aforementioned political ruling elite is entrenched in every part of government, where they exert their influence to secure their political and economic interests. NOC board members are expected to be obedient to the Communist Party, and enact corporate strategy according to the party's interests.

From a macro-level perspective, Chinese NOCs are generally supervised by several governmental entities including the State Council, State Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the National Energy Administration (NEA) and the Ministry of Commerce (MOC). The State Council is the highest executive government body in China. The cabinet-like State Council is headed by the Prime Minster, four vice-premiers, five state-councilors and one secretary general.[5] It has 25 subordinated departments, but some departments, such as SASAC, are considered to be 'supreme ministries' that are more essential and powerful than others.

Established in 2003, SASAC is the only department that is directly subordinated to the State Council. It was created to take on investment and administrative responsibilities for SOEs. SASAC is responsible for supervising NOCs, establishing corporate regulations, perfecting company structure, adjusting national economic policy and reforming SOEs. Currently, SASAC holds around 3.7 billion dollars of assets from its 116 flagship SOEs, including CNPC, Sinopec and CNOOC.[6]

SASAC retains absolute executive control over NOCs performance and selection of their board members. SASAC exercises its controlling power over allocation of remuneration, assets disposal and enactment of plans regarding commercial merges and shareholding acquisitions. NOCs must obtain permission from SASAC before conducting overseas investments, establishing joint ventures or mobilizing assets, activities through which SASAC can achieve the party's political and economic interests.

The other three significant government bodies related to NOCs are the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the National Energy Administration (NEA) and the Ministry of Commerce (MOC). NDRC, formerly known as State Planning Commission, is in charge of the overall macro-economic development of China and enacting guidance for restructuring the Chinese economic system. Meanwhile, the Energy Bureau branch of NDRC presents policy recommendations for NOCs' overseas investments and other cross-border activities. Established in 2013, NEA is a new government entity that coordinates with NDRC in setting energy development policies. Domestically, NEA will research and publish energy-related information, participate in the process of sustaining domestic energy supply, and adjust energy policies in response to the global energy situation. As NOCs are vital entities that can assure China's energy security, they must consult and obtain policy recommendations from NEA. Lastly, MOC participates in macro-economic development, providing financial support and policy recommendations for the central and regional governments. MOC is further related to the China Development Bank, Exim Bank of China, and China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation (Sinosure), all of which will provide financial and credit support for NOC transnational activities.

The Central Organization Department (COD) retains absolute authority in appointing and dismissing personnel in different ministries, provincial government branches, SOEs and universities. The Communist Party possesses a strict hierarchical list of political leaders and other candidates that are suitable to fill those positions. The most senior positions in SEOs – party secretary, chairman and chief executive officer – are all chosen by COD, and one person will often be simultaneously appointed as chairman and party secretary.

Since the Chinese government is responsible for ensuring China's energy security, the CPC has institutionalized its control over strategy, board members and the corporate structure of NOCs. The criteria for leadership positions in NOCs include political reliability inside the CPC membership, and practical working experience related to the oil sector. It is clear that most China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) executives have the dual role of manager in the company and a membership of the CPC. For instance, Wang Yilin was elected as the Chairman of the Board of CNPC in 2015, and is also a member of the Central Commission of Discipline Inspection in the CPC; and Zhou Jiping served as the director of CNPC from 2011 to 2015, while simultaneously appointed as a member of the 12th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) from 2013 to 2018.[7] CNPC's senior officers must be able to balance the company's commercial interests and the CPC's political and economic goals, and even prioritize the latter. In most scenarios, only by complying with CPC protocols and by acting in accordance with CPC interests can NOC board members be promoted and transferred to higher positions.

Concluding remarks

In order to assure China's energy security, the Chinese government has enacted the Going-Out policy, in which NOCs have successfully achieved their trans-nationalization and played a pivotal role in obtaining more oil resources in the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and Latin America. Moreover, Chinese NOCs remain under the supervision of the Chinese Communist Party. The management of NOCs is institutionalized through entities such as the State Council and the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission. The Central Organization Department plays a decisive role in appointing NOC board members and this allows the Chinese ruling elite in the oil sector to ensure the maximization of its interests. Furthermore, with the recent CPC reformation and large-scale anti-corruption movement in SOEs, it is without doubt that NOC board members are aware of the CPC's desires, since ensuring the party's general interests can help them get promoted. This mechanism has effectively concretized the governance of Chinese NOCs.

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Heritage diplomacy along the One Belt One Road

Today the preservation and commemoration of cultural heritage in Asia occupies a complex place in an increasingly integrated and interconnected region. In comparison to ten years ago we are seeing a significant growth in the level of international hostility concerning the past and its remembrance. Histories of conflict, for example, are the source of ongoing tension in East Asia at a time of escalating militarisation. The diplomatic tensions between Japan, Korea and China concerning the events of World War 2 are being further exacerbated by the approach of museums in the region and attempts to have remnants – whether it be buildings, letters or landscapes – recognised by international heritage agencies. At the same time, however, we are also seeing major growth in the scale and scope of international cooperation between countries across Asia regarding the preservation of the past. Heritage conservation is fast emerging as an important component of the intra-regional economic and political ties that are binding states and populations in the region. In the coming decade one initiative in particular will take this heritage diplomacy to a whole new level, China's One Belt One Road.

Tim Winter

Fig. 1: Archaeological Survey of India conservation aid Angkor, Cambodia. (photo by author)

IN 2014-5, JAPAN SUCCESSFULLY ADDED two industrial sites to the World Heritage List. Their nominations followed very different pathways. The first, the 'Tomioka Silk Mills and Related Sites' passed through smoothly, with India and Turkey among those praising Japan for highlighting silk and sericulture as 'the common heritage of mankind'. A year later however, the nomination of 'Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution' located in the Kyushu-Yamaguchi region sparked controversy within the committee and significant consternation for UNESCO and its world heritage office. The nomination included factories that used Korean forced labour during World War II, a time when the Korean peninsula was under Japanese occupation. Japan's unwillingness to acknowledge this led to anti-Japanese protests in South Korea and China and prolonged diplomatic tensions in the region. The dispute over Kyushu-Yamaguchi also received considerable press attention around the world. But while Tomioka passed largely unnoticed, I would suggest it is this nomination, and the nature of its endorsements, that will have far greater consequences over the longer term.

For a number of decades Japan has successfully utilised culture and cultural heritage as a mechanism for advancing its foreign policy and soft power strategy.[1] Within South and Southeast Asia alone, Japan currently has heritage related projects in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam. Today, however, they are far from alone in folding heritage diplomacy into their bilateral and multi-lateral programmes of cooperation and aid. China, India, and South Korea are among those spending heavily on heritage diplomacy to secure influence in the region. South Korea, for example, is investing in a number of institutions designed to provide expertise both domestically and overseas. The Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, an independent government agency since 1999, has moved beyond its original domestic remit by signing around 60 bilateral agreements with organisations in more than a dozen countries over the last decade or so.

India is similarly expanding its cultural interests in Southeast Asia. For some time India has provided assistance to Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos in an array of heritage sectors, including archaeology, textiles, museums and modern urban architecture. More recently however, such forms of cooperation have been explicitly mobilised as a mechanism for promoting economic and diplomatic relations, with Myanmar offering a case in point. Concerned by the growing influence of China in the country, the Indian government began folding archaeology into its official diplomatic visits from 2010 onwards, invoking ideas of mutual pasts to build trust and diplomatic ties.

This growth in heritage assistance is occurring in tandem with a rise in intraregional aid and trade. The development sector, which has historically been driven by bilateral and multilateral agencies headquartered in Europe or North America, is now being transformed by new forms of intraregional cooperation and assistance. As a result, the cartographies of influence and power across the networks of heritage diplomacy are also shifting. The rapid rise in intraregional tourism since the early 2000s also means Asia's governments can use overseas cultural aid as a mechanism of public diplomacy that reaches multiple audiences.

It is a set of changes academia has been slow to respond to. In the critical analysis of Asia's heritage, the focus often remains on certain agencies, actors and places. UNESCO, for example, has been the subject of countless publications and dissertations, often critically analysed in relation to questions of western neo-colonialism or the role its policies play in shaping nationalism, economic development or memory in Asia. The concept of heritage diplomacy moves the analysis of cultural heritage in the region in productive directions.

One Belt One Road

One project that exemplifies the trends outlined here is One Belt One Road. Launched by Xi Jinping in September 2013, the project has been described as "the most significant and far-reaching initiative that China has ever put forward".[2] Five major goals sit within a broad framework of connectivity and cooperation: policy coordination; facilities connectivity; unimpeded trade; financial integration; people to people bonds.[3] Although recognised as an important mechanism for deepening bilateral and multilateral cooperation, this final goal has received less media and expert attention in large part because its projects do not carry the spectacle of multi-billion dollar infrastructure investments and contracts, or the mega-project outcomes they produce. In contrast to the 'harder' matters of trade agreements, physical infrastructure or reforms in legal systems, the people-to-people elements of the project are passed off as a series of 'softer' outcomes. Moreover, where such issues are discussed they tend to be vaguely accounted for as Chinese 'soft power', an analysis that misses the complex role culture and history play in the initiative. Indeed, I would suggest for both China and many of the countries involved, in cultural and historical terms much is at stake in this project.

In recent years a growing number of experts have pointed to the role deep history plays in China's conduct of international affairs today. The long game, it is suggested, is overcoming a century of humiliation, a sense of national weakness at the hands of oppressive powers, and securing international recognition for Chinese civilisation and its impact on world history. The question thus arises regarding how the state conveys and communicates such ideas today, both domestically and to the outside world. Cultural heritage has become a powerful and important platform in this regard. The Chinese government is investing significant resources to connect present society to its past by establishing museums, festivals, expos, and countless intangible heritage initiatives. Perhaps most significant here though are its urban, monumental and archaeological cultural properties, thirty four of which are recognised by UNESCO as being of Outstanding Universal Value and thus worthy of its prestigious World Heritage List.

Now in its fifth decade, the list has inadvertently become a marker of not just national, but civilisational standing. States around the world are pursuing world heritage in order to promote particular forms of cultural nationalism and civic identities at home. At the international level, it has emerged as the cultural Olympics of history, with much energy going into ensuring the worlds of European, Persian, Arab, Indian or Chinese pasts are given the recognition they deserve. China ranks second in the global league table of listed properties, and the Silk Road will help it eclipse Italy in the prestige stakes of culture and civilisation. As David Shambaugh has indicated at length, culture has become an important pillar within China's strategy to secure influence internationally, with Xi Jinping dedicating a plenary session of the 17th Central Committee of the CCP to the issue in 2011.[4] Nowhere is this more important than within the region itself, where there are deep seated suspicions about China's economic and military rise. I would suggest that it is within this wider context that we need to situate the Belt and Road strategy of fostering people-to-people connections.

Moreover, we need to look to the ways in which a historical narrative of silk, seafaring and cultural and religious encounters also opens up a space for other countries to draw on their own deep histories in the crafting of contemporary trade and political relations. Iran, Turkey and the Arab States of the Persian Gulf are among those looking to Belt and Road as an expedient platform for not only securing international recognition for their culture and civilisations, but also using that sense of history to create political and economic loyalty in a region characterised by unequal and competing powers. The now conventional idea of soft power focuses on how states and countries secure influence through the export of their own social and cultural goods. But this idea only partially captures what is at stake in One Belt One Road. Reviving the idea of the silk roads, on both land and sea, gives vitality to histories of transnational, even transcontinental, trade and people-people encounters as a shared heritage. Crucially, it is a narrative that can be activated for diplomatic purposes.

In their participation at UNESCO's annual world heritage committee meetings, state parties now regularly use this language of shared heritage to endorse each others' nominations. World heritage has thus become an important platform for identifying trade, religious and other connections from the past as the basis for future cooperation. It is an arena that explicitly encourages states to be internationally disposed, wherein norms of cooperation rely upon internationalised cultural nationalisms and the building of bridges as a platform for strengthening bilateral relations. While the idea of Silk Road nominations formally commenced in 2003, we are now seeing a surge in activity with Belt and Road dramatically changing the political impetus for cultural sector cooperation. Financial support from the governments of Japan, Norway and South Korea contributed to the first successful Silk Road world heritage listing in 2014. The nomination involved government departments and experts from China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan cooperating over thirty three separate sites. In November 2015 the fourteen country members that currently make up the Silk Roads Coordinating Committee gathered in Almaty, Kazakhstan to plan future nominations and tourism development strategies. Given dozens of Silk Road corridors potentially linking more than five hundred sites across the region have been identified, the Silk Road is likely to emerge as the most ambitious and expansive international cooperation program for heritage preservation ever undertaken.

Heritage diplomacy as hard power

Collaboration over nominations is only a small part of a much larger trend towards international cooperation for heritage preservation in Asia. Numerous world heritage sites across Asia have become honeypots of development in the past twenty years, and provided the logic for the construction of airports, roads, hotel zones and various forms of urban redevelopment. Increasingly tied to infrastructure, urban planning, tourism, post-disaster reconstruction and conflict transformation, heritage has thus emerged as an important form of spatial and social governance. The provision of cross-sector bi-lateral aid in this space also complicates any distinction between soft and hard power. This is evident in the apparent alignment of Silk Road heritage nominations with the multilateral structures of cooperation now proposed under the 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road' issued by the Chinese government in early 2015. A proposed South Asian Silk Road nomination largely corresponds with Belt and Road's Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, and plans for a Central Asian heritage corridor involving Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan directly align with the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor.

Central to all this is tourism, an industry that uses people-to-people connections to link the cultural past to economic development. Over the next twenty years the Asia Pacific region will be the key driver of growth in a global tourism industry forecast to reach 1.8 billion international arrivals by 2030 (from around 1 billion currently). Rising middle classes in Asia, most notably China, will populate the airports and hotels built along the Silk Road opening up previously remote regions and communities. As a transboundary cultural landscape, the Silk Road will become a network of corridors and hubs of tourism development, oriented in large part around the branding of world heritage. As low and middle income countries in South and Southeast Asia have demonstrated in recent decades, international tourism has become a significant factor in GDP growth.

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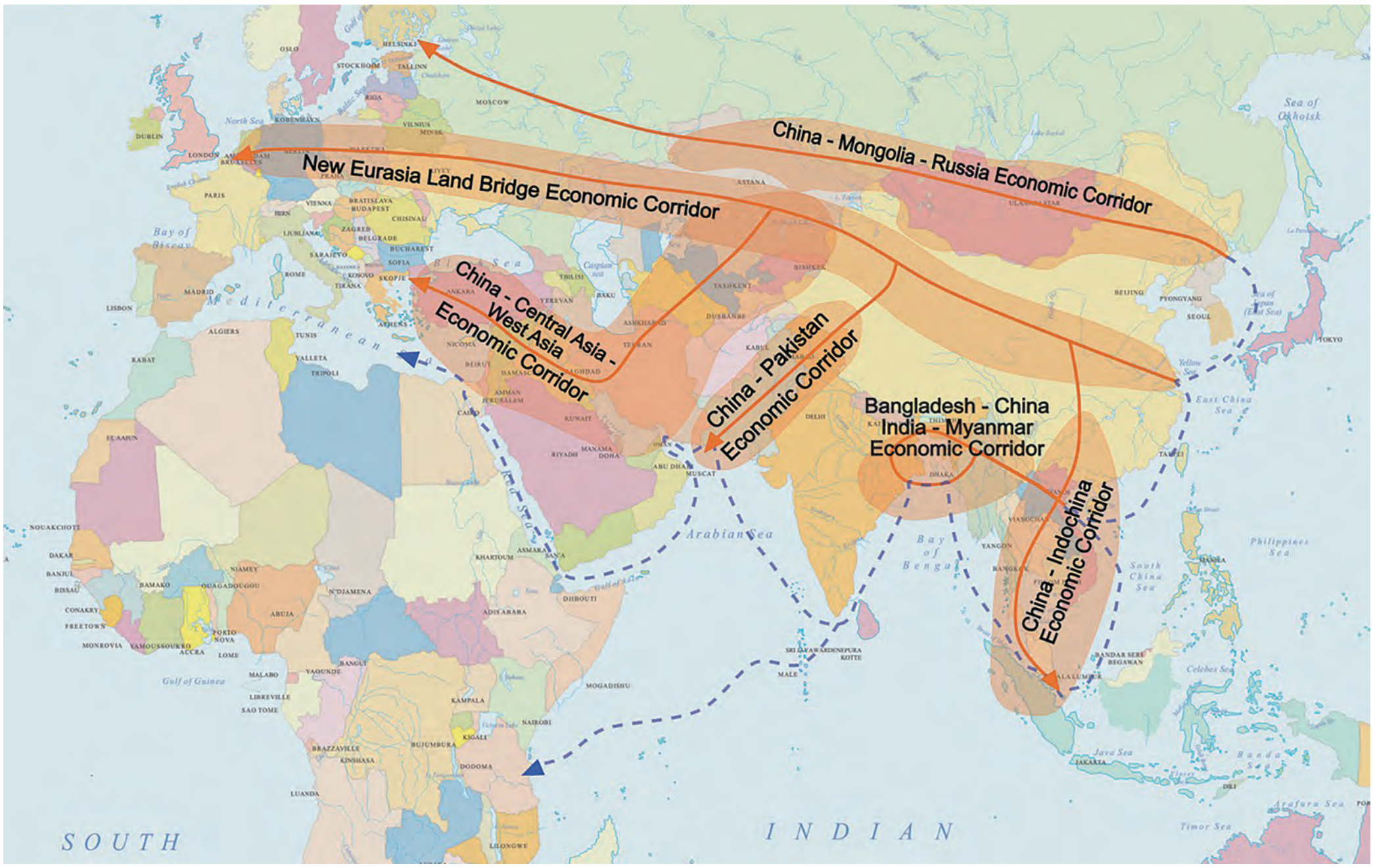

Fig. 2: **Principle Economic Corridors of One Belt One Road.**

Heritage diplomacy along the One Belt One Road *continued*

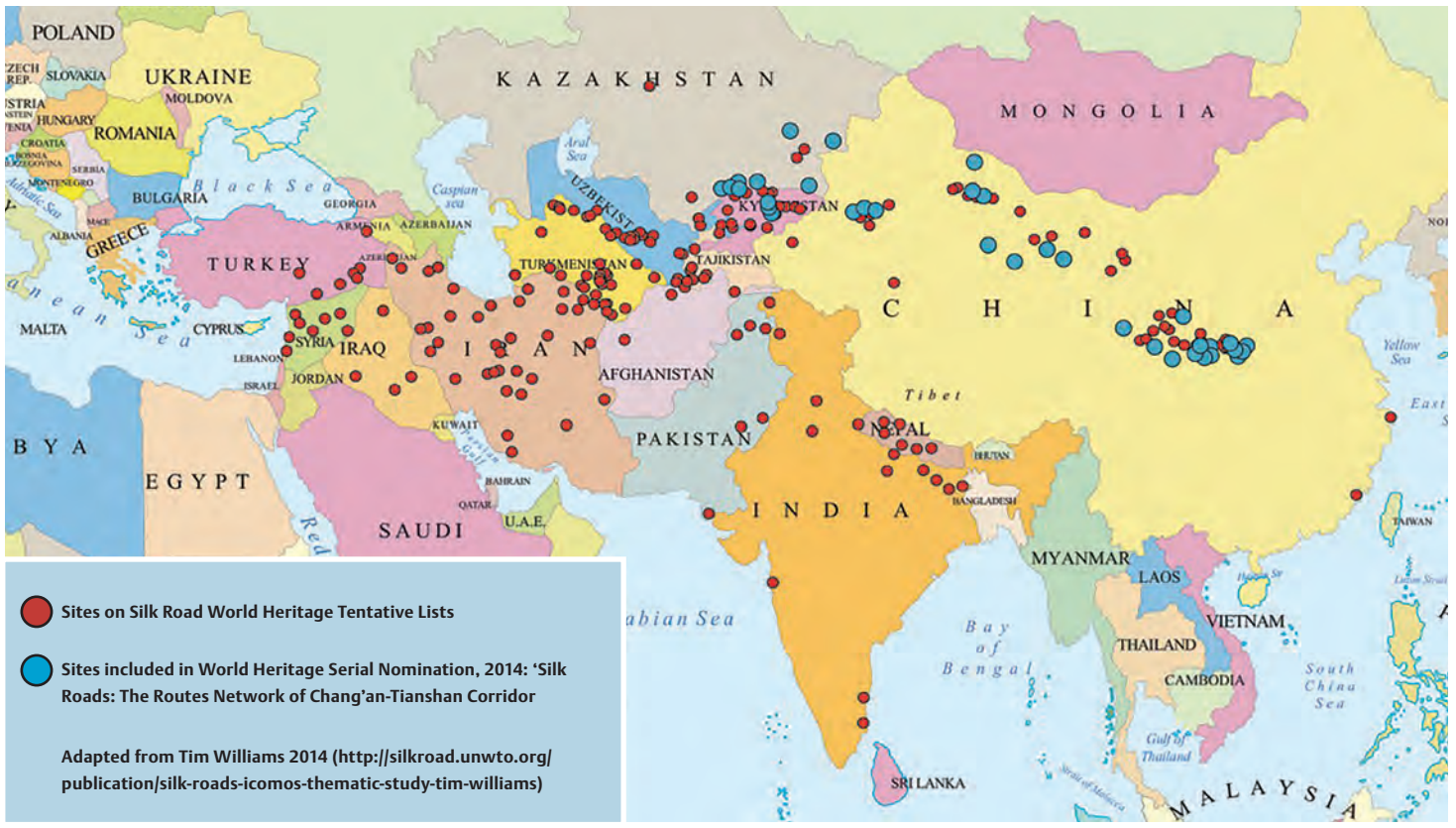

Fig. 3: Locations of sites on World Heritage and Tentative World Heritage Lists.

For the Silk Road, the UN World Tourism Organisation is working with thirty three states, spanning Southeast Europe to Southeast Asia, and the Middle East to East Asia, to align their tourism development strategies. In reversing long standing policies based on anxieties about regional counterparts or previous geopolitical alignments, many of these member states are now reforming visa regulations to facilitate greater leisure mobility and a less bureaucratic experience for tourists moving across multiple jurisdictions. Xi'an in northwest China has developed an ambitious heritage tourism strategy that capitalises on its location as the starting point of the original Silk Road. Projects now in development include the 'Silk Road International Museum City' and 'Silk Road Expo Park'. Museums and pavilions will exhibit the arts, crafts and archaeological artefacts of more than twenty Silk Road countries. In this regard Xi'an aims to be the gateway for a new era of intra-regional tourism.

In such examples we also begin to see how prioritising people-to-people connections, both domestic and cross-border, ties into the security dimensions of the Belt and Road initiative. One of the lessons of the original Silk Road was that cross-border trade and cultural exchange build mutual respect and trust. Of paramount importance to Beijing is the stability of its western provinces, and transforming Urumqi and Kashgar into commerce and transport hubs – and the wealth generation that affords – will integrate the Muslim Uighar communities of the region with the rest of the nation. Indeed, the recent history of Tibet and Lhasa provides a likely template of the cultural politics in play here. As cross-border and domestic tourism brings business opportunities to these regions it is highly probable that Han Chinese migration into the area will also increase. Moreover, for Beijing and the governments of Central Asia the spectre of Islamic fundamentalism demands policies that turn long, and in many cases porous, borders from being a threat into an opportunity for creating the types of social stability that come from economic prosperity. For many in the region, the Silk Road is a story of peaceful trade, and a rich history of religious and harmonious cultural exchange. Belt and Road seeks to directly build on this legacy. It rests upon a historical narrative that connectivity – both cultural and economic – reduces suspicion and promotes common prosperity, an idea that is being eagerly taken up by states concerned about civil unrest, both within and across their borders. In November 2015, Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, chose UNESCO's headquarters, Paris to announce the country's new 'Academy of Peace', stating that "we can best counter extremism through inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue".[5]

The Maritime Silk Road

The situation of the overland Silk Road is mirrored in the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The 2015 Visions and Action plan calls for two transboundary maritime economic routes, linking deep water ports across the South China Sea, Indian Ocean and beyond. It has been extensively documented that both China and India are competing to build networks of maritime infrastructure across these regions, amongst growing anxieties over freedom of navigation rights and the need for strategic locations for seaborne trade.[6] In response to the Chinese financing of deep water ports and Strategic Maritime Distribution Centers in littoral regions across Africa and South America, India has increased funding to its navy and maritime defence capacities. Against this backdrop sits heritage diplomacy, with China and India assembling countries in the region for maritime themed world heritage nominations, namely the 'Maritime Silk Road' and the Indian Ocean 'Project Mausam' respectively.

As Erickson and Bond have noted, maritime archaeology has formed part of China's strategy for claiming territory in the disputed South China Sea.[7] Various maritime archaeology institutes including the National Center for Conservation of Underwater Cultural Heritage, together with ships and submersibles equipped for deep water shipwreck hunting, have endeavoured to find material evidence in support of claims for territorial jurisdiction over the East and South China seas based on historical right. In contrast to many Western expert commentaries that point to twentieth century laws and treaties, within China discoveries of porcelain and other artefacts dating as far back as the ninth century Tang dynasty substantiate the country's position over the disputed waters.[8] Crucially, however, the notion of a Maritime Silk Road flips this excavation of shipwrecks from mere evidence of historical presence towards a much larger, and more diplomatically expedient language of region-wide trade, encounter and exchange. Belt and Road's emphasis on maritime connections also sustains claims that China ranks alongside its European counterparts as one of the great naval powers in world history.

One figure in particular, Admiral Zheng He, embodies this grand narrative. A Muslim eunuch who led seven fleets across to South Asia, the Arabian peninsula and West Africa between 1405 and 1433 during the Ming dynasty, Zheng He is widely celebrated as a peaceful envoy in both China and by the overseas Chinese living in Malaysia, Indonesia and elsewhere. In addition to the museums, mosques, and artefacts now appearing around the region celebrating his voyages, China has given millions of dollars to Sri Lanka and Kenya to support the search for remains of Zheng He's fleet. Both countries are key nodes in the Belt and Road infrastructure network, with China financing the construction of deep water ports in Colombo and Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and Lamu in Kenya. In 2005 Singapore also celebrated the 600th anniversary of Zheng He's voyages, hosting multiple events over the course of the year.[9] These helped raise public awareness about Singapore's maritime history and connections to China; an historical narrative political leaders now explicitly invoke to garner domestic support for Singapore's strategic engagement in Belt and Road. Given the networked nature of the initiative, over the coming years we will see other states in the Persian Gulf, East Africa, and South-Southeast Asia excavate – both physically and discursively – their own maritime pasts and build heritage industries and museums around stories of trade, connection and exchange.

Fig. 4: Zheng He/Cheng Ho replica ship, Melaka, Malaysia. (photo by author)

The connections of silk

By speaking to the construct of the Silk Road, One Belt One Road sits on a deep history of cultural entanglements and flows, which countries across Eurasia and beyond can buy into and appropriate for their own ends. As a bridge, this complex trans-boundary cultural history is reduced to a series of heritage narratives that directly align with the foreign policy and trade ambitions of governments today. The Silk Road is a story of connectivity, one that enables countries and cities to strategically respond to the shifting geopolitics of the region and use the past as a means for building competitive advantage in an increasingly networked Sinocentric economy. Culture forms part of the international diplomatic arena now, and with routes, hubs and corridors serving as the mantra of Belt and Road, countries will continue to find points of cultural connection through the language of shared heritage in order to gain regional influence and loyalty. But this also raises important questions concerning new forms of cultural erasure and coloniality and the political violence they deliver. The lives of vulnerable communities, particularly those located in borderland regions, will be deeply affected by the developments outlined here. In both its land and sea forms, Belt and Road gives impetus to a network of heritage diplomacy that fosters institutional and interpersonal connections.
This in turn provides the foundation for the more informal people-to-people connections that will lie at the heart of Silk Road tourism. Indeed, framed by the political and economic imperatives of One Belt One Road, there is a distinct possibility that the heritage diplomacy of silk will have lasting consequences that far outlive the tensions of twentieth century conflict and occupation.

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“And then the government fell. But the books continued!”

Violence against Muslims, against socialists, against intellectuals, against women – India has been witnessing a pattern of tragic events since the coming to power of the right wing government, whose actions and policies scream out ‘Intolerance!’. The country’s citizens and its media, deemed as the fourth pillar of democracy, have been taking sides without entirely understanding the situation. It is not just India, but a problem shared by many countries worldwide, where people fail to see through the political manipulation of their governments that distort knowledge.

We interviewed Professor Emeritus Romila Thapar on these issues. Holding a doctorate from SOAS and honorary doctorates from the universities of Paris, Oxford, Chicago, Edinburgh, Calcutta and Hyderabad, she is known not only for her brilliant contribution to the field of history, but also her refusal to accept the Padma Bhushan (awarded by the Indian government) as well as her strong condemnation of the anti-intellectual attacks by certain political groups in India.

Byapti Sur and Kanad Sinha

28 September 2015, night-time in Bisara village in Uttar Pradesh, India – a Hindu mob lynches a Muslim man and his son for allegedly consuming beef. The man dies while his son is severely injured. They had been guilty of killing the sacred *Go-mata* (Mother Cow) of the Hindus.

Morning of 30 August 2015, in the Kalyan Nagar locality of Dharwad, Karnataka – a man knocks on the door of the famous Indian scholar and vice-chancellor of Karnataka University, M.M. Kalburgi. Kalburgi’s wife answers the door and leaves them to talk, assuming the man to be Kalburgi’s student; she then hears gunshots. Moments later, she discovers that the man has fired two shots at point blank range through her husband’s chest and forehead. Kalburgi’s fault lay in raising questions backed by textual evidence on nude idol-worship and other semi-religious issues.

12 February 2016, at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi – undercover police enter the campus and arrest Kanhaiya Kumar, the JNUSU (students’ union) president, from his hostel room, without a warrant. They continue raiding other hostels too, arresting students on charges of ‘sedition’, ‘terrorism’ and ‘anti-nationalism’. The alleged crime of the students is organizing a peaceful cultural event criticizing Afzal Guru’s death penalty. Guru was sentenced to death on the basis of mere circumstantial evidence for his supposed involvement in a terrorist attack on Parliament House. The charges also include speaking in favour of the ‘right to self-determination’ of the people of Kashmir.[1]

Sur & Sinha (SS): You, as a historian, have been a pioneer and one of the very few in India to take up the challenge of bringing academic history to the public. Your statements about the responsibility of ‘public intellectuals’ to help make citizens aware of governmental policies have invited a lot of attention. How far do you think India has come as a democratic society, in terms of understanding the use and abuse of history in politics?

Romila Thapar (RT): Well to begin with, I think the understanding of the differentiation between history as an academic discipline and history as used in politics, is a distinction that isn’t being made sufficiently in India. There is a tendency for the popular use of history to try and overwrite academic history. At this moment, I think, this is our major struggle in trying to convince public opinion that academic history is something different. It’s not popular history. Therefore, even though one may say that popular history is legitimate because people will have ideas about their past, a differentiation needs to be made. The two cannot be confused.

SS: There is clearly a gap then between academic history and the popular ‘histories’. You have pointed out that neither the policy makers nor the common people pay any heed to the opinions of the ‘public intellectual(s)’. In fact, they freely use history as constructed pasts – be it fabricated, mythologized, glorifying, revivalist or pseudo-historical – to legitimize debates in the public sphere. Do you think that the academic arrogance of professional historians is to be blamed?

RT: Let me go back a little to say that in all nationalisms, history plays a central role. Nationalism derives its identity in part from the way the past gets projected. The desire for a particular community to set itself up as a nation means that it seeks legitimacy in its past. And in the process of constructing the past, the past can get deliberately twisted, distorted, and presented, in a non-academic way, as ‘History’. Political parties writing history therefore don’t interpret the past as historians, but force it to be bent in the ideological direction they want. There itself you have a clear distinction. Besides, one needs to understand that the colonial reading of history had simply been a case of putting together the narratives from texts – pick a book, read it and state its contents in the form of events that happened. This kind of writing came to be challenged around the 1950s and history began to change. It ceased to be a part of Indology, raising a lot of questions about the colonial reconstructions of the past. Soon it became a part of the social sciences and interacted with other social science disciplines like sociology, economics, anthropology, archaeology and so on. Eventually history developed into a method of analysis, which is what characterizes academic history today. There is a method. And popular history knows nothing about this method. The problem starts when neither the method nor the questions that are being asked by historians become comprehensible to popular opinion. For the public at large, history is simply some information about the past with a few dates strung together. So there is a gulf, an enormous gulf between academic and popular perceptions of history.

SS: It is indeed extremely frustrating when you talk to people about history and they miss the entire point of critical thinking, reducing it to what you just said – a bundle of facts and figures.

RT: Yes, it is a rather silly question that people ask me: “A historical fact is a historical fact, so why do you talk about these different interpretations?” The understanding of what are historical facts, how they are analyzed, is often beyond the comprehension of the popular mind. This is simply because

An interview with Romila Thapar

they have not taken an interest in the methods used by this discipline. What is interesting is that people don't ask these questions from scientists, because they do not understand the discipline, and because they expect scientific knowledge to change and be up-to-date. They also don't question economists because they can't handle econometrics. Even with sociology they are a little unsure with the terminology. But history is very easy in their minds because it is about their identity, their past and it can be concocted in any way that they want.

SS: Is there a solution then?

RT: I think we can solve this problem to some extent by making our first attempts at teaching history properly in schools. Children are mostly taught to just repeat information for getting good grades. It is a bit like the creed and the Catechism of religious organizations – you already know what the questions are and you even know what the answers are. I am not suggesting that whatever is being taught is rubbish. There is a method of teaching students to question knowledge in a creative way so that knowledge is opened up and further questions can be asked. Otherwise you are dealing with dead knowledge. The characteristic of knowledge is that it is constantly being tested and if need be, being renewed and taken forward. This is absolutely essential. Take for example the dominant Hindu and Muslim nationalisms in India. Their intention is not to question knowledge. You are given answers and you have to accept them. The syllabus of the *madrassa* (Muslim schools) or that of the *shishu mandir* (Hindu schools) inhibits students from questioning knowledge. Unless this is redressed, public opinion will be based on just repeating information, and this will continue without it being questioned.

SS: Coming back to these Hindu-Muslim nationalisms you just talked about; let's focus on India being in the international news recently for its rising intolerance debates. Don't you think that it is more of a universal problem of 'Islamophobia' in all places, and not just particularly India?

RT: It is, and one has to analyze it not just in terms of Christians against Muslims or Hindus against Muslims, but rather in terms of what is happening globally. What are the ideologies that nations are adopting? What is the global economy doing? One can even assert to a large extent that its genesis lies in history. After all, let's not forget that the anti-Islamic sentiment in Europe began with the crusades. Recent research has proved that religion was much less of a reason behind this and it had more to do with the competition for trade and profits. What goes wrong is when certain aspects and ideas during such conflicts get emphasized and remain ingrained in public opinion. The religious cause in this case has geared the widely prevalent 'Islamophobia'. The Iraq War in our time worsened the situation. The present European-American politics and their relationship with the Islamic states also contribute to heightening this phobia. There is a political and economic reality as well, which enhances Islamophobia and one should therefore not see it only in terms of religions battling each other. This is not a kind of Huntington notion of the clash of civilizations – it is rather a clash of realities. These are nations trying to establish themselves and they are running into problems with their neighbours and with distant people. So I think that when one looks at all the fears in the world today, one can't just limit it to religious fears. There are many other problems that sustain Islamophobia, and therefore need attention.

SS: The Netherlands, where one of us works, takes pride in being called a 'tolerant country'. It is similar to the 'Unity in Diversity' kind of nationalist message proclaimed in India. These kind of debates raise questions about what in fact tolerance means, and why should that word exist at all. Isn't it a dichotomy to preach tolerance where one should suppose diversity to be a natural factor and accept it that way? The word 'tolerance' is apparently a loaded term with subtle implications in that sense. Do you agree?

RT: An insistence on the concept of tolerance indeed foretells the existence of intolerance. You do not keep talking about the need for tolerance and how good it would be to be tolerant, unless somewhere there is some niggling little evidence of intolerance. It is therefore a double edged word. Now why are we making such a fuss about it in India? I think we have to go back a little into the anti-colonial nationalist ideology where tolerance and non-violence were said to be the difference between the West and the East (or India in this case). The West used stereotypes of Oriental Despotism and anti-democratic societies for the East. The Indians reacted to it by accusing the Westerners of being materialistic, unlike the spiritual East. The notion of 'tolerance' is part of this package of spirituality. It is from then on that India has come to be touted as a tolerant culture. And of course in order to be tolerant you have to be non-violent, since one of the biggest consequences of intolerance is violence. Both go hand in hand, and this image of a non-violent and spiritual India worked well for the anti-colonial nationalist propaganda, particularly for Gandhi. But then the violence during the partition happened. The question is, if we were such an innately tolerant and non-violent people, would these massacres have ever happened? Probably not!

Throughout Indian history there have been examples of Buddha, Ashoka, Akbar and others propagating the values of tolerance. But these values coexisted with examples of strong discord among religious cultures, which proves that there was not that much tolerance after all. For example, from the accounts of Megasthenes, the Ashokan edicts, Xuanzang and from Alberuni, the distinction between the *brahmanas* and the *shramanas* (non-Vedic heterodox mendicant groups, like the Buddhists or Jainas) can be quite clearly deduced. The grammarian, Patanjali (c. second century BCE), refers to their relation as that of the mongoose and the snake. Buddhist and Jaina teachings did not accept Vedic Brahminism and a lot of deaths and destruction followed. It was thus a society that was not entirely harmonious. One has to come to terms with this and as historians try to understand what the underlying intolerance was about. It is true that India did not suffer from the type of Catholic intolerance in Europe – the burning of people, the heresy, the inquisitions... We didn't have any of that. So the kind of intolerance here was perhaps a little more muted, but this has to be investigated. But one has to first admit that there was intolerance. Only then is it possible to start examining it. Moreover, beyond religions, there was enormous social discrimination against the *Dalits*. The moment you mention intolerance people think of religion. But the social stratification of Indian society irrespective of religion, was one in which intolerance has remained a powerful factor.

SS: You too have been a victim of this intolerance. You have even received physical threats from certain political groups.

RT (laughing): Oh yes, it all started when Morarji Desai's government came to power and Murli Manohar Joshi attacked the history textbooks that we had written. He would stand up in Parliament and call us 'academic terrorists', 'anti-national', and 'anti-Indian'; he asked for the books that we wrote to be banned. Calling those who disagree with you 'anti-national' seems to be endemic to the thinking of these groups. Since those times we have had to defend ourselves. For three years the debate went on and on and then the government fell. But the books continued! This has been the story of the textbooks in this country – every time you write a textbook that the right wing Hindu extremists don't like, they call it anti-national and anti-Indian. The historian is then attacked and a fierce battle of words ensues. So far it has been words and actions against academics, but rationalist thinkers have fared far worse and have even been assassinated. One cannot predict what might happen this time.

SS: Your statements have always been quite strong and assertive.

RT: I don't make strong statements. If you are in a profession and your profession is being attacked, you have to defend yourself. That's all I do!

SS: In that light we think that you have raised a very daring and obvious point in terms of demanding the attainment of a totally 'secular' India. This involves reforming the legal system and ensuring a 'uniform civil code'. It is something that has always remained a very sensitive issue (since the colonial regime) and nobody has dared meddle with it. Given the sentiments of the diverse society that India accommodates, every political group would find it an extremely precarious legislative task to execute. In fact, you have argued for being "conscious as a citizen and having the courage to say we object to it". How or what would you suggest should be the way or the first step to make such major changes happen? Do you hope to see the citizens or the government taking the initiative in making the first move?

RT: All I mean is that the time has come for an extensive debate. And it should not only be in terms of setting religious goals. It should address questions like, what is meant by a 'uniform civil code'? Nobody knows since we play around this idea. It needs to be defined much more clearly because it is tied into the concept of a democracy. A democracy requires secularism since the status of every community has to be equal and every citizen has equal rights. And this requires the uniform application of basic civil laws reflected in the issue of a uniform civil code. One has to accept its inevitability if we are to be a democracy. Otherwise there will be continuous violence and the ridiculous love *jihads,* the horrors of the *khap panchayats,* and other such practices. Do we want proper civil law or should we allow religious customary law or religious personal law of every kind to prevail?

When I talk about forming a uniform civil code, I do not mean a bringing together of all religious codes and somehow knitting them together. A new and different simple, secular code that relates to the basic features of a citizen's life – registration of births, marriages, and rules on inheritance of property, has to be worked out. If you take even these three issues and place then under a uniform legal code, that will be enough to make a world of difference to people, such as *Dalits, Adivasis* and women. I am certainly not talking about making a radical revolutionary step. All I am saying is that let's start talking about it, discussing it, and making it a kind of reality. These aspects don't come to the fore unless people talk about them. We as the citizens need to debate every aspect of this.

SS: The problem lies again in the same old assertion – who reads what the 'public intellectuals' write? It is well-known today that history books written by academics are hardly read, bought or circulated beyond a certain group of readers. But that does not mean history does not sell. The movies based on historical themes and characters or the TV soaps and the large genre of historical fiction, happen to have mass appeal. But they suffer from the paradox of spreading awareness about history on the one hand and yet presenting a distorted version of historical events on the other. Do you think there is a solution to this problem? Also, how far do these ranks of 'creative intellectuals' bear a responsibility towards their audience and readers about using biased depictions that go on to stir up dangerous identity politics?

RT: They have a huge responsibility but either they are not aware of it, or even if they are, they cater to their own commercial interests. The enormous number of rapes that we hear about now is a reflection of the mind-set of the people, which is in part shaped by the media. Patriarchy is accepted in India and instilled in everything that is made and shown and continues to be so. Those that make the programmes should be the ones who take up the responsibility of changing the mind-set, by the way they talk to people, educate them, use the media – in terms of asking questions like, "If you don't agree with rape, are you aware of what the preconditions are and are you willing to do something about that?" The media should be more responsible and not keep supporting the values that are regarded as retrogressive. There has to be some awareness and it will come only when civil society stands up and says "that's not the kind of thing we want to hear and see."

SS: How can an academic contribute to the formation of this informed 'public'? Should s/he also participate actively in alternative forms of knowledge production outside academia, such as writing journalistic pieces, contributing to popular magazines, delivering public speeches, engaging more with electronic and social media, and composing more in the vernaculars?

RT: The question is – how to educate the public? It is important to remember that not every academic can or wishes to write in the style of a journalist. The journalistic style of writing is very different from the academic style. And let's face this – the really serious academic is addressing his or her research paper to fellow researchers. So that cuts off a lot of the popular audience and its interests. Now this doesn't mean that in case you are someone who has been gifted with skills for communicating with the public, that you must not do so. You certainly can do so. But do so from the point of view of taking it as a responsibility to educate. I am amazed for example that Indian TV or radio hasn't had a single channel devoted to serious discussion of problems. Every self-respecting country in this world has at least half a channel, half of prime time on a channel, where a serious discussion takes place. Here there is zero. It is substantially superficial discussion. So there is a tendency for serious academics to stay away. Besides this, academics should also feel equally responsible for the basic education at schools and colleges. How teachers are being trained is certainly crucial. They should stimulate younger people to think since that is what education is about – getting information and then thinking about it and asking questions. Once that is done, we shall have an educated public.

Romila Thapar (b. 30 November 1931) is a distinguished Indian historian, and currently Professor Emerita at JNU in New Delhi. Her area of expertise is ancient Indian history, on which she has published extensively, besides other popular writings. Her books, *A History of India* and *Interpreting Early India* are part of the history syllabus of several international schools and universities. She frequently appears on television and in newspapers for interviews, like the BBC and the NDTV. In 2008, Thapar co-won 'The John W. Kluge Prize for Achievement in the Study of Humanity' with Peter Brown.

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1 A group of Leiden University students and faculty have extended their solidarity in protesting against government high-handedness and suppression of dissent with regard to this matter.

News from Northeast Asia

Since 2009, the Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) has been proposing new contents and perspectives on Asia by integrating regional and thematic research across Asia. SNUAC seeks to be the leading institution for research and scholarly exchanges. The center features three regional centers, the Korean Social Science Data Archive (KOSSDA), and seven thematic research programs. By fostering 'expansion' and 'layering' between Asian studies and Korean studies, the Center endeavors to shape new frameworks of Asian studies that go beyond a 'Western-non-Western' dichotomy. The Center will continue to support the pursuit of scholarly excellence in the study of Asia by providing opportunities to conduct international collaboration on an array of topics in Asia research.

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One Belt, One Road, and many responses

Kim Chong Min

THE 'ONE BELT, ONE ROAD (OBOR)' initiative can be understood as China's new international economic diplomacy aimed at increasing connectivity and cooperation among countries along China's old maritime and overland trade routes, namely, the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The OBOR initiative involves accelerating outward investment, and shifting industries and infrastructure into Central, South and South-East Asia. In addition to creating new markets, upgrading its industries and stimulating growth, China is creating mechanisms to facilitate investments, as well as engaging with states along the routes.

The Chinese government described OBOR as an "endeavor to seek new models of international cooperation and global governance", but there have been various interpretations of the initiative, in academic, business, journalistic and governmental contexts, since it was first proposed in late 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping. Is China pursuing greater roles as regional leader and provider of public goods? Is it pursuing a new paradigm of international trade, instead of integrating into an existing system? Does it aim to reshape the economic and political order in Asia?

In this issue of News from Northeast Asia, we would like to know how experts in the three Northeast Asian countries assess the current responses of their respective countries to the OBOR. In particular, we would like to hear the expert opinions on the following points: What is the overarching impression of the initiative as perceived by the respective NEA countries in political, strategic and economic arenas? How can such perceptions be evaluated in light of the original intention, primary policy goals and history of the initiative? What changes in business and diplomatic practices and strategies is it likely to bring about?

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One Belt, One Road: China's reconstruction for global communication and international discourse power

Xiang De Bao

DURING HIS VISIT TO ASEAN COUNTRIES in 2013, Secretary Xi Jinping presented a plan for the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt (hereafter, One Belt) and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (hereafter, One Road). One Belt, One Road is a major policy in China's domestic and foreign economic strategy, with which the country actively responds to changes in the global state of affairs. More importantly, it is a move in China's pursuit of international communication and international discourse power, a far-reaching strategic vision aiming to fully realize the Chinese dream.

The rise of China in the 21st century has had an enormous effect on global politics and the global economic structure. The more that China's hard power increased, such as its economy and military, the more the country sought ways in which to increase its international communications, discourse, and other types of soft power. According to American scholar Joseph Nye, soft power refers mainly to a nation's ability to attract others with its culture and political values, to define international norms, and to set the agenda in world politics.

The traditional international communication order has been monopolized by the great powers of the West, and Western discourses have been playing the leading role in the world. Western countries have exercised this power by excluding developing countries, using their powerful communication systems and advantage of discourse, while developing countries have lost their discourse power in international affairs and international relations, and have been put in a passive position, bullied and exploited. That is why, from the Chinese perspective, reconstruction of the global order with an emphasis on China's international discourse power is such an important and urgent task.

In recent years, China has attracted much attention around the world by actively setting the global agenda – from the Harmonious World to China's Road, China Model, Chinese Worldview, Chinese Dream, and the One Belt, One Road initiative. It has ushered in a new way of interpreting the world through the Chinese framework, increased China's discourse power on the world stage, and filled the world stage with Chinese content. Therefore, One Belt, One Road is an important tactic of the Chinese government to reconstruct the international communication order, to exercise China's discourse power, and to develop the nation's soft power in the age of globalization.

The One Belt, One Road strategy can be summarized as one core idea (peace, cooperation, development, and mutual benefit), five foci for cooperation (policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds), and three communities (a community of shared interests, a community of common destiny, and a community of responsibility). The 'community of common destiny' is the new discourse system proposed by the Chinese government; the voice of China transmitted to the world by China itself. Since 2013, Xi Jinping has used the concept of 'community of common destiny' at different venues on over 60 occasions.

Concepts of a community of common destiny between nations, regional community of common destiny, and community of common destiny for mankind reflect China's hope to achieve peace and development and create a worldview that transcends boundaries of nation-states and ideologies. They express China's idea of a win-win cooperation with other countries. By converging individual interests and forming a community of common destiny for all of mankind, economic globalization has given the world's population of 7 billion an opportunity to develop all together. The discourse system of a community of common destiny has incorporated China's cultural environment and is a major force pushing forward China's international discourse system.

Currently, One Belt, One Road is receiving the support of 64 countries and its discourse system is gaining international influence, and thus, the world has started accepting a Chinese discourse. As One Belt, One Road is being carried out, the international communication system led by China and China's discourse in it are gradually gaining more currency. Through One Belt, One Road, the country is exercising its international communication and international discourse power, and the success of that strategy can bring the effect of realizing the Chinese dream.

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News from Northeast Asia *continued*

One Belt, One Road strategy and Korean-Chinese cooperation

Tai Hwan Lee

CHINA'S ONE BELT, ONE ROAD (一帶一路, land- and sea-based Silk Road) strategy is part of the country's grand strategy for realizing the Chinese dream of the 'great national rejuvenation'. Achievement of the world's second largest GDP in 2010 boosted China's confidence, and the Xi Jinping administration put forward a new foreign strategy of dimensions completely different from those of the past. Looking ahead to the next 35 years until the hundredth anniversary of New China in 2049, the initiative seeks to create a new growth engine by developing infrastructure and increasing trade along the land- and sea-based Silk Road, linking Asia with Europe and Africa.

The idea of the Silk Road Economic Belt (絲綢之路經濟帶) was first mentioned by Secretary Xi during his visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013 and developed into his proposal, in Indonesia in October of the same year, to jointly build a Maritime Silk Road. On 28 March 2015, China's National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce together released a detailed plan for the strategy implementation, titled "Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road".

The strategic intentions behind the initiative are to satisfy the demand of neighboring countries by utilizing China's foreign reserves of 4 trillion USD, to resolve the problem of overproduction of steel and cement in China through trade, and to expand China's global influence in concert with over 60 nations of the Silk Road. The demand in neighboring countries for the construction of infrastructure (social overhead capital) facilities through loans is enormous. It is estimated that in Asia alone the demand for infrastructure development until 2020 will amount to 8 trillion USD and the investment in transportation infrastructure in the regions beyond Asia will total 5 trillion USD. To bring the One Belt, One Road initiative into fruition, China created the 40 billion USD 'Silk Road Fund' in 2014 and led the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The investment of a large part of China's 4 trillion USD foreign reserves into infrastructure development is expected to facilitate the use of yuan internationally and contribute to its advancement to the rank of one of the key currencies in the world.

Another important strategic objective is energy security. To China, securing energy is crucial for continuous growth. For this reason, "Vision and Actions" clearly states that communication in procuring and transporting energy is a major goal of the One Belt, One Road strategy. It is worth pointing out that the plan calls for increased cooperation in the connectivity of energy infrastructure and sets forth "work in concert to ensure the security of oil and gas pipelines and other transport routes". China's dependence on foreign oil and gas is so high that the document refers to it as "security of oil and gas transport routes". 80 percent of crude oil imports, 50 percent of natural gas imports, and 42.6 percent of the entire imports and exports of the country are transported through the Strait of Malacca. Therefore, obtaining reliable transport routes and diversifying transport routes by procuring oil and natural gas from the energy-rich Central Asian region through the construction of the land-based Silk Road is of critical importance to China's energy security. From this perspective, the Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Road projects can be likened to two wing axes of the rising China.

The success or failure of the initiative will ultimately depend on the progress in China's relations with its neighbors. Although the initiative is welcomed in the Asian and African countries with high demand for infrastructure development, the US and other great powers along with a number of regional players are concerned that China is using this opportunity to expand its sphere of influence. Several nations, including the US, Japan, and India, regard One Belt, One Road as a Chinese solo performance rather than a choral performance and are wary of it.

Especially worthy of observation is the reaction of the US. During her tour of four countries in Central Asia in 2011, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton proposed building a New Silk Road economic zone by investing in the countries of the region in order to increase the American influence there. The Chinese strategy can be seen as countering that plan. There is also an opinion that One Belt, One Road is not intended to directly challenge the US policy of rebalancing Asia, but to thwart it indirectly by expanding China's sphere of influence. At the time of establishing the AIIB, the US assessed it as an attempt to build a new financial order led by China and, to foil the plan, took a stand opposing membership in the bank by American allies and countries of Western Europe. The US failed, however, as the UK, Germany, France, South Korea, Australia, and other countries joined the AIIB. The subsequent change in US attitude – the welcoming remarks and promises of cooperation by the Governor of the World Bank and expression of support by Washington – is a positive sign. Nevertheless, we have yet to see how American-Chinese relations over the issue unfold in the future, since building an international political and economic order is a long process and the One Belt, One Road initiative is no more than a step toward it.

Recognizing such concerns, Beijing emphasized in the "Vision and Action" implementation plan (made public at the Boao Forum in March 2015) that One Belt, One Road is not China's version of the Marshall Plan but a strategy of mutually-beneficial regional cooperation evolving through joint efforts of participating nations. In reality, for One Belt, One Road to succeed, it needs support of not only neighboring developing countries but developed countries as well. Given that the number of neighboring nations in the initiative exceeds 60 countries with a total population of 4.4 billion people (63 percent of the world's population) and an economic scale amounting to 29 percent of the global economy, the strategy can hardly succeed in the format of a Chinese solo performance. Secretary Xi Jinping himself emphasized in his keynote speech at the Boao Forum that the programs of development "will be a real chorus" and "not a solo for China itself."

Korea, too, hopes that the initiative is realized as a chorus. What effect will the joint implementation of One Belt, One Road have on the Korean Peninsula and how will South Korea and China cooperate? There is no doubt that the initiative provides economic opportunities for the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. According to the "Vision and Actions" plan, three northeastern provinces (Liaoning, Jilin, and Jeilongjiang) are to become sea-land 'windows' linking Russia, Mongolia, and other areas in the Far East. In this light, there are many points for cooperation with the Eurasia Initiative of the Korean government and ways in which One Belt, One Road can contribute to building a Northeast Asian economic zone.

One of the key projects of the Eurasia Initiative is the construction of the Silk Road Express with a trans-Korea railway and transcontinental railroads as its basic axes, to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula. China is already pushing forward with or examining several business projects related to transportation infrastructure – such as roads and railways – in North Korea, so there is the possibility of South Korea's participation in those projects. However, with the relationship between South and North Korea strained by North Korea's fourth nuclear test, the Silk Road Express remains an unattainable dream.

Nevertheless, both South Korea and China have the will to connect One Belt, One Road and the Eurasia Initiative. Even if the construction of a trans-Korea railway cannot be realized due to the North Korean nuclear development problem, there are many other ways for South Korean-Chinese cooperation. Korea can take part not only in building infrastructure in developing countries but also join efforts with China in distribution, development of resources and new industries. Such cooperation is beneficial to both parties, but it is also desirable for the future of Northeast Asia because it contributes to creating a regional economic zone.

To summarize, One Belt, One Road is China's grand strategy for the next 35 years, which envisions building a Datong (大同, Great Unity) society in Asia. Its success is indispensable for the attainment of the Chinese dream as propagated by Secretary Xi Jinping. China estimates that it will take the strategy at least 8 to 10 years to bear fruit. For One Belt, One Road to be successful in the three northeastern provinces and the Korean Peninsula during that period, the most desirable and necessary task is achieving unification of the peninsula through the joint efforts of Korea and China. I hope the sound of the One Belt, One Road chorus spreads loud and wide across Northeast Asia.

Tai Hwan Lee, Director of Center for Chinese Studies, Sejong Institute (thlee@sejong.org)

One Belt, One Road: a Japanese perspective

Hidehito Fujiwara

THE ASIAN Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was established under the leadership of China for the purpose of putting into reality the country's economic vision of One Belt, One Road. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration has been consistently skeptical about the AIIB, pointing to the lack of transparency in its management and financing, as well as other issues. Even Vietnam and the Philippines, who are in a harsh territorial conflict with China in the South China Sea, joined the AIIB along with European powers; but Japan, keeping in step with the US, has chosen to stay out.

However, given Japan's position in Asia, its continuous dismissive attitude to the One Belt, One Road initiative may hurt the country's economic interests and even diminish its presence as a major power in the region. In fact, from an economic standpoint, it makes more sense for Japan to welcome One Belt, One Road. The reason why the Japanese government has failed to do so lies in its strained relationship with China.

Japan has been suffering from an economic depression for a long time. In contrast, China, despite the shadows cast on its growth these days, has already grown to become the world's second largest economic superpower, and its military presence is also increasing. Consequently, the Japanese are starting to doubt the sense of superiority they felt over China for many years after the end of World War II. The antagonism over the perception of history, the Senkaku Islands, and other issues cannot be ignored, either. According to the "Survey of Public Opinion on Foreign Relations" released by the Cabinet Office on 12 March 2016, the percentage of respondents who had "no positive feelings" toward China recorded the highest value since 1978: 83.2 percent.

During the first Abe administration, Prime Minister Abe agreed with his Chinese counterpart on the need to build a mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests between the two countries. At the time, he received high praise from the Chinese. However, after the Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) landslide victory in the 2012 general election and Abe's return to office, Japanese-Chinese relations froze due to his visits to Yasukuni Shrine and his demonstration of a defiant attitude toward China. Afterward, the Abe administration joined the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and announced an independent plan to provide 110 billion USD in aid for Asian infrastructure projects – an amount that exceeds the capitalization of the AIIB.

By maintaining a posture of unmasked defiance toward China, the Abe administration is garnering support from many Japanese who feel no affinity toward China. On the other hand, in the aforementioned survey, 73.3 percent of the respondents agreed that "the development of Japanese-Chinese relations is important for the Asia-Pacific region". In other words, they consider relations with China as essential, even if they don't have positive feelings toward the country.

China evaluates positively the leading role that Japan has played in regional economic cooperation in Asia and is requesting Japanese participation and support for the One Belt, One Road initiative and the AIIB. China wants to learn from the expertise Japan has acquired throughout the years. In this situation, Japan should not turn its back on China but start cooperating in feasible areas. That is the way to build a mutually beneficial strategic relationship.

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News from Southeast Asia

ISEAS YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE

INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

Research.
Scholarship.
Policy.

The following articles come from ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute's ASEAN Studies Centre (ASC). The ASC is devoted to research on issues that pertain to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as an institution and a process. ASC conducts studies and provides inputs and ideas to ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat on issues and events that call for collective ASEAN actions and responses, especially those pertinent to building the ASEAN Community.

Workshop on the heritage of ancient and urban sites: giving voice to local priorities

Elizabeth Moore, Terence Chong, Helene Njoto and Kyle Latinis

Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre,
ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute,
14-16 March 2016

The Workshop on the Heritage of Ancient and Urban Sites sought to unravel the complex politics involved in the manufacturing of heritage. To understand how stake-holders from across Southeast Asia define and voice local priorities, twenty-two cultural heritage practitioners based in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand were invited to explain their projects. The successes – and impasses – they presented were part of their personal stories as they sought to make a difference in their communities. The need for education and collaboration was voiced by all: through education, communities come to care and with communication, grassroots and policymakers are, if not on the same track, at least aware that the other exists. And while most literature frames 'grassroots' as opposition and lobbying against authorities, our speakers evoked a far more intimate interchange between different levels of society. They spoke of impasses but also of exchange and negotiation.

Continued overleaf >

The Buddhist landscape of Bagan now threatened by development. Image reproduced under a Creative Commons license courtesy of Flickr.

News from Southeast Asia *continued*

> *Continued from previous page*

Above: Urban Sketchers at Bukit Brown Cemetery. (Courtesy Dr Hui Yew-Foong)

Education

In championing education to generate heritage awareness, the speakers were not lobbying for changes to formal teaching curriculums. While in some cases this has happened, the majority of classrooms described during the workshop were at ancient temples or in city streets. Heritage learning and teaching takes place beyond classrooms, often led by those with no formal degrees but in-depth local knowledge. The diverse ways this is being done is demonstrated in the following examples:

- HE Tan Boun Suy, Deputy Director General, APSARA-Authority, Cambodia discussed enhancement of traditional community agricultural practices within the Angkor Park to engage the eighty percent of the park population that are farmers.
- In Sumatra, Mr. Mukhtar Hadi has established the Muara Jambi Great Nature School (Sekolah Alam Raya Muara Jambi) using non-formal methods outdoors in the temple areas.
- At Lenggong Valley, Mr Mohd Syahrin Abdullah, Ministry of Culture Malaysia has constructed a World Heritage Trail to educate visitors on the archaeological landscape.
- Mr. Dwi Cahyono, Chairman, The Association of Indonesian Museum, East Java and the Malang Heritage Inggil Association, has published a history of Malang in comic-strip format, opened a restaurant *cum* archaeology museum (a "museum-resto") and holds an annual festival for the citizens of Malang. Called Tempo Doeloe ("good old times"), annual themes have included the Malang coat of arms and the stories of Panji.
- Dr Hui Yew-Foong, ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute and Research Associate Professor with the Hong Kong Shue Yan University, showed how community engagement generated new discoveries on family lineages during documentation of the Bukit Brown Cemetery.
- Mr. Lim Chen Sian Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, showcased the benefits – and drawbacks – of volunteers in rescue excavations beneath the streets of Singapore.
- Dr Nigel Taylor, Director of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, profiled Lawrence (Laurence) Niven (1826-1876) who laid out the future Singapore Botanic Gardens in a manner akin to the 18th century British Victorian parks, and Henry "Rubber" Ridley who directed the gardens from 1888-1912 during which time (1877) rubber plants arrived from Kew Gardens in England.

All these examples, and indeed, the entire workshop, showcased the incentives taken by different projects to educate and motivate local communities.

Another common point was the importance of intermediary voice holders categorized as 'passeurs' in the presentation of Mrs. Pijika Pumketkao-Lecourt.[1] These individuals do not necessarily derive from or represent grassroots communities or state institutions. Rather, *passeurs* act as liaisons and transmitters to find common ground between dissimilar parties. This concept successfully bridged a divide between the senior abbot and local residents on the restoration of the nineteenth century CE Viharn Phra Chao Pun Ong at Pongsanuk in Lanna. In 2004, a local art historian initiated a dialogue that began with raising community awareness and research.[2] Conservation was completed in 2007 following Lanna traditional norms. Equally important was revitalising community cooperation in the maintenance and repair of religious structures.[3]

Two speakers from Cambodia highlighted how education needed to be the first step:

- Dr Ea Darith stressed how during the 2015 Koh Ker International Field School with the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute stake-holders were first defined. They came from village and commune leaders, government offices, and religious organizations and the APSARA-Authority who employs almost 100 local people to safeguard, maintain, and clean the site.
- Associate Professor Dr Surat Lertlum from Thailand and Mr Im Sokrithy from APSARA-Authority Cambodia showcased education in the transnational Living Angkor Road Project (LARP) to the Cultural Relationship Study of Mainland Southeast Asia Research Center (CRMA). The LARP/CRMA team actively uses the results of the partnership to educate and involve high school students in Cambodia and Thailand in classrooms and in the field at sites in both countries.

As in the Lanna temple restoration project, Assistant Professor Dr Kang Shua, Singapore University of Technology and Design, described the changing norms of architectural conservation of Chinese temples, from a '3R Principle' of 'Maximum Retention, Sensitive Restoration and Careful Repair' to a nuanced relativist approach that appreciates the temple as a living monument able to function for religious and non-religious groups.

Collaboration: grassroots, municipal and national institutions, and international organisations

While positive government-community communication was seen in Myanmar and Cambodian heritage, many instances were voiced where strong government control hobbled the sustainable relationships with grassroots organisations.

- This lack of coordination was apparent in mining threats to the 7-14th century CE site of Muara Jambi presented by Mr Mukhtar Hadi (Perkumpulan Padmasana Association, Jambi).
- Mr Phon Kaseka, Royal Academy of Cambodia, showed how ancient kiln complexes and other archaeological sites are being systematically and rapidly destroyed at Cheung Ek in Phnom Penh's fast developing peri-urban area. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts (MoCFA) seeks to research and protect while other ministries are tasked to increase land value and productivity.

Democratisation and decentralisation were proffered to empower conservation initiatives from civil society. In Thailand, the decentralisation policy adopted by the Thai constitution of 1997 has strengthened local community-led engagement. Ms Mizuho Ikeda, Waseda University, in showing the ups and downs of a community-led group in Phrae to bring intangible beliefs to the attention of excavation officials, offered the model of Hagi-shi where urban heritage begins with local stories linked to tangible evidence. In Malaysia, government initiatives date to the 1960s, but it was more than two decades

Above: Mr Punto Wijayanto, Chief Rapporteur.

Statement of the Rapporteurs

SIX RAPPORTEURS were selected from the younger members of each panel: Dr Goh Hsiao Mei from Malaysia who reported on the Indonesia panel, Mr. Lim Chen Sian from Singapore for Thailand, Prof Dr Su Su from Myanmar for Cambodia, Dr Ea Darith from Cambodia for Singapore, Ms Mizuho Ikeda from Japan/Thailand panel for Myanmar panel, and Mr Punto Wiyayanto from Indonesia for Malaysia. Mr Punto Wijayanto also presented a drafted Rapporteur Statement to highlight three common concerns:

Financial sustainability

Financial issues are raised mostly by heritage organisations, but the public sector also raises this question. Is funding really the problem? For example, Singapore has ample financial ability, although this State doesn't have a proper budget for heritage conservation. In the case of Malang, Heritage organisations can still work without funding or even with self-funding. Heritage organisations can find creative ways such as crowd-funding, as was shown by Dr Goh Hsaio Mei from the Center for Global Archaeological Research, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). In short, funding is a prime issue but money does not mean the community will care about the heritage of our sites.

Encouraging collaboration

More crucial is the need to integrate and make connections between government and grassroots to create a balance between different actors and their authorities. Governments can't work alone. Myanmar's process of World heritage nomination shows that the government can in certain circumstances appreciate the importance of community engagement.

However, in many or most cases, governments as the key actor only focus on the national significance of heritage, less on the community significance and use. In addition governments generally are limited in terms of manpower or funding. However, when government budget, action and law enforcement are absent, academics, professionals and heritage-lovers manage to work with local communities to promote their vision of heritage. This situation created alternative roles to discuss formal legal and local mechanism that we heard many speak of during the workshop. These roles and the individuals that fill them in French have been called the transmitters or passeurs. We heard this in the "Little People in Conservation" case of Lampang project in Thailand, where a local art historian successfully mediated with monks to safeguard the architectural heritage of a Buddhist temple. In Singapore, the passeurs have been called 'citizen historians', and they were the ones who primarily documented every detail of every object from the graves exhumed from the Bukit Brown cemetery slated for an urban development project.

Other speakers raised the issue of sustainability; all agreed that a heritage project needs the engagement of the community who feel a sense of ownership. Sites and artefacts need to be maintained over not just days or months, but many years. Education and the integration of heritage related events in public spaces are key factors, although this requires perseverance, as seen with the long transnational collaboration of 'The Living Angkor Road' (LARP) and the 'Cultural Relationship Study of Mainland Southeast Asia Research Centre' (CRMA), started by Dr Surat Lertlum and Mr Im Sokrithy.

Local meanings of heritage

During the presentations, all speakers used the word 'heritage', but actually understood and applied the notion to different situations and contexts. Defining heritage to encompass all stakeholder perceptions as well as the nature and intensity or degree of 'value' they attach to a particular heritage asset (tangible or intangible), has long been a problem. It is clearly an issue of ongoing concern, as the Rapporteurs' point on this was followed by discussion both inside and outside of the conference rooms. Singapore uses the word 'heritage', for example, but in Indonesia two words – 'warisan' and 'pusaka' – exist. In Malaysia, only the word 'warisan' is recognised and in Thailand, 'Moradok' is used to translate heritage. We are left with the question for future workshops of how each of these words sustain local commitment to their community heritage.

until local grassroots organisations, such as the Penang Heritage Trust (1986) profiled by Khoo Salma Nasution, arose. Speakers in the workshop also cited recent studies indicating that local stakeholders do not openly voice their interest in heritage to authorities at the UNESCO World Heritage site of "Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca" (http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1223; inscribed 2008). The studies also have noted gaps between how communities and authorities define the value of the UNESCO site of the "Archaeological Heritage of the Lenggong Valley" (http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1396; inscribed 2012).

In Indonesia it has only been from 1998 decentralisation that activities have increased despite the 1992 enactment of the Cultural Heritage Preservation Law (UUBCB) and the earlier rise of grassroots organisations such as the 1995 Preservation Team founded in Malang by Mr. Dwi Cahyono. On an optimistic note, Mr Punto Wijayanto showed how the Ministry of Public Works collaborated with grassroots in the Heritage City Conservation programme joined by 57 cities since 2008. He also showed that the grassroots term "Pusaka" instead of "Warisan" is now being adopted by State institutions. All three Indonesian speakers reminded the audience that initiatives emerged only after about 50 years following independence during which time, ancient sites were looted and old city buildings destroyed, especially following the 1970's economic boom.

Governmental change has also impacted on heritage awareness in Singapore and Myanmar. In Singapore, since the 2011 elections, the ruling party has started to pay further attention to civil society's expectations for more heritage preservation demonstrated by increased archaeological exca-vations, religious-civil dialogues on temple conservation and documentation of family heritage through work at the Bukit Brown Cemetery. In Myanmar, subsequent to 2010 elections, the government initiated the serial nomination of three early first millennium CE Buddhist Pyu sites to the UNESCO World Heritage list. During the process of inscription, the Department of Archaeology actively engaged the rural populations of the Pyu Ancient Cities, and worked with local stakeholders to form the heritage trusts. In a country where the caretakers of heritage have been the Buddhist Sangha and lay pagoda trustee committees for two thousand years, the new civil associations were a remarkable development.

The changes have brought threats as well, as explained by Ms Ohnmar Myo from the UNESCO Cultural Office, Yangon. She profiled post-inscription support to address increasing pressures on the Pyu Ancient Cities and Bagan stemming from recent development in tourism infrastructure, urban encroachment, newly mechanized farming methods and a rise in the construction of religious facilities linked to the ancient monuments. In contrast to the traditional care of religious structures in Myanmar, there has been little awareness of the value of civil or residential architecture in cities of the last one hundred and fifty years. As presented by Prof Dr Su Su (Mandalay Technological University), heritage inventories prepared by the Department of Architecture, Mandalay Technological University and Department of Urban and Housing Development, Ministry of Construction in 2015 have laid the groundwork for heritage zoning of Mandalay, Pyin Oo Lwin and Bagan, and an urban plan was adopted by municipal authorities for Yangon in 2014. Much is has been underway during the last five years.

Conclusion

Local heritage voices are now being heard across Southeast Asia, but they are remarkably new. The workshop speakers did not link themselves to heritage groups of the 19th or early 20th century, with Dr Nigel Taylor's presentation an exception in connecting today's UNESCO World Heritage Singapore Botanic Gardens to the 19th century founders. The rest of the speakers began their history with new organisations and laws of the late 1980s. Notably, this is also the time that art historians divide modern from contemporary art, separating the beginnings from the later post-modern experimentation. It is also the period during which the first sites from Southeast Asia were inscribed on the World Heritage List (Ayutthaya and Sukhothai 1991, Borobudur and Prambanan 1991, Angkor 1992).[4] Local voices began to assemble in the 1990s, go through phases of experimentation and often failure, and since 2005, consolidate and mature. A regional paradigm still in the process of emerging, sees local community and grassroots organisations as normal players in the heritage domain. Their role as educators and interlocutors is often contested by academics, and rarely is written up in scholarly articles: they are actively educating rather than writing about their work. With the young, who will newly define cultural heritage, they are a highly valued window into another world. The ways local heritage practitioners have learned to spark and sustain commitment from youth and elderly are many: history books laid out in graphic comic-book strips, fairs in the city streets and offering lunchtime meals for monks. These and more activities are promoted though social media, the prime medium of communication to forge a sense of community within a space of shared heritage.

References

1 'Little People in Conservation: bridging the divide between local and international norms', citing Pedelahore de Loddis, C. 2010. "Urban Transition in Vietnam: Its Processes and Stakeholders", in Gubry, P. et al. (eds.) *The Vietnamese City in Transition,* pp.7-31.

2 Assoc. Prof. Dr. Woralun Boonyasurat, Dean of Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University (CMU)

3 Project Profile, 2008 Award of Merit, Wat Pongsanuk (http://tinyurl.com/meritaward2008)

4 Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore's entry to the World Heritage List was later: Melaka and Georgetown 2008, Pyu Ancient Cities 2014, and Singapore Botanic Garden 2015.

Below: Deputy Minister Daw Sanda Khin promoting local crafts with villagers of the Pyu Ancient Cities. (Courtesy H.E. Daw Sanda Khin)

Guests at the Opening of the gallery on 14 March 2016

The NSC Archaeology Unit Gallery in the ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute Library

THE WORKSHOP also saw the opening of the NSC Archaeology Unit Gallery. Established in 2010 under the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (NSC), the Archaeology Unit (AU) was officially inaugurated by the 6th President of Singapore, SR Nathan, on 23 August 2011. The Archaeology Unit purses projects in Singapore and in Southeast Asia to enhance understanding of the region's civilisations and their cross-fertilisation through the study of material record and archaeological evaluations. The AU also conducts rescue excavations, post-excavation analyses, public lectures, and artefact management.

The NSC Archaeology Unit Gallery showcasing the Archaeology Unit's excavations and projects in Singapore and Southeast Asia was opened during the workshop "The Heritage of Ancient and Urban Sites: Giving Voices to Local Priorities" by H.E. Tan Boun Suy, Deputy Director General APSARA-Authority. The Cambodian Ambassador to Singapore, H.E. Cheth Naren, officially unveiled the exhibition. H.E. Tan Boun Suy's opening remarks:

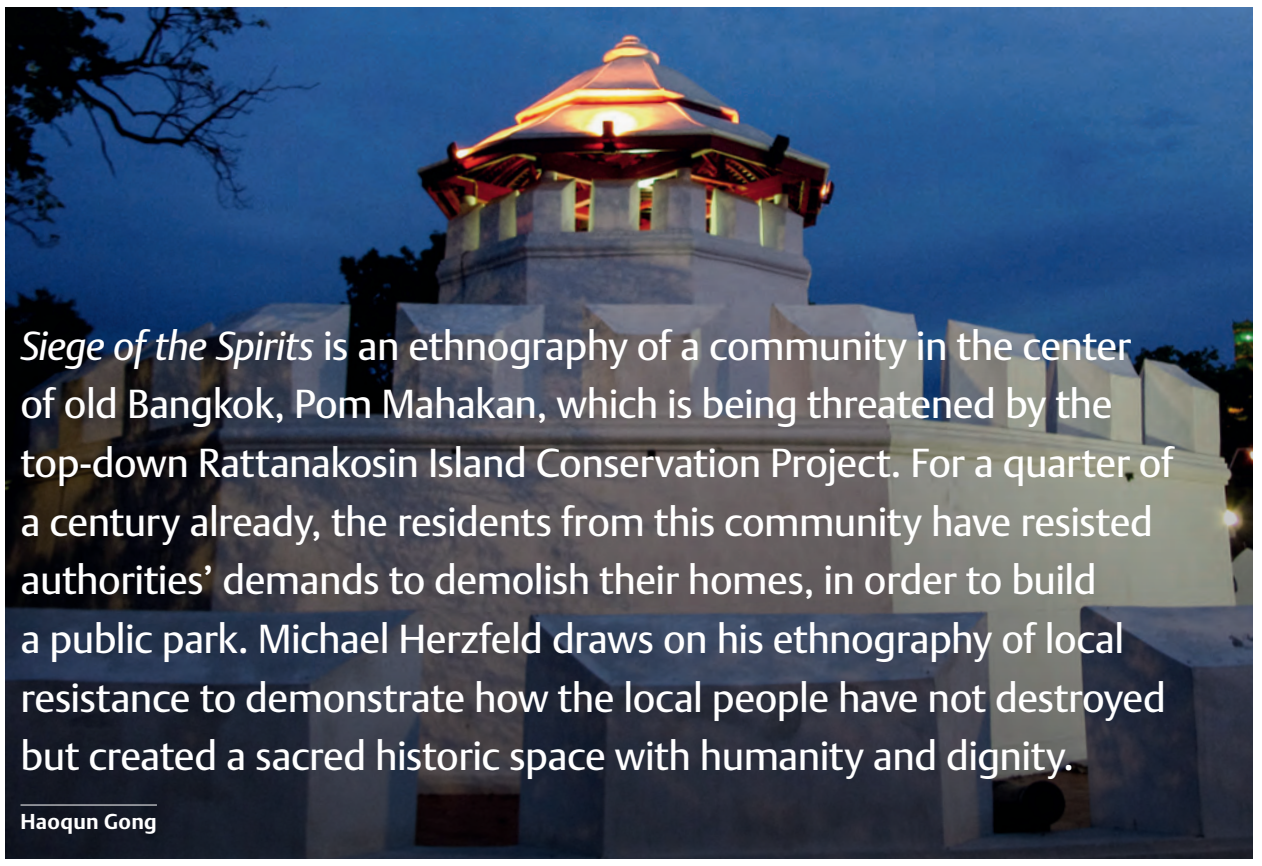
> *We are honoured to be part of the ISEAS-YII library display opening. Our cooperative projects and Field Schools with Singapore and ISEAS-YII, NSC have been highly successful. They necessitate and promote local community inclusion and local voice – very much the theme of this conference. They also serve as a successful example of regional cooperation involving ASEAN and EAS countries, especially the recent Field School at Koh Ker.*
>
> *As representatives of ASEAN countries here, I am confident all of us can build more partnership projects and successes; further strengthening meaningful, peaceful, and goal-oriented integration through our shared interests and respect for heritage and all concerned stakeholders, especially local communities. Their voices are not just important for each of our countries individually, but all of our countries together; important for all of ASEAN and beyond.*

The gallery features a range of archaeological finds ranging from ancient Singapore in the 14th century to the British colonial period in the 19th century and the Second World War. Also on display are artefacts from the Archaeology Unit Field School and research projects in Cambodia.

Dr Elizabeth Moore, Visiting Senior Fellow, NSC (Elizabeth_moore@iseas.edu.sg)
Dr Terence Chong, Head of NSC (terencechong@iseas.edu.sg)
Dr Helene Njoto, Visiting Fellow, NSC (Helene_njoto@iseas.edu.sg)
Dr Kyle Latinis, Visiting Fellow, NSC (david_kyle_latinis@iseas.edu.sg)

Left: Opening of Archaeology Unit exhibit, ISEAS library with (left to right) Head of the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre Dr Terence Chong, The Ambassador of Cambodia H.E. Mr Cheth Naren, and Deputy Director of Archaeology APSARA Authority H.E. Tan Boun Suy.

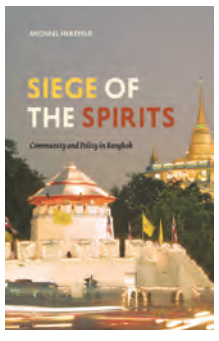
Fighting for the future of the past in Bangkok



Siege of the Spirits is an ethnography of a community in the center of old Bangkok, Pom Mahakan, which is being threatened by the top-down Rattanakosin Island Conservation Project. For a quarter of a century already, the residents from this community have resisted authorities' demands to demolish their homes, in order to build a public park. Michael Herzfeld draws on his ethnography of local resistance to demonstrate how the local people have not destroyed but created a sacred historic space with humanity and dignity.

Haoqun Gong

Left:
There were originally 14 forts in Bangkok. Pom Mahakan is only one of the two remaining forts that have been preserved, besides Phra Sumeru. (photo courtesy Aaron Toth on Flickr)



Reviewed title:
Herzfeld, M. 2016.
Siege of the Spirits: Community and Polity in Bangkok
Chicago: University of Chicago Press
ISBN 9780226331584

THIS BOOK MAKES a significant contribution to the anthropology of politics, both in a general sense and in the context of the violently political conflicts of Thailand. Much of the prevailing discourse on politics in Thailand focuses on the contradictions between two different kinds of political systems, and treat Thailand as a country swinging between monarchy and democracy. Herzfeld, however, not just revives the anthropological discussion of how "pulsating galactic polity" and nation-state polity coexist in post-colonial times, but stresses the agency of the local people to move between the two polity models when they are fighting for their community. Tracing the community's strategy and leadership style, this book demonstrates the deep tension and dynamics in Thai political culture. With his involvement in the local resistance for more than ten years, Herzfeld also shows us how engaged anthropology can be as one part of the real political society.

A tiny community between two polity models

Pom Mahakan, a tiny community with about 300 residents, sits beside a main avenue leading down to the symbolic heart of old Bangkok, the City Pillar. As the main avenue reflects a Western European's city style and the embracement of modernity, the City Pillar represents the center of mandala cosmological image. Herzfeld tries to use the case of Pom mahakan as a mirror to reflect the entangling of two polity models: "pulsating galactic polity" *(moeang)* and a clearly demarcated territorial nation-state *(prathaet)*. The older polity model, the *moeang* was reproduced at multiple levels from the local to the national, and it signifies a place where people regard it as a moral community. On the contrary, *prathaet* was designed according to the Western state model, which adopted well-defined geographical frontiers and a pyramidal bureaucracy (p45). The difference between two polity models provides the root of contradictions, and also the space for social performance. Herzfeld points out: "Pom mahakan inhabits both polities, the moeang and the prathaet [...] and the play of difference between these two models is crucial to understanding the community's ability to chart a course through political upheavals at every level" (p44). Rattanakosin Island Conservation Project, claiming to "preserve the historic appearance and the connections and linkage between the past and the society of today" (p68), has attempted to evict the local communities since the 1990s, but the people from Pom Mahakan have applied agile strategies to create a community culture inside state culture, i.e., to keep the *moeang* as part of the *prathaet*.

Resilience and agency

How can such a small group of people, with such few resources, maintain the fight for so long? Activists, NGO networks, media, academics including the author, and a few conscientious politicians have all joined in the long-term struggle; but as Herzfeld tells us, it is the people from Pom Mahakan who really make the difference. When the government decided to clear the area, the local people showed their resilience and tremendous creativity in self-education, self-gentrification and self-management, and their ability to construct a political identity beyond class division and political polarization. And when the government denied the existence of Pom Mahakan as a genuine community, people from Pom Mahakan set about defining themselves as quintessentially Thai, appealing to the romantic image of rural life.

Self-education is the key to winning the battle of recognition in the arenas of way of life, culture, community, and history (p108). These residents have learned much from NGOs, academics and even opponents, in order to confirm the value of their community, which represents the past of the *moeang* as the heritage of national culture. Self-gentrification is an insightful concept in this book: "[they] adapt to their own purpose the aesthetics and social values of the bourgeoisie and the state it governs"(p85). For the local residents, the best way of staying in place is to not escape from, but to become involved in the gentrification. This participatory style has been strongly supported by NGOs. By improving their living area according to the standards of the middleclass, attracting tourists who seek the 'true Thai experience', and by associating themselves with the Democrat Party, Pom Mahakan residents have managed to blur class boundaries, and increase their chances for survival (p201).

The ability to self-manage is crucial to Pom Mahakan's survival. This tiny community is well organized in different ways: the community is divided into five zones, and the head of each zone keeps villagers and leaders in close contact; the elected community committee includes both community members and experts from outside; a community savings fund has enabled the building of new houses. As for the leadership style in Pom Mahakan, Herzfeld shows the oscillation between authoritarianism and egalitarianism, which reflects the characteristic of Thai political culture. In short, the residents of Pom Mahakan have managed to build a moral community by practicing their rights. "The social rhythms of everyday life thus disrupt the pretensions of the state to a reified permanence. They are not always violent or disruptive; but when they are consensual, they challenge officialdom's exclusive claims to being the arbiter of order" (p165).

Engaged anthropology today

Herzfeld advocates anthropological engagement in "the politics of mereness" by asking who defines what matters in residents' lives (Herzfeld 2010). In *Siege of the Spirits,* Herzfeld gives us a great example. We can see his every kind of endeavor to hear, understand and help the community, and at the same time, he always focuses on the agency of the people themselves, which is the hope for the future of the past.

Haoqun Gong, Minzu University of China, Beijing. (mollygong@yeah.net)

Reference

Herzfeld, M. 2010. "Engagement, Gentrification, and the Neoliberal Hijacking of History", *Current Anthropology* 51(supplement 2):S259-67.

Amnesia is a state-sponsored sport

The 1989 killings in Tiananmen Square awakened my global conscience. I was barely thirteen years old, uninterested in world events, yet tears were falling down my cheeks as I followed images of the students calling for freedom and democracy and then the response of the rumbling and chaos of tanks. Born to a deeply Catholic family with Irish and Dutch ancestors, and living in New York, China was somewhere far away, but it was the word "students", that struck a chord. They were older than I was, but still like me. "Why were they doing this?" I asked, exasperated, staring at the column of tanks.

Peter Admirand

Reviewed Title:
Louisa Lim. 2015.
The People's Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisited,
Oxford: Oxford University
ISBN 9780190227913

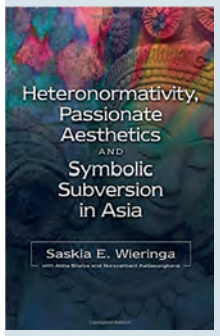
JOURNALIST LOUISA LIM initially published her brave, insightful reporting on the legacy of the Tiananmen Massacre (here I choose the term from poet Liao Yiwu) in 2014. *The People's Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisite*d was received with general great acclaim. The 2015 paperback version includes a new epilogue, reflecting on the 25th anniversary of the violence in 2014. Surprisingly, the cover or back-cover blurb does not address this stellar addition.

The book revolves around interviews Lim carried out with a number of seminal or representative figures linked with June 4th or how that event has been remembered, (mis)interpreted or forgotten. Many chapter titles therefore are terms like soldier, student, mother, patriot, official. These include a soldier-turned-artist (Chen Guang) trying to make sense of the June 4th violence; a Chinese patriot (Gao Yong) eager to denounce Japan in a recent protest; former student protestors (like Zhang Ming, who has a wife who knows about but cares little about

Women living beyond the norms

Heteronormativity, Passionate Aesthetics and Symbolic Subversion in Asia by Saskia Wieringa, with Abha Bhaiya and Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, offers a nuanced cross-cultural comparison of the lives of women from two of the world's most populated countries, India and Indonesia.

Linda Rae Bennett



Reviewed publication:
Wieringa, S., with
A. Bhaiya & N. Katjasungkana. 2014
Heteronormativity, Passionate Aesthetics and Symbolic Subversion in Asia
Sussex Academic Press,
ISBN 9781845195502

THE BOOK FOCUSES on the identities and life trajectories of three different groups of women living beyond the norms of heteronormativity, these are: women who are divorced or widowed; women who engage in sex work; and lesbians living in urban environments. The cross-cultural comparisons developed in the book are particularly pleasing because they refuse the all too common pattern of comparison between western and non-western cultures. That is, this book takes women from lower income countries within Asia and compares their identities and experiences against one another, without assuming high income and western experiences to be the norm against which other women's lives are compared. This is a reflection of reality, as women in lower income countries such as India and Indonesia constitute the world's majority population.

One of the stellar contributions of this book is the way in which it clearly spells out the complex processes and politics embedded in conducting feminist research in cross-cultural contexts, which is the focus of Chapter 1. It is a fine example of how knowledge can be co-constructed by women of different cultures, class backgrounds and women working in different sectors. This example of collaborative knowledge construction will be of great use to students wishing to embark on politically sound cross-cultural research, as well as activists and staff of community based organizations wanting to engage with more rigorous research beyond the narrow paradigm of monitoring and evaluation.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this outstanding book is the relevance of its theoretical insights and in particular it's convincing critique of heteronormativity. In Chapter 2, Wieringa articulates the key concepts that drive the analysis of women's lives in the following chapters. She writes: "as an ideology and practice, heteronormativity exceeds heterosexuality and permeates all social institutions, such as education, law, religion and the media. Those conforming to its hegemonic pattern are 'normal' human beings, while those who fall outside of, or who place themselves beyond its boundaries, are 'abnormal', 'abjected', and routinely denied rights and entitlements." Further, she rightly describes heterosexuality as "a double-edged sword that not only marginalises those who fall outside of its norms but also patrols those within its constraints." The usefulness of this theoretical construct is virtually boundless; already I have applied it in my own work pertaining to the positioning of infertile women in Indonesia, who like *janda,* sex workers and lesbians are failing in the successful performance of heteronormativity.

Of equal theoretical interest are the concepts of passionate aesthetics and symbolic subversion also developed in this book. Through the notion of passionate aesthetics Wieringa articulates the complexity and interconnected aspects that make up gendered and sexual identities, behaviours, and status in any given society. She defines passionate aesthetics as, "a mix of institutions, dynamics, motivations, codes of behaviour, (re) presentation, subjectivities, and identities that make up the complex structure of desires, erotic attractions, sexual relations, and kinship and partnership patterns that are salient in a given context." Symbolic subversion is also used to refer to a sliding scale of resistance to heteronormativity, ranging from public advocacy for rights to self-defeating strategies and various forms of adaptation. This chapter also provides an analysis of sexual citizenship in India and Indonesia that is carefully embedded within historical context and the wider debates and struggles occurring around sexual citizenship and rights in both societies.

Chapter 3 of this book is where the reader is engaged in greater detail with the women who are the narrators or subjects of the study. It explores how these different groups of women negotiate their lives in the public arena and details the varied ways in which such women are denied their rights and/or are socially excluded. Additionally, the chapter spells out how women respond to discrimination and exclusion, the varied strategies and positions they take up to make sense of their own subjectivity and to reconcile their religious and sexual identities. Chapter 4 moves into the private realm and offers a compelling destabilization of the happy Asian family norm. It exposes how heteronormative families do not necessarily represent safe spaces for women, regardless of their sexual identification or marital status. It traces lives affected by early marriage, intimate partner violence, and the denial of sexual and reproductive autonomy in marriage. It also shows how suffering in women's families of origin, most often heteronormative families, left them wanting but ill-prepared to negotiate family lives with any more equality than those they were raised in.

Chapters 5 and 6 are concerned with unpicking how particular forms of heterosexuality are represented as both 'normal' and as 'abnormal'. It draws on women's narratives to explore how normal sexuality in both India and Indonesia are produced and enforced through mechanisms ranging from formal legal and religious injunctions to more subtle forms of persuasion and subjugation. Wieringa reveals that while the narrators of the study are positioned on the margins of heteronormative society, this does not mean they are free from the values and demands of heteronormativity. The exploration of 'abnormal' or abjected lives and sexualities delves into women's liminal experiences. It identifies stark contrasts between how society views women and how they view themselves, while at the same time revealing how women still seek out heteronormative respectability.

Chapter 7 examines the intimate sex lives and desires of the women narrators of the study. It shows how the sex lives of non-normative women are closely surveilled in both societies. It exposes the many barriers women face in achieving satisfying sexual partnerships and experiences including self-censorship, gossip, family violence and social isolation. At the same time it illuminates that humour, a supportive partner and good friendships all contribute to the attainment of satisfying sex lives. Chapter 8 further explores how these non-normative women understand their own subjectivities and the identities bestowed on them by the societies they live in. The common pattern between all groups of women in both cultures is that they construct their identity in relation to the heteronormative society in which they are embedded, but which also seeks to exclude them.

Chapters 9 and 10 theorize the nature of women's symbolic subversion, as well as the explicit strategies for imagining their futures – futures in which they will most likely remain marginalized by heteronormative society – but may still construct alternative relations of belonging and acceptance. Chapter 11 concludes the volume by teasing out the usefulness of the conceptual complexities developed within academic, activist and policy circles.

This volume demonstrates the importance of research that incorporates women's interpretations and experiences of their intimate lives and personal subjectivities, and the enmeshment of personal and private sexual politics. The book is of wide appeal, starting with those working within queer studies and sexuality studies more broadly, as well as anthropologists, Asian studies and cultural studies scholars. It should be essential reading for all people seeking to understand both normative and non-normative gender and sexuality regimes in India and Indonesia. The work also extends the scope of earlier landmark contributions on female same sex desire in Asia (Blackwood and Wieringa, 1999) because of its inclusion of several categories of women who are constructed as 'other', according to the boundaries of heterosexuality. The theoretical contributions of the volume also serve as an important correction to the imbalance of western-derived queer theory.

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the Massacre) who remained in China but suffered for this decision; other student protestors (like Wu'er Kaixi) who managed to flee abroad, but have come to regret this choice; Bao Tong, "the highest-ranking government official to serve time for the events of 1989" (160); and a 76 year-old grandmother (Zhang Xianling), one of the founders of the 'Tiananmen Mothers', with resonance to similar groups like the 'Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires', demanding to know the truth about their disappeared sons and daughters.

At the heart of Lim's work is a fear and argument that the Chinese Communist Party has been successful in changing the narrative (86), incentivizing a reason to forget the state-orchestrated violence through the carrots of greater economic freedoms and prosperity, and the stick of severe silencing and punishment if anyone decides to challenge that state narrative. Lim calls this the "great forgetting", an idea initially formed through her interviews with contemporary students who seemed to have scant, if any, knowledge of what happened on June 4th 1989. This great forgetting is prevalent on college campuses. Lim writes: "It has happened in homes around the country, too. Parents who knew about or took part in the protests now want to protect their children from learning about what happened" (95). At issue is how the value of remembering seems to serve little purpose: as forgetting is rewarded and remembering punished. Lim quotes from author Yan Lianke: "our amnesia is a state-sponsored sport" (50). It thus seems fitting for Lim to provocatively replace China with amnesia in her title, a further irony when one considers the rich and ancient history of the Chinese people and land.

There are many historical parallels one can address here. German Catholic theologian Johann Baptist Metz, trying to face and grapple with the horrors of World War II, and especially Christian treatment and slaughter of the Jewish people, spoke of the need to embrace dangerous memories. These are memories that challenge, and even threaten to annul one's core identity and belief in one's orthodoxy, purity, or beauty. Linked to the suffering of others and one's own complicity in such suffering, these truths demand to be remembered and acted upon. Likewise, in the context of black oppression in the United States, James Baldwin, in his work, *The Evidence of Things Not Seen,* highlights the need for deep awareness in how what we choose to remember or forget instils a value and power in such presence or absence. If European Americans choose to believe their history in the language of Manifest Destiny and God-given protection, then the cries of the Native American and the African American will be muffled, seemingly unimportant. For Baldwin, echoing similar thoughts of the Native American Crow chief Plenty Coups (see Jonathan Lear's *Radical Hope*), the cries of the victims must eventually be heard, especially as the acts of violence against the Other were also damaging to oneself. Thus, philosopher Avishai Margalit advocates an ethics of remembering; and others like Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel call for an obligation to remember. How could such contentions play out in the context of June 4th, when it seems too many Chinese people do not want to remember, or choose to forget; and the elite or aspiring elite youth are satiated by mobile phones, designer clothes, and other expensive, materialistic ephemera?

One of the key closing chapters in the work is Lim's investigation of similar protests, inspired by the one in Tiananmen Square, that also occurred in other parts of China, including Chengdu, a Chinese city in the southwest. There, too, the government sent military personnel to quell the protests, which resulted in dozens of deaths and disappearances. Again, the Chinese government brutally suppressed investigations and then denied and concealed most of the evidence. Lim writes: "The whole truth may never come out. But what happened in Chengdu was very nearly the perfect case study in first rewriting history, then excising it altogether" (205). She further adds: "In Chengdu, the events largely existed in memory alone, but the party knew all too well that memories are mutable – even the memories of tens of thousands of people" (205).

Global humanity and, here especially, the Chinese people, are obligated to remember such hidden truths. The violence has already occurred, but it is a repeated and double violence when the crime is denied and erased – or even worse, when the victims are rendered into enemies or terrorists. No country is spared these dangerous memories and sadly, the amnesia that Lim highlights in China is prevalent elsewhere, too. If my 13 year-old-self had been told that twenty-six years later such blatantly vile and immoral acts of state violence were no longer remembered, that they were even transformed into something justifiable, what would I have said? Can any words do justice to such injustice? Lim's work provides informative and ample material to address and overcome such amnesia.

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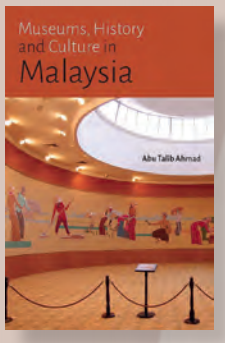

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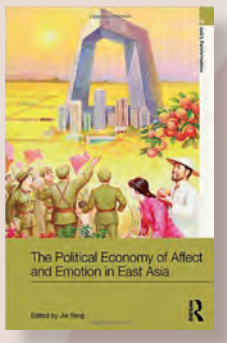

Affective engagements in East Asia

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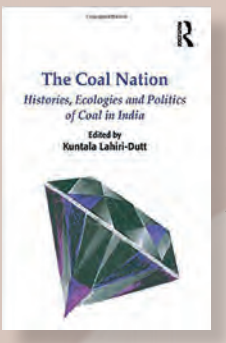

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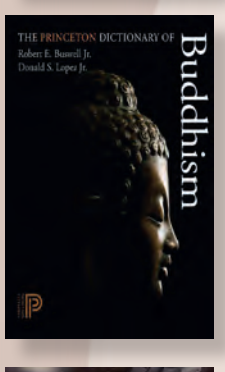

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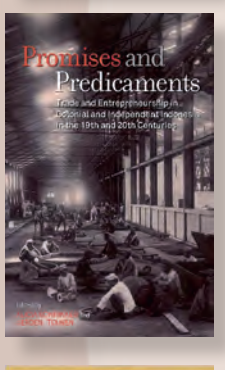

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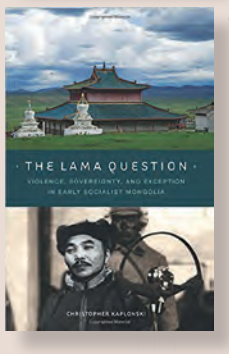

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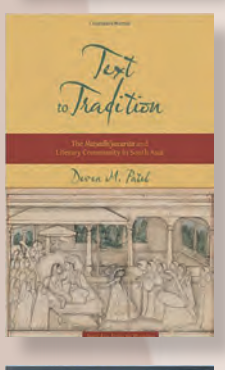

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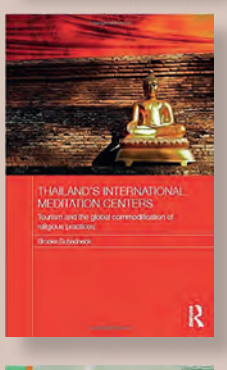

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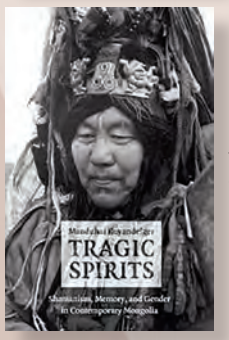

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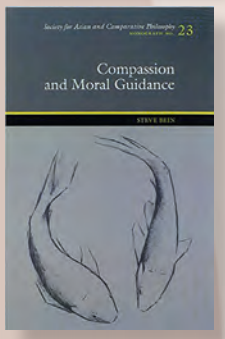

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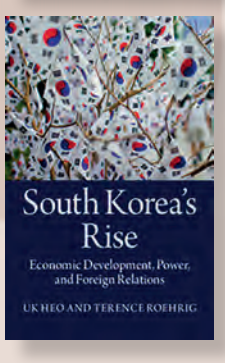

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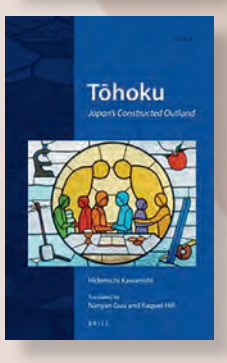

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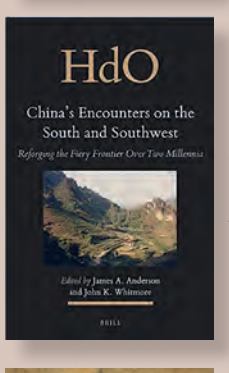

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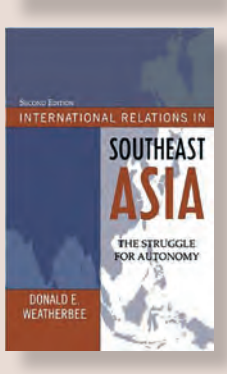

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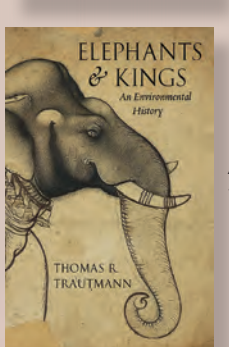

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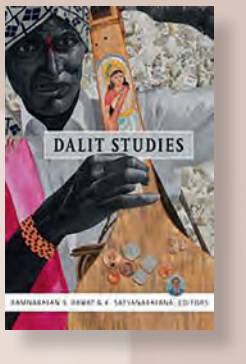

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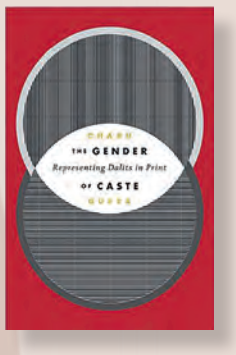

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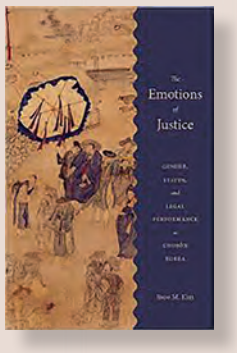

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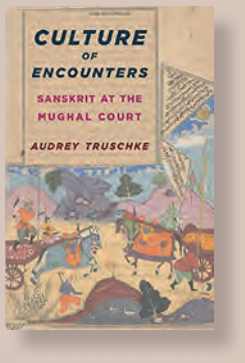

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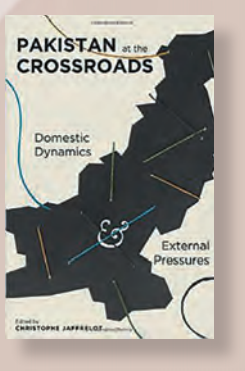

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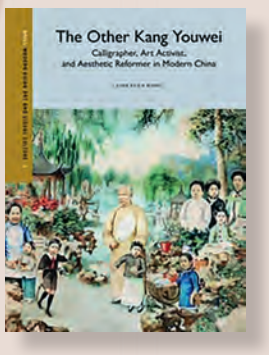

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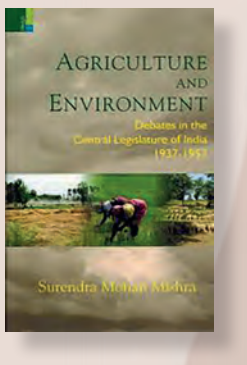

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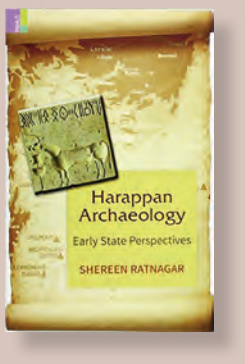

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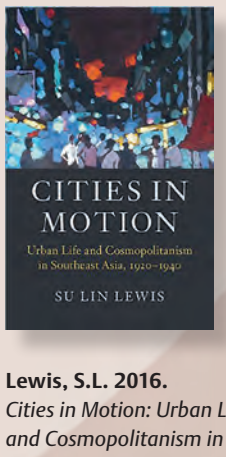

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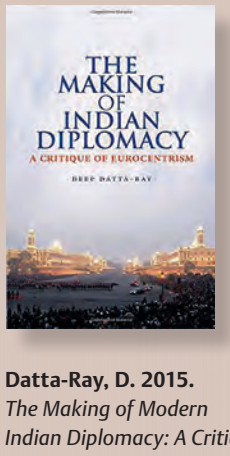

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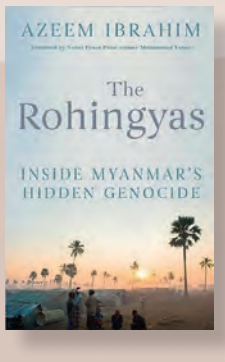

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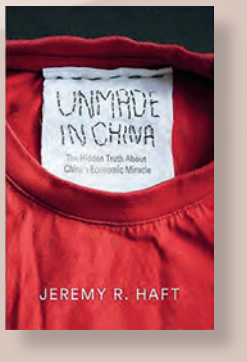

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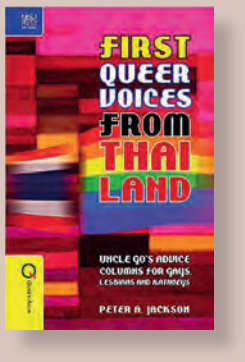

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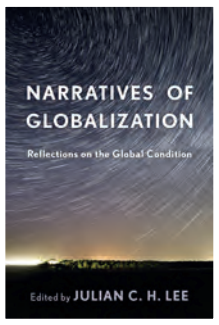
An interview with Julian CH Lee

Julian CH Lee, Senior Lecturer in Global Studies at RMIT University, speaks to Christina Plant about his new edited volume *Narratives of Globalization: Reflections on the Global Human Condition.*



Reviewed title:
Narratives of Globalization: Reflections on the Global Human Condition,
Rowman and Littlefield International,
ISBN 9781783484423 (hardback)

CP: *Narratives of Globalization* attempts to explore globalization differently from other academic books. How would you describe that difference?
JL: All the chapters in *Narratives of Globalization* are written in a highly personalized style. The authors ground their discussions in their personal histories, and by sharing and reflecting on moments in their lives, they explore key concepts in the study of globalization. For example, in my own chapter I use the reactions of people to the South Korean hit song 'Gangnam Style' at my cousin's wedding to explore cultural hybridity, and I use the presence of helium balloons in the shape of 'Angry Birds' at a protest in Kuala Lumpur to explore localized interpretations of global symbols.

At the same time, each chapter seeks to take a key concept in the study of globalization, including human rights, diversity and transculturation, and to critically explore it through the authors' narratives. A core objective of the writing was that it must be both accessible and academically rigorous, which are characteristics which I feel are too often ignored in academic writing.

Why was the 'first person' narrative approach important to you?
There are a number of reasons why I felt it was important. One reason is that I believe it is possible to write in a way that is both relevant to established scholars and also approachable by non-scholars, including first year university students. Being able to engage with wider audiences beyond academia is not only a nice side-project, but might even be considered a scholarly duty. It helps to make the relevance of our research clear, which is something that social scientists could do more of.

Furthermore, I think this approach of exploring key ideas through personal experiences also presents readers, especially students, with a model of how they can connect their lives with larger phenomena, whether it be neoliberalism, global migration or international security. Writing that is abstracted and inaccessible can readily alienate people and make it difficult for people to connect the dots between their own worlds and the things that scholars say are important.

Above:
Angry Birds at the BERSIH protest in 2012 in Kuala Lumpur. (Photo by Julian CH Lee)

A notable feature of *Narratives of Globalization* is that Asia features prominently in many of the chapters. What does the prominence of Asia in the book say about the place of Asia in the processes of globalization?
There are a few reasons for Asia's prominence in the book. One is that Asia is widely regarded as being on the ascent, whether economically or politically. One can see this in suggestions that this century is the 'Asian Century'.

A second reason is that Asia, as a global hub of exchange in goods, ideas, culture and people, throws up so many case studies that are ideal for exploring themes in the study of globalization. We can take as an example what is often said to be the world's best airport, Changi in Singapore. Chris Hudson uses Changi to question the notion that airports are bland nodes of global transit and are therefore 'non-places' – devoid of a sense of belonging and place. Through her descriptions and photos, we can see how Singaporeans have brought Changi's Terminal 3 into the ambit of their lives and it is very much a place with meaning for them.

I found Rebekah Farrell's chapter 'On a Global Moral Economy' particularly thought provoking. Could you speak a little about her chapter?
Rebekah Farrell's chapter is an important one because she wrestles with issues relating to privilege and power in the context of a rural village in Thailand. This village is in need of assistance in dealing with socio-economic transformations that are impacting its ability to be sustainable. Young people have been leaving for urban centres, endangering both the economic viability of the society and its cultural continuity. How Farrell and her youth-led organization sought to thoughtfully enable villagers to protect the integrity of their village is a touching example of a respectful and helpful approach to development work in Asia.

The book's authors are all associated with the Centre for Global Research at RMIT University. How has this influenced the resulting book?
The atmosphere around the Centre for Global Research encourages creative ventures and critically reflexive practice and research. Therefore, this book brings those elements out and puts them on display, along with the great diversity of the research interests of the members which is evident in the diverse topics of the chapters. This book is in some ways a showcase for the Centre and the kinds of analysis it is capable of.

Christina Plant is an intern at the Centre for Global Research (s3436027@student.rmit.edu.au).

Multicultural education in Indonesia

Reviewed title: Raihani. 2014.
Creating Multicultural Citizens: A Portrayal of Contemporary Indonesian Education
London and New York: Routledge
ISBN 9780415844147

Diversity is the cornerstone of Indonesia's national identity; it is proclaimed in the country's motto, and celebrated on many occasions, from the obvious Youth Pledge Day to the unrelated Kartini Day. However, alarmingly, there have been few reflective discussions about what living in a plural society should entail. This book is relevant because it initiates this discussion by studying how education in Indonesia constructs or obstructs multicultural attitudes among its citizens, particularly with regard to cultural and religious diversity. Written by Raihani, currently a professor at the State Islamic University of Riau, this is a timely project.

Stefani Nugroho

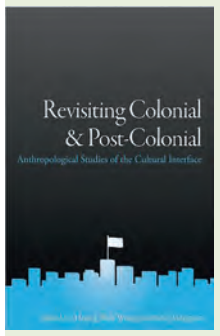
THE BOOK OPENS with three chapters that are introductory in nature. The general introduction is followed by an overview of the various paradigms regarding multiculturalism. Raihani argues for critical multiculturalism that emphasizes the representation of minority narratives, and critical reflections on dominant discourses of the majority groups. The next chapter deals with the history of education in Indonesia, particularly the longstanding disparity between state schools and *madrasahs* (Islamic day schools). Under decentralization regulations, general schools are funded by the regional government. This is not the case for *madrasahs,* which remain under the national government and tend to be underfunded. The chapter also discusses other recent changes, like school-based management, school-based curriculum, teacher certification programs and the introduction of international standard schools. For readers who are familiar with paradigms of multiculturalism as well as the history of education in Indonesia, these chapters could be skimmed over.

The next eight chapters contain the crux of his research. In each of them, Raihani explores the extent to which multiculturalism is nurtured in a particular element of education. With the exception of an analysis of the Education Law in chapter four and the concluding last chapter, the six other chapters contain observations and interviews with the principals, teachers, and students of six secondary schools in Yogyakarta and Palangkaraya. The types of schools vary: three state-owned schools (one general, one vocational, and one *madrasah*), two private schools (one is owned by Muhammadiyah, a large Islamic organization, and one is a Catholic school),

Wonderland of 1001 prospects

It is like a marriage: when you are in touch and even after divorce, you keep influencing each other, albeit that the logic of it is screwed, unpredictable and rather surprising. If the book under review has a message, it is that contact between cultures results in a process of mutual influencing that shouldn't and can't be settled through sticking simple labels to it, such as 'localization', 'hybridization', 'creolization', 'Japanization', or what have you. Influences are two-sided, influences live on and it is the dialectics of the contact that should be in focus. This insight directs the attention to minute details that cannot be meaningfully reduced to grand ideas and is amply illustrated by the exploits of some ten Japanese fieldworkers and two Hong-Kong Chinese anthropologists, resulting in the description and analysis of the "Dynamics of Culture in Interface".

Niels Mulder



Reviewed title:
Heung Wah Wong & Keiji Maegawa (eds.) 2014.
Revisiting Colonial & Post-Colonial; Anthropological Studies of the Cultural Interface
Los Angeles: Bridge 21 Publications
ISBN 9781626430129

THE PRESENT COLLECTION of original essays is based on the papers presented at an international conference titled *Anthropology of Cultural Interface* convened at the University of Hong Kong in February 2011. The conference and the essays should bring Marshall Sahlins' insights to the fore, such as the assumption that culture cannot be studied in isolation, as it develops in relation to its encompassing contexts at the same time that it shows itself in distinctively local patterns. This is to say that the social process is ordered by culture and takes place in the conference's 'cultural interface'. The latter is a conceptual space where the local culture mediates with foreign cultural elements to produce social effects that cannot be specified by either the local culture or the foreign cultural element/s but by the mediation between them. Consequently, a cultural encounter is an extremely complex and unpredictable affair that calls for a highly refined description, which also holds for the internal dynamics within a given culture. As such, the unit of analysis cannot be determined *a priori* but is specified by the ever-changing boundary of the cultural interface (Preface, pp. 15-17).

This Wonderland of the all-possible is then given shape in often wonderful Japanese English prose that shows that the parties involved in the intercultural or intra-cultural encounters – each equipped with their own means and motivated by their own ends – reciprocally engage each other in a dynamic, emergent relationship. Through thorough reporting, it is hoped to shed light on the open question of how the cultural interface can be theorized.

It is a baffling array of observations and experiences that the reader is presented inside ten empirical essays, ranging from reflections on the cross-cultural migration of Japanese popular culture to Hong Kong to the colonial whiteness introduced in the New Guinea Highlands; the bungling of good order after independence; and the remaining yet changing desirability of acquiring whiteness through Christianity. In post-Mao China, the Hui Muslims have been become more and more conscious of themselves and their Islamic identity as pragmatic responses to two shifting worldviews, i.e., that of the state they live in and of the faith they devoutly believe in. Buddhism among the former untouchables in India and the pull of certain Hindu ideas among those who experience their religion as faith and who do not draw a rigid ideological line that excludes the others are at the center of a dynamic yet complex religious scene in Nagpur city. And so it goes on, as festivals change meaning, as Ainu identity blurs, as rice noodles stimulate appetite and friendly relationships, as pigs are de-animalized as pork, as multicultural workplaces become contested spaces, and as the understanding of Western medical technology and its pharmaceuticals offers a perspective on traditional and modernized African thinking.

Generally speaking, the very aim of developing a theory is to reduce complexity by subsuming a variety of elements or phenomena, by bringing them under a common denominator and placing them in an inner-connected framework. Here, however, through insisting that dynamic cultural interface should be regarded as the unit of analysis, it is complexity galore. It is like *tutti frutti;* one can discern the various components, but there are no connections. Accordingly, I doubt whether said interface with its flabbergasting potential can be theorized. It can be smashed to smithereens, to fragments that can be individually described, even as this procedure results in tortuous images while leaving the reader perplexed in the wonder-land of 1001 possibilities.

Niels Mulder (1935; Dutch) has devoted most of his professional life to research on the mental world of members of the urban middle classes on Java, in Thailand and the Philippines. His latest work is *Life in the Philippines: Contextual Essays on Filipino Being* (forthcoming with University of the Philippines Press). (niels_mulder201935@yahoo.com.ph)

Reference
Sahlins, M. 1999. "Two or three things that I know about culture", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) 5:399-421.

and one *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). Through this strategy, Raihani obtains a sample that roughly represents the types of schools in Indonesia (secular-religious, state-private, general-vocational). Interestingly, despite the wide range of schools studied, there is insignificant difference between them with regard to multicultural education. As each sub-sequent chapter shows, the formation of multicultural attitudes is not a priority in the Indonesian education.

One of the key issues is the neglect of multiculturalism in the national policy. The Education Law 2003 reflects the process of democratization in Indonesia. It mandates that every citizen has an equal right to education, and ensures greater involvement from the community. However, according to Raihani, the Law does not contain articles on multicultural education. Multiculturalism is weakly implied in references to education as a human right, and the role of education in creating democratic citizens. A strategic implementation of the law, the Ministerial Decree of 23/2006 that outlines the expected outcome for primary and secondary education, shows that multicultural attitude is not one of the competencies targeted by school subjects, with the exception of anthropology. Only anthropology provides a platform for discussions on tolerance and respect for cultural and religious diversity, but the course is only available for students in the low-prestige language stream.

Without a clear mandate from the government, the extent to which multiculturalism is aspired to depends on individual school principals and teachers. In chapter five, Raihani shares his findings on leadership styles of the school principals and their policies. Although all the principals are aware of and appreciate diversity, they do not have clearly articulated strategies to cultivate multiculturalism. Some of the policies are outright contradictions to multiculturalism. Thus for instance, in the vocational state school, all Muslim female students are obliged to wear *jilbab,* in the general school owned by Muhammadiyah, all female students, including those who are not Muslims, have to wear *jilbab,* and in the general state school, the minority religions are not given dedicated rooms for their religion classes. Accusations of ethnic or religion-based favoritism have also been made towards principals, for instance, when sending teachers to professional development programs.

The practices related to the teaching of the subject 'Religion' are discussed further in chapter six. Despite the potential of the subject to build mutual understanding among people of different religions, Raihani finds that the confessional framework does not fully accommodate this. The confessional approach of religious teaching emphasizes truth claims and doctrines. There is little room for new and contextual interpretation, let alone comparative discussions with other religions. Here too, very much depends on the teachers' initiatives. While some teachers engage in a comparative approach, many are reluctant to do so.

In chapters seven and eight, Raihani focuses on the students and their points of view. Based on interviews and observations of extra-curricular activities, Raihani argues that one of the unintended consequences of these activities is the interaction with fellow students from different religious or ethnic backgrounds. Although this is undoubtedly positive, the fact that it is unintended, once again, highlights the lack of systematic cultivation of multicultural ideas in the students' learning activities. In the subsequent chapter, Raihani presents the results of his focus group discussion with students regarding their ideal community. Most students are in favor of diversity, although a small number of students would rather live in a homogeneous society. In terms of personal relationships, interethnic marriages are more acceptable than inter-religious marriages. Differences between religions are perceived to be more unsurmountable. Given the confessional approach in religious teaching, this stance is unsurprising.

In chapters nine and ten, Raihani ventures to other types of inequality in the school setting. Thus in chapter nine, he discusses injustices based on economic class, and the discrimination against students that do not take the natural science stream. Chapter ten looks closer into an Islamic boarding school *(pesantren)* and shows that the hierarchies are based on economic class as well as family lineage, the latter giving a higher status to offspring from religious leaders. In comparison to the discussion of multicultural attitudes in relation to ethnic and religious diversity that are five chapters long, the discussions in these two chapters are too cursory, and lack clear connection with the other chapters. The issues explored in these two chapters might be better served if they are presented as separate studies.

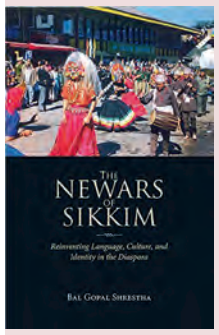
Overall, the book shows that the education system does not aim to transform Indonesians into multicultural citizens. This alone should be a warning for the future of the nation. Based on Raihani's study, there is a great possibility that the next cohort of leaders will consist of people who are not critical of systemic inequalities and majoritarian discourses. Therefore, this book should not only be of great interest to scholars in Indonesian studies, but also to educators and policy makers in Indonesia.

Stefani Nugroho, Postdoctoral Fellow Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam (swarati@gmail.com).

Adaptation and transformations in Sikkim

Studies of Newar diaspora inevitably give rise to comparisons between such communities as exemplified by the Newars of Sikkim – the focus of Bal Gopal Shrestha's monograph being reviewed here – and Newar settlements in the Nepali hinterland. Newar internal migrations out of the heartland of Kathmandu valley in the first century and a half of the Shah period were characterized by a number of peculiarities.

Ajaya N. Mali



Reviewed title:
Shrestha, B.P. 2015.
The Newars of Sikkim: Reinventing Language, Culture, and Identity in the Diaspora
Kathmandu: Vajra Books
ISBN 9789937623339

IN EVERY NEW SETTLEMENT, the Newars attempted to provide for themselves a sense of cultural security through, among others, the construction of urban space modeled on or approximating to the Newar town, and the commencement of fetes and rituals similar to those in the heartland. The Newars who crossed into Sikkim and India's north-eastern region probably felt a greater sense of alienation because they found themselves in a land that did not share a continuous history with their ancestral region.

Shrestha's research on the Newars of Sikkim provides evidence that the diasporic community there underwent socio-cultural transformations similar to those experienced by settlers inside Nepal. The significance of this work does not lie in this fact as there is ample literature on social change in Newar migrant populations. This work's importance rests in its analysis of the distinct nature of the socio-cultural transformation in Sikkim.

The book begins with a short history of Newar and Nepali migrations into Sikkim. The tale of the first Newar - and Nepali - migrant in Sikkim makes for as interesting a myth as that of the first pre-historic Newar settlers in Kathmandu valley. Eventually, Laksmidas's attempts to ensure his own survival in Sikkim occurs at a time when certain local chiefs oppose both British influence and the growing Nepali in-migration. With continued Nepali complaints of discrimination by the local Lepchas and Bhotias and the annexation of Sikkim by India in 1975, the Nepali diaspora is condemned to perennial blame for Sikkim's loss of independence.

Chapters three to seven study the absence or remains of the traditional Newar practices. The Newar caste system, notorious for its rigidity and intricacy in the heartland, has weathered away as have the numerous Newar guthis. Many of the Newars have forgotten their caste roots, language and traditional customs. The only remaining guthi has evolved into a much wider association, fulfilling the needs of not just one clan or caste but the entire community. Due to a shortage of Newar priests, the local population has had to take the services of Parbatiyas who are ignorant of Newar life cycle rituals.

In many instances, the Newars are compelled by local socio-political circumstances to co-opt other communities into their religious space. The heterodoxical structure of the Swayambhu Bhimakali temple appears to be such a cultural innovation, incorporating aspects of different religions in a Newar religious space. Even more innovative is the annual fire sacrifice in which religious prayers from all major religions are invited. Such attempts can be seen as harmonizing strategies employed by a diasporic minority to minimize the crystallization of ethnic fault lines amidst growing insecurity and distrust. The Newar situation is apparently all the more precarious given a decrease in the group's participation in the state's civil service with most of their lost seats going to the Bhutia and Lepcha communities. With the shifting power dynamics, an ethnic group that once thrived under the patronage of the political elite appears to be veering towards a gradual marginalization.

However, Newar influence in Sikkimese society continues in a different form. A striking parallel with the Newars in Kathmandu Valley is evident from the symbolic-ritual role played by certain Newars. Politically weak groups that remain ritually important draw capital from their traditional corpus of accrued cultural knowledge and practices. The decline of power in the political arena does not necessarily lead to a similar decline in other domains. Just as the Newars in Kathmandu valley are today relegated to positions of ritual power in the form of cultural agents complementary to the politically dominant Gorkhalis, so the Newar priest in his officiating role at the Swayambhu Bhimakali temple functions as a pivotal agent in religious rituals enacted for social harmony and cohesion in Sikkim. Such an exertion of symbolic power implies the Newari influence has not diminished despite weakening strangleholds in politics and the economy. More significantly, it suggests attempts to, if not recoup some amount of political influence, at least ensure one's continued presence in the political field through the institutionalization of the religious-political ritual.

Just how successful have the Newars in Sikkim been in reviving their language and culture? The Newar case is interesting because even in the heartland, culture and language are fast disappearing. Many of the festivals and life cycle rituals mentioned by Shrestha have decreased in importance in many urban areas of the Kathmandu valley, and in some places, the younger generation may not even be aware of them. The Newar language has been classified by UNESCO as "definitely endangered" and has a low retention rate in comparison to other dominant Nepali languages. In this context, how do we judge the success of the cultural revival in Sikkim? Is the current state of Newar language and culture in Nepal's capital region a good standard for comparison? Culture retention in the Newar heartland cannot be assumed and needs to be rigorously researched across the entire cross-section of an uneven social topography before any comparisons can be made with diasporic populations. The tables and descriptions of fetes and rituals detailed in the fifth chapter should be taken as ideal-typical rather than representative of actual practice. I shall suggest that a comparison with the heartland requires a much more nuanced analysis, one that examines variations in the latter just as meticulously as in the diaspora.

I recommend that, for future editions, the publisher provide the researcher better editorial support in order that the many grammatical, typographical and citation errors are ironed out. This is an important addition to South Asian studies and I hope it leads to more research that link Northeast India with Nepal and the central Himalayas.

Ajaya N. Mali, Syracuse University. (anmali@syr.edu)

From acrobatics to worship: bringing together South Asian folklore

Research publication on South Asian folklore has a 200-year history. From the late eighteenth century, European travelers and scholars set out to document the cultural practices and beliefs of South Asian groups and people. The aims of this research were multifold: gaining knowledge in a new field of study through a comparative study of local traditions and stories, the wish to convert people by getting insight in their customs and –last but not least- social and political control.

Patrick Vanden Berghe

Reviewed title:
M.A. Mills, P.J. Claus & S. Diamond (eds.) 2015
South Asian folklore: an encyclopedia
Routledge (first published in 2003)
ISBN 9780415866927

WHILE DOING SOME RESEARCH on Indian culture, my attention was recently drawn to the work of Kamiel Bulcke S.J, a Belgian priest who played a key-role in the study of the Ramayana. Bulcke has received most fame as being the author of the most-used Hindi-English dictionary.

Whatever the goals, most researchers working on matters concerning non-Western subjects before the nineteenth century (and this is not limited to studies on Asia) upheld a European or western-oriented approach, which often included imperialist - or sometimes even racist- undertones. This was a result of the environment in which they were formed or because their sponsors were Western governments. In recent years scholars have followed a different approach. Studies of folklore of non-Western groups have taken on a more objective point of view. This approach does not only counter the imperialistic stance but also the move that was taken by a new generation of nineteenth century indigenous scholars who collected and documented traditions in their country of origin. Some of these researchers have been linked to nationalist movements that tried to prove the social and moral value of these cultural expressions.

Studies on folklore have always been limited to either one country/region or one subtheme (oral traditions, performing arts,...). South Asian folklore: an encyclopedia has a larger scope. It aims at bringing together the work of a huge array of contemporary scholars on different subjects and is in such the first work trying to do so. Edited by three scholars, the encyclopedia contains close to 500 entries on the local traditions of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The editors point out that cultural production is not bound by modern political boundaries and acknowledge that, because of the size of the region and the uneven state of research, the work presents only a "suggestive sample of the huge range of South Asian cultural practices and productions" (p. X). So the editors are aware of gaps and omissions.

This makes this encyclopedia vulnerable to criticism. Apart from the limitations referred to in the introduction, the reader may notice that some parts of South Asia do not (or hardly) feature in this book. Let me just point to Bhutan. And indeed, some topics do not occur, as is for example the case with the Kumari in Nepal.

Although the editors, in the introduction, elaborate largely on the premises of their publication, nowhere is explained what exactly is meant by the term folklore. We know from the history of the study of folklore that there are many definitions. The reader can only hope that the editors see folklore in its broadest description, as the traditional art, literature, knowledge, and practice disseminated largely through oral communication and behavioral example.

The alphabetically arranged articles can be divided into three categories: general concept articles, case study articles and definitional articles that introduce either a non-English term or a concept as interpreted in South Asia. The general articles relate to topics that are applicable to the entire region (or to one country, e.g., Nepal) and provide an overview of this topic (e.g., Gender and Folklore, Pottery, Popular Music). Usually two or three pages long, these articles are intended to draw the reader's interest. The case study articles focus on one specific topic (e.g., Comic books in India, Jain folklore, Ramayana). The volume contains a list of articles and, at the end of the book, an index helping the reader pull together all the information related to a specific place or cultural expression.

For the scholar or interested reader keen on finding accessible information on cultural practice in South Asia this encyclopedia serves exactly what the editors hope for: introducing the cultural richness of this vast area to a general audience, while being an invitation to further research!

Patrick Vanden Berghe, independent researcher. (patrickvandenberghe@gmx.net)

The publishers' winners list

Find below a selection of recent award-winning Asian studies titles from publishers involved with our newbooks.asia review website.

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University of Hawai'i Press, 2013
Winner of the Humanities Ground-Breaking Matter Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

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Inha Jung
University of Hawai'i Press, 2013
Winner of the Humanities Publishers Accolade for Outstanding Production Values, ICAS Book Prize 2015

The Art of Sukumar Bose: Reflections on South and Southeast Asia
Venka Purushothaman (ed.)
ISEAS Press, 2013
Winner of the Social Sciences Best Art Book Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

Bodies in Balance: the Art of Tibetan Medicine
Theresia Hofer
University of Washington Press, 2014
Winner of the Humanities Best Art Book Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

Brewed in Japan: The Evolution of the Japanese Beer Industry
Jeffrey W. Alexander
University of Hawai'i Press, 2014
Winner of the Humanities Most Accessible and Captivating Work for the non-Specialist Reader Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

Buddhist Stone Sutras in China, Sichuan Province Vol. 1
Lothar Ledderose & Hua Sun (eds.)
Harrassowitz Verlag/China Academy of Art Press, 2014
Winner of the Toshihide Numata Book Award 2015 (Awarded by the Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley)

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Min Hyoung Song
Duke University Press, 2013
Winner of the 2015 Asian American Studies Association Literary Studies Book Award

China's Battle for Korea: The 1951 Spring Offensive
Xiaobing Li
Indiana University Press, 2014
Winner of the 2015 Best Scholarly Publication Award for Original Research, Association of Chinese Professors of Social Sciences

The Chulia in Penang: Patronage and Place-Making around the Kapitan Kling Mosque, 1786–1957
Khoo Salma Nasution
Areca Books, 2014
Winner of the Colleagues' Choice Award, ICAS Book Prize 2015

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P.K. Basant
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Winner of the Braj Dev Prasad Memorial Prize, awarded at the 76th session of the Indian History Congress, Malda, December 2015

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Winner of the 2016 AAAS Award for Best Book in History, Association for Asian American Studies
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Anuradha Roy
Primus Books, 2014
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Peter Schwieger
Columbia University Press, 2015
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文革前的鄧小平: 毛澤東的「副帥」(1956–1966) (Deng Xiaoping before the Cultural Revolution: Mao's "Vice Marshal" (1956–1966))
Yen-Lin Chung
The Chinese University Press, 2013
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Essential Trade: Vietnamese Women in a Changing Marketplace
Ann Marie Leshkowich
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The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority
Madeline Y. Hsu
Princeton University Press, 2015
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Grammaticalization and the Rise of Configurationality in Indo-Aryan
Uta Reinöhl
Oxford University Press, 2016
Winner of the Wilhelm von Humboldt Award 2015, awarded by Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft (German Linguistics Society)

Historical Atlas of Northeast Asia 1590-2010. Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Eastern Siberia.
Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb
Columbia University Press, 2014
Winner of the Social Sciences Best Teaching Tool Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

A History of the Vietnamese
K.W. Taylor
Cambridge University Press, 2013
Winner of the Humanities Best Teaching Tool Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

Imag(in)ing the Nagas: The Pictorial Ethnography of Hans Eberhard Kauffmann and Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf
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M.C. Ricklefs
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Philip Taylor
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Marco Polo Was in China. New Evidence from Currencies, Salts and Revenues
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Brill, 2013
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政治的道德: 從自由主義的觀點看 (Political Morality: From a Liberal Point of View)
Chow Po Chung
The Chinese University Press, 2014
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The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism
Robert E. Buswell Jr. & Donald S. Lopez Jr.
Princeton University Press, 2013
Winner of the 2015 Dartmouth Medal, Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association

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Jinghong Zhang
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The Wind from Vulture Peak. The Buddhification of Japanese Waka in the Heian Period
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Cornell East Asia Program, Cornell University, 2012
Winner of the 2015 Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission (JUSFC) Prize for the Translation of Japanese Literature (Awarded at the Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture, Columbia University)

Women and the Literary World in Early Modern China, 1580-1700
Daria Berg
Routledge, 2013
Winner of the Humanities Specialist Publication Accolade, ICAS Book Prize 2015

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Andrew Quintman
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Recipient of the American Academy of Religion's 2014 Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion–Textual Studies
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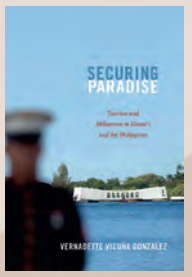

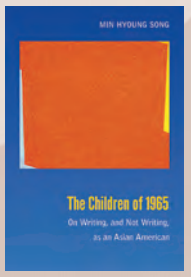

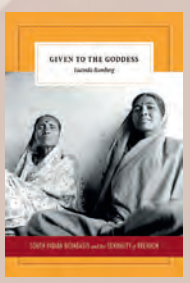

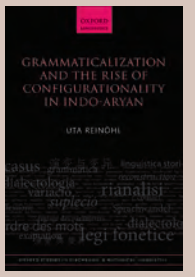

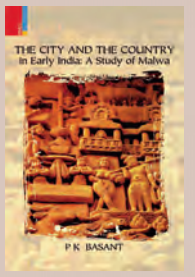

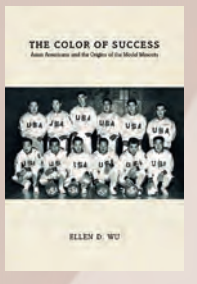

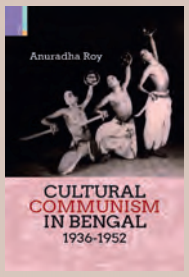

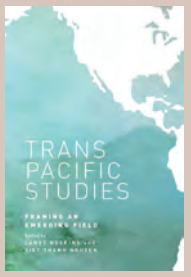

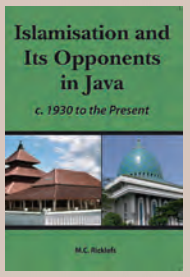

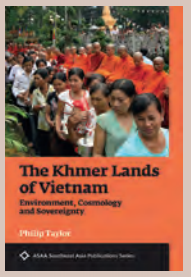

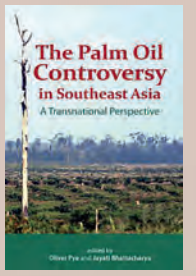

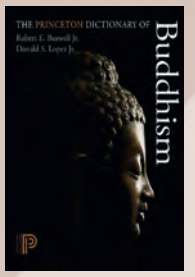

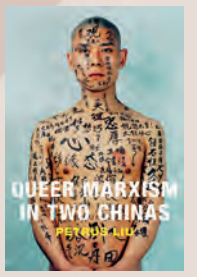

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ICAS 10

The International Convention of Asia Scholars is the largest international gathering in the field of Asian studies, ranked among the top five percent of conferences worldwide in terms of attendance (source: ICCA). It attracts participants from over 60 countries to engage in various dialogues on Asia that transcend boundaries between disciplines and geographic areas.

ICAS 10, hosted by Chiang Mai University, will take place from 20-23 July 2017. 1250-2000 participants are expected to attend. ICAS 10 will offer a unique opportunity for participating institutions and individuals from various academic, cultural and political domains, to explore outside of their specialisations and engage with professionals and civil society actors from Thailand, Southeast Asia and beyond.

Application forms are now available from www.icas.asia

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Exhibition booths can be reserved for the duration of the Book Fair, providing you with an area to display and sell products as well as showcase your services to potential clients, authors and collaborators. Trasvin Jittidecharak of Silkworm Books will be our local host extraordinaire for all exhibition-related issues.

The price for a booth has been kept to a minimum at only €400, which includes 1 free registration. Additional booth personnel can register at a discounted amount of €125 per person.

For a comprehensive book fair info package visit: http://icas.asia/en/sponsorship-and-exhibition

Become an ICAS 10 co-convener

Institutions and publishers are invited to build and sponsor a programme of activities to enhance their visibility at ICAS 10. A tailormade institutional programme will increase exposure and deliver a richer experience, with more opportunities for interaction with potential partners. A programme could consist of a mix of panels, roundtables, workshops, a booth at the Book Fair, exhibitions, book presentations, performances, documentary screenings, receptions, and so on. All ideas are welcome. This same opportunity applies to individual participants, who are free to design (and sponsor) a broader programme of activities. Proposals for Programmes will be duly reviewed by the ICAS 10 Organising Committee. The deadline for all proposals is 10 October 2016.

Suggested activities

ICAS book presentation carousel

This exciting event is designed for Asia scholars and Asian studies publishers who want to present books/series published between June 2015 and June 2017 (or those titles to be included in the 2017 fall catalogue). Presenters will be allotted a one hour time slot and may be accompanied by a commentator to encourage discussion. At the end of the carousel authors will have the opportunity to sign their books.

ICAS dissertation pitch

Designed for young scholars who have received their doctorate in the two years prior to the convention, participants will be given 30 minutes to present their dissertation to a panel of potential publishers.

Participating in either the book presentation carousel or dissertation pitch will not exclude you from presenting at panels or roundtables, as the schedule will take this into account.

Extra activities

All participants are welcome to organise (and sponsor) public activities. For example, documentary films screenings, photographic exhibits, cultural performances, or social meetings. ICAS will review all proposals and facilitate where necessary.

The Wild Ideas Lab

Join in the fun at the Wild Ideas Lab, where you will be given a 6-minute time slot to pitch your ideas with regard to research, discoveries, projects, events, or thoughts in general. Time your words and slides perfectly to meet the time limit – or risk being cut off mid-sentence!

Contribute to the ICAS 'sponsor a scholar' fund

The ICAS 10 Organising Committee has established a fund for low income scholars, to facilitate their ICAS 10 attendance. Institutions and individuals have the opportunity to donate to this fund to help even more scholars attend. Donors will be thanked by name, or remain anonymous if preferred.

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Authors and publishers are invited to submit their titles to compete in the IBP. Deadline: 10 October 2016. Submission portal: www.icas.asia/submit-IBP2017

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theFocus

Memory & commemoration in Central Asia

Heritage sites and commemorative practices have become visual protagonists of a nationalist rhetoric in modern Central Asia. Central Asia is defined as the region encompassing the former-Soviet republics, in addition to Xinjiang, Afghanistan and Mongolia. This special issue analyses cultural memory practices used by former and current Central Asian elites as a tool for boosting ethno-nationalism.

Elena Paskaleva

View from the Aq Saray Palace, Shahr-i Sabz. The Turko-Mongol conqueror Tamerlane was born in the vicinity of the city. Image reproduced under a creative license courtesy of Arian Zwegers on Flickr (2008). The historic centre of Shahr-i Sabz was inscribed in the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2000. Nevertheless, this part of the old city has been demolished in a large-scale urban regeneration campaign, starting in February 2013.

Memory and commemoration in Central Asia *continued*

ASIDE FROM THE RESTORATION of powerful historical figures as national heroes (Chinggis Khan, Tamerlane), the value of cultural memory practices lies in the transmission of beliefs, storytelling and collective acts of cultural remembering. These new cults have become instrumental for creating urban monumentality on an unprecedented scale across the capitals of modern Central Asia. Heroic deeds represented in the historical epics of the region, such as the Manas and the Shahnama, or the performance of religious poetry in Badakhshan have been transformed into a powerful vehicle for expressing long-suppressed religious devotion. Multiple commemorative sites are deployed as visual representations of the past and are being used to foster a sense of belonging and national pride among the multi-ethnic population. How can these practices and local historical contingencies provide a better understanding of the search for national and religious identities in modern Central Asia?

Heritage in Central Asia

"There is, really, no such thing as heritage", states Laurajane Smith in her acclaimed book *The Uses of Heritage* (2006).[1] According to Smith, heritage is an "inherently political and discordant" practice used by different interest-groups with varying degrees of legitimacy. The process of heritage-making entails various forms of conflict over the definition, ownership, and use of cultural attributes. Originally, a concept coined by the nation-state, heritage has become the object of intellectual reclamation by academics, activists and associations. Institutional and non-institutional social actors in Central Asia are increasingly involved in debating the legitimacy as well as the need to 'safeguard' different expressions of heritage. Furthermore, heritage is being used as a marketable commodity for the sake of tourism.

Analysing heritage and commemorative practices across Central Asia provides a prolific framework to outline the complexity of group identities often constructed as nationalistic narratives in this highly contested region. The most unexpected innovations and fusions of the world's religions and material culture have taken place along the trade and communication networks of Central Asia. The artistic vibrancy of the empires that stretched from China to Byzantium was reflected in their cultural production. Their artistic excellence combined with exquisite decorum was the product of continuous exchanges, mixing and melding of traditions. The problematic definition of this multi-lingual and multi-religious realm, tucked away between Ural and the Hindu Kush and torn by the entrenched legacies of the greatest empires, from the Mongols through the Timurids and to the Ottomans, and later on between the Soviets and the Chinese, has not been fully explored. Comprehending the complex history of Central Asia by taking into account its dynastic historiographies and more recent nationalistic narratives is crucial for perceiving the current dynamics of this vast region.

To regard the culture and borders of Central Asia as a solid reality would be an anachronism. Nothing is solid in Central Asia, it is a multi-faceted cultural ecumene. The dynamic symbolic bond between the Turkic nomadism and the Iranian sedentary lifestyles, severed during the modern period, has resulted in denoting this frontier region as 'barbaric' and 'uncultured'. Unfortunately, this approach has been effectively used to colonize Central Asia and has totally disrupted and suppressed its spatial and cultural relationships. The national delimitations of the 1920s and 30s, imposed by the Soviet regime, brutally cut across the ethnic, language and religious diversity of the Central Asian peoples. The presumed democratization of the 1980s did not result in any unity in Central Asia and both ethnic and religious tensions have only intensified. Subsequently, the Soviet and the post-Soviet governments have tried to legitimize the idea of a harmonious present, in which all ethnic and religious minorities share a common purpose of free co-habitation. This ideological attempt to subdue the diversity of Central Asia, and to transform it into a cultural diachronic unity, has resulted in the creation of a repository of state-defined cultural memory and religious practices. Currently, cultural memory is skilfully used as a tool for building national identity.

Any statement describing one's culture as 'original' is a fallacy. In particular, Central Asian culture is inherently nuanced and mutable over time and space. That is why, during the Soviet period the study of folklore traditions was an indispensable part of Soviet ideology. It was an attempt to create a set of notions and examples of idealized, original traditions deprived of any religious associations. Furthermore, the folklorists were agents of this ideological programme created by the state. Constructed by means of governmental texts and vocabulary, the perpetuation of epic images and their politically-attributed connotations have resulted in a pantheon of salient heroes. Some of their charismatic legacies have survived the pre-Islamic Persian civilization, the glory of Islam and the drastic banishment of religion during the Soviet period. The narratives associated with them have resulted in the elevation of places of national fame. In an attempt to maintain peaceful dynamic interaction between multi-ethnic communities, heritage has taken on new and sometimes unintended meanings in the midst of social change, asserting religious identity and political upheaval. Nowadays, their legacy is drawn from within an officially imposed narrative that is alien to the majority of the population. Even though the presence of the heroic figures is commemorated with large statues dominating the cityscapes, their presumed permanence is based on estranged politicized narratives that most people do not want to be part of.

The artefacts across the vast Central Asian urban landscapes and steppes are material carriers of cultural memory. Although each ethnic group has its own distinct self-consciousness and self-identification, patriotic heroic tropes and in particular the glorification of the past have gained considerable public attention. Their elevation and veneration are being used to preserve the state's vision of culture.

Commemoration practices across Central Asia

This collection of essays offers a broader understanding of the concept of common heritage and multiple identities across Central Asia. The studies show how cultural memory practices are used by the Tsarist, Soviet and contemporary post-Soviet Central Asian elites as a tool for boosting ethno-nationalism. Yet, this process is far from smooth and straightforward. Rather than focusing on a single genre, medium or language of literary production, the selection of articles takes a comparative and connective perspective. The authors propose different approaches – historical, literary, anthropological, critical heritage studies. They show that memory is an intrinsic constituent of identity formation. In search of a historical identity based on shared languages and culture, the aim is to map the interaction between political, ideological, literary and artistic production in a diachronic and synchronic perspective, and to contextualize the process dynamics through textual and material analysis.

The first contribution, by Zifa Auezova, discusses the painful legacy of the 1916 Revolt in Turkestan and the Steppe Regions of the Russian Empire, based on the 1928 novel Qily Zaman (The Time of Ordeal), written by the Kazakh author

Below: Muhammad Dilbeg Ruzadorov (rubob) and Sanawbar Nimatulloyev (daf), Darzhomch, Badakhshan, photo by Jan van Belle. **(see article page 37)**

Top: Pilgrimage at the Sufi memorial complex of Bahauddin Naqshbandi in the vicinity of Bukhara, photo by the author.

Above: Modern sculpture of Kazakh dancers, Astana, photo by the author.

Mukhtar Auezov. The novel tells the story of a Kazakh clan in the Semirechye, which in 1916 had witnessed the violence of the Russian government to such an extent that fleeing from their land, from the realms of their ancestors, appeared to be the only solution. Drawing from the extensive family archive and her intimate knowledge of the author's life, Auezova underlines the historical importance of the revolt. The uprising was a particularly sensitive issue for the Russian and Central Asian historians who had become Soviet citizens between 1917 and the 1930s and who had to maneuver within shared ideological frameworks defined by the new authorities.

The subsequent creation of national republics within the USSR necessitated the formation of nationalities policies, which resulted in constant appropriation and renegotiation of historical sources and themes. Artemy Kalinovsky shows how the creation of the Tajik national opera and ballet was a symbolic centrepiece of the Soviet policies in the 1930s. By professionalizing 'traditional' music, rather than creating professionals for Soviet Tajik culture, the opera showcased the USSR's commitment to blending egalitarianism with respect for and promotion of high culture. By discussing the debates on the proper cultural forms for the new republics, and outlining the musical and literary sources for the new operas, Kalinovsky traces the tensions and contradictions of the Soviet experiment in Tajikistan.

Performed in state theatres by large ensembles of professional musicians, many Tajik music genres were taken out of their original, often ritual context during the Soviet period. In order to illustrate how these genres became part of a newly formed national music tradition, Gabrielle van den Berg draws our attention to the Ismaili community of Badakhshan (an autonomous region within Tajikistan). Badakhshani music, which had a more secular character, was also part of this process of 'theatrification'. Yet, the religious poetry maddoh, as a devotional practice and a form of religious education, remained entirely outside it. After the Civil war (1992-1997), *maddohkhoni* acquired a new public dimension, with stage performances and local television broadcasts.

Drawing from the vast literary heritage of Central Asia, Nienke van der Heide describes how the history of the Manas epic has been used by political elites in Kyrgyzstan. The mythical forefather Manas and his companions are remembered as true ancestors who represent the pride of the present Kyrgyz nation. However, the first recordings of the Manas epic from the 1880s do not portray Manas as an ethnic Kyrgyz. Understood as folklore, oral epics formed an integral part of the Soviet nationalities policy aiming at the creation of a structure that was 'nationalist in form, socialist in content'. By the 1930s, the Manas epic was connected to the effort of bringing literacy to the nomads in an attempt to view folklore as the expression of the deepest moral aspirations of the proletariat. Van der Heide concludes that Manas narration in its present-day context is as an act of commemoration of a nomadic, pre-socialist and pre-capitalist past. It is often understood within an ethno-nationalist framework, that provides narrators and audiences with a sense of ownership and agency.

In this line of great Central Asian ancestors, the medieval conqueror Timur (also known as Tamerlane) and his descendants created a complex aesthetic vocabulary based on their shared Turko-Mongol heritage. Yet this vocabulary was constantly replenished through a dynamic cultural exchange encompassing the vast territory of Central Asia, from Iran to China. My own article explores how the contemporary Uzbek state in a sense legitimizes its policies by 'imitating' the craftsmanship of the Timurid period, reviving the distinct Timurid visual morphology and visions of kingship. Furthermore, the Uzbek elite sets the tone for contemporary architectural production with Timurid monumentality articulated in the urbanscape of major Uzbek cities.

Mongolia is another state that aspires to material recognition of its policies through elevating the cultural and religious heritage of its great ancestors. Combining the recent ideological shifts in Ulaanbaatar with a critical reading of its cityscape, Orhon Myadar illustrates how Chinggis Khan has been appropriated as a symbolic narrative of the new political ideology. The figure of Chinggis Khan has been used as the foremost representation of Mongolian national identity through the state's selective interpretation of history, in a state-driven process of forgetting or remembering.

Focussing on the urban heritage of Kashgar, the westernmost city of China and an important hub along the Silk Road, Tomás Skinner describes the recent processes of spatial cleansing and gentrification in one of the oldest and best-preserved Islamic cities in the world. Showcasing the importance of the Silk Road as the most significant economic, political and cultural exchange network between the Orient and the West, Skinner relates the shared Silk Road heritage to Xi Jinping's initiative 'One Belt, One Road'. China draws heavily upon the Silk Road narrative to assert its economic role across Central Asia. Skinner concludes that the development of Xinjiang's cities, supported by the globalising Silk Road discourse, is being used to assimilate the Uyghur population into the Chinese nation, whereby Muslim ways of life and traditions are being disrupted. This has resulted in tight constraints on religious freedom, increased surveillance over Uyghur communities, and the bulldozing of the region's dense historic urban centres.

These contributions address many of the key issues related to memory and commemoration in Central Asia. The interpretations offered by the authors are based on their long-term fieldwork and personal experiences. However, many more questions remain open. What will be the impact of recent state policies and governmental intrusions on the diverse cultural production of the region? How will the various legitimization projects in the Central Asian nation states resonate with the insecure political and economic situation in the post-Soviet realm? Will the promised prosperity and revival of the complex cultural exchanges vowed by the fabled Silk Road result in any democratic changes? The purpose of this collection is to raise the visibility of this vibrant and still widely unknown region among the wider academic and non-academic audiences.

Elena Paskaleva is a lecturer in Critical Heritage Studies at Leiden University. Her current research focuses on the material culture of Central Asia and in particular on the history and socio-political importance of Timurid architecture in Uzbekistan. At present, she is also involved as a post-doctoral researcher in an initiative to strengthen the study and teaching of Central Asia in Leiden. In 2014 she was an associate at the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University. Her latest interests involve urban developments across Central Asia. (elpask@gmail.com)

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1 Smith, L. 2006. *Uses of Heritage,* London and New York: Routledge.

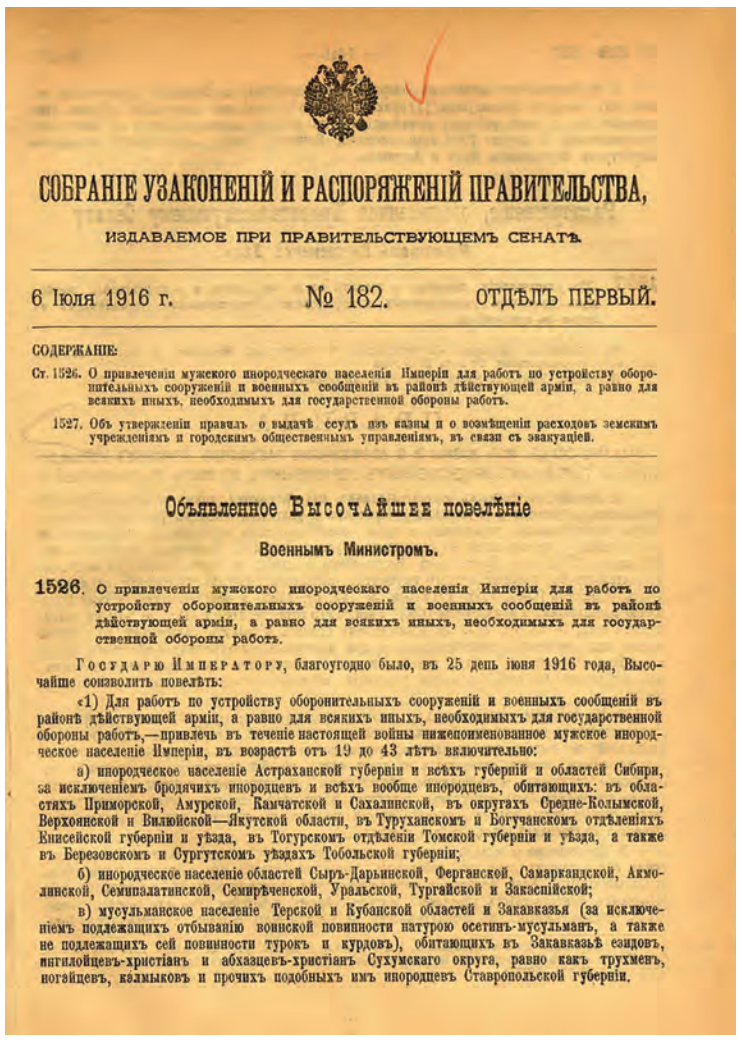
In order to promote Central Asian studies at Leiden University, the research cluster 'Asian Modernities and Traditions' created a platform for the study of Central Asia in its broadest sense, by uniting and consolidating existing expertise and initiating new international collaboration. Key issues are cultural space, identity formation, geopolitics and heritage. Two new course modules on Central Asia will start in September 2016 (www.centralasia.leiden.edu).

The Newsletter | No.74 | Summer 2016

“The Time of Ordeal”: a story of the 1916 revolt in Central Asia

For Central Asian history this year marks the hundredth anniversary of the massive revolt in Turkestan and the Steppe Regions *(Krais)*,[1] which cost thousands of lives. It consisted of a series of local manifestations and armed attacks against the Russian administration and settlers, whose pressure had been becoming particularly harsh during World War I. In an attempt to escape the massacre several Kazakh and Kyrgyz clans fled as far away as China.

Zifa Auezova



СОБРАНІЕ УЗАКОНЕНІЙ И РАСПОРЯЖЕНІЙ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВА,

ИЗДАВАЕМОЕ ПРИ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВУЮЩЕМЪ СЕНАТѢ.

6 Іюля 1916 г. № 182. ОТДѢЛЪ ПЕРВЫЙ.

СОДЕРЖАНІЕ:

Ст. 1526. О привлеченіи мужского инородческаго населенія Имперіи для работъ по устройству оборонительныхъ сооруженій и военныхъ сообщеній въ районѣ дѣйствующей арміи, а равно для всякихъ иныхъ, необходимыхъ для государственной обороны работъ.

1527. Объ утвержденіи правилъ о выдачѣ ссудъ изъ казны и о возмѣщеніи расходовъ земскимъ учрежденіямъ и городскимъ общественнымъ управленіямъ, въ связи съ эвакуаціей.

Объявленное Высочайшее повелѣніе

Военнымъ Министромъ.

1526. О привлеченіи мужского инородческаго населенія Имперіи для работъ по устройству оборонительныхъ сооруженій и военныхъ сообщеній въ районѣ дѣйствующей арміи, а равно для всякихъ иныхъ, необходимыхъ для государственной обороны работъ.

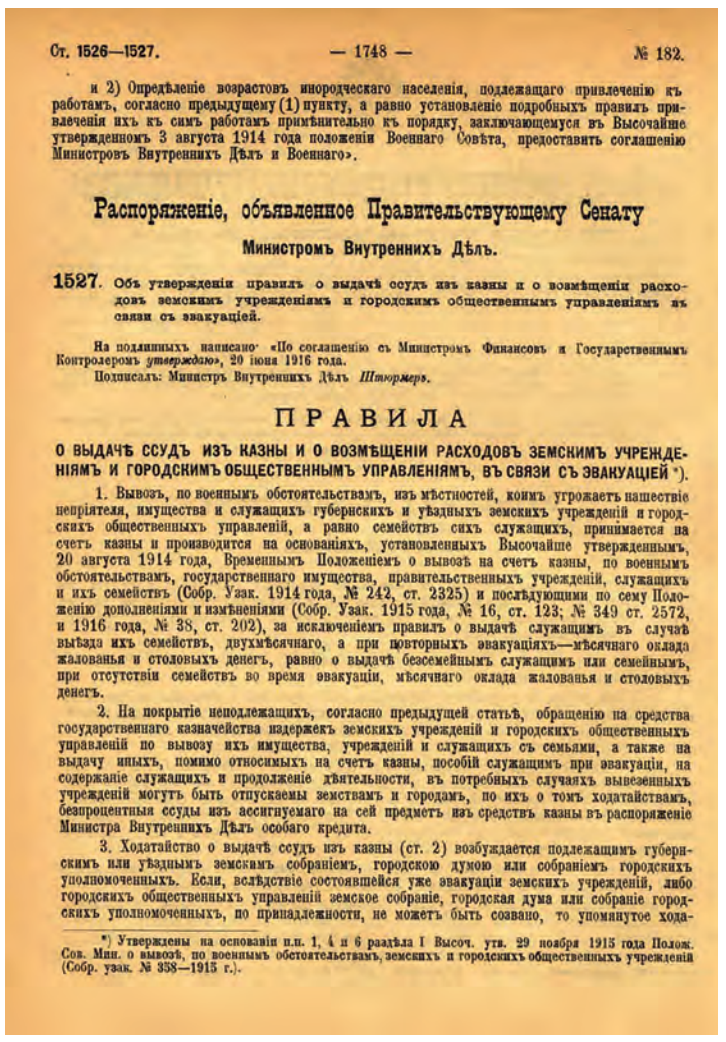
Государю Императору, благоугодно было, въ 25 день іюня 1916 года, Высочайше соизволить повелѣть:

«1) Для работъ по устройству оборонительныхъ сооруженій и военныхъ сообщеній въ районѣ дѣйствующей арміи, а равно для всякихъ иныхъ, необходимыхъ для государственной обороны работъ,—привлечь въ теченіе настоящей войны нижеименованное мужское инородческое населеніе Имперіи, въ возрастѣ отъ 19 до 43 лѣтъ включительно:

а) инородческое населеніе Астраханской губерніи и всѣхъ губерній и областей Сибири, за исключеніемъ бродячихъ инородцевъ и всѣхъ вообще инородцевъ, обитающихъ: въ областяхъ Приморской, Амурской, Камчатской и Сахалинской, въ округахъ Средне-Колымской, Верхоянской и Вилюйской—Якутской области, въ Туруханскомъ и Богучанскомъ отдѣленіяхъ Енисейской губерніи и уѣзда, въ Тогурскомъ отдѣленіи Томской губерніи и уѣзда, а также въ Березовскомъ и Сургутскомъ уѣздахъ Тобольской губерніи;

б) инородческое населеніе областей Сыръ-Дарьинской, Ферганской, Самаркандской, Акмолинской, Семипалатинской, Семирѣченской, Уральской, Тургайской и Закаспійской;

в) мусульманское населеніе Терской и Кубанской областей и Закавказья (за исключеніемъ подлежащихъ отбыванію воинской повинности натурою осетинъ-мусульманъ, а также не подлежащихъ сей повинности турокъ и курдовъ), обитающихъ въ Закавказьѣ езидовъ, ингилойцевъ-христіанъ и абхазцевъ-христіанъ Сухумскаго округа, равно какъ трухменъ, ногайцевъ, калмыковъ и прочихъ подобныхъ имъ инородцевъ Ставропольской губерніи.



Ст. 1526—1527. — 1748 — № 182.

и 2) Опредѣленіе возрастовъ инородческаго населенія, подлежащаго привлеченію къ работамъ, согласно предыдущему (1) пункту, а равно установленіе подробныхъ правилъ привлеченія ихъ къ симъ работамъ примѣнительно къ порядку, заключающемуся въ Высочайше утвержденномъ 3 августа 1914 года положеніи Военнаго Совѣта, предоставить соглашенію Министровъ Внутреннихъ Дѣлъ и Военнаго».

Распоряженіе, объявленное Правительствующему Сенату

Министромъ Внутреннихъ Дѣлъ.

1527. Объ утвержденіи правилъ о выдачѣ ссудъ изъ казны и о возмѣщеніи расходовъ земскимъ учрежденіямъ и городскимъ общественнымъ управленіямъ въ связи съ эвакуаціей.

На подлинныхъ написано: «По соглашенію съ Министромъ Финансовъ и Государственнымъ Контролеромъ *утверждаю*», 20 іюня 1916 года.

Подписалъ: Министръ Внутреннихъ Дѣлъ *Штюрмеръ*.

ПРАВИЛА

О ВЫДАЧѢ ССУДЪ ИЗЪ КАЗНЫ И О ВОЗМѢЩЕНІИ РАСХОДОВЪ ЗЕМСКИМЪ УЧРЕЖДЕНІЯМЪ И ГОРОДСКИМЪ ОБЩЕСТВЕННЫМЪ УПРАВЛЕНІЯМЪ, ВЪ СВЯЗИ СЪ ЭВАКУАЦІЕЙ *).

1. Вывозъ, по военнымъ обстоятельствамъ, изъ мѣстностей, коимъ угрожаетъ нашествіе непріятеля, имущества и служащихъ губернскихъ и уѣздныхъ земскихъ учрежденій и городскихъ общественныхъ управленій, а равно семействъ сихъ служащихъ, принимается на счетъ казны и производится на основаніяхъ, установленныхъ Высочайше утвержденнымъ, 20 августа 1914 года, Временнымъ Положеніемъ о вывозѣ на счетъ казны, по военнымъ обстоятельствамъ, государственнаго имущества, правительственныхъ учрежденій, служащихъ и ихъ семействъ (Собр. Узак. 1914 года, № 242, ст. 2325) и послѣдующими по сему Положенію дополненіями и измѣненіями (Собр. Узак. 1915 года, № 16, ст. 123; № 349 ст. 2572, и 1916 года, № 38, ст. 202), за исключеніемъ правилъ о выдачѣ служащимъ въ случаѣ выѣзда ихъ семействъ, двухмѣсячнаго, а при повторныхъ эвакуаціяхъ—мѣсячнаго оклада жалованья и столовыхъ денегъ, равно о выдачѣ безсемейнымъ служащимъ или семейнымъ, при отсутствіи семействъ во время эвакуаціи, мѣсячнаго оклада жалованья и столовыхъ денегъ.

2. На покрытіе неподлежащихъ, согласно предыдущей статьѣ, обращенію на средства государственнаго казначейства издержекъ земскихъ учрежденій и городскихъ общественныхъ управленій по вывозу ихъ имущества, учрежденій и служащихъ съ семьями, а также на выдачу иныхъ, помимо относимыхъ на счетъ казны, пособій служащимъ при эвакуаціи, на содержаніе служащихъ и продолженіе дѣятельности, въ потребныхъ случаяхъ вывезенныхъ учрежденій могутъ быть отпускаемы земствамъ и городамъ, по ихъ о томъ ходатайствамъ, безпроцентныя ссуды изъ ассигнуемаго на сей предметъ изъ средствъ казны въ распоряженіе Министра Внутреннихъ Дѣлъ особаго кредита.

3. Ходатайство о выдачѣ ссудъ изъ казны (ст. 2) возбуждается подлежащимъ губернскимъ или уѣзднымъ земскимъ собраніемъ, городскою думою или собраніемъ городскихъ уполномоченныхъ. Если, вслѣдствіе состоявшейся уже эвакуаціи земскихъ учрежденій, либо городскихъ общественныхъ управленій земское собраніе, городская дума или собраніе городскихъ уполномоченныхъ, по принадлежности, не можетъ быть созвано, то упомянутое хода-

*) Утверждены на основаніи п.п. 1, 4 и 6 раздѣла I Высоч. утв. 29 ноября 1915 года Полож. Сов. Мин. о вывозѣ, по военнымъ обстоятельствамъ, земскихъ и городскихъ общественныхъ учрежденій (Собр. узак. № 358—1915 г.).

Fig. 1 & 2 (above): “The 1916 Edict”. Source: *Vosstanie 1916 goda v Turkmenii (dokumenty i materialy)*, Ashhabad, 1938, pp. 29-30. [The revolt of 1916 in Turkmenia, documents and materials]

Fig. 3 (below right): Semion Chuikov. *1916 Revolt in Kyrgyzstan*, 1936.

THE REVOLT WAS A REACTION to the tsar’s edict (25 June 1916), ordering males of non-Russian origin aged 19-43 to register for work at military installations of the Russian army. This was the second year of Russia’s participation in the ‘Great War’, which led to a huge loss of human lives and materials. In accordance with the statutes of compulsory military service, by 1916 work at military installations had become one of the regular tasks performed by the home guard, comprising non-military males under the age of forty-four.[2] The population of annexed and colonized peripheries of the Russian Empire, where only a few people could speak Russian, had been exempted from any kind of military service before June 1916. However, the new edict on enlistment also included almost all of the provinces with populations of non-Russian origin: Astrakhan province and the greater part of Siberia; Syr-Darya, Fergana, Samarkand, Akmola, Semipalatinsk, Semirechye, Ural, Turgai and Transcaspian oblasts; the Muslim population of Ter and Kuban oblasts and Transcaucasia; certain groups of Christians in Transcaucasia; Turkmens, Nogais, Kalmyks and “other non-Russians of this sort” from Stavropol province.[3] For the local communities this meant sending the strongest members of their families off on dangerous journeys. Protests and then spontaneous violence against Russians in various parts of the region were suppressed by Russian troops armed with the most modern weapons of the time. The brute oppression led to the deaths of thousands of people and the massive flight of people from the lands of their ancestors.

The first manifestation against the edict took place in Khodjent on 4 July 1916.[4] Three days later the head of the Khodjent garrison, N. Rubakh, sent a telegram to Tsar Nikolai II reporting on the event: “Your Imperial Highness, let me humbly inform you that on July 4 in the city of Khodjent a crowd of the local natives gathered in the office of the police officer and requested him to stop composing the lists of workers who should be sent to the army’s rear, in compliance with the order of Your Imperial Highness of June 25.”[5] Rubakh reported that “the natives” had thrown stones at five armed guards and had tried to disarm them of their guns. A shot was fired, and upon hearing the gunshot the guards began shooting into the crowd. They fired 16 shots, leading to the death of two “natives” and injuring one other. In the course of the following weeks the protests grew in number and scale, expanding into Kokand, Andijan, Djizak, Semirechye, the Transcaspian region, the Steppe Krai and Siberia.

The interpretation of the revolt in Soviet historiography

The 1916 revolt was a particularly sensitive issue for the Russian and Central Asian historians who had become Soviet citizens between 1917 and the 1930s and who had to work within ideological frameworks defined by the new authorities. In the 1920s, shortly after the triumph of the Socialist revolution, the mainstream discourse in Soviet historiography was critical of the tsar and the policies of the Russian Empire in the colonized territories. Attempts to collect data on the revolt were supported by the authorities: a special commission for the study of the revolt was formed in this period. Violence perpetrated by the Russian government and army in the suppression of the revolt was condemned as a feature inherent to ‘colonial oppressors’ in general. Considerable attention was also paid to the representatives of local elites, who had provided support to Russian officers, bribed them to stay at home and betrayed their poor fellow-tribesmen. The Soviet discourse of the 1920s was based primarily on polarization of class distinctions: the working class and the ‘exploiters’. From this perspective, looking back to 1916, the Soviet Russian proletariat sympathized with all victims of tsarist Russia, the overthrown imperialist state.

However, in the 1930s Soviet historiography formed a new ideological platform focused on emphasizing the leading and consolidating role of the Russian people for all ethnic groups of the Soviet state. The publications from the 1920s that criticized the Russian colonial administration and exposed the cruelties of the Russian army were reassessed as ideologically harmful. Local historians who criticized the Russian rule in Turkestan and the Steppe Krai were labeled as nationalists and became subjects of political accusations and repression. Discussing the 1916 revolt became a dangerous issue in the 1930-40s, till the end of Stalin’s rule (1922-1952).

In 1953-54 historians of Soviet Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan, together with their colleagues from Moscow and Leningrad, held a series of conferences – in Frunze, Ashkhabad, and Tashkent – giving special attention to the issue of assessing the 1916 revolt. International contexts featuring decolonization processes all over the world revealed certain similarities between this revolt and anti-colonial movements abroad. The 1916 revolt was characterized as a progressive liberation movement. This formula, which was preserved in the historical discourse until the end of the Soviet period, was explained in detail in the foreword to a special volume on the 1916 revolt, published by the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1960.[6] The volume contains a rich collection of reports, correspondence, and protocols provided by Russian officials and still serves as a main reference volume on the 1916 events in post-Soviet states. The foreword to the volume recognizes the considerable significance of the revolt: “This revolt, which proved to be a link to the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917, reminds us about the need for deep and detailed study of all progressive revolutionary and national liberation movements in our country. They led to the overthrow of the tsarist government, to the great October victory and the triumph of socialism on one-sixth of the globe”.[7]

A literary consideration of the 1916 revolt

The voices of the local populations of Turkestan and the Steppe Region who lost thousands of countrymen in the revolt, were little heard during the Soviet time, especially if they did not conform to the mainstream ideological concepts. But an important attempt to tell the insiders’ impressions of the revolt was made in literature. In 1928 a short novel “Qily Zaman” (“The Time of Ordeal”), written by the young Kazakh writer Mukhtar Auezov, was published in Kyzyl-Orda. It is the story of a Kazakh clan, which in 1916 had witnessed the violence of the Russian government to such an extent that fleeing from their land, from the realms of their ancestors, seemed to be the only solution. Two years later in 1930, the author Auezov was accused of spreading anti-Soviet views with his novel, and he was arrested and imprisoned until 1932, at which time his repentance letter apologizing for “The Time of Ordeal”, and several other compositions, were published in the newspapers *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* and the *Sotsialdy Kazakhstan.* Auezov’s novel remained prohibited in the Soviet Union until 1972.

The content of the novel

Auezov tells the story of the revolt from the perspective of the members of the Kazakh clan Alban. The Alban were known for their fertile lands and prosperity: “The fabulous pastures of the Alban clan are like emerald silk curtains, like green silky cradle…The pastures of the Alban are gorgeous and dense, rich in summer rains and thick meadows” (p.10)[8] Life for the Alban used to be rather quiet and peaceful; the subtitle of the novel, “a story of the revolt of the peaceful clan of Alban”, exposes a radical change in its existence.

The greater part of the described events takes place around the Karkara Fair, the famous summer fair in the river valley: “The shining river of Karkara abounds in water and draws zigzags on the surface of vast green plain. It helps thousands of living things to overcome thirst, fatigue and suffering” (p.10). It was a meeting place for merchants from various regions: “The Fair was on the junction of nine roads: those leading to large Russian cities, and the others, leading to Kulja, Kashgar, Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand and Tashkent” (p.10). In 1916 this area was part of the Semirechye district of the Turkestan Krai. Today this place is on the border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Auezov describes the Fair as an active independent subject: “The Fair of Karkara was boiling as a life symbol of boundless world of abundance. Unceasing stream pours day and night rows of cattle to the melting pot of the Fair from all four sides, from Kyrgyz living among the snowy mountains, and Kazakhs coming from the foothills” (p.10). The Fair plays a very important role in the life of the Alban clan: “Its wealth

and riches are sustained by Alban, a long-armed kind-hearted and simple-minded people. The Fair is held once in the year's twelve months. Always in full force. Three-four months, as long as this Fair lasts, are the happiest part of the year. In this period the people of Alban shovel up a stock, which will feed them a whole year"(p.11).

One of the central characters of the story is the Russian superintendent Podporkov, nicknamed Akzhelke [White Neck]. His office in the center of the market square stands under the Russian flag. The locals associate the eagle on the flag with a mythological bird from their native folklore: "The white flag fastened to a long wooden pole in the middle of the fair is decorated with a picture of the double-headed bird Simurgh *(Samuryq)*. It corresponded clearly to the image of an insatiable and greedy glutton" (p.12). The superintendent's daily tasks are for the most part related to settling quarrels between merchants and inhabitants of the neighborhood of the Fair. With the help of two interpreters he settles the quarrels easily: those who pay most money or give him more sheep win.

One day White Neck receives a large envelope with many stamps. Inside he finds a copy of the tsar's edict on the requisition of non-Russian men for the needs of the Russian army and a letter ordering him to put together a list of the recruits. His first reaction is of joy, as he thinks about the huge amounts of money and cattle that the locals will bring him for keeping their relatives home. However, this happy picture fades when White Neck holds a meeting with the governors, judges and elders of ten local districts. The local leaders, even the most loyal ones, fear that their kinsmen will refuse to obey the order.

The conflict between the superintendent and the Kazakhs escalates when the tribal elders gather the people and reach the decision to not let their kinsmen be taken away. The clan's people follow their representatives *en masse* to White Neck's office at the Fair to declare their refusal to follow the order. As a sign of protest, Kazakhs have already stopped buying goods at the Fair. It has become deserted. As a consequence of the developments, White Neck requests military support from his superiors in the city of Vernyi (today's Almaty) and a couple of days later hundreds of soldiers armed with rifles arrive at Karkara in order to arrest seventeen elders of the Alban tribes. The most influential of them are sent to prison in Kyrgyz Karakol, where the Russian administration has a larger office and its military headquarters.

The conflict reaches its peak when the Alban tribal elders, as well as Kyrgyz prisoners, are shot in their cells by Russian soldiers. Their shocking execution puts an end to any illusion the Kazakhs may still have had about the loyalty of the Russian administration. The Alban clan decides to take revenge and hundreds of households begin to flee.

Kazakhs set fire to numerous houses in the neighboring Russian settlements, then gather to attack the superintendent's office on the market square. Several groups of hundreds of horsemen armed with cudgels, spears, poleaxes and a few guns surround the Karkara valley and advance shouting tribal war-cries. Suddenly the front lines of the horsemen collapse. The horsemen at the rear look on with confusion at the thin threads of fire coming from White Neck's office and try to understand what is happening. A few manage to retreat on time, but about one third of the Kazakh horsemen are killed. Those who survive learn later that the Russians' killing fire device is called a *pulemyot* [machine-gun], and are horrified by its capacity: "It mowed thirty-forty people down at once, like a scythe" (*Otyz-qyryq kysyngdy orghandai byr-aq qyrqyp tusyrdy;* p.147).

Fig 5: Mukhtar Auezov in 1925.

Fig 4: Semion Chuikov. *Escape of rebels to China,* 1936.

That night the superintendent and his staff pack their belongings, papers and the machine-gun onto horse-drawn carts and carriages and leave in convoy in the direction of Zharkent. In the morning, the locals set the whole Fair on fire. The crackling and rumbling can be heard in the surrounding mountains for many hours. The Kazakhs of the Alban clan fold up their yurts, load their horses and camels and leave Karkara not knowing where they will settle: "Obscure days full of uncertainty opened their arms to them" (*Aldynda belgisizdikke tolghan tumandy kunderi kushaghyn zhaidy;* p.156].

The place of the novel in Auezov's oeuvre

"The Time of Ordeal" was one of the earliest literary works by Mukhtar Auezov (1897-1961), who became a prominent Kazakh Soviet writer in the 1940-50s. The most well-known of his compositions is a four-volume biographic novel "Abai Zholy" ("The Path of Abai"), dedicated to the popular 19th century Kazakh thinker and poet, Ibrahim (Abai) Kunanbay-Uly. The Soviet government honored this novel with the highest literary awards (Stalin Prize in 1949 and Lenin Prize in 1959). The success of this novel can be explained certainly by its rich ethnographic and historical material, absorbing style of story-telling and refined lexicon, but also by very accurate censorship, which by the 1940s was profoundly institutionalized in the Soviet literature. As for "The Time of Ordeal", Auezov never saw it appear again during his lifetime. The novel was 'rereleased' only in 1972, nine years after the author's death.

The Russian translation of "The Time of Ordeal", written by Aleksey Pantielev, was first published in the literary journal *Novyi Mir,* in Moscow.[9] Chingiz Aitmatov, who had been a close friend and follower of Auezov, wrote the introduction to the publication.[10] Aitmatov writes about the stories that he heard from Kyrgyz witnesses of the 1916 events: "When whole clans were leaving their lands in an attempt to escape from the chastisers, mothers did everything to save their children. Even falling under machine-gun fire mothers tried to protect children with their bodies. Many of these children bear the names of this time of ordeal: Tenti, 'a wanderer', Kachkyn, 'a fugitive', Urkun, 'exodus'."

In order to legitimize Auezov's story of the revolt, Aitmatov emphasizes its anticolonial content, conform with the ideological discourse of the 1970s: "I can name only a few examples in eastern literature, where the protest against the tsarist rule and its violence are expressed so convincingly. Young Auezov exposed the inhumanity and cynicism of the tsar's colonial policy and showed that its administrative system was alien to the nomad people".[11]

Aitmatov grieves, but at the same time admires the revolt as one of the most significant events of his people's past and calls it "a spontaneous uprising against the tsar's oppression, ... when people revolt, believing that they are right and free; when they challenge the violence and demonstrate a huge potential of human spirit".

Commenting on the fact that Auezov had not had the opportunity to see his novel published after 1930, Aitmatov notes that introducing the novel to a Russian-reading audience after the author's death makes him feel as if he is sending a racehorse on a journey without a rider – a fitting metaphor by a 'post-nomadic' Soviet intellectual!

The return of the "Time of Ordeal" in post-Soviet years

In post-Soviet Kazakhstan "The Time of Ordeal" enjoyed much public interest. In 1997 the writer N. Orazalin adapted it for the stage, and the Kazakh Drama Theatre in Almaty introduced "Qily Zaman" to the public in Kazakh. In 2012 the theatre director A. Rakhimov made a new production of the play. In 2008-2009 the "Time of Ordeal" was selected as the main book for reading and public discussion in the framework of the national campaign 'One country – one book'. Special seminars dedicated to the novel were held in secondary schools and higher education institutions across Kazakhstan.

The 1916 revolt became one of the most revisited issues in the process of rewriting national histories in post-Soviet Central Asia. By the end of the Soviet period, the revolt had still not been given a convincing interpretation. Although the discussions of the 1950-60s had led to the acknowledgement of tremendous losses and trauma, the official interpretation as a case of 'class struggle' of local farmers against their rich tribesmen would not satisfy a critical reader in the 1990s. Since then, however, new chapters dedicated to the revolt have been written for numerous textbooks on the history of the whole region, and "Time of Ordeal" is recognized as a literary portrait of the revolt, almost as if it was painted from life.

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1 Turkestan Krai – the province that the Russian Empire annexed in 1867; it included territories of today's Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Turkestan Krai was governed by general-governors of the Russian army from Tashkent. The Steppe Krai – the province founded by the Russian government in 1882 on territories populated predominantly by Kazakh tribes, which the Russian Empire gradually started to annex in the 18th century. Its administrative centre was Omsk.

2 See: S.M. Goryainov. 1913. *Ustavy o voinskoi povinnosti,* St. Petersburg.

3 *Vosstanie 1916 goda v Srednei Azii i Kazakhstane, sbornik dokumentov,* Moscow: Academy of Science of the USSR, 1960, p.25.

4 Today Khujand, a city in Tajikistan. In 1916 it belonged to the Samarkand district, Turkestan Krai.

5 ibid. note 3, p.105.

6 ibid. note 3.

7 ibid. note 3, p.5.

8 Auezov, M. 1979. *Qily Zaman,* Almaty: Zhazushy Publishers.

9 Aleksey (Abel) Pantielev (1913-1977) – a Soviet writer, author of the novels "The Flow" and "The White Bird", about the life of working people at big Soviet factories in the 1930-40s and during World War II (referred to as Great Patriotic War in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet states). Translator of several literary compositions of Mukhtar Auezov and the Uzbek writer Askhad Mukhtar.

10 Chingiz Aitmatov (1928-2008) – a prominent Kyrgyz and Soviet writer, the author of short stories and novels, which were translated and became well-known internationally: "Jamila", "Farewell, Gulsary", "The White Ship", "The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years", "The Scaffold".

11 Aitmatov, C. 1972. "Introduction to the 'Time of Ordeal'", *Noviy Mir* N6, Moscow.

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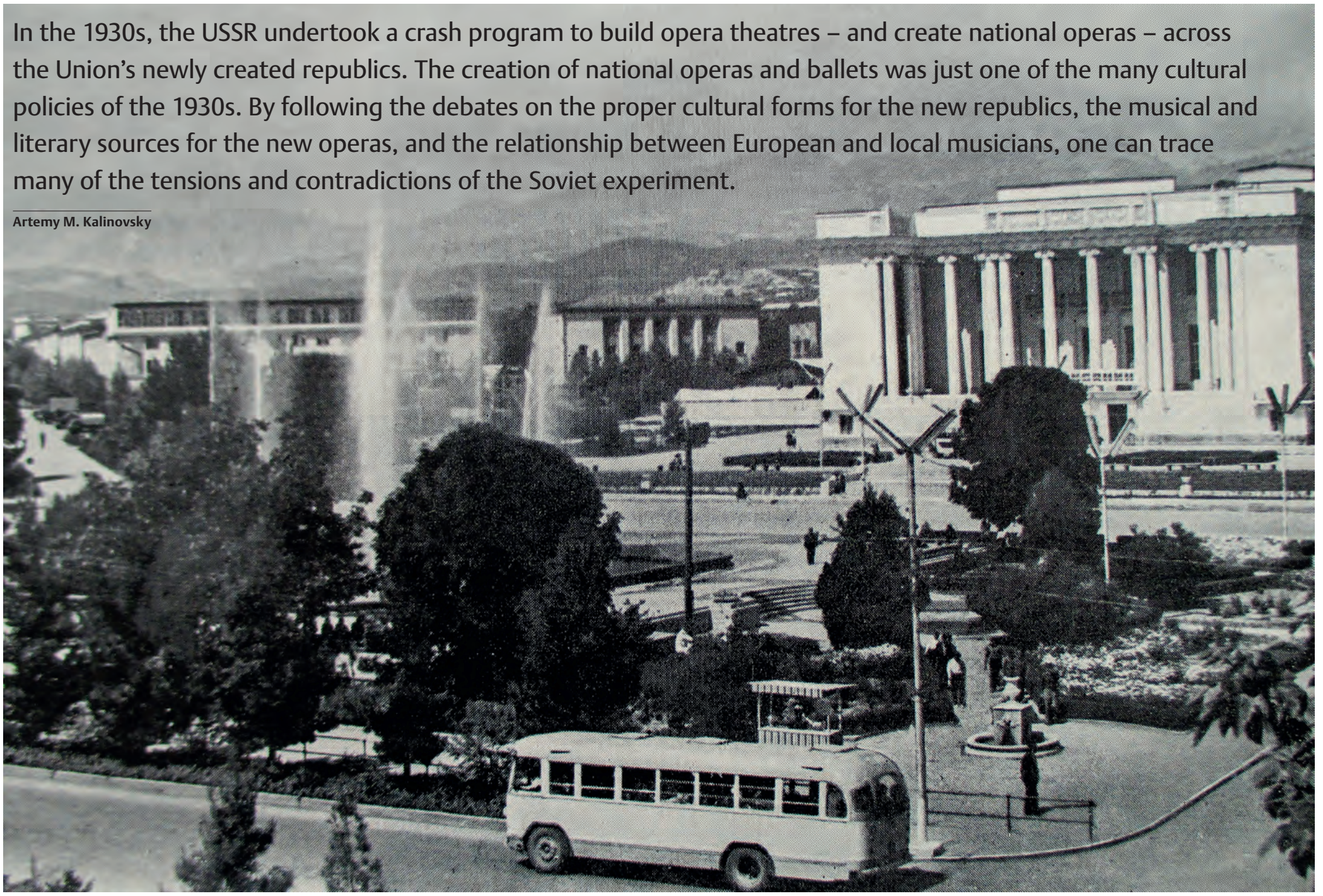
Opera as the highest stage of Socialism

In the 1930s, the USSR undertook a crash program to build opera theatres – and create national operas – across the Union's newly created republics. The creation of national operas and ballets was just one of the many cultural policies of the 1930s. By following the debates on the proper cultural forms for the new republics, the musical and literary sources for the new operas, and the relationship between European and local musicians, one can trace many of the tensions and contradictions of the Soviet experiment.

Artemy M. Kalinovsky



Above: The Opera in Dushanbe, *Architektura SSSR*, October 1972.

THE FIRST FEW MONTHS I spent in Tajikistan in the summer of 2011 I paid little attention to the Saddridin Ayni Theater of Opera and Ballet. Situated on a square off its main thoroughfare, Rudaki Avenue, the white neoclassical structure was impressive, but its existence seemed unsurprising – after all, every Soviet republican capital had an opera theater, and many medium sized provincial cities did too. (My father, an opera singer, had first fallen in love with the form attending performances in Donetsk in the years after the Great Patriotic War. Donetsk was the closest city to the factory town where he grew up.) In any case, it was already June when I arrived and the season was winding down, so for the moment the theater became for me what it was for many of the city's residents – a backdrop to the beer and kebab tents spread out along the fountains in the square.

A year later, I was sitting in a Moscow archive when I came across a surprising document: an order to speed up construction of the opera theater in Stalinabad (as Dushanbe was known between 1929 and 1961), and several other cities. What surprised me was the date – didn't the Soviet Union have bigger things to worry about on the eve of war than building opera houses in far-flung parts of the USSR? I became fascinated with the story of the opera; whilst tracing the history of the theater through archives in Dushanbe and Moscow, Soviet periodicals, and tracking down people who still remembered Soviet-Tajik opera in its heyday, I realized that it held important lessons for me as someone researching economic development in the Soviet era. In the history of Tajik opera, I would find echoes of all of the major contradictions and dilemmas of the Soviet era: between the promise of anti-colonialism and the persistent legacy of imperialism, the celebration of national difference and the drive towards homogenization, the goal of rapid development and transformation and the reality of persistent material shortages.

National liberation and European civilization

The Soviet idea of development was revolutionary – defined by a break with the past – but also teleological. Literary culture was higher than oral culture; polyphony was more advanced than unisonal music. These were, however, not firm beliefs, and the emphasis on the development of 'high' culture, even at its height in the 1930s, sat uneasily with a veneration of everything 'folk', while the need to define a sharp break with the past often gave way to a reverence of 'classical' cultural production, major literary and artistic figures, and even forms. This confusion helped limit the dominance of any one cultural idea and created the space where the definition of 'national culture' could be contested and negotiated.

Although the 1920s are seen as the decade of freedom and experimentation in the arts and the 1930s that of Stalinist bureaucracy bringing the arts under strict control, Katerina Clark reminds us that the latter decade, despite a growing xenophobia and isolationism, saw the biggest push to not just engage with 'universal' culture in literature, architecture, and other arts, but also to make Moscow (and, by extension, the Soviet Union) that culture's centre. This bid for cultural leadership took place in the context of continued insecurity about Russia's culture advancement relative to Europe.[1] In attempting to bring European techniques to Central Asian music, Soviet composers were not simply looking for fusion, but for the connections that showed the universality of cultures just as they were insistently celebrating their individual particularities.

The 1930s was the decade when major Russian composers like Glinka, Tchaikovsky, and 'the mighty handful' were 'rediscovered.' Marina Frolova-Walker connects the mission of these Russian composers, who drew inspiration from traditional Russian folk music, with the 'national opera' projects of the Soviet period. Glinka's and Rimsky-Korsakov's operas drew on epic and heroic Russian legends; these were lionized in the 1930s and formed a model for the new 'national' operas. Taking their cues from German romanticism, these composers codified the music they heard in Russia's villages and found ways of incorporating them into their own composition (either through 'quotation' or 'assimilation').[2]

The creation of Russian opera and ballet had put Russia on the cultural map of Europe; European audiences and critics appreciated the touch of exoticism developed within familiar and respected cultural forms. It was proof that Russia was an equal in cultural terms, not just as a military power.[3] For the USSR in the 1930s, the creation of 'national' operas for its newly 'liberated' peoples was thus simultaneously proof that Moscow was the true centre of a 'universal' culture (and not of a more provincial, imperialist, bourgeois European one) and that the Soviet Union was helping these nations achieve the kind of elevation that Russia itself had reached vis-à-vis those people who had once looked down on it as something rather wild and uncultured.

Specialists and melodists

Like other development projects, the creation of theatres, orchestras, and especially operas involved groups of specialists who came to organize, teach, and supervise. The idea was that the development of local culture could be accelerated through the exchange of knowledge and expertise: Europeans brought the technical and professional skills, the Tajiks the local knowledge. Stage directors and voice teachers, young composers and choreographers all became a part of this cultural mission. In the periphery these relatively young composers, directors, and musicians could find room for experimentation and creativity that would be limited in the more crowded cultural capitals of Moscow and Leningrad.

The best known of the specialists was Sergei Artemevich Balasanyan, an Armenian born in what became Soviet Turkmenistan and product of Moscow Conservatory's department of musical theory and history. Balasanyan volunteered to go to Tajikistan in 1936 to help prepare the republic for the festival of Tajik culture that was to be held in Moscow, excited by the opportunity to be a part of the creation of professional Tajik music. Once there he took on the roles of "composer, social-musical worker, [obschestvenno-muzykal'nii deiatel'], folklorist, and pedagogue."[4] He would stay in Tajikistan until 1943, serving as the first chairman of the Tajik Composers Union and the artistic director of the opera theatre. Balasanyan's work with 'Eastern music' did not end with Tajikistan. Moscow's engagement with post-colonial states (and cultures) from the mid 1950s gave Balasanyan new opportunities, and a list of his compositions in the late 1950s and early 1960s seems to follow the itinerary of Nikita Khrushchev's travels: 'Afghan suites' for orchestra in 1956, scoring for radio plays in India and Indonesia, arrangements of children songs from the latter country, a ballet, and a series of songs based on poems by the Indian writer Rabindrant Tagor. He would also write several pieces on African and Latin American themes.

If Balasanyan became the most famous of the 'specialists' to work in Tajikistan, Aleksandr Lensky is the composer who remained the longest and had the biggest influence on the musical institutions created in Tajikistan. Like Balasanyan, Lensky came from the periphery (the Mordavian SSR) to Moscow to study, then went to Tajikistan in 1937. He worked as artistic director of the Lahuti Theatre from 1937 to 1941, and later directed the Tajik Philharmonic. Lensky was the

composer of the first Tajik ballet as well as an opera and a number of orchestral pieces. He also became the first secretary of the Tajik Union of Composers after it was founded in 1954, which he tried to use as a bully pulpit to advance the cause of 'modernization' in Tajikistan. Lensky's relationship with local cultural figures became increasingly strained, however, and his failure to learn any Tajik cost him the respect of intellectuals.[5]

What's so revolutionary about opera?

Whatever the project of creating national opera was supposed to be in theory, its realization in practice was a process of constant challenge and renegotiation. For one, there was the problem of defining what was the proper source of national culture. Was it the folk music that ethnographers and musicologists tried to record in villages? Or was it *Shashmaqam,* the music favoured by the elite of cities like Bukhara and Samarqand? And what about plot – did one draw on local legends, socialist themes, or great historical epics like the *Shahnama*? Moreover, how did one combine Central Asian music, which was unisonal, with European forms that called for polyphony? Indeed, the first productions focused on safe 'socialist' themes: a musical called 'Lola' which celebrated the life of Tajik peasants, and the Vose Uprising, "a heroic uprising of the Tajik people against the Emir's oppression."[6] The libretto for the latter was written by Mirzo Turson-Zade and A. Dekhoti, both of whom had already made names for themselves creating the new Tajik-Soviet poetry and were leading figures in the Tajik Union of Writers.

Poets like Mirzo Turson-zade, Abdulqasem Lahuti, and A. Dekhoti may have been enthusiastic about adopting new forms, but they also stood their ground to see that those forms were used to preserve and spread what they saw as their cultural heritage. They criticized the composers working in the musical theatre and the opera for focusing only on 'folk' elements. "The problem is that the classical [heritage] of Tajikistan is completely forgotten," Lahuti complained in 1939. "It is not right that everything is being built entirely on folklore. The inheritance of world culture needs to be used, and we need to pay attention to classical compositions."[7] This applied both to themes and to the music itself. Tursun-zade called it a travesty that party officials had labelled *Shashmaqam* 'music composed for the Emir' and refused to support musicians who could play it. "They do not understand that this music comes from the people."[8] Turson-zade and Lahuti's views won the day. Balasanyan's next opera, 'The Blacksmith Kova,' was based on episodes from the great Persian epic *Shahnama*.

Although the mass reception of the opera and other performances at the ten-day festival in 1941 are unknown, it was celebrated in *Pravda* as one of the finest of the 'national' festivals. Samuil Samosud, the conductor who would one day lead the Bolshoi, wrote a glowing response, noting that while it was clear that the performers still needed more training, what he had seen was already a remarkable achievement. Samosud also underlined that the opera's very existence testified to the USSR's commitment to blend egalitarianism with respect for and promotion of high culture: "We have already gotten used to the fact that every republic, every large oblast centre has an opera theatre. At the same time the largest theatres of Europe and America – not just now, during wartime, but even during peacetime – did not have permanent opera companies. This is easily explainable: in capitalist countries, everything, including art, is translated into the language of money. And opera does not bring big profits. Here, in the USSR, opera theatres are surrounded by the most serious attention on the part of the party and government. That is why the Tajik people were able to so quickly educate its own conductors, musicians, singers, and ballet performers."[9] The economic irrationality of creating an opera theatre, even in conditions as unfavourable as those in Stalinabad, was actually something to celebrate, something that showed how different Soviet power was from European imperialism and Western capitalism in general.

Who is the opera for?

Within Tajikistan itself, responses to the project ranged from wholesale resistance to engagement. The director of the musical theatre complained in 1938 that "bourgeois nationalists" had been carrying on a "fierce battle" against the introduction of vocal training and notation because it "perverted national culture…Singers were intimidated, their lessons were deliberately interrupted, they were provoked, bullied…everything was done to discredit and disgrace the elements of musical and vocal culture that are so necessary for each artist of a musical theatre."[10] There were those who saw polyphony as "foreign to Tajik music, as ruining and distorting Tajik music… as Russification of Tajik music."[11] And many years later, the Tajik Union of Composers was confronted with the fact that radio stations in Tajikistan largely avoided playing its members compositions, "limiting [their broadcasts] primarily to one-voice singing."[12]

The creation of a Tajik Union of Composers in the 1950s was supposed to strengthen the position of Soviet-Tajik music within the republic. To an extent it did this, giving the remaining Russian composer in Tajikistan, Aleksandr Lensky, a bully pulpit from which to agitate for harmonic music and the institutional basis to find resources and reward composers who went along with the scheme. But it also provided a venue for Tajik composers, musicians, and occasionally other cultural figures to challenge these priorities and define what was acceptable as Tajik-Soviet music. Every new piece was now performed for a committee that repeatedly challenged music for not being 'Tajik' enough. Eventually some of these critics would challenge all of the assumptions of the Soviet musical project: that a 'professional' was someone who had studied at the conservatory and knew how to arrange music. At the Union's second congress in February 1956, Lensky's complaints were rebutted by cultural figures and officials. Why were *Shashmaqam* singers any less professional than those trained to sing in the Italian style? A culture that had risen so high, and valued in so many countries, said one speaker "was a great achievement of our ancestors that we have no right to reject." The poet Abdusalom Dekhoti agreed, adding "is this the way that cultured peoples act towards their ancestors?"[13]

Dekhoti's challenge to Lenski's notions of culturedness and professionalism proved timely. The thaw was underway, and the room to define and redefine these terms was growing. In 1957 the Tajik Union of Composers held a plenum in which they denounced the 'attacks on heterophonic music' that had previously been so prominent. The plenum sparked a whole series of articles in *Tojikiston soveti* on the future of Tajik music. Z. Shakhidi, the chairman of the Union (and composer of the opera 'Komde and Modan,' which premiered in 1960) noted that the composers, scholars, writers, and listeners who took part in the debate on the pages of *Tojikiston soveti* were right in their criticism of Tajik composers who ignored unison, which is the "basis of national music."[14] As the first Tajik head of the Union, and among the first Moscow trained composers to work in Tajikistan, however, Shakhidi defended the project of 'modernization' with the zeal of a convert, and felt that the criticism had gone too far. Composers had to know the musical culture of the people, he would argue, but "if they don't master modern musical theory, if they do not know world musical culture, they will never be able to raise the musical culture of their people."[15] Likewise, he advocated professionalizing vocal culture, which he did not see as incompatible with maintaining national characteristics: "uniting the virtues of one and the other, one can create something whole and wonderful."[16] His successor similarly had to fend off criticism that Tajik composers failed to find an audience because they were neglecting classical and folk traditions.[17]

Opera never achieved a mass following in Tajikistan, or even much support among the elite. It seems that performing for a nearly empty theatre was more or less the norm throughout the Soviet period (the Lahuti theatre, which performed drama in translation as well as original Tajik pieces, was supposedly much more popular). Of course, the theatre would be filled on occasion by groups of pioneers, workers, and visiting dignitaries. The proponents of opera and polyphony in Tajik music complained that the problem was with the listener, or more precisely, the institutions that were supposed to educate the listener. They complained that radio stations did not play enough symphonic music, to which station directors replied that their programming was based on requests from the public, and the public preferred either 'Tajik' music or popular songs.

Continued on next page >

Below: The Opera Square, Pavel Yevteyev, 1974. *USSR Tajikistan.* Novosti Press Publishing House.

Opera as the highest stage of Socialism *continued*

Above: Opera Dushanbe, 2016, photo by Irna Hofman

Temples of modernity

The most difficult aspect of researching the story of Tajik opera is trying to understand what it meant to Tajiks beyond the elite. While I did meet some Tajiks who reported attending the opera frequently and who seemed to know the biographies of all of the theatre's major performers, even most of the relatively Russianized intelligentsia seemed to be at best lukewarm about the theatre. But the response of one film director was particularly interesting. Although he said he hardly attended the opera, he was not immune to the effect that it produced: "When I was first brought here as a young pioneer, I remember that the inside of the theatre, the performance – it took my breath away." In his view, it did not matter if Tajiks did not attend the opera; the purpose was rather to demonstrate what Soviet power was capable of, both in terms of raising the building, but also in terms of creating an art form that was so dependent on a high level of professional training and organization.

According to a legend that appears to have some currency in Dushanbe, the opera building was constructed using bricks from recently demolished mosques. While this is almost certainly false, the legend's existence is instructive. As my interlocutor suggested, the building was constructed as a 'temple' to Soviet power. Similar things could be said about other facilities that were constructed as part of the Soviet modernization and nation-building programmes, such as libraries, universities, government buildings, and palaces of culture. They served simultaneously as markers of the people's advancement to national consciousness and socialist consciousness, and as a reminder that their liberation came with the help of Soviet power. In the post-war period especially they would also serve to demonstrate the USSR's egalitarian modernization to the outside world. The anthropologist Bruce Grant engages this contradiction in a helpful way; on the one hand, he points out that "the Soviet cultural project was unabashedly public, reified, intended for mass consumption and intended most importantly to be widely shared." Yet in his own fieldwork he found libraries of atheistic literature where he was consistently the only visitor and houses of culture where musicians brought in by helicopter played to an empty hall. Nevertheless, Grant argues, by their existence and place in the city both institutions helped advance a "perceived project of Soviet civilization."[18]

Similarly, the opera theatre did not stand alone. Rather, it was a symbolic centrepiece of all of the investment that went in to cultural construction in the republic. In the 1950s, composers and other cultural figures fought for the creation of a conservatory, which they eventually got.[19] Meanwhile educators and local party activists from across the republic petitioned for music schools, theatres, and resources to put together local choirs and mount amateur productions.[20] The logic was clear – to create an opera theatre, one needed to train musicians, singers, and composers – and to find potential professionals one needed music schools and amateur productions. (The latter, too, helped to train new listeners). The fact that, like the radio, these schools may have professionalized 'traditional' music, rather than created professionals for Soviet Tajik culture, is almost besides the point. Development always has unintended consequences. All of these cultural institutions together are what made up 'Soviet Tajik' culture, with the opera theatre as its main temple. It did not matter that it often stood empty or that the local interpretations of its faith differed significantly from what was proselytized in the capital.

All Soviet republics developed national operas, and their fates since independence have varied. Kazakhstan, whose budget until recently was flush with money from hydrocarbons and where the president's daughter is a devoted opera fan, has invested in the opera and even built new facilities. In Turkmenistan, opera was banned between 2001 and 2009. In Tajikistan the theater of opera and ballet survived not only the civil war (1992-1997) and economic chaos that followed, but even the persistent effort to define an authentic Tajik culture. With help from foreign donors, the government even refurbished the theater and hired an Italian conductor to serve as artistic director for three years. Since my initial visit in 2011 I have gone to over a dozen performances. Russian and European classics such as *Eugene Onegi*n and *La Traviata* share the schedule with 'national' operas like *Komde and Madan*. Often, the theater was almost empty, except it seems, for myself and some friends of the performers. Other times it was almost full, with an enthusiastic and engaged crowd. Although it seems far from the lives of most Tajiks today, the theater has its supporters. When I interviewed the theatre's director in 2013, he proudly gave me a glossy album that had been published to celebrate the theatre's 70th anniversary. It was called 'The Temple of Fine Art'.

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Keeping religion alive: performing Pamiri identity in Central Asia

The inhabitants of the river valleys of the Pamir Mountains in Tajik Badakhshan cherish a rich and multilingual tradition of oral poetry, sung on a variety of festive occasions and commemorative gatherings. For the Ismailis of Tajik Badakhshan (an autonomous region within the Central Asian republic of Tajikistan), the performance of religious poetry, called *maddoh* or *maddohkhoni,* is an important devotional practice. In Central Asia, the Ismailis form a relatively isolated Shiite minority in an overwhelmingly Sunni environment. During the civil war in Tajikistan (1992-1997), the performance of *maddoh* gained a new dimension as a powerful vehicle for expressing Badakhshani or Pamiri identity.

Gabrielle van den Berg

Language, religion and identity in Tajik Badakhshan

While Central Asian Muslims are predominantly adherents of Sunni Islam, a community of Ismaili Shiite Muslims live in the Pamir Mountains, in the area of Badakhshan, situated on both sides of the Oxus River Valley in present day Tajikistan and Afghanistan. The Central Asian Ismailis, who refer to themselves as Pamiri or Badakhshani, belong to the Nizari branch of Ismailism, and thus are followers of the Agha Khan, the 49th Nizari Imam. In Tajik Badakhshan, Ismailism plays an important role in uniting the population of this area, who speak a variety of different languages, amongst which languages of the Eastern Iranian Pamir language group stand out. The languages of the Shughni-Rushani group, alongside Wakhi, are the most widely spoken Pamir languages of this area.[1] Persian in its Tajik form (Tajik Persian) is the first language of some of the Badakhshanis, and a second language for most of them, as it is the official language of Tajikistan, the language of education and the *lingua franca* of old. Russian too is widely known, as part of Soviet heritage and as a result of the present economic situation, which has led to a steady increase of Badakhshani migrant workers in Russia today. Religion and, to some extent, language function as important identity markers that set apart the Badakhshanis from the other inhabitants of Tajikistan, who are Sunnis.

Conversion narrative: the position of Nosiri Khusraw

The Ismaili community of Badakhshan believe that they were converted from fire-worshipping to Ismailism in the 11th century AD by the famous poet and philosopher and champion of Ismailis, Nosiri Khusraw (Nāṣir-i Khusraw), and that they have always inhabited this region. Nosiri Khusraw hailed from Qubodiyon, a village in Khatlon, an area neighbouring Badakhshan. After visiting the Ismaili Fatimid caliph in Cairo, he returned to his homeland as a missionary. Nosiri Khusraw is therefore the *pir*, or religious guide, of the Badakhshanis, and today he is highly revered. Many poems contain references to Nosiri Khusraw, and many places are dedicated to his memory. Trees and springs which are said to have been visited by him, are now holy places where people come to find a blessing.[2]

Echoes of a history of persecution

Being a Shiite minority, the position of Ismailis has been a difficult one for many centuries. They were considered, within as well as outside Central Asia, as heretics, and treated as such. Though the history of the Ismailis in present-day Central Asia is to a large extent obscure, it is well possible that the Ismailis of Badakhshan live in this area because of the persecution they suffered by zealous Sunnis in the past. They found a place of refuge in the inaccessible Pamir mountains where they lived a harsh, isolated but relatively safe life, until colonial rule gradually opened up the area from the beginning of 19th century onwards and brought an end to the relative isolation of the Badakhshanis. During the Soviet period, matters of religion were temporarily pushed into obscurity, though regionalism *(mahalchigi)*, in which religion also plays a role, remained an omnipresent socio-political phenomenon: one's regional background mattered in both Soviet and post-Soviet Tajikistan. Immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, not only regional background but also religious identity manifested themselves as major issues, demonstrated by the outbreak of civil war and its subsequent development. The lingering prejudice against the so-called heretic Badakhshanis proved to be very much alive in post-Soviet Tajikistan, and they fell victim to violence and deadly persecutions in the capital Dushanbe in 1992 and 1993, under the pretext of politics. To many Badakhshanis, these persecutions were no less than a genocide attempt. Since then, the Badakhshanis have emphasized their own religious and ethnic identity more strongly than before. One of the means to confirm this identity became a renewed interest in Ismaili religion, visible in the revival of the performance of religious poetry, a revival that had already begun in the years before, when the new Soviet policy of glasnost had facilitated the expression of religion.

Above: Members of the Shirinbekov family playing rubob and setor, Kuhi La'l, Badakhshan, photo by Jan van Belle.

***Maddohkhoni* as religious education and devotional practice**

The tradition of performing religious poetry, *maddoh* (*maddāḥ*) or *maddohkhoni (maddāḥkhāni),* is both a devotional practice and a form of religious education. *Maddoh* literally means praise; in *maddohkhoni*, 'the singing of *maddoh*', Ismaili teachings are presented in a poetical form, sometimes in specific terms, but often in more generic terms, by way of recommendations to lead a cautious and pious life. In a performance of *maddoh*, long cycles of (Tajik) Persian poems are sung, generally by one to three male musicians who accompany themselves by a fixed set of musical instruments, among which the *rubobi pomiri* or Pamiri lute is prominent. Many of these poems can be described as mystical; a fair number of them are ascribed to the great Sufi poet Rumi (1207-1273). Other poems praise the heroic deeds of the central figures of Badakhshani Ismailism. It is noteworthy that Tajik Persian is not the mother language of the majority of Badakhshanis, and that Persian in this specific tradition functions as a liturgical language.[3]

A tradition outside the scope of 'nationalisation' in a Soviet framework

During the Soviet period, many genres of music found new functions and contexts: taken out of their original, often ritual context, music was now also performed on stage in state theatres by large ensembles of professional musicians, who were trained in state institutions. These genres thus became part of a newly formed national music tradition, which in turn influenced and adapted the perspective people had of this music. Though Badakhshani music with a more secular character was also part of this process, as an obvious religious genre, *maddohkhoni* remained entirely outside of this 'theatrification'.[4] Musicians who performed on stage in public were in some cases also *maddohkhons*, 'singers of *maddoh*' in private, but in many cases *maddohkhons* were non-professional musicians who performed *maddoh* in the seclusion of the village community in the framework of religious commemoration, as a communal service; specifically, but not exclusively, as a mourning ritual. *Maddohkhons* are by definition non-professionals in the sense that they do not make a living out of *maddohkhoni;* even if they are professional musicians otherwise. During the civil war, under the harsh circumstances of repression and isolation, *maddohkhoni* gained new prominence amongst younger Badakhshanis and amongst musicians who previously were not involved in *maddohkhoni*. Most *maddohkhons* learned the canon of music and poetry connected to the tradition of *maddohkhoni* in their own village or town, from their father or grandfather or a neighbour, and on the basis of a *bayoz (az ruyi bayoz)* or notebook, indicating poetical anthologies, sometimes in Arabo-Persian script, sometimes in Tajik-Cyrilic script, kept safe in the family circle. Since the profession of Ismaili faith is now less restricted, especially since the Agha Khan came to meet his followers in Tajik Badakhshan for the first time in 1995, *maddohkhoni* has acquired a new public dimension, with stage performances and primarily local television broadcasts.

Occasions for performing *maddoh*

The performance of *maddoh* remains to be connected, however, to certain, fixed occasions. *Maddoh* can be sung all night long as part of mourning ceremonies, presided by a so-called *khalifa,* who contextualizes the poetry sung by the *maddohkhons* during this and other ceremonies. *Maddoh* may also be performed on Thursday evenings, on Fridays, or on request; a more specific occasion is the annual commemoration *(ayyom)* of a holy grave or *mazor*. Badakhshan has many such graves, in which saints or *pirs* have been buried; these graves are small stone buildings marked by horns of the ibex. They are usually situated just outside the village and are carefully maintained; they stand out as landscape markers of devotion.[5]

Maddohkhoni is the major form of religious commemoration for the Ismailis of Tajik Badakhshan. Though devotional practices based on music and poetry are current amongst Ismaili communities elsewhere, and indeed amongst Muslim communities at large, the context, form and development of the tradition of *maddohkhoni* are in many ways unique. In the recent past, when Tajikistan gained independence and plunged into civil war, *maddohkhoni* started to function prominently as a powerful means to express Pamiri-Ismaili identity. In present-day Tajikistan, the tradition continues to evolve under the influence of renewed ties with the global Ismaili community and new forms of patronage that come along.

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Remembering Manas

The Manas epic takes up a specific position in Central Asian commemoration culture. Unlike the central figures of the cults of Genghiz Khan and Timur, Manas has not proven to be a historic figure. Attempts to harness this mythical ancestor for political purposes date back to the Soviet period and continue until today. As I will show, however, the internal dynamics of storytelling that make Manas an attractive tool for nation building, eventually backfire and undermine the authority of those who employed it.

Nienke van der Heide

Tourists on the Ala-Too Square in front of the statue of Manas. (photo by author)

ON 27 NOVEMBER 2015, at noon, thirteen Manas narrators (Manaschïs) embark on an enormous endeavour: they will narrate the ancient oral epic 'Manas' for seven days and seven nights on end, unceasingly. The Manaschïs will take turns, picking up the storyline where the other has ended. Before they commence, the Manaschïs and the organisers of the event sacrifice a mare in honour of the ancestral spirits, hoping that the spirits of the epic characters will guide and protect the Manaschïs during their seven day recital.

Dressed in their finest robes, the Manaschïs sit on a decorated padded plaid at the head of a yurt-shaped building. In a cadence specific to Manas narrating, they recount of the deeds of Manas, his suffering, his mistakes, his victories. Hundreds of people visit the event in the Ethnocomplex Dasmiya, in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek. They spend a few hours in the yurt-shaped venue to listen to the tales of Manas and his companions. Some of the visitors, among whom a number of parliamentary deputies, have come to ask for the Manaschïs' blessings for their work. They bring along livestock to sacrifice or gifts for the narrators and pray with the Manaschïs that are waiting for their turn to narrate.

On the final day of the recital marathon, the sponsor of the event, a traditional dress company, presents the narrators with an expensive laptop computer. Three of the Manaschïs are awarded a quality watch by the prime minister. As he hands them over on stage, the prime minister announces that from this day on, the 4th of December will be an official national holiday: Manas Day.

Manas narration as commemoration

Each Manas narration is an act of commemoration. As the story unfolds, an imagery of ancient practices and wisdom is conjured up, creating in the listeners' minds a connection with people from a distant past – individuals with names and personalities who many Kyrgyz consider to be their direct ancestors. The old ways of living become almost palpable, the trials and tribulations tangible, the heroic acts a source of pride, the defeat and treason a source of grief, shame and anger. Through the tales of Manas and his companions, narrator and audience become emotionally engaged in a nomadic past in all its complexities –without having to live the tribulations themselves. In sharing these emotions, the audience experiences a connectedness in which the past is romanticised and alternative ways of living are juxtaposed to the present, and actually experienced, tribulations.

Not surprisingly, political elites have attempted to harness this connective potential for political purposes. In the history of the Manas epic, political actors ranging from nomadic manaps, to Soviet Party leaders, to post-Soviet politicians, have incorporated the Manas epic into their political discourses. As a heroic tale, however, the Manas epic has a dynamic of its own. A story cannot survive for centuries if it does not speak of evil as well as good, of discord as well as community, of failure as well as success. Whereas in political rhetoric, the good must always conquer the bad, a good story surpasses this good-and-bad divide and portrays the complexities involved in surviving in a social world. The richness of an epic tale provides a versatility that seems to suit politicians' purposes very well: there is always a storyline to match a particular political position. As history has shown, however, the dynamics of the tale cannot be controlled and the multiplicity of social meanings awarded to the epic always catches up with the political player.

Storytelling and transcendence

In Kyrgyzstan today, many consider the Manas epic to be more than just a tale. Manas narration is surrounded with mystique. Manaschïs speak of dream inspiration: most of them have been called to their profession in a vocation dream and they often receive images and storylines through dreams and visions. Occasionally, Manaschïs will even recite in their sleep, performing a recital that is audible for their fellow sleepers, but will not wake up the Manaschï. There are many tales of people in the audience being healed after listening to Manas narration. Many people understand this by reference to the transcendental nature of narrating: Manaschïs are in direct contact with ancestral spirits, thus opening up a connection through which healing energy emanates.

The idea of transcendence through storytelling is not particular to the Manas epic. Many anthropologists have described instances of the human capacity for "a unique exteriority of being – an ex-tasis – that locates us 'elsewhere' and 'otherwise' even as it is grounded in and tethered to our live body's 'here' and 'now'" and have pointed out how this capacity for transcendence is mediated through storytelling in oral or visual form.[1] Anthropologist Birgit Meyer, who discusses Pentacostally inspired Ghanaian video movies, speaks of trans-figuration to describe "practises through which an imaginary expressed through (...) narratives, including visions and dreams, is pictorialized in movies and feeds back into narratives and the inner imagination".[2] In Manas narration we can discern a similar dialectical relationship between dreams and stories, as narrators and audiences find the extraordinary made imaginable when these images link up to their inner imaginations. As this imagery in synchronised in storytelling, a profound sense of connectedness is created that exceeds verbalised commitment to the ethnic group.

In this experience of transcendence, Manas and his companions are remembered as mythical and true ancestors at the same time. Although historical proof of their actual existence is lacking, for many people the connection they sense when encountering Manas in narration or other art forms, or during their dreams and prayers, cannot be discarded that easily. However, as these experiences are typically cast into an ethno-nationalist framework, in which the Manas epic comes to represent the pride of the Kyrgyz nation, empiricist approaches to the epic are inevitably evoked. For those who are excluded from the Kyrgyz nation, questions on the origins of Manas and the Manas epic evolve around the idea that perhaps, attempts to use the epic as symbol for the Kyrgyz nation are based on falsifications and illusions, leading towards misguided and possibly dangerous policies.

Manas and Kyrgyzness: the dialectics of group identification and nation building

In ethno-nationalist rhetoric, the Manas epic is uncritically described as a work of art that captures the essence of the great and ancient Kyrgyz nation. In Western scholarship, on the other hand, the notion that the Kyrgyz nation is a very recent Soviet invention, and that present-day nationalism can only be understood as a product of the Soviet nationalities policy, is often accepted in an equally uncritical fashion, leading to a tendency to regard ethnic symbols such as the Manas epic as objects of political machinations. The intricate relationship between popular group identifications and political harnessing of these sentiments are too often simplified to stress one side of what is in fact a dialectical relationship. It takes attentive and careful study of the interconnectedness of Kyrgyz ethnic identification and nation building efforts to overcome this binary approach.

If we examine the first recordings of the Manas epic closely, to unravel the interconnection of the epic and Kyrgyz identification, we find that by the 1880s, Manas was not portrayed as an ethnic Kyrgyz in the tales. Manas was referred to as a Muslim, a Sarï Nogoi and a Sart, but never as a Kyrgyz. The very few cases where the Kyrgyz are mentioned, it is in a derogatory way; for instance when Manas' father scolds "the Kyrgyz who never stop to be greedy, who keep begging and drinking and are never full",[3] or when the narrator tells of how Manas killed all Kyrgyz boys and took the Kyrgyz girls.[4] Still, the epic, as well as the narrators, are described as a Kyrgyz epic (or rather: kara-Kyrgyz, a Russian ethnonym that is understood to denote the ancestors of the present-day Kyrgyz) by the collectors of the tales, Wilhelm Radloff and Chokan Valikhanov. By the early 1920s, in the version recorded from Sagïnbai Orozbakov's mouth, Manas is undoubtedly an ethnic Kyrgyz, as well as a Muslim.[5] We can thus conclude that before the Soviet nationalities policy was implemented, a sense of Kyrgyzness was connected to the epic, be it not as unequivocally as it is today.

Connected to the past, connected in the present

During the seventy years of Soviet regime, a variety of attitudes to and policies on the Manas epic can be discerned. In the early years, there was little support for Manaschïs and the collectors of the epic, much to the frustration of the Great Manaschï Sagïnbai Orozbakov.[6] As the national delimitation proceeded, during which the Tsarist territory was structured into ethnically organised socialist republics and autonomous regions, a new approach to oral epics arose. Understood as folklore, oral epics formed an integral part of the nationalities policy that aimed to create a structure that was 'nationalist in form, socialist in content'. By the 1930s, strengthened by Maxim Gorki's appeal to view folklore as the expression of the deepest moral aspirations of the masses, a number of Kyrgyz writers and scholars had managed to publish Manas verses. The Manas epic in written form was connected to the effort of bringing literacy to the nomads. At the same time, the Soviet regime portrayed itself as rescuer of folk art, in the same way it had rescued the people from the yoke of their feudal lords and Muslim clerics.

During the 1936-38 purges, however, most members of the cultural and political elite were murdered, including those who had championed the Manas epic.[7] The Soviet policies that had invoked Manas as a folkloric masterpiece that could entice the Kyrgyz nomads into modernity dwindled in the face of Stalinist terror. This was the first time that using the Manas for political purposes turned against the protagonists – although the Manas epic seems to have played a minor role in the downfall of the new political elite.

When in the 1940s the window for ethnic projects was opened in an attempt to keep all nations committed to the Great Patriotic War, Manas activities resumed, only to be discredited again by the 1950s. At a national conference on the Manas epic, following a wave of condemning national epics of the Tatar, Turkmen, Nogai, Kazakh and others, a compromise was reached: the Manas epic was considered to be a respectable exemplar of the art of the Kyrgyz people, but it had to be purged of feudal-clerical elements in order to fit the Soviet project. The connection with Kyrgyzness remained intact, but only within the strict boundaries of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Already in 1974, however, the state once again capitalised on the connective power of Manas imagery by naming the newly built airport 'Manas Airport', and in 1981 a set of seven statues of historic Manaschïs and three characters from the epic was erected outside the capital's Philharmonic building. By the 1980s, academic commitment to original texts rekindled the publication of the original recordings of the 1910s, including the allegedly feudal-clerical elements. With the advent of perestroika, the internal dynamics of the Manas tale swirled its political significance out of the course delineated by the Soviet regime. No longer confined to the straightjacket of socialist ideology, other elements of the epic were foregrounded, now representing a pre-Soviet past that originated in times previous to Russian domination. Even though the appraisal of Russians interference in Kyrgyz life remains a topic of dispute in Kyrgyzstan today, with a large majority stressing the positive influence of the Russians, over time, voices that recount Soviet and Russian domination have increased, sometimes accumulating in a blaming narrative where the Soviet regime is held responsible for suppressing vital elements of Kyrgyz culture. The Manas epic, as the quintessence of Kyrgyz culture, now came to represent an ancient nation in its struggle for independence.

Harnessing the Manas in independent Kyrgyzstan

When the Soviet Union disintegrated, nation building assumed an entirely different dynamic, as the Kyrgyz Republic was no longer a unit within the Soviet structure but a political entity of its own. For many residents, this meant a reorientation of their ethnicity in the light of citizenship. People of Kyrgyz ethnicity were suddenly the owners of an independent country, people of other ethnicities often felt they had unexpectedly become immigrants. President Akayev promised to strengthen Kyrgyz nationhood, but was equally committed to creating a civic state in which inhabitants of different ethnicities felt at home. The violent clashes between Özbeks and Kyrgyz in the Ferghana valley, as well as the imminent brain drain of Russians, Jews and Germans, were worries that kept the Akayev government from pursuing an ethno-nationalist course without careful consideration. Building on the Soviet reputation of the Manas epic as valuable cultural heritage, Akayev proposed seven principles based on the epic that could function as independent Kyrgyzstan's national ideology. These principles carefully navigated the epic's controversial themes: ethnic tensions, religious antagonism and the threat posed by China. Instead, the principles spoke of 'ethnic pride', 'friendship between nationalities', 'relentless work and advanced industry', 'respect for nature' and 'humanism, nobility and forgiveness'.

In a grand display of Kyrgyz cultural richness, a UNESCO-sponsored commemoration of 1,000 years of the Manas epic was held in 1995. A sumptuous feast featuring an abundance of ethnic symbolism, such as horse sports, decorated yurts and komuz music, was hosted for international guests of standing. The Manas was recited and battle scenes from the epic were acted out by beautifully dressed horseback riders. Popular attitudes towards the festival were ambiguous. Although ethnic pride was boasted and many people were actively and proudly involved in the feast through yurt making competitions and Manas recitals, at the backdrop of a devastated economy, people questioned the government's priorities. Out of the 8 million US$ spent on the commemoration feast, the three Great Manaschïs, who ought to have been the core carriers of the festival, received nothing but a ticket for free public transport and a second-rate wristwatch.

An unanticipated effect of tying Kyrgyz ethnic pride to imagery from the Manas epic, was that identification with the image of the Kyrgyz nomadic spirit was strengthened. During the two popular revolutions that shook independent Kyrgyzstan's political landscape in 2005 and 2010, the idea that the Kyrgyz, as sons of Manas, are a freedom-loving nomadic nation that do not bow to bad leaders was used for drawing courage to remain standing in the face of snipers. In less heated times, both Manaschïs and politicians tried to present the nomadic way of life as an alternative to global capitalism that destroyed Kyrgyzstan's social and environmental fabric. The Manas epic became once again a tool of resistance to the very government that had championed its political significance.

Reasserting ownership of the Manas epic

After independence, people involved in the Manas epic reconstructed the Soviet past as a time when ownership of the Manas epic had been ceded. The Soviet state had incorporated the Manas epic in its cultural activities under the flag of internationalism, but severely restricted the forms in which Manas could be commemorated. Twenty years after independence, Manaschïs gradually introduced new forms of Manas narration that they considered more traditional than Soviet-style performances. The Manas marathon described on this page (see text box) was the second of a seven-day-seven-night Manas narration that has strong potential for becoming a yearly commemoration, as this type of performance both appeals to audiences and yields state support. The successor of socialism, international capitalism, thus did open up the freedom to create new forms of Manas remembrance, but brought along an even more intense experience of loss of agency. In an increasingly pluralised political and religious social landscape, where many people struggle to survive economically, worries about the many potential sources of conflict are ubiquitous.

Manas narration in its present-day context is, as an act of commemoration of a nomadic, pre-socialist and pre-capitalist past, often understood within an ethno-nationalist framework, which provides narrators and audiences with a sense of ownership and agency. Although these practices do not occur in a void outside of the global capitalist system, they create temporary imaginaries of an alternative life where people can envision strife without feeling the actual pain. In this safe heaven, however, the danger of ethnic discord created by ethno-nationalism is often ignored by those who portray the Manas epic as Kyrgyz cultural heritage. The future will tell whether the internal dynamics of the epic tale once again prove to be stronger than those who attempt to harness it for political stability.

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The holy hill of Chech Döbö, where Almambet, Manas' best friend, was supposedly buried. (photo by author)

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Commemorating Tamerlane

One of the ‘great ancestors’ who has been consciously recognized and emulated by contemporary Uzbek elites is Amir Timur, commonly known as Tamerlane (d. 1405). The powerful personality of Timur and his grandiose architectural ambitions fostering state legitimation have made him the most popular symbol of post-Soviet political leadership in modern Uzbekistan. Maria Subtelny defines the rise and rule of Timur as “based on charismatic authority”.[1] Combined with bravery and the ambition to establish a powerful, centralized state, Timur used his charisma to create an entourage of trusted followers who belonged to leading families. In return, these loyal followers were rewarded with booty and high military positions. Although the material artefacts of the Timurid Empire have been widely acknowledged by the Soviet architectural historians, Timur as a state visionary, who created a powerful centralized empire based on a personal following,[2] was not generally recognized prior to 1991.[3] In the post-Soviet period, however, the Timurid legacy has been commemorated as the prototype of strong statehood, documented by Medieval emissaries from Spain to China.

Elena Paskaleva

SEEKING WIDE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION and trying to boost the sense of belonging within the newly independent state,[4] Timur was branded as the father of the Uzbek nation. At present, the historical provenance of Timur and the rich cultural production within the Timurid empire are narrated as apolitical, similar to the rhetoric of the *Ideology of National Independence* – ideology propagated by the official discourse as reflecting authentic Uzbek values and ‘high morality’, presumably widely accepted by the public at large. These virtues are not directly related to politics, but are regarded as elevating ideas that prescribe the ways for the Uzbek people to relate to the present and to aspire to the future.[5] Awareness of the historical glories will help the nation to achieve high goals; the legacy of the great ancestors will guide the nation. In modern Uzbekistan, Timurid heritage is seen as a representation of Timur’s humanistic achievements and state policy is re-enacted through the collective memory of Timur. As a result, one of the most characteristic post-1991 feature of the architectural boom in the Uzbek capital Tashkent is that the majority of the state-sponsored buildings draw inspiration from the glorious Timurid past.

The Timurid Museum

Opened on 18 October 1996, the museum was built to celebrate Timur’s 660th anniversary. Situated in close proximity to the governmental quarters, its scale and design sets the pro-Timurid tone of Uzbek state ideology. The museum guidebook quotes the president on its front page:

> *If somebody wants to understand who the Uzbeks are, if somebody wants to comprehend all the power, might, justice and unlimited abilities of the Uzbek people, their contribution to the global development, their belief in future, he should recall the image of Amir Temur.*[6]

Seen from the Timurid Square with the bronze equestrian monument of Amir Timur (1993), the museum is situated to the right of Timur’s horse statue and follows the line designated by his raised right arm. The orientation of the main staircase towards Timur’s monument creates a visual connection between the two. In this sense, the museum relates to the historical importance of the square, locally known as the *Skver,* which has been the ideological centre of Tashkent since 1882 and has been widely regarded as the primary locus of ‘civilized’ Russian rule.

The circle plan of the museum, designed by the architects Turdiev and Umarov in 1995, is based on the Mongol yurt *(ger).* Its architecture can be regarded as a modern shrine attesting the Turko-Mongol nomadic origin not only of Timur but of all Uzbeks. While in the Soviet nationalistic discourse nomadism was associated with backwardness, it was Amir Timur who combined nomadic military campaigns with a sedentary cultural production. In particular Timur’s son Shah Rukh and grandson Ulugh Beg created vibrant artistic centres in Herat and Samarqand respectively. Built to commemorate the achievements of the Timurid dynasty, the museum functions as a treasury of important Timurid artefacts and models of major architectural monuments. In particular, the curators of the permanent exhibition chose to present contemporary Uzbek history and leadership in parallel to the achievements of the Timurid dynasty. Thus, one of the main purposes of the museum is to create what Laura Adams has described as the “continuity in the leadership of Uzbekistan”.[7] Portraits of the president narrating the historical virtues and values of his statecraft, a wall with personal testimonies by world leaders and a museum visit book, signed among others by Vladimir Putin, testify to the international recognition of Uzbekistan. The first page of the museum book was signed by Islam Karimov with the words “In this museum our past, present and great future are reflected as in a mirror.”

The building is crowned with a modern rendition of the ribbed turquoise Timurid dome, iconographically referencing the wooden frame structure of the yurt. The main exposition area is enclosed by an open *ayvan* (portico) with twenty white marble columns, replicating the craftsmanship of Uzbek carved capitals. The exterior walls are decorated with pseudo-portals, topped by eight-pointed stars with Arabic inscriptions in glazed tiles. While exterior epigraphy and exquisite tile revetments were widely used in Timurid monumental architecture, the inscriptions spelled out the names of God and the Prophet. However, the present texts at the Timurid museum reveal keywords of the *Ideology of Independence* such as: submissiveness, justice, renewal, conscience, mercy, dignity, success, faithfulness, stability, courage. According to Aziz Sharipov, a historian working at the museum, these words reflect “the core and the importance of the politics, exercised by the head of our state, the benevolent goals of the Uzbek people” (2014). The museum is thus conceived as a shrine to contemporary Uzbek politics rather than a commemoration site.

Iconography of the triptych

The centrepiece of the museum is a monumental stucco triptych based on a modern rendition of Persian miniature painting featuring the life of Timur. The triptych, called ‘The Great Sakhibkiran – The Great Creator’, was painted in 1996 by a team of Uzbek artists collectively called *Sanoi Nafis.* The first panel is dedicated to the heroic birth of Timur, the Lord of the Fortunate Conjunction. According to Persian historiography, Timur adopted the imperial title of *sahib-qiran,* the world-conqueror, professing that his destiny is governed by the auspicious conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Venus. The astrological sign of Aries refers to Timur’s presumed birthday on 8 April 1336. However, there is no direct historical testimony confirming the exact date.[8] Beatrice Manz has pointed out that the year 1336 was perhaps chosen to stress the dynastic succession of the Ilkhanid and Timurid dynasties, whereby Timur chronologically followed the last Ilkhan Abu Said, who died in 1335. The Ilkhans were a Mongol dynasty, founded by Genghis Khan’s grandson Hulegu, that ruled in Iran from 1256 to 1335. Throughout his military campaigns Timur aimed at recreating the Mongol empire and achieving recognized primacy over the Islamic world.

The lower scene of the triptych depicts a cradle *(beshik)* surrounded by young women singing a lullaby and embroidering the cradle curtain for Timur. The idyllic landscape is marked by a poplar tree that refers to the birth of a son. The royal tent, symbol of power and prosperity at Islamic courts, makes up most of the background. It is festooned in gold and turquoise blue, with decorative motifs used in Timurid miniature painting and architecture. Yet, Timur did not have a royal origin. He was a member of the tribal aristocracy, but he was neither a descendant of Genghis Khan, nor a chief of his own Turkic Barlas tribe. That is why Timur could not claim the title of khan, a mark of sovereignty among the steppe nomads, and could not call himself a caliph, the supreme title of the Islamic world. Instead, he established himself as a supreme military leader, proud of his valour and audacity, symbolized in the triptych by a falcon perching on top of the royal tent.

The central panel, called *Rising,* reveals Timur as a just leader, strong statesman, wise diplomat and as the founder of a mighty dynasty. The scene is framed as a majestic *iwan* (ceremonial gate used in Timurid architecture). The text in the cartouche just above the pointed arch is in Persian and reads: “If you are truthful, you will be saved”. Timur is seated on a gilded Solomon throne, surrounded by astronomers, scholars, poets and military chieftains. Four selected members of the Timurid dynasty are represented in the lower tier of the composition. These are (from left to right) Sultan Muhammad (1383-1403), Timur’s grandson and heir presumptive, who died before Timur but is remembered for building the ensemble at Gur-i Amir that would become the Timurid dynastic mausoleum; Ulugh Beg (d. 1449), renowned astronomer and ruler of Samarqand; Sultan Husayn Bayqara (d. 1506), governor of Herat, known as one of the most influential artistic patrons in the fifteenth century; and Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur (1483-1530), the founder of the Mughal dynasty in India. They sit around a wooden bookstand and revere the Timurid codebook (*Malfuzat-i Timuri:* The autobiography of Timur, known in Russian as *Ulozhenie Timura*). The work is widely regarded in post-1991 Uzbekistan as the basis of statehood; it consists of two parts: Timur’s (incomplete) biography between 1343 and 1381 and guiding principles for successful governance

Above:
Timurid Museum in Tashkent.

Ideological and iconographical approaches at the Timurid Museum

and military tactics. It is remarkable that the artists of the triptych chose to portray not the four sons of Timur but four members of the Timurid dynasty whose accomplishments are widely known and recognized worldwide. They venerate a book that was compiled and cherished by Timur's descendants and has been propagated throughout the Mughal and local dynastic courts as the epitome of ingenious statecraft.

Timur's three-circle seal *(tamgha)* is depicted to the right of his throne; the three circles are also situated above the main entrance to the museum. Initially, they adorned the entrance portal to the Aq Saray palace (1379-1396) in Shahr-i Sabz – the bastion city of Timur's Barlas tribe.[9] The panel reveals further key Timurid monuments such as the Bibi Khanum Mosque in Samarqand and the Ahmad Yassawi Shrine in Turkestan (Kazakhstan). Two angels descending from the Heavens bestow a heavenly mandate to Timur. The left one is carrying a sword, celebrating Timur's military power and prowess; the right one is offering him the Koran. These two symbols are essential to Timur's Empire, implying that he ruled with a just, firm hand by observing the Koran. In the didactic sense, Timur is portrayed as an exemplary ruler, enacting the will of God. The same idea of a just statesman, postulated in *Ulozhenie Timura,* is reiterated in the slogan "Strength is in Justice", inscribed on the equestrian statue on Timur's Square.

The third section of the triptych, entitled *Pride,* is dedicated to the last stages of Timur's life. Timur died on 18 February 1405 near Utrar (in Kazakhstan), which is why the panel depicts the astrological sign of Aquarius. The star of *sahib-qiran* is metaphorically shining in the centre of the composition and lights up the future. The sage in the white robe bequeaths Timur's testimony to the young generation. The book in his hands might also metaphorically refer to the Sunni orthodoxy (Timur was a Hanafi Sunni), implying that the state-approved Sunni Islam is a religion learned by reading books. The water-mill wheel alludes to the repetition of historical events, i.e., the historically attested might and glory of Uzbekistan achieved during the Timurid period, is now being reinstated and reconfirmed in the years of independence. Science (exemplified by the sextant, referencing Ulugh Beg's observatory in Samarqand) is also the pride of modern Uzbekistan. The third panel ends with a poem by the celebrated poet Alisher Navoi (d. 1501) entitled 'My era!'. Navoi was a distinguished member of the Timurid court in Herat and is generally considered as the father of Uzbek literature.[10]

It is interesting to note that part of the triptych also depicts some Shaybanid monuments, such as the tympanum of the Shir Dar Madrasa on Registan Square revealing a solar disk. This detail, placed next to Timur's throne, is endlessly multiplied on textbook covers, tourist brochures and billboards. Although the Shaybanid dynasty, and in particular its importance in Tashkent, has not been widely spread in the Soviet period,[11] I think that the architectural legacy of the khans in the Uzbek capital and their intrinsic Uzbek roots have been artistically reinstated in recent years.[12]

The triptych can be interpreted as a Timurid manifesto that underlines the socio-political and cultural agenda of the Uzbek state. Furthermore, it sets the tone for architectural production with Timurid monumentality as the best example to follow. The text, "If you have doubts about our grandeur, look at our edifice", supposedly inscribed on the Aq Saray palace in Shahr-i Sabz, has been incorporated as one of the main guiding principles of *Ulozhenie Timura.* Even though there is no actual material evidence verifying the existence of this inscription, Timurid architecture is undoubtedly exquisite and inventive, and Timur has been widely praised by court chronicles and by foreign ambassadors for the initiation and sponsorship of opulent and grandeur buildings. The ruler as a builder and creator of the material world is one of the main prerogatives of his divinely bestowed mandate. Although in independent Uzbekistan the political elite is allegedly elected, the ambition to follow the ancestral testimonies of leadership is paralleled with the commission of lavish contemporary architecture, which only the state can afford to finance.

The Uthman Koran

A huge Koran reading stand is situated at the centre of the main museum hall. At present, a 1905 copy of the Uthman Koran rests on it. The vertical axis of the museum is accentuated by the Koran reading stand on the ground floor, the Swarovski chandelier hanging from the inner dome, covered with thin sheets of gold, and the green outer dome, representing the celestial sphere. All these attributes underline the profound influence of Islamic heritage.

The original Uthman Koran (also known as the Samarqand codex) was compiled in Medina under the third Sunni caliph Uthman (r. 644-656) and is considered to be one of the oldest in the world. The original is kept at the Hazrat Imam Complex in the old part of Tashkent; it is believed to be one of six surviving copies, the other ones were sent to Mecca, Medina, Damascus, Kufu and Basra.[13] The blood of the caliph stained the Koran and legend has it that the blood stains on the Tashkent copy can be related to Uthman. Some historians believe that Abu Bakr Muhammad Kaffel Shashi brought the Koran from Baghdad to Samarqand in the tenth century. However, the majority of scholars agree that Timur captured it during his military campaigns either in Syria or Iraq and kept it in the main sanctuary of his Bibi Khanum Mosque in Samarqand. Known ever since as the Samarqand codex, the Koran was further preserved at the madrasa of Khwaja Ahrar in Samarqand. In 1863 the Hungarian orientalist Vamberi visited Samarqand and saw it on a giant stand at Gur-i Amir.[14] He suggests that Timur took the Koran from Bayezid after defeating him in the battle of Ankara in 1402.

In 1869, after the Russian conquest of Turkestan, the governing general of the Zeravshan region, Abramov, handed the manuscript to general Konstantin von Kaufman, who sent it to the Imperial Public Library in Saint Petersburg. In the late nineteenth century, the Koran was extensively studied by Shebunin and in 1905 Pisarev published a facsimile edition, of which fifty copies were made. The present copy at the Timurid museum is one of these facsimiles. After the revolution in 1917, the Soviet authorities returned the Koran to the administration of the Muslims in Russia, located in Ufa. Later on in 1923 it was transported to Tashkent by a special train. In Tashkent, it was initially kept at the Kukeldash madrasa. Prior to 2007, the Uthman Koran was exhibited in a glass safe at the Library of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan. The Russian building of the library was demolished during the recent reconstruction of the Hazrat Imam Complex. Since 2007 the Uthman Koran has been preserved in the Muyi Mubarak madrasa. Built by the mayor of Tashkent Mirzo Ahmad Kushbegi between 1856-57, the madrasa apparently houses a hair of the prophet Muhammad. The Koran is kept in a glass case in the middle of the centrally domed space, the hair is underneath it. During the restorations in 2007, only the building of the Muyi Mubarak madrasa was adorned with a blue ribbed dome, denoting its primary importance within Hazrat Imam and directly relating it to Timurid architecture.

With its long history, the Uthman Koran has always been a major trophy in the hands of the ruling elites, whose buildings were regarded as proper commemoration sites attesting its religious importance. The Koran at the Timurid museum unveils the state tolerance towards Islam. As pointed out in *Ulozhenie Timura,* Timur understood that society cannot live without religion. The fact that, although being illiterate, Timur knew the Koran by heart and engaged in theological disputes testifies to his "elevated spirituality, the purity and firmness of his faith".[15] However, Timur also recognized the division between the secular state and religion, which is clearly manifested throughout the independence discourse. In modern Uzbekistan, Timurid cultural heritage is seen as a representation of Timur's humanistic achievements.

Concluding remarks

The post-independence building activities in the Uzbek capital have been characterized by the Timurid (and partially Shaybanid) heritage used as an iconographic source for the formation of the architectural landscape of modern Tashkent. The state as the main commissioner of all major construction sites aspires a material recognition of its policies through elevating the cultural and religious heritage of great ancestors. The *Ideology of National Independence* created by the political and intellectual elite has pledged for shared goals and ideals stemming from the Uzbek collective memory. Architecture is used by the present regime as a tool to profess ideological power and prompt respect and recognition at local and international level.

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Below: Triptych in the main museum hall with the Uthman Koran facsimile in the foreground.

All photographs are by the author.

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City and ideology

Urban space is one of the ways by which the state's ideological shift is articulated in post-socialist Mongolia. The state's ideological shift is easily 'readable' in the post-soviet cityscape, especially in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, where the city's symbolic architecture and iconography have been profoundly altered to reflect the ongoing power arrangements. Specifically, the state has appropriated Chinggis Khan[1] to symbolically narrate a new political ideology and has used him as the foremost representation of national identity in the post-socialist era. The omnipresent glorification of Chinggis Khan in the new Mongolia can be juxtaposed against the disappearing and displaced symbolic representations of the Soviet era (e.g., the statue of Lenin) to show the manner in which Chinggis Khan has been used as a political and ideological tool in post-socialist Mongolia. To illustrate this juxtaposition, the article examines the changing symbolic landscape of post-socialist Mongolia's urbanscape using three primary sites: the central square, the statue of Lenin, and the Chinggis Khan monument.

Orhon Myadar

THESE THREE SITES ILLUSTRATE the state's instrumentality in determining which version of history is invoked and which version is silenced at any given period. The dialectical method is helpful to situate the integrated totality of the state's appropriation of the national past and its fractured materiality within the confines of an ideological framework. It illuminates the binaries within the structure of the state's ideological pursuits: between what is remembered and what is forgotten.

While many Mongolians clung – and continue to cling – to socialism, the Mongolian state's commitment to socialist ideology came to a halt following the collapse of international communism in the late eighties and early nineties. Since the break-up of the former Soviet Union, Mongolia has gone through a remarkable political transformation – effectively shedding its socialist cast and breaking away from the Soviet ideological model. The new Mongolian elite assumed the role of producing a Mongolian ideological path detached from the Soviet mold. This ideological path would justify the dismantling of cherished vestiges of socialism. The process has been, in Bulag's words, "a challenge to seventy years' of production and reproduction of Mongol identity and the entire social order".[2]

When a political regime changes, new national leaders often use urban space to articulate the ideological shift, unless the new regime is largely an extension of the previous regime. Symbols of national and political identity serve as *milieus* of national identity and sites of political contestation. New expressions of the state ideology, however, are not imposed onto an empty landscape. Rather the old has to be razed for the new to occupy the space, both literally and metaphorically. A substantial amount of human and material resources are devoted to inscribing the state's new ideology and to projecting the new triumphant national identity.

The central square

Like many former socialist cities, Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia, radiates physically and symbolically outwards from its central square. Long before the square was cemented, it was already a gathering site where political leaders spoke to the public from a wooden podium. One such leader was Sukhbaatar, Mongolia's most idolized figure during the socialist era for his role in fighting and securing Mongolia's independence. During the socialist years, Sukhbaatar was undoubtedly the foremost representation and symbol of the country's socialist ideology. He became the material expression of the state, from banknotes, to grand statues, to streets, provinces and cities either decorated with his image or named after him. To honor and monumentalize Sukhbaatar's legacy, the central square was chosen as the embodiment of his contribution to the national cause. In the center of the square, a prominent equestrian statue of Sukhbaatar was erected in 1946. Sukhbaatar is seated on his horse looking north – presumably toward Russia – capturing Mongolia's commitment to the Soviet Union and Soviet leadership in the quest for international communism. Sukhbaatar was the original leader of the Revolutionary Party until his untimely death at the age of 30. The Revolutionary Party went on to control Mongolia for seven decades, during which time many generations of Mongolian's grew up playing, walking, and gathering under Sukhbaatar's fatherly eye.

Fig.1: Fallen statue of Lenin. (Photo by Michael Kohn)

In 1954, a mausoleum was built and ceremoniously opened immediately to the north of the square, as part of the main government building. The mausoleum was to house the remains of Sukhbaatar reifying his legacy and preserving his cult of personality posthumously. Although Sukhbaatar had been dead for over three decades by the time the mausoleum was constructed, his remains were exhumed and transferred from Altan Ulgii, where he had been previously buried. In the mausoleum, Sukhbaatar's remains were accompanied by those of Horloogyn Choibalsan. Choibalsan ruled Mongolia for over two decades after Sukhbaatar, amassing complete political power. The mausoleum was thus to embody and serve as a constant reminder of Sukhbaatar and Choibalsan and the socialist ideology they personified. With Sukhbaatar's statue at its center and his remains in an overlooking mausoleum, the square was always, since formalized inception, known as Sukhbaatar's square.

And then surprisingly, breaking from this long history, the state changed the central square's name from Sukhbaatar Square to Chinggis Khan Square, in the summer of 2013. It was a remarkable move not only because the square is an important public space, but also because it has served as a primary platform for both political expressions and informal gatherings since its inception. One of the common metaphors that is used to understand the politics of space is that of understanding a site as a text. Geographers have long argued that an urban space functions as a text bears meanings that are authored for particular purposes.[3] If we use the text metaphor to understand the evolving meanings of the square, we can see that the square has been used as a site to express the changing political ideology of the state.

The decision to change Sukhbaatar Square's name to Chinggis Khan Square can be read not only as an attempt to signal the ideological departure from the previous regime but also as an effort to erase the memory associated with the site and to instill a new memory. Similarly, the material expressions of socialist ideology are fading in post-socialist Mongolia. The grand mausoleum of Sukhbaatar and Choibalsan, for example, was demolished and in its place now stands a statue of Chinggis Khan. When the government of Mongolia removed the mausoleum it was not a mere architectural re-arrangement of the physical space. By demolishing the left-over relic of the socialist-era, the newly appropriated space was to represent the country's departure from its socialist legacy and arrival at a newly reinvigorated society.

Statue of Lenin

During the same year that Sukhbaatar Square was renamed Chinggis Khan Square (2013), another monument of socialist memory was erased from Ulaanbaatar's symbolic landscape: the statue of Lenin, which had stood near the center of Ulaanbaatar for several decades. Witnessed by about 300 people on a sunny October day the statue was brought down, whilst the mayor of the city, Bat-Uul Erdene, gave a speech justifying the act (fig.1).

Until that ill-fated day, the colossal statue had stood dignified, looking down from high above, superimposing a visual hierarchy over passersby and demanding respect and reverence.[4] For decades the statue was one of the foremost symbols of Mongolia's ideological commitment. The statue symbolized the Mongolian state's allegiance to international communism since the country joined the socialist camp in 1921, preceded only by the Soviet Union. The year 1921 marked Mongolia's much celebrated rebirth after its two-hundred year long subjugation by the Manchus and Chinese. In the following seven decades the Mongolian state exerted considerable efforts to re-territorialize not only the national political and ideological landscape, but also material urbanscapes.

Politics of urbanscape in Post-Socialist Mongolia

The statue of Lenin, erected near the heart of the city in 1958, was one of countless state efforts to imprint the popular psyche with materialized and embodied socialist icons, which undoubtedly served to articulate the state's greater ideological project. The statue was not an accidental urban site, but its purpose was to concretize a particular set of meanings, consistent with the state's overall ideological discourse. It represented someone who pioneered and directed the benevolent regime, of which the subjects of the state were to be constantly reminded. It immortalized the god-like figure who stood there to witness the progress that society was making. His enormous size suggested that he was not only greater than life, but also hegemonic.[5] Therefore, passersby would be subtly reminded of their inherent subordination, not only to this concrete image but also to the ideological pursuit of the state represented by the statue.

As a public site, however, the statue served purposes beyond a mere plot to express political ideology. Rather, it became an integral part of Ulaanbaatar's urbanscape as the statue occupied this particular space for nearly six decades. In the post-socialist era, however, the statue no longer delivered the state's vision and ideology, thus it became victim to the state's efforts to cleanse the city landscape of the remnants of the socialist period. To revisit Foucault's dramatic visualization of a tortured body in his prologue to Discipline and Punish, Lenin's body (in statue form) was used as an instrument for the wider purpose of disciplining the subjects of the state beyond the mere moment of the statue's destruction. The dishonoring of Lenin's body under the public's watchful gaze served to express the state's new ideology and to desecrate the embodied expression of the old.

Fig.2: The statue of Chinggis Khan. (Photo by Michael Kohn)

Chinggis Khan monument

While old symbolic landscapes are fading from Ulaanbaatar's urbanscape, new expressions of the state ideology have victoriously asserted their presence. Among these expressions, Chinggis Khan has become the most preeminent symbol of post-socialist Mongolia. While the central square was named after Sukhbaatar until recently, Chinggis Khan had already begun to assert his presence in the space long before the name change when a massive statue of him replaced Sukhbaatar and Choibalsan's mausoleum, which once stood seemingly immortal and permanent. This massive statue of Chinggis Khan was erected in 2006 in commemoration of the 800 year anniversary of the establishment of the Great Mongolian State and the proclamation of Chinggis as the 'universal' Khan (fig. 2).

To say that Chinggis' image is *everywhere* in today's Mongolia is hardly an exaggeration. Chinggis Khan 'lives' in every imaginable form in Mongolia, from billboards to rock bands to vodka bottles. He has become the most prominent symbol of national grandeur, culture and identity.[6] Given his ubiquity, the project of constructing a national identity does not *appear* to have been top-down, carefully engineered by the state, as was the case during the socialist era. Instead, the nation *seems* to be reinventing itself rhizomatically, at least on the surface. The Deleuze and Guattarian 'rhizome' metaphor represents a model that extends in all directions with multiple non-hierarchical and disorderly entries and exits. The metaphor aptly captures the chaotic articulation and appropriation of Chinggis Khan in post-socialist Mongolia.[7]

However, unlike rhizomes, these articulations are not necessarily independent discursive circuits detached from the core ideological generator: the state. The state's role has in fact been monumental in producing and inscribing the Chinggis-rooted national identity. By the time the Soviets left Mongolia, the epistemological vessel of Chinggis Khan among the general public was increasingly depleted owing to Soviet-dictated policies. One such policy was to teach in schools that Chinggis Khan was a ruthless feudal leader and thus an undesirable and inappropriate figure in Mongolian history.[8] Therefore, each generation under the socialist state of Mongolia was removed further from the legacy of Chinggis Khan, not only temporally but also ideologically. As a result, Chinggis Khan and his empire's legacy became "distant and vague memories".[9]

Therefore, the new Mongolian state assumed a central role in generating and propagating a new epistemology of Chinggis Khan and remolding the public psyche to the renewed version of this highly contested historic figure. Though one of many, the Chinggis monument in front of the government building is particularly important in understanding the state's role in inscribing a Chinggis Khan-centered national identity. The monument is also an example of the memorialization of Chinggis Khan by the state, which inscribes his image not only in public minds but also in the material urbanscape.

In articulating the state's vision, the statue is strategically situated in the focal point of the government building. By visually and physically centering Chingiss Khan, the statue is not to be seen as a mere architectural ornament but rather to be treated as the undeniable symbol of the state. Furthermore, the monument is positioned above and over, which denies the viewer the transcendent position.[10] The spatial hierarchy between the monument (by extension the state) and the viewer only highlights the inherent binary between the state and its citizens. The sheer size of the monument makes the gazed upon feel particularly insignificant. Additionally, the way that Chinggis Khan is depicted in this monument signals the visual narrative the state produces – one of governance rather than of conquering. Here, Chinggis Khan is seated authoritatively and dressed in traditional costume without the usual décor of armor or weapons. This monument sits in sharp contrast to other Chinggis monuments elsewhere, including the Chinggis monument in Ordos (Inner Mongolia, China), a forty-meter high stainless steel Chinggis monument on the eastern steppe of Mongolia, and the equestrian Chinggis monument that was exhibited at Marble Arch in Central London – both of which depict him as fierce and 'warrior-like', on horseback in full armor. By shying away from such a war nexus, this particular monument intends to narrate the allegorical focus of Chinggis' leadership of his people, rather than his conquering of other lands.

The statue is accompanied by two smaller statues, of Ögödei Khan and Khubilai Khan (Chinggis Khan's son and grandson respectively). Though Chinggis Khan produced numerous direct descendants,[11] the state's choice of Ögödei and Khubilai, two of Chinggis' descendants considered the most successful, suggests that the state is interested in only the selective legacy of Chinggis Khan. The monument is obviously not "an audible part of policy talk".[12] Rather it silently but effectively inscribes political rhetoric to the subjugated gaze. Munkh-Erdene argues that the Chinggis monument serves as a tool to illicit loyalty to the Mongolian state.[13]

The demand of subjugation and loyalty is most 'readable' during state official ceremonies where elite members of the state, along with other dignitaries, offer ceremonial tributes to the monument. The amount of respect displayed during such ceremonies conveys an utmost veneration to this beautifully crafted colossal bronze. Such a spectacle by the elites 'flags' appropriate behavior to those subjected to this visual reign (with the state in the background literally and metaphorically). Michael Billig uses the term *flagging* to imply a constant reminder of nationhood.[14]

Foreign dignitaries are treated to this elaborate ritual as well. Official delegates to Mongolia often join the heavily choreographed ceremony of paying respect to the Chinggis monument. Extending Ippei's assertion that Chinggis' name is used as a political and cultural resource in and out of Mongolia,[15] this ritual is demonstrably used as a political narrative for post-socialist Mongolia's ideological undergirding, rooted in the fame and glory of Chinggis Khan.

Conclusion

The decision to change the central square's name was not a simple process of changing names on a city map. Rather, it has deep implications in channeling the state ideology through the city's urbanscape. It is an example of the state's selective use of history, and state-driven forgetting or remembering. Chinggis' image is not inscribed on an empty landscape. Instead, the expression of the Chinggis-centered state ideology has displaced, altered or removed the existing iconography from the urbanscape. Moreover, changing the urban iconography and symbolic landscape has not been a simple aesthetic and architectural expression, but has served as an arena to express the state ideology regardless of the public perception of the meanings attached to the symbols and iconography from the previous regime.

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Urban Heritage of the Silk Road

Xinjiang's largest cities have undergone a series of redevelopment programs over the last decade. The westerly autonomous region in China is inextricably connected to the romantic narrative of the Silk Road, a narrative that is used to legitimize the destruction and gentrification of historic urban centres. Xinjiang's heritage is being managed to build transboundary economic relations with Central Asia, assimilate the Uyghur population into the Chinese nation, and secure the region against perceived threats to the state. This can be seen in particular at Kashgar, the westernmost city of China, where the buildings of the historic town centre have been bulldozed, and their Uyghur residents moved to the outskirts of the city.

Tomás Skinner

TODAY, HERITAGE IS RECOGNIZED as a discursive process of meaning-making. The Silk Road can be viewed not as a clearly demarcated 'thing' with a linear history that carries intrinsic meaning and value, but a set of attitudes and relationships with the past by specific people at a specific time for specific reasons. Certain parts of the Silk Road's past are highlighted in particular, and dominate over others, according to top-down principles of 'value' and 'knowledge'. Xinjiang's cities are affected by this "authorized heritage discourse",[1] which is used to establish of a set of social, economic, and political relationships between China and its Central Asian neighbours, and between the state and its Uyghur ethnic minority population. These relationships are contradictory. On the one hand, China promotes the Silk Road as a timeless heritage that can unify the country with its Central Asian neighbours. Yet, at the same time, at the local level Xinjiang – considered to have been one of the most active landscapes in the historic Silk Road – is a place where heritage is fiercely contested. It is dangerous to readily accept evocations of the Silk Road without identifying or understanding their nationalist applications.

Top: One of the largest statues of Mao in China (18m/59 ft). Kashgar, Xinjiang. Photo by Dperstin (flickr).

Above: Uyghur men outside the Kashgar mosque. Photo by Eric Wilson (flickr).

Critical approaches to Silk Road heritage

Approaching the Silk Road with a critical heritage perspective requires asking one fundamental question: who does what to whom, and why? Many stakeholders wish to protect, preserve, or exploit 'the past'. A critical heritage perspective questions what past, whose past, and for what reasons?

Heritage is about selectivity and power; it is used to assert local, national and international interests. Ancient sites become muddled between ideas of authenticity and depictions of an 'accurate' past. Layers of history are removed and forgotten, whilst others are highlighted for their evocative or marketable values, and placed within broader and more exiting narratives that are unrelated to the entire history of the site. Urban heritage consists of material 'anchors' and references to an idealized past that are conceptualized in different ways by different stakeholders. Moorings to the past, spatial markers of identity, and feelings of 'belonging to' or 'owning' a place are processes that can be managed to secure loyalty and assimilate people into imagined communities, as well as to evoke ideas of shared heritage that bridges nations and cultures. When abused, this has real effects on the people involved: spatial separation and emotional banishment from the environment with which their identity was formed, and values that are shifted according to non-local aspirations and nationalist agendas.

Urban heritage is a single field of relations that should not be divided into tangible and intangible. Like a Möbius strip, these frequently applied dichotomies are illusory; heritage cannot be preserved when the tangible materiality of the city and its intangible human actors are detached from one another.[2] A focus on material culture might disregard the performative or experiential dimensions of urban heritage, whilst a focus on 'intangible' rituals and action risks ignoring the material context that frames and enables them. Neither action nor the historic environment in which they take place can be separated or artificially generated.

Despite theoretically discarding a separation of tangible and intangible, each are frequently demarcated, privatized, and commodified for their economic or narrative value. It seems that when a 'heritage asset' is noticed and defined it is only a matter of time until it becomes isolated as a resource to be used and abused. This is selective; only some heritage is noticed – let alone protected – when urban sites are developed or modernized, at the expense of that which is regarded as insignificant and discarded as rubbish.[3]

The Silk Road as a heritage discourse

The Silk Road is a discursive process, not a clearly demarcated entity with a single fixed location, time, or material presence. However, it is frequently reified as a narrative that is fixed, linear, and representational of people, places, and traditions. This narrative is used to frame diplomatic, economic, and heritage dialogues between and within modernizing nation-states.

This has occurred in particular within new states that have appeared in Central Asia. Their sudden sovereignty following the collapse of the Soviet Union has resulted in a flurry of cultural heritage property claims and the formation of new national identities, selectively drawing upon the deep history of the lands they control.[4] A 'renaissance' of New Silk Road schemes has emerged in Eurasian states, aimed at 'reviving' ancient markets between their countries.[5]

Xinjiang is of great economic and strategic value for China, with enormous borders linking the country with the growing markets of six neighbouring states. China has therefore been keen to collaborate with these countries through strategies focused on exploiting the economic and diplomatic potential of their shared Silk Road heritage, such as Xi Jinping's 'One Belt and One Road' *(yī dài yī lù)*. China draws heavily upon a Silk Road narrative to do this, advocating its location as an "important trunk road where the economic, political and cultural exchanges between the Orient and the West were taking place", where "friendly exchanges" and "national amalgamation" occurred, and which connected the "friendship of China and Eurasia".[6] The Silk Road has a capacity to evoke Orientalistic imagery and ideas that have been used to legitimise development in the areas through which it passed.

UNESCO has long been invested in the Silk Road's heritage discourse, from the *Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values* between 1957 and 1966 to the continuing designation of transboundary Silk Road World Heritage properties. From the mid-1980s, China has sought to collaborate with UNESCO by expressing their shared interest in promoting unity and preserving diversity. The Chinese approach to safeguarding urban heritage appears to hold similar values for the social dimension of historic urban centres that are expressed in UNESCO's *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* (2011). *The Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China,* China's heritage policy that was adopted in October 2000 and revised in 2015, draws heavily upon Australia's *Burra Charter* by placing an emphasis on the recognition of ethnic and religious heritage, and by claiming to approach heritage sites as cultural landscapes with a living heritage that is worth protecting.[7]

Yet the state fails when it comes to implementation at the local level; in Xinjiang, we see a dearth of community involvement in urban development projects, and the intrinsic 'friendly exchanges' that are believed to exist along the Silk Road are largely absent. Far from being unifying, Xinjiang's heritage is dissonant; it involves a lack of agreement and inconsistency of

treatment. Not all heritage is protected in the region's cities, and it is often restricted to a limited 'representational' selection of everything else that gets destroyed, imitated, or forgotten. These are issues that are faced throughout China. City-scale preservation policies in Beijing struggle to protect vernacular *sìhéyuàn* houses and *hútòng* neighbourhoods from the destructive effects of urbanization, even though the dominant heritage discourse in the capital advocates the preservation of the entire Old Town.[8] On both sides of China conservation and development are a façade that facilitates the demolition of entire neighbourhoods, which has often led to gentrification by rising land prices and the development of luxury residences or economic districts.

The development of Xinjiang's cities, supported by the globalising Silk Road discourse, is being used to assimilate the Uyghur population into the Chinese nation. Although in practice Uyghur and Han frequently assert their own spatial and social boundaries in cities across Xinjiang, China follows a strict policy of assimilation, and does not recognize attempts of national self-determination by the Uyghur. Sinification *(hànhuà)* is taking place, by which local identities are being transformed according to the values of Han China. The ideological promotion of a single, unified people has been viewed by China's ethnic minorities as an attempt to destroy their identity. With cultural hegemony and state nationalism has come the widespread suppression of religious places and practices in Xinjiang. Muslim ways of life are being disrupted by a strict crackdown on the 'three evils': separatism, extremism, and terrorism, particularly following anti-Chinese uprisings in the 1990s. This has resulted in tight constraints to religious freedom, increased surveillance over Uyghur communities, and the bulldozing of the region's dense historic urban centres.

Kashgar

The above processes can be seen in Kashgar, a city that was an important node along the Silk Road, one of the oldest and best-preserved Islamic cities in the world, and a potential candidate for World Heritage status.[9] Since 2009, in the aftermath of the Sichuan earthquake the previous year, the Old City has been systematically demolished and rebuilt as part of the *Kashgar Dangerous House Reform* program. The government maintain that they are modernizing the Old Town, protecting its allegedly flimsy structures from future earthquakes, improving the infrastructure, and installing plumbing and electricity.[10] In addition, Kashgar is modelled to become the Special Economic Zone of the West, based on Shenzhen. Around 65,000 buildings have been demolished, to be replaced with a new and modern city. This development follows strategies that focus on its marketable value for non-local stakeholders, clouded in a rhetoric of progress and given legitimacy through evocations of the Silk Road narrative.

When making judgments about the destruction of heritage, we must consider ethics to always be relative to the people concerned. Many Uyghur seem to welcome their new homes, enjoying all the benefits of modern living. The city is under risk of regional earthquakes, though this raises the question of how the Old Town has lasted for so long with its allegedly unsafe buildings. Government cadres evoke humanitarian responsibility as justification for their actions – not for the tangible heritage assets of the city, but for the wellbeing of the people living there. They claim that the world values the material remains of past cultures over the suffering and destitution of people living there in the present day.[11]

However, spatial cleansing and gentrification occur in Kashgar. The Chinese state has claimed ownership of Kashgar's Old Town, and is enforcing a spatial separation of Kashgar's Uyghur and non-local communities, and the structural cleansing of the material that formed Uyghur identity. At least 220,000 Uyghur residents have been relocated to the outskirts of the city when they found that the compensation they received from the state was not enough to redevelop their previous homes. Non-local organisations employed only Han workers for the development of new buildings in the Old Town, with highly skilled local Uyghur craftsmen – well-practiced in constructing adobe buildings – being rejected. Most of the former residents of the Old Town are not able to afford the luxury apartment complexes emerging in place of their old homes. This is intentional: promotional materials for the European View Gardens properties are not written in Uyghur, the Han letting agents having stated "What's the point? They can't afford this place".[12]

Land is seized and transformed, with communities forced to leave their generational homes. The apartments that they have moved to are flimsy and monitor the Uyghur residents with surveillance cameras. Many communities fear the loss of social networks that had been formed in the *mehelle* neighbourhoods of the Old Town, neighbourhoods that were created according to close social relations between family units.[13] In place of vernacular courtyard houses and a warren of lanes, in which many generations of local identity have been built, luxury apartments for international investors and Han settlers are being built.

This development goes against the Chinese State Administration of Cultural Heritage's own principles, which emphasize *yuánzhēnxìng* – originality or authenticity – as of prime importance.[14] A small part of the Old Town has been 'preserved' as an ethnic theme park, a 'living Uyghur folk museum' where tourists can visit 'traditional' Uyghur homes where they can buy souvenirs and ethnic unity propaganda. Yet this new Old City is not based on accurate evidence from the past. Archaeologists were not involved in the development projects; officials maintained that they were not needed because the government "already knows everything about old Kashgar".[15] In doing so, there has been a tremendous and irretrievable loss of the archaeological record, with accurate data being discarded in favour of creating an authentic experience. Neither is it formed from the authentic interactions of its generational residents. Instead it is managed by the government, which approaches Kashgar and its Uyghur community in terms of their marketable value. An authentic experience, sanitised of threats to national unity, is desired, rather than one that pursues an accurate and data-driven story of the city and how it is experienced by its residents.

Community involvement in the future

What does it mean to be Uyghur in Xinjiang compared to being Chinese in Xinjiang? Can one simply be 'Kashgarian'? The competing answers to these questions have led to discord between Xinjiang's Han and Uyghur populations. The Silk Road has been resurrected in a way that facilitates the link with Central Asian markets and a globalising world, and turns the region's heritage into symbolic resources that are used to promote a unifying Chinese national identity. China continues to keep Kashgar off their list of sites submitted to UNESCO for World Heritage status, despite international claims that Kashgar demonstrates Outstanding Universal Value as part of the Silk Road narrative. The opportunity for Kashgar to acquire World Heritage status seems to have been lost, due to the dramatic transformation of the Old Town.

Procedures must be found that do not resort to a nationalist or separatist rhetoric – a solution that involves Uyghur independence will not be found quickly or peacefully. Neither is freezing the urban site and preventing development a feasible solution. Preservationist discourses often do not respect the social dimensions of material culture, instead often falling back on aesthetic and essentializing museum language and models. Tourism has played a role in developing a heritage industry in Xinjiang, though so far it is based on presenting selected places that are enjoyed by Han visitors to the city. Marketing heritage is not intrinsically bad, and has been seen across the world to bring great benefits to local communities that are involved.

An approach is therefore required that facilitates consultation with the local population and allows them to guide how their city develops in response to change according to their heritage values, their ways of life, their future aspirations. Interfering with the long-term practices of China's minority groups will result in the disruption of longstanding ideas of ownership, inheritance, and authenticity, leading to still further conflict. Transformations to urban sites must respect – not offend and destroy – the existing practices and values of local communities. The divide between 'authentic' or 'traditional' material structures and the vernacular context that makes them real, must stop. There is no one single homogeneous Uyghur, Han, or Chinese identity in Xinjiang, nor is there a single, linear Silk Road narrative. The Silk Road was a constantly changing and infinitely describable process, yet it has been isolated from the world-in-formation through imposition of nationalist ideologies and association with a homogenizing narrative.

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Below: Destruction of historic buildings in Kashi, Xinjiang, China (2012). Photo by Marc van der Chijs (flickr).

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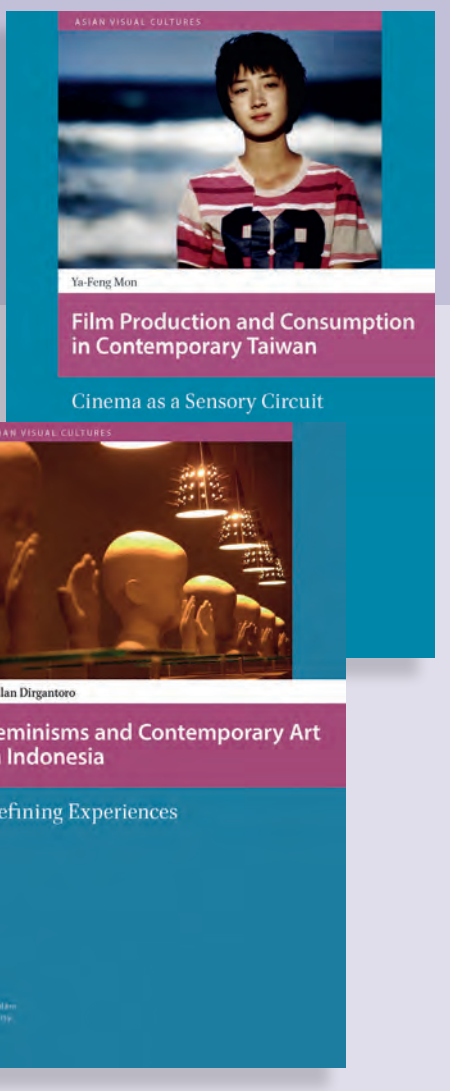

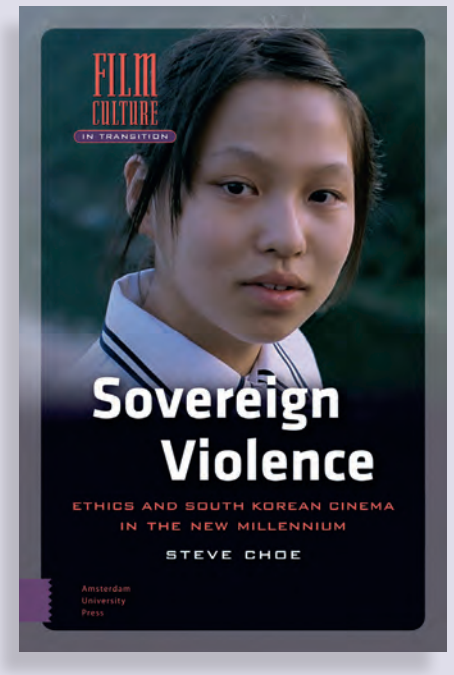

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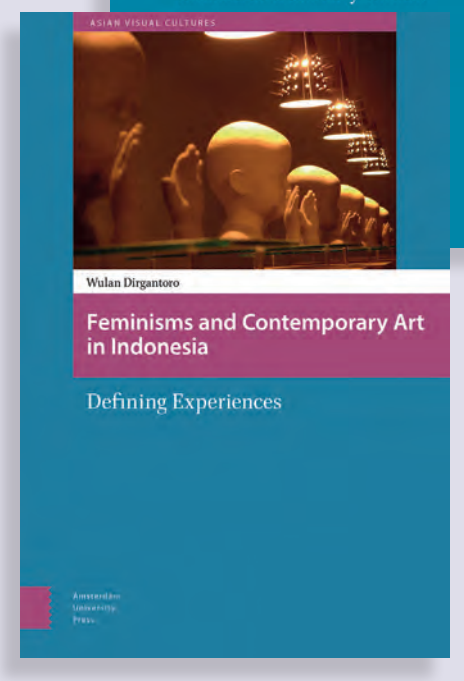

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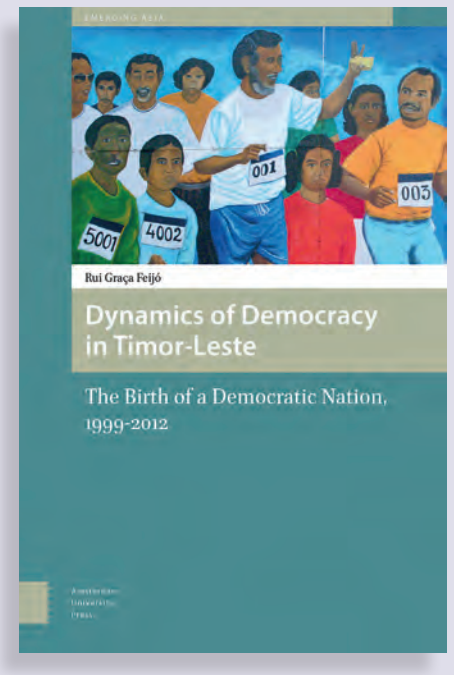

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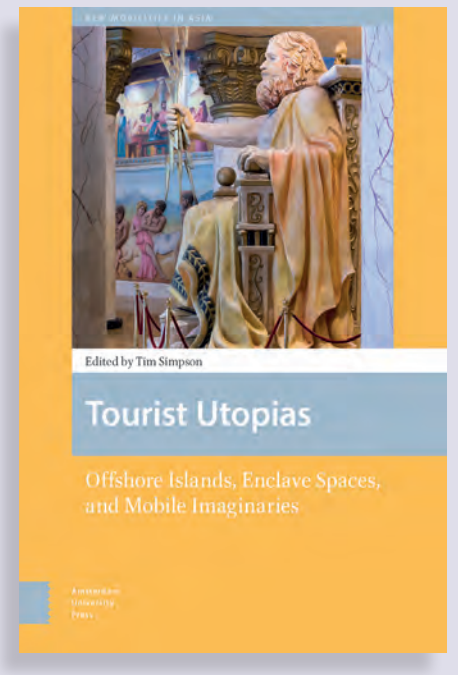

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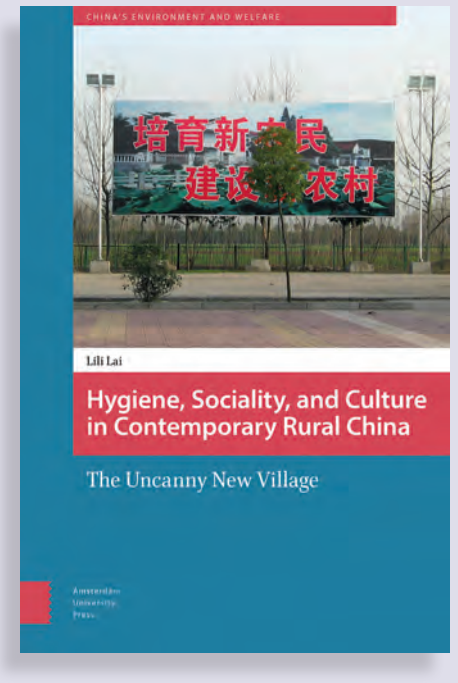

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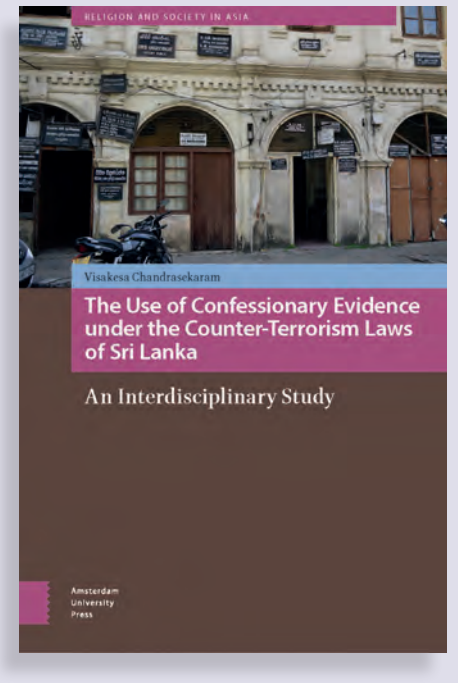

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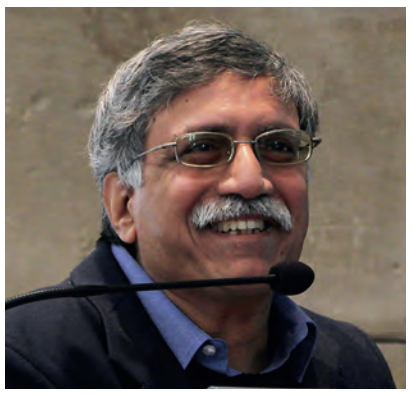
IIAS Reports

Language, power and identity in Asia: creating and crossing language boundaries

Willem Vogelsang and Sandra Dehue

FROM 14-16 MARCH 2016, the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, the Netherlands, was the venue of a large international conference on the role of languages in Asia. The conference was co-sponsored by the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics, the Leiden University Institute for Area Studies, and supported by LeidenGlobal. Organised by IIAS, the meetings were attended by almost two hundred participants from all over the world. All together they presented almost 150 papers (35% from Asia, 37% from Europe, 10% from the USA, and the remainder from Russia, Australia, the Middle-East and Africa). These contributions, which discussed a multitude of approaches and covered a wide geographical area, centred on the importance of linguistic differences, practices, texts and performances and their impact on the political, social and intellectual power structures among Asian communities, both in the past and in the present.



The two keynote speakers: Dr Mark Turin (above) and Professor G.J.V. Prasad (below and in main image).

Keynotes

The conference was introduced by two keynote speakers: Professor G.J.V. Prasad (Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Study in New Delhi, India) and Dr Mark Turin (Chair of the First Nations and Endangered Languages Program and Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Canada).

Prasad in his talk addressed the role of English as the Associate Official Language of India, and its contested position with regard to Hindi, the Official Language. He argued that Indian multilingualism and identity politics, together with the impact of globalization, have made the position of English in India almost unassailable. Turin in his address focused on the hierarchies of language and power in the Himalayas, in the face of growing vulnerability of many of the Himalayan languages, caused by mobility and migrations and cross-border resource conflicts. Although linguistic rights may now often be protected by legislation, there is sometimes an unsurmountable gap between political aspiration and effective implementation.

Parallel sessions

Following the keynote addresses, the participants joined a series of 42 parallel sessions that all focused on different sub-themes. These parallel sessions included three to five speakers who briefly outlined their paper, after which the floor was opened to often very lively and animated discussions, which were continued over coffee and lunch.

It is of course impossible to list all panels and contributors here, but the programme and all abstracts are available on our website.

There was much attention given to the linguistic situation in the Indian subcontinent, but also on mainland Southeast Asia, the Indonesian archipelago, and East Asia. Some of the panels had been organised by the contributors themselves: for instance, 'Harmonisation of territorial nationalism with cross-border languages reservoir for peace building (A case of South Asia)', organised by Pramod Kumar (Institute for Development and Communication in India), and 'Language, power, discourse and identities in China', put together by Linda Tsung (University of Sydney, Australia). Equally interesting and important were panels such as, to name but a few: 'Rethinking the relationship between language and identity in Burma and beyond', 'Localised terminologies, political implications', 'Language and hierarchy', and 'Languages and practices of imperial power in local government of Kazachstan'.

Part of a panel focusing on the politics, identity and power in South Asia was a presentation by IIAS fellow Bal Gopal Shrestha, entitled ''Nepali', the official 'killer' language and other Nepalese languages in multi-lingual Nepal'. In his presentation, Shrestha focused on the position of the language of the Newars ('Nepal Bhasa'), the indigenous people of the Kathmandu Valley and surrounding areas. Nepal, a multinational, multicultural, multilingual, and multi-religious Himalayan country in South Asia, hosts more than 100 'nationalities' or 'ethnicities' *(janajati),* speaking various languages and dialects. As a result of the 1769 Gurkha conquest, Nepal underwent a repressive rule of 'one-language - one dress, one nation - one country' for about two and half centuries, to the benefit of the ruling Arya-Khas or the high caste Hill Brahmins and Chetris, who speak Khas as their mother tongue. The suppression of Nepalese languages was systematically applied during the later period of the Rana regime (1846-1951) when the rulers desired to make their mother tongue *Khas,* also known as *Parvate* or *Gorkha bhasa,* the single official language of Nepal, designating it as 'Nepali'. As a consequence, the Newars lost the true name of their language 'Nepal Bhasa'. The Newar language was officially banned from the court, and sanctions were imposed on the usage of the Newar language. Many Newar writers were given admonitions and fines, sent to prison or forced into exile. The new constitution of 2015 still fails at recognizing equal status to all the languages spoken in Nepal and gives continuity to the discriminatory policy favouring a single language – 'Khas' – as the only 'Nepali' and 'official' language of Nepal, much to the dissatisfaction of various indigenous nationalities, such as the people of the southern plain (Madhesi), indigenous nationalities (Janajati) and the Tharu, who have been fiercely protesting the new constitution.

These are just a few examples of the many interesting panels and presentations held over the course of three days. The facilities of the Museum and that of the adjoining Gravensteen, where some of the panels were held, ensured a very congenial atmosphere that strongly contributed to the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

The programme and all abstracts are available at: www.iias.asia/language

Photo © Ania Blazejewska

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The Netherlands
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IIAS Reports

2016 IIAS-CSEAS Winter School – Mapping the aesthetics of urban life in Asia: a dialogue with the arts

Preeti Singh and Soaham Mandal

Organized by the International Institute of Asian Studies in collaboration with the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies; Kyoto, Japan, 25- 30 January 2016.[1]

THE SIX-DAY WINTER SCHOOL organized by the I*nternational Institute of Asian Studies* in Leiden (IIAS), in collaboration with the *Centre for Southeast Asian Studies in Kyoto* (CSEAS), successfully lived up to its interdisciplinary aims of bringing together artists, researchers and practitioners to work towards developing models of intervention in urban spaces. Hosted by CSEAS, this workshop enabled participants to navigate Kyoto, and brought them closer to their own urban realities. Doctoral candidates, from disciplines as varied as Literature, Musicology, Archaeology, Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Media Studies, Design and Civil Engineering and Environmental Studies, participated in lectures and fieldwork, gathering a host of perspectives on Kyoto, a city that is a repository of tradition and modernity, to think about aesthetics in urban Asia. They spent many hours working on creative collaborative projects, with the aim to broaden the space of intervention in order to stimulate public engagement with the city.

Above: Winter School 2016 Participants. Photo courtesy of Amanda Lim.

Lectures

The first day began early at the Inamori Foundation Building, Kyoto University with a welcoming lecture by Dr Mario López (Associate Professor, CSEAS), Dr Nathan Badenoch (Associate Professor, CSEAS) and Prof. Kono Yasuyuki (Director of CSEAS) who introduced the themes, upcoming schedule of the conference and acquainted the participants with the geocultural reality of Kyoto. This initial session was followed by the introduction of participants, who had arrived from places spanning Indonesia, the Netherlands, Nepal, India, USA, China, Singapore, Pakistan and Malaysia. Scholars from the Graduate School of Asian and African Studies (Zenta Nishio and Kim Yujin) and the University of New South Wales Australia (Amanda Lim) volunteered to help, and brought in their own reserves of knowledge and experience to the program. Ms. Martina Van den Haak (International Institute for Asian Studies) worked meticulously towards the coordination and the coherence of the entire effort. The three convenors of the workshop, Susie Ibarra, Kenta Kishi and Jeroen de Kloet, introduced their respective approaches and plans for the workshops and fieldwork.

Participant introductions were followed by two extremely informative lectures by Dr Andrea Flores Urushima and Yoko Inoue. Dr Urushima, a researcher at the Centre for Integrated Studies (CIAS) at Kyoto University, is currently studying the urban reconstruction of post-war Japan. Her lecture entitled "Everyday and Innovation in the making of Kyoto a Cultural Heritage City" drew the attention of participants towards urban development policies in Japan and how they sought to integrate tradition and modernity, in reinventing Kyoto. Structures like the Kyoto Tower and the International Conference Centre, famed for the Kyoto Protocol conference in 1966, were efforts at modernization and were placed simultaneously with regulations of traditional structures like the beautiful but fire prone *Kyo-machiyas* (traditional, wooden townhouses of Kyoto) on the streets of Kyoto. In a conference that sought to investigate the space for social dialogue in modern Asian cities, Dr Urushima's lecture highlighting the co-existence of official master projects and narratives with independent proposition from citizens, contributing towards urban planning in Kyoto, opened up new avenues of thinking and understanding, what she called the 'mental structure of the city'.

Dr Urushima's talk was followed by a lecture by Yoko Inoue, a multi-disciplinary artist who has worked extensively on sculptures, installations and public performance art. Yoko's work explores the intersection of the sacred and profane in the context of art in this age of globalization. Her lecture sought to engage the participant's attention in the social life of things, by identifying the cultural traits of specific objects and how they become part of the public imagination. Citing art as a collaborative enterprise, Yoko talked at length about the concepts of barter and exchange and how sacred objects are placed and circulated within capitalism. Participants collaboratively thought of ways in which interventions can be made in the consumerist space of the market. The three convenors then continued to introduce their subjects to the participants as a preliminary exercise to the next day's workshops.

Workshops

The workshop lectures were also held at the Inamori Foundation Building located on the bank of the Kamogawa River. The main workshop was divided into three participatory seminars and lectures by the three convenors.

The first workshop, conducted by Susie Ibarra (Composer, Percussionist, Faculty member in Music and the Center for Advancement in Public Action, Bennington College, USA), was entitled "The City as an Orchestra: Remapping Cities through Sound". The participants were guided through intense listening exercises with sample sound excerpts. The aim was to create awareness of sonic textures through ambient listening.
A discussion followed on the orchestral principle that can be observed in the soundscapes of the city. Introduction, theme, variation, repetition and recapitulation are the aspects of that principle, through which the listening practice can be executed in the compositional paradigm. A defining question that emerged out of the discussion was: "Who/what is the conductor function in the urban soundscape, considering that orchestral principle can be extrapolated to the understanding of urban landscape?" Equipped with queries, questions and recording equipment, the participants were guided into a sound walk through the central segments of downtown Kyoto; Oike Street, Sanjo Street, Teramachi and Kawaramachi Streets, sampling and mapping sounds of the streets, water channels, stores, floors, classrooms, shops, traffic signals, the river flow and people. Creating a harmonious arrangement and imagining an essay of sonic aesthetics was the aim of the project.

The second workshop, "Urban Mapping and the Exploration/Cultivation of Empty Space", was conducted by the renowned architect, practitioner, teacher and theorist Kenta Kishi (Orange House Studio). Kishi has ongoing projects in Surabaya (Indonesia), and he drew on these experiences in Southeast Asia to help highlight similarities and differences between the two cities. The workshop and following group work focused on the transformation of 'empty' spaces into 'spaces of absence'. These are the urban spaces that exhibit 'lack of cultivation'. They subtly embody a multiplicity of functions: dynamic, spontaneous relationships between elements that define the work of architecture and its relationship with its surrounding space. The product of this interaction can be a 'quasi-public space', 'formal public space' and/or 'problematic invisible adjunct spaces' like space between different types of ownerships. The workshop also highlighted the problems of dead/dormant space by exemplifying the alarming 15% empty /abandoned houses in Japan. The proposition to address the problem came in the form of 'updating' the found absent spaces through careful customisation and occupancy thereby maximising their potential. This can be facilitated through locating micro-emergencies that act as the trigger for update thereby possibly transforming the spaces of absence into alternative spaces. This theory was put into praxis as part of the workshop, by asking the participants who were divided into small groups, to locate and propose transformations of spaces of absence within the Inamori Foundation Building. Participants went around the building in groups and came up with proposals aimed towards transforming the absent spaces into productive ones - library lounges, bookshelves and smoking rooms.
They presented their findings and the credibility of the exercise was established.

The third workshop conducted by Dr Jeroen de Kloet (Professor of Globalisation Studies and Director of the Amsterdam Centre for Globalisation Studies (ACGS) at the University of Amsterdam), was titled "Urban Precarity, Revitalization and Occularcentrism". The workshop focused on the sensory experience of Asian cities that prioritise sight, and are therefore visual spectacles in themselves. The ocularcentrism of the city makes imperative the need to record, to film. Participants were introduced to the idea of precarity in urban spaces that are constantly in the process of decay and regeneration. "What does it mean for a city where everything has to be destroyed or kept?" was a question that the participants grappled with while they engaged in discussions about the possibility of a 'creative city', where urban precarity brought about through commerce and expansion would be inextricable from processes of revitalization. Participants engaged with sites that may have been subjected to this process of gentrification. Various schools that were explored included the former Rissei Elementary School Building, the 1928 Creative Building, and the Kyoto Manga Museum. The method was deeply rooted in the global motivation towards creative understanding. Therefore, photography, soundscaping, artistic intervention, participatory and comparative methods of aesthetic theorisation of urban spaces were employed.

The day ended with instructions for fieldwork, plans for excursion and the division of the groups into specific sub topics of interest under the respective convenors. The venue of the school was shifted the next day to the former Rissei Elementary School, which has been revitalised into a community and art centre. The objective was to understand the city and undertake fieldwork. The art centre worked as the rendezvous point, the workshop, the café, the space for rehearsal, and the space for presentation for the remaining days of the workshop. In fact it became the very embodiment of the revitalization process.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork entailed two days of lectures and visits to the sites. The first day began with two lectures by Akira Kanbe (Head of the Rissei Elementary School City Planning Committee and member of the Kyoto Poncho City Planning Conference) and Ikuko Naito (Head of the Kyoto Keikan Forum (NPO)).
The lectures were delivered in Japanese and were translated in English by Yoshida Chiharu. Both speakers focused on the changes and transitions in the urban area of Kyoto with special reference to the development of the new town around the Kamogawa River. They highlighted the current policies of town planning and maintenance of the old townscape of Kyoto.
These lectures, while aiming to familiarize participants with the intricacies of the city in order to equip them for subsequent fieldwork, also introduced them to specificities of Japanese Culture. Akira Kanbe elaborated on how in Japan, art is not an individual activity, but a collaborative one. This is reflected in the Japanese city too, which can be read as an accumulation of cultures and artefacts from around the world. It is perhaps for this reason that tradition and modernity coexist in the city so effortlessly. The fieldwork was an attempt to trace this co-existence on the streets of Kyoto. The participants began by visiting the Zuisenji Temple where the priest delivered a lecture on the ancestors of the temple and its history. This was followed by a walk around the Pontocho area. The Pontocho street runs parallel to the West Banks of the Kamogawa River and is the site of traditional shops and restaurants of Kyoto.

During the afternoon, the participants visited the Kyoto City Hall for a lecture on the Kyoto City Landscape Policy, delivered by Kadogawa Shinichiro (Kyoto City Hall, Landscape Department, Landscape Policy Planning Division). The participants were introduced to the official measures taken to ensure Kyoto's beautification. These included the processes of preservation, revitalization and creation in the basic concept of landscaping and city making. The attempt was to understand how natural beauty, cultural heritage and modern processes of beautification were harmonised through the landscaping policies of the city. The day ended with a visit to Sanjo Street, one of the liveliest shopping streets in Kyoto, and the Nishiki market, famed for its shops offering traditional Kyoto cuisine. While strolling along these streets, participants also made short visits to the nearby Mataba Shrine and the Nishiki Tenmangu Shrine. This manner of perambulating through the city offered the participants insights into the mutual co-existence of shrines, shopping malls and traditional markets in Kyoto city.

The next day the participants were divided into two teams. The first one led by Mario López visited the Fushimi-Inari Temple, named after Inari, the Shinto God of Rice. The temple is famously known for its ten thousand Torii gates that lead up to the shrine and that were donated by different companies as a token of gratitude for their prosperity. The highlight of this fieldwork, however, was the visit to Kohso Oiwa, a Buddhist Woodcarver who works to keep the ancient art of woodcarving alive in the area. The second group led by Nathan Badenoch went up to Mount Hieizan, located in Kyoto's eastern Mountain ranges and the site of the Eryakunji Temple, one of the most important monasteries in Japanese history and the headquarters of Japanese Buddhism. These visits, when coupled with the lectures arranged during the fieldwork, allowed the participants to reflect on the process of restoration, preservation and revitalization of cultural heritage central to their understanding of the city of Kyoto.

Presentations

After two days of collecting data and samples from the city and many hours of planning and working together over endless cups of coffee, the last day of the Winter School was to be the day of presentations. The presentations were attended by quite a few people from the city and members of the Japan Foundation, represented by Kei Kojima, Ai Kawamura and Chiharu Yoshida were also on hand to assist with interpretation. The group presentations began with Susie Ibarra's group, followed by Dr Kishi's group, and were concluded by the group headed by Dr de Kloet.

City Orchestra

After initial meditations and listening exercises, there were numerous categories of sounds that were to be recorded, isolated, arranged and finally composed. There was a need for a foundation track that established the theme on which different characters and elements must introduce, repeat, vary and recapitulate. The sounds must be representative. Silence is of paramount importance for a city like Kyoto. It must not be overpowered, yet be punctuated by the various sonic elements that create the orchestral texture that can represent the city, her life, and her people. With a compositional thread, equipped with recorders, the participants went scourging the city for the necessary representative sounds. After collecting them, they sorted them for quality, clarity and relevance. Then the composition began which carefully created layers, textures and plots, with space reserved for live elements. Overnight, Susie's team worked on the composition and arrangement, bringing all the individual elements together, woven into an organic whole. With the help of a sound editing suite and four people live-mixing the track over an 8.1 transmission system, the essay was presented in the auditorium of the former Rissei Elementary School. But before the sonic essay, the presentation began with Dayang Yraola introducing a slideshow of visuals of Kyoto collected over the span of the week, followed by a live performance by an ensemble led by Susie Ibarra on Kulintang, Andrea Giolai on flute, Mohamed Shahril Salleh on piano and Soaham Mandal on improvised percussions. It was accompanied by a dance presentation by Widya Suryadini. Following this, Maria Adriani presented a short note of summary of the entire process, Rafique Wassan narrated a travelogue and the presentation was concluded with a poem written and read out by Widya Suryadini.

Peeled Onions

Dr de Kloet's team concerned itself with attempting to deconstruct and present before an audience the uniqueness of Kyoto's beauty. Many of the lectures that the participants attended had tried to define the uniqueness of Kyoto's beauty, ranging from official measures of beautification to its cultural heritage. This team talked to the residents of Kyoto on the streets and in museums to discover what made Kyoto beautiful. The participants conducted interviews and recordings in the Art Museum of Kyoto, The City Hall and on the Sanjo and Poncho streets. Participants Anissa, Rahadiningtyas, Elizabeth Wijaya, Markus Wernli and Kim Dînh Bùi embarked on a unique project. Accompanied by Shinya Akutagawa, they went around Kyoto city with a tray and a few onions, asking willing participants to peel the onions layer for layer, and while doing so, talk about what makes Kyoto beautiful through the metaphor of the onion. They arrived at some interesting insights and developed a film based on their research which they presented on the final day. Preeti Singh and Khushboo Bharti visited the Kyoto Manga Museum at the Kyoto Seika University and the Kyoto City Street Museum respectively. Their presentations attempted to highlight how popular culture like Manga and heritage traditions sit neatly alongside each other in Kyoto city. They compared their insights from the museum with the ethos of the streets in Kyoto through photographs, maps, postcards and other street items, where video games and manga stores are found alongside temples and shrines. Mengfei Pan's google street map took the viewer on a journey through these streets by bringing them alive on the screen. Elly Kent put up a short film, along with an installation with a pylon, aimed at highlighting the official measures for the beautification of Kyoto and the processes of control and surveillance that they entailed.

Introducing Presence in Absent Spaces

Dr Kishi's team worked around Sanjo Street, the Art Centre and the Art Museum. Their attempt was to find empty spaces in the city, those that could be recreated as productive and participatory spaces. The presentations and performances by the team members attempted to evoke this very spirit of participation and engagement of the audience by inviting them to take part in their installations/spaces. Catherine Bender put up a collection of postcards and pamphlets from the shops and lanes of Kyoto. Her attempt was to highlight the spaces and possibilities of individual and collective protest in the city. Arjen Nauta, through his simple but clever installation, flirted with the idea of private space; Dinesh Kafle invited the audience to take part in his project that brought up questions of home and belonging; Jennifer looked at urban nostalgia; Sharenee Paramasivam's project explored the transnational presence as absent space; and Liwen Deng, through her installation, invited the participants to take part in the recreation of unused spaces in the Art Centre.

The discussions from the Art Centre continued late into the evening on the last day. The farewell dinner at Ryoma Sanjo witnessed many references to 'absent spaces', 'occularcentrism' and 'sonic energy'. The 2016 IIAS-CSEAS Winter School was not only a great learning experience for its participants, but it also culminated in some wonderful friendships and professional associations.

The 2017 IIAS-SSRC Winter School (January 2017), "Media Activism and Postcolonial Futures", will be co-organised by IIAS and the Social Science Research Council (New York), and hosted by the C-Centre (Centre for Chinese Media and Comparative Communication Research) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (www.iias.asia/winterschool2017).

Report prepared by Winter School participants Preeti Singh and Soaham Mandal (both of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi).

References

1 For the programme and full list of participants, please visit www.iias.asia/winterschool2016

Below: Participants presenting their work. Photo courtesy of Amanda Lim.

Announcements

Vietnam and Korea as longue durée subjects: negotiating tributary and colonial positions

Call for Papers

Application deadline: 5 July 2016
Conference dates: 3-4 March, 2017
Venue: Hanoi, Vietnam

The International Institute for Asian Studies (Leiden), Asia Centre (Seoul National University), Vietnam National University (Hanoi), Leiden University (Leiden), and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris) are organising a two-part conference *In Comparison: Korea and Vietnam in History.* For the first part, we invite the submission of paper abstracts on the 'pre-modern' and 'colonial' periods of Vietnam and Korea. Scholars do not need to be experts on both countries, but we welcome proposals that are framed in a way that can lead to interesting interactions with people working on the other country.

The conference
Comparative studies are located at the heart of humanities and social science studies (Détienne 2000, Werner and Zimmermann 2004; Felsky & Friedman 2013), particularly in area studies (Anderson 1998, Lieberman 2009). In that field especially, implicit or explicit comparisons often determine certain conceptions of regional and sub-regional orders. For example, the study of East Asia is implicitly situated within a comparative approach to China and the Sinitic culture. What other "strange parallels" (Lieberman) could possibly be operational to set a "comparative gesture" (Robinson 2011) that would not be determined by usual 'sino-style' conceptions of Asia? How to trigger new connections and parallels in area studies?

In partnership with a number of universities and institutions, IIAS and its partners set out to address this 'comparative gesture' by initiating a deliberate by-pass of dominant geometries and meta-narratives. One way to do so will be by organizing conferences or other forms of interactive platforms that would explore unexploited or only partially studied parallels and connections. In doing so, it will not only seek to contribute to renew how 'Asian studies' is methodological framed. By identifying new articulations beyond established approaches of global history, it seeks to underscore the intellectual merits – as well as limits – of comparisons as a social science and humanities method.

This call for papers is for Conference Part 1 in March 2017. The second part of the conference, focusing on the contemporary Korean and Vietnamese conditions from 1945 onward, will be held in Korea the following year.

Conference 1: Vietnam and Korea as longue durée subjects: negotiating tributary and colonial positions
The first proposed event will focus on Korea and Vietnam, two major regional nations and societies in Asia; as great kingdoms in the pre-modern period they developed, sometimes within and sometimes outside of the Sinitic "tributary" system, strong political organizations and original civilizations. The vicissitudes of the modern and contemporary periods, first with the experience of colonial subjugation, then international warfare and civil conflicts resulting in the division of the two countries, set many connections and parallels in the two countries' trajectories. Today, Vietnam and Korea continue to stand at the edge of the two great ideological systems that shaped the twentieth century, socialism and capitalism, yet in divergent ways – Vietnam being reunified and having entered post-communist-pro-capitalist State authoritarianism, while Korea remains divided between two models of statehood and governance.

The conference is conceived as an exploratory exercise to identify points of connections in which scholars of Vietnam and Korea could confront their work and engage their paradigms. As an ongoing project historically grounded with contemporary perspective situated within the larger Asia-global spectrum as well as for practical sake, the first part of the conference will focus on two conventionally agreed historiographies of the countries: their 'pre-modern' and 'colonial' periods. An underlying question this conference aims to address will be: How did the Korean and Vietnamese states and their civil societies, concepts that were shaped during the tributary system, become formulated during the modernization period?

Various approaches and disciplines are invited to interact. Topics that would be particularly relevant for the conferences include – but should not be restricted to – the following:
- Ancient kingdoms: indigenization of Sinitic culture and resources; articulation with vernacular cultures (e.g., indigenous religious systems and beliefs);
- Pre-modern urban cultures, bureaucracies, statehood;
- Ways of dealing with the world and China: diplomatic cultures and techniques, exchange, commerce, piracy;
- Western incursions and missionary experiences in Korea and Vietnam;
- Looking at China, Japan and other Asian countries from Korea and Vietnam;
- Writing and languages (relation to Chinese writing systems, and vernacularization processes; linguistic innovations and hybridization);
- Colonial experiences, including differences of governmentalities, processes of modernization; cities and modern urban cultures; transcultural experiments; forms of political (and cultural) resistance and contestation; new cosmopolitanisms.

Individual presentations need not be restricted to works explicitly comparing Korea and Vietnam, yet presenters have to bear in mind the ultimate purpose of framing debates in comparison between the two Asian countries and their societies. Likewise, studies from scholars specializing in China, Japan, and other Asian countries are welcome, provided they contribute to the general problematic of the workshop. Junior scholars are particularly encouraged to submit abstracts.

Proposal submission requirements
Paper proposals should be submitted via the online paper proposal submission form available at www.iias.asia/vietnamkorea by **Tuesday 5 July 2016.**

Successful applicants will be notified by 31 August 2016 and will be required to send a draft paper (6000 - 8000 words) by 15 January 2017.

Financial support
Participants are expected to pay their own travel and accommodation expenses. Limited financial support may be made available to some scholars who reside in Asia and some junior or low-income scholars from other parts of the world. If you would like to be considered for a grant, please submit the Grant Application Form available at www.iias.asia/vietnamkorea in which you state the motivation for your request. Please also specify the kind of funding that you will apply for or will receive from other sources. Please note that the conference operates on a limited budget, and will not normally be able to provide more than a partial coverage of the costs of travel. The form should be submitted by 5 July 2016. Requests for funding received after this date will not be taken into consideration.

Information
Further information about the venue, suggestions for accommodation, and logistics will be provided at www.iias.asia/vietnamkorea once the proposals have been accepted.

For questions, please contact Ms Martina van den Haak at: m.c.van.den.haak@iias.nl

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An initiative directed by IIAS

New Publication

Anika Altaf. 2016. *Bangladesh field report. Defining, targeting and reaching the very poor.* ASC Working Paper 126/2016, African Studies Centre Leiden, co-published with IIAS

https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/37714

THE RESEARCH PROJECT 'Defining, targeting and reaching the very poor' has resulted in 5 Working Papers. These volumes are field reports on Bangladesh (Working Paper 126), Benin (Working Paper 127), Jeldu, Ethiopia (Working Paper 128), Addis Ababa (Working Paper 129) and finally a Synthesis (Working Paper 130).

From 2007 onwards, the PADev (Participatory Assessment of Development) research project started to focus on the assessment of development interventions from the perception of recipients in Burkina Faso and Ghana. One of the most important and striking conclusions of this study was its failure to reach the poor and the very poor, meaning that the bulk of interventions were not reaching these groups. Development organizations thus have to struggle with the question about whether to adjust their current targeting practices or to redefine their target groups.

Anika Altaf is currently working on her PhD on how to target the ultra poor in poverty-alleviation initiatives. Her research aims to discover how extremely poor people can benefit on a long-term basis from such actions. In addition, she is attempting to find out who the ultra poor are and the struggles they face. Her research is being carried out in Bangladesh, Benin and Ethiopia using the PADev methodology and she is trying to connect Asian experiences (in a country where NGOs are experimenting with and developing methods to reach the ultra poor) with African experiences.

Ancient Asia

Journal of the Society of South Asian Archaeology

ANCIENT ASIA, the official continuous publication journal of the Society of South Asian Archaeology (SOSAA), is now accepting submissions for publication for 2016. We primarily publish research papers but also welcome book reviews and short reports.

Ancient Asia is a fully peer-reviewed, open access journal. The journal publishes as soon as articles are ready, meaning there is no delay in research being released.

The scope of *Ancient Asia* is vast - from Stone Age to the Modern times, including archaeology, history, anthropology, art, architecture, numismatics, iconography, ethnography, various scientific aspects including archaeobotany and archaeozoology, and theoretical and methodological issues. Amongst its goals are to bring forth the research being conducted in areas that are not often well published such as the North Eastern States of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Central Asia, Iran, etc.

Topics that are encouraged for submission are (but not exclusively):
- Prehistory
- Physical Anthropology
- Environmental Archaeology
- Proto and Early History
- Settlement Archaeology
- Maritime Archaeology
- Industrial Archaeology
- Art History
- Ancient Architecture
- Epigraphy
- Heritage Management and Conservation
- Ancient Technology and Computer Application
- Museum Studies and Development
- Religion
- Trade
- Folklore and Ethnology

We accept online submissions via http://www.ancient-asia-journal.com.
Find author guidelines at http://www.ancient-asia-journal.com/about/submissions.
Alternatively, please contact the Editorial Team for more information:
http://www.ancient-asia-journal.com/about/submissions

Ancient Asia is published by Ubiquity Press. Article Processing Charges (APC) apply.
To encourage submissions from developing regions, waivers are granted on a tiered basis according to the country the author's institution is based. For more information, please go to the submissions page.

Indian medicine: between state & village

Workshop dates: 23-24 June 2016
Venue: Leiden University Faculty of Humanities, Lipsius Building, room 148, Cleveringaplaats 1, Leiden, the Netherlands

THIS WORKSHOP TAKES the sensibilities of Indian medicine as its point of departure, focusing on themes such as Indian medicines as tangible and intangible heritage, Indian medicines as health security for the poor and Indian medicines as identity markers. The workshop is organised by IIAS and convened by Dr Maarten Bode (University of Amsterdam and the Institute of Trans-disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology, Bangalore, India).

For more information and registration, see www.iias.nl/indianmedicine

Japan: Modern Japanese prints in the Rijksmuseum's Philips Wing

24 June – 11 September 2016

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam) will be presenting 170 Japanese prints from the Elise Wessels Collection, picturing Japan's rapid modernization during the opening decades of the twentieth century. Alongside prints, the exhibition will feature kimonos and lacquerware from the Jan Dees and René van der Star Collection and posters on loan from the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo.

Japan at the turn of the 20th century

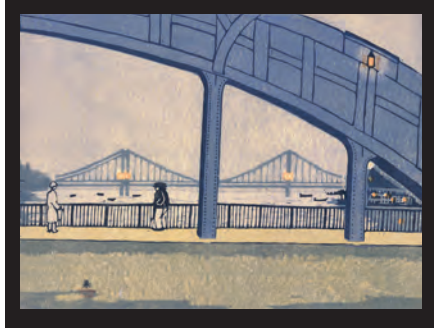
In the early 1900s, Japan was booming. Its modern urban centres offered a fertile climate for burgeoning industries and gave rise to new forms of leisure. As in Europe and America, women were pushing back old boundaries, forging a new model of the 'modern girl'. Alongside optimism, there was also a prevailing sense of nostalgia, fed by feelings of uncertainty. In this era of vast change, the past was glorified as an ideal.

With Japan in the midst of this whirlwind development, a devastating earthquake struck in 1923, ravaging the city of Tokyo and many towns and villages for miles around. Work immediately began on reconstruction of the country's capital, putting the pace of modernization into an even higher gear. Synthetic fabrics made clothing, including kimonos, more affordable, and in their window displays the new department stores showcased the latest fashions to tempt shoppers. By 1930, Tokyo was a modern world metropolis that bore little resemblance to the city it had been just a few decades earlier.

Dancer
Kobayakawa Kiyoshi (1889-1948), 1932.
Collection Elise Wessels - Nihon no Hanga.

Japanese prints: Shin hanga & Sōsaku hanga

Prints from this period offer an unparalleled window into this turbulent time. Japan already had a long tradition of printmaking, but the early twentieth century saw the emergence of two new artistic currents known as Shin hanga ('new prints') and Sōsaku hanga ('creative prints'). Artists within these two movements each applied traditional woodcutting techniques in their own specific ways. Shin hanga artists used time-honoured methods and pictorial content that dovetailed with Japan's centuries-old printmaking tradition, choosing subjects such as idealized female portraits and evocative landscape prints. Sōsaku hanga artists, by contrast, were avant-gardists with innovative ideas about the role of the artist and the creative process, whose subject matter revolved around the modern world, city life and industry. Weaving together these two strands of Japanese printmaking, this exhibition tells the story of a society in transformation.



Above: Eitai and Kiyosubashi, 1928
Koizumi Kishio (1893-1945).
Collection Elise Wessels - Nihon no Hanga.

Right: Winter at Arashi gorge, 1921
Kawase Hasui (1883-1957).
Collection Elise Wessels - Nihon no Hanga.

Elise Wessels Collection

Dedicated to Japanese prints from the first half of the twentieth century, the Elise Wessels Collection is unique in the Netherlands, and among the best in the world from this period outside Japan. The collection currently contains some 2,000 prints of exceptional quality, collected over a 25-year time span. With a large selection of prints in both the Shin hanga and Sōsaku hanga styles represented, the collection is furthermore unusual in offering a virtually comprehensive overview of Japanese printmaking during this period.

Publication and Rijks Lecture

To coincide with the exhibition, a catalogue is being published in Dutch and English. On Sunday 26 June, the museum will be hosting a special lecture by Curator Marije Jansen and an interview with Elise Wessels.

ABIA ONLINE

Studying art and archaeology? Search the ABIA!

The internet may at times resemble an ever-widening ocean of publications, big and small. Understandably, it becomes increasingly difficult to fish out those studies that appear most relevant for ongoing research or teaching. Bibliographies can help trace published materials efficiently. The use of a bibliography may sound stuffy and old fashioned, but e-bibliographies are in fact digitally agile tools that prove much more efficient than their paper predecessors.

One such up-to-date bibliography is the ABIA, which focuses on the art and archaeology of South and Southeast Asia in their widest sense. This database, which originated at Leiden University, covers academic journals, monographs, edited volumes and contributed chapters going back as far as 1926. Many of these publications would not surface in result lists of every-day search machines; some might be near-forgotten, others never known in the first place. Presently the ABIA offers access to bibliographic data on more than 45,000 specialist publications on South and Southeast Asia's art and archaeology.

The platform

Since 2013 the e-ABIA is based at Brill (Leiden), with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in New Delhi as its partner institute in Asia. The database is part of Brill's online reference shelf, sitting next to bibliographies such as the *Index Islamicus*, the *Linguistic Bibliography* and the *Index to the Study of Religions*, and major online reference works for Asian studies including the *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism* (http://bibliographies.brillonline.com/browse/abia).

Users

Who are the target users? These include scholars and students specializing in Asian studies, art history, archaeology and history, but also museum professionals working on Asia. They can access the ABIA through database portals offered by subscribed university libraries and institutes, or via a personal subscription. Hyperlinks in the ABIA records link to the 'GetCopy' document delivery site for large library catalogues, and digital journal platforms and article archives such as JSTOR and ProjectMuse.

How does it work?

Searching the ABIA can be done by using simple terms profiting from full-text searchability. However, the bibliography also offers focused retrieval through many annotations and specialized key-words for geographic scope, subject and person names. The subjects range in time from the Stone Age to the contemporary urban scene; from tools, techniques and trade to textiles, photography and heritage. The ABIA also covers inscriptions, coins and seals, but feels equally at home with Buddhist iconography of Tibet, Hindu temples in Cambodia, or the Islamic fine arts of the Deccan in India. This wealth in scope reflects that of its predecessor, the famous *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology,* which was compiled by Prof. Jean Philippe Vogel and his team at the Kern Institute of Leiden University, starting in 1926. The books were mostly published for the institute by E.J. Brill from the very start. All data once contained in the printed ABIA now give the e-ABIA great chronological depth sitting comfortably underneath up-to-date coverage of the latest publications on South and Southeast Asia's art and archaeology.

Visibility

In spite of its impressive ancestry, the e-ABIA needs to still secure its place as a trusted companion for research, teaching and publishing for those studying Asia in the 21st century. At present its readership is quite limited, because word of an ABIA e-version has not yet gotten around. The e-ABIA needs to build its fan-base, as only frequent usage by subscribing end-users ensures that its compilation can be continued. That is why the compilers, themselves art historians for South and Southeast Asia, urgently appeal to Asia specialists to introduce the e-ABIA to colleagues and students, and request subject-librarians to add the ABIA to the e-shelves.

For matters of content and coverage, please contact managing editor Dr. Ellen Raven at raven@brill.com. Any enquiries about trials or the different kinds of subscriptions may be directed to sales-nl@brill.com.

IIAS Research and Projects

IIAS research and other initiatives are carried out within a number of thematic clusters in phase with contemporary Asian currents – all built around the notion of social agency. The aim of this approach is to cultivate synergies and coherence between people and projects. IIAS also welcomes research for the open cluster, so as not to exclude potentially significant and interesting topics. Visit www.iias.nl for more information.

Global Asia

THE GLOBAL ASIA CLUSTER addresses contemporary issues related to trans-national interactions within the Asian region as well as Asia's projection into the world, through the movement of goods, people, ideas, knowledge, ideologies and so forth. Past and present trends are addressed. The cluster aims to expand the understanding of the processes of globalisation by considering the various ways Asian and other world regions are interconnected within a long-term historical framework. Acknowledging the central role of Asia as an agent of global transformations, it challenges western perspectives that underlie much of the current literature on the subject and explores new forms of non-hegemonic intellectual interactions in the form of 'south-south-north' and 'east-west' dialogue models. In principle, any research dealing with Asian global interactions is of interest.

Asian Borderlands Research Network (www.asianborderlands.net)
The Asian Borderlands Research Network focuses particularly on the border regions between South Asia, Central/East and Southeast Asia. The concerns of the ABRN are varied, ranging from migratory movements, transformations in cultural, linguistic and religious practices, to ethnic mobilization and conflict, marginalisation, and environmental concerns. The ABRN organises a conference in one of these border regions every two years in co-operation with a local partner. Next conference: Dynamic Borderlands: Livelihoods, Communities and Flows; Kathmandu, Nepal, 12-14 December 2016.
Coordinator: Eric de Maaker (maaker@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)

Energy Programme Asia (EPA)
The EPA-research programme is designed to study the effects of global geopolitics of energy security on the one hand, and policy to increase energy efficiency and estimating the prospects for the exploitation of renewable energy resources on the other. EPA's current and second joint comparative research programme with the Institute of West Asian and African Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is entitled *The Transnationalization of China's Oil Industry: company strategies, embedded projects, and relations with institutions and stakeholders in resource-rich countries (2013-2017)*.
Involving various Chinese and Dutch research institutes, this programme will analyse China's increasing involvement with governments, local institutions and local stakeholders in the energy sectors of a number of resource-rich countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, notably Sudan, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Venezuela, and Brazil. It seeks to determine patterns of interaction between national institutions and Chinese companies, their relationships to foreign investment projects, and the extent to which they are embedded in the local economies. This programme is sponsored by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Social Sciences (KNAW), the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and IIAS.
Coordinators: M. Amineh, Programme Director EPA-IIAS (m.p.amineh@uva.nl or m.p.amineh@iias.nl),
Y. Guang, Progamme Director EPA-IWAAS/CASS
Website: www.iias.nl/research/energy-programme-asia-epa

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 – focusing on emerging markets of Asia. Its multi-disciplinary 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 research projects fall within the following interlocking areas: State licensing, market closure, and rent seeking; Regulation of intra-governmental conflicts; State restructuring and rescaling; and Regulatory governance under institutional voids.
Coordinator: Tak-Wing Ngo (t.w.ngo@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Asian Studies in Africa
Since 2010, IIAS and other partners from Africa, Asia and the USA have been working on an initiative to promote the study of and teaching on Asia at African universities and, equally, to promote African Studies in Asia. The initiative constitutes a first attempt to sustain a humanities-informed South-South knowledge platform with connections between other academic centers in Europe and North America, but also Latin-America and Oceania.

In 2012, a roundtable in Chisamba, Zambia, led to the establishment of the pan-African 'Association of Asian Studies in Africa' (A-ASIA). A-ASIA's development is headed by a steering committee of scholars, mainly from Africa and Asia. In September 2015, A-ASIA held its three-day inaugural conference, in Accra, Ghana, called 'AFRICA-ASIA: A New Axis of Knowledge'. It was the first conference held in Africa to bring together a multidisciplinary ensemble of scholars and institutions from the continent and the rest of the world with a shared focus on Asia and Asia-Africa intellectual interactions.
Website: www.africas.asia

Asian Cities

WITH A SPECIAL EYE on contemporary developments, the Asian Cities cluster aims to explore the longstanding Asian urban "tradition", by exploring the origins of urbanism and urban culture in different parts of Asia and linking the various elements of city cultures and societies, from ancient to modern (colonial and post-colonial) times. Through an international knowledge-network of experts, cities and research institutes it seeks to encourage social scientists and scholars in the humanities to interact with contemporary actors including artists, activists, planners and architects, educators, and policy makers. By bringing together science and practice, IIAS aims to create a platform for scholars and urban practitioners focusing on Asian cities 'in context' and beyond traditional western norms of knowledge.

Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA)
Consisting of over 100 researchers with affiliations at 17 institutes in Europe, China, India and the United States, the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) represents the largest global academic network on Asian cities. UKNA's objective is to nurture contextualised and policy-relevant knowledge on Asian cities, seeking to influence policy by contributing insights that put people at the centre of urban governance and development strategies. To this aim, the programme hosts a variety of research projects through the exchange of researchers of the participating institutions, focusing on the three research themes:
1. Ideas of the city;
2. Cities by and for the people; and
3. Future of the cities.

Between April 2012 and April 2016, the staff exchanges within the UKNA network were funded by a grant awarded by the EU. The success of the UKNA synergy has encouraged the network's partners to carry on with their joint effort and plans are underway to expand the network and broaden its research agenda. IIAS is the coordinating institute in the network and administrator of the programme.
For a full list of UKNA Partners please refer to the UKNA website (www.ukna.asia)
Coordinators: Paul Rabé (p.e.rabe@iias.nl) and Gien San Tan (g.s.tan@iias.nl)

Asian Heritages

THE ASIAN HERITAGES CLUSTER critically addresses cultural heritage practices in Asia. It explores the notion of heritage as it has evolved from a European-originated concept associated with architecture and monumental archaeology to incorporate a broader diversity of cultural forms and values. This includes the contested distinctions of 'tangible' and 'intangible' heritages, and the importance of cultural heritage in defining one's own identity or identities vis-à-vis those of others. It addresses the variety of definitions associated with heritage and their implications for social agency. It aims to engage with the concepts of 'authenticity', 'national heritage' and 'shared heritage' and issues pertaining to the political economy of heritage. Attention is also given to the dangers of commodification of perceived endangered local cultures/heritages, languages, religious practices, crafts and art forms, as well as material vernacular heritage.

International Graduate Double Degree Programme in Critical Heritage Studies
Over the last few years, IIAS has been intensively engaged with the Leiden University Institute for Area Studies (LIAS) and targeted Asian partners, in the development of an international Double Degree programme for graduate students in the field of 'Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe'. To date, the Asian partners involved have been two departments of National Taiwan University and one department of Yonsei University in South Korea; contacts with other possible Asian partner institutes are being explored. The programme offers selected students the opportunity to follow a full year study at one of the partner institutes with full credits and a double degree. The curriculum at Leiden University is supported by the IIAS Asian Heritages research cluster and benefits from the contributions of Prof Michael Herzfeld (Harvard) as a guest teacher and the Senior Advisor to the Critical Heritage Studies Initiative of IIAS.
Contact: Elena Paskaleva (e.g.paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl) or Willem Vogelsang (w.j.vogelsang@iias.nl)
Website: www.iias.nl/critical-heritage-studies

Indian Medical Heritage Research Network
The Indian Medical Heritage Research Network wants to stimulate social-cultural and social-historical research on Indian medical traditions such as Ayurveda, Unanitibb, Siddha, Yoga and Sowa Rigpa. Of special interest is the integration of Indian medicine in Indian public health and its role as second resort for middle class Indians and Europeans. The network offers a virtual space on Facebook (www.facebook.com/IndianMedicalHeritage) for collating research findings and other information about India's medical heritage covering diverse perspectives, interests and backgrounds. A workshop, entitled, 'Indian medicine: Between state and village' will take place in Leiden, The Netherlands on 23-24 June 2016.
See: www.iias.nl/indianmedicine.
Coordinator: Maarten Bode (m.bode@uva.nl)

Rethinking Asian Studies in a Global Context

A research network supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
With the objective of reshaping the field of Asian Studies, the three-year pilot programme (2014-2016) 'Rethinking Asian Studies in a Global Context' seeks to foster new humanities-focused research. In practice, this means adapting Asian Studies to an inter-connected global environment built on a network of academics and practitioners from Asia, the Americas, Europe and Africa. Educational opportunities are created by selecting cross-disciplinary methodological questions likely to shift scholarly paradigms as they pertain to Asia. In the process, the initiative seeks to shape academic communities around new themes of research, emphasising the inclusion of young and aspiring scholars from the four world-regions and beyond.

The initiative is coordinated by IIAS, in collaboration with numerous institutions in Asia, the United States, Europe and Africa, and is funded with a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York. The pilot programme includes a range of scholarly activities such as workshops, conferences and summer schools in five topical areas, or fora, that cut across regions and disciplines:

1. Artistic Interventions: Histories, Cartographies and Politics in Asia
2. Uses of Culture and Cultural Heritage
3. Asian Spatialities: the Indian Ocean World, Central Eurasia and Southeast Asian Borderlands
4. Idea of the City in Asian Contexts
5. Views of Asia from Africa

Coordinator: Titia van der Maas (t.van.der.maas@iias.nl)
Website: www.rethinking.asia

IIAS Fellowship Programme

Along with the research fellows who are attached to one of the IIAS research programmes, the Institute yearly hosts a large number of visiting researchers (affiliated fellows) who come to Leiden to work on their own individual research project. In addition, IIAS also facilitates the teaching and research by various professorial fellows as part of agreements with Dutch universities, foreign ministries and funding organisations.

CURRENT FELLOWS

Rosalina Abu Bakr
Social interaction in the Malay manuscripts
1 Nov 2014 – 31 Oct 2016

Mehdi Amineh
Coordinator 'Energy Programme Asia (EPA)'
Domestic and geopolitical challenges to energy security for China and the European Union
1 September 2007 – 31 March 2017

Nachiket Chanchani
The construction of sacrality in the Central Himalayas
10 Jan – 10 Jul 2016

Manuela Ciotti
The global spread of modern and contemporary art from India
1 Mar – 31 Jul 2016

Daniela De Simone
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1 Sep 2015 – 30 Apr 2016

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Haoqun GONG
Practising (Patibad) Buddhism: Body techniques and religious publicity in urban Thailand
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Pralay Kanungo
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Indian politics
1 Sep 2013 – 30 Jun 2016

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Andrey Klebanov
Indology
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Adam Knee
Thailand in world cinema
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Cheng-tian KUO
Visiting Professor, Taiwanese Chair of Chinese Studies
Asian religious politics: Democratic theology of ecology
20 Jan – 20 Jul 2016

Tak-wing Ngo
Coordinator 'IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance'IIAS Extraordinary Chair at Erasmus University Rotterdam
State-market relations and the political economy of development
1 May 2008 – 1 Jun 2016

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Minna Valjakka
Seeds of hope: Urban creativity in Hong Kong
1 Nov 2015 – 30 May 2016

Shu-li WANG
The Politics of China's cultural heritage on display: Yin Xu Archaeological Park in the making
1 Sep 2015 – 31 Aug 2017

Michael Williams
Indology
1 Apr – 30 Sep 2016

Gonda Fellowships for Indologists

FOR PROMISING YOUNG INDOLOGISTS at the post-doctorate level, it is possible to apply for funding with the J. Gonda Foundation, to spend three to six months doing research at IIAS. Please send your application to the J. Gonda Foundation by the appropriate deadline below. The J. Gonda Foundation of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) supports the scholarly study of Sanskrit, other Indian languages and literature, and Indian cultural history. In addition to enabling Indologists to spend time at IIAS, the foundation offers funding for projects or publications in Indology of both researchers and scientific publishers, as well as PhD grants.

Application form: www.knaw.nl/en/awards/subsidies/gonda-fund
Application deadline: 1 April and 1 October every year

KNAW

ASC-IIAS Fellowship Programme

A joint fellowship offered by the African Studies Centre and the International Institute for Asian Studies

THIS FELLOWSHIP is intended for researchers specialising in Asian-African interactions. It aims to attract researchers whose work is informed by current theoretical debates, in the social sciences and humanities, on global connectivities and who are able to critically engage with shifting paradigms in 'area studies' beyond the ways in which these have traditionally been conceived in the West. We are particularly interested in receiving fellowship proposals that go beyond a mere analysis of current issues associated with African-Asian comparative economic developments or Chinese investments in Africa – although none of these themes, if appraised critically and for their societal consequences, will of course be excluded. Our definition of Asia and Africa is broad and inclusive, Asia ranging from the Middle-East to the Pacific Coast, and Africa from North-Africa to the southern tip of the continent.

Application deadline:
15 March and 15 September each year.

For more information and application form, go to:
www.iias.nl/page/asc-iias-fellowship-programme

African Studies Centre

IIAS
International Institute for Asian Studies

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Shu-Li WANG

Critical heritage studies

I HAVE BEEN A LECTURER at the Leiden University Faculty of Archaeology as well as a research fellow at IIAS, since 2015. I obtained my B.A. in Political Science with a double major in Anthropology from National Taiwan University, an M.A. in Archaeology from Leiden University and a PhD (2013) in Anthropology from the University College London, London University. I have been involved in various museum development projects in Taiwan, and have served as a consultant in several museum projects during my fieldwork in China.

My research interests lie in the field of critical heritage studies and revolve around the construction of and discourses relating to UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the 'museumification' and materialization of China's historical past, and the uses of heritage and archaeology in nation-building in 20th-century China. As an emerging field of academic research, 'critical heritage studies' takes an interdisciplinary approach to tackling the role of the past in the present, which requires theoretical, historical and social approaches as well as practical application. Accordingly, my research trajectory has spanned heritage and museums themselves as well as the anthropology of nationalism, cultural memory, space and politics and social history in China. My PhD thesis *(The Politics of China's Cultural Heritage on Display: Yin Xu Archaeological Park in the Making)* explored the production of archaeological knowledge, the interplay between macro-history and micro-history, and the impact of heritage on contemporary China. For my postdoctoral research I have been looking at the development of museums in China, Mexico and Europe from a comparative perspective. This latter research was part of an ERC research project entitled 'Time in Intercultural Context'. My research sites in China are mainly located in Anyang (Henan Province), Chengdu (Sichuan Province) and Xi'an (Shaan'xi Province), where I did fieldwork in archaeological stations and museums to explore the everyday life of history, heritage and museum making.

At IIAS I am working towards the transformation of my PhD thesis into a manuscript (to be published by the Critical Heritage Series at Left Coast Press). My goal is to present ethnography on archaeological and heritage works in China as the place to explore knowledge production and nation-building in contemporary China. In addition, I have been facilitating IIAS in various heritage activities, in particular in the development of its Double Degree Programme in Critical Heritage Studies with Asian partners in Taiwan, Korea and Indonesia. Before my current affiliation with and work for IIAS, I participated in several IIAS heritage events, including the first Summer School on critical heritage studies (2011), a Roundtable on local heritage issues in Taipei in 2012, and in 2013, the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) in Macao.

Trained as an anthropologist, from Asia, I intend to investigate heritage issues from a native perspective with Asia at the center of knowledge production, and to promote platforms to facilitate cross-cultural communication to examine the global heritage phenomenon. I am the author of "Exhibiting the Nation: Cultural Flows, Transnational Exchanges and the Development of Museums in Japan and China, 1990-1950" (in C. Stolte & Y. Kikuchi, eds., *Eurasian Encounters: Museums, Missions and Modernities*), "Civilization and the Transformation of Xiaotun Village at China's Yinxu Archaeological Park" (in C. Brumann & D. Berliner, eds., *World Heritage on the Ground: Ethnographic Perspectives*) and "Making and Unmaking Heritage Values in China" (in H. Geismar & J. Anderson, eds., *Routledge Reader on Cultural Property*).

Manuela Ciotti

The global spread of modern and contemporary art from India

MY FELLOWSHIP at the IIAS focuses on the writing of a book manuscript that analyzes the outcome of the circulation of modern and contemporary art from India, and the politics of presence engendered by this process. My book draws on a large-scale investigation examining a number of art exhibitions held at biennales, museums and private galleries in the cities of Venice, New York, and Shanghai among others. This book's inquiry empirically and conceptually traverses the South and North of the world and recasts some of the relations between these spheres through the lens of the art world. My inquiry is sustained by an interdisciplinary framework aimed to understand the art world through the production of novel geographies, materialities and mediascapes.

The book and the research project underpinning it are part of the 'Framing the Global' project, an initiative of Indiana University Press and the Indiana University Center for the Study of Global Change, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This project's goal consists of rethinking theories and methodologies around the 'global'. Similarly, this goal enlivens my teaching activities at Aarhus University (AU), where I am Associate Professor of Global Studies; at AU, I engage students with lectures on global issues and on designing research projects in order to investigate them.

Art is a global issue, and my book focuses on the outcome of its circulation around the world out of a particular geo-cultural location. Art-making draws from specific contexts in conversation with forms of cultural production taking place globally; however, art from India (and the Global South, more generally) is subject to processes of recognition, canonization and legitimation, which are still largely powered by Western art institutions and actors. The book that I am writing voices the tension between modern and contemporary art from India viewed as 'particular', and often expected to speak as 'particular', *and* its universal address – without art being unmoored from specific places, societies and histories.

At IIAS, I benefit from the trans-disciplinary and Pan-Asian interests of the Institute fellows, the activities that are organized around them, and the institute events as well as from the interaction with Area Studies scholars at Leiden University. During my fellowship, I will disseminate my research insights through the lectures entitled 'For a politics of presence: The multiple lives of *After midnight: Indian modernism to contemporary India 1947-1997*' (Queens Museum, New York, 2015) and 'Pavilion desire: India at the Venice Biennale in contemporary times', which I will deliver at The Courtauld Institute of Art in London and at IIAS respectively. I look forward to the fruitful exchanges these lectures will generate, which will surely enrich the writing process.

Bhupen Khakhar: You Can't Please All

From 1 June until 6 November 2016, Tate Modern will present the first international retrospective of Indian artist Bhupen Khakhar (1934-2003) since his death. Renowned for his vibrant palette, unique style and bold examination of class and sexuality, Khakhar played a central role in modern Indian art, but was also a key international figure in 20th century painting. This exhibition will bring together the artist's work from across five decades and collections around the world, including major works on canvas, luminous watercolour paintings and experimental ceramics.

Far left:
Bhupen Khakhar Hathyogi 1978. Courtesy of the Estate of Bhupen Khakhar/National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi. © Estate of Bhupen Khakhar.

Left:
Bhupen Khakhar Man Leaving (Going Abroad) 1970. Courtesy of Tapi Collection, India. © Estate of Bhupen Khakhar.

Below:
Bhupen Khakhar Night 2002. Oil paint on canvas Courtesy of Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (New Delhi, India). © Estate of Bhupen Khakhar.

BORN IN 1934 IN BOMBAY, Khakhar lived in Baroda (Vadodara), where he completed an MA in Art Criticism at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Siyajirao University, which was an important artistic centre. Khakhar continued working part-time as an accountant until his artistic career became established. After experiments with collage, Khakhar's early paintings depicted the ordinary lives of workers and tradesmen, such as *The De-Lux Tailors* 1972 and *Barber's Shop* 1973. His portraits captured the modern male subject with extraordinary pathos, echoed in the hollowed eyes and piercing gaze of *Hathayogi* 1978 or *Man with a Bouquet of Plastic Flowers* 1975. As he gained confidence as a painter, Khakhar went on to combine popular and painterly aesthetics, absorbing diverse art-historical influences with ease, from Indian miniature and devotional iconography to 14th century Sienese painting and contemporary pop art. He evolved an engaging figurative style, part of a new wave of narrative painting and figuration that moved away from the modernist canon in vogue in Bombay and Delhi.

Khakhar was part of a lively community of artists and writers in Baroda where his home became a gathering place to meet and exchange ideas, even for visiting artists such as Howard Hodgkin and Dexter Dalwood. Khakhar spent six months as artist- in-residence at the Bath Academy of Art which cemented his links with contemporary British artists. Following his time in Europe, he painted the seminal work *You Can't Please All* 1981, depicting a life-size naked figure on a balcony watching characters from an ancient Aesop fable. This confessional painting signalled Khakhar's self-awareness as a gay man and suggests the personal difficulties he faced at the time.

Khakhar was influenced by Gandhi and was committed to relating the truth as a guiding principle. He confronted provocative themes, particularly his homosexuality, with honesty, sensitivity and wit throughout his career. Works like *Yayati* 1987 show mythical figures in frank and fantastical portrayals of same-sex love. The large-scale diptych *Yagnya-Marriage* 2000 depicts a traditional celebration and feast in a small town with two men receiving a blessing, while smaller watercolours such as *Flower Vase* 1999 and *Grey Blanket* 1998 are more intimate visions of same-sex desire.

Also a writer and playwright, Khakhar was dedicated to storytelling and the illustration of the world in detail. He worked with Salman Rushdie on a special edition of two stories for which the artist produced a series of wood-cuts. Towards the end of his life, Khakhar also made works that expressed his very personal battle with cancer. Works such as *Bullet Shot in the Stomach* 2001 and *At the End of the Day the Iron Ingots Came Out* 1999 show the realities of living with his illness in characteristically unflinching detail. The final work in the exhibition, the small gold hued painting *Idiot* 2003, expressively combines beauty, rage and irony as one character laughs at another's grimace of pain.

Khakhar's work was shown in *Six Indian Painters* at the Tate Gallery in 1982 and in Century City at Tate Modern in 2001. Tate acquired his iconic painting *You Can't Please All* 1981 in 1996. Alongside the exhibition, other recent acquisitions from South Asia will be shown in the new Tate Modern's displays this summer, including works by Sheela Gowda and Sheba Chhachhi.

***Bhupen Khakhar: You Can't Please All* is curated by Chris Dercon (Director, Tate Modern) and Nada Raza (Assistant Curator, Tate Modern). It will be accompanied by a fully-illustrated catalogue from Tate Publishing and a programme of talks and events in the gallery:**

Bhupen Khakhar: Truth is Beauty

2 July 2016, 14.00-16.00
This event takes its name after the same exhibition and self-written catalogue, Truth Is Beauty and Beauty Is God. Bringing together three speakers who offer a unique insight into a specific period of the artist's career, this panel discussion aims to introduce and situate the artist's practice and life within his particular contexts. Themes explored include Khakhar's use of the biography, iconography, the visual language of the street, and more broadly his personal experiences in and of modern India. Speakers include Geeta Kapur, Sonal Khullar and Karin Zitzewitz, and is chaired by Chris Dercon.

Curator's Tour

11 July 2016, 18.30-20.30
Assistant Curator Nada Raza leads an hour-long tour of Bhuphen Khakhar, which brings together his work from across five decades and from collections around the world. Following the tour guests are invited to explore the exhibition for themselves.