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Vietnam and Korea in the *longue durée*

Negotiating tributary and colonial positions

Valérie Gelézeau
and Phạm Văn Thuỳ

Vietnam and Korea are rarely compared *per se* in scholarly work, whether in the field of social sciences or that of area studies. Yet, obvious convergences in their recent histories are apparent: both are Asian countries where the Cold War was indeed hot, tragic and deadly; and both nations were situated at the core of the big divide of the 20th century between capitalism and socialism – Korea still divided, Vietnam reunified in 1975. A conference hosted in March 2016 in Hanoi at the Vietnam National University, and co-organized by IIAS, Seoul National University and Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), pioneered new attempts to compare Vietnam and Korea, with their similar tributary and colonial positions, as *longue durée* subjects of history. This instalment of the Focus presents a selection of a few excellent papers presented at the conference.

The Newsletter is a free periodical published by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS). As well as serving as a forum for scholars to share research, commentary and opinion with colleagues in academia and beyond, The Newsletter is also a window into the Institute.

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a global Humanities and Social Sciences institute and a knowledge exchange platform, based in Leiden, the Netherlands, with programmes that engage Asian and other international partners. IIAS takes a thematic and multi-sectoral approach to the study of Asia and actively involves scholars and experts from different disciplines and regions in its activities. Our current thematic research clusters are 'Asian Heritages', 'Asian Cities' and 'Global Asia'.

Information about the programmes and activities of IIAS can be found in the Network pages of each issue of The Newsletter.

In this issue

In this issue, Françoise Vergès reflects on the symposium *Reclaiming the 'workshop' as collaborative pedagogy* held at Brown University, USA, in the framework of the IIAS programme 'Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World' (p.49). On page 50, Rituparna Roy shares the topics discussed during the conference *Partition in Bengal*, including her idea of and work on a Kolkata Partition Museum. Other reports are those on the symposium *River Cities: water space in urban development and history*, held in Surabaya, Indonesia (p.44-45), and the Leiden Summer School *Asian food: history, anthropology, sociology* (p.48).

IIAS research programmes, networks and other initiatives are described in brief on page 52-53, preceded on page 51 by a more elaborate description of the goals and activities of the newly established Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies. Pages 46-47 provide more information about the Double Degree in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe, including the experiences of four students with the programme. Information about the IIAS Fellowship programme can be found on pages 54-55.

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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Connecting knowledges and peoples

Philippe Peycam

The past few months, following ICAS 10 in Chiang Mai, have been a phase of consolidating IIAS's ongoing programmes and reinforcing its capacities in order to carry out its mission. Some important events have punctuated the period: a workshop on 'Reimagining the Civic Role of the University' at Mandalay University and a methodological meeting on 'the Workshop' at Brown University's Cogut Center for Humanities (Providence), both under the Humanities Across Borders (HaB) programme funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (p.49); a conference followed by an in-situ roundtable with a policy action plan in Peneleh Neighbourhood in Surabaya, in collaboration with communities and Airlangga University, under the Southeast Asian Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET) funded by the Henry Luce Foundation (p.44-45). Meanwhile, preparations have begun for the second edition of the Africa-Asia Conference, 'A New Axis of Knowledge', which will take place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 20-22 September 2018. Work on ICAS 11, under the theme 'Asia and Europe, Asia in Europe', which will be held in Leiden, on 16-19 July 2019, has also begun in earnest.

Expanding our capacities

This relatively 'quiet period' - for IIAS - may be a fitting time to take stock of some of the transformations the Institute has undergone. The last five years or so have seen the reinforcement of its character to serve as a global facilitator, or enabler, while new spaces of involvement, beyond the traditional limits ascribed to academic area studies, were opened. The exciting endeavour to renew the Institute's communication strategy has also significantly contributed to these transformations. More on that below.

The past years have seen IIAS respond more assertively to a number of external and internal challenges. They relate to the original position the Institute occupies as both 'national' and 'international', with an equally unique mandate of facilitation of research, pedagogy and public service. IIAS, as a global promoter of knowledge regarding 'Asia in the World', has been forced to take a position in the larger academic context where area and humanistic studies are under economic threat, and at a time when scholars face increasingly overt attacks on their basic academic freedoms. One response by the Institute has been to reinforce the potentialities of its own public service mission. IIAS is continuously expanding its capacity to serve as a space in which contextualized knowledge practices are put into fertile conversation with broader transdisciplinary questions of universal significance. This is demonstrated by the Institute's ability to engage with social actors located outside mainstream academia (e.g., artists, urban practitioners, community members), or by rediscovering the benefits of working alongside scholars and universities deemed 'at the margins' of mainstream academia.

IIAS's versatile character allows it to simultaneously engage with local and global, theoretical and applied, research-led knowledge. This capacity to reduce barriers, by testing new methodological and epistemological instruments has propelled the Institute to the forefront of scholarly innovation. The introduction of new formats

of activities and engagement has permeated a number of IIAS's 'traditional' programmes, such as its Fellowships, or ICAS, while new initiatives, under the HaB and SEANNET programmes, or the highly popular 'IIAS In Situ Graduate School', were shaped to translate this quest for connecting different modes of experience and knowledge, in context.

With the HaB and SEANNET programmes especially, IIAS inaugurated an original model of scholarly engagement conceived as: research-led; collaborative; decentralized; local-global.

In both HaB and SEANNET, research is carried out by a selection of local and international Principle Investigators informed by a multiplicity of actors not merely involved as materials for knowledge extraction but as co-producers of this knowledge.

The two programmes contribute directly to the educational, social and institutional needs at the local and supra-local levels. Both share a pedagogical ambition that seeks to facilitate synergies across artificially held boundaries, i.e., university-society; teachers-students; north-south, research-teaching and services.

In their operations, HaB and SEANNET privilege collaboration over competition. They stand to counter the prevailing trend of academic atomization resulting from the deleterious application of quantitative 'Key Performance Indicators' evaluation. The two programmes, moreover, are built on networks made up of diverse albeit willing partner institutions. These networks will hopefully crystallize into active consortia, like the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA).

The two programmes are decentralized: their coordination is conjointly carried out from Leiden and Chennai (HaB), Leiden and Singapore (SEANNET), or with regional colleagues coordinating their own project and budget. The Dutch/European dimension is not dominant. Partners, as co-owners of the projects, are in turn encouraged to seek additional funding or at least to contribute in-kind to the overall initiative.

Both programmes are articulated in a way that local projects can grow out of their environment while their findings are put into dialogue with other centres of knowledge practice. The objective is to shape locally-globally framed spaces of exchange. For instance, 'neighbourhoods': a universally accepted site of urban knowledge practice that finds its distinctive meaning at the level of the local.

Multiple forms of collaborations

This decentralized and mutualized way of operating complex programmes can also be found in the way ICAS reinvented itself. Originally organized along the traditional academic mega-conference model, ICAS, a global event platform, has in the past years morphed into an inclusive collaborative framework enabling a multiplicity of activities to converge in the same place for an intensive short period. Whilst the traditional model of parallel panels and paper-presentations remains, the biennial ICAS events are now framed in a way that they allow for multiple forms of collaborations, with partner institutions partaking in the overall enterprise. This is the case between the ICAS Secretariat (at IIAS) and the host institution(s) and city.

It is also true about partners supporting events within the larger conference framework: for instance, Leiden University's Asian Library sponsoring the ICAS English-language Book Prize. ICAS, moreover, aims to facilitate dialogue and collaboration involving academic and civil society actors.

ICAS 10 in Chiang Mai (20-23 July 2017) was a case in point. It featured within its midst two international graduate schools: the first on 'craft', co-organized by IIAS-Columbia Chiang Mai universities; the second on 'intra-Asia studies', with the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). The documentary film festival was organized by Kyoto University's Southeast Asian Studies Centre. A number of exhibitions were put together by local NGOs, in collaboration with Chiang Mai University. The various language editions of the ICAS Book Prize involved collaborations with Leiden University (English), Seoul National University (Korean), The Education University of Hong Kong (Chinese), the German Institute of Global Area Studies and the Schweizerische Akademie für Geistes und Sozialwissenschaften (German), and GIS Asie (French). Book launches, exhibition booths, public roundtables, concerts, etc., also resulted from collaboration. IIAS itself sponsored a number of events including: a HaB institutional roundtable; two SEANNET meetings; an Africa-Asia roundtable (with A-ASIA); a Latin America-Asia roundtable (with Federal University of Rio, and the Asociación Latinoamericana de Estudios de Asia y África, ALADAA); an Indian Ocean roundtable (with Leiden U., Michigan U., SSRC, National University of Singapore, Réunion U.); and a Critical Heritage Studies roundtable (with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Academia Sinica).

The success of the ICAS meetings has led IIAS and the ICAS Secretariat to facilitate a number of Asia-focused events in new regional environments: in Africa (Accra, 2015 and Dar es Salaam, 2018) with the Association for Asian Studies In Africa (A-ASIA); in the Indian Ocean region (Zanzibar, 2018); in Latin America (workshop Rio de Janeiro, 2016; first conference possibly in 2020). ICAS also assists nationwide or regional events such as GIS Asie Paris in 2015 and 2017; the Southeast Asia Studies conference in Kyoto (2016); or the two Myanmar Studies international conferences in 2016 (Chiang Mai) and 2018 (Mandalay). From a traditional mega-conference organizer, ICAS (and IIAS) has thus transformed into a collaborative clearinghouse for a multiplicity of knowledge on, in and with Asia, in the world. ICAS's governance reflects this spirit of inclusiveness: since 2013, its Secretariat works in tandem with an International Council made up of institutions from the different regions of the world where Asia is the focus of academic interest.

Introspection

Reflecting on these substantive evolutions of IIAS and the perceived gap that has grown between what the Institute has become and what it was just a few years ago, our team embarked last year on a soul-searching collective exercise to seek to refine the way our 'message' is received while deepening synergies and cross-fertilization between the different activities that shape it. To that end, we engaged with an Amsterdam-based communication strategy organization, LAVA. The exercise led to introspective discussions. Questions regarding visual and textual representations ignited discussions and the crystallization of new communication tenets. One highly debated issue concerned the name of IIAS. The idea of a name change was floated. Today, IIAS clearly does more than 'Asian studies'; its scope of intervention goes beyond the 'inter-national' framework. Only the word 'institute' still reflects its organizational and operational character. However, the introduction of a new name may be too drastic a move for now and so perhaps a new tagline would be more appropriate. One suggestion has been, 'Connecting Knowledges and Peoples', which certainly addresses our wish to align the Institute's public image with its current modus operandi.

Philippe Peycam
Director IIAS

IIAS' new visual identity

Thomas Voorter

Dear reader, the new design you see here in this issue of The Newsletter is the first materialized outcome of a mental process that started at IIAS two years ago. Over time, we became increasingly dissatisfied with our visual identity; it was proving to be an inefficient way to communicate the institute's core values to our readers. We had occasionally updated some colours and formats of our communication products, but in the long run it only resulted in an inconsistent image.

Offer

We are a transformative agent. We connect knowledges that relate to Asia in the world.

- Building networks
- Facilitating research
- Initiating programmes

Image

Always in the making.
An engaging community of curious minds.

Connecting knowledges & peoples

Environment

A place for conversations and exchanges between different forms of knowledge.

People

- Collaborative
- Pioneering
- Sharing
- Transformative



Only our beloved logo, the Chandra, which served us for twenty-five years, stayed more or less the same. It depicted a crescent-shaped ritual axe head from the Bronze Age, found in Southeast Asia. Albeit a strong, if not curious, shape – it never was very clear what it stood for and how it related to our institute. Is IIAS an archaeological or historical organisation? Does it only cover Southeast Asian topics? It was always difficult to explain.

Another problem we faced was that our audiences often failed to recognise IIAS' signature activities and projects, such as the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS), the Urban Knowledge

Network Asia (UKNA) or our review website newbooks.asia. There appeared to be a perceived gap between what we do and how we showed it.

Clearly, we faced a communication problem, which we could not solve ourselves anymore. We needed a new strategy that would help us to integrate all our communication efforts and to make our projects and activities better known and visible to our audience. We needed new ways to foster a sense of ownership among our partners (organisations and individuals), and to clearly show our identity as an open-minded, pioneering, inclusive and globally operating institute. To help solve

our problem, we asked the Amsterdam /Beijing based creative agency www.lava.nl to assist us in developing a new and effective communication strategy.

Creating a brand platform

Right at the start, the good people from Lava gave us, the IIAS staff, an inspiring lecture about branding. They confronted us with difficult, awkward – at times even existential – questions about who we are, why we do the things we do, and where we want to go from here. We learned that re-branding is more than a visual makeover, that it also entails the cultivation of a deep understanding of what

it is we offer the world of Asian Studies; how we perform and what our convictions are; how people perceive us, where we interact with them and how we exchange ideas with them. To hold all these elements together we needed a strong, central notion.

The designers from Lava proposed to build – in three phases – a solid brand platform, from which a new visual identity could be developed. In the first phase Lava's strategist, Cecilia Martin, conducted some in-depth research. In this process she interviewed partners and colleagues of IIAS, investigated our strengths and weaknesses, and made a visual audit of existing organisations in the field of Asian Studies. These findings she

New IIAS logo and sub brands



New IIAS typeface

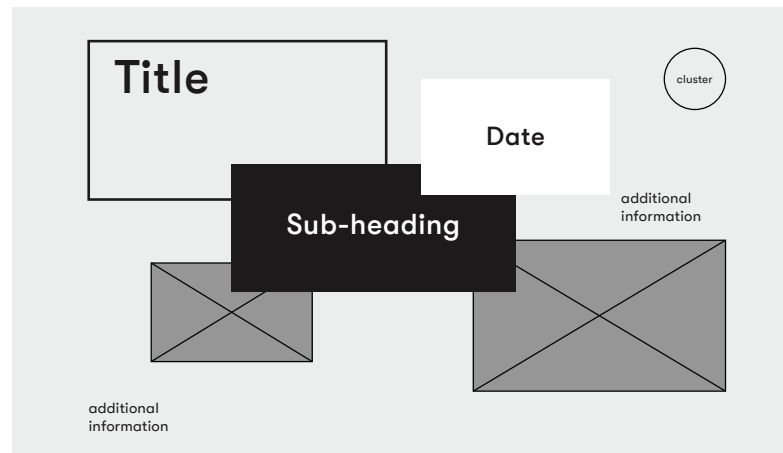
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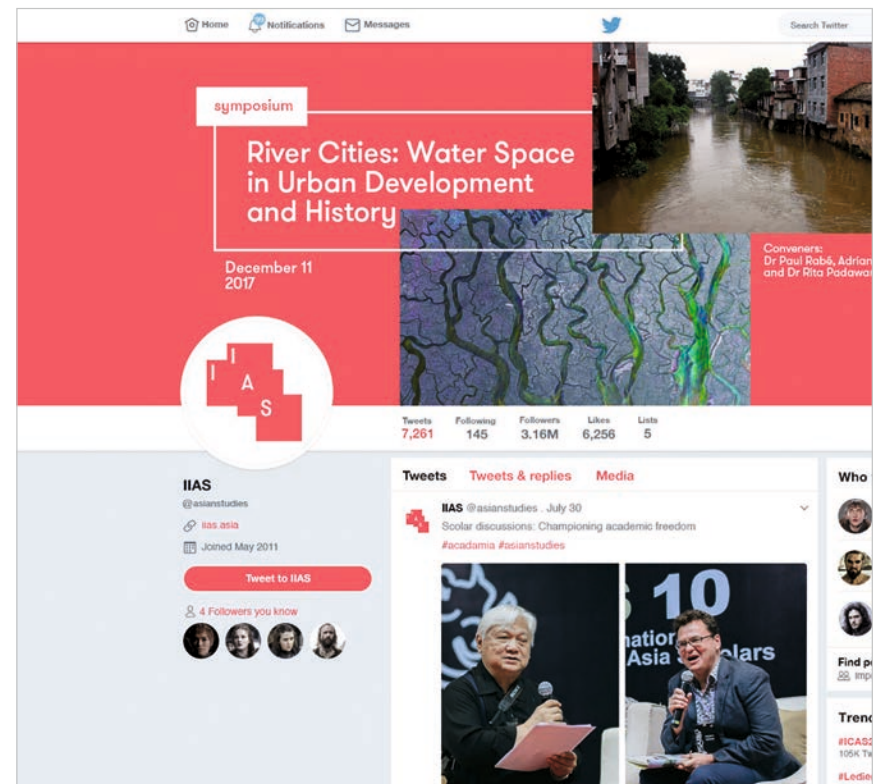
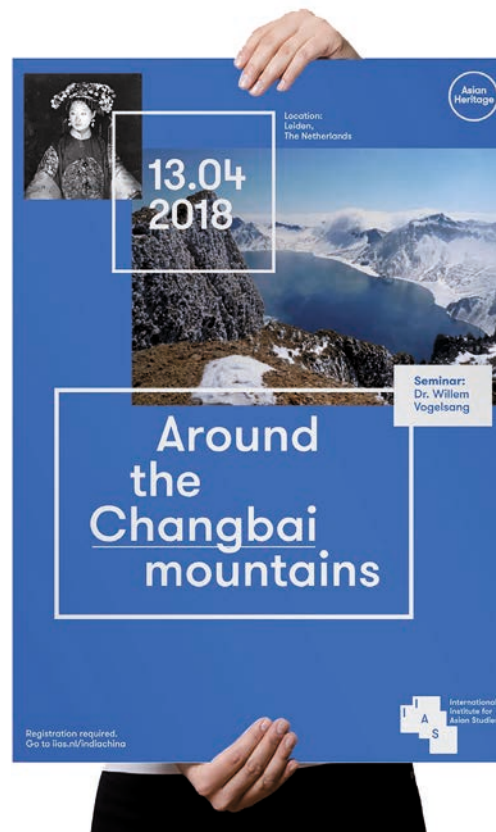
'Stacked' layout concept



Photograph © Cian Ginty - CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.



Photograph © IRRI Photos - CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.



took with her into phase two, in which she organised an inspiring creative workshop with IIAS staff. During this workshop all IIAS staff members had the opportunity to express their opinions about the tone of voice the institute should use in order to convey its key messages, and in which direction we should further develop our brand platform.

We discussed our position in the global academic landscape, about what makes us unique (broad audience beyond just academia, boundless research areas, extensive topics, inclusive of both scholars and practitioners) our core values (sharing, collaborative, transformative, pioneering) and the impact we want

to make (builder, facilitator, initiator). Concluding our session, we formulated the tagline 'Connecting peoples and knowledges' as the central concept for our brand platform. Cecilia finalised phase two with a solid strategic document, serving as a guideline for the designers to develop our new visual identity.

'Stackiness'

In phase three, the Lava designers explored some ideas: should the designs reflect the connectedness of IIAS as a dot in a wider network of interlinked nodes, or as a dashed line connecting these

elements? After some testing, we decided to conceptualise and visualise our core identity, as a research institute, with the practice of 'carrying out research'.

Typically, when doing research your desk is cluttered with stacks of books, folders, photos, maps, memos, sticky notes, and other scribbled-upon pieces of paper lying around in some structured form of chaos. The designers used this image of stacked documents to develop a visual ecosystem for all our media products: layouts with information blocks overlapping each other. The stacking principle has also been applied to our new logo, and can be used in a wider brand architecture, with current

and future projects having their own look and feel, while maintaining a direct visual reference to IIAS.

In 2018 you will see the new designs gradually permeating through our media channels, from the Newsletter to our brochures and posters and thereby ultimately also synchronising our digital services. But first the Newsletter. We hope the new design will make reading it even more pleasurable. Let us know what you think of our new identity – email Thomas Voorter: t.j.h.voorter@iias.nl

With special thanks to the Lava team: Noortje Boer, Daan Hornstra, Anton Lamberg, Cecilia Martin and Frank Smolenaers.

The International Convention of Asia Scholars



The International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) engages participants from all continents in dialogues on Asia that transcend boundaries between academic disciplines and geographic regions. ICAS is an active accelerator of research.

Since 1998, ICAS has brought more than 20,000 academics, civil society representatives, administrators and artists together at 10 conventions. Publishers, institutes and NGOs converge to display their products, services and research outcomes in the ICAS exhibition hall. The ICAS Book and Dissertations Carousel offers (future) authors a platform to launch their publications. With all these activities ICAS has contributed to the decentring of Asian studies by including more 'Asian voices', while successfully convening a global space in which Asia scholars from the whole world can directly interact.

ICAS 11

Leiden University will be the local host of the eleventh meeting of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS).

ICAS 11 will be held in Leiden, the Netherlands, from 16-19 July 2019. The convention will draw on the historically rich Asian and global connections of the city, along with its renowned research institutes and museums.

Call for papers: deadline 10 October 2018

For further information visit: icas.asia

The ICAS Book Prize (IBP) 2019

The biennial ICAS Book Prize (IBP) is a global competition that provides an international focus for publications on Asia in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The IBP received in excess of 500 entries in 2017 (300 books and 200 dissertations). In addition to the original English-language Prize, the IBP 2019 will include 5 other language editions: French, German, Chinese, Korean, and Spanish/Portuguese. The IBP awards will be presented during the ICAS 11 opening ceremony.

Eligible titles are Asia-related academic publications in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Books must have first been published after August 2016, and not have been submitted to a previous IBP.

Submit your titles to the IBP 2019 on icas.asia

Deadline: 10 October 2018

Asian Studies Book Fair

Publishers and academic institutes are invited to exhibit at the Asian Studies Book Fair at ICAS 11, to present their publications, projects and programmes to the large number of attendees. The Book Fair will also host events such as manuscript pitches, author meetings and book launches.

Exhibitors or advertisers email icas11.exhibition@iias.nl



Universiteit
Leiden



Re-establishing juristic expertise

A historic congress of female Islamic scholars¹

Mirjam Künkler and Eva Nisa



The Minister of Religious Affairs and women *ulama* released doves at the closing ceremony of the Congress.

Mirjam Künkler and Eva Nisa, researchers with decades of expertise in Islamic authority and gender, dissect the outcomes of the first congress of female Islamic scholars held in Indonesia in April 2017. They examine the historic significance of the event based on interviews with women scholars and male attendees and the analysis of the congress materials issued.

Can women interpret Islamic law? This question would have been a ‘no-brainer’ to a Muslim from Damascus in the 12th century, when women served as renowned teachers of the Islamic tradition,¹ and the opinions of women jurists² on questions of Islamic law carried weight comparable to that of male jurists. Yet, if one asks a Muslim today: “have you ever asked a woman for an interpretation of Islamic law?”, the answer from Dakar to Dhaka, from Sarajevo to Cape Town, from Jakarta to Ann Arbor will usually be “no”. Women are not asked to interpret Islamic law, and few expect them to do so. Very often, this is because women are not sufficiently trained for this work.³ If they are, they tend to be consulted only on so-called ‘women’s issues’ such as child rearing, a wife’s duties towards her husband and other family members, household organisation, and hygiene.

In recent years, however, Muslims in different parts of the world have started to address gender imbalances in juristic expertise. In India and Turkey, programs have been set up to train women as *muftis* (jurists who can issue *fatwas* or expert legal opinions). Judicial institutions in Malaysia⁴ and the Palestinian Authority⁵ have begun to hire female judges in their Sharia courts. In a similar trend, Indonesian organisations recently joined forces to convene the Muslim world’s first congress of *ulama perempuan*: women Islamic scholars.⁶ This historic event, held in late April 2017 in Cirebon, West Java, was nothing short of a breakthrough in terms of re-establishing the long-lost juristic authority of women to produce Islamic legal recommendations and rulings.

Women’s juristic authority⁷ was squarely on the agenda of the congress. Religious authority in Islam can manifest itself in several ways including by leading prayer, reciting the Qur’an, delivering a sermon, or transmitting a *hadith* (a saying of the prophet). The pinnacle of this authority is the ability to interpret Islamic sources to make recommendations of behaviour in the here and now. In most contemporary Muslim societies, this is exercised in two main ways. The first is by issuing *fatwas*. These are legal recommendations based typically on interpretations of the Qur’an and *hadith*. (Different sects in Islam regard different *hadiths* as authentic, and therefore the specific source material differs from sect to sect.) A person trained to issue a *fatwa* is called a *mufti*, with the feminine form in Arabic *muftiya*. *Fatwas* are only recommendations.

They are not binding, but can carry great weight depending on the moral authority of the issuer. In some countries, policy makers take *fatwas* of leading Islamic authorities into account⁸ when, for example, considering reforms to family law, Islamic finance, or food and medicine regulations.

The second way juristic authority is exercised is by serving as a judge in an Islamic court where non-codified Islamic law is applied (which means judges must interpret original sources, as there is no codified text issued by the state, like a statute or book of law). This requires deep engagement and expertise in interpreting religious sources. The needed erudition and experience to act as a judge of non-codified Islamic law can take decades of study and training to acquire. In Indonesia, for instance, family courts for the Muslim majority apply Islamic law (non-Muslims are subject to civil family law). Since the 1950s, judges of Islamic law have been trained in the country’s Islamic state institutes. Although female judges were unheard of when the institutes first opened – and remain a minority – admission was not restricted to men. Starting in the 1960s, women also completed this advanced training and over time many have been appointed judges in Indonesia’s Islamic courts.⁹ In 1970, Sudan also began to appoint women to its Islamic courts. However, it would take another 35 years before women would be appointed to Islamic courts in other countries. Malaysia did so in 2005, the Palestinian Authority in 2009, and Israel appointed the first woman judge to its Islamic courts in 2017.¹⁰

Three fatwas

Faced with the limited participation of women in the juristic process, the congress in Indonesia aimed to raise awareness about pioneering developments and strengthen local initiatives to promote women’s juristic authority in Islam. Importantly, it showed that it is not only women who support this struggle. Male scholars, while a minority, were also among the speakers and attendees. At the congress’s core was *musyawarah keagamaan* (religious deliberation) to formulate *fatwas*, and the women *ulama* at the congress issued three *fatwas*.¹¹ This in itself was historic,

as *fatwa* issuing has long been monopolised by male clerics. There are, for example, only seven women *ulama* out of 67 members of the *fatwa* commission of *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI) – a prominent *ulama* organisation, which has become an influential voice in Indonesia’s legislative process.

The first *fatwa* of the women’s congress focused on sexual violence. It emphasised that such violence, including within marriage (marital rape), is forbidden under Islamic law (*haram*). It also distinguished *zina* (adultery and fornication) from rape, and stressed that victims must receive psychological, physical and social support – not punishment. The second *fatwa* concerned child marriage and denounced the practice as harmful (*mudarat*) to society. The *ulama perempuan*’s accompanying commentary called for raising the Indonesian legal marriage age for girls from 16 to 18 years. Importantly, as most

child marriages are not registered with the state in the first place, the *fatwa* also reminded ordinary Muslims and imams that it was obligatory (*wajib*) to prevent them.

The third *fatwa* linked environmental

destruction and social inequality. It described environmental degradation for economic gain as *haram* and asserted that it had, in recent decades, exacerbated economic disparities in Indonesia, with women being the most affected. It noted how drought, for example, added to the burdens of rural women typically responsible for preparing food and fetching water. Deliberations on this *fatwa* also touched on issues of land and forest governance, and on the impact of deforestation on women in particular. It was demanded that the Indonesian government impose strict sanctions on perpetrators of environmental destruction. Among other issues, the discussion highlighted the damaging effects of illegal deforestation campaigns to make space for vast palm oil plantations.

Re-establishing authority

The women *ulama* based their religious interpretations on four sources: the verses of the Qur’an, *hadith*, *aqwal al-‘ulama* (views of religious scholars), and, interestingly, the Indonesian constitution. They used

a methodology called ‘unrestricted reasoning’ (*istidlal*), with stated aims to maximise *maslaha* (public interest) and reduce *mudarat* (harm) to arrive at rulings. The issuing of the three *fatwas* is of major significance. It shows that women *ulama* have the ability and the expertise in Islamic sources to formulate these recommendations. The *fatwas* also demonstrate that the *ulama perempuan* do not restrict themselves to the Qur’an, *hadith*, and other classical Islamic texts. Like the best judges in any society, they do not only aim to interpret classical legal texts but also develop legal proficiency in diverse contemporary issues.

Indeed, the participants produced more than *fatwas*, which usually consist of only a few pages of argumentation. The congress considered a large range of sources during its deliberations, including social scientific evidence of conditions and challenges faced by women. It also produced far longer and more in-depth written explanations and legal opinions than is common for *fatwas* in Indonesia. Some Indonesian gender rights activists, and Indonesian *fatwa* committees themselves, use the term *sikap keagamaan* (religious views) for recommendations that come out of this complex deliberation process. But whether one calls these recommendations *fatwas* or *sikap keagamaan*, their significance was clear: the congress was a historic step towards re-establishing the long-lost juristic authority of women to produce Islamic legal recommendations and rulings.

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New light on the archaeology of the Majapahit court capital

Amrit Gomperts, Arnoud Haag,
Djoko Umbaran and Hari Subekti

Calling attention to a recently found but hitherto undisclosed 1941 report on the archaeological dating of the Majapahit royal palace site, we reflect upon the extent of the court capital in the 14th-15th centuries, and its Indian-styled sanitation and water management.

As war loomed over the Pacific, the Dutch colonial government announced excavations on the site of the 14th-century Majapahit court capital. On 14 May 1941, the Dutch colonial newspaper, *De Indische Courant*, turned insider information into front-page news, which we translate as follows (explanatory details are added between square brackets):¹ “The Majapahit Royal Palace (*Kraton*). New Excavations—Our editor in Batavia reports: word has reached us that the Head of the Archaeological Service (*Oudheidkundige Dienst*), Dr. W. Stutterheim [1892-1942, in office 1936/7-1942], intends to instruct the Service’s pre-historian, Dr. W. Willems [1898-1964], to conduct excavations on the site of [Kēḍaton in] the village of Sēntonorējo near Mojoagung. The Javanese tradition has pinpointed this site as the spot where the royal palace of the great Majapahit Empire (1293-1520) once stood. Excavations were carried out there before [in 1930] but budgetary cuts halted these. Hopefully, the new excavations planned will provide certainty about [Kēḍaton as] the site of the [14th-century] royal palace [because, in 1924] Maclaine Pont [1884-1971] suggested a different terrain as the location of the now vanished royal palace during the heyday of the Majapahit Empire, namely [the Menak Jinggo remains] near the village of Trowulan. However, many available facts and details argue in favour of the Archaeological Service’s views”.



Fig. 1: The 14th-century Siti Inggil site (now called Candi Kēḍaton and Sumur Upas) in Kēḍaton during the 1941 excavations. Willems took the photograph from the centre of the terrace looking towards the north-west. According to local Javanese oral tradition, the Majapahit kings granted audience to their senior officials here inside the royal palace. These historic brick structures were demolished during museum construction activities in July 2013 (© and courtesy of Erik Willems).

Belated triumph over pseudo-archaeology

Actually, the Dutch architect, H. Maclaine Pont, had already honestly acknowledged in 1927 that he had never even investigated the Menak Jinggo remains.² Most pertinently, however, the colonial government planned the 1941 excavations in a decisively concerted effort to refute the Dutch architect’s other 1924 ‘hypotheses’ that the brick remains in Kēḍaton [lit., Royal Palace] represented nothing more than a *tani-woning* [farmer’s dwelling] postdating the Majapahit period (Fig. 1).³

Just before his promotion to the *Raad van Indië* [Council of the Indies] during his last days in office as the Governor of East Java, Ch.O. van der Plas (1891-1977, in office 1936-June 1941), who took a keen interest in Majapahit history, personally authorised a huge budget of 20,000 Dutch East Indies Guilders (now approximately 300,000 Euros) for the excavations. From early July until mid December 1941, Willems unearthed some 750 square metres of the north-western and western parts of the Siti Inggil terrace in Kēḍaton, a brick-lined earthwork measuring some 66 metres north-south by 56 metres east-west and some 2 metres in height where, according to local Javanese oral tradition, the Majapahit kings

granted audience to their senior officials inside the royal palace (Fig. 1). After the archaeologist W.F. Stutterheim passed away in 1942, his successor, the art historian A.J. Bernet Kempers (1906-92, in office 1947-53), published an inconclusive summary of the 1941 Kēḍaton excavations in 1949.⁴ However, we recently found correspondence of the ceramics expert and former curator of the Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences ceramics collection (now in the National Museum in Jakarta), E.W. van Orsoy de Flines (1886-1964, in office 1932-42, 1945-59),

Fig. 2: Medieval round brick-walled well located north-west of Kumitir village (© Arnoud Haag).



which offers new insights into the 1941 Kēḍaton excavations.⁵ According to six letters exchanged between Willems, Van Orsoy de Flines and Stutterheim between 25 August and 30 December 1941, the excavator sent four boxes with sherds unearthed at the Kēḍaton site to the ceramics specialist. Summarising his 29-page reports on the first two boxes in his letters to Stutterheim, Van Orsoy de Flines dated at least 92.4% of 765 sherds—originating from Central, East, South-east and South China as well as from Tonkin, Cambodia, Thailand and Burma—to the 14th and/or 15th centuries. In his last letter to Stutterheim on 30 December 1941, the ceramics expert authoritatively dated nearly all sherds in the third and fourth boxes to the narrow period 1350-1500. Van Orsoy de Flines was also fully aware of the archaeological context of the 1941 Kēḍaton dig, concluding: “*Het geheel maakt nog meer den indruk van een rijke hofhouding, dan de vorige zendingen deden*”. In our contextually amended translation, “all sherds [in the last two boxes] leave me with an even stronger impression of a prosperous [Majapahit] royal household [on the Kēḍaton site] than the previous [two] deliveries did”. These words have not lost any of their actuality, because the site has now been entirely unearthed and partly destroyed (Fig. 1).

When a team of archaeologists recently staged a dig in Kēḍaton, the *Jakarta Post* English-language newspaper reported on 11 September 2008: “Researchers find capital city of Majapahit, but not palace”.⁶ So evaluating his reports 77 years later, Van

Orsoy de Flines’ archaeological dating of the Siti Inggil terrace in Kēḍaton will go into history as the only one ever undertaken, because the sherds excavated there in 1941 have seemingly been lost. Moreover, in July 1941, Stutterheim also reconstructed the layout of the Majapahit royal palace on the basis of the 1930 Kēḍaton excavation plan in combination with a close reading of Prapañca’s description of the royal palace in the 1365 Old Javanese *Nāgarakṛtāgama* eulogy.⁷ Hence, Van Orsoy de Flines’ sherd analyses in September-December 1941 constituted the final piece of missing evidence which confirmed that Kēḍaton—the royal palace site according to local Javanese oral tradition—positively dated to the Majapahit period (14th-15th centuries), thus irrevocably refuting Maclaine Pont’s ‘hypotheses’. However, all this crucially important evidence was not available to later archaeologists. Consequently, the publicity-savvy Dutch architect’s fantasies have dominated Majapahit-Trowulan archaeology for 94 years, leaving it with a lasting legacy of irrationality.⁸

“All sherds leave me with an even stronger impression of a prosperous royal household”

Mapping habitation patterns

Invoking Maclaine Pont’s 1926 plan of a make-believe Majapahit megalopolis covering a vast area of 150 square kilometres, John Miksic conjectures that the remains of densely settled clusters of the 14th and 15th centuries were spread over 100 square kilometres in

the Trowulan area and ‘rough calculations’ yield a minimum population of 200,000.⁹ Both numbers seem excessively large. In Miksic’s imagined sketch plan of “sacred sites and water features”, the distribution of 42 medieval wells differs from previous mappings as well as our own earlier GPS data on 139 wells.¹⁰ As stripping medieval brick remains has become part of the local Trowulan economy and the pace of site destruction has increased alarmingly in recent years (e.g., Figs. 1, 3 and 5), we decided to fieldwalk the area shown in Miksic’s sketch plans. Adopting Stuart Robson’s anthropological approach of community-based archaeology in his 1971 survey of Bèdulu, the medieval capital of Bali, we scouted out the Trowulan region by actively engaging the Javanese villagers in our search for locally known *sumur kuno* [ancient wells].¹¹ In this manner, our team systematically combed an area of more than 75 square kilometres in two and a half years, tracing another 458 medieval wells. Our results, including wells that others had mapped previously, are shown in Fig. 6.¹² The highest density of wells for 50% of all of them appears within a circle with a radius of 1.04 km around the Kèdaton hamlet, thus spatially confirming the Majapahit royal palace site as the centre of medieval habitation.¹³ On the basis of the distribution of the wells mapped, we estimate that the extent of the Majapahit court capital including all the suburban and adjoining villages would have stretched over an area covering at the most 30 square kilometres. Using the population density data of East Javanese towns at the end of the colonial period, a maximum population of 25,000 seems realistic.

Indian influences

On site, we mapped three types of medieval wells: about 350 round brick-walled wells, some 80 rectangular brick-walled wells, and about 150 wells comprising four to seven terracotta rings stacked on top of one another, each approximately 25 centimetres high (Figs. 2-5). The round brick-walled wells and those consisting of terracotta rings are undoubtedly medieval, but a few rectangular brick-walled wells might postdate the Majapahit period. On the royal palace site in Kèdaton, we observed 51 round and rectangular brick-walled wells. No terracotta



Fig. 3: Medieval round brick-walled well, 2.8 m deep, located north-west of Kumitir village. The Sanskrit *Kāśyapīyakṣisūkti* text (156-61) describes that the two flanking boulders (*śilākhanda*) below strengthen the structure of the brick-walled well. These brick remains were destroyed in November 2017 (© Arnoud Haag).



Fig. 5: An Indian-styled medieval pit latrine [*jumblēng*] comprising six terracotta rings [*jobong*] in Mutèran village, which was destroyed in November 2017 (© Arnoud Haag).



Fig. 4: Medieval rectangular brick-walled well south-east of Kumitir village. Note the high groundwater level at about 1.5 m below the surface (© Arnoud Haag).

rings were found on sites known as funerary monuments [*canḍi*], which served primarily as sacred spaces for ancestral worship. According to the Javanese villagers, the ‘wells’ consisting of terracotta rings functioned as *jumblēng* [pit latrines].

Discovered in 2013, we became aware of a hotspot of 33 wells, consisting of all three types and arranged irregularly in a small area spanning a mere 263 square metres. So it gradually became clear to us that these may have been part of a public place reserved for sanitary purposes, where many people gathered in the very centre of the

medieval town. Such details are unknown from post-1500 court architecture in Java and Bali. Although water management figures prominently in South-East Asian archaeology, urban sanitation is virtually an unaddressed issue in the field. So we turned our eyes to the Indian subcontinent.

Indeed, wells with terracotta rings are known from all over India, dating back to centuries BC and in use until medieval times. Indian archaeologists refer to them as ‘ring wells’ and conclude that most of them were used as soak pits.¹⁴ Since the groundwater level is quite high in Trowulan, often

All this crucially important evidence was not available to later archaeologists

situated 1.5-7 metres below the surface during the monsoon season (Fig. 4), and leaky soak-pit latrines would have polluted the groundwater in such a densely populated urban environment, the Majapahit ‘ring wells’ probably would have functioned as sealed cesspits constructed well above the groundwater level (Fig. 5). Similar brick structures as shown in Fig. 1, round wells constructed from curved bricks as depicted in Figs. 2-3 and medieval clay water pipes found on site in Trowulan, also exist in India. Moreover, wells constructed from well-burnt bricks, water management and local water quality are important topics in the Sanskrit text on agriculture, *Kāśyapīyakṣisūkti* (Fig. 3).¹⁵

Prapañca’s 1365 description of the Majapahit court capital also reveals influences from Sanskrit texts, for example, *catuṣpatha*, the central crossroads inhabited by spirits. More importantly, Prapañca’s contextual use of the Sanskrit word *brahmasthāna* [Brahma’s place], which is located on the *catuṣpatha*, goes back to Sanskrit texts on urban architecture and town planning, like the *Mānasāra* (c. 6th century) and the *Mayamata* (c. 10th century), denoting the conceptual centre of a settlement, a spot reserved for offerings, shrines or temples.¹⁶ All this points to significant influences from ancient Indian town planning.

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- 4 Bernet Kempers, A.J. 1949. *Oudheidkundig Verslag 1941-1942*, pp.44-5.
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- 7 Gomperts, A., A. Haag & P. Carey. 2008. ‘Stutterheim’s Enigma: The Mystery of His Mapping of the Majapahit Kraton at Trowulan in 1941’, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 164(4):411-30.
- 8 E.g., the highly imaginative ‘Majapahit canal theory’ which is based on scientifically unfounded claims, *ibid.*, note 7 Gomperts et al. 2008, p.421 n.5; *ibid.*, note 2 Gomperts et al. 2014, pp.72-3 n.8.
- 9 Miksic, J. 2012. ‘Life among the Ruins: Habitation Sites of Trowulan’, in Alexandra Haendel (ed.) *Old Myths and New Approaches: Interpreting Ancient Religious Sites in Southeast Asia*. Clayton: Monash University Publishing, p.160 Fig.10.1, pp.172-3.
- 10 *Ibid.*, note 9, Miksic, p.171 fig.10.9.
- 11 Robson, S.O. 1978. ‘The Ancient Capital of Bali’, *Archipel* 16, pp.75-89.
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- 13 We computed the 50% circle using Rousseeuw, P.J. 1984. ‘Least Median of Squares Regression’, *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 79(388): 871; ‘The resulting estimator can resist the effect of nearly 50% of contamination in the data.’
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- 16 *Ibid.*, note 2, Gomperts et al. 2014, pp.100-2, 108-10.

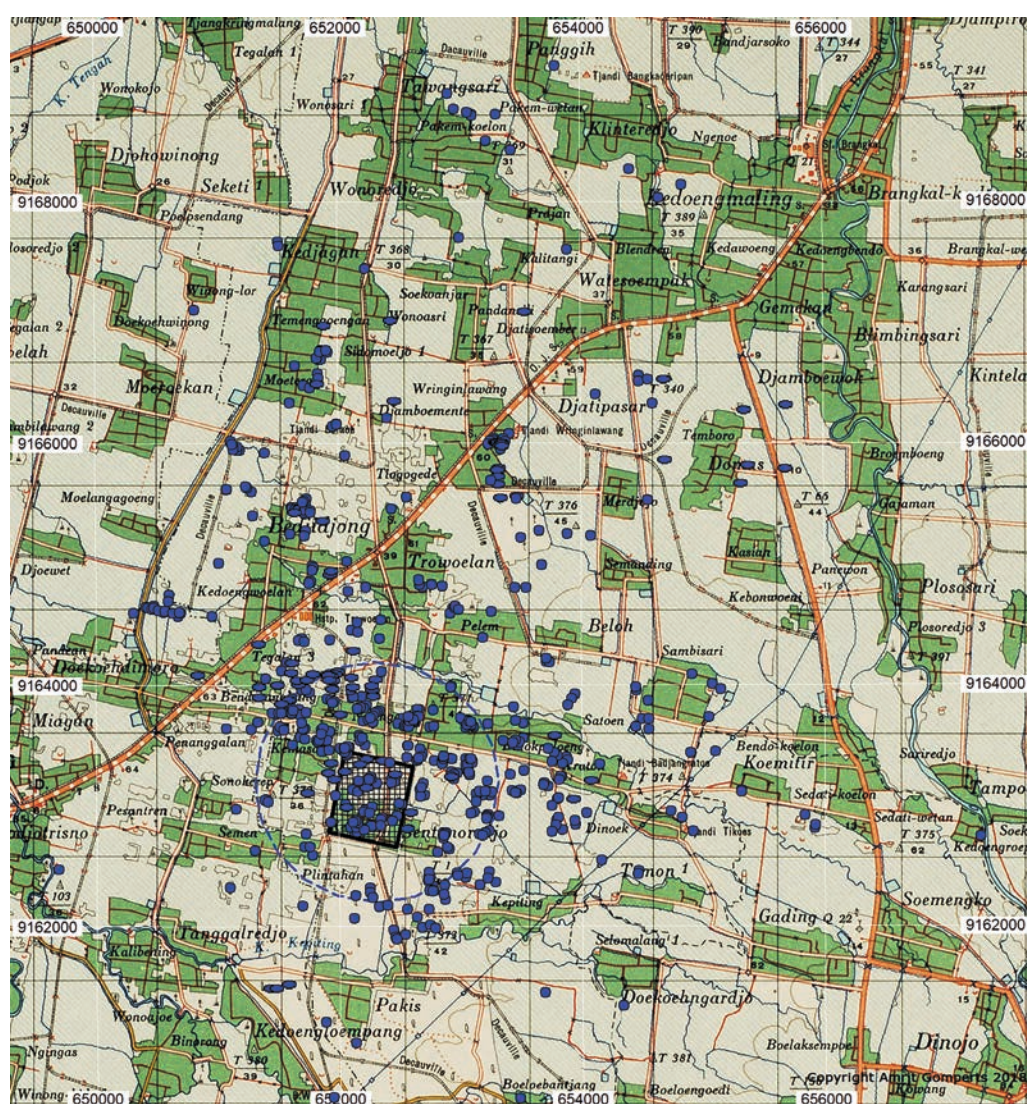


Fig. 6: The site of the vanished 14th century Majapahit royal palace (black rectangle) projected onto the 1941 topographic map of Modjoaeng with added WGS84, UTM, zone 49M grids (white) appearing at intervals of 2000 m. The solid circles (blue) represent our own GNSS field data on 597 wells. The 81 solid ovals (blue) are now vanished wells taken from published mappings. The highest density of wells for half of all 678 appears within the large dashed circle (blue).

Redefining gender identities on campus

Tarini J. Shipurkar

Few women in India ever experience living on their own. In most cases, they shift directly from their natal home to their husband's home; in both homes their lives are greatly monitored in terms of who they interact with, where they go, what they wear, and so on. This controlled movement and behaviour, coupled with disparate gendered norms and closely knit family and community networks, restricts women in exploring their own aspirations.

However, in the last few years, the Indian subcontinent has seen a significant increase in the number of women enrolled in higher education.¹ In addition to enriching their scholastic knowledge, academic (and campus) life also has the potential to bring about a transformation in their social lives.

My research focused on young women who migrated from smaller towns – characterized by deeply asymmetrical gendered relations – to a seemingly ‘egalitarian’ and ‘metropolitan’ university space in the capital city of New Delhi, India. I explored the transformative role of the university space, emphasizing its significance in the learning as well as unlearning of gendered performances, and at the same time researched the pivotal role that the family ‘back home’ plays in this process. I argue that in migrating from semi-urban settings to a metropolis, women interpret, filter and absorb notions and performances of gender that differ from the ones they knew and make some of these part of their own social repertoire. The women experience not merely a physical shift but a situational shift, across contexts. They now have the freedom to explore and engage with social environments on their own terms; to internalize and build on these terms of engagement; and also to decide how much, if at all, they wish to change.

The research location

The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) gated campus in New Delhi is spread across approximately 1000 acres of land; a large number of students, faculty members and administrative staff live inside its boundaries, making it easy for varied interactions to occur. JNU is especially known for its gender-sensitive admissions policy that gives extra weightage to female students and students from ‘backward’ groups/regions, as well as its minimal fees and many grant opportunities, which facilitate the enrolment of students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

During my research at the university, I spent time with young women who came from very diverse regions of the country (Assam, Rajasthan, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand to name a few). Although their homes differed geographically, the restrictions they experienced in their social settings and relationships corresponded almost perfectly. Their previous education, often in the form of an all-girls convent school (run by nuns), had focussed on their ‘moral’ education. While young men are commonly expected to become leaders, confident and decisive, girls are supposed to grow into ‘good’, obedient, proper and demure women. They are often disciplined, at school as well as at home, about how to sit ‘properly’, to wear ‘decent’ clothes, and not raise their voices. Such gendered norms are, however, situational and contextual, and thus I explored them among women in a ‘new’ space; a space in which many popular practices may lend themselves to the creation of different norms. For instance, at JNU, it is common to see women actively participate in student politics, requiring them to be opinionated and vociferous during protests or debates.

Moving to JNU, as recollected by many of my respondents, involved getting lost in the campus, getting used to living independently, meeting people from diverse backgrounds, adapting to different habits, and people with different views of the world around them. Many spoke of a sense of freedom, free from prying eyes of relatives or neighbours. My interest lay in the new ‘ways of being’ that could potentially emerge in such spaces characterized by heterogeneity and anonymity.

Safety and freedom to experiment

“JNU is like an island”, was a phrase I heard in almost every conversation I had about the university. JNU enforces no restrictions on behaviour, dress code, hostel curfews, etc.² Another feature of this ‘island’ is the sense of safety, very much helped by the presence of a robust Gender Sensitisation Committee against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH). “Unlike ‘outside’ in Delhi, here in JNU the difference is that individuals (irrespective of their gender) can speak out and report the harassment that they face, and know that their matter will be looked into fairly”, stated one of my respondents Ritika. Many students remarked that they knew they would be heard and that someone would stand up for them if something were to happen. “You will always find me outside, roaming about in JNU ... It’s so exciting to live in a place where I can roam around at any time,” exclaimed Shefali. The freedom to roam whenever and wherever they wanted was very new for all the young women. A historically left-leaning political atmosphere is what some believe to be the reason for this sense of camaraderie, which also extends into freedom of speech and opinion: students are encouraged to raise questions in their classrooms and to take part in public debates and discussions held on campus.

This completely new setting of JNU offers a space where women have the opportunity to freely and safely experiment. However, the question arises whether the students, especially the young women, are open to transgress the norms they have inculcated thus far, and even if they do, to what extent? What are their learning trajectories from this experience in the new space? Do they question their earlier ideals or denounce these new ways? What happens when they go back home for visits?

Maintaining and pushing boundaries

One of the processes I clearly witnessed was the blurring of strongly held ideas of what is good/bad or right/wrong. A few new students at JNU exclaimed with surprise, “some women here smoke as well!” As one of my older respondents told me, “you can recognize a new student by their reaction to a woman lighting up a cigarette.” This, she pointed out, changes over time and the students come to realize that the freedom

they enjoy at JNU also means that it is up to them to decide what they think is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. Almost ashamedly, Marjauna (from Mangaldoi, Assam) recalled that when she was in her hometown, she believed that girls who wore short skirts or dresses were not ‘nice’ and did so only for attention from men. She told me that after coming to JNU she witnessed a different narrative – one that said it was okay to wear whatever one chooses – this made her question her earlier beliefs. She was excited to tell me that she had worn a dress for the cultural night in her hostel, and was happy to try this, though she still prefers jeans.

Women are allowed into the men’s hostels at JNU. This access gives women an opportunity to discover yet more new spaces, in turn also allowing them to discover new ways of interacting with, becoming comfortable among, and connecting to their peers. However, this allowance elicited many varied opinions. While all the women I spoke to found this access to a new space a liberating feature, some seemed sceptical and commented with “I don’t think it is necessary that women are allowed to stay all night, they could have the rule till 11pm or something”, providing an interesting insight into the internalized notions of keeping distance from men, and perhaps reflecting the influences from home that (continue to) guide their thoughts and practices.

When talking about the absence of strict rules governing their lives at JNU, many of the women pointed out that they were glad that they came from a ‘small town’, ‘middle-class family’, telling me that they knew their ‘limits’ and wouldn’t want to breach their parents’ trust. Although a lot of them have indeed tried many new experiences at the university (such as their first alcoholic drink, or first time being outside after 8-9pm) these are things they don’t see as ‘for them’.

The physical and contextual shift of moving from small town India to the cosmopolitan campus of JNU constitutes a tricky and extremely personal path, which each individual who experiences such a new space (that gives everyone the scope to change) grapples with. My respondents were well aware of the contradictions between their home setting and JNU. Many were comfortable living an almost dual life and switching between the two spaces. For instance, one of my respondents was not allowed to wear sleeveless clothes at home,



Photo taken on JNU campus. © Tarini Shipurkar.

but felt free to do so at JNU; every time she went home for a visit she would make sure to bring along the appropriate attire. However, there were a few women who felt the need to push the boundaries, some even drastically. One of my respondents was determined that she would not marry someone chosen for her by her family, even if it meant that she had to be alone and pay her own way. She had in fact already begun saving money from the fellowship that she received in order to fulfil this idea of hers. These were individual choices each one of the young women made, based perhaps on an assessment of the risks of making such choices, and their own ability or need to push boundaries.

Constant reinvention

Although I looked at the specific site of JNU, similar experiences play out across South Asia as more young women are gaining the opportunity to shift out of their homes in search of jobs and educational opportunities – opening up possibilities of new conversations. It is important to recognize the constant reinvention that these young women undertake while constructing themselves as women. Entrenched in their familial ties, these young women redefine their identities as they engage with ambivalent images, and simultaneously strategically transform themselves while developing their own aspirations.

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Notes

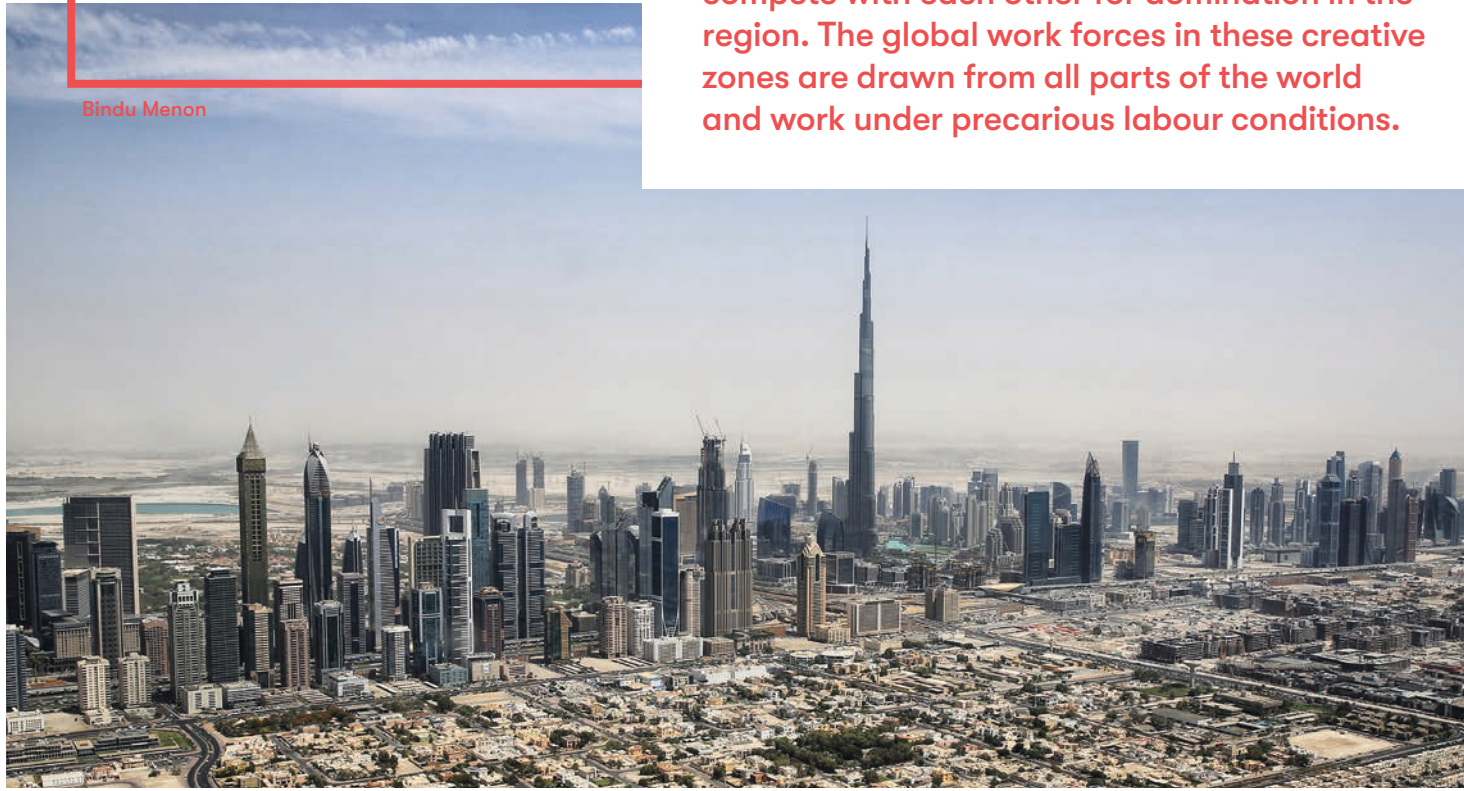
- 1 All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) reports 2010-11 through 2015-16. <http://aishe.gov.in/aishe/reports>
- 2 This, however, many believe is changing due to alterations in the institution's administration and a shift to a dominating right-wing party in the larger national political atmosphere. As a 'central university', JNU comes under the purview of the Union Human Resources Development Ministry.

Media free zones

Precarious labour and migrant vernaculars in Emirati cities

Transnational finance capital in the media sector has been exploring world locations with lower labour rates and less-regulatory environments that would allow free movement of capital. The petro-modernist cities of the United Arab Emirates have emerged as key sites in this search. Free zones for media production in Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah compete with each other for domination in the region. The global work forces in these creative zones are drawn from all parts of the world and work under precarious labour conditions.

Bindu Menon



Skyline of Downtown Dubai with Burj Khalifa from a Helicopter. © Tim Reckmann on Wikimedia Commons.

Dubai and other Emirati cities are examples of the 'high modernist cities', catalysed by a petro dollar economy since the 1950s, and distinguished by the fact that their growth was not organic, but planned entirely by architects. In their post-liberalisation drive towards becoming global mega cities that cater to a transnational middleclass and its global imaginations, the urban gulf landscape has indeed produced petro-modernist cities par excellence. Dubai has in particular emerged as a spectacular media city, with its incorporation of everyday media technologies and embedded media practices in its infrastructure. This allows us to move towards a larger experience of media as a specific experience of modern social life that emerges through a complex process of co-constitution between architectural structures and urban territories. Media technologies form a significant part of the Gulf city's urban infrastructure, shaping its everyday life, popular perceptions of space, environment and representations of the city. The Gulf cities are inseparable from their information superhighways, display boards, art exhibitions, huge installations in public spaces, spectacles of city tours, the architectural wonders of Burj Khalifa, opera and jazz clubs, Bollywood Tours and Filipino concerts.

The UAE's 'Media free zones' compete with other major media capitals of the contemporary world. The UAE government offers subsidized facilities, tax incentives, and labour concessions to such zones that are designed to nurture local capacity and lure producers away from other locales, such as Hollywood. With a host of ancillary services, production facilities, broadcast facilities and changes in policy discourse on creative economies, there is much competition among such cities in their aspirations to become media capitals. In her insightful work on special economic zones of production as architectural units of extra statecraft, Keller Easterling traces the genealogy of the zones as temporary sub optimal economic instruments that absorbed domestic economies into the enclave and spread across the world in the 1970s. The

1970s zone germinated into a new form in the Middle East, particularly Dubai; new campuses developed over the decade, such as Dubai Knowledge City, Dubai Health City, Dubai Media City, and Dubai International Finance Centre. The zones merge both industrial and knowledge economies, allowing for a smooth movement of transnational finance capital and a reservoir of spatial products that migrate around the world, a model that is now central to the global urban imagination.

It is evident that the state has moved from the 'welfare state' model to the commodification of the city, in which 'urban space' has become a commodity and is thus systematically exploited for the primary purpose of profitmaking. The organisation of a city space such as the 'Media City' takes this logic one step further. This represents the ultimate vision of the financialisation of the city, a process by which the city itself is specifically and systematically engineered and designed by finance with the sole and explicit aim of generating profits.

Unorganised production by migrants

Yet, are these cities to be read only as terminator cities? While these are clearly economies that emerge in the context of a globalised political economy of media production, it is incumbent upon us to not lose sight of the relationship between these locales and the deep histories of migration. It is significant to explore the networks that are built in contemporary processes of border crossings, global division of labour, cultural and economic exchange in late capitalism. The intercultural and unorganised production by migrants stands almost as an antithesis to the organised 'media city'. I argue that the crucial link between this amateur representational economy and the other end of this spectrum, the emergence of immaterial labour in special free zones of media production like the 'Dubai Media City', is the precariat that exists in both.

Most of the migrant media productions – music videos, vlogs, short narrative films and documentaries – are embedded in cyber aesthetics. These productions cast the migrant life outside the dominant paradigm of utilitarian economism, addressing migrants as complex social beings and inhabitants of an emotional landscape of migration. The 'Gulf city' emerges as the site of both utopian and dystopian imaginations. On one end of the spectrum is Dubai's multilingual multi-ethnic vlog community, in which active participants narrate migrant experiences and act as self-help guides to leading a migrant life in Dubai. They offer advice about job searches, travel, shopping, lifestyle, fitness, cooking, investments and religious rituals. A widely accepted definition of self-help encompasses "legally permissible conduct that individuals undertake absent the compulsion of law and without the assistance of a government official in efforts to prevent or remedy a legal wrong". The scope of self-help consists in behaviour that is both freely undertaken, without the assistance of the state, and is in order to prevent or cure a rights violation.

How do we make sense of such voluntary acts and their visual registers? How does one tie what these videos put forth to a broader civic culture in Dubai?

Legally, most of the countries in the Gulf Council region have a hierarchical structure, with citizenship limited to 'native' Arabs, thus making the legal and cultural lives of immigrants and Arab Communities mutually exclusive domains. The exploitative guest worker system and racialized economic hierarchy in which, for example, Indians and Africans are placed 'below' all others is shown to contribute to this profound experience of alienation for the immigrant in the Gulf. The *kafala* system coalesces resident permits with specific employment contracts, which require a national resident or company to act as sponsor. The system thus keeps the guest worker an economic dependant, or in some cases an elite non-citizen. In the absence of any form of legal citizenship, anthropologists

argue that the Emirati states offer a substitute form of consumer citizenship to its residents.

Recognition of the absence of legal citizenship frames the moral compulsion of self-help videos. Cultures of improvement videos shift their focus from the individual and productivist ideas of self-improvement to more collective and consumerist conceptions. I am compelled to read these visual narratives as traces of the development of an ideal that connected 'self-improvement' and citizenship as a response to the particular conditions of late capitalist neo liberal economy, limited presence of a welfare state-government, and a limited franchise. It can be understood as a key site of contemporary popular ideas of citizenship in Dubai.

An undercurrent of subnationalisms

The media production houses in these media zones reflect the status of Gulf cities as essentially migrant cities. The zones house studios, freelance services, television channels, distribution services, graphic design studios and other media enterprises owned by entrepreneurs of Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Saudi Arabian, Palestinian and Pakistani descent, and employing global media work forces. Both in the free zones of media production, and the unorganised yet market oriented creative labour in the Emirati cities, we find a collision of languages, genres, and technologies. They recalibrate the city space and possibilities of migratory aesthetics across a heterogeneity of media forms. Saskia Sassen, in a seminal essay that tries to untangle the knots of various processes involved in globalisation, points towards an almost subterranean undercurrent of subnationalisms in the deep recesses of the global sites. While remaining an integral part of global lateral networks, knowingly or unknowingly, the media forms are both evidence of subterranean subnationalisms at global sites like Dubai, yet continue to be deeply attached to locality, and attempt a resuscitation of migratory networks and their deep histories.

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Notes

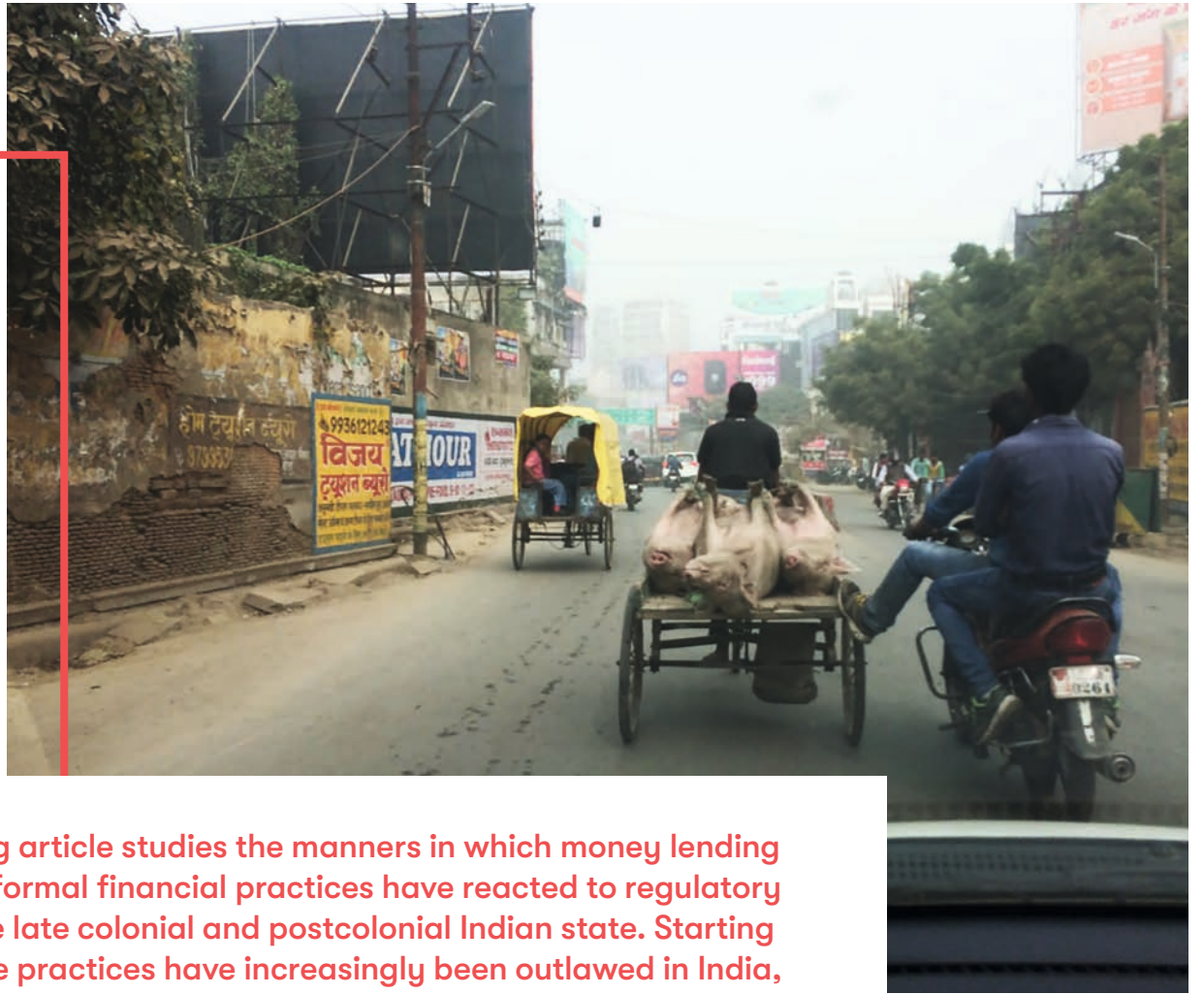
- 1 See Curtin, M. & Sanson, K. 2016. *Precarious creativity: Global media, local labor*. University of California Press., p.336.
- 2 Easterling, K. 2014. *Extrastatecraft: the power of infrastructure space*. Verso Books.
- 3 Analysing the emergence of 'Fantasy Film cities' that combine profit and pleasure in cities of India, Shanti Kumar argues that they claim a share in the transnational media production sphere and imagine a post-colonial alternative to Hollywood-centred models of profit and pleasure. Kumar, S. 2006. 'Mapping Tollywood: The Cultural Geography of "Ramoji Film City" in Hyderabad', *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 23(2):129-138.
- 4 Precarity and an increase in job insecurity is seen as an important feature of work and life. Perhaps present in its strongest and most violent form in the context of the temporary labour migration to the Gulf States. Though overbearing and oppressive it is also seen as creating new conditions of permissibility and accessibility and generative of new political subjectivities; see Standing, G. 2016. *The precariat: The new dangerous class*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- 5 Brandon, D.I. et al. 1984. 'Self-Help: Extrajudicial Rights, Privileges and Remedies in Contemporary American Society', *Vanderbilt Law Review* 37(4):845.
- 6 The *kafala* system monitors migrant labourers, working primarily in the construction and domestic sectors, in Lebanon, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.
- 7 Sassen, S. 2003. 'Globalization or denationalization?', *Review of International Political Economy* 10(1):1-22

Urban space, reputation and entrepreneurial transgression

Informal finance in a North Indian city

Sebastian Schwecke

A rickshaw driver transporting pigs in western Banaras. Image: Anoop Sharma.



The following article studies the manners in which money lending and other informal financial practices have reacted to regulatory policy by the late colonial and postcolonial Indian state. Starting in 1918, these practices have increasingly been outlawed in India, or have at least been pushed toward an extra-legal mode of operation. Using socio-spatial patterns and reputational means, informal financial practices have remained an important everyday feature of rural areas, but even more so of Indian cities.

There is a tea stall attached to a rickshaw stand next to one of the busier roads running through the western neighbourhoods of the north Indian city of Banaras (Varanasi). In the early evenings, this stall is one of the nodal points at which Babu¹ is engaged in the type of business that the Indian state for well over a century has sought to displace through regulation, while at the same time failing to provide a functioning alternative. Babu – a young professional with a college degree and a relatively well-paying job – becomes a moneylender in the evenings, predominantly targeting rickshaw drivers. He offers small loans that his clients need to tide them over during crises in their everyday lives, charging the locally prevalent interest rates: 30% per month simple interest. Babu's business is illegal, though even in this small area around the tea stall there are several other moneylenders plying their trade, in addition to several thousand lenders throughout the city of Banaras who provide financial services for a variety of target groups ranging from the destitute to successful shopkeepers, traders, and manufacturers. What they do centres on an entrepreneurial transgression of the law, yet at the same time provides a necessary element of India's 'informal economy', as catalysts of a subsumption under capital that differs in crucial ways from historical blueprints for development and from the definition of the 'proper swindle'² underlying the Indian state's modernization project or, in global terms, the 'magicality' of ever-increasing procedural codification that forms the hallmark of modern capitalist finance.³

Improper transactions and the production of informality

The study of informality (in line with Keith Hart's original emphasis) is related to visible failures of economic segments to comply with predictions based on Weberian notions of rationalisation. Pronouncedly in the South Asian context, it revolves around failures or even the absence of regulation. It has attracted wide-ranging criticism: originally from Marxist perspectives, and more recently in that it produces conceptual binaries that presuppose clear distinctions through its mode of categorization, in the process obscuring gradations and overlaps between the formal and the informal.⁴ Especially in historical studies on labour, the emphasis on the subject has also turned toward the study of processes 'producing' not only formality

but also informality, implying an active role of the state in shaping the informal sector.⁵ However important these criticisms are, they tend to engage with the concept in ways that still follow the original logic of Weberian modernity, depending crucially on an ever-increasing elaboration of codified procedure, rather than seeking to address what makes the informal work. To simplify matters to some extent, the study of informality – especially in the South Asian context – focuses on the absence or gradation of state-led regulation of economic activity, but it should be emphasizing to a much greater extent what is replacing regulation within the informal sector.

Concerning informal finance in South Asia, the most important historical rupture in the evolution that defines its operation concerns the removal of contractual law from what in the process emerged as the informal segment of credit markets in the early twentieth century. Historiographic literature has tended to emphasize an earlier period, following the abolition of usury laws in India in 1855, and the replacement of 'moral economies' of debt by a system relying on contractual law as a step to bring money lending into Indian capitalism.⁶ At the same time, subsequent developments have shaped the operation of informal credit markets in contemporary India to a much greater extent. Starting with the enactment of the Usurious Loans Bill in 1918 that bestowed wide-ranging discretionary powers to Indian courts in cases of money lending and proceeding into the post-colonial period, a significant share of credit providers in India withdrew from this 'formalization' in a complex and gradual process, and started to operate beyond the reach of the Indian state.

In the process, the operation of contractual law in a significant segment of Indian credit markets was replaced by economies of reputation, providing a basis for the continued operations of moneylenders that differed both from the emerging 'formal' credit sector and 'traditional' credit practices that centred on loosely scripted mercantile ethics, 'moral economies', and on caste and community networks.⁷ Considering the highly exploitative nature of contemporary money lending – with interest rates that are significantly higher than in late colonial India – and the resulting

frequency of default by the debtors, the enforcement of contractual obligations remains of paramount importance within the economic segment, but cannot anymore rely on contractual law or 'traditional' forms of social organization.

Money lending as an economy of reputation

Reputation, occasionally depicted in Hindi as *vishvaas* (lit.: faith), constitutes one of the fundamental features of urban money lending in contemporary India, though its precise mechanisms differ across segments of informal credit markets. Within the trade credit segment that underlies much of the business activities in the bazaar and the informal sector, reputation strongly correlates to a mutual endeavour by lenders and borrowers alike to prevent (temporary) default on interest payments. It acts as an impediment to both the strident enforcement of contractual obligations by the lender and the incentive to delay repayments for the debtor. Communication flows, primarily through gossip, ensure that the behaviour of both sides to a transaction becomes widely known. Maintaining a good reputation, for the debtor, therefore may secure advantages in facilitating good terms for future contracts, establish the debtor's status as a reliable entrepreneur and, most importantly, ease access to future credit by a 'good' moneylender who can be relied upon not to transgress the unwritten behavioural codes applying to renegotiations of obligations in the face of future need. For the lender, in turn, maintaining a good reputation not only facilitates the eventual recovery of outstanding liabilities, but increases social standing and maximizes the number of (potential) 'good' borrowers and thereby

reduces the efforts involved in the recovery of loans. As interest rates are high, typically ranging from around 2% to 10% per month simple interest, the maintenance of high levels of reputation thus produces a relatively conflict-free market in which both sides co-operate: for instance, lenders are lenient to the extent of offering to defer interest payments even for relatively long periods, and borrowers notify lenders in advance of impending defaults and studiously avoid giving the impression of paying less than they are capable of.

In lending to the poor this mutual assistance to avoid default would be futile because the high frequency of temporary defaults constitutes one of the main elements of this financial segment. Interest rates here are highly exploitative, with small unsecured loans frequently being provided against monthly rates of 30% simple interest. Similarly, debtors are much less likely to be able to repay instalments of the principal, and the accumulation of interest over several months is debilitating for the borrowers. Instead, lending to this target clientele involves practices of intimidation and petty violence that are almost entirely absent in trade credit, though they are still embedded into a discourse of reputation that in this case centres on a performance of supplications for lenience for a 'price' for this lenience. The

need to maintain a reputation in petty money lending, rather than avoid conflict, emphasizes the calibration of transgressions of contractual obligations on both sides. The creditor, aware of the limits to extracting even higher payments,

is likely to eventually show lenience but will strive to make the process of supplication sufficiently difficult to discourage frequent defaults. In turn, the debtor may seek to evade the lender, thereby increasing the effort involved in lending. Communication flows through gossip remain as significant

Reputation constitutes one of the fundamental features of urban money lending in contemporary India.

as in trade credit when it comes to establishing both side's reputations. But once the transactional terms have been agreed, the communication of reputations becomes more strongly related than in trade credit to inter-personal exchanges in renegotiating contractual obligations. Lenders who fail to calibrate their recourses to intimidation will fail to attract 'reputable' borrowers in the future, leading to a vicious circle in which the higher likelihood of defaults and evasion by debtors requires higher levels of intimidation, while frequently defaulting or 'troublesome' debtors will have difficulties in approaching 'good' lenders.

Entrepreneurial transgression and urban space in Banaras

As informal finance in Banaras has become centred on economies of reputation as a means of facilitating entrepreneurial transgression, informal credit transactions have become embedded in a variety of socio-spatial patterns. Some of these are directly related to the processes of communicating *vishvaas*, while others originate from different socioeconomic aspects underlying money lending that may even contradict the spatial ordering of informal credit markets.

As the United Provinces Banking Enquiry Committee of 1930 noted, the emerging segment of informal finance was increasingly becoming the preserve of 'amateurs'. While informal finance in contemporary Banaras still has some enclaves of sophistication – which will be discussed later – most of the market operates in 'amateurish' manners that set limits on its socio-spatial ordering. The relatively strong reliance on gossip and inter-personal forms of communication, combined with the extra-legality (or even illegality) of the businesses, set boundaries for the accessibility of information that can rarely be overcome by the lenders. For much of petty money lending this boundary correlates with a loose definition of the neighbourhood, which forms the limit of accessible and 'reliable' local gossip. In similar ways, the neighbourhood frequently even sets the boundary for businesses in the trade credit segment, though the precise localities tend to be larger commercial clusters.

In petty money lending, especially to the poor, there are two major distinct socio-spatial patterns that can be distinguished according to the degree of accordance with this neighbourhood pattern of ordering markets and the relative mobility of clientele. By far the larger of the two serves the credit needs of relatively immobile clients. Here, the neighbourhood pattern is reinforced by the requirement for business locations. Contrary to significant parts of public perception, petty money lending, especially targeting the poor, is not typically a form of exploitation of the poor by the petty bourgeoisie but, rather, an exploitation of the really poor by the

somewhat better-off poor. Quintessentially, lending to the poor is more likely to be carried out by shop workers than by shopkeepers. The reasons for this are simple: starting capital requirements for petty lending are very low and given the relatively small number of clients that an 'amateur' lender can handle at any given time, and the small principals in petty lending, there are much more lucrative (as well as relatively effort- and risk-free) forms of informal finance for the petty bourgeoisie in the bazaar.

These lenders of relatively low socioeconomic standing benefit from the availability of a location for their businesses that, on the one hand, heightens their hierarchical status vis-à-vis the borrowers and that, on the other hand, forms an environment for the characteristic renegotiation of contractual obligations that can be controlled by the lender. The most important location for this is the shop (or, to a lesser extent, office space). Workloads for shop workers tend to be relatively low – especially in the absence of the shopkeepers – giving ample time to engage in side-businesses like lending. Many shopkeepers are frequently absent from their shops, especially in the mornings as much of the shops' business tends to be conducted in the early evenings, which raises the degree of control over the environment for negotiating obligations by the shop workers as well as their relative social standing during these times. The benefits of the shop as a location for petty lending, however, go together with a disadvantage of relative immobility, making it more difficult to lend to target clientele that are highly mobile – for instance rickshaw drivers – and who can accordingly evade lenders more easily.

For the more mobile clientele the neighbourhood principle in ordering informal credit markets collapses to some extent. Here, lending and especially the renegotiations of

contractual obligations take place primarily along a series of nodal points, specifically at places that the clients cannot easily evade in the long-term, such as rickshaw stands, especially those that are attached to stalls catering to the needs of the drivers. The likelihood of more affluent lenders being engaged in lending in this segment is even lower, considering the need to share social space with their customers. Moneylenders rely on these nodal points to access information just as much as to be able to meet their clients, but will frequently visit several of these points during the course of the day (or, frequently, evening). As rickshaw drivers are able to evade the lenders in the short term by shifting routes, and the whereabouts of the lenders at certain times of the day are familiar to them, the performative aspect of renegotiating obligations is enhanced. Lenders and debtors alike are well aware of the likelihood of encountering each other at these nodal points, so they are often

prepared to enter the performance of supplications for lenience against the extraction of a 'price' from the outset.

A similar variation on the neighbourhood pattern takes place in lending from homes. Creditors engaged in this type of lending prefer to serve stable circles of clients, often

by offering better terms, or at least better treatment. In turn, borrowers seek to maintain access to these circles by going to great efforts to maintain good relations with the lenders, visiting them on their own volition even in cases of default in order to uphold their reputations. To some extent, the stability of client groups (and the resulting familiarity) negates the necessity for the lender to gather information, though many lenders continue to spend some of their time hanging out at various centres for local gossip. In one particularly evocative case I have come across, the lender admitted that this was hardly necessary and that he was simply engaging in these activities as it formed an agreeable way to spend time in the late afternoons and early evenings.

In contrast, the neighbourhood pattern of petty lending is significantly compromised by a geography of shame, though this reinforces the central notion of communicating reputations. Infrequent borrowers occasionally seek out moneylenders in distant locations, primarily to avoid gossip carrying news of their need for loans within the locality. Yet, approaching distant lenders is difficult as the lenders need to assess the debtors' reputations, so that these efforts invariably rely on introductions and vouching for good conduct by relatives and friends. In turn, this tends to diminish the rationale of keeping the transaction secret. The rationale, accordingly, is less to keep their misfortunes from becoming public knowledge through gossip but rather to save face through the difference between gossip on (supposedly) secret and (arguably) well-known information.

Reinforcing the neighbourhood pattern are cases of secured lending to the poor defined by the value of the collateral and its acquisition rather than direct accumulation through interest, for instance, in cases in which property rights in poor neighbourhoods

are acquired by lenders for the purpose of real estate development. In the city proper, however, cases like these have become increasingly rare as the business increasingly shifts to the peri-urban areas. The main exceptions to the neighbourhood pattern of urban informal finance instead originate from the trade credit segment and its enclaves of sophistication. While most lenders in the trade credit segment, especially in retail trade, conform to the 'amateurish' characteristics of informal lending, the bazaar areas of Banaras and specifically the neighbourhoods that make up the 'heart' of the bazaar comprise a number of entrepreneurs engaged in specialist roles. These either facilitate loans by acquiring information on larger borrowing needs and pooling capital available for lending as well as taking over the management of transactions and recovery, or (much more rarely) act as guarantors, the informal equivalent to an insurance scheme. The presence of these specialists and the resulting enclaves of sophistication – their density receding significantly in non-bazaar commercial areas – does not negate the principle of communicating reputations, but significantly increases the sophistication of these credit market segments.

This pattern, in turn, is mirrored in another important aspect of informal finance in Banaras: *bisi*. *Bisi* is the local variant of what is more commonly known in India as *chit funds*, though in colloquial usage of the term it only refers to the locally played variety, rather than large registered money circulation schemes. While *bisi* can be used to circumvent the need for borrowing, especially in its more sophisticated forms prevalent in the bazaar it forms a temporarily set up arena for communicating reputations in informal finance. As the risks involved in setting up a *bisi* are carried by the head of a circle, while its profitability depends on the capacity for rapid returns on investment, moneylenders are almost pre-destined to become circle heads, and the behaviour of the 'players' during the course of a *bisi* allows various ways of communicating reliability and solvency as well as a willingness to comply with the unwritten behavioural norms of informal finance. Constituting a temporarily set up and bounded social space following rules that deviate from accepted behavioural norms in the remainder of urban society in India, *bisi* in its role for informal finance forms a type of heterotopia, though certainly not one leading to the establishment of a Foucaultian conception of modernity. In the process, these temporary social enclaves highlight the manifold uses of spatial organisation in urban north Indian society that differ significantly from 'traditional' patterns as well as the 'modern' formal sector of Indian finance.

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Notes

- 1 The name has been changed to a frequently used 'pet name', and the location is depicted in a deliberately vague manner in order to ensure confidentiality.
- 2 Birla, R. 2009. *Stages of Capital. Law, Culture, and Market Governance in Late Colonial India*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- 3 Appadurai, A. 2015. 'Afterword. The Dreamworld of Capitalism', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 35(3):481-485.
- 4 Basile, E. & Harriss-White, B. 2010. 'India's Informal Capitalism and Its Regulation', *International Review of Sociology* 20(3): 457-471.
- 5 Dietrich Wielenga, K. 2016. 'Repertoires of Resistance. The Handloom Weavers of South India, c. 1800 – 1960s', *International Review of Social History* 61:423-458.
- 6 Hardiman, D. 1996. 'Usury, Dearth and Famine in Western India', *Past and Present* 152:113-156.
- 7 Rudner, D. 1989. 'Banker's Trust and the Culture of Banking among the Nattukottai Chettiers of Colonial South India', *Modern Asian Studies* 23(3): 417-458.



Gossip at a paan shop. Image: Anoop Sharma.

Communication flows, primarily through gossip, ensure that the behaviour of both sides to a transaction becomes widely known.



Workshop in the heart of the bazaar. Image: Anoop Sharma.

Friendship: its meaning and practice in time and place

Carla Risseeuw and Marlein van Raalte

Semantics

Limitations of language are felt more prominently within certain discourses than others. While in the field of semantics the study of a specific term obviously profits from paying attention to its relation to the world outside, studying a concept that might be felt to have worldwide relevance will also have to deal with differences in vocabulary. Since local moralities in which 'friendship' is embedded are contextual and tend to shift accordingly, the topic as such is complex enough. A cross-cultural debate on the theme of 'friendship' is bound to lay bare in addition sensitivities attached to the connotations of the English term, with its attributes of good company and warm feelings. Words in other languages likely to be translated by 'friendship', however, can well refer to relationships in which affection does not play a prominent role, as in the case of kinship bonds. Moreover – however unwelcome to some (Western) scholars taking part in the discussion – sexuality may well be part of friendship. Here, we use the English term 'friendship' as a stand-in for a supposedly worldwide cognitive notion covering relationships of solidarity.

Within a single cultural setting, owing to its persuasive potential, language can also serve as an auxiliary. An appeal to help among equals can be more successful by addressing someone as a friend. Where the designation 'friend' is used in contrast to romantic or erotic relationships, it can be used to elevate such relations to a higher plane.³ In a time of social change, it can be wise to testify to being someone's 'friend', while at every step one takes remaining aware that this person cannot be trusted.⁴

The inclusion of friendship within a broader conceptual system may contribute to its emancipation. In traditional Chinese ethics with its hierarchical system of the five recognized cardinal human relationships (*wulun*),⁵ friendship – the only relationship not determined by one's rank in the empire or by kinship bonds – occupies the lowest position. In spite of this marginal position, its being part of *wulun* creates the potential of friendship bonds to open up the hierarchy of the system, even if these are to be cast in kinship terms (e.g., sworn brotherhood).⁶

Kanako Akaeda argues that female writers in pre-war Japan described intimate relationships between young women in terms of *douseiai* (same-sex love) or *dousei no ai* (love between the same sex), since terms including *ai* sounded more positive and feminine.⁷ Persuasive strategies in a literary context may be recognized for instance in the *Jātaka* tales of the Buddha's previous births, going back to the Buddhist canon of the third century BCE. In three stories taken from a 14th-century Sinhala version analysed by Ranjini Obeyesekere, equality of birth, intelligence, and status are not considered necessary components of friendship – in contrast to the general conception in the society of that time. She suggests that the Buddhist monks who made the collection may have specifically selected stories of friendships that cut across such barriers.⁸

The landscape of friendship

Relationships of solidarity are naturally connected with concepts of personhood and the self-other distinction. In the context of reincarnation, the scale of connectedness extends beyond the human species, human and non-human animals being inhabitants of the same world, having shared lives in previous births. Owing to the *karma* in which

The volume *Conceptualizing Friendship in Time and Place* is the result of the interaction between colleagues from different disciplines and geographic backgrounds, gathered with the aim of understanding the various meanings and practices that 'friendship' can have in different social and historical contexts.¹ It was a privilege to be able to invite contributions from Asian and Euro-American cultural traditions in the fields of philosophy, anthropology, sociology, history, philology, and (popular) literature, and the conference on the topic proved to be an inspiring challenge.² A worldwide conference on the theme of 'friendship' (including participants, for instance, from Africa and Southern America) remains a heartfelt desideratum.



Detail from the scroll by Gao Qiwei, 1672-1734, 'Three Laughing Friends'. Courtesy of Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

the individual person partakes, animals can well be seen as past or potential selves – with vegetarianism as a natural consequence. Within traditional Chinese ethics, as Ping Wang describes, an individual was never defined by him/herself alone, but by one's various roles in relation to others, depending on the specific conditions in the cosmos, community and family.⁹ A focus on all members of the human species is found in the "undifferentiated benevolence" as promoted by Immanuel Kant, who argued we should experience friendship as if all were brothers submissive to a universal father who wishes the happiness of all.¹⁰

Interpersonal relationships within an ad hoc circle of individuals play a central role in the concept of "event friendship" as was proposed by Andrew Lambert. Using an informal musical jamming session as a metaphor, he points out that transforming routine interpersonal actions into events – and extending the circle of people with whom such events are created by including, in principle, anyone who enters the subject's local social world – may realize a moral ideal based on an openness which is a form of impartiality.¹¹

On the other end of the scale, where aristocratic honour codes prevail, a stable concept of personhood in terms of honour

code is essential, which "requires promises and solemn undertakings of personal loyalty, sustained by concrete acts of protection, service, favors and aid".¹² In Greek antiquity the view of the self as a partner in reciprocal relations underwent a change, as Tazuko van Berkel shows, when pre-monetary culture based on long-term bonds of mutual solidarity transformed into a culture with a "disembedded type of exchange", characterized by a commercial transaction: "the simultaneous exchange of equivalent goods that does not necessarily yield a lasting relationship between the participants".¹³ Such developments tend to induce a shrinking of the range of persons valued as 'friends in the strict sense of the word', as happened in Western 18th century 'civil society'. Allan Silver notes how Adam Smith "understands commercial society to 'purify' friendship (...)". Value measured by price systems in markets now has no bearing on values in friendship, which is entirely founded on circumstances distinctive to each bond, falling under the 'sovereignty' of friendship itself".¹⁴

A more common-sense reflection on friendship takes into account its culturally required performance. Cultural variations in companionship are linked with differing values attached to gender, age, caste and class. Local proximity codes of touching and eye contact, forms of address, and ways of carrying your body and dressing, are fashions to express proximity and distance. For distinguishing local taken-for-granted socialities, migration is often an eye-opening experience. In a cross-cultural marriage one has to learn how to perform new ways of shaping everyday life with family members, and new ways of keeping company. Thai wives "initially are amazed to see that their Dutch spouses make an appointment with parents and friends a few weeks or even a month in advance". On the other hand, Dutch husbands may feel uneasy when Thai close female friends go into the kitchen to help with cooking, and even bring their own cooked dishes.¹⁵

Outlook

The 'self' is unmistakably prominent in the modern Euro-American world, where privacy prevails – such in contrast to cultures in which being the only person in a room is exceptional, and intergenerational units are common practice. Within the current relatively small nuclear family units of Northern European welfare states and parts of white Northern America, after the grown-up children leave the parental home, parents wish to live independently, and don't wish to interfere with the career and the happiness of their children – who are forming nuclear families of their own. Supporting parents tends to become as complicated as asking for help is to the

parents themselves.¹⁶ Studying the social implications of the Dutch system together with Indian colleagues makes one sensitive to what – without undervaluing the advantages of public social services – gets eroded with welfare state arrangements.¹⁷

The fragile logic of reciprocity on the part of grown-up children towards their parents requires a more complex scenario of taking responsibility and accepting support. The priority attached to kin over those who are 'just friends' seems to be a topic worthy of discussion where social networks in several (especially Euro-American) cultures are concerned. The potential of – both life-long and more recently made – close friends is tapped not infrequently in practice. The idea of legally recognized bonds of support in a Civil Friendship Pact as proposed by Natasha Gruver, supplementing current state provisions for family members with formal agreements to support selected friends, seems to offer a promising perspective.¹⁸

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Gentrification in East Asian cities

Ilhong Ko



The impact of gentrification on the urban population of East Asia has been significant indeed, due to the region's experience of condensed urbanization and rapid economic development. The specific trajectories of gentrification that can be observed in the region, however, are widely varied, stemming from the different social, economic, and political conditions facing each East Asian country.

In this issue of *News from Northeast Asia*, we examine the distinctive characteristics of gentrification as it has unfolded in East Asia, and consider the different histories and perceptions of, and reactions towards, gentrification in South Korea, China, and Japan.

In 'The Geographies of Gentrification in East Asia', Hyun Bang Shin of the London School of Economics and Political Science, addresses the multifaceted and uneven nature of gentrification in East Asia, as well as the challenges facing those contesting gentrification in the region. In the three articles that follow, specific case studies dealing with the contexts, motivations, and results of gentrification are introduced. In the first case study, 'Deregulation Policy and Gentrification in Chuo Ward, Tokyo', Yoshihiro Fujitsuka of Osaka City University traces the history of urban decline and regeneration accompanied by gentrification in central Tokyo over a time period spanning 30 years. In the second case study, Seon Yeong Lee of King's College London focuses on the problems facing the tenants of Hannam, Seoul, following the gentrification of the area and their active attempts to address those problems in 'Resisting Gentrification in South Korea'. In the third case study, 'State, Global Urbanism, and Gentrification in Chengdu', Qinran Yang of Southwest Jiaotong University considers a new form of gentrification led by state-led urbanism and warns of its potential treat for the urban community of Chengdu.

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The geographies of gentrification in East Asia

Hyun Bang Shin

Gentrification was initially coined in 1964 as a critique of unequal urban processes in north London, which involved the transformation of working-class neighbourhoods into more affluent ones while displacing existing residents. Following subsequent gatherings of international and comparative studies, gentrification has come to take on a more generic definition, that is, the class remake of urban space involving displacement. This remake of urban space mutates across time and space, thus gentrifications in a plural form.¹ In post-industrial Western cities, the shift to the entrepreneurial urban governance coupled with the commodification of collective consumption (especially, of the social housing sector) has produced urban environments favourable to gentrification. While the original conceptualisation of gentrification involved the gradual upgrading of residential properties at a neighbourhood scale, the advancement of financialisation and the prevalence of neoliberal urban policies from the 1980s together gave rise to new-build gentrification, such as the wholesale clearance and redevelopment of entire neighbourhoods or housing estates. What is often regarded as urban regeneration

or property-led redevelopment has turned out to be, in fact, gentrification.

Gentrification has gone planetary,² and has been a key urban process in East Asian cities as well, even though the very expression of gentrification is less known in everyday discourses.³ Reflecting the condensed urbanisation and economic development of the region, gentrification in East Asia has been largely in the form of new-build gentrification.⁴ Condensed urbanisation and economic development in East Asia meant that cities were subject to major socio-spatial restructuring at an unprecedented pace, involving the re-writing of the landscape and the rise of various urban redevelopment projects. Substandard or dilapidated neighbourhoods, which used to be homes to millions of poor urbanites, were cleared to make way for affluent upscale residential and commercial complexes that catered for the needs of more desirable populations. A large majority of existing residents had to bear the brunt of new-build gentrification.⁵

The rise of new-build gentrification in East Asia is helped by the powerful presence of the developmental state (and the Party State in mainland China). The state plays an instrumental role for the socio-spatial

restructuring of cities, especially when there are needs of creating conditions of real estate investment by clearing sites of fragmented property rights or by transferring public assets into private hands (e.g., slum clearance, land expropriation).⁶

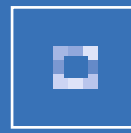
More recently, classic forms of gentrification have also come to prevail in East Asia, but developing as commercial gentrification in the shadow of new-build gentrification.⁷ This process includes the commercialisation of surviving heritage sites and of those spatial remnants of the by-gone era such as alleyways of traditional neighbourhoods that escaped redevelopment. Increased affluence among populations in East Asia and the popular appeal of tourism have also contributed to the transformation of scenic and exotic places into tourist attractions. While small-scale individual entrepreneurs become gentrifiers in this process, it is the arrival of real estate capital and speculative interests, which bring about profound commercial changes that create irreversible damages to the lives of local communities.

Like all other urban processes, gentrification in East Asia unfolds across geographies in an uneven way. As expressed elsewhere, when studying gentrification, there is a need to "adhere to a more open-minded approach, which understands gentrification as constitutive of diverse urban processes at work".⁸ Gentrification may be a more dominant urban process in a given place, while it may remain less influential or only emergent somewhere else. While major urban agglomerations in East Asia attract investments that fuel the sustenance of real estate interests and hence a mix of new-build and commercial gentrification, other more regional cities may experience stagnation or shrinkage while selectively experiencing commercial gentrification and touristification in pockets of scenic attractions. Upon examining gentrifications in East Asia, what is more important than the identification of gentrification in a given locality is to critically explore the ways in which gentrification has become part of aspirational urbanism,⁹ as a state policy and strategy aimed at remaking cities in the imagination of the rich and powerful.

Finally, contesting gentrification in East Asia is quite a challenge, not just because of the heavy presence of the state that often displayed authoritarian characteristics including the use of violence to suppress protesters, but also because of the persistent culture of property built on the material affluence brought about by real estate investments. The hegemony of property creates particularistic discourses and ideologies that are built on individual property ownership, undermining struggles that call for collective control of property assets or the protection of tenants' right to stay put. Nevertheless, as witnessed by a recent wave of urban contestations in Taiwan and Hong Kong,¹⁰ there is a potential to overcome the property hegemony in East Asia, perhaps in the way the democracy movements in South Korea were able to overthrow authoritarian governments in the past and more recently.¹¹

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SNUAC
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The Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) is a research and international exchange institute based in Seoul, South Korea. The SNUAC's most distinctive feature is its cooperative approach in fostering research projects and international exchange program through close interactions between regional and thematic research programs about Asia and the world. To pursue its mission to become a hub of Asian Studies, SNUAC research teams are divided by different regions and themes. Research centers and programs are closely integrated, providing a solid foundation for deeper analysis of Asian society.

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Deregulation policy and gentrification in Chuo Ward, Tokyo

Professor Yoshihiro FUJITSUKA



Fig. 1: Typical landscape of displacement and gentrification in Minato District during the 2000s.

Between the 1980s and early 1990s, when land values in Japan soared, numerous plots of land near Central Business Districts (CBDs) were bought up as investments, and former tenants were displaced. The period also saw financial institutions such as banks and insurance companies moving into the Tokyo core. Industrial restructuring significantly increased the number of white-collar workers in Tokyo. In an attempt to recover its population, the local government of the Chuo ward in central Tokyo implemented a new initiative, known as the Housing Linkage Program, for large developments in 1985.

Urban Development Area in the Emergency Urban Development Area, and a building height was exempted from the height district. Limitations to the floor area ratio in zoning were also deregulated in this area.

Chuo ward experienced an increase in population due to the implementation of the Housing Linkage Program (fig.2). As the number of single households increased, though, the Chuo ward government revised its housing policy, and the Housing Linkage Program was abolished in 2003 to be replaced by a new deregulation policy concerning the construction of high-rise residential buildings. The ward government also promoted a scheme to increase the number of family households; only long-term residential buildings were allowed to increase the floor area ratio to 1.4 times the standard floor area ratio.

The number of construction disputes increased in the first half of the 2000s; therefore, in 2004, in order to resolve the dissatisfaction with high-rise building construction, the increase in the floor area ratio was reduced from 1.4 to 1.2. Consequently, the number of construction disputes dropped in the second half of the 2000s. During this period, Chuo ward witnessed the highest increase rate (24.8%) of professional, technical workers, managers, and officials in Tokyo. The number of these workers increased in three districts: Tsukishima, Nihonbashi, and Minato.

Tsukishima is located on the south-eastern side of the Sumida River. There were warehouses, and a shipyard in Tsukuda, which is to the north of Tsukishima. Redevelopment of these sites began in the 1980s; high-rise condominiums were constructed, and affluent people started to live there. Nihonbashi is located in the north-eastern part of Chuo ward. Wholesale shops were once agglomerated in this district. However, as the wholesale business began declining, many wholesale shops were replaced by condominiums, which attracted white-collar workers. Developers invested in this district to redevelop the former sites of wholesale shops. Deregulation, such as changes to slant plane restrictions on the sides of building sites, transformed urban landscape.

Minato district is located just two kilometres from the commercial city centre. The district features a manufacturing quarter with print shops and is, as such, an agglomeration of the printing and binding sectors. The district is located close to the Ginza shopping streets and the Nihonbashi business district. The shops and offices in these districts require printed materials, including sales slips and

documents. The print shops were small and medium-sized companies. Furthermore, the residences and workplaces of the workers were generally in the same building. After much speculation, investors bought factory sites in the 1980s. The agents of developers were rampant in Minato 2, pouring 35.5 billion yen into the land for four years.²

The residents of Minato District were displaced, a few of the houses were demolished, and parking lots were established in their place. After the collapse of the economic bubble, a block comprising houses and parking lots was not redeveloped. The terrace-style houses were demolished individually, needing to be propped up on their sides. Vacant parking lots and houses remain in front of the high-rise buildings. The apparatus for elevated parking has been rusting, and a bicycle instead of a car is parked in the parking lot. Two high-rise buildings are shown in fig.1. The high-rise building in the middle consists of rented flats which are one-room apartments. The building on the right is 32-storeys high. As two-thirds of the units in the building have floor space above 40 square metres, more units can be added. The addition of more units to the building was allowed by providing public open space around the building; two blocks were consolidated in order to enable this. Deregulation allowed the erection of dramatically larger buildings than would have previously been allowed, and developers indeed began taking advantage of the changes to build much larger high-rises. The building on the right in fig.1 includes very expensive flats that rent at over 500,000 yen per month, with the most expensive among them priced at one million yen per month. The rent of corporate executives are generally paid by their companies.

In the ways mentioned above, the local government's urban policy induced gentrification. Former residents could no longer afford to live in these expensive leaseholds, and were consequently displaced.

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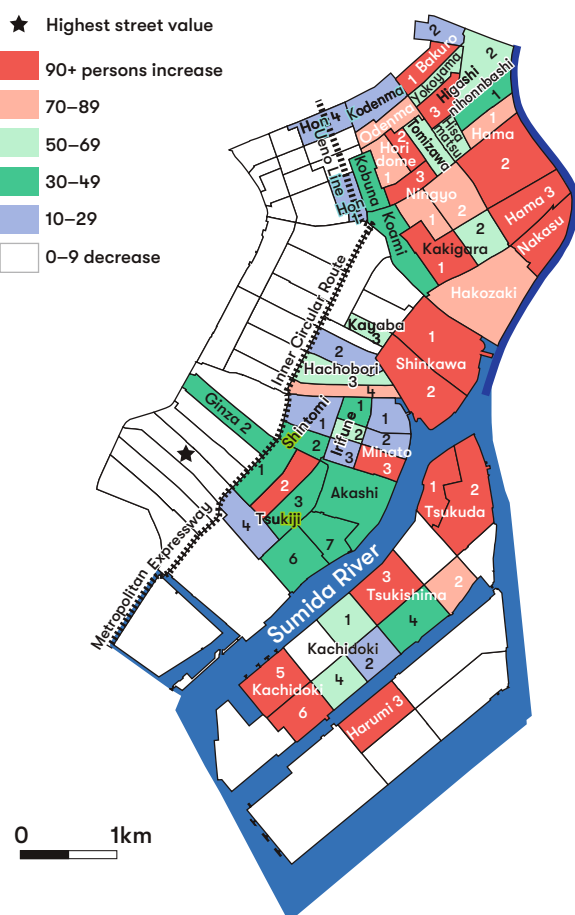


Fig. 2: Population increase in Chuo ward districts

The Chuo ward government set two standards for the Housing Linkage Program according to the zoning. In the case of commercial zoning, developers were required to supply housing whose total size should be 50% or more of the project site, otherwise be extended beyond 100% of the project site. The floor space of each housing unit supplied by the Housing Linkage Program had to measure 40 square metres or larger. One problem with the Housing Linkage Program, however, was the rising cost of private housing, which resulted in a shortage of affordable housing.

With the collapse of Japan's economic bubble, reconstruction plans were abandoned. Land values continued to drop during the ensuing economic slump, which led to high mortgage arrears rates and indebtedness. Because numerous underused plots of land stood close to Tokyo's CBD, revitalising these areas became the government's primary objective. In the late 1990s, price deflation drove Japan's economy into a recession. Many small and medium-sized factories in inner Tokyo closed down or moved to other regions or abroad.

In 2002, Japan's government introduced the Urban Regeneration Policy with a budget of 2.5 billion yen as an economic stimulus measure to address problems related to bad loans in the central areas of major cities. The Urban Regeneration Policy designated districts as Emergency Urban Development Areas in the central areas of Japan's major cities. 70% of the land in the Chuo ward was designated as an Emergency Urban Development Area.¹ The Tokyo metropolitan government could thus decide on a Special

Resisting gentrification in South Korea

Dr. Seon Young Lee

Gentrification has been a hot issue in South Korea over the last five years. Due to extensive media coverage on gentrification, this academic term has become a commonly used word. However, the phenomenon called ‘gentrification’ in Korea is somewhat different from that of the West. Gentrification in Korea, as currently spotlighted in the mass media, refers to the socio-spatial change that takes place as the unique culture and distinctiveness of an area becomes commercialized, and tenants who played an important role in this transformation become displaced due to sharp increase in rent. As social conflicts between commercial tenants and their landlords have become serious, gentrification has come to be discussed as a crucial social problem which needs to be solved urgently. Local and central governments have been trying to tackle this problem and some regulations and ordinances for its prevention have been created.

Although the term ‘gentrification’ has recently drawn great social attention, it is not a truly new phenomenon in South Korea. Urban redevelopment in Korea has worked as gentrification for a long time since urban redevelopment is directly connected to socio-spatial upgrading. Tenants have resisted urban redevelopment, and tenant movements have made progress in improving tenants’ rights and in opposing the strong property rights of landlords. Likewise, a representative body of commercial tenants was created to resolve the problems resulting from unequal tenancy agreements and to organize the struggle of commercial tenants. As a result, the issues of commercial tenants began to be expressed in an organized fashion.

In particular, Takeout Drawing (TOD), a cafe and gallery in Hannam, Seoul, represents a symbolic resistance against commercial gentrification. As TOD was harassed with forced eviction and noticed many neighbours facing the same difficulties, it came to emphasize that its struggle was not a private struggle but a social problem. TOD defined its problem as gentrification and tried to overcome it through cultural

resistance (fig.1). Although TOD’s protest has been successful, its neighbourhood is rapidly gentrifying. Hannam, once a quiet residential area, has become a trendy commercial space after artists and retail entrepreneurs moved in. The arrival of new restaurants, boutique shops and cultural spaces changed the image of the area, and it attracted more people to visit. As Hannam has become a hot place to go out, capital has followed into the area, displacing the early gentrifiers. Almost half of the small craft shops opened in the early 2010s, which initiated the transformation of the area, were already displaced in 2016 by franchised shops, high end cultural facilities, because of rent increase. Rising rents are putting pressure on residential tenants as well as commercial tenants, since converting from housing to commercial buildings has been common. Therefore, it is very likely that more conflicts over these changes will emerge.

In this social change to highlight socio-spatial inequality and call for a new approach, gentrification is used as the frame to explain current urban changes in Korea. The concept of gentrification provides an explanation of who the winners and losers are and how their relationships change in the face of resistance. The social interest in gentrification reflects that people are aware of the power inequality embedded in urban development more than ever and recent social challenges for finding alternatives in urban development are emerging. Gentrification is chosen to explain how people have tried to rebalance asymmetrical power relations and how these attempts have influenced and been influenced by political and economic processes. It is important to understand the form, nature and scale of gentrification in Korea, but it is more important to understand why there has been a surge in interest in gentrification in Korea.

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Fig. 1: Takeout Drawing (TOD) created a research group called ‘Disaster Lab’ with artists, social activists and researchers to resist gentrification.



Fig. 1: Redeveloped condominiums and shopping area in the inner city of Chengdu, photographed by Qinran Yang in 2015. The fifty-one-story Excellency residential apartment is the first project of Singapore Land Limited’s in Chengdu. The Taikoo Li shopping area developed by the Swire Properties of Hong Kong and Sino-Ocean Land of Beijing represents cutting edge commercial buildings in Chengdu.

State, global urbanism, and gentrification in Chengdu

Dr. Qinran Yang

Chengdu, an historical city situated in the heartland of southwest China, has been recently spotlighted by the international community. In 2015 the city accommodated a population of 6.98 million, including 1.07 million rural-urban migrants. Its notability derives from not only the city’s remarkable economic performance but also its heightened cultural vitality.

A critical moment of urban change occurred in 2003 with the innovations of the former party secretary (from 2003 to 2009). Secretary Chuncheng Li embraced theories of city marketing and paid close attention to urban imagery. Chengdu was for the first time branded as a *liveable and amicable city*, but one that lacked global acclaim. With this urban imaginary, Secretary Li promoted one of the most extensive urban redevelopment plans from 2002 to 2004, wherein 5.8 million square meters of housing were cleared away, and 110,000 households were relocated.¹ A small number of Singaporean, Taiwanese and Hong Kong investors played a significant role in importing modernist landscapes from Southeast Asia to Chengdu, and these symbolized a desirable international lifestyle for the newly rich in the city. Older Chengdu neighbourhoods have since been stigmatized as blighted, less civilized spaces and have become subject to “control, redefine and transform”.² Not so much an example of global urbanism, this wave of urban redevelopment spurred what is to date the fastest development of real estate and has tremendously benefited land-based local finance.

From 2009 to 2011, Secretary Li advocated for the second round of the urban redevelopment program. Soon after, he was charged with corruption in these urban projects and sentenced to 13 years in prison in 2015. On the heels of this event, the new municipal secretary Xinchu Huang established the North Chengdu Redevelopment Program in 2012, covering 211 km², two urban districts and two suburban counties. From 2012 to 2014, this program dislocated 35,241 households.³ If the landscape-making in the early 2000s showed a self-representation of globalization, the latter two waves of urban redevelopment have spoken to the clear-cut commitment of local governments to recast the city’s identity to be competitive in attracting transnational investment and new industries. At the southeast corner of the inner city, for example, new iconic spaces appeared on previous manufacturing bases. The minimalist and spectacular high-rise condominiums with facilities such as reinforced security systems, indoor gyms, cafes and clubs are said to

provide cosmopolitan spaces for financial and business professionals. Commercial buildings inject local authenticity into a transnational landscape, presenting to the world a Chengdu with great potential to lead in urban creativity. The place has nurtured not only financial industries but also tourism, art industries, and trendsetting consumption and recreation.

The One Belt One Road Initiative currently promoted by the central government is heralding a new era for Chengdu. Territorially, the city inhabits an inland hub opening China to West Asia. The Chengdu government has been invigorated to innovate new approaches to sustainable development. New state-led urban strategies have been devised, converting the city from a battleground of investments and industries to talented people. Once the proper urban image is created, it is believed, those national and transnational elites will be lured to it, and investments and industries will follow.⁴ Backing those strategies, a scoring system of people, adding to the *hukou* system, is established to function as a gatekeeper to the city. We forecast that a substantial number of rural-urban migrants in the city are in grave peril. This peril no longer directly represents a two-class conflict over space nor is it an issue of land rent exploitation by political-economic agents-notions built in the conventional literature on gentrification. It warns of the advent of gentrification as an immediate result of cultural isolation and socioeconomic deprivation due to the state-led creation of cultural urbanism.

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Digital Buddhology

Di Luo

Buddhist studies in the digital age is faced with immense opportunities, challenges, and problems both old and new. By using the word 'Buddhology', we encourage readers to think of not only text-based Buddhist studies but a cross-disciplinary field where art, architecture, and material culture are an integral part of the term in question.

In this issue's 'China Connections', we invite readers to look at the exciting development of digital Buddhology in present-day China. Highlighted here are recent digitization projects by Peking University, Zhejiang University, and the research institutes at the world heritage sites of Dunhuang, Yungang, Longmen, and Dazu, some involving international collaborations such as with the Getty Center and Harvard University.

Conservators, researchers, curators, and educators from around the world work toward the common aim of preserving Buddhist cultural heritage – texts, images, objects, monuments, and entire sites – by exploring and adopting, all the while pushing the forefront of, digital technologies. Contributors of this issue demonstrate how Buddhist canonical work and manuscripts in multiple languages and media have been made available through open-access online databases; how Buddhist monasteries and

their ancient wooden buildings and century-old murals are recorded and experienced through Virtual Reality; and how rock-cut cave temples with their monumental statues are captured using laser-scanning or photogrammetry and reconstructed for conservation as well as education purposes. The benefits of the application of digital tools are immediate, certain, and manifold: they make quick and precise documentation, allow (in some instances) for a greater accessibility to and searchability of

Buddhist materials, and provide excellent research and educational materials.

The very practice of digitization forces us to reconsider the very meaning and significance of the 'cultural heritage' itself. Concerns have been made as to how much a digitally recorded or reconstructed piece of work can be considered an extension to that heritage and the protection thereof, while much of the 'aura' of the original has been lost during the process of digitization. On the other hand, some have advocated for the 'digital life' or 'digital afterlife' of Buddhist art and architecture, as Buddhist practitioners actively engage themselves with all kinds of digital tools and platforms in their religious routines. We hope that you find some answers, but more importantly further questions, from the five essays presented in the following.

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Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai

The Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai serves as the hub within the NYU Global Network University system to promote the study of Asian interactions and comparisons, both historical and contemporary. The overall objective of the Center is to provide global societies with information on the contexts for the reemerging connections between the various parts of Asia through research and teaching. Collaborating with institutions across the world, the Center seeks to play a bridging role between existing Asian studies knowledge silos. It will take the lead in drawing connections and comparisons between the existing fields of Asian studies, and stimulating new ways of understanding Asia in a globalized world.

Asia Research Center at Fudan University

Founded in March 2002, the Asia Research Center at Fudan University (ARC-FDU) is one of the achievements of the cooperation of Fudan and the Korean Foundation for Advanced Studies (KFAS). Through the years, the center is making all the efforts to promote Asian Studies, including hosting conferences and supporting research projects. ARC-FDU keeps close connections with the ARCs in mainland China and many institutes abroad.

Digital heritage, cyber-archiving and education

Wu-Wei Chen

When discussing heritage conservation, authenticity is the guideline of the process. To maintain the original status of the heritage, paying attention to details and reversibility helps to prevent further damage to the cultural properties when applying materials or methods. Contemporary conservators embrace digital technologies such as photogrammetry, laser scanning, CT (MRI), Inferred and X-Ray scanning in the process. These technologies provide non-intrusive monitoring to collect and share data. The data further helps to analyze the status of the material within and enables the establishment of visualizations and replicas as references. In some cases, replicas further become part of the heritage object after restoration or even replace the original cultural object.

In China, the restoration of the Thousand-Armed Bodhisattva Guanyin, which is part of the Chongqing Dazu Rock Carvings, showcases the usage of 3D printing for heritage conservation. The 3D printed model, made in 1:3 proportion to the original, became the reference for the restoration team during the process. Some 3D-printed parts were also blended with the authentic heritage item (fig.1).

Projection mapping, along with restoration, can be further utilized in creating engaging narratives and messages for cultural heritage. yU+co, one of the sponsors of the exhibition of the 'Cave Temples of Dunhuang' in 2016, created a projection-based installation at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at the Getty Center in Los Angeles. According to Garson Yu, founder and creative director of yU+co, this projection "gives a more volumetric or immersive experience than regular VR, using a special 360-degree dome shader. It was a year-long process to merge the 2D photographs and merge them into the 3D geometry for the entire cave." Collaborating with the Getty Conservation Institute on the narrative, yU+co has created a "fluid experience" in the physical environment other than the heritage site. In this case, projection mapping, along with VR, stimulates public interest in and care



Fig. 2: Animation film directed by Chen Haitao and Chen Qi. Image courtesy Dunhuang Academy.



Fig. 1: Restoration of the Thousand-armed Bodhisattva Guanyin in progress. Image courtesy 3ders.org

for cultural restoration. It also reveals the fluidity of digital heritage across cultures, regions, and identities.

Even with the collective devotion, cultural heritage continues to face the threat of human activities ranging from vandalism to theft and wars. Education is key to raising and cultivating the awareness for preservation. With the joint efforts of academia, governmental organizations and industry, the finalized projects can be transformed into education materials. Digital storytelling, computer-aided drawing, and cyber-archiving can be integrated into the STEAM curriculum (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) to help students comprehend the intangible values of heritage (method, techniques, context) and further cherish the existing yet endangered tangible cultural properties.

Good practices of conservation, from cultural objects to architecture and the entire heritage sites, can be further revitalized by digital narrative and storytelling. The latest

animation released by the Dunhuang Academy was inspired by the digitized painting in Cave 254. Mr. Chen Haitao and Mrs. Chen Qi, the directors of the animation, integrated the rich imageries of the Buddhist stories of 'The Great Departure' and 'The Attack of Mara' from the Mogao Cave 254 into animated infographics (fig.2). Their interpretation of the cave painting and artistic recreation has given the piece more profound meanings. The follow-up premiere and workshops at Beijing in late 2016 further revitalized the original painting and contributed to public and higher education.

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Note

- 1 Aréchiga, F. 'Bringing the Ancient Theater of the Silk Road to Los Angeles'; <https://tinyurl.com/ancienttheater>

Kaihuasi: Buddhist art and architecture in virtual reality

Jianwei Zhang and Lala Zuo

The Kaihuasi (開化寺) is a Buddhist monastery located about 17 km northeast of the city of Gaoping (高平) in southeast Shanxi province. The monastery was established in the 6th century and expanded in the late 9th to early 10th century under the supervision of the Chan Master Dayu [大愚]. The Kaihuasi is especially known for its main hall, the Daxiongbaodian [大雄寶殿] [Mahāvīra Hall], which was built in 1073 during the Northern Song. The interior of the Daxiongbaodian is decorated with exquisite Buddhist mural paintings that have been preserved from the 11th century.

In 2017, a research team of the Experimental Teaching Center for Virtual Reality and Simulation in Archaeology of Peking University used Virtual Reality (VR) technology to record the monastery including the main hall and its murals. First, the team deployed drones to take pictures of the monastery complex from an aerial view. Then panoramic photography was used to record both the interior and exterior of each building (fig. 1). In order to virtually reconstruct the building structure and mural paintings in the Daxiongbaodian, the team took 480 high-resolution photographs and used photogrammetry to create a 3D model of the Daxiongbaodian (interior) with surface texture and color information. In other words, the photos were applied as skins to precisely cover the surface of the 3D model of the building's interior (fig. 2). After all data was collected, the team located all buildings on a map using the Geographic Information System (GIS). The links to the panoramic photographs were pinpointed on the aerial picture according to the real locations where the photos had been taken. The links to the 3D models with surface texture were also displayed on the map.

Aside from documentation, this VR project has also been applied to enhance the experience of museum visitors. In the spring of 2017, the Arthur M. Sackler Museum of Art and Archaeology at Peking University exhibited high-resolution life-size photocopies of the wall paintings from the Kaihuasi. In addition to viewing the paintings in two dimensions, visitors were able to wear a VR headset and immerse themselves in the virtual scene of the Daxiongbaodian to appreciate the paintings and the building structure in their original spatial context. VR would help museums to redesign and/or upgrade traditional exhibitions, and to protect historical architecture from potential damages made by flocking visitors.

Using the VR technology to document art and architecture is only the team's first step.

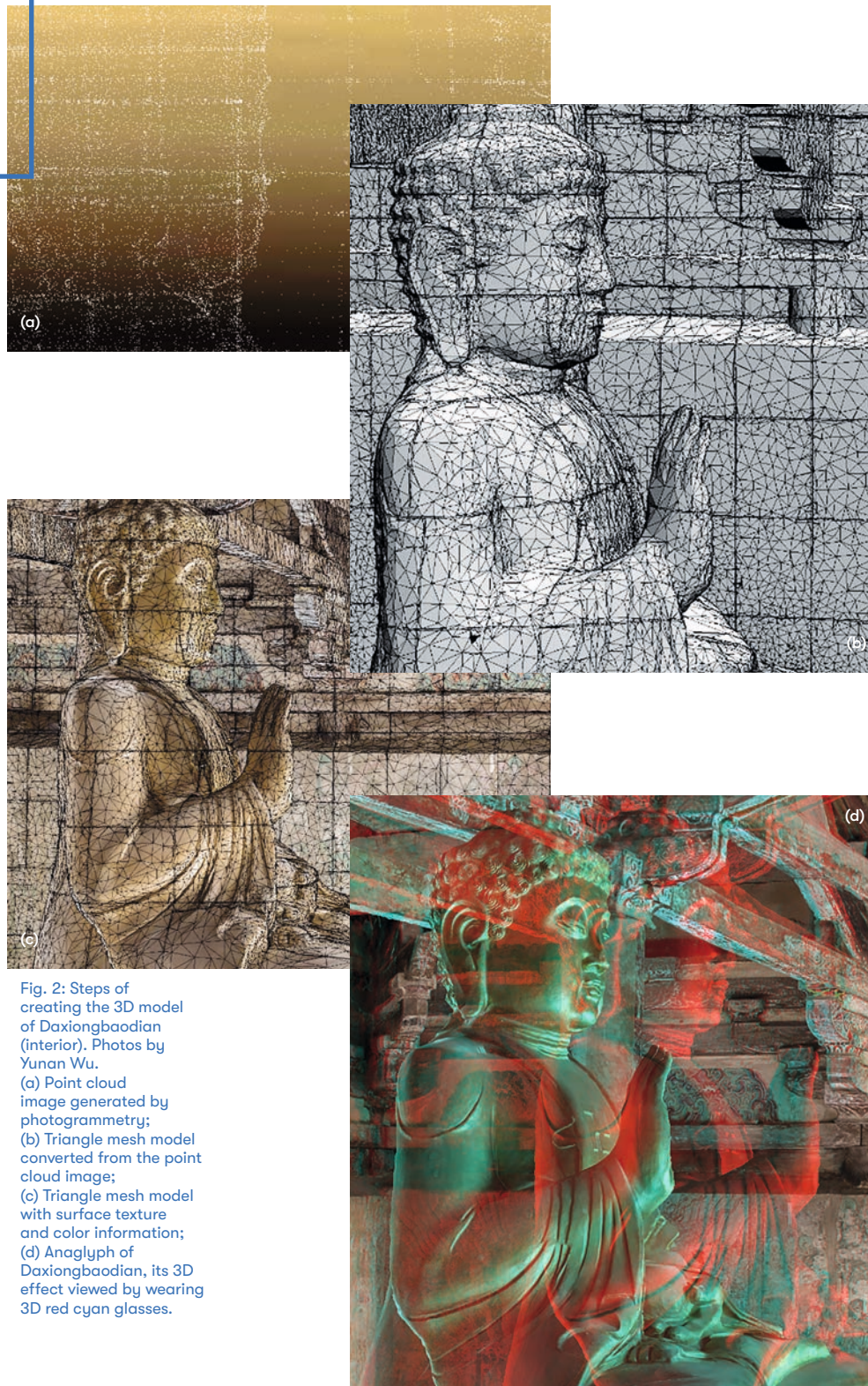


Fig. 2: Steps of creating the 3D model of Daxiongbaodian (interior). Photos by Yunan Wu. (a) Point cloud image generated by photogrammetry; (b) Triangle mesh model converted from the point cloud image; (c) Triangle mesh model with surface texture and color information; (d) Anaglyph of Daxiongbaodian, its 3D effect viewed by wearing 3D red cyan glasses.

The Kaihuasi is only one example in the team's database called VR-Heritage that stores hundreds (currently around 150) of temples and buildings dated from the 10th century to the early 20th century. This database can help scholars, professors, and students to discover new problems and generate new research topics. For example, the team has developed several themes such as 'Song-Jin architecture in southeast Shanxi', 'Yuan-Ming architecture in Sichuan', and 'Liao pagodas in Inner Mongolia and Liaoning'. Most of the objects are Buddhist architecture or monuments.

The benefits and challenges of the application of VR and other digital technologies will be further discussed in a panel titled 'Digital Humanities and New Directions in Studying East Asian Art and Architecture' at the 2018 Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS), to take place in Washington D.C. this March. The panel, organized by Professor Lala Zuo, will present more original digital humanities projects and explore new directions in East Asian art and architectural history.

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Lala Zuo is an Assistant Professor at the Languages and Cultures Department of the United States Naval Academy zuo@usna.edu

Notes

- 1 Miller, T. 2008. 'The Eleventh-Century Daxiongbaodian of Kaihuasi and Architectural Style in Southern Shanxi's Shangdang Region', *Archives of Asian Art* 58:4.
- 2 The VR-Heritage is a database developed by Peking University in 2017. It aims to record important cultural heritage sites with panoramic photography, oblique-imagery 3D modeling, and other VR technologies. It is currently under construction and will be accessible for academic use in 2 or 3 years.



Scanning a Buddha statue in one of the Grottoes.

Longmen Grottoes: New Perspectives

Fletcher John Coleman

On 25-26 October 2017, Harvard University welcomed a team of experts from the Longmen Grottoes Research Academy to inaugurate an international joint-initiative focused on digital conservation and restoration. An enduring legacy to Chinese art, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Longmen Grottoes represents over a millennium of religious and creative activity. The 'Longmen Grottoes: New Perspectives' workshop brought together Longmen Academy researchers with specialists on Buddhist art from across the globe to promote cutting-edge efforts at digital preservation, archaeological work, and documentary projects taking place at Longmen.

Spearheaded by Eugene Wang, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Asian Art at Harvard University, and Hou Yuke, Director of the Material and Information Center at the Longmen Grottoes, the two-day event was centered on overviews of recent digital programs at Longmen. Tasked with addressing centuries of damage and dispersal of the magnificent limestone grotto sculptures, the Longmen Grottoes Research Academy began a comprehensive program of 3-D scanning over a decade ago. Having built an extensive database of cave scans, the Academy uses the information to conduct new efforts at preservation – including the redressing of groundwater and other environmental damage. The precision of the digital data has also driven exciting new archaeological discoveries in the eastern cave district at Longmen.

With technological efforts reaching a mature phase at the Longmen Grottoes, the Research Academy has turned its attention to the digital restoration of sculpture removed from the site during the early 20th century. The 'Longmen Grottoes: New Perspectives' workshop represented the inaugural partnering of Harvard University and the Metropolitan Museum of Art with the Longmen Grottoes Research Academy to begin a 3-D digital scanning project of all known Longmen sculptures housed in institutions around the world. As data is collected, the caves will be digitally restored using a combination of virtual and augmented reality technologies. Algorithms are used to match fragmentary pieces with their original cave locations, allowing for the accurate virtual recreation of the sculptures to their original forms. Workshop participants were able to explore the Longmen Academy's most recent sample cave restorations through a virtual reality experience. The Academy plans to build a site museum of digital restorations, as well as an immersive travelling exhibition.

Workshop participants were also treated to presentations on exciting new academic research being conducted on the Longmen Grottoes. Ranging from explorations of female agency in Buddhist patronage at Longmen to exciting new archival discoveries on the collecting history of the site, traditional research continues to play a crucial role in broadening our understanding of the Longmen Grottoes. Scholars remain eager to explore further horizons in their research through the new digital tools offered by the Longmen Academy.

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Fig. 1: Panoramic photograph of the Daxiongbaodian at Kaihuasi (built in 1092). Photo by Yunan Wu.

Digitization of Buddhist cultural heritage

Marcus Bingenheimer

Throughout history, Buddhists have used all available means to encode and transmit the ever increasing volume of their textual heritage. After the death of the founder of Buddhism, the early community organized the transmission of a sizable corpus with the help of mnemonic recitation techniques. The earliest Indian epigraphy as well as the earliest manuscript fragments in Indian languages are connected with Buddhism, and the earliest extant printed book, dated 868 CE, is a Chinese translation of the Diamond Sutra.

Today, in the twilight of print, text is largely produced, transmitted, and stored digitally and, for better or worse, cultural heritage information is being digitized ever more comprehensively. In the field of Buddhist studies, texts were a natural starting point for digitization. Buddhist texts exist in a bewildering range of languages and genres, and there are several large canonical collections in Pāli, Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolian, and Manchu that overlap in complicated ways. Many texts have also survived in Sanskrit and prakritic languages, sometimes complete in the monasteries of Nepal and Tibet, sometimes fragmentary in the sands of South and Central Asia. Then there are modern translations into Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, French, English, German, etc.

Since the late 1980s, various organizations have started to digitize these riches, scanning manuscripts and producing digital full text editions. Distributed online, vast amounts of Buddhist literature are now available, equally and freely, to the wider public. The effects on Buddhism of making all its texts available to all believers with an Internet connection are not yet fully understood, but the impact could be significant—comparable to that of the adoption of writing in Buddhism (which played a major role in the emergence of

Mahāyāna) or the discovery of printing in Europe (which was a condition for the Reformation).

Where to find Buddhist canonical texts online in reliable form? For Pāli the most widely used digital corpora are the *Chatṭha Saṅgāyana* corpus, the *Buddha Jāyanti* corpus, and the digitized version of the *Pāli Text Society* edition. For early Buddhist literature in general, *SuttaCentral* offers parallel full-text in ancient languages and the largest number of translations from Pāli texts into modern languages. It also makes all its data available in an exemplary fashion for download.

For the Chinese canon there is the *Taiwanese Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association* (CBETA) corpus, and the *Japanese SAT Daizōkyō Text Database*. Translations of Chinese Buddhist texts are less readily available online. An online bibliography of translations from the Chinese Buddhist canon shows that so far about 520 of c. 5500 pre-modern Chinese Buddhist texts have been translated into European languages, but not all of them are available digitally.¹ Other projects offer scans of manuscript collections that contain a large amount of Buddhist material. The *International Dunhuang Project*, for instance, offers scanned images of the manuscript witnesses for Chinese Buddhist texts, and the *Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts* preserves the rich heritage of Laotian manuscript culture.

Most of these datasets and initiatives are openly accessible, and many, but unfortunately not all, projects share their data freely via their websites or version controlled repositories such as Github. The digital data on offer now surpasses by far any single canonical print collection in terms of volume, acquisition cost, searchability, and portability.

While the digitization of texts has been quite successful, others aspects of Buddhist heritage digitization are less advanced. With a few notable exceptions, such as the *Huntington Archive*,² the high-end digitization of images, objects, and spaces has just begun. Many museums today make digital images of their holdings available, but an archive with faceted search across institutions and geared to Buddhist iconography still needs to be built. The 3D scanning and printing of Buddhist objects and sacred spaces are still at an early stage of development, but have strong potential for both teaching and research.

For scholars, one of the benefits of digitization is that we are now able to use computational methods to explore the language, the historical geography, the social networks and other facets of the Buddhist tradition in new ways. Individual researchers have taken steps into this direction using computational analysis, for instance,

to re-assess the attribution of translations, or to create data for historical social network analysis.³ The challenge is now to integrate these new approaches into mainstream research and for graduate programs in Buddhist Studies to include training in digital methods and datasets.

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Notes

- <http://mbingenheimer.net/tools/bibls/transbibl.html>
- www.huntingtonarchive.org and www.huntingtonarchive.osu.edu
- See the attribution database by Michael Radich <http://dazangthings.nz> or emerging datasets for historical social network analysis <http://mbingenheimer.net/tools/socnet>

Language	Database	Website
Pāli	Chatṭha Saṅgāyana Pāli Text Society Corpus (at GRETIL) SuttaCentral	http://tipitaka.org http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de https://suttacentral.net https://github.com/suttacentral
Chinese	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CBETA) SAT Daizōkyō Text Database	http://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index_en.html
Tibetan	Asian Classics Input Project Buddhist Digital Resource Center Buddhist Canon Research Database Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies Tibetan and Himalayan Library (THL)	http://www.asianclassics.org https://www.tbrc.org http://databases.aiib.columbia.edu https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/sub/index.php http://www.thlib.org
Sanskrit	Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages & related Indological materials from Central & Southeast Asia (GRETIL) Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon	http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de www.dsbcproject.org
Multiple	International Dunhuang Project Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts	http://idp.bl.uk http://www.laomanuscripts.net

Digitization projects at the Cultural Heritage Research Institute, Zhejiang University

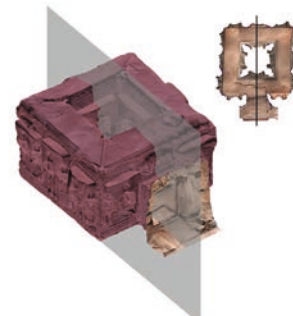
Zhirong Li and Changyu Diao

The team at the Cultural Heritage Research Institute of Zhejiang University embarked on a series of major digitization projects in 2010. Headed by an archaeologist and a scholar in image processing, our members come from various disciplines including computer science, archaeology, art history, and digital humanities. Our mission is to establish a high-standard, comprehensive digital database of the cultural relics in China for the purpose of conservation, research and education.

At present, the team has conducted digitization work at more than a hundred archaeological sites, museums, and cultural institutions across twenty different provinces, cities, and autonomous regions in China. Our works encompass large-scale monuments such as historic architecture and Buddhist cave temples, and museum collections ranging from textiles to paintings, calligraphy, porcelains, and statues. We aim to maintain state-of-the-art technological standards in the process of scanning, archiving, preserving, and presenting cultural objects and sites.

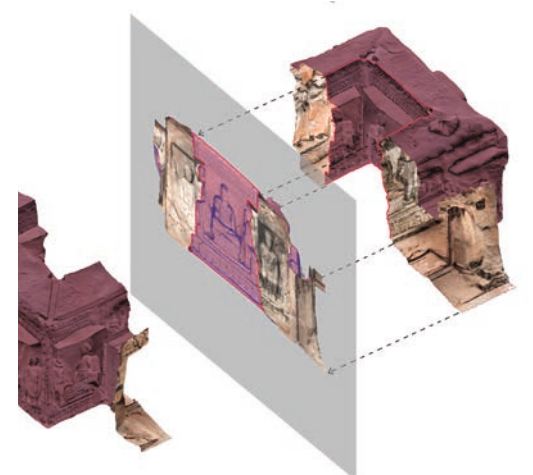
Recently, with the collaboration of the Yungang Academy, we have successfully printed a to-scale 3D model of the rear chamber of Yungang Cave 3. This marks a significant advance in the digital conservation and reconstruction of cultural heritage in China.

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Left and below: Digital scans of the Xumishan Cave 45 in Ningxia.

Bottom: Scanned image of the east wall mural of the White Hall at Tholing Monastery, Ngari Prefecture, Tibet.



Tibetan studies in Australia

For *News from Australia and the Pacific*, we ask contributors to reflect on their own research interests and the broader academic field in Australia and the Pacific of which it is a part. We focus on current, recent or upcoming projects, books, articles, conferences and teaching, while identifying related interests and activities of fellow academics in the field. Our contributions aim to give a broad overview of Asia-related studies in Australia and beyond, and to highlight exciting intellectual debates on and with Asia in the region. Our preferred style is subjective and conversational. Rather than offering fully-fledged research reports, our contributions give insight into the motivations behind and directions of various types of conversations between Asia and the region. In the current issue, we highlight the topic of *Tibetan studies in Australia*. We would like to acknowledge Gerald Roche's invaluable support for this collection of essays.

Articles are edited by Ana Dragojlovic ana.dragojlovic@unimelb.edu.au and Edwin Jurriëns edwin.jurriens@unimelb.edu.au, with assistance from Andy Fuller fuller.a@unimelb.edu.au, from the Asia Institute in Melbourne arts.unimelb.edu.au/asiainstitute

Tibetan studies in Australia: history and religion

Ruth Gamble

The study of Tibetan Buddhist texts and, by extension, Tibet's religious history, has been a fixture in Australian universities since the middle of last century. Tibetans' preservation of several versions of the Buddhist canon, and their society's intensive investment in the production of books, has made the study of the classical Tibetan language a priority for many Buddhist scholars.

The first Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism in Australia was the philologist Willem de Jong, appointed to the Australian National University in 1965. The tradition of textual studies he started continues today, with the appointment of Jim Rheingans as the inaugural Khyentse Lecturer in Tibetan Buddhism at the University of Sydney. Rheingans, an expert in Tibetan texts, comes to Sydney from the University of Bonn in Germany, and joins a team with expertise in manuscripts from various Buddhist traditions.

Rheingans is the third scholar to have an ongoing position in Tibetan Buddhism in Australia, joining John Powers at Deakin University and Sonam Thakchöe at the University of Tasmania. Powers has conducted research into the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tradition and Tibetan history, producing more than ten books. Thakchöe has focused on Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and was part of the international collective 'The Cowherds' who investigated the common ground between Tibetan and Western philosophy. In a development from The Cowherds project, Thakchöe and a few other Cowherds teamed up with Powers to investigate the Indo-Tibetan presentation of the precept. They are now working together on a new project on the polemical writing of the fifteenth-century Tibetan author, Daktsang. Both projects hope to uncover the foundational discourses of Tibetan presentations of reality and inform contemporary discussions of metaphysics and epistemology.

Like Powers and Thakchöe, David Templeman of Monash University has been researching Tibetan history for decades. Most of his efforts have focused on the historical, philosophical, literary and

artistic contributions of the Tibetan polymath Taranatha (1575–1634). Templeman has translated, edited or written several books about Taranatha and related topics. In his most recent project, he has teamed up with Andrew Quintman from Yale University to investigate the production of art at Taranatha's monastery, Jonang Phuntsokling. This project is investigating not only the religious and artistic expertise of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century artisans, but is also analysing the materials they used and the trade networks in their art supplies, which stretched across Central, South and East Asia.

In recent years, several junior Australian scholars have added to this core group, approaching Tibetan religious and historical studies from innovative perspectives. Tenzin Ringpopsang recently completed his Ph.D. at the Australian National University. His doctoral research focused on the relationship between the Tibetan Buddhist teacher Chögyal Phakpa (1235–1280) and the Mongol Emperor, Qubilai Khan (1215–1294). Ringpopsang's research showed how Phakpa presented kingship as a Buddhist ideal and suggested that gurus were more important than emperors. He is now expanding his investigation by looking at the role a belief in magic played in the relationship between the two men, while also putting his study of Mongolian and Tibetan history to use on the ground in Mongolia, where he is involved in the development of historical education programs.

Elizabeth McDougal has just begun her Ph.D. studies at the University of Sydney, but brings to this role the experience of living as a nun and working in several monastic communities in Tibet and India for over fifteen years. Her doctoral research is focused on a group of nuns living in Nangchen, Qinghai Province, in the People's Republic of China. She is tracing the various impacts of modernity on the nuns' lives, from changes in their physical environment to those in educational norms that are forcing them to substitute their yoga-focused practice for

more easily quantifiable academic pursuits. McDougal is conducting this research through a combination of ethnography, doctrinal study, and oral history collection. Her language skills and longstanding relationship with this community have given her a unique perspective on the changes the community is undergoing, and her research will no doubt transform the way we understand Tibetan modernity.

My own work takes an environmental perspective on the impact of modernity on the Plateau. I recently completed my first book based on my Ph.D. thesis, completed at the Australian National University. This book, to be published by Oxford University Press, investigates the relationship between Tibet's reincarnation tradition and its sacred geography. I am now extending my investigation of Tibet's past spaces by researching the environmental history of the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) River. In this project, I am collecting data from traditional historical sources such as archives and biographical literature and then comparing this information with the results of scientific studies. It will not only produce another perspective on Tibetan history, but also provide context for the profound environmental changes that have occurred on the Plateau during the Anthropocene. In October 2016, I was selected to become one of the inaugural David Myers Research Fellows, a prestigious appointment based at La Trobe University. In early 2017, I was awarded a concurrent research fellowship at Yale University's Forestry and Environment School in order to continue this research.

By persisting with textual and philosophical studies, as well as opening up new areas of scholarship into the Plateau's political, social



and environmental pasts, those pursuing Tibetan religious and historical studies in Australia will continue to make significant contributions to their fields. As the number of Buddhists in Australia continues to grow, it is essential for scholars of Tibet's religion and history to conduct high-quality research into the beliefs and practices of this religious tradition. Tibet's geopolitical location between the region's two largest nations, China and India, and its geographic position at the headwaters of Asia's largest rivers mean, moreover, that the research into these topics will become increasingly important to Australia's national interest.

Ruth Gamble is a David Myers Research Fellow at La Trobe University and an environmental and cultural historian R.Gamble@latrobe.edu.au

Notes

- 1 Hara, M. 2001. 'In Memoriam J.W. de Jong', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 24(1):1-6.
- 2 'Donation Supports Lectureship in Tibetan Buddhism', Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney, accessed 7 August 2017; <https://tinurl.com/dontibbud>
- 3 This project produced a recent publication: D. Duckworth, M.D. Eckel, J.L. Garfield, J. Powers, Y. Thakchöe & S. Thakchöe. 2016. *Dignāga's Investigation of the Percept: a Philosophical Legacy in India and Tibet*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 4 Gamble, R. (forthcoming) *Reincarnation in Tibetan Buddhism: the Third Karmapa and the Invention of a Tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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The Asia Institute

The Asia Institute is The University of Melbourne's key centre for studies in Asian languages, cultures and societies. Asia Institute academic staff have an array of research interests and specialisations, and strive to provide leadership in the study of the intellectual, legal, politico-economic, cultural and religious traditions and transformations of Asia and the Islamic world. The Institute is committed to community engagement and offers a dynamic program of academic and community-focused events and cultural exchanges that aim to promote dialogue and debate.

Tibetan studies in Australia: politics

James Leibold

Researchers in Australia have long made an important contribution to our understanding of the politics of contemporary Tibet. This contribution continues today, with a new generation of scholars shining light on Tibetan society and its complicated relationship with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the People's Republic of China (PRC). Writing over five years ago, Colin Mackerras noted Australia's surprising strength when it comes to the study of Tibet, highlighting the diverse work of a range of Australia-based scholars.¹ In this brief review, I focus on new research related to the politics of Tibet since the publication of Mackerras' 2011 report.

He Baogang, Alfred Deakin Professor and Personal Chair in International Relations at Deakin University, has a longstanding interest in the 'Tibet problem' in both Chinese politics and international relations. His new book draws together a number of previously published articles and new material to explore how democratic governance can offer a viable solution to the place and status of Tibet within China.² He argues that new forms of democratic governance, chiefly a deliberative referendum, could help solve contentious national issues, such as the status of Tibet and Taiwan.

Ben Hillman at the Australian National University has spent nearly two decades studying the Tibetan communities of Southwest China, exploring ethnic policy and governance issues, as well as the important role that patronage and power plays in sustaining CCP rule in rural frontier areas.³ He is currently working on a new project that seeks to document the agency and diversity of Tibetan lives in a rapidly changing China. Using a series of life stories, the project seeks to move beyond stereotypes to reveal the complex ways Tibetans pursue their life chances and the implications for Tibetan identity and culture. Hillman is one of Australia's leading experts on the politics of ethnicity in China, and has recently teamed up with Gerald Roche and myself to explore how urbanization functions not only as a tool of ethnic governance for the Party-state but



also as dynamic sites for Tibetan counter-mobilization across the Tibetan plateau.⁴

In my own work on ethnic policy in China, I've sought to highlight the unique challenges Tibet and Xinjiang present for Party leaders in Beijing. These two remote yet highly strategic territories possess demographic majorities that share neither the same culture nor belief system as the one billion strong Han ethnic community. While the Party-state claims 'Chinese' links with these regions going back centuries, there is a strong memory of recent colonialism that is exasperated by a heavy-handed, top-down security strategy. While some advocate a second generation of ethnic policies, aimed at weakening minority rights and identities, stability maintenance (*weiwen*) remains the abiding priority, meaning the current approach of more intrusive governance and state-led developmentalism continues to drive Beijing's approach to the two regions.

The Melbourne-based independent scholar Gabriel Lafitte has spent most of his life documenting the colonial nature of Chinese rule over Tibet. His 2013 book, *Spoiling Tibet*, highlights the resource nationalism behind the extraction of mineral resources (copper, gold, silver, uranium, etc.) from the Tibetan plateau, and more recently, he has been exploring the appropriation of the plateau's water resources for bottled water, hydro-electric power and now its diversion to other parts of China as a part of the South-North Water Transfer Project. Much of Lafitte's research can be found through his blog, Rukor.

In his new book *The Buddha Party*, Professor John Powers analyses how the Chinese Communist Party is co-opting and re-defining Tibetan religious practices, arguing religion has emerged as a new tool of control in the Party-state's ongoing colonial mission on the Plateau. Now at Deakin University, Powers is one of Australia's leading experts on the history of Tibetan Buddhism, but in recent years he has turned his attention to the contemporary politics of Tibet and how the Party-state uses history and now religion to reshape the public narrative on Tibet both domestically and overseas.

There is also renewed scholarly interest in the Tibetan community in Australia. Around one hundred Tibetans arrive in Australia each year under the government's Special Humanitarian Programme. Julie Blythe, a PhD student at La Trobe University, is exploring the community's views on conflict and conflict transformation, asking how the Tibetan community in Australia negotiates conflict in their daily lives. While Ms Blythe's focus is on the Tibetan community in Sydney and Melbourne, Jennifer Rowe, a PhD student at the University of Queensland, is studying the Tibetan community in Brisbane and how they negotiate their identity and culture in exile.

In his 2011 article, Colin Mackerras noted that "public opinion in Australia tends strongly to side with the Dalai Lama against the Chinese over the Tibet issue." Yet the tide might be turning due to concerted efforts by Chinese officials and their allies in Australia

to reshape public opinion on the Tibet issue. John Howard was the last Australian prime minister to meet with the Dalai Lama, in 2007, with the Nobel laureate being snubbed by top politicians during five subsequent visits to Australia. Pro-Tibet community groups, like the Australia-Tibet Council and Students for a Free Tibet, now struggle for new members and must compete with a range of pro-CCP delegations and united front organs like the Australia-Tibet Compatriots Friendship Association and the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China. It is hoped, however, that Australian scholars will continue to probe the political sensitivities associated with Tibet's status and the lives and life chances of Tibetan people both inside China and in exile.

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Notes

- 1 Mackerras, C. 2011. 'Tibet studies in Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore', *Asian Ethnicity* 12(3):265-83.
- 2 He Baogang. 2015. *Governing Taiwan and Tibet: Democratic Approaches*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
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Tibetan studies in Australia: anthropology

Christine Mathieu

At a recent gathering of Australia's Tibetan studies researchers, held at La Trobe University on 13 June 2017, Geoffrey Samuel opened the discussion with an overview of the trajectory of Australian Tibetan studies since the mid-1960s and the days of Jan Willem De Jong and Joseph Kolmas at the Australian National University (ANU). The first official gathering of Tibetan studies in Australia took place at an anthropology conference in Newcastle in 1988, and was attended by David Templeman, Gabriel Lafitte and Geoffrey Samuel. Since then, interest in Tibetan studies has grown exponentially, both domestically and abroad, and has expanded to include other Himalayan regions: Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Ladakh.

Early interest in Tibetan studies originated with what Samuel called the "theosophical fascination with ancient Himalayan sages", and a perception of Tibet as a sort of "exotic spiritual museum", insulated from the world. This 'view up to the plateau' has now evolved in to a 'view from the plateau' – not only has interest in Tibet broadened far beyond

Buddhism, but Tibetan studies are no longer Western-directed, and are now also inclusive of Tibetan and other scholars. Samuel concluded by asking: "Are we a community at all, and do we have common interests to pursue?" To which he answered in the positive: "Australian scholars of Tibet and the Himalayas, although scattered across many disciplines, depend on each other to maintain the critical mass of expertise that is vital to the production of world-class scholarship".

Exemplary of the broader, more interdisciplinary nature of 'new' Tibetan studies in Australia is the work of Catherine Schuetze. She has been a practicing veterinarian in the Himalayan region for fifteen years and turned to social sciences to develop a better understanding of human-animal relations in the Tibetan context.



Schuetze is currently researching several facets of human-animal relations, and developing methods and concepts in veterinary anthropology. Her approach looks at animals through several lenses and narratives: the place of animals in Tibetan medicine; their place in the perspective of Tibetan herdsman; the Buddhist commitment to kindness to all sentient beings; and the current state of veterinary practice in Tibet, which, though predominantly concerned with livestock, also has an emerging focus on companion animals. Schuetze is currently

training Tibetan veterinarians in companion animal veterinary medicine, as well as training herdsman in administering their own treatments to animals. Her work also involves recording rituals dedicated to the pacification of local deities and to keeping herds healthy, and other rituals involving animals. Finally, her work involves the compilation of a glossary and bibliography of Tibetan veterinary medicine.

Gillian Tan's current research builds on her former work in socio-environmental change among nomadic pastoralists of the eastern

Tibetan studies in Australia: language and education

Gerald Roche

As recently as 2011, John Powers could claim that “there are no Tibetan language courses taught at universities in Australia,”¹ and, unfortunately, the situation has changed little since then. The only formal Tibetan language course offered in Australia is at the Australian National University (ANU), and it is currently suspended.² Nonetheless, competence in some form of Tibetan is an important foundation for Tibetan studies in Australia.

David Templeman (Monash), Yanfang Liou and Tenzin Ringpapontsang (ANU); Geoffrey Samuels, Jim Rheingans, Catherine Scheutze, and Elizabeth McDougal (University of Sydney); Sonam Thakchoe (University of Tasmania); John Powers and Gillian Tan (Deakin); Ruth Gamble (La Trobe University); and myself all work, to varying extents, with varieties of spoken and written Tibetan. With the lack of Tibetan language training in Australia, all of these scholars have learnt their Tibetan overseas, in a variety of formal and informal programs. In addition to Tibetan, scholars working on the sacred textual traditions of Tibet also work with Sanskrit (John Powers, Sonam Thakchoe and Jim Rheingans).

Chinese, English, and Hindi are also used as research languages in Tibetan studies in Australia. Political scientists such as Ben Hillman (ANU) and James Leibold (LTU) work in Chinese, as does anthropologist Christine Mathieu (Monash), who conducts research on the Naxi and Mosuo people on the southeastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. In terms of language teaching in Australia, Chinese is now widely taught in Australian universities, as well as some primary and high schools. Meanwhile, scholars examining issues to do with the diaspora community, such as Julie Fletcher (Victoria University), Jennifer Rowe (University of Queensland), and Julie Blythe (LTU), use English in conducting research. Georgina Drew (University of Adelaide), who works on a variety of issues related to religion and resource management in the Himalayas, uses Hindi as a research language, as does Ruth Gamble in her work in India. Jane Dyson (University of Melbourne), who works in the Indian Himalayan state of Uttarakhand with communities that once had

trading relations with Tibetans north of the Himalayas, works in both Hindi and Garhwali.

Other lines of research in Australia that intersect with Tibetan studies have opened up new linguistic horizons beyond Tibetan, Chinese, English, and Hindi. As a country with a large number of endangered and ‘sleeping’ languages, Australia has internationally been at the forefront of language description, documentation and revitalization research, and this expertise contributes to Tibetan studies. Two PhD studies describing languages spoken by Tibetans in the People’s Republic of China have been completed in recent years. One, on the Ersu language spoken by Tibetans in Sichuan Province, was written by Zhang Sihong at James Cook University.³ Another, completed by Henriëtte Daudey at LTU in 2014, provided a grammatical description of the Pumi language spoken in Yunnan Province;⁴ although its speakers are classified as belonging to the Pumi ethnic group, just across the border in Sichuan Province, speakers of the same language are classified as Tibetans.

Two other PhD projects are currently nearing completion at LTU, both being undertaken by Tibetans from the PRC, both native speakers of the languages they are describing. One project, by Sonam Lhundrop, will produce a description of the rTta’u language, spoken by about 4,500 Tibetans in Sichuan Province. Another, by Libu Lakhi, will describe the Namuyi language, spoken by about 10,000 Tibetans, also in Sichuan Province. Both of the projects, as well as Henriëtte Daudey’s, are testimony to the heritage of Tibeto-Burman linguistics at LTU and the work of Emeritus Professor David Bradley and Randy LaPolla (now at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore), and now continued by Lauren Gawne, a David Myers Research Fellow and author of *A Sketch Grammar of Lamjung Yolmo*.⁵ Lauren’s work, in particular, intersects with that of other linguists in Australia who work on Tibeto-Burman languages outside of Tibet, in Nepal and Bhutan—Gwen Hyslop (University of Sydney), Mark Donohue (ANU), and Barbara Ward (University of Melbourne). It is also worth noting the important linguistics work being done in the surrounding Himalayan regions in northeast India, bordering the Tibetan world, by Stephen Morey (LTU) and Mark Post (University of Sydney).

My own current research, for my three year Discovery Early Career Research Award from the Australian Research Council, focuses on how the linguistic diversity of the Tibetan world is recognized and managed within the PRC. I am conducting ethnographic research with a specific community—speakers of the Manegacha language on the northeast Tibetan Plateau—to understand why they are shifting away from Manegacha and increasingly teaching Tibetan to their children. Meanwhile, I am also endeavoring to understand the broad political context within which this shift is happening, and how other Tibetan communities in the PRC are responding.⁶

In addition to this research on language, education is now emerging as a field of research by Tibetan graduate research students in Australia. PhD candidate Rigdrol Jikar at the Victoria University is undertaking a project examining the internationalization of higher education in the PRC, and how Tibetan students access and interact with this emerging educational field. Jia Yingzhong, another Tibetan student at Victoria University, graduated with a Masters in Education in 2015, with a thesis examining how culturally-responsive pedagogy for Tibetan students in the PRC improved their English-learning outcomes.⁷ Finally, Lhamotso, a Tibetan from the culturally and linguistically distinct Tibetan region of Rgyalrong, is currently undertaking a PhD in Education at Deakin University. Her research focuses on professional development amongst Tibetan English language teachers in Rgyalrong.

In summary then, except for scholars working in English, Chinese, or Hindi, Australia’s Tibetan studies community has flourished despite the lack of language training opportunities in Australia. Australia’s strengths in language documentation and description have given the country an important role in describing the region’s undocumented languages. Additionally, Australia, as a huge recipient of international students, especially from the PRC, has the potential to be an important site for training future Tibetan educators.

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Notes

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Tibetan region of Kham,¹ examining how pastoralists perceived the rapid changes taking place in their traditional pastures under the influence of government policy, international development, and religion. In this work, Tan focused on change as processes of adaptation and transformation. Adaptation implicates variables that may shift and alter human-non-human relationships but where these relationships are still relatively intact. Transformation, on the other hand, signals a rupture that may or may not be reversible. With a focus on territorial deities, Tan’s current work builds on these insights to explore the interplay between ecology and religion on the Tibetan plateau. Drawing from Gregory Bateson’s *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, she proposes that in the Tibetan pastoralist context, the terms ‘ecology’ and ‘religion’ inform each other, and may be regarded as inherently connected. At the heart of this analogy are the relationships that people have with the entities constituting both their ecological systems and their religious systems.

Yan Fang Liou’s ethno-musicological research focuses on the outer and inner performances involved in Tibetan Buddhist rituals. Her work is based on a case

study of the Two-Arm Mahakala ritual of the Karma-Kagyü order, in which she considers the connections between outer performance, which includes musical behaviours (chanting and the playing instruments) and physical behaviours (displaying mudra), and inner performance (spiritual visualisation). Ritual performance and music connect and work together: the outer performance initiates the ritual, while the inner performance fulfils

the ritual’s religious function. Liou works with emic concepts of music and notation to explore how ritual instruments are played. She draws from linguistics, musical semantics, and American folklore studies to develop the methodology and concepts to show how music produces both meaning and function for the community.

As for my part, following conversations at the IUAES-CASCA conference in Ottawa

this year, I am now planning to revisit my doctoral work in the ethno-history of the South-western Sino-Tibetan borderland (Naxi and Mosuo people) in order to 1) make some of my findings more accessible to anthropologists working in the region, and 2) develop some of the implications of this research for anthropological theory. The structural and historical exploration of mythology, ritual and kinship revealed a web of inter-connections between traditional beliefs, folk behaviours, and politics, and allowed a reconstruction of the shaping of ‘Naxi’ and ‘Mosuo’ polities under Ming indirect rule. I have thus argued that the deliberate adjustment of mythology and ritual by local elites who were well-versed in local lore as well as Chinese and Tibetan civilizational modes, spurred and legitimated the transformation of the societies in this region from tribal to feudal. My analytical method made extensive use of the structuralist theories of Edmund Leach and Claude Lévi-Strauss, confirming these scholars’ enduring genius as well as calling for theoretical fine-tuning.

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Notes

- 1 See her book *In the Circle of White Stones: Moving Through Seasons with the Nomads of Eastern Tibet*, <https://tinyurl.com/giltanstones>



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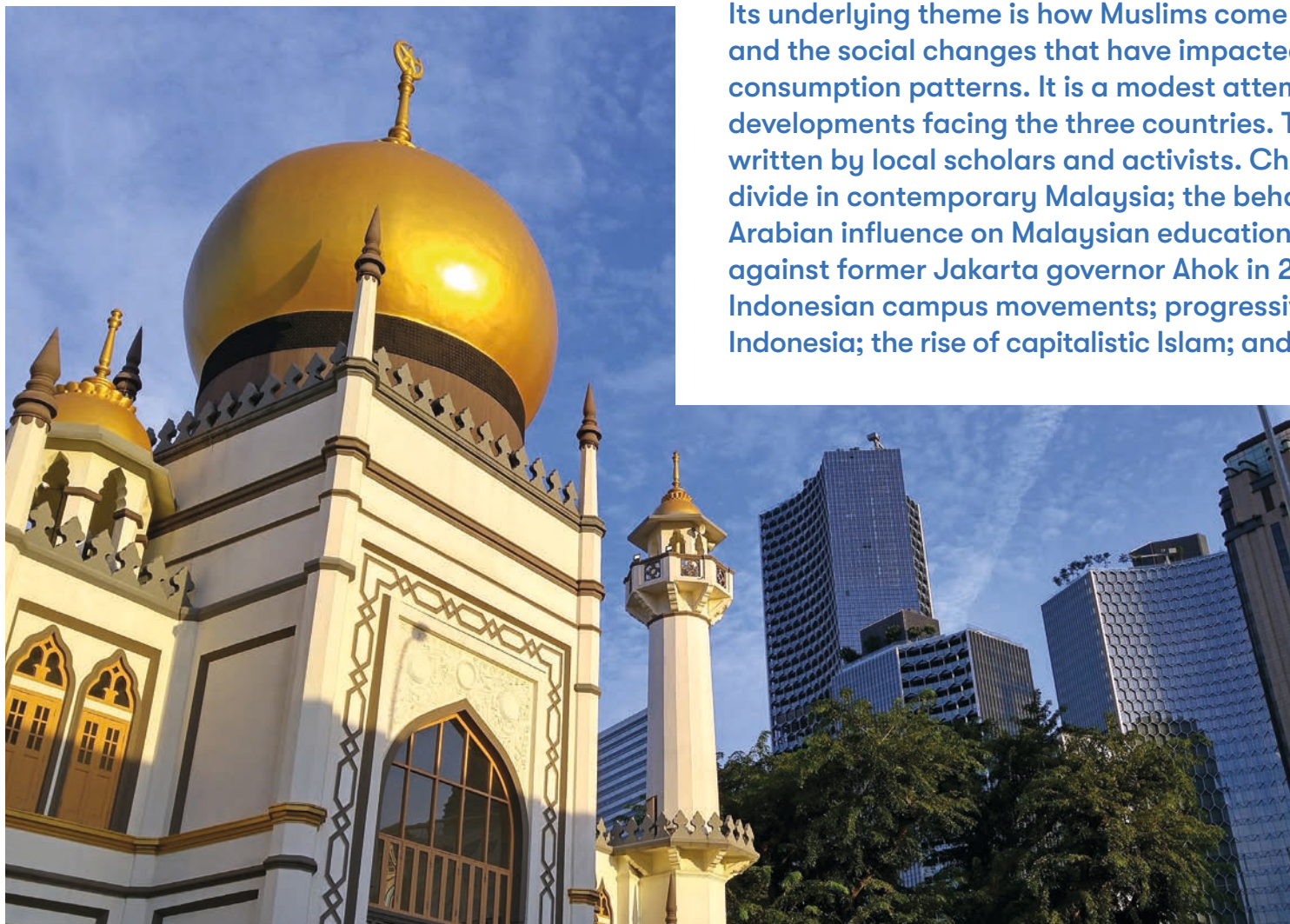


Negotiating Modernity

2018 marks the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute's 50th anniversary. Initiated in 1968 by then Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee, ISEAS has since been dedicated to research and scholarship on Southeast Asia.

The two essays featured here are condensed chapters from the upcoming book entitled *Islam in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Modernity?* This book is edited by Norshahril Saat and is the end-product of the 'Islamic Developments in Southeast Asia Workshop' held at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute in 2015. Its aim is to understand some of the contemporary socio-cultural and political challenges facing Islam in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Its underlying theme is how Muslims come to terms with modernization and the social changes that have impacted laws, politics, ideas, and consumption patterns. It is a modest attempt to take stock of recent developments facing the three countries. The book comprises nine chapters written by local scholars and activists. Chapters cover the political Islamist divide in contemporary Malaysia; the behaviour of Malaysian muftis; Saudi Arabian influence on Malaysian education; the 'Aksi Bela Islam' protests against former Jakarta governor Ahok in 2016; the Middle East impact on Indonesian campus movements; progressive responses to radicalism in Indonesia; the rise of capitalistic Islam; and syariah revivalists in Singapore.



Masjid Sultan, or Sultan Mosque, Singapore.

Syariah revivalism in Singapore

Noor Aisha Abdul Rahman

Southeast Asia has witnessed the emergence of religious resurgence amongst the Malays, popularly referred to as the 'dakwah movement' since the 1970s. Essentially an urban phenomenon, it is marked by an assertion of Islam in the public sphere that differs radically from how religion has been understood and experienced in the past. Characterised by a defensive, authoritarian and puritanical understanding of Islam in response to the problems of change and modernity, it is strongly manifested in the domain of Muslim law known as 'syariah'. While there has been considerable research on syariah revivalism in neighbouring countries, the same cannot be said for Singapore where the Muslims are subjected to the same laws as non-Muslims in all areas except in matters pertaining to the domains of marriage and inheritance.

Syariah revivalism emerged in Singapore about a decade after Independence in 1965. For the community already mired in socio-economic problems under colonial rule,

adaptation to the new demands and changes of a young nation proved highly challenging. The early decades of urban development and resettlement also exacerbated tension and insecurity as changes impacted on how religious teachings had been understood and practiced.

In their attempts to alleviate the problems of the community, the Malay elites constantly evoked religious values and cultural traditions, an effort reinforced by the government's emphasis on multiculturalism in its search for national identity. The turn to Islam as ballast for the community was neither novel nor unexpected given its strong influence on the lives of the Malays. However, amidst anxiety in the face of change, the constructive role of religion was impeded by the emergence of revivalism with its distinct religious orientation in the bid to preserve and safeguard Malay/Muslim identity against what was seen as the onslaught of modernity from the west. In revivalist discourse the west is strongly caricatured as embodying a host of negative ideologies and values. Stakeholders

assume sole guardianship of Islam and are also intolerant of intra-community opposing thoughts and perspectives drawn from competing Islamic traditions. Unlike theologians who had the monopoly of religion in the past, revivalists generally emerge from disparate upwardly mobile groups, the product of modern education or Islamic studies.

Syariah revivalism, the Malaysian connection and other influences

Syariah revivalists in Singapore are strongly influenced by the larger discourse of their counterparts in the Muslim world and Malaysia facilitated by, among other factors, technological advancement in communications. Their discourse reveals strong demands for an alternative state and systems including law, which they deem as indispensable to Islam's comprehensiveness (*ad-deen*), though they are exempted from

implementing them given their minority status. Nonetheless they offer their 'Islamic' alternative as a solution to what they allege are the moral ills of man and society resulting from modernity and development, which they attribute to the impact of the secular west. For more than three decades, the Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) has persisted in its political project to introduce *hudud* [Islamic penal laws] in the northern state of Kelantan as part of its agenda of establishing an Islamic state. The conflation of religion and politics has but boosted this fixation. In the bid to undercut Malay support for PAS, UMNO (United Malays National Organisation) has introduced various measures and backed laws that have expanded the scope and power of religious bureaucracy over matters pertaining to Islam with serious consequences on the supremacy of the constitution and individual rights and liberties of Muslims as citizens. While the conflation is absent in the calls for syariah in Singapore, rhetoric on syariah nevertheless reveals similar traits with those of their Malaysian counterparts in terms of themes and perspectives.

For example, Malaysian revivalists' demands for the restoration of syariah based on the notion that Islamic law had long been observed and implemented in Malay society, and would have remained so had it not been 'robbed' of its status by colonial powers, are uncritically adopted in Singapore. So has the notion that Malay rulers were the protectors of Islam and law and had struggled for it to be a basis of unity and collective identity of the Malays, hence its significance in the definition of Malay in the constitution. Such a view is incongruent with Malay legal history, which reveals an admixture of Islamic law with, for example, feudal customary laws that promoted and entrenched the interest of the ruling class. These contravened the rule of law and basic values of equality central to Islamic teachings. It also deviates from historical evidence and judgement of superior courts in Malaysia on the meaning and status of Islam in Article 3 of the Malaysian Constitution. The lack of awareness of ideological motives behind legal texts reinforces the problem as it negates how legal texts serve as instruments in boosting the power of the feudal elite rather

than as evidence of actual implementation of Islamic law. Such misunderstandings prevent an objective appraisal of Islamic law in Malay legal history. Suspicions are also similarly cast on activists and scholars who have been labelled as deviant back home.

Apart from the influence from Malaysia, Singapore's syariah revivalism is also conditioned by other influences. While in the early period, the impact of South Asian and Middle Eastern revivalist thought was stronger, today the turn towards Muslim migrants in the west for assertion of Islamic identity is more evident. The importation of Qardhawi's minority *fikh* [Islamic jurisprudence], and the related 'fikh of priorities', into the local context provides evidence of its dominance.

Major issues in revivalist discourse in Singapore

Syariah revivalists' discourse reveals a host of issues that lack relevance to the community. It dabbles on the significance of syurah understood by them as the law making institution in Islam despite the fact that it is unable to demonstrate on the basis of principles why the parliamentary system is unIslamic. Its rhetoric that Parliament can pass any law with majority support unlike syurah, which can only legislate what has not been determined in the Koran, reveals lack of insight and understanding of both Islamic legal history as well as the system of parliamentary sovereignty. Its fixation on hudud as integral to faith provides further evidence of the fact that stakeholders share similar values and orientation as their counterparts in Malaysia and beyond. Fear mongering by proponents that discourages questioning of hudud as it "can lead to apostasy", or that those who do not implement it "have strayed from Islam", is not uncommon. Nevertheless, syariah revivalists in Singapore have shied away from making clear if they believe that the punishment for apostasy should be death, a punishment supported by PAS in Malaysia. Instead, their overriding concern lies with impediments in the enforcement of hudud. They delve at length into who can implement hudud, the stages of its implementation, grounds for exception and prioritisation of needs for minority Muslims in Singapore who are unable to implement it. While these issues are confined to the rhetorical plane, it has serious implications on the image and understanding of Islamic law and the religion. It also deflects attention from vital problems confronting Muslims, including poverty, corruption, and authoritarianism, all of which cannot be resolved by fixation on law and punishment.

Again like their counterparts, they denounce competing views on Islamic tradition that favour human rights, gender equality, freedom of belief and other basic liberties as unIslamic. Their non-critical support for minority *fikh* also overlooks its legal opinions enunciated that fail to treat Muslims equally with non-Muslims, for example, in the realm of marriage and inheritance. Some of these *fikh* even promote negative stereotypes against them, which affect adversely the well-being of pluralistic society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, revivalists' discourse deflects attention from the challenges of administering the actual Muslim law in operation. Their rhetoric and fixation with an imagined syariah are not productive in alleviating genuine problems pertaining to Islamic law in Singapore but, instead, compromise urgent attention to reforming the existing syariah for modern life. Instead of helping ordinary Muslims adapt and contribute to the development of good law on the basis of principles, revivalists' puritanical, essentialist and 'asociological' understanding of syariah reinforces exclusivism. This tendency must be checked for the well-being of not just the Malay community but larger society as a whole.

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Religious exclusivism in Malaysia

Norshahril Saat

Malaysia's Islamic elite have been promoting conservative and exclusive ideas lately. This group consists of individuals trained in the religious sciences, and includes *muftis* (state-appointed persons with religious authority), *ulamas* (religious scholars), popular preachers, religious teachers and religious bureaucrats.

Academics and human rights activists in Malaysia have associated this elite with Wahhabi-Salafism (puritanical brand of Islam). For example, Marina Mahathir, a women rights activist, opined that Malaysia was undergoing an Arabisation of Islam because the way the Malays dress, behave, and think no longer reflected 'Malay identity'. Prominent sociologist Professor Syed Farid Alatas also argued that extremist ideas from the Middle East have influenced the *ulama's* thinking and behaviour. The Sultan of Johor, Ibrahim Iskandar, recently criticised Malaysian Malays for imitating the Arabs, declaring, "If there are some of you who wish to be an Arab and practise Arab culture, and do not wish to follow our Malay customs and traditions, that is up to you. I also welcome you to live in Saudi Arabia."

By contrast, Malaysian Prime Ministers Abdullah Badawi (2003-2009) and Najib Razak (2009-present) have portrayed Malaysia's brand of Islam as a moderate one. However, recent controversies involving the Islamic elite, such as book bans, the persecution of religious minorities (the Shias), and the prevention of non-Muslims from using the word 'Allah', do little to support notions of Muslim moderation. Instead, since 2016, the Najib administration has worked closely with the Islamic opposition party, PAS, to strengthen syariah laws in the country despite protest from opposition parties and other groups.

The influence of Middle Eastern Islam

To what extent has Middle Eastern Islam crept into the Malaysian Islamic discourse? Is it even correct to link the exclusivist attitudes of Malaysia's Islamic elite with Middle Eastern Islam in the first place? Generally speaking, a case can be made for how Wahhabi-Salafism has influenced the behaviour of some Islamic elite in Malaysia, particularly those who continue to receive their training in Middle East universities. They frown upon the following



Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. Image: Wikimedia Creative Commons.

acts which used to be commonly practised in Malay society: veneration of saints, visitations of graves of saints, and celebrating the Prophet's birthday. There is greater promotion of Wahhabi-Salafi ideologies by the Saudi Arabian government funded by petro-dollars. Globalisation has also allowed greater exchange of ideas between the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Local and national factors

However, one should never discount local and national factors. In this case, the role of the dominant Malay party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), and the Malay rulers in shaping the religious elite's political and religious behaviour. In Malaysia there is still a strong emphasis on rituals and mysticism in Malay society with little regard for universal Islamic values such as equality. Hence, blaming the Middle East alone for the country's conservative bent ignores the historical, institutional, and political conditions under which *ulamas* function.

The truth of the matter is that exclusivism in Malaysia draws support from wherever it can. What Malaysians need to be wary of is the exclusive faith-based attitude in general. This means being wary of those who are ultra-defensive of particular ideas, who display authoritarian views towards diversity, and who condemn alternative voices as 'liberal' or 'deviant'. Such exclusivist attitudes are found across different theological orientations, be they Wahhabism, Salafism, Sufism, or traditionalism.

In addition, the patronage of Malay rulers remains crucial in defining the political behaviour of some Malaysian *muftis*. Some scholars have suggested that Wahhabi-Salafi modes of thinking are more marginal to Malaysian society than previously thought.

After all, the majority of Malaysian *muftis* remain Sufis and conservative in outlook, just like the Perak and Negeri Sembilan *muftis*. The Selangor religious council, for instance, defends Sufi practices that are frowned upon by Wahhabi-Salafists. In fact, the Malay rulers, who are constitutionally the custodians of Islam in each state have consistently backed the Sufi-oriented religious elites.

In some instances, Islamic institutions send mixed signals. For example, in 2014, the Pahang Religious Council banned Wahhabi-Salafism from being preached in the state. The grounds for the ban was that the ideologies sowed disunity among Malaysian Muslims. On the surface it suggests that the religious council was combating exclusivism. However, more recently, the Pahang *mufti* Abdul Rahman Osman made hostile remarks towards the opposition Democratic Action Party. He declared the party as *kafir harbi* (non-believers who can be slain) for opposing Islamic laws. He was also quoted to say that working with the opposition party was a sin according to Islam. Again, such exclusive views were not related to Wahhabi or Salafi thought.

Conclusion

In summary, the way forward should be for Malaysian Muslims to be critical of any form of exclusive attitudes in religious discourse, rather than to single out particular religious doctrines. An exclusivist is an exclusivist, regardless of whether he is a Wahhabi-Salafi, Shia, Sufi, Sunni or a self-declared liberal. Common spaces for debate over religious ideas and values are needed.

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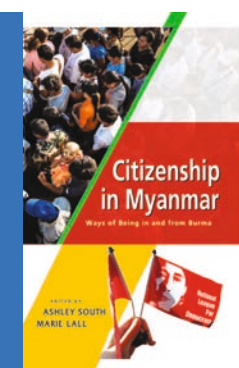
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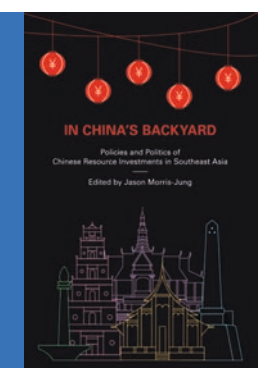
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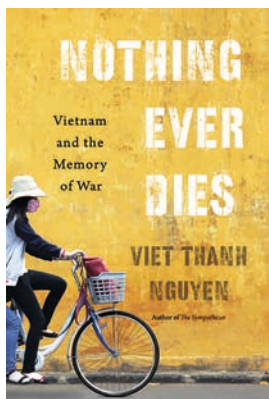
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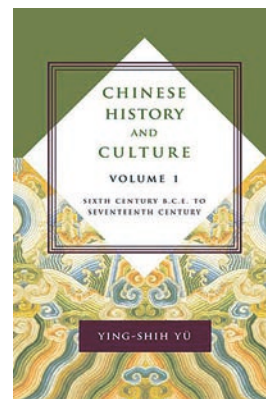
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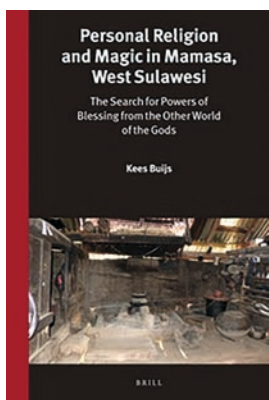
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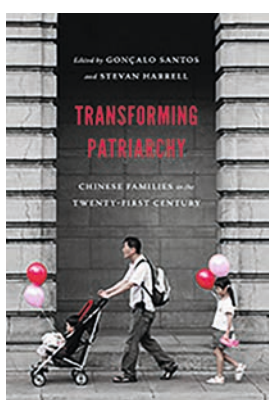
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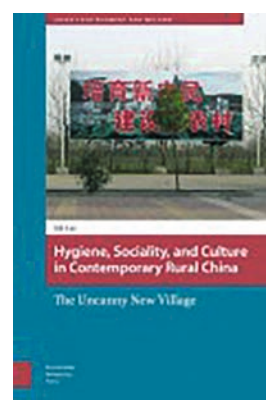
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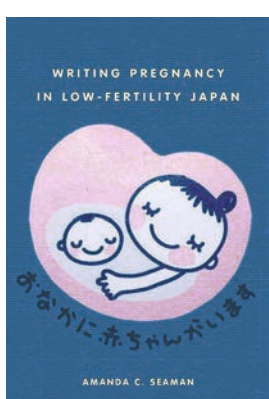
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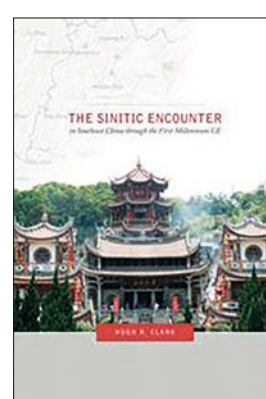
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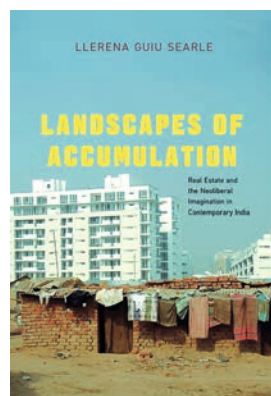
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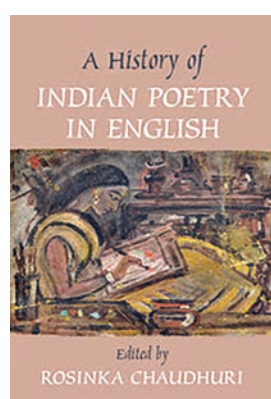
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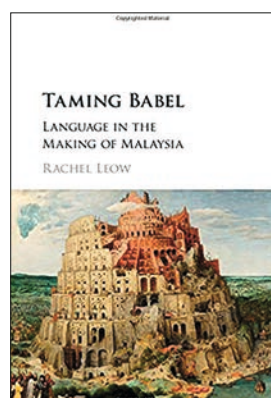
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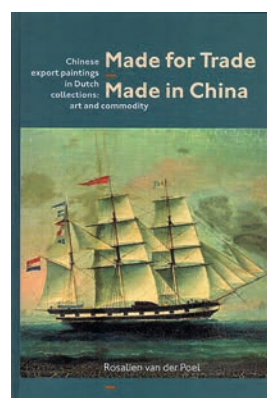
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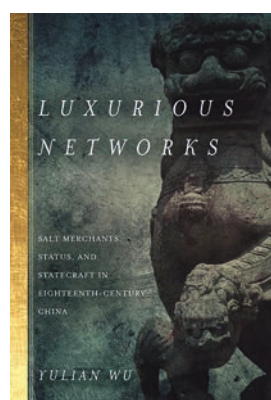
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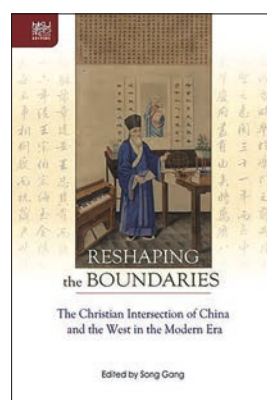
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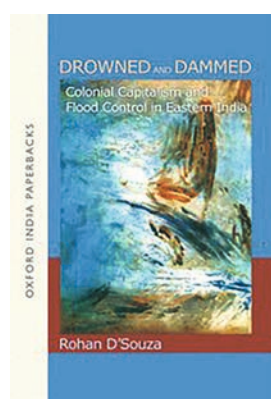
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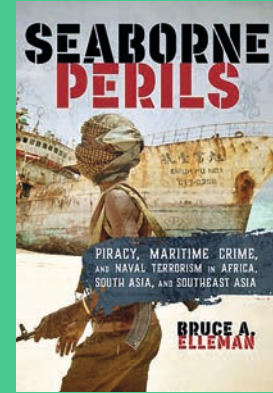
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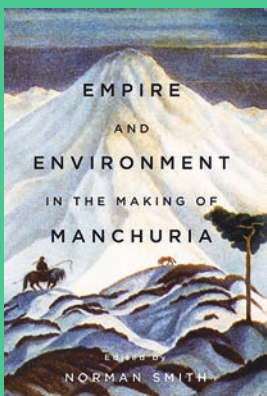
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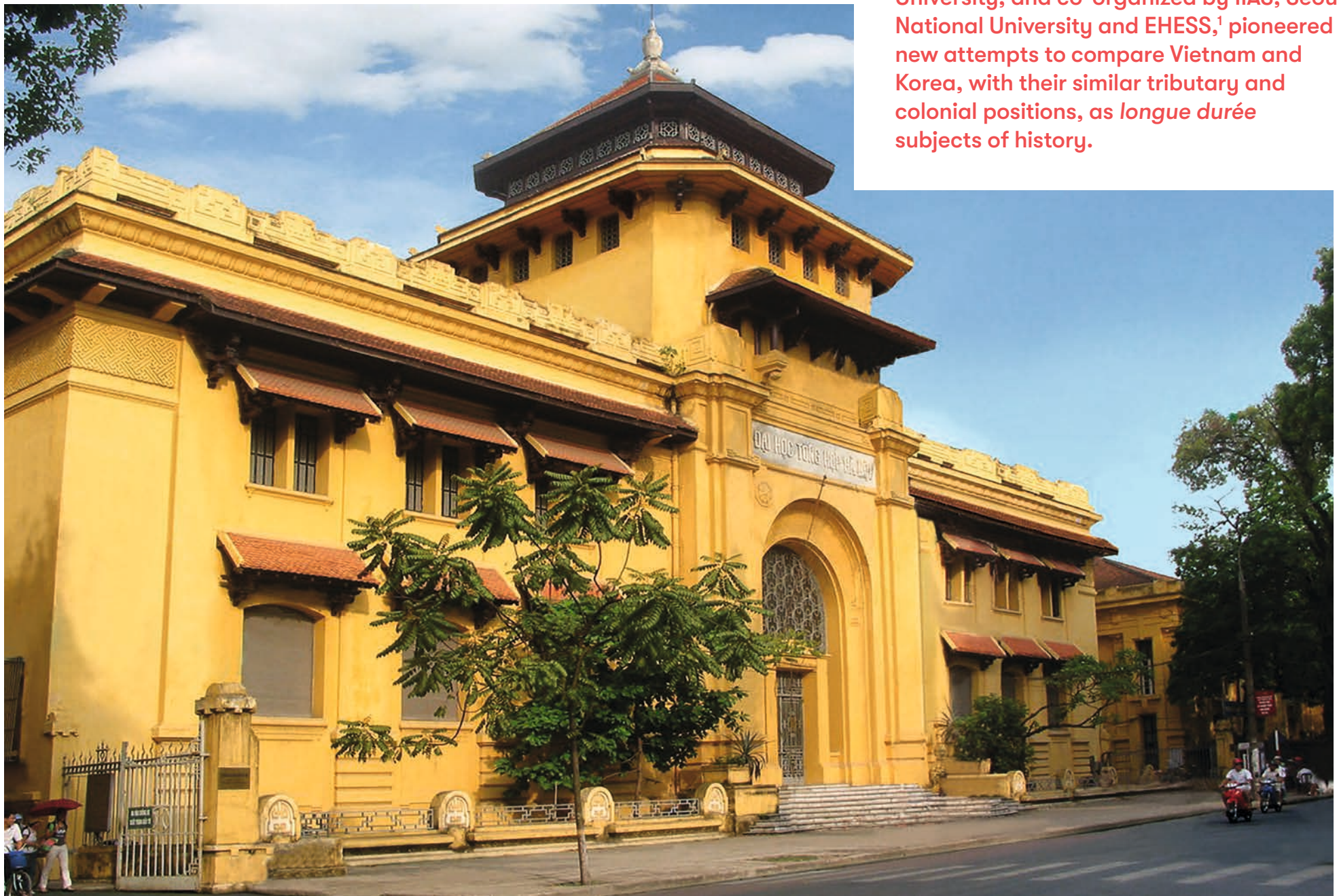
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Vietnam and Korea in the *longue durée*

Negotiating tributary and colonial positions

Valérie Gelézeau and Phạm Văn Thuỳ

Vietnam and Korea are rarely compared *per se* in scholarly work, whether in the field of social sciences or that of area studies. Yet, obvious convergences in their recent histories are apparent: both are Asian countries where the Cold War was indeed hot, tragic and deadly; and both nations were situated at the core of the big divide of the 20th century between capitalism and socialism – Korea still divided, Vietnam reunified in 1975. A conference hosted in March 2016 in Hanoi at the Vietnam National University, and co-organized by IIAS, Seoul National University and EHESS,¹ pioneered new attempts to compare Vietnam and Korea, with their similar tributary and colonial positions, as *longue durée* subjects of history.



Vietnam National University.

Vietnam and Korea: *longue durée* convergence?

As great kingdoms in the pre-modern period, both countries developed strong political organizations and original civilizations, sometimes within and sometimes outside the Sinitic 'tributary' system. After the political fragmentation of the Antiquity, the first political unification by the Southern State of Silla (57 BC–668 AC) created the basis for a unified entity on the Korean peninsula: the Greater Silla (668–936). With the rise of the Koryŏ Kingdom (936–1492),² the whole peninsula continued as a powerful proto-state within the Chinese tributary system, along with indigenized Sinitic cultural traits found in the political and social order (from the State examination system, to the importance of Buddhism as the State religion). The Koryŏ Kingdom was followed by the Chosŏn Kingdom, which was centred on Seoul, the core capital of the peninsula (and a great world city today), and which was ruled by the Yi Dynasty, one of the longest in world history (1392–1910). As A. Delissen puts it, the equation

'Korea = one peninsula = one nation' takes root in the *longue durée* of the peninsula.

The earliest kingdoms in Vietnamese history had their roots in the Red River Valley of today's Northern Vietnam, namely Văn Lang and Âu Lạc. In 179 BC these proto-states were conquered by the Nan Yue (Southern Viet) kingdom that covered parts of northern Vietnam and southern provinces of modern China.³ As Nan Yue increasingly fell under Han influence, northern Vietnam was annexed into the Han Empire. Meanwhile, in Central Vietnam, the independent states of Lin Yi (192–758), precursor of Champa (758–1832), and Funan (1st–7th century) endured. Independence was restored in North Vietnam in the early 10th century after a millennium of Chinese domination. Like the Korean counterparts, however, the successive dynasties of independent Đại Việt (name of Vietnam for the periods from 1054 to 1400 and 1428 to 1804) carried out tributary relations with the Chinese Emperors and adopted various elements of Confucianism, such as the political structure, social order, education, and culture.⁴ Following the gradual territorial expansion of the Đại Việt Empire,

which annexed a large part of Champa in 1471 and established Vietnamese control over the Mekong Delta in the first half of the 19th century, Confucianism was also cultivated in Central and South Vietnam.⁵

As all countries in Asia, after the surge of the great Western powers in the region, and with the disruption of the Sinitic order, Korea and Vietnam experienced the vicissitudes of the modern and contemporary periods. They were confronted with colonial subjugation: Korea became a Japanese protectorate in 1905, and was a colony from 1910 to 1945. Vietnam was invaded by the French in 1858; but it took 26 years for the French to extend their control over the whole country. The unified Vietnam was then divided into three parts with different regimes: Tonkin (North Vietnam) and Annam (Central Vietnam) as French Protectorates, and Cochinchina (South Vietnam) as Proper Colony. These three regions were incorporated with Laos and Cambodia in the formation of French Indochina. The French colonial rule continued to exist in Vietnam until 1954.

International warfare and civil conflicts, resulting in the division of the two countries

and triggering diasporic projections, initiated an array of connections and parallels between the two countries' trajectories. Today, Vietnam and Korea continue to stand, albeit in divergent ways, at the edges of the two great ideological systems that shaped the 20th century: socialism and capitalism. Reunified Vietnam has entered post-communist-pro-capitalist State authoritarianism, which puts a strong emphasis on a socialist-oriented market economy. Korea remains divided between two models of state-hood and governance. On the one hand we have the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or 'North Korea'), an impoverished dictatorship banned from the international community for its nuclear development, which, after a profound crisis of its economic and social system, experiences again economic growth despite sanctions. On the other hand we have the ROK (Republic of Korea, or 'South Korea'), a rich (post) industrial and capitalist country democratized since the early 1990s, which inundates the global scene with its cultural productions (from K-pop to K-beauty).

Continued on next page >

Beyond contemporary politics, the virtue of the 'comparative gesture'

In fact, most recent work taking Vietnam and Korea as common objects of comparison focus on the contemporary era, analysing more particularly the United States' policy towards Vietnam and Korea during the Cold War,⁶ or comparing both wars (the Korean war 1950-1953, the Vietnam war 1954-1974).⁷ A few works, which situate the perspective within the global approach of, for example, the colonial situation and more specifically the post-colonial wars, compare the Korean war, the Vietnam war and the Algerian war and their outcomes during the 20th century.⁸ But beyond the obvious recent and contemporary history, how is it possible to compare Vietnam and Korea, two major regional nations and societies in Asia, in the *longue durée* perspective?

Comparative studies are located at the heart of the humanities and social sciences,⁹ particularly area studies.¹⁰ In that field especially, implicit or explicit comparisons often determine certain conceptions of regional and sub-regional orders. In the field of social sciences, specifically area studies, isn't any reflexive method more or less comparative in its essence?¹¹ Jocelyne Dakhlia states: "Comparatism is anyways, in an explicit way or not, our permanent horizon of thought; consciously or unconsciously, we constantly transfer notions, problematics already tested in another context."¹²

In fact, area studies efficiently illustrate two very powerful tools of comparatism that avoid ethnocentrism; the first one is based on *spatial displacement* (from here to there): similar objects or categories are analysed in different socio-cultural contexts. The second is based on a *displacement of perspectives*: similar objects or categories may be analysed from different points of view (disciplines, or scientific culture). Inspired also by post-colonial studies, which profoundly contest the traditionally euro-centred schemes of thoughts, scholars have been calling for renewed approaches based on critical thinking and creative comparatism in order to reconsider classical and binary comparative geometries.¹³

For example, the study of East Asia is implicitly situated within a comparative approach to China and the Sinitic culture. What other "strange parallels"¹⁴ could possibly be operational to set a "comparative gesture"¹⁵ that would not be determined by usual 'sino-style' conceptions of Asia? How to trigger new connections and parallels in area studies?

The conference held in March 2016 attempted to initiate a deliberate by-pass of dominant geometries and meta-narratives, hoping that it would not only contribute to a renewed methodological framing of 'Asian studies', but also, by identifying new articulations beyond established approaches of global history, contribute to underscoring the intellectual merits – as well as limits – of comparisons as a method within the social sciences and humanities.

Confronting paradigms and parallel histories in Vietnam and Korea

Conceived as an exploratory exercise to identify points of connection, and in which scholars of Vietnam and Korea could examine their work and challenge their paradigms, the March 2016 conference was the first round of an ongoing project, historically grounded by a contemporary perspective situated within the larger Asia-global spectrum. This first round¹⁶ focused on the 'pre-modern' and 'colonial' periods (two conventionally agreed upon historiographies of the countries): how were the Korean and Vietnamese states and their civil societies – concepts shaped during the tributary system – formulated during the modernization period? During the two days of the conference (3-4 March 2016), 65 scholars coming from the five continents and of various trajectories and status interacted and presented their work in 16 different panels, which were regrouped according to a few main topics.

Three panels touched upon diplomacy and tributary systems, either from a general and trans-periodic approach (which could for example compare the Korean semi-tribute system – *kyorin* – with the Vietnamese system and their collapse), or from more specific periods. For example, one panel discussed the ritual displays (including cultural production such as poetry) in medieval diplomacy. A second group of panels examined cultural production in the larger sense, such as writing systems (both countries are known for having used the Chinese writing system to express their vernacular language, and created a common script), literature (the importance of book culture, and the circulation of the Classics, the new women and literature in both countries), but also religion (the spread of Buddhism in both countries) and spirituality (myths and folktales, the importance of geomancy). A few panels pertained to a more general basis of State formation in Vietnam and Korea (focusing on State construction either via cultural formation, or war; or discussing how economy and trade shaped the national structures). A significant number of panels (five, that is about a third of the papers) focused on the colonial period and analysed various aspects of it: from land and territorial management, to political issues such as school systems, and more generally nationalism, and, of course, cultural issues such as visual art or music.

Finally, a panel entitled 'Urban development of the city of Kaesŏng, from the Koryŏ period till the 20th century in DPR Korea' illustrated the effort of this conference to go beyond South-centric views of the long history of Korea. Although they did not attend the conference, the voice of North Korean scholars was also present thanks to this panel, which presented an archaeological scientific cooperation between the EFEO (École française d'Extrême-Orient) and the DPRK National Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage.

This Focus section on Vietnam and Korea

This instalment of the Focus presents a selection of a few excellent papers presented at the conference. Nguyễn Nhật Linh (Vietnam National University), analyses Chosŏn's understanding of Ming-Đại Việt relations and shows how the comparison of tributary positions and diplomatic strategies were made by Vietnam and Korea themselves, through the interface of the Ming tributary missions. At the turn of the 14th century, the founders of the Chosŏn Kingdom secured their dynastic transition, and sought legitimation from the Ming while looking at the problematic transition happening at the same time in Đại Việt, and the war with the Ming (1406-1407). The early Yi Kings' diplomacy was thus oriented to avoid the same situation, and hold Đại Việt's example as a cautionary tale, which

Vietnam and Korea in the *longue durée*. Negotiating tributary and colonial positions.

eventually led Chosŏn to a relatively peaceful and stable relationship with the Ming.

Momoki Shiro (Osaka University) reconsiders categories of land and taxation systems during the successive periods of Lý-Trần dynasties (11th-14th century) in Đại Việt. A fruitful comparison with the taxation system in Korea during the medieval Koryŏ Kingdom points out a certain privatization of commoners' fields, which created in Vietnam a fractionation of arable land in the Northern/Central regions. The author forms the hypothesis that, combined with the rapid demographic growth of the period, this situation played a role in the collapse of the Đại Việt state at the end of the 14th century.

Ho Tai Hue-Tam (Harvard University) delivers here a condensed version of her fascinating keynote speech, also touching upon diplomatic missions. The celebrated exchange of poems between two famous literati, Phùng Khắc Khoan and Yi Su-gwang (16th century), illustrates very well not only the transnational cultural encounters that occurred during the tributary missions to China thanks to the use of classical Chinese (*wenyan*), but also and by contrast, the parallels found between the introduction of both vernacular common writing systems, the *chữ nôm* in Vietnam and the *hunmin jeongeum* in Korea.

In his paper describing the complex networks of Japan's international trade during the isolationist Tokugawa period (17th and 18th centuries), Ryuto Shimada (The University of Tokyo) shows the important connector role played by Chinese junk merchants, and also by the Dutch East India Company. While trade was the main focus of Japan's international relation with Vietnam and China at the time, by contrast the relations with Korea included diplomatic missions, in the sensitive context of the post-Japanese invasion of Korea (late 16th century).

Youn Dae-young (Sogang University) examines the introduction of so-called 'new books' in Vietnam, while reform ideas and revolutionary thinking were disseminated by great figures such as Phan Bội Châu (famous revolutionary leader) and Lương Văn Can (founder of the Tonkin Free School). In Vietnam, the relatively stable presence of Chinese emigrants, the extension of the influence of Sun Yatsen into Indochina and the uprisings that shook South China in the early years of the 1900s triggered rebellions that were more numerous and violent than in Korea.

In the final paper of this issue, John D. Phan (Columbia University) elaborates on the topic of language. He studies a 1919 issue of *Nam Phong* [Southern Wind], a very important intellectual journal of the time, and analyses Phạm Quỳnh's (chief editor of *Nam Phong*, monarchist and pro-colonial) defence of the use of the Vietnamese language and the literati Phạm Huy-hồ's discussion on Chinese script, which denationalizes the Chinese script. John D. Phan concludes comparatively that the strikingly similar role of literary Chinese

language in precolonial Vietnamese and Korean societies strongly suggests that parallel processes of rebranding the role and nature of language in national identity occurred, not only in the critical moment of late 19th and early 20th century colonisation, but potentially multiple times throughout history.

The next Korea-Vietnam conference will be held at Seoul National University, on 1-2 June 2018. We hope it will be as successful as the 2016 conference in Hanoi!

Valérie Gelézeau, EHESS, France gelezeau@ehess.fr; and Phạm Văn Thuý, Vietnam National University, Hanoi Thuypv@vnu.edu.vn

Notes

- 1 Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris, France.
- 2 In all the articles of this Focus section, the McCune-Reischauer system has been used to Romanize the Korean; the vernacular order for a person's name has been kept (name, first name). The names of Vietnamese persons and places are also written in vernacular order (family name, middle name and first name) and the Romanized alphabet (*Quốc Ngữ*; lit.: national language), except for those which have been widely internationalized.
- 3 Taylor, K.W. 2013. *A History of the Vietnamese*. Cambridge University Press, p.14.
- 4 See Woodside, A.B. 1971. *Vietnam and the Chinese Model: A Comparative Study of Vietnamese and Chinese Government in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*. Harvard University Press. See also the work by Kwon Heonik (author of *Ghosts of War in Vietnam*, Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- 5 See Choi Byung Wook. 2004. *Southern Vietnam Under the Reign of Ming Mạng (1820-1841): Central Policies and Local Response*. Cornell University Press.
- 6 Bragg, C. 2006. *Vietnam, Korea, and US Foreign Policy: 1945-75*. London: Heinemann.
- 7 See for example the article by Robinson, L.S. 2011. 'Did Stalemate Equal Victory? From the Korean to the Vietnam Wars', *American Diplomacy*. Available from the UNC-Chapel Hill website: <https://tinyurl.com/amdipstalemate> (last consulted 26 January 2018).
- 8 See for example Delissen, A. 2009. 'War memories of the periphery: bombastic commemorations in Korea, Vietnam and Algeria', in Lee Jae-Won (ed.) *Kieok-kwa cheonjaeng [Memory and War]*. Seoul: Humanist, pp.51-73. See also: Woodside, A. 2001. *Lost Modernities. China, Korea, Vietnam and the Hazards of History*. Harvard University Press.
- 9 Détienné, M. 2000. *Comparer l'incomparable [Compare the incomparable]*. Paris: Seuil; Werner, M. & Zimmermann, B. (eds.) 2004. *De la comparaison à l'histoire croisée*. Paris: Seuil.
- 10 Liebermann, V. 2009. *Strange Parallels : Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830*. Cambridge University Press.
- 11 Gelézeau, V. 2012. 'La Corée dans les sciences sociales. Les géométries de la comparaison à l'épreuve d'un objet dédoublé' [Korea in social science: a divided object beyond geometries of comparisons], in Rémaud, O., Schaub, J-F, & Thireau, I. (eds.) *Faire des sciences sociales [Practicing social sciences]*, Vol. 3 Comparer [To compare]. Paris: EHESS editions, pp.255-284.
- 12 Dakhlia, J. 2001. 'La "culture nébuleuse" ou l'Islam à l'épreuve de la comparaison' [The 'nebula culture' or Islam challenged by the comparative method], *Annales SHS* 56(6):1181
- 13 For example, in urban geography Jennifer Robinson criticizes the simplistic and binary opposition between developed/third world cities; socialist/capitalist cities; European cities/others, etc.: Robinson, J. 2011. 'Cities in a world of cities: the comparative gesture', *International Journal of Regional and Urban Research* 35(1):1-23.
- 14 Liebermann, V. 2009. *Strange parallels. Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830*. Cambridge University Press.
- 15 Robinson, J. 2011 (cited in note 13).
- 16 The second one is being held at Seoul National University in June 2018, and will focus more on contemporary issues.



Phùng Khắc Khoan (1528-1613). Image Wikimedia Commons.

Chosŏn's understanding of Ming-Đại Việt relations

Nguyễn Nhật Linh

Another reason to suspect an unofficial gathering of evidence was the fact that the subject of a civil service exam for court officials, which took place only 10 days after the court convened at the beginning of April, was 'Congratulations on the conquest of Annam'.² These occurrences reflect the significance of the Ming-Đại Việt war for Chosŏn, and the leaders' wish to stay ahead of and to understand the political developments. *The Annals of the Chosŏn Kingdom* reveal that the number of Chosŏn missions to China suddenly tripled in 1407.

Chosŏn believed they could and should learn from the failure of Đại Việt to maintain peaceful diplomatic relations with China. This was repeated in Taejong's speeches in 1407, and even in 1414. The war between the Ming and Đại Việt was considered to be a cautionary tale for Chosŏn, especially because the histories of Chosŏn and Đại Việt had a lot in common: the newly founded dynasties in both Chosŏn and Đại Việt underwent reformations that led to the development of the two countries, which were the earliest to establish relationships with the Ming. Chosŏn's understanding of the Ming-Đại Việt war was reflected in its subsequent political and military strategies with regard to China, in order to maintain its relations with the Ming Dynasty.

Ming-Đại Việt relations (1403-1406)

The turning point for Ming-Đại Việt relations took place in Nanjing on 3 April 1403, when the Ming Emperor Yongle and his court met with envoys from the Hồ Dynasty from Đại Việt (then Đại Ngu). The envoys claimed that after the death of King Trần Nhật Khuê, the line of the Trần family had been broken and that Hồ Đê was now responsible for ruling Đại Việt. They also asked Emperor Yongle to officially install Hồ Quý Ly as the King of Annam (Đại Việt). Coincidentally, as is evident from the records by *Ming Shilu*,³ Yi Kyu-ryeong (an official from the Chosŏn Kingdom) was also in attendance that day to conduct business with the Ming court; it is clear he would have been able to gather much information from the meeting he witnessed between the Annam envoys and the Emperor. Thus, the Chosŏn Kingdom likely already learned of the Ming's investiture of Hồ Quý Ly as the King of Annam in early 1404.

In August 1404, however, Trần Thiêm Bình attended the Ming court and pronounced himself the son of the old Annam King Trần Nghệ Tông. Trần Thiêm Bình accused the Hồ family of murdering the King to usurp the throne in Annam. He pleaded with Emperor Yongle to engage his army to help him get revenge for the Trần family. Some months later, on 16 December 1404,⁴ a Chosŏn delegation led by Yi Nae made a tributary visit to Emperor Yongle, alongside envoys from Đại Việt and other native officials. Right after the ceremony, the Emperor introduced everyone present to Trần Thiêm Bình; the Đại Việt envoys were said to have recognized "the grandson of their old king", to have been amazed and confused, to have bowed down, and some were moved to tears.⁵ At this point another banquet was conferred upon the envoys from Chosŏn and Annam, to take place on 2 January 1405.⁶ On all these occasions at the Ming court in Nanjing, the Chosŏn Kingdom came to learn of the struggle for power taking place in Đại Việt.

The Ming-Đại Việt (or Đại Ngu under the Hồ Dynasty) war (1406-1407) was mentioned for the first time by the Chosŏn Royal Court when it convened on 8 April 1407. During a discussion on state defense and military policies, King Taejong (1400-1418) brought up the war: "(I) heard that when the Emperor conquered Annam, the people of Annam were shiftless, died, no one could resist".¹ Notably, the court must have become aware of the Ming-Đại Việt conflict through an alternative (non-official) source, since the official royal message from Ming Emperor Yongle didn't arrive in Chosŏn until a month later, on 1 May 1407. One suggestion for the source of information was the Chosŏn missions to China and to its Ming Imperial Court.



King Taejong (1400-1418). Image Wikimedia Commons.

The Chosŏn reaction to the Ming-Đại Việt war

On 11 April 1406 the Ming court received notice of Trần Thiêm Bình's death; subsequently, on 23 April 1406, Ming Emperor Yongle ordered General Huang-Zhong to enter Đại Việt.⁷ A Chosŏn tributary mission, led by Seol Mi-su, was at the Ming court on the day that Ming Emperor Yongle ordered the invasion of Đại Việt, at the previous request of Trần Thiêm Bình.

The official royal message sent to Chosŏn from Yongle stated that the usurpation by Hồ Quý Ly and his son was the main reason for the Ming to 'punish' Annam; but Chosŏn knew that Hồ Quý Ly had previously already been recognized by the Ming as the King of Annam. On 8 April 1407 at the Chosŏn court, King Taejong used the phrase 'King of Annam' to refer to Hồ Quý Ly, the ruler of Đại Việt who had been dealing with the Ming Emperor right up until the conflict erupted between the two countries. He said: "The King of Annam had come to inform him respectfully, but the Emperor could not approve of those kinds of behaviors. If our Emperor likes, it is our good work, but if our country was careless in its rites of *sadae*, surely the Emperor would raise the army to punish".⁸ (*sadae*: 'serving the great', a word which, at the time, stood

for 'foreign relations with the Ming'). This discussion revealed two important truths. Firstly, Chosŏn already knew what steps the Hồ family had been taking to maintain their relationship with China after they had claimed the Annam throne. Secondly, Chosŏn now understood that the Ming invasion was not only about rectifying a diplomatic wrong, but that the turmoil caused by the changing dynasties in Đại Việt was being used by the Emperor as an excuse for punishment.

To avoid similar treatment by the Ming, Chosŏn showed compliance with the Ming actions, so as to stabilize their own relationship. At the beginning of the 15th century, Chosŏn and Đại Việt were in very similar positions with regard to the Ming.⁹ Taejong explained to his court that Chosŏn was now, just like Đại Việt, in danger of receiving the same treatment by the Ming if they did not maintain good diplomatic relations. This is why the 18 April 1407 civil service

exam was so significant; by focusing on the theme 'Congratulations on the conquest of Annam' they were able to have a response ready within a week after they received Ming Emperor Yongle's royal letter.

Ham Pu-rim was appointed the Chosŏn envoy to visit Nanjing on 9 May 1407 to congratulate the Ming Emperor on the Annam conquest. Chosŏn received a positive response to the visit on 11 September; apparently, Chosŏn's letter had been correctly presented to the Emperor and "The Emperor talked again about the non-compliance of Annam and his righteous chivalrous spirit".¹⁰ The message reveals that Yongle must have discussed the events in Annam with the Chosŏn envoys, and that he compared the crimes of Annam to the morality of Ming.

Taejong knew that the doubts over leadership in Đại Việt had occasioned Ming Emperor Yongle to attack, and so, in addition to maintaining good *sadae*, Taejong understood that he had to remind Yongle of the legitimate Chosŏn lineage, which the Ming Jianwen Emperor himself had recognized only a few years before (in 1401), and which Yongle had repeated in 1403 after Jianwen's dethronement. The next envoy to the Ming court was subsequently planned for 25 September 1407,¹¹ and significantly,

it was led by the Chosŏn Crown Prince Yi Che (Yi Je, 1394-1462), who had been instated by Ming Emperor Yongle in 1404.¹² Compared to previous Chosŏn envoys, this was a particularly large party of officials. In the eyes of the Ming, foreign countries had no meaningful existence unless their rulers could maintain relations with the Emperor;¹³ besides showing compliance and submitting to the Ming, Chosŏn reestablished relations by memorializing the Ming proclamation of the Yi family as rulers of Chosŏn, and the investiture of the crown prince as successor of the ruling family.

Taejo Yi Sŏng-gye (the first King of the Yi dynasty, founder of the Chosŏn Kingdom) failed to acquire investiture from the Ming court in 1392. In fact, the Ming Emperor Hongwu regarded Taejo Yi Sŏng-gye an usurper, and dangerous to the people of what was then still the Koryŏ Kingdom, led by King Kongyang. Emperor Hongwu even threatened to punish the Yi family for its actions. However, less than a decade later Taejo's son, Taejong, did succeed at being invested as King of Chosŏn by the Ming Emperor. Three years later, in 1404, the Chosŏn Crown Prince Yi Che (Yi Je) was invested as well. But then the Ming-Đại Việt war erupted. In short, where Taejo's efforts had gone toward gaining approval from the Ming as a legitimate ruler, Taejong's main focus of his *sadae* diplomacy towards the Ming was to strengthen and stabilize the legitimation. Taejong's *sadae* was, moreover, geared to avoid a repeat of the Đại Việt situation. Chosŏn held Đại Việt up like a mirror, as a cautionary tale. Chosŏn's main goal was to ensure the Ming recognition of the Yi family, so as to avoid being considered usurpers like the Hồ family in Đại Việt had been. And eventually, their diplomacies did indeed successfully protect Chosŏn; King Taejong led Chosŏn to a relatively peaceful and stable relationship with the Ming.¹⁴

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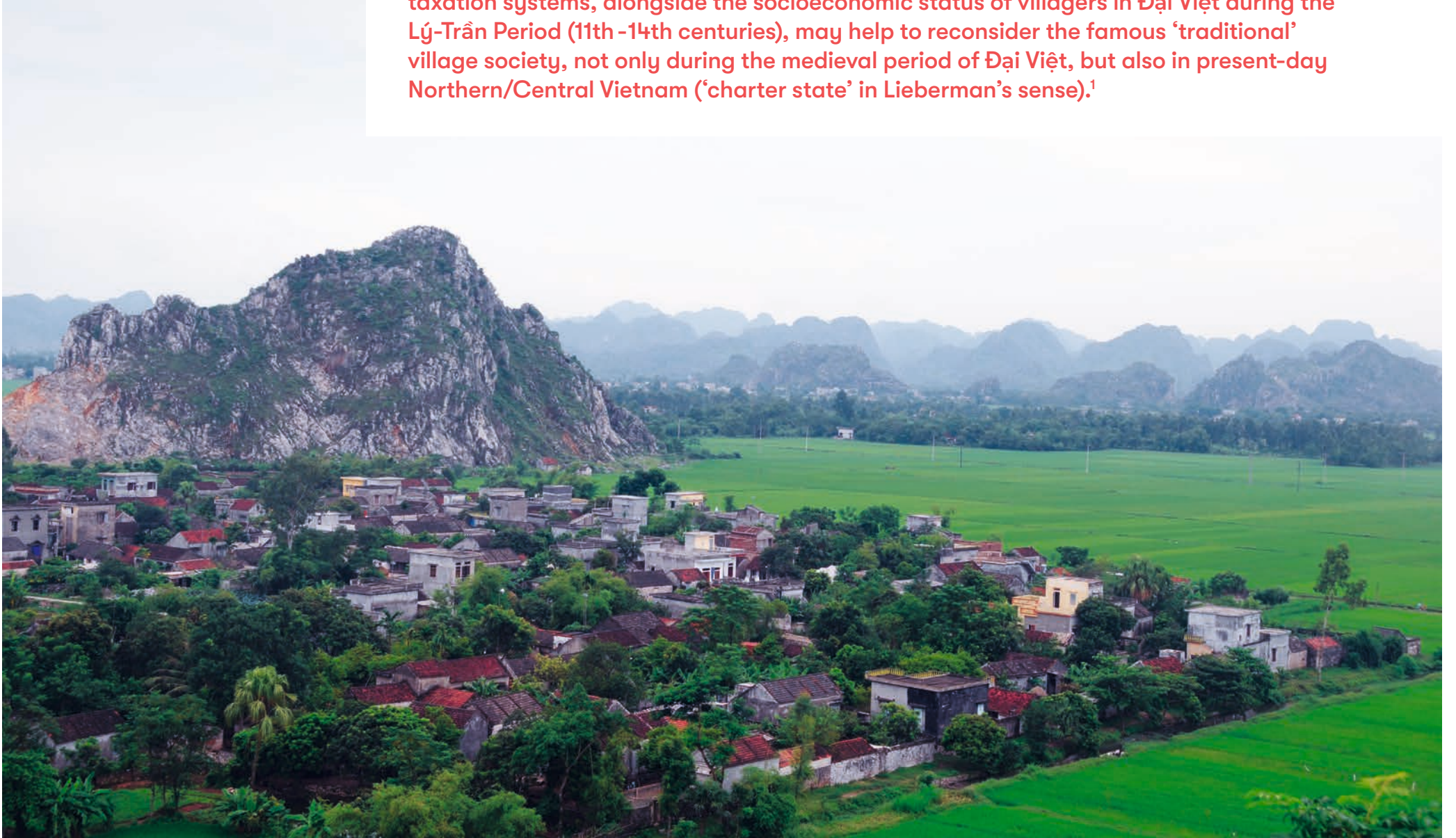
Notes

- 1 *Chosŏn Taejong Sillok*, (The Annals of Chosŏn King Taejong), National Institute of Korean History, Seoul, 1973, 13:16b-17a.
- 2 *Chosŏn Wangjo Sillok*, 13:27b-28a.
- 3 *Ming Taizong Shilu* (The Veritable Records of the Ming Taizong), Institute of History and Philology, Taipei, 1966, 19:1a.
- 4 *Chosŏn Taejong Sillok*, 8:12b.
- 5 *Ming Taizong Shilu*, 37:3a.
- 6 *Ming Taizong Shilu*, 37:3a-b and 38:1a.
- 7 *Ming Taizong Shilu*, 53:4b-5a.
- 8 *Chosŏn Taejong Sillok*, 13:16b-17a.
- 9 Taejo (first king of the Chosŏn Kingdom, r.1392-1398, after overthrowing the Koryŏ Kingdom) had never been able to obtain an investiture from the Ming. Emperor Hongwu (founder of the Ming Dynasty) did not recognize or agree with the new Kingdom. It was only the third king of Chosŏn, Taejong, who in June 1401 was finally granted Ming recognition by the second Ming Emperor (Jianwen), which was reconfirmed by Ming Emperor Yongle in 1403.
- 10 *Chosŏn Taejong Sillok*, 14:24b
- 11 *Chosŏn Taejong Sillok*, 14:24b and 14:29a-30a.
- 12 Yi Che (Yi Je) was the first son of Taejong. He was invested as Crown Prince in 1404. However, Yi-Je and Yi Po (Yi Bo, the second in line) behaved badly, and both had their titles withdrawn. As a result, the third son, Yi-Do (1397-1450) was invested as Crown Prince in 1409 and became King Sejong (1418-1450) of Chosŏn.
- 13 Wang Gungwu, *China and the Chinese overseas*, The Academic Press, 1991, p.40.
- 14 朴元煥, 明初朝鮮關係史研究, 一潮閣, 2002, pp.6-8; 285-286 and 161-163.

Land categories and taxation systems in Đại Việt (11th-14th centuries)

Momoki Shiro

Reexamining land categories (such as ‘public’ and ‘private’ paddy fields) and their related taxation systems, alongside the socioeconomic status of villagers in Đại Việt during the Lý-Trần Period (11th-14th centuries), may help to reconsider the famous ‘traditional’ village society, not only during the medieval period of Đại Việt, but also in present-day Northern/Central Vietnam (‘charter state’ in Lieberman’s sense).¹



A village in Ninh Binh Province (photo: Momoki Shiro)

A new understanding of ‘public’ and ‘private’ lands

The ‘traditional’ village in present-day Northern/Central Vietnam is famous for its collective character, accompanied by a system of communal land: *công điền* [public paddy field] and *quan điền* [government paddy field]. Because it often played a crucial role in both anti-colonial resistance and socialist revolution, the traditional village has attracted many sociologists and historians in the world. It is widely believed that the communal land was formed in a remote past and that it survived throughout the period of Chinese domination (111 BC- 938 AD), from the Han to the Tang. However, the records of *công điền* and *quan điền* in the sources of the Lý-Trần period (approx. 1000-1400 AD), including

quan điền mentioned in later-Trần inscriptions (1407-1413), do not appear to be referring to paddy fields possessed by collective villages.

Previous studies should have paid more attention to commoners’ fields [*dân điền*], which occasionally appear in Trần inscriptions and annals. In China, after the Tang Dynasty (618-907), commoners’ fields were categorized as private fields. However, it is quite likely that Đại Việt before the end of the Trần period had a different system which was rather similar to that of the medieval Kingdom of Koryŏ (918-1392) in Korea, and partly to that of Japan after the decline of the Tang-modeled *ritsuryō* system. In Koryŏ, commoners’ land (for which farmers had to pay rent to the state) formed a part of public land along with plots under the direct control of the state or administrative offices. Private land was also

under the ownership (often nominal) of the state, but the right of collecting rent was conferred to officials, soldiers, or temples. Here, the opposition between public and private did not concern ownership, but a taxation structure. In Korea, commoners’ land became regarded as private land only in the 18th century – under the Yi Dynasty (Chosŏn Kingdom) – as the social rights of commoners were strengthened.

In the case of Đại Việt, however, it appears that commoners’ land was already categorized as private land by the end of the Trần period. In 1398, according to *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* [Complete Annals of Đại Việt], Emperor Hồ Quý Ly ordered people to declare their land ownership to the local authority; land that was not claimed was confiscated as public land. People’s land became private

property, as was the case in China at that time. Nevertheless, only in the 18th century did the government of Đại Việt start levying a regular tax on the private paddy field [*tư điền*], almost at the same time as Chosŏn (Korea).²

The change of taxation system and peasants’ burden

According to *Annanzhi* (a record of the Ming rule of Đại Việt), the government during the Lý-Trần period (approx. 1000-1400) collected heavy taxes (or rent) from public fields, especially from the *quốc khố điền* or lands under the direct control of the state, while commoners’ paddy and dry fields were levied only a very small amount (see Table 1).

Table 1: From *Annanzhi*

Categories	Rent per <i>mu</i> (<i>mẫu</i>)	
Public paddy fields	‘field of national treasury’ (<i>Guokutian/quốc khố điền</i>)	Upper class: 6 <i>shí</i> (<i>thạch</i>) 80 <i>sheng</i> (<i>thăng</i>) Middle class: 4 <i>shí</i> Lower class: 3 <i>shí</i>
	‘field of throwing sword’ (<i>Zhuodiaotian/thác đao điền</i>)	Upper class: 1 <i>shí</i> Middle class: 1 <i>shí</i> on 3 <i>mu</i> Lower class: 1 <i>shí</i> on 4 <i>mu</i>
Commoners’ paddy field	3 <i>sheng</i> Note: 1 <i>mu</i>	

Note: 1 *mu* (*mẫu*) = 0.36 ha; 1 *shí* (*thạch*) ≈ 94.88 litres; 1 *sheng* (*thăng*) ≈ 1.0737 litres

Judging from the demographic stagnation after the 16th century, the agricultural development reached the natural limit earlier in Đại Việt than in Korea and Japan.

The traditional village often played a crucial role in both anti-colonial resistance and socialist revolution.

Table 2: Regulation in 1242, from the *Complete Annals of Đại Việt*

Acreage of land (in mẫu)	Copper cash (in quán)	Rent (paddy) per mẫu (in thăng)
0	0	100 thăng per mẫu
1-2	1	
3-4	2	
5-	3	

Table 3: New regulation promulgated in 1402, from the *Complete Annals of Đại Việt*

Acreage of land (in mẫu)	Paper cash (in mán)	Rent (paddy) per mẫu (in thăng)
0	0	5 thăng per mẫu
0-0.5	0.5	
0.6-1.0	1.0	
1.1-1.5	1.5	
1.6-2.0	2.0	
2.1-2.5	2.6 (?)	
2.6-	3.0	



Stone pedestal of Hường Trai Temple (Hoài Đức District, Hà Nội), which recorded villagers' donations three times during the late Trần Period (photo: Momoki Shiro)

In the *Complete Annals of Đại Việt*, tax regulations are recorded for the years 1242 and 1402. In both entries, male adults with paddy or dry field had to pay cash and paddy annually, while those without land were exempt. Although the Annals do not mention the specific category of land (or people) for which the paddy (rent) and copper cash (substitute for poll tax) were levied, it is likely that it concerned the majority of land (and people). This system seemingly followed the model of the southern variation of the Chinese Two-Tax system, which had been enforced since the late-8th century.

Judging from the amount of 100 thăng per mẫu collected from the land holders, the burden stipulated in 1242 for all fields is similar to that of the first class of so-called *thác đao* field in *Annanzhi*. In the case of *thác đao* field, the paddy (rent) seems to have conferred to nobles, officials or soldiers, as was the case of private fields of the Koryŏ Kingdom. Another problem here can be pointed out with the example of Cào Xã village, studied by the author in *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*: 100 thăng of paddy was levied on both commoners (in the 1242 regulation), and 'criminals', a category that is not further explained (in the entry of the year 1230 in *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*). This category may have meant a low status, quasi-slave for instance, of commoners. For the Chinese author of *Annanzhi*, however, it must have been natural to regard this category of 'criminal' land, the beneficiary of which did not have a real property right, as a 'public' field. On the other hand, the low rent of paddy field stipulated in

1402 is seemingly identical with the amount levied on commoners' fields recorded in *Annanzhi*. As shown above, commoners' land seems to have already been classified as private land in 1398. The heavy commoners' rent during the early-Trần period appears to have become a nominal one by the end of the Trần dynasty.

Epigraphic sources and the rising status of villagers

Epigraphic sources prove this change. Most epigraphs incised before the end of the Later Lý Dynasty (1009-1225) were tomb inscriptions of aristocrats or records of temple buildings sponsored by aristocrats. There is very little financial information. However, among the 60 inscriptions from the Trần Dynasty (1225-1400), 37 inscriptions (of which 34 from the 14th century) tell about properties of Buddhist temples or donations to temples or shrines. Most of the donations are small-scale ones by villagers, often less than one mẫu wide. The *Thanh Mai viên thông tháp bi* inscription, however, records around 2,800 mẫu of large-scale donations made by imperial family members.

Among more than 300 donors, only a small number bear an aristocratic title, while many males bear a civil or military title, such as *thư gia* or *thư nhi* [secretary] or *thị vệ nhân* [palace guard]. Some women bear a title of the court, like *dưỡng mẫu* [wet nurse]. These people appear to have been upper class villagers. The fact that their donations

were incised shows their rising social status. They probably first appropriated private paddy fields conferred to them for their arbitrary control. Then, they may have moved their privatized commoners' fields outside the subject of taxation on the public land. It is likely that the 1402 regulation meant the state owned a considerable amount of land therefore could be content to levy a light rent in kind on commoners' private land. In the mid-14th century, many peasants rebelled and even formed gangs. Slaves or subordinates of nobles' estates were known to flee to join the rebels and gangs. This must have been another expression of the socio-economic transformation of the farmers' society.

Conclusion

The experiences of Đại Việt during the Lý-Trần period are comparable with many other "charter" polities not only in Southeast but also in Northeast Asia. As was the case in the Koryŏ Kingdom (Korea) and early medieval Japan (from Insei to Kamakura periods), Đại Việt had to localize and modify overwhelming Tang territorial and land management models against new regional background after the collapse of the Tang. Judging from the demographic stagnation after the 16th century, however, the agricultural development reached the natural limit earlier in Đại Việt than in Korea and Japan. The advance of commoners and peasants in 14th century Đại Việt appears to have been accompanied by a too rapid

growth of the population and a fractionation of arable lands by privatization, judging from the small scale of donations. The large-scale reclamation of lower delta regions and commercialization of village economy do not appear to have mitigated the land scarcity to a large enough extent. This situation may have deepened the general crisis in the 14th century, due to which the state of Đại Việt collapsed.

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Notes

- 1 See Lieberman, V. 2003/2009. *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c.800-1830 (2 vols.)*. Cambridge University Press. Charter polities or charter states is a terminology coined by Victor Lieberman to describe the early empires in Southeast Asia, such as Pagan in Upper Burma, Angkor in Cambodia and Đại Việt in northern Vietnam. These states are called 'charter states' because they provided their political and territorial charter for subsequent generations and had a foundational role in future evolutions.
- 2 This could be seen as an expression of the Lê government's insistence upon the glorious 15th century system, in which the taxation system was centred on the public land. The Lê government could nationalize a great amount of lands after they repelled the Ming.

Table 4: The number of donations of 19 selected epigraphic sources, involving more than two donors

Males	Females	Husband and wife	Other groups*
125 persons	64 persons	51 couples	27 groups
149 lands of 0.18 ha	21 plots of lands of 0.276 ha	37 plots of lands of 0.17 ha and more	13 plots of lands of 0.29 ha
+ other 41 plots of land	+ 34 other plots of land	+ 18 other plots of land	21 other plots of land
+ 734 long string of copper coins and so forth	+ 464.5 string of copper coins and so forth	+ 955.5 long string of copper coins and so forth	+10 long string of copper coins and so forth

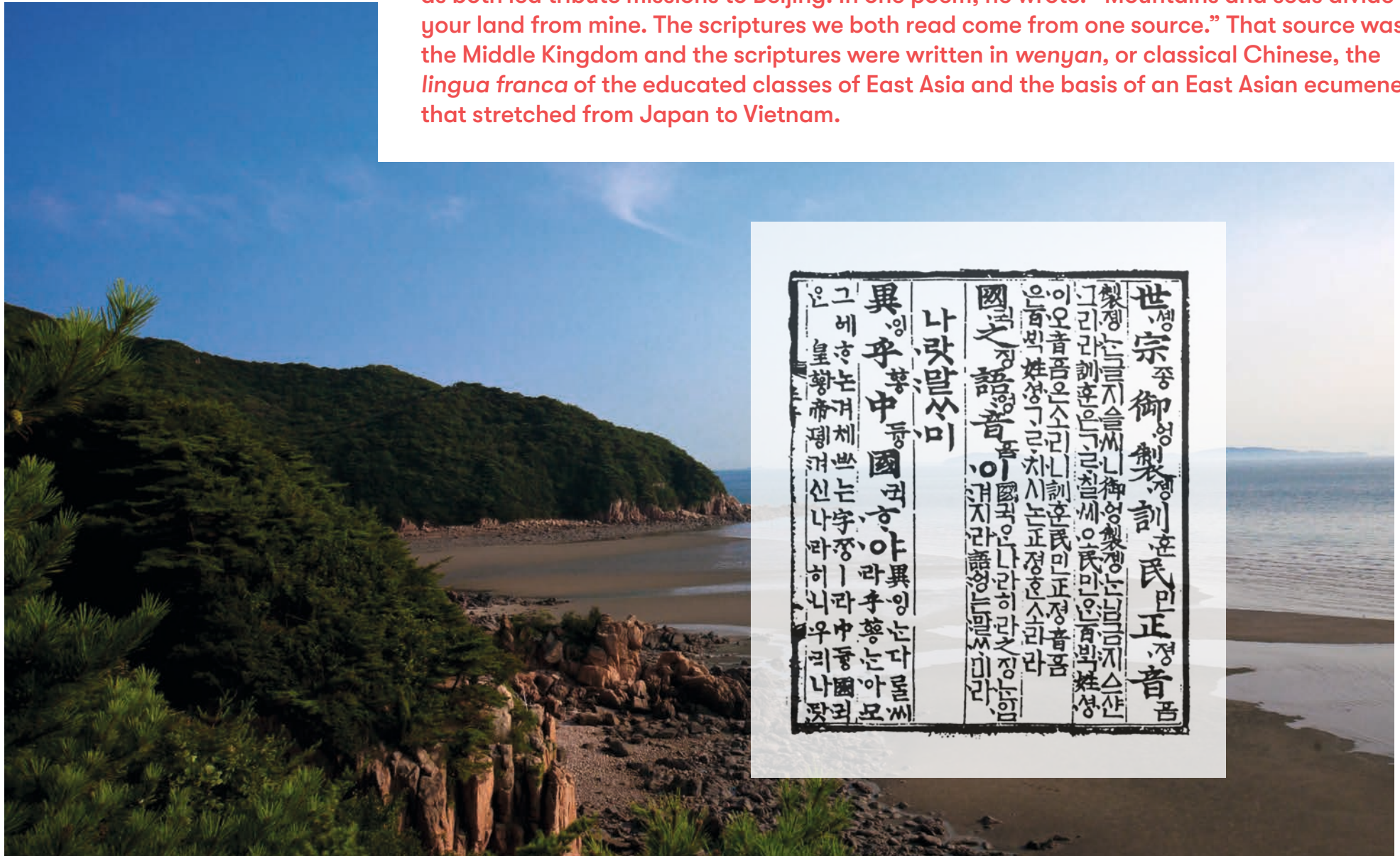
* Mother and child, grandmother and grandchildren and so forth.

This must have been another expression of the socio-economic transformation of the farmers' society.

Separated by mountains and seas, united by a common script

Ho Tai Hue-Tam¹

In 1597, Phùng Khắc Khoan (1528-1613), the Vietnamese envoy to the Middle Kingdom (China), exchanged a series of poems with his Korean counterpart, Yi Su-gwang (1563-1628) as both led tribute missions to Beijing. In one poem, he wrote: “Mountains and seas divide your land from mine. The scriptures we both read come from one source.” That source was the Middle Kingdom and the scriptures were written in *wenyan*, or classical Chinese, the *lingua franca* of the educated classes of East Asia and the basis of an East Asian ecumene that stretched from Japan to Vietnam.



Inset: The first page of *hunmin jŏngŭm* (lit.: correct sounds for the instruction of the people), or *han'gŭl*, as it is known in South Korea today. In North Korea it is called *chosŏngŭl*.

Wenyan as the transnational language for pre-modern Asian literati

By 1597, a vernacular script had been available in both Korea (Chosŏn) and Vietnam (Đại Việt) for over a century. In Chosŏn, in 1443, King Sejong the Great (r.1418-1450) had created the *hunmin jŏngŭm* (lit.: correct sounds for the instruction of the people), also known as *han'gŭl*. The Vietnamese demotic script, *nôm*, traced its earliest beginnings to the ninth century, but its flowering came in the fifteenth century. In 1428, the scholar and statesman Nguyễn Trãi (1380-1442) authored the *Great Proclamation of the Pacification of the Wu* [Binh Ngô Đại Cáo] in *wenyan* to celebrate the end of the twenty-year occupation of Đại Việt by the Ming. But he is also known for his poetry in *nôm* (the common script). Emperor Lê Thánh Tông (r.1460-1497) emulated him by writing poetry in *nôm*. Thus vernacular scripts appeared during the same period in Korea and Vietnam and both enjoyed imperial support. Yet, their appearance did not displace *wenyan*, which continued to be the language of officialdom. Both scripts were useful for advancing the imperial project of forging closer connections between the emperor and his officials and spreading neo-Confucian values among commoners.

Wenyan was the language of the educational system culminating in exams through which officials were chosen in China, Korea and Vietnam. The model was the Song-era system. In Korea, such a system was instituted under King Kwangong (r.949-975)

and a *Kukchagam* [Academy for Imperial Sons] was established during the reign of King Sŏngjong (r.1083-1094) during the Koryŏ period. In Đại Việt, the introduction of neo-Confucianism was delayed by the influx of Buddhist monks who had fled China to escape repression in the late Tang era. Their arrival consolidated the influence of Buddhism through the next few centuries. Nonetheless, in 1070, a temple to Confucius was established in Thăng Long (modern Hanoi), followed by an Academy for Imperial Sons, Quốc Tử Giám, thus roughly paralleling developments in Korea. But thereafter, the two histories diverged.

In 1392, the pro-Ming Yi dynasty founded the Chosŏn Kingdom that replaced Koryŏ. In Đại Việt, Hồ Quý Ly wrested power away from the Trần dynasty (1225-1400) and proclaimed himself emperor in 1400. His usurpation gave a pretext for the Ming to occupy Đại Việt from 1407 to 1427. Unlike Chosŏn, therefore, the Lê dynasty (1428-1788) was founded by men who had fought against the Ming. Yet, the careers of King Sejong the Great and of Lê Thánh Tông offer some interesting parallels. By the time Sejong assumed the throne in 1418 at the age of 22, his dynasty was still new. During his 32-year reign, Sejong set about strengthening the state by entrenching neo-Confucianism as the official ideology. At 17, Lê Thánh Tông

was even younger when he became emperor in 1460. The 20-year Ming Occupation had occasioned the destruction or disappearance of documents and forced the new Lê dynasty to depend on Chinese models for restoring imperial control. Lê Thánh Tông sought to extend the reach of the state by expanding the bureaucracy. He also expanded Đại Việt's territory after his victory over Champa in 1471. Control of both territory and population was pursued via the spread of neo-Confucianism as it was reflected in the civil service exam system since 1462 and in the legal code of 1483. Thus, despite his promotion of *nôm*, ultimately his administrative and cultural priorities privileged the use of *wenyan*.

In *Imagined Communities* Benedict Anderson argued that print capitalism displaced Latin as the language of writing throughout Europe and promoted the spread of local languages; by this he meant not just printing, but also the wide distribution of materials by profit-seeking printers and publishers.² Through forging imagined connections among far-flung, unconnected readers, print capitalism was at the origin of the modern nation. Printing had emerged in East Asia long before Europe, but the lack of transportation and distribution networks hindered the dissemination of materials –

whether in *wenyan* or in demotic scripts – in premodern Korea and Đại Việt.

The use of different scripts corresponded not just to distinctions between classes, but also between genders and between private and public writings. *Han'gŭl* was used primarily by women and writers of fiction. Similarly, in Đại Việt, *nôm* was associated with commoners and with women, as well as with the expression of private emotions, hence its use in poetry. Forged through the same *wenyan*-based educational system and imbued with the same neo-Confucian values, appointed to serve outside of their native places, officials were the only social group that transcended the particularistic ties of lineage and locality. They were not just administrators; they were also responsible for spreading neo-Confucian values. The Vietnamese legal code of 1483 was an amalgam of administrative rules and instructions on everyday behavior along neo-Confucian principles. The same amalgam could be found in the *Kyŏngguk taejŏn* [Great Code of Administration], promulgated two years later (1485) in Chosŏn.

In both Chosŏn and Đại Việt, imperial promotion of neo-Confucianism elevated the status of the literati, known collectively as *yangban* in Korea and *sĩ phu* in Vietnam. Comparisons between Vietnamese and Korean strands of neo-Confucianism must be limited to northern Vietnam, the Mekong Delta not forming part of the Vietnamese polity until the eighteenth century. The *sĩ phu* community was concentrated in the Red River Delta, encircled to the north and west by mountainous areas inhabited by non-Viet populations; to the

Mountains and seas divide your land from mine. The scriptures we both read come from one source.

south were Cham lands with their Hinduized culture. After 1600, Đại Việt was divided between the Lê-Trịnh regime north of the eighteenth parallel and the Nguyễn regime in the south. Nearly continuous social unrest and conflicts between the two regimes, culminating in the 30-year war at the end of the eighteenth century, not only taxed the economic resources of the *si phu* community but splintered it as well, as its members took different sides in various conflicts. Đại Việt produced some illustrious individual scholars, yet long-lasting elite lineages or stable alliances were few. The small and economically precarious *si phu* community was unable to sustain a school of thought comparable to the *Silhak* [Practical Learning] School in Korea where the Yi dynasty reigned uninterrupted from 1392 to 1910. The economic differences between the *si phu* and yangban classes were reflected in Phùng Khắc Khoan, who came from a modest background and Yi Su-gwang who belonged to a prosperous aristocratic lineage.

The yangban's ability to maintain themselves was due not only to political stability but also to economic resources, especially to the institution of slavery. Đại Việt society also included slaves, especially soldiers captured in warfare, but they were confined to special villages and thus not available to supply their labor to literati families. The yangban constituted 10% of the population; below was the 'intermediate class' known as *chungin*, made up of workers with the skills necessary to administer the kingdom on behalf of the ruler and the yangban. *Sangmin*, or commoners, formed the third class; at the bottom were the *chõnmin*, or outcasts. Slaves were of the lowest standing. Meanwhile, despite claims of also having four occupational classes – scholars, peasants, artisans and merchants – in reality Đại Việt had only two: literati (*si*) and peasants (*nông*). Except for a few specialized villages, the majority of crafts were performed as off-season work. Small-scale trade was the province of women; trade on a larger scale was done by either Chinese or Western merchants, who thus formed no part of mainstream society. Vietnam, like Korea, had its share of outcasts who were similarly banned from taking the exams; but they were not considered a separate social group; neither were slaves.

Tributary relations and transnational encounters

As the capital of the Middle Kingdom, Beijing was the meeting point for envoys from the various states that constituted the cultural ecumene based on *wenyan*. The tributary relationships between these states and the Middle Kingdom we are most familiar with were established under Emperor Ming Taizu in 1368. In response to Ming Taizu's request, Đại Việt sent tribute in 1369, as did Chosõn. On that occasion, Đại Việt was recognized as a 'state of civility' [*văn hiến chi bang*]. Đại Việt was expected to send tribute every three years but sent twice as many missions during Ming Taizu's reign. This increase in frequency was probably occasioned both by recurring conflicts with Champa and by Hồ Quý Ly's maneuvers to seize power. Lê Thánh Tông's campaign against Champa in 1471 caused a disruption in tributary exchanges between Đại Việt and China. Afterward, Đại Việt reverted to sending a mission every three years but this frequency was once more disrupted when Mạc Đăng Dung overthrew the Lê in 1527. Meanwhile, in 1400, Chosõn increased the number of tributes sent to Ming from once every three years to three times each year; in 1531, Chosõn began sending tribute four times each year. The different frequency of tribute missions from Chosõn and Đại Việt must have affected the degree of penetration of neo-Confucianism in the two countries.

Korean missions usually traveled to Beijing, a distance of 950 km. Ordinarily, Vietnamese missions only traveled to the border, the distance from the Vietnamese capital to Beijing being nearly 2,330 km. Even so, internal politics often disrupted travel and therefore tribute. The delegation led by Phùng Khắc Khoan in 1597 was particularly important to the Lê dynasty that was restored to the

throne in 1592, as it was meant to negotiate recognition of its legitimate claim to the throne and the return of territories ceded by Mạc Đăng Dung in 1541. Therefore, the mission traveled all the way to Beijing. The stakes of Yi Su-gwang's mission were also high. In 1592, Hideyoshi had launched the Imjin War against Chosõn. In 1596, Hideyoshi launched a second attack. This was the background of Yi Su-gwang's first of three missions to Beijing.

In 1597, Yi Su-gwang was 29 and intellectually curious. On one of his trips, he met the Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) who gave him a copy of *The True Meaning of the Master of Heaven* [*Tianzhu shiyij*]. Ricci's fusion of Catholic and Confucian concepts deeply influenced Yi Su-gwang. Yi also included what he had learned from the Western books Ricci gave him in his 20-volume encyclopedia *Chibong yusõl*. Christianity was by no means unknown in Đại Việt at that time, thanks to the activities of Portuguese merchants. But how much Phùng Khắc Khoan knew about Catholicism is not known. When he went to Beijing, he was already 64 and of a highly pragmatic bent. He brought back knowledge about silk weaving, cultivation of maize and sesame and new varieties of rice. Whereas Yi Su-gwang left behind observations on Đại Việt in his encyclopedia, we do not know what Phùng Khắc Khoan thought about Chosõn or reported to the court.

The longevity of Chosõn rule and continuing loyalty to the Ming may explain the Korean envoys' reaction to the Tây Sơn delegation at Qianlong's 80th birthday celebrations in 1790. On Lunar New Year 1789, the Tây Sơn, led by Nguyễn Huệ, defeated the Qing army that had been sent in support

of the Lê emperor whom Nguyễn Huệ had deposed a few months earlier. Nguyễn Huệ lost no time in requesting investiture as king of Annam [*An Nan guowang*], which the Qing court granted. At Qianlong's birthday, all tributary states sent a delegation. Ordinarily, delegations were headed by a high-ranking official. The very large (over 100) Vietnamese delegation was headed by a man who appears in Chinese and Korean documents as Nguyễn Quang Bình and who may or may not have been Nguyễn Huệ himself. According to Sõ Ho-su, the head of the Korean delegation: "Nguyễn Quang Bình, the king of Annam, asked the Chosõn envoy: 'Does your country also have a precedent for a king to personally pay homage to the Supreme Kingdom [China]?' The Chosõn envoy replied: 'Ever since the founding of our East Kingdom [Korea], there has been no such precedent.' The king of Annam commented: 'There is no such precedent in Annam either. However, I have received enormous mercy and grace from Emperor Qianlong. Therefore, I was eager to present myself before the emperor, regardless of the perilous journey of ten-thousand miles.'"

Sõ Ho-su condemned Nguyễn Quang Bình for "abandoning the righteousness between ruler and subjects" by ousting the Lê dynasty. The Koreans, who represented the unbroken Chosõn dynasty and still wore Ming-style clothing, disparaged the Vietnamese adoption of Qing-style clothing and challenged them to explain their reason for doing so. Phan Huy Ích, a member of the Vietnamese mission, explained: "The emperor rewarded our king for personally showing up to pay homage. We were bestowed with costumes and vehicles ... We will wear our traditional attire when we

have an audience with the emperor in the capital or attend sacrificial ceremonies. The clothing we are now wearing is nothing but an expediency. When we return to our country, we will switch back to our traditional attire."

While Korean envoys like Sõ Ho-su decried the loss of proper clothing and rituals in Đại Việt, the Vietnamese envoys tried to emphasize cultural commonalities between the two countries. Phan Huy Ích wrote: "We have shared a system of clothing and hats for thousands of years/fortuitously, we have the chance to have conversations day after day/The elegant verses are reminiscent of the exchange of poems between Yi and Phung/ Our friendship is stronger than sweet wine."

Vernacular scripts and imagined communities in Korea and Vietnam

The Sino-French war of 1882 ended Vietnam's tributary relationship with China. French protectorates were established in Tonkin (North) and Annam (Center) in 1885; the Vietnamese south had already become the colony of French Cochinchina in 1867. The Treaty of Shimonoseki, which ended the Sino-Japanese war of 1895, similarly abrogated Korea's tributary relationship with China. In each country, the elite was later criticized for its continued adherence to outmoded neo-Confucian thought, blaming it for the decline in cultural vitality and loss of national independence.

In 1905, the Vietnamese reformist scholar Phan Bội Châu was inspired by the Chinese reformist Liang Qichao to write *The History of Vietnamese Loss of Country* [*Việt Nam Vong Quốc Sử*]. The book was written in *wenyan*, the script in which Phan had been educated. Liang wrote a preface to *The History* and organized its printing and publication in East Asia as a cautionary tale. For Korea, where *The History* was widely disseminated, it was already too late. Korea became a Japanese protectorate in 1905 and an outright colony in 1910.

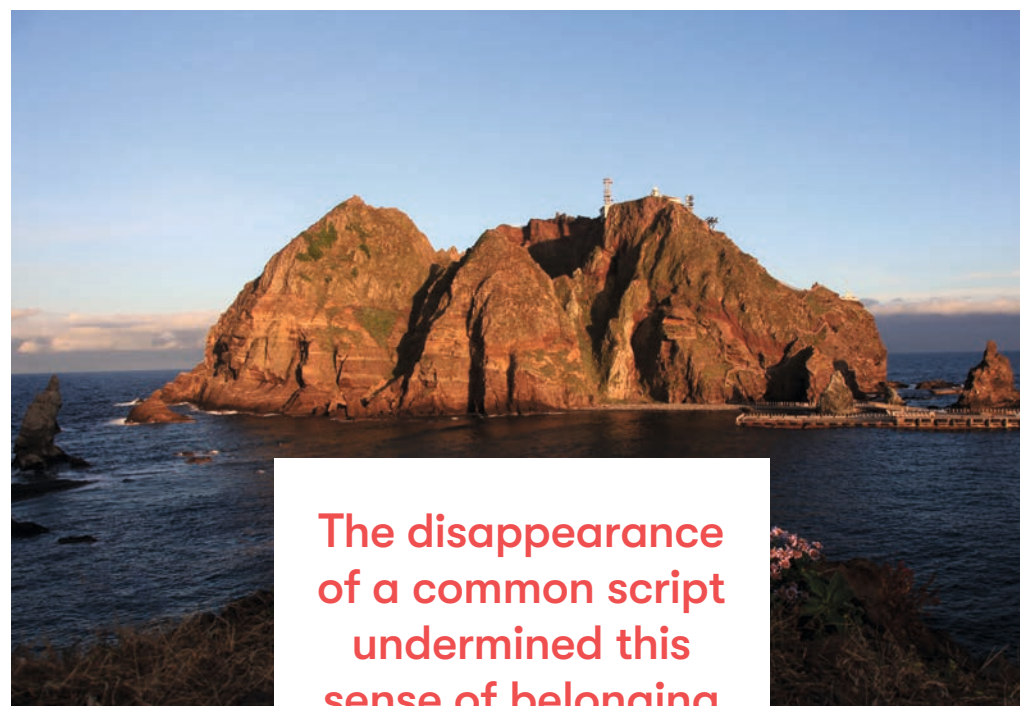
In Vietnam, under French colonial rule, both *wenyan* and *nôm* were replaced by *quốc ngữ* [national language], a script based on the Roman alphabet that had been devised by Portuguese missionaries and merchants in the seventeenth century. The deathblow to both scripts was the abolition of the civil service exams in 1915. In Korea, *han'gul* only became the primary Korean script following independence from Japan in the mid-20th century, though *hanja* (Chinese script) is also still used today. In both countries, journalism in the vernacular enabled the growth of an imagined national community.

The premodern elites of East Asia had been both national (or proto-national) and transnational. They might not have spoken the same language, but they wrote in the same script and shared the same values. What Phùng Khắc Khoan and Yi Su-gwang were celebrating in 1597 was a transnational ecumene. The disappearance of a common script undermined this sense of belonging to the same cultural universe. It became more difficult for citizens of Vietnam and Korea to engage in the kind of brush talk that envoys from both countries had delighted in over the previous four centuries. The rise of mass culture similarly emphasized dissimilarities rather than the shared cultural values that had sustained the premodern elites of the two countries. Whether 21st century globalization can replace this sense of belonging to the same cultural universe remains to be seen.

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Notes

- 1 The author wishes to thank Cai Wenjiao of Harvard University for translations of Sõ Ho-su's writings and Kathlene Balanza for discussing Vietnamese relations with Ming China.
- 2 Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.

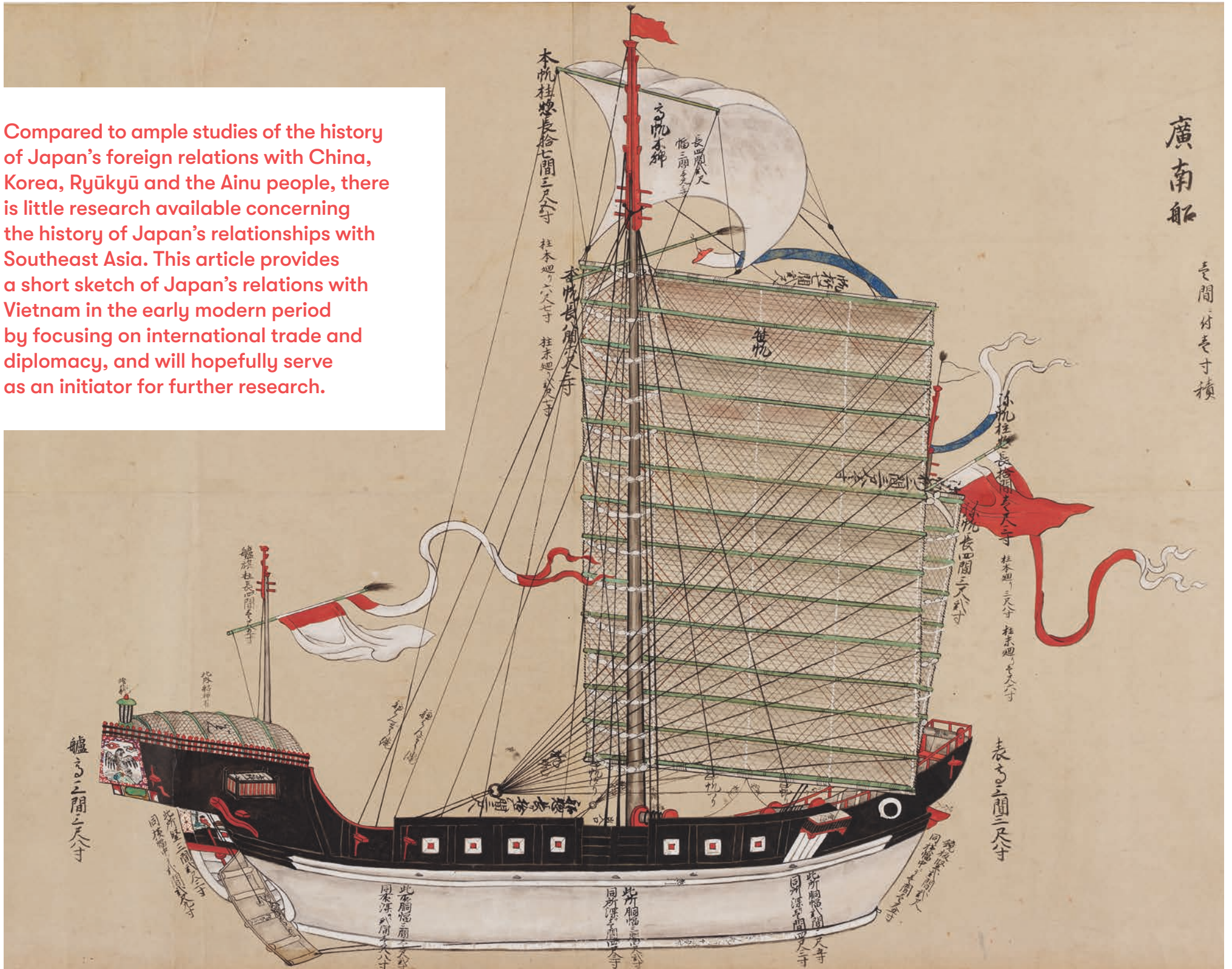


The disappearance of a common script undermined this sense of belonging to the same cultural universe.



A page from Phạm Đình Hổ, Chinese-nôm dictionary *Nhật dụng thường đàm* [Everyday Conversations], 1851. National Library of Vietnam.

Compared to ample studies of the history of Japan's foreign relations with China, Korea, Ryūkyū and the Ainu people, there is little research available concerning the history of Japan's relationships with Southeast Asia. This article provides a short sketch of Japan's relations with Vietnam in the early modern period by focusing on international trade and diplomacy, and will hopefully serve as an initiator for further research.



Junk ship from CochinChina (Courtesy of Matsura Historical Museum)

Beyond diplomacy

Japan and Vietnam in the 17th and 18th centuries

Ryuto Shimada

Tokugawa Japan (1603-1867; also known as the Edo period) set in motion a unique systematic policy for foreign trade and diplomacy with the establishment of the so-called *sakoku* isolationist policy in the 1630s, which continued until the 1850s when Japan signed the treaty to open ports for trade to Western countries such as Great Britain and the United States of America. The *sakoku* policy limited international trade to four gateway ports: Tsushima, Matsumae, Satsuma and Nagasaki.

The first three gateway ports were each managed by a *han* [clan] under the supervision of the Tokugawa central government. Tsushima was assigned to manage foreign relations with the Kingdom of Chosŏn (Korea), Satsuma took care of affairs with the Kingdom of Ryūkyū (present-day Okinawa), and Matsumae interacted with the Ainu people on the island of Hokkaidō. The port of Nagasaki was an

exemption. This gateway was managed by the Governor, appointed by the Tokugawa central authorities, and it was the most important gateway port in terms of the scale of foreign trade. Only two types of vessels were permitted to call at this port: those of the Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*; hereafter VOC), and *tōsen* [junk ships]. Literarily meaning 'Chinese ship', *tōsen* came in many varieties. During the 17th century in particular, several sorts of junks berthed at Nagasaki: junks from Taiwan under the control of Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga), who attempted a revival of the Chinese Ming dynasty; junks from Chinese coastal areas under the control of Qing China; and junks from ports in Southeast Asia, which were run and managed by overseas Chinese merchants.

While Tokugawa Japan officially continued to keep diplomatic relations only with Korea and Ryūkyū, Japan held a multi-directed

foreign trade policy, realized through these four gateway ports, not only with Korea and Ryūkyū but also with other countries such as China, Southeast Asian states and the Netherlands. Thanks to several sorts of junk ships coming from the China Sea region, Japan successfully obtained a set of Asian commodities, such as raw silk and sugar, at reasonable prices without sending out its own Japanese vessels to China and Southeast Asia.

Japan's trade with Vietnam

Before the establishment of Japan's *sakoku* isolationist policy in the 1630s, Vietnam's trade with Japan was mainly conducted by Japanese merchants holding the so-called 'red-sealed letters' provided by the Tokugawa *shōgun*'s central authorities. But after Japanese nationals were banned from going abroad by Tokugawa central authorities in 1635, international trade between Japan and Vietnam began to be run by overseas Chinese settled in Vietnam in cooperation with Japanese immigrants living there, and who best knew the conditions of the Japanese market. In addition to overseas Chinese traders in Vietnam, the VOC conducted trade between Japan and Vietnam under the framework of the intra-Asian trade.

The Japanese categorized junk ships from Vietnam according to their place of embarkation. The first category was the ships that came from Tonkin (present-day Hanoi) in Northern Vietnam, which was the capital of the Trịnh regime. The second category was called *Kannan* (or *Kannam*), and were ships

originating from the middle of Vietnam, for example, from the port city of Hoi An, formerly known as Fai-Fo or Faifoo. These ships were under the control of the Nguyễn regime. The third category covered junk ships from Champa, south of the territory of Nguyễn Cochinchina.

The international division of labor was a basis for this maritime trade. As direct trade between Japan and mainland China had come to a halt following the maritime ban in Ming China (1368-1644), Vietnam came to be regarded as a substitute source of raw silk for the Japanese market. Vietnam also exported cinnamon, several types of sugar, aloeswood (used in incense and perfume), rayskin, and animal hides (deer, buffalo, etc.) to Japan.

Silver was the most significant trading item from Japan to Vietnam. In addition to silver, copper bar and copper cash were also exported from Japan to Vietnam. Japanese copper was smelted in Vietnam and used to manufacture guns and other weapons; some of the copper cash was in circulation as a small denomination currency in Vietnam. Miscellaneous goods such as lacquerware and house utensils were also shipped to Vietnam from Japan.

The VOC was also engaged in the Vietnamese trade, where it maintained trading posts in Tonkin and Cochinchina. The Vietnamese trade was important for the Dutch Japan trade; in order for the VOC to acquire large volumes of silver in Japan, it needed Asian products for the Japanese market. Trade between Japan and Vietnam was done under the framework of the VOC's intra-Asian trade: by supplying Southeast Asian goods to Japan, the VOC obtained silver and copper from Japan and then sold Japanese copper in South Asia, where it could procure Indian cotton textiles for the market in Southeast Asia. Through this triangular trade in Asian waters the Dutch company was able to reduce silver exports from the Netherlands to purchase Asian products such as spices for the European market, and to ultimately obtain large profits.

The rise of the Chinese junk network

In the late 17th century, the economic links between Japan and Vietnam began to decline. There were various reasons, including the Ming-Qing transition, the arrival of political peace in China and the recovery of the Sino-Japan trade. After the surrender of the Zheng family in Taiwan (Kingdom of Tungning; 1661-1683) to Qing China, the trading pattern of junk traders changed on a large scale around the China Sea region. Until 1683, most junk traders had been overseas Chinese settlers in Vietnam. Some of these overseas Chinese were merchants and some were junk ship crew members. Afterwards, more Chinese junk traders from mainland China began to participate in the Vietnam-Japan trade. In 1692, for example, 45 Chinese and only 6 Tonkinese were registered on a particular junk ship from Tonkin to Nagasaki.

But then, due to the rapid increase of the numbers of Chinese junk ships coming from the Yangtze River Delta in the 1680s, Japan undertook to restrict the volume of international trade. And so, in 1715, the *Shōtoku Shinrei* Act was issued by the Japanese Tokugawa central authorities. This act introduced a new restriction policy for international trade, and the pattern of maritime trade by junk ships began to change again in the China Sea region. From 1715, to around the 1760s, Vietnam trade with Japan was conducted only by Chinese traders based in ports around the Yangtze River Delta, such as Zhapu and Shanghai. They departed from ports in the Yangtze River Delta, headed to Vietnam to procure Vietnamese goods for Japan, and shipped onwards to Nagasaki. Copper purchased in Nagasaki was sold in mainland China. However, during the 1760s, Vietnamese products became widely available in the Yangtze River Delta, and so Chinese junks for the Japan trade no longer needed to travel to Vietnam. In fact, the

last junks to sail to Nagasaki (according to VOC records) from Tonkin and Cochinchina did so in 1763 and 1767 respectively, and from Champa already in 1735.

This change in the pattern of junk ship trade was not only seen between Japan and Vietnam, but also generally for the junk trade between Japan and other Southeast Asian ports, such as Ayutthaya and Batavia. By and large, the junk trade at Nagasaki became dominated by mainland Chinese traders from the Yangtze River Delta, where Southeast Asian products were extensively available thanks to the development of the Chinese junk trading network around the China Sea region.

Diplomatic relations with Korea, China and Vietnam

Unlike with Korea, Japan refrained from official diplomatic relations with the states in Southeast Asia after Japan's establishment of the *sakoku* isolationist policy in the 1630s. For example, when Thai King Narai took the throne of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya in 1656, he sent a mission to Japan with his official Royal letter addressed to the *shōgun*. In this letter King Narai expressed his wishes to reopen diplomatic relations with Japan in order to further develop the international trade between both countries. In spite of the King's eagerness, the Tokugawa central authorities refused his request.

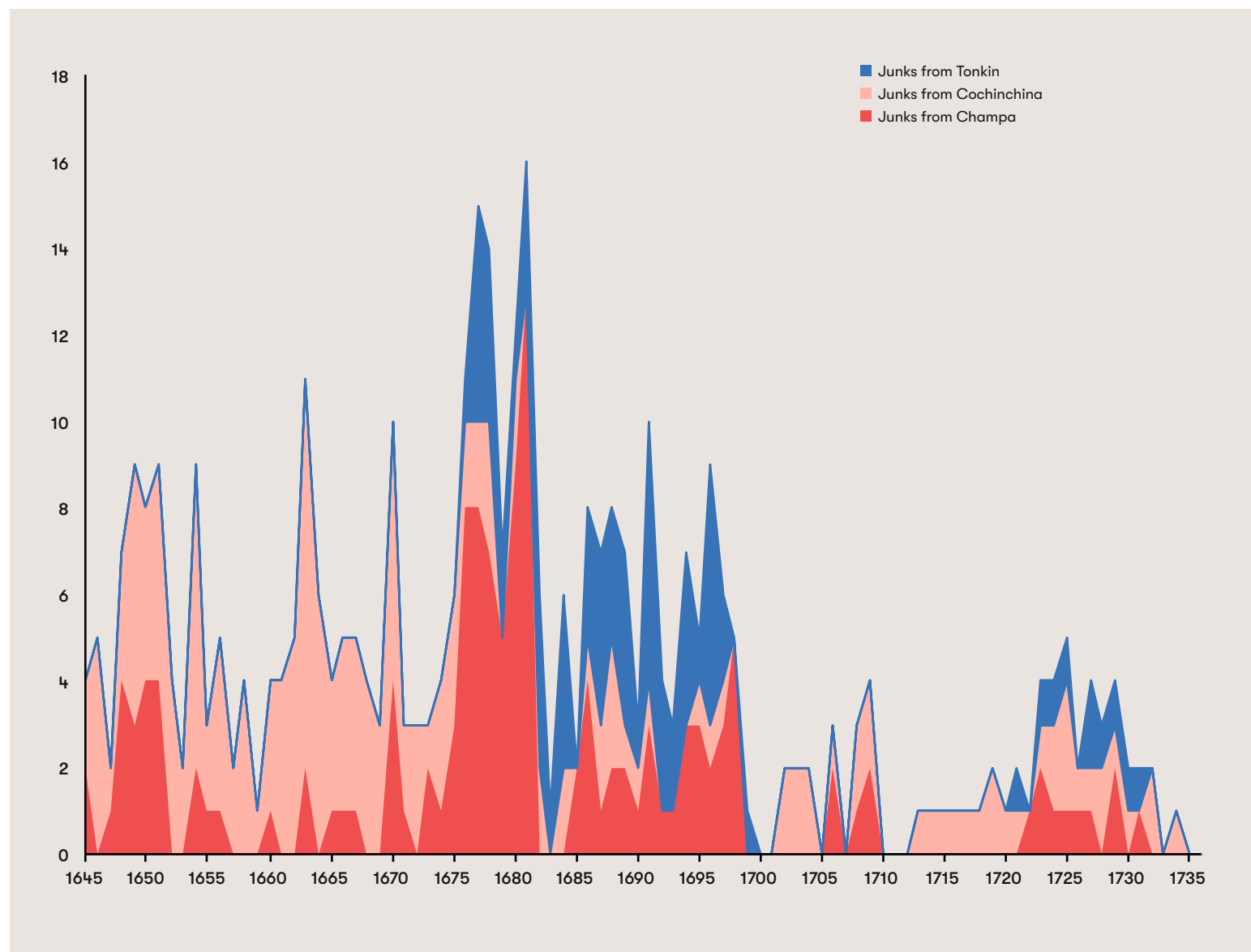
By contrast, the Tokugawa central authorities did choose to reopen diplomatic relations with Korea in 1607, when the Tokugawa central authorities accepted a Korean mission to Edo (currently Tokyo). Japan's new political regime of Tokugawa shōgunate was intent on putting an end to the awkward atmosphere between Japan and Korea after the Japanese invasions to Korea led by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the late sixteenth century (1592-98). From 1607 to 1811 Korean official diplomatic missions

to Japan amounted to twelve. Except for the last mission in 1811 to Tsushima island, all other missions arrived at Edo and contributed to the establishment and preservation of peace between the two countries, even in the eighteenth century when Japan-Korea international trade had declined. Interestingly though, this foreign relationship was somewhat strange because it lacked a full exchange of missions; the Tokugawa central authorities never sent a diplomatic mission to the capital city of Korea. This was likely due to the simple fact that Korea feared a Japanese visit could lead to a repeat of a Japanese invasion.

The Tokugawa central authorities also never established official diplomatic relationship with Qing China. If negotiations were necessary between these two countries, for instance, when castaway people were sent back to Japan from China, local governors or officers would just exchange letters.

Vietnam was also 'rejected'; in 1688, the King of Cochinchina sent an official letter to the *shōgun* to ask for copper cash from Japan, yet the Tokugawa central authorities never sent an official letter back to Vietnam. However, while the Tokugawa central authorities did not wish for official diplomacy, they did want to maintain positive practical relations, for example, through the Governor of Nagasaki. In other words, Japan continued to make an effort to keep peaceful links with Vietnamese states without an official relationship at the top levels. For example, the King of Cochinchina sent a letter to the Governor of Nagasaki in 1695 to show his thankfulness for sending Vietnamese castaways back from Japan. These Vietnamese castaways were secured by a Chinese junk ship going to Nagasaki and they were sent back from Nagasaki to Cochinchina under the supervision of the Japanese Governor of Nagasaki. Another example took place in 1795; seventeen Japanese castaways discovered on the Vietnamese coast were brought back to Nagasaki by a Chinese junk ship.

Junks from Vietnam to Nagasaki, 1647-1738



Links between Japan and Southeast Asia

In terms of trade, there was clear competition between various traders. The VOC competed with several Asian indigenous traders. Among Asian traders, Chinese junk traders were dominant, although Chinese traders were not a single monolithic group. Each Chinese junk trader group emerged and declined in the course of time. Through these processes, a well-organized Chinese junk trading network was established in and around East Asia and Southeast Asia. The development of these trading networks and the competition among traders contributed to the efficient economic development in the China Sea region. Further research on trade and diplomacy shall help us paint the whole picture of economic change in East Asia and Southeast Asia in terms of the international division of labor.

One final remark on conducting further research is that it will entail a multi-archival method. Japanese and Chinese records are extant; especially local archives at Nagasaki offer detailed information. However, historians benefit hugely from consulting the archives of the VOC. This company was a key trader, and connector of Southeast Asian states, China and Japan. Dutch records provide historians not only with detailed information about the company, but also concerning its competitors, because this wise merchant company was highly sensitive to the activities of its rivals.

The introduction of revolutionary 'new books' and Vietnamese intellectuals in the early 20th century

Youn Dae-yeong

The First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) widened the Chinese intellectuals' vision. They realized China's weakness in the face of Japanese military intrusions and felt the need to transform their country into a prosperous 'modern' nation. Chinese reformers began to develop journalism and translate numerous European and Japanese works in order to introduce their compatriots to the various fields of Western sciences and ideas. As was the case with China, and thanks to the dissemination of 'new books' introducing reform ideas, intellectuals in Vietnam as well as in Korea also started to look to the outside world to help them reconsider their own lands. This paper analyses the Vietnamese case where the movement was particularly effective.

As Rebecca E. Karl demonstrates, the understanding by European and Japanese scholarship of contemporary events in countries such as Poland, the Philippines, and Hawaii influenced the way Chinese thinkers thought about the future direction of their own country.¹ On that basis, between the late 19th century and the early 20th century, reform ideas were introduced from China to Vietnam and Korea through the so-called 'new books' (*xinshu* 新書 in Chinese; *tân thư* in Vietnamese), which were the vehicle of a 'new learning' (*tân học* in Vietnamese). The intellectual progress in respectively Vietnam and Korea was tangible and comparable. However, a difference soon appeared in the degree of distribution of 'new learning' in Vietnam by the revolutionary party of Sun Yatsen (孫逸仙).

How did Vietnamese reformers and Chinese revolutionaries encounter each other? Did the Chinese emigrants to Indochina play a role in developing a network of communications between the Chinese and Vietnamese activists? Was there strong interaction between these two groups? Finally, what was the political position of the Vietnamese reformers? To answer these questions one should explore the dissemination of revolutionary 'new books' into Vietnamese society, via a complex web of agents and a path of circulation that has one locus in Europe, and more specifically, Paris.

The complex circulation of revolutionary magazines into Vietnam

From the end of February 1903, the presence of the Chinese revolutionary Sun Yatsen in Indochina was a great matter of concern to Governor General Paul Beau because of the plots that the revolutionary could possibly foment with the numerous Chinese nationals residing in the colony. In fact, Paul Beau supposed that Sun Yatsen had a considerable influence on the secret societies that counted among their members a part of Indochina's Chinese residents, as well as a few Annamese.² Jean-Louis de Lanessan, former Military Governor of French Indochina, wrote on 10 July 1908: "Today, there can be no doubt that there are communications between the Annamese rebels and Chinese reform associations."³ As Governor General Antony W. Klobukowski later also pointed out (1908), it is in large part from the Chinese revolutionary literature that Vietnamese intellectuals gained their reform creed and their new ideas.⁴ In fact, biographies of Chinese revolutionaries as well as Chinese journals and magazines published by Sun Yatsen's party penetrated more and more into Vietnam during the early 20th century. The magazine *Xin Shiji* (新世紀 *La Tampoj Novaj*, *Le Siècle Nouveau*, *New Century*) is a very interesting example (fig. 1).



The first issue of *Xin Shiji* (新世紀/*Le Siècle Nouveau*/*New Century*). Source: AMAE (Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères/Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs), NS (Nouvelle Série/*New Collection*), vol.695, file: 'Affaires contentieuses. Pièces et affaires diverses' [Contentious cases. Various documents and cases].

Xin Shiji was founded in Paris by a group of Chinese anarchists and revolutionaries, including Wu Zihui (吳稚暉), Zhang Renji (張人傑), and Li Shizeng (李石曾); its first issue appeared on 22 June 1907. The newspaper printed 1500 copies, which were not sold in Paris, but were shipped directly to China. Bundles of *Xin Shiji*, which were distributed clandestinely in the French colony as well as in the Chinese empire, also found their way into many Vietnamese villages.⁵ Issue n° 101 (12 June 1909) indicates that it was distributed

free of charge to subscribers in the city of Hà Nội. *Xin Shiji* was published weekly until its final issue, n° 164, at the end of June 1910. *Xin Shiji* advocated the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty by an insurrectional movement, and was thus considered to be a revolutionary magazine and an anti-Manchu and anarchist journal by the Chinese government, who ordered post offices at all Chinese entry ports to confiscate *Xin Shiji* as soon as it was shipped into the country. In addition to regular papers and essays, the magazine also

featured the written correspondence between a Chinese person in Indochina and a newspaper in Formosa; the correspondence implied the desire of the Vietnamese people, particularly the Tonkinese, to expel the French from their colonized territory. According to the Chinese local correspondent, these independence projects were maintained by the introduction into Vietnam of revolutionary works, many of which the Governor General of Indochina had already seized. The Chinese emigrants in France and Vietnam, in particular the Chinese communities originating from the city-port Swatow,⁶ played a crucial role. The revolutionary propaganda and the exaltation of political assassination could definitely have had an impact on the spirit of the Vietnamese people.

In Vietnam, the reform ideas and movements of the early 20th century were divided into two trends: the supporters of pacific reform and the supporters of uprising and revolution. It is under the influence of radical ideas that the latter proposed to resort to external assistance and foment insurrection in order to recover national independence. And so a revolutionary movement was hatched, just as designed by the 'new books' originating from the party of Sun Yatsen. Little by little, a group of Vietnamese reformers turned to the Chinese revolutionary party that seemed capable of carrying out the task of reorganizing Vietnam.

Encounters between Vietnamese reformers and Chinese revolutionaries

While Korean reformers had little direct links with Chinese revolutionaries in the early 20th century, Vietnamese reformers were actively making contact with them. The case of the famous Vietnamese revolutionary leader Phan Bội Châu, the founder of the *Đông Du* (*Journey to the East*) political movement, is significant. Leaving Vietnam on his way to Japan at the beginning of 1905, Phan contacted Feng Ziyou (馮自由), one of Sun Yatsen's confidants, in Hong Kong. After his arrival in Japan, Phan did meet the Chinese revolutionary leader, who had returned from the United States and was residing in Yokohama. Phan Bội Châu also had numerous contacts with other Chinese comrades. He had also been able to read the revolutionary 'new books' translated into Chinese such as *Contrat Social* (*The Social Contract*) by Rousseau and *L'Esprit des Lois* (*The Spirit of the Laws*) by Montesquieu; in his autobiography, Phan Bội Châu swore that he had already disposed of the monarchical doctrines in his mind.⁷ In this regard, the concerns of the Chinese and French authorities were well-grounded: the influence of Chinese emigrants in Vietnam on their local 'comrades', and the subsequent repercussions of the Chinese revolutionary movement

Dr. Sun Yat-sen (far right) together with his Japanese friends in Tokyo, 1900. Image: Wikimedia Commons.



The influence of Chinese emigrants in Vietnam could develop into a conspiracy formed by ‘agitators of the two countries’.

in Indochina, could develop into the real possibility of a conspiracy formed by ‘agitators of the two countries’ (i.e., China and Vietnam).

Having entered into relations with young Chinese reformers in Japan in 1905, Phan Bội Châu established contacts with Chinese students in Yunnan and Guangxi, and subsequently formed a Yunnan-Guangxi-Vietnam League in the summer of 1907. These exchanges were maintained thereafter in Vietnam. There was at least a branch of this league in Hà Nội, called the ‘League of Two Nam’ (Việt Nam and Vân Nam = Yunnan). In addition, during a secret visit to his country at the beginning of 1907,⁸ Phan actively supported direct contact between Chinese and Vietnamese activists. Phan’s political action and propaganda was expanded with the help of the Yunnanese revolutionary group in Indochina; these Chinese emigrants played an important role in encouraging meetings intended for possible cooperation among revolutionaries.⁹

Moreover, like the Chinese revolutionaries, Vietnamese patriots began to take advantage of the unrest in the two countries. Phạm Quỳnh (1892-1945), a monarchist who served as a government minister under Emperor Bảo Đại’s administration, wrote in a note about Phan Chu Trinh:¹⁰ “In reality, the Vietnamese reformers secretly nurtured a hope of fomenting a revolution against the protectorate with Chinese assistance. The attempts of 1908 and the following years were the consequence of all these movements.”¹¹

From tax resistance to uprising

As one of the concrete outcomes of revolutionary agitation that ultimately led to the 1911 Xinhai Revolution in China, it is very interesting to compare the origin and development of the respective tax resistance movements in China and Vietnam. Indeed, the most important cause of unrest in China as well as in Vietnam resided in the weight of the taxes. In the early 20th century, the increase of taxes and the creation of new taxes in China caused a general discontent among the population of Guangdong (廣東), where serious disorders erupted in several locations between April and July 1907.¹² Immediately after those events in South China, a tax resistance movement occurred in Central Vietnam, where the taxes had been increased with more speed. On 6 February 1908, the decision imposed on the residents of the Province of Quảng Nam to immediately provide the newly required corvée labor ignited violent opposition. On 12 March 1908, a few hundred inhabitants of the sub-prefecture Đại Lộc gathered in front of the local governor’s residence to demand the reduction of taxes. Other demonstrations ensued between April and May in Quảng Nam

as well as other provinces and cities: Quảng Ngãi, Thừa Thiên, Phú Yên, Nha Trang, and Phan Thiết.¹³

While it is hard to track the actual connections between China and Vietnam regarding tax resistance, beyond parallel dynamics and similar chronology, the April 1908 Hekou (河口) uprising in Yunnan shows that a conspiracy had been jointly prepared by unknown Chinese and Vietnamese revolutionary activists. In the night of 29 April, the market of Hekou, located on the Sino-Vietnamese border opposite the border town Lào Cai, was attacked by a group of Chinese revolutionary partisans. It is very likely that secret agreements had been reached between the Chinese rebels and the Vietnamese soldiers of the garrison stationed in Indochina. The Vietnamese gunners participated in this military operation: the French military

Robert, responsible for the outpost, heard “the bullets whistle above his head”.¹⁴ Moreover, after the failure of four Sino-Vietnamese border uprisings between 1907 and 1908, most of the Chinese revolutionaries had returned to Tonkin, in particular to Hà Nội. From then on, the revolutionary campaign moved from the border to the inland area, and took on new forms.

On 27 June 1908, the first part of the insurrection plot was carried out. At dinner, two French infantry companies of the Hà Nội garrison were poisoned – and barely survived. It is an established fact that Chinese revolutionaries were involved in this conspiracy of Vietnamese activists planning to poison the French troops. The attempted poisoning was executed by the employees who were working in the barracks and the plan was to remove arms and ammunitions from the colonial forces. Immediately after the French authorities discovered this criminal plot, a curfew was enforced and a large number of suspects were captured. Because of the involvement of several Chinese revolutionary refugees in this conspiracy, approximately one thousand of them were thrown in jail.¹⁵

At the time, the French authorities began to suspect that Lương Văn Can, one of the founders of Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục (the Tonkin Free School¹⁶), was a member of ‘secret societies’, and that he was also maintaining relations with several persons who had taken part in this poisoning conspiracy. Later, his ongoing relations with Ernest Babut, former French director of Đại Việt Tân Báo (Đại Việt Times), were equally significant. Ernest Babut, a socialist activist in the Human Rights League, critical of colonial rule and considered an agitator, was not only the defender of the Vietnamese reformers, but also of the Chinese revolutionaries. On 10 November 1909, Babut had a meeting with Lương Văn Can about financial issues. Before parting with Lương after the meeting, Babut showed him the portrait of Sun Yat-sen and told him: “He is one of my good friends. A lot of Vietnamese ought to be like him.”¹⁷

Compared to Korea, the introduction of revolutionary ‘new books’ into Vietnam benefited from several specific factors:

the relatively stable presence of Chinese emigrants in Vietnamese society, the extension of the influence of Sun Yat-sen into Indochina and the dissemination of revolutionary ideas and movements. In particular, the uprisings that shook South China in the early years of the 1900s had their inevitable impact on Vietnam. Unlike in Korea, where the resistance against the Japanese was not fueled from outside ideas and groups, the territory of Indochina thus served as the basis for the establishment of a furnace of revolutionary propaganda against the colonial government.

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Notes

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- 2 AMAE (Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères/Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs), NS (Nouvelle Série/New Collection), Chine, vol. 6, ‘Hanoi, le 26 février 1903. Paul Beau, gouverneur général de l’Indo-Chine, à Doumergue, ministre des Colonies’ [Hanoi, 26 February 1903, Paul Beau, Governor General of Indochina to Doumergue, Ministry of the Colonies], f.109-111.
- 3 Jean-Louis de Lanessan, former Governor General of Indochina, ‘Contre la domination française en Indo-Chine. Le mouvement révolutionnaire s’étend. Le remède, c’est une entente franco-chinoise’ [Against the French domination in Indochina. The revolutionary movement is spreading. The remedy is in Franco-Chinese alliance], *Le Siècle (Century)*, 10 July 1908, in AMAE, NS, China, vol.200, p.223.
- 4 AMAE, NS, Indochina, vol.17, ‘Saigon, le 18 septembre 1908. Le gouverneur général de l’Indochine au ministre des Colonies, Paris. Création de consulats chinois en Indo-Chine.’ [Saigon, 18 September 1908. The Governor General of Indochina to the Ministry of Colonies, Paris. Creation of Chinese Consulates in Indochina.], f.145.
- 5 AMAE, NS, China, vol.18, ‘Le 4 mai 1909. La presse chinoise du 26 avril au 1er mai 1909’ [4 May 1909. Chinese press from 26 April to 1 May], f.16.
- 6 Shantou, formerly romanized as Swatow, is located on the Easter Coast of Guangdong. A city significant during the 19th Century, as it was one of the treaty ports established for Western trade.
- 7 Phan Bội Châu. 1957. *Phan Bội Châu Niên Biểu* [A chronological autobiography of Phan Bội Châu]. Hà Nội, Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Sử Địa, pp.75,139-140.
- 8 Phan Bội Châu lived in Japan from 1905 until 1908. This visit was his second secret visit to Vietnam during his exile in Japan.
- 9 Phan Bội Châu. 1957. *Phan Bội Châu Niên Biểu* [A chronological autobiography of Phan Bội Châu]. Hà Nội, Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Sử Địa, p.119; Nguyễn Hiến Lê. 2002. *Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục* [Tonkin Free School]. Hà Nội, Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Thông Tin, pp.128-129.
- 10 Phan Chu Trinh (also known Phan Châu Trinh) was a Vietnamese nationalist.
- 11 Phạm Quỳnh. 1926. ‘Phan Chu Trinh’ *Nam Phong* [South Wind], n°104, p.32.
- 12 AMAE, NS, Indochina, vol. 20, ‘Fonctionnement de la police mixte à la frontière sino-annamite pendant le mois d’avril 1907’ [Work of the border police at the Sino-Annamite border during the month of April 1907], f.187.
- 13 Nguyễn Thế Anh. 1992. *Monarchie et Fait Colonial au Việt-Nam (1875-1925)* [Monarchy and colonial situation in Vietnam (1875-1925)], Paris, L’Harmattan, pp.215-216.
- 14 Archives des Missions Étrangères de Paris [Archives of the Foreign Missions of Paris], vol.543B-1 (Yunnan) and f.28, vol.711A (Haut-Tonkin), f.50.
- 15 Teo Eng-hock. 1933. *Nanyang and the Founding of the Chinese Republic*, Shanghai, p.63.
- 16 The Tonkin Free School was an educational institution founded to reform Vietnamese society under French colonialism at the time.
- 17 See Archives d’Outre-Mers [Overseas Archives], ‘Fonds du Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine’ [Documents of the General Government of Indochina], f.4.151.



Page from the Đại Việt Tân Báo (Đại Việt Times).



Rival nationalisms and the rebranding of language in early 20th century Tonkin¹

John D. Phan

The French colonization of Vietnam in the mid-late 19th century generated a massive and traumatic conduit, along which a rich diversity of technologies, products, social values, and cultural concepts, traveled with alarming speed. One of the most influential concepts to be imported from Europe was the model of French nationalism, and the notion of an invisible fellowship that bound together the people of a state through a shared and monolithic history, culture, and most significantly—language.

Alongside these new nationalist concepts, the Vietnamese were deeply influenced by contemporary efforts to modernize, and resist either the threat or reality of colonialism in other parts of the world. These forces converged to form a particularly volatile intellectual space over the first few decades of the 20th century; and in the center and the north, where traditional education in Literary Chinese and the Confucian Classics continued to receive entrenched support, the debates over language and education came to occupy the center of the nationalist conversation.² Yet by the end of 1919, the civil service examinations had been dismantled in Hue, and the *lycée Albert Sarraut* (where many of Vietnam's future leaders would be educated) was opened in Hanoi. In the same year, the French-endorsed literary magazine *Nam Phong* [Southern Wind] edited by Phạm Quỳnh (1892–1945), published both a famous defense of vernacular Vietnamese language as emblemized by the long narrative poem

known as *The Tale of Kiều* [Truyện Kiều 傳翹] by Phạm Quỳnh himself, as well as another article defending Literary Chinese as a cornerstone of Vietnamese national identity by the literatus Phạm Huy-Hồ. Despite the apparently opposing views of these two publications, a closer look reveals that they both support—or attempt to support—a vision of the Vietnamese nation that enshrined the vernacular language at its heart, and sought to identify a *national essence* [quốc túy 國粹] as encoded in Vietnamese literary and educational practice. The task at hand was to reconcile an older concept of Vietnamese identity—one that enshrined Literary Chinese at the heart of Vietnamese culture—with new concepts of nationalism that demanded Vietnamese vernacular as the ‘national language’. To do so, Phạm Quỳnh and Phạm Huy-Hồ had to grip the beast by both ends—rebranding and promoting the Vietnamese vernacular on one side, while redefining and denationalizing Literary Chinese on the other.

Phạm Quỳnh and the rebranding of language in the modern nation

Despite fluency in both Literary Chinese and modern Mandarin, Phạm Quỳnh was not classically educated, but rather a graduate of the school of interpreters and a beneficiary of French education. As both Ho Tai Hue-Tam and David Marr have noted, Phạm Quỳnh himself was possessed of a vision of Vietnamese national identity deeply influenced both by European models of the nation-state, and efforts to modernize throughout East and South Asia, such as the *national essence* sub-movement of contemporary Chinese neo-traditionalists, and the views of the Indian intellectual Rabindranath Tagore.³ As Hue-Tam Ho Tai put forth, Phạm Quỳnh spearheaded a Vietnamese instantiation of Chinese neo-traditionalist thought, which sought to identify the quintessence of Vietnamese culture in order to preserve it, and—like Rabindranath Tagore's vision for South Asia—ultimately merge it with western features of civilization in order to produce a new modern Vietnam.

Phạm Quỳnh was perhaps best known as the editor-in-chief of *Nam Phong*, selected by the Governor-General of Indochina, Albert Sarraut, and the chief of the *sûreté*, Louis Marty, to use the magazine to promote collaboration with the French colonial regime. For this, Phạm Quỳnh became almost universally reviled for what was perceived to be a pro-colonial and collaboratorist stance.

Phạm Quỳnh sought to define a Vietnamese quintessence rooted in the Vietnamese language, which nevertheless espoused a (perhaps diluted) version of classical values—and which would in turn remain open and amenable to French influence. This required the drawing of new lines around language, culture, and society, that made the older concept of a Vietnamese nation—one in which Vietnamese language was only considered secondary in power and expressivity to Literary Chinese—awkward and unacceptable. Although Phạm Quỳnh drew heavy criticism—especially from anticolonial intellectuals like Ngô Đức Kế 吳德繼 (1879–1929)—even his greatest detractors would eventually embrace both the Vietnamese vernacular, and the romanized alphabet (*Quốc Ngữ*; lit.: national language) as the new linguistic vehicles of modern Vietnamese nationalism.

The *Nam Phong* project strongly recalls Benedict Anderson's seminal description of modern nationalism, particularly the standardization and promotion of a ‘print language’ as a powerful tool for nationalistic self-articulation, to the empowerment of certain capitalist and political agendas (and at the expense of pre-national diversity). As Anderson also noted, the essential fantasy of the nation was founded on an imagined fellowship defined by shared language, ethnicity, and cultural beliefs. From this perspective, Phạm Quỳnh may be viewed as passionately dedicated to reifying a particular (and particularly elitist) vision of Vietnamese nationhood, which enshrined vernacular language and vernacular literature at its heart.

This agenda is made particularly clear in Phạm Quỳnh's famous defense of the *Tale of Kiều* as the definitive repository of Vietnamese culture (or national essence), published in 1919.⁴ The universal love and acclaim of the poem today, is perhaps rooted in Phạm Quỳnh's 1919 elaborate and impassioned defense of the poem. Phạm Quỳnh begins with a series of rhetorical questions that attempt to reify and amplify the poem's universal popularity among the Vietnamese:⁵

[Among] the people of our country, who does not know *The Tale of Kiều*? Who has not memorized some measure of lines from *The Tale of Kiều*? Who does not know clearly the story of the maiden Kiều, or does not feel for Miss Kiều—a beautiful lady, cursed by fate, full of talent and beauty, but who encountered a destiny

Above: Page from 'the tale of Kiều'.
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of broken hearts, fifteen years of bitterness in life, as though cruelly spurned by Heaven so as to make a shining mirror for all those of shallow disposition?⁶

Although reviled as a collaborator, it is not hard to see how Phạm Quỳnh's views on the *Tale of Kiều* became so popular: he is a master of emotive rhetoric, armed with a deeply intuitive sense of literature. This combined with, as David Marr noted, the popularity of a message of 'language nationalism', amplified the voice of his message beyond his own deeply ambiguous reputation.⁷ But what is more interesting than the power of his rhetoric, is the cultural vision of the Vietnamese nation that he is constructing. In a rather grand move, Phạm Quỳnh attempts to sweep away all socio-economic and cultural diversity in Vietnam, and to extend his elitist vision of the Vietnamese nation far and beyond the educated class, by hitching it to the popularity of *The Tale of Kiều*.

In the following passage, Phạm Quỳnh assembles an image—not only of the universal, trans-class, trans-labor, transregional love for the poem—but also of a national identity based on that love, which unites all these disparate groups of Vietnamese:

But is it not wondrous that each and every class of people within our country—from men of literature and knowledge to the common worker, from those elites of the arched gates to those who work the fields gathering mulberry—that there are none who do not love the *Tale of Kiều*, none who read *The Tale of Kiều* and are not moved, as though experiencing those desperate situations, suffering that bitter pain, undergoing those catastrophes, and weathering the footsteps of those roads for themselves.⁸

Here, Phạm Quỳnh is actively fabricating an 'imagined community'—one in which people of all classes and backgrounds are bound together by a shared understanding of, and affection for, the *Tale of Kiều*.

The contradictory nature of this vision is self-evident, especially where Phạm Quỳnh refers to the reading [đọc] of the poem—an example of his privilege on display, despite his sweepingly inclusive rhetoric. Indeed, as Hue-Tam Ho Tai has discussed, Phạm Quỳnh's particular species of neo-traditionalism differs from Chinese instantiations precisely in its unstinting elitism.⁹

But the more important point here is that Phạm Quỳnh is attempting to construct a sense of the Vietnamese spirit as residing in Vietnamese vernacular literature. Over the course of the essay, Phạm Quỳnh hits virtually every note of the European model of a nationalist anthem, but repeatedly returns to the notion of one people who speak one language, and of that national language reposing in a national literature. In defense of the primacy of vernacular language to the nationalist project, Phạm Quỳnh first turns to France as an example:

The nations of Europe and America respect masters of literature more than emperors or kings, because the work of the spirit is more valuable and precious, its influence deeper and further, than works of a single era regarding the roads of governance. The names of King Louis XIV, of Napoleon I, may one day disappear, but the names of the famed, such as Pascal, Corneille, Racine—so long as there are men who speak French under heaven, so long as there are men who understand deep and subtle ideas, then [these] will never be forgotten.¹⁰

Establishing vernacular literature as a vessel for national culture sets up for the major crux of Phạm Quỳnh's entire agenda: to associate a Vietnamese national essence with the Vietnamese language. Phạm Quỳnh explains his promotion of this 'language nationalism' in the following passage:



Cover of the first issue of *Nam Phong*, published in 1917.

What is 'establishing language?' It is the conveyance of the highest ideals of ourselves, our most caring sympathies, the conveyance of all our feelings and our natures, crystalized into the spoken language of our country—that spoken language which has already undergone countless generations to take form, and which will certainly be inherited by countless generations, never lost. Thus, so long as marching time remains, our spirit will remain, and so long as our spirit remains, our language will never be lost. As such, is not the establishment of language a thing long-lived and undying in this life?¹¹

Once again, one is struck by the power of Phạm Quỳnh's rhetoric—an almost religious quality to the way in which he infuses his views of the nation and of history with emotion. This is where Phạm Quỳnh lays the abstract groundwork for his specific arguments about the *Tale of Kiều*: language is the repository for the entire intellectual experience of a people, and thus language—spoken language; vernacular language—is the vessel in which a nation's spirit resides. This leads us to Phạm Quỳnh's enshrinement of the *Tale of Kiều*—from his perspective, a uniquely rich, mosaic, profound, and subtle example of the vernacular language, expressing an unparalleled range of ideals, feelings, thoughts, and philosophies that he attributes to the spirit of the Vietnamese:

So long as there are Annamese living on this peninsula of the Eastern Seas, and so long as the Annamese still know how to speak the Annamese language, then *The Tale of Kiều* will continue to have readers. And so long as the *Tale of Kiều* continues to have readers, the spirit of the Master of Tiên Điền [i.e. Nguyễn Du] will continue to drift amid the rivers and mountains of the land, and [thus] Vietnam will never...be lost!¹²

Here, finally the link is made between poem and language, and ultimately, between poem and nation. The essence of the Vietnamese people is imagined as the spiritual essence of Nguyễn Du himself, maintained by the readership of the *Tale of Kiều*, drifting like an intangible current in the air, indestructible so long as the Vietnamese language remains. This message became Phạm Quỳnh's personal anthem, and despite his popular indictment by virtually all anticolonial factions, the union of the vernacular language with national identity proved, perhaps, the most durable cornerstone of modern Vietnamese national identity.

Rebranding literary Chinese in the new nationalism of the 20th century

Yet how did this new concept contend with the incumbent view, one which enshrined not vernacular Vietnamese, but Literary Chinese as the clearest expression of Vietnamese national identity? How did those who came to be swayed by Phạm Quỳnh's new nationalism reconcile older values and older concepts of what it meant to be Vietnamese? Some answers to these questions may be found in an article appearing in the same 1919 issue of *Nam Phong*, by an intellectual named Phạm Huy-Hồ. Known today primarily for his *Summary of National History and Philology* [*Quốc sử tiểu học lược biên* 國史小學略編, pub. 1907], Phạm Huy-Hồ's article was written ostensibly as an inquiry into the history of Chinese writing in Vietnam, and is entitled *Since What Era has Our Vietnam Known Han Writing?* [*Việt-Nam ta biết chữ Hán từ đời nào?*] However, the political and nationalist objectives of the author are made plain in the very first sentence:

Today, our country must study *Quốc Ngữ* and French letters, but neither must Chinese writing be abandoned.¹³

Clearly, the nation-state requirement to enshrine the vernacular language needed to reckon with the incumbent preeminence of Literary Chinese in Vietnamese society. The way in which Phạm Huy-Hồ chose to do this, was to revise the history of Chinese writing in Vietnam, starting from the very beginning. That beginning, in turn, he identifies as the very mythological dawn of the Vietnamese people:

I believe that we have known Chinese writing ever since the moment when the Hồng-Bàng clan first established our country. The Hồng-Bàng were the children of the clan of Shennong [*Thần-Nông*], already knew Chinese writing, and so of course taught it to their children.¹⁴

Here, Phạm Huy-Hồ repeats a claim initially found in the 15th century historical chronicle known as the *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*, linking the (perhaps mythological) Hồng Bàng dynasty with the Sinitic sage-king inventor of agriculture, Shennong.¹⁵ However, Phạm Huy-Hồ makes explicit what might be considered an implicit point in this association: if we accept it, we must also accept that the Hùng kings of the Hồng Bàng dynasty knew Chinese, and were perhaps even native Chinese speakers.

This historiographic construction, along with all of its controversial implications, not only raised no nationalist eyebrows in the 15th century (when the *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* was composed), but was in fact an integral feature of a double-articulated concept of the Vietnamese nation as a southern instantiation of classical culture that was formalized at this time.¹⁶ Since language was not tied to national identity in a zero-sum manner, and since Literary Chinese—if any language—occupied the central altar in Vietnamese quasi-national ethics of the time, there was absolutely nothing sacrificed in claiming Shennong as a forefather, and everything to gain. In the 20th century, however, such a view—incumbent as it was—forced a couple of questions that demanded resolution: 1) must Vietnam be understood as 'educated by the Chinese?' and 2) can Chinese writing and language belong to the Vietnamese nation, or must it be understood as essentially belonging to a Chinese nationalism? These are the questions that Phạm Huy-Hồ—as an inheritor of a pre-colonial concept of Vietnamese identity—was forced to confront in his *Nam Phong* article.

Phạm Huy-Hồ rather dexterously resolves these issues by arguing that Chinese writing is not 'Chinese' at all—at least not in the national sense:

To summarize, [as for] these square characters that Cang Jie originally established previously, of all the regions in East Asia it was first people from China that spread them, and thus all came immediately to know them as 'Han' characters before all else—[only] later adding native or regional writing. Our Vietnam joins two Han characters together to make Vietnamese *Chữ Nôm*. In the Two Quangs, they add or subtract strokes from Han characters to create the *Chữ Nôm* of the Two Quangs. In Japan, they took the forms from Han characters and joined them to make Japanese *Chữ Nôm*. Therefore, Han writing is writing common to all nations of East Asia, and not the writing of the Chinese nation alone—just as Latin letters are the root of writing over in Europe.¹⁷

This is the silver bullet that Phạm Huy-Hồ aims at those who might argue that Chinese writing belongs to China, or conversely

that Chinese writing does not belong to the Vietnamese nation. Note that Cang Jie, the legendary inventor of Chinese characters, is not here described as ‘Chinese’, but as a nationless sage who created writing in an antique age before all nationhood. The only special claim the Chinese have to Han characters is that they were the first to use and disseminate them.

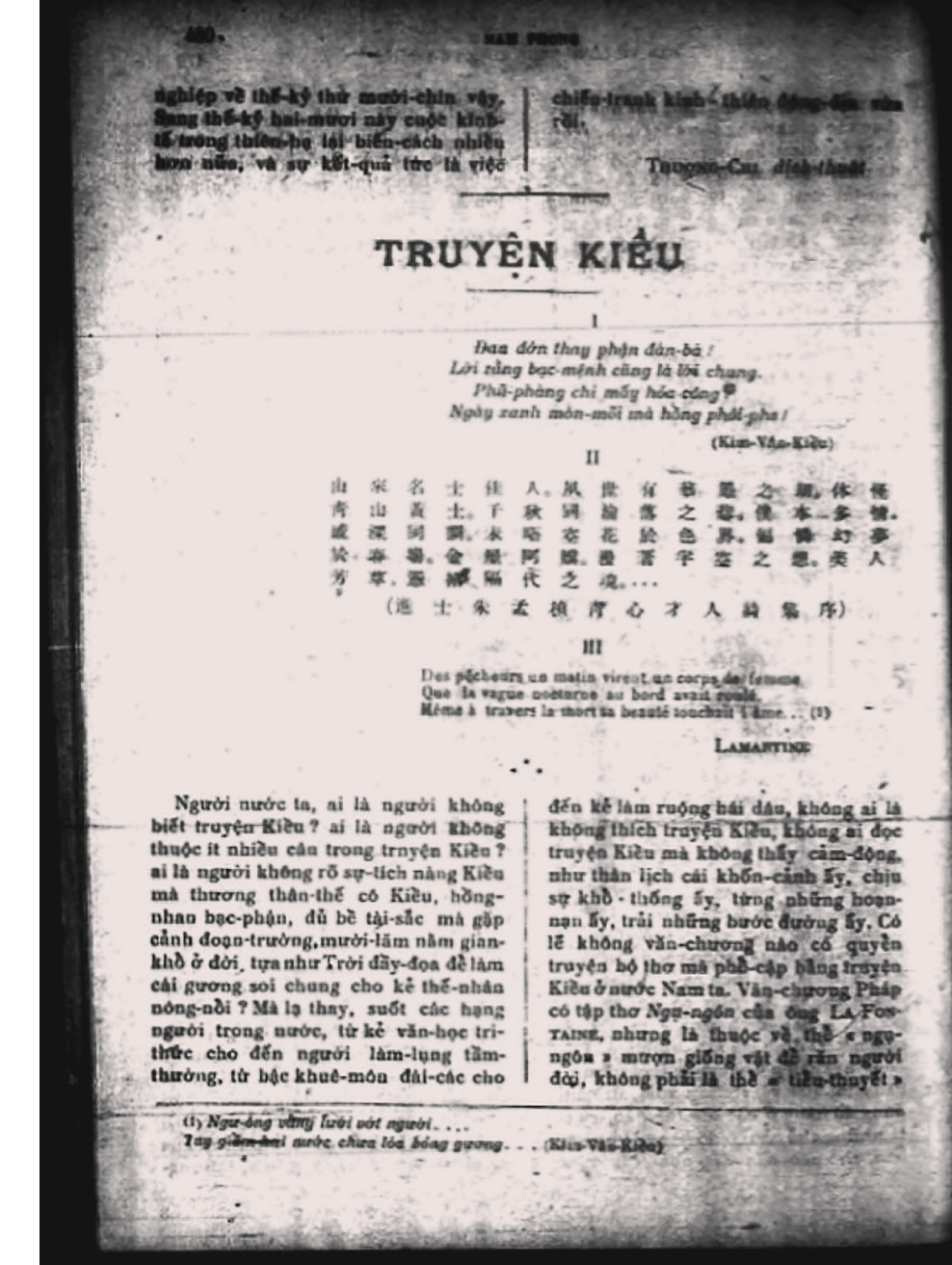
However, for Phạm Huy-Hồ, attributing China—not simply the *Middle Kingdom* [Trung Quốc 中國], but the Chinese nation—with the invention of writing was an unacceptable position, that precluded any claims by other East Asian nations to ownership of Sinitic writing and all developed out of it. Thus, while echoing the basic understanding of how writing was invented and disseminated across East Asia that had prevailed for centuries, Phạm Huy-Hồ also felt the need to break the explicit connection between the Chinese nation and the Sages of antiquity—responsible for the invention of writing (and other major civilizational achievements). China was now merely the first nation to appropriate and disseminate writing, rather than the culture or civilization that invented it. This clearly reflects the intervention of a new conceptualization of the Vietnamese nation based on the European nation-state, and it is no surprise that Phạm Huy-Hồ employs the analogy of Latin letters to support his claim here. The unspoken lynchpin of the argument is that Italy can no more claim special ownership of Latin letters than China could claim special ownership over Chinese characters.

In the next passage, Phạm Huy-Hồ makes it unassailably clear that this is the real crux of his article, and not a survey of when or how Chinese writing entered into Vietnamese society:

Why do the Chinese [as well as] we [the Vietnamese], call those square characters Han characters? Han means the Central Land [Trung-châu 中州], and it is that those characters were originally established in the Central Land. Thus, one must not call them ‘Chinese’ [Tàu]. In past days, China was comprised of more than a thousand countries, and later, merged into some hundreds of countries, and then slowly merged into a single country. And yet within that single country, today, one still reads those characters differently in different provinces. If hypothetically later on, China again divides into many countries, each with its own national designation, then regarding [the pronunciation] of those characters, how would you know which country’s tones and sounds to take as a model, calling those characters as belonging to such and such a country?¹⁸

Here, then, is Phạm Huy-Hồ’s answer to the elephant in the room: the fact that even the Vietnamese themselves call Chinese writing ‘Chinese writing’—or at least, Han writing. In a remarkable rejection of the actual etymology of the term Hán 漢 (which refers ultimately to the Han Dynasty—the first stable imperial dynasty after the classical period, and thus definitively post-dating the legitimately more diverse and less unified Zhou period, out of which the ‘classics’ emerged), Phạm Huy-Hồ baldly argues that the Hán here means Trung 中—[i.e., ‘central’]. The fact that this is not true aside, Phạm Huy-Hồ’s proposal essentially and explicitly rejects China’s national claim to Sinitic writing, and instead, decomposes Chinese history to delegitimize that claim. Remarkably, Phạm Huy-Hồ is responding precisely to what Benedict Anderson identified as one of the key features of an ‘imagined community’—the fantasy of an ancient and monolithic narrative of history. The Chinese nation, then, is not five thousand years old, is not monolithic, and may not lay claim in any innately authoritative way over something like the invention of writing. It is difficult not to detect, just beneath the surface of Phạm Huy-Hồ’s hypothetical scenario of a future splintered China, the analogy of a post-Roman Europe in which all nations feel free to lay claim to Latin cultural achievements, without the awkward presence of a living Roman Empire to complicate the narrative.

In these remarks, we see Phạm Huy-Hồ’s ultimate answer to the delicate demands of the *Nam Phong* vision of Vietnamese national identity: he must divorce Chinese writing from



First page of Phạm Quỳnh's 1919 essay on *The Tale of Kiều*.

China, so that its role as a pillar of Vietnamese national identity may be preserved. After presenting several arguments for the severe consequences of abandoning both Chinese characters and Literary Chinese language, Phạm Huy-Hồ finally states what he and generations before him had firmly believed about the role of the Chinese language in Vietnamese nationhood:

Chinese characters are intertwined with our nation's people, and cannot be disentangled. That is simply the way it is.¹⁹

The use of the word *quốc dân* [our nation's people]—a political neologism with explicitly nationalist connotations—makes it clear that Phạm Huy-Hồ's project in this article matches Phạm Quỳnh's agenda for *Nam Phong*: the construction of a new model of the Vietnamese nation. For Phạm Huy-Hồ, any definition of Vietnamese nationhood would be meaningless without the presence of Chinese writing. This in turn expresses a concept of Vietnamese culture and nationhood stretching back at least to the 15th century. But this attachment to Literary Chinese required a massaging of the monolingual definitions of nationhood that France and the western world had brought to Vietnam. While Phạm Quỳnh focused on the proper enshrinement of the Vietnamese vernacular language, Phạm Huy-Hồ felt the need to denationalize Chinese writing in order to preserve at least some place for it in this vision of the Vietnamese nation. Of course, despite his pleas, all forms of Sinitic writing would die out within two decades.

Conclusions

Phạm Quỳnh's enshrinement of the vernacular may seem strikingly at odds with the task and sentiments of Phạm Huy-Hồ discussed above—but only if we ignore Phạm Huy-Hồ's major preoccupation in his defense of Chinese writing. Recall that Phạm Huy-Hồ felt a powerful need to disassociate Chinese writing from the Chinese nation—to strip the potential for a nationalist connection between the Chinese people and Chinese

Vietnam and Korea in the *longue durée*. Negotiating tributary and colonial positions.

characters, so that he could feel free to claim Chinese writing for Vietnam (something that never had posed a problem before colonization). But even in claiming Chinese writing (and by implication, Literary Chinese language) as part of Vietnam's national identity, it remains clear that Phạm Huy-Hồ was writing under the pressure of a new vision of the nation, promoted by Phạm Quỳnh—one in which the true repository for the Vietnamese spirit could never be Literary Chinese, or Chinese characters—but only the Vietnamese vernacular. That is why Phạm Huy-Hồ's article proceeds from the position that “Chinese characters should not also be abandoned”. It is a defense in retreat, a compromise between older concepts of Vietnamese identity formed in the wake of the Ming occupation centuries earlier, and the new nationalism, which imagined a single ethnicity, a single language, and a single culture. Phạm Huy-Hồ's hope for the maintenance of Chinese writing in Vietnamese society were eventually dashed, for the most part due to the meteoric rise of *Quốc Ngữ*. In this, one might imagine that even Phạm Quỳnh may have felt some measure of regret. Given the powerful language with which he lifted up vernacular Vietnamese—a rhetoric that so ably reflected contemporary notions of the nation—it is no surprise that Sinitic writing (ultimately including *Chữ Nôm*) and Literary Chinese became the most dramatic casualties of this rebranding of Vietnamese nationhood. Within a matter of decades, the central pillars of Vietnamese identity had been replaced, and a thorough renovation of the temple of the Vietnamese nation was accomplished. It remains an enduring irony that *The Tale of Kiều*—Phạm Quỳnh's choice to embody Vietnam's national essence—is such a monumental work of Chinese erudition, and based of course, on a Chinese novel.

These reversals in the tenor and nature of Vietnamese nationalism—particularly as they apply to questions of language—suggest many strong and curious parallels with contemporary Korea. Similarities in the older visions of Vietnamese nationhood have

already been discussed. But the efforts of Phạm Quỳnh to promote vernacular language—as well as the (relatively) new vernacular script, *quốc ngữ*—bear striking parallels to the initial promotion of *han'gũl* under Japanese colonization. As chief editor of *Nam Phong*, Phạm Quỳnh worked under the close supervision of the Governor-General Albert Sarraut and the chief of the *sûreté*, Louis Marty, both of whom viewed the promotion of *quốc ngữ* as a possible alternative outlet for nationalistic energies that might otherwise galvanize into anticolonial sentiments. Ironically, *quốc ngữ* would become a vehicle for exactly the kind of anticolonial activity feared by Sarraut and Marty over the later 1920s and 1930s, when French-educated intellectuals such as the *Self-Reliance Literary Movement* [*Tự lực văn đoàn*] embraced it as a tool for self-strengthening. A comparison of the complex promotion of vernacular writing by the French and Japanese colonial regimes, and their consequences for both the anticolonial movements and the development of Vietnamese and Korean nationalisms, would be well-worth conducting—especially given the similarities in precolonial nationalisms that seems to have obtained. Finally, the strikingly similar role of both Chinese characters and especially Literary Chinese language in precolonial Vietnamese and Korean societies, strongly suggests that parallel processes of rebranding the role and nature of language in national identity must have occurred, not only in the critical moment of late 19th and early 20th century colonization, but potentially multiple times throughout history.

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Notes

- 1 This paper is a severe condensation of a work prepared for purposes of the conference *Vietnam and Korea as Longue Durée Subjects of Comparison: From Pre-Modern to the Early Modern Periods* (3–4 March 2017). For the full article, please email the author.
- 2 See especially Marr, D. 1981. *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial: 1920–1945*; Hue-Tam Ho Tai. 1992. *Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution*; and McHale, S. 2004. *Confucianism, Communism, and Buddhism in the Making of Modern Vietnam*.
- 3 *ibid.*, Tai, p.48
- 4 *The Tale of Kiều* was written in the early 19th century by Nguyễn Du 阮攸 (1766–1820), an official who served as ambassador to Beijing under the Nguyễn Dynasty. Nguyễn Du used a Chinese vernacular novel entitled *The Tale of Jin, Yun, and Qiao* [金雲翹傳] as a basis for the plot of his reimagined poetic rendering. This new version of the story—written in vernacular Vietnamese *Nôm*, and using the native poetic meter known as *six-eight*—was called a ‘New Cry from a Broken Heart’ [Đoạn trường tân thanh 斷腸新聲]. The poem enjoyed popularity over the colonial period, but its esteem leapt forward astronomically after the 1920s, largely due to Phạm Quỳnh's promotions.
- 5 All translations in this article are my own.
- 6 Phạm Quỳnh. 1919. ‘Truyện Kiều’ [[On] The Tale of Kiều], *Nam Phong* 39:480–500. Imprimerie Tonkinoise: December 1919; see p.480
- 7 *ibid.*, Marr, pp.154–155.
- 8 *ibid.*, Phạm Quỳnh, p.480; note the loose translation here, for purposes of clarity.
- 9 *ibid.*, Tai, p.49.
- 10 *ibid.*, Phạm Quỳnh, p.491.
- 11 *idem*
- 12 *idem*
- 13 Phạm Huy-Hồ. 1919. ‘Việt Nam ta biết chữ Hán từ đời nào?’ [Since What Era has Our Vietnam Known Chinese Characters?], *Nam Phong* 39:416–419. Imprimerie Tonkinoise: December, 1919; see p.416.
- 14 *idem*
- 15 This is a key point in my *longue durée* analysis of prenationalist formulations of Vietnamese identity, and is discussed at length in the full article.
- 16 Please see full article.
- 17 *ibid.*, Phạm Huy-Hồ, p.417.
- 18 *ibid.*, Phạm Huy-Hồ, p.418.
- 19 *idem*; note the loose translation here, for purposes of clarity

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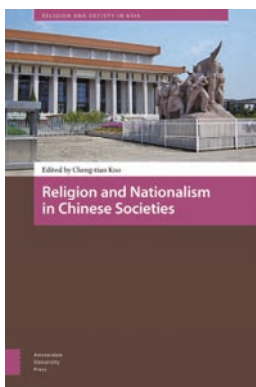


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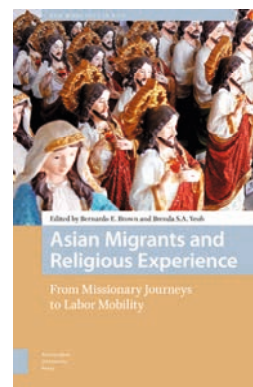
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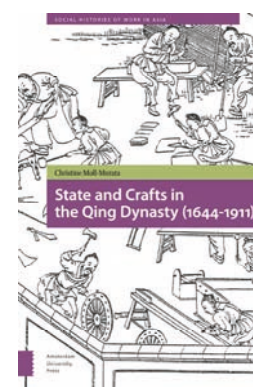
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River cities

Water space in urban development and history

Paul Rabé (IIAS)

This symposium, co-organized by the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA),¹ sought to investigate the relationship between rivers and cities from a multi-disciplinary perspective in the humanities and social sciences. A three-day follow-up symposium will take place in Shanghai in December 2018. In this issue of the Newsletter, we provide an overview of the topics explored during the Surabaya conference.



On 11-12 December 2017, the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) organized a symposium in Surabaya, Indonesia, entitled 'River Cities: Water Space in Urban Development and History'. The event

was hosted by the Faculty of Humanities of Airlangga University in Surabaya and jointly organized by IIAS (through UKNA) and Airlangga University. The symposium conveners were Rita Padawangi

(Singapore University of Social Sciences), Adrian Perkasa (Airlangga University) and Paul Rabé (Coordinator of UKNA at IIAS).

The symposium sought to investigate the relationship between rivers and cities from a multi-disciplinary perspective in the humanities and the social sciences. It aimed to contribute innovative ways of thinking about how to better integrate rivers, creeks and canals, and with them, their environmental, historical, social, political, cultural and economic dimensions, into the fabric of contemporary cities in South, East and Southeast Asia. Following a competitive call for papers, seventeen scholars, ranging from PhD students to

Symposium,
Surabaya, Indonesia,
11-12 December 2017

established academics, presented their papers in Surabaya. Together, they addressed four main categories of investigation (featured below). In this issue of the Newsletter, we provide an overview of the seventeen papers presented, which will be part of an edited volume to be published in the IIAS Asian Cities series of Amsterdam University Press.

A follow-up symposium on the topic of water in urban Asia, entitled 'Water Heritage in Asian Cities', will take place in Shanghai from 29 November through 1 December 2018. It will be hosted by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS), and jointly organized by UKNA, SASS, New York University Shanghai (China), Fudan University (China) and IIAS.

Category 1: Rivers and cities in historical perspective

'Water world to inundation: river cities in Southeast Asia from old to new millennium'
Howard Dick, Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Melbourne, Australia; Faculty of Business and Law, University of Newcastle (NSW), Australia

Accelerating climate change is now giving rise to a new challenge of sustainability. This paper explores this problematization in the case of Surabaya, and considers how it applies more broadly to other river cities in Indonesia, notably in Sumatra and Kalimantan, and elsewhere in mainland Southeast Asia. The emphasis will be on how the urban system has adapted, failed to adapt or mal-adapted to the exigencies of a monsoonal climate.

'Through the passages and across the worlds: the bridge-and-temple complex and the popular procession in a "rurban" town in Jiangnan region'
Xiaomei ZHAO, Department of Cultural Heritage and Museology, Fudan University, China

Water towns in Jiangnan have been urbanizing since the 16th century. Popular rituals in these towns represent their special economic and administrative position between (urban) cities and (rural) villages. The temples of local deities are usually situated by the canal with a bridge built in front. The bridge serves as a passage to the sacred temple from the profane world, and this spatial transition is represented by processions across the bridge. Based on literature reviews and fieldwork, I reproduce the historical procession scene in a 'rurban' town in the region, and I provide an explanation about the changes in the social relations among participants.

'The influence of political economy on the river landscape of Banjarmasin during the sultanate period (1526-1860)'
Vera Dian Damayanti, Centre for Landscape Studies, Graduate School of the Humanities, University of Groningen, the Netherlands

Banjarmasin, the capital of South Kalimantan Province, is well known in Indonesia as the city of one thousand rivers. The urban development of Banjarmasin started when this area was designated as the capital and commercial port of the Banjarmasin sultanate in 1526. This paper explores landscape changes in Banjarmasin town during the sultanate period (1526-1860). These changes involved spatial and physical landscape elements caused by warfare, contacts with foreign traders, and the divided territory under the treaties with the Dutch. With its riverine terrain and tidal-swamp environment, urban life in Banjarmasin took place along its rivers, which made this city different from other port cities in the archipelago, which developed on the coast.

'From the city to the sea: riverside temple networks in South India'
Emma Natalya Stein, curatorial fellow for the Southeast Asian Art Freer Gallery of Art; Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution (USA)

During the 8th-12th centuries, Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu served as the royal capital for two major dynasties, the Pallavas and then the Cholas, and it was home to thousands of priests, literati, and landholding elites. Flowing into and out of the city from west to east, the Palar River directed Kanchipuram's expansion as it developed outwards from the urban core. However, settlements that once belonged to the city's expanse today have become remote villages. Using Kanchipuram's rural-urban hinterland as a case study, this paper asks how the river contributed to the urbanization process during the premodern period, and how the river's deterioration in recent centuries may have contributed to the disappearance of places that previously thrived.

Category 2: Neighborhoods and social life of riverine communities

'Sacred river, syncretic city: reflections on the dialectics of co-living and contestation in Varanasi'
Pralay Kanungo, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India; International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and Leiden University, the Netherlands

The mother river Ganges/Ganga has given birth to many cities, of which Varanasi/Kashi/Benaras has always been prominent in terms of its history, religion, culture and commerce. In this paper, reflecting on various cultural symbols and rituals, from Lat Bhairo and Bismillah Khan and from silk-weaving to Hindustani classical music, I will explain how Varanasi represented a unique cultural heritage (Ganga-Yamuna Tehzib) that celebrated shared traditions and composite culture. While this heritage has promoted syncretism in everyday life and inter-community interaction and exchange, Varanasi's history has also witnessed contestations and ruptures among communities.

'The decline of ritual practices in response to pollution in the Vishnumati river, Kathmandu, Nepal'
Rajani Maharjan, Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal, Nepal

As the water of the Bishnumati River in Kathmandu is becoming visibly contaminated with sewage and toxins, people are avoiding going near the river and are using water from other sources, including dug-well, tap or bottled mineral water, to conduct centuries-old rites and rituals. This paper argues that the decline of riverside ritual practices, combined with a decline in the frequency with which people approach the river, has an impact on people's perspectives about living with water. An ecologically balanced way of living with the environment, in the name of numerous cultural and religious rites and rituals, is being replaced by rapid and unsustainable development.

'Floating settlements in Sintang City, West Kalimantan: a representation of urban-rural dendritic connectivity'
Mira Lubis, School of Urban and Regional Planning, Tanjungpura University, Indonesia

This paper explores the life of migrant communities in floating houses (rumah lanting) along the urban riverfront areas of Sintang, the capital city of Sintang District in the interior of West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia, which is located at the intersection of two large rivers, Sungai Kapuas and Sungai Melawi. Growing from the river's edge, the present Sintang still maintains its riverine culture in the form of floating houses as its legacy of the past, when rivers played an important role as main transportation routes for political and economic activities. The dendritic network of rivers and tributaries around Sintang plays an important role in linking Sintang city with villages in the interior, from where most migrants hail. Historically, the river network has always shaped power relations between indigenous communities in the interior with the authorities on the main rivers who controlled river-based transportation and trade, and this relationship persists until today.



View of Sabarmati Riverfront, Ahmedabad.
Courtesy of Manjil Purohit via Wikimedia Commons.

Category 3: Evaluating experiences with riverfront and riverbank settlement and design interventions in Asia

'The unjust redistribution of floodwater within the city: the story of and resolution for Shezidao, Taipei City'
Liao Kuei-Hsien, Graduate Institute of Urban Planning, National Taipei University, Taiwan

Shezidao is a low-lying and flood-prone sandbar sandwiched between two major rivers of Taipei City, home to approximately 10,000 residents. The area has been excluded from the Taipei Area Flood Control Zone and is currently subject to a development plan that would enhance the perceived injustice by displacing most current residents and encircle it with high levees. This paper explores how floodwater has been and would be redistributed between Shezidao and the rest of Taipei and the relationship between flood management, social justice, and sustainability. An alternative plan for Shezidao is also discussed, as well as 'flood mitigation banking' as a policy tool to address the social-environmental controversies often arising from the development of urban riverine communities around the world.

'The canal and the city: water's edge urbanisms in Chennai'
Karen Coelho, Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), India

Through the case of Chennai's Buckingham Canal, this paper examines the edges of urban waterways as a specific kind of intra-urban 'periphery' offering a crucial geography from which to theorize urban transitions in Indian metropolitan cities. The Buckingham Canal has undergone shifting valuations in the city's urbanization schemes over its history since its construction by the British in the 1800s to transport freight down the eastern coastal tracts of the Madras Presidency. Employing multi-sited ethnography in three canal-bank settlements, this paper highlights the specific conditions of water's edge urbanism and the shifting trajectories of opportunity, challenge and threat it offers, showing how the production of urban space in each of these neighborhoods is shaped by the canal's changing ecological and economic values.

'Colonial-global Tianjin: the politics of design centered on the Hai River between past and present'
Maurizio Marinelli, University of Sussex, United Kingdom

During the last two decades, the port-city of Tianjin has undergone a massive urban revitalization program conducted under the aegis of 'beautification', which has radically transformed the cityscape. The hyper-colonial phase of Tianjin, when the treaty-port city constituted an unparalleled microcosm of the world with up to nine foreign concessions (1860-1945), has been actively re-interpreted as marking the beginning of the Tianjin's global age. This paper analyses the importance of Tianjin's urban revitalization from the perspective of a 'river city'. Particular attention is given to the contribution played by the Hai River to the production of space in colonial-global Tianjin, through the analysis both of its historical role and the narratives constructed in the colonial past vis-à-vis the Tianjin Municipal Government-led 'beautification' strategy in the present.

'Community initiatives in the riverine area of Kali Pepe, Surakarta'
Eng Kusumaningdyah N.H., ST., MT, Urban-Rural Design and Conservation Laboratory (URDC Labo), Sebelas Maret University of Surakarta, Indonesia

The environmental degradation of the Kali (River) Pepe in Surabaya, Indonesia, has many physical, social and economic implications for residents of the city, especially the downstream communities that interact with the river the most. This research identifies community initiatives in the riverine area of Kali Pepe, through in-depth interviews with local leaders and community representatives, to understand how local communities interact with the river. The objective is to obtain a new perspective about how communities experience the river and how community initiatives are attempting to contribute to the sustainability of the river itself.

'Sociocultural and spatial factors in river-edge relationships: a comparative case study of rivers in Indonesian cities'
Michaela Prescott, Monash University, Australia

This paper describes a comparative analysis of qualitative aspects of river improvement in Indonesia in order to understand the amelioration potential of river cities. The research employed fieldwork to collect material evidence of the spatial reconfiguration of river edges along four urbanized rivers, namely: the Code and Winongo (Yogyakarta); the Cikapundung (Bandung); and the Bengawan Solo (Surakarta). Building from architectural and social science approaches, a conceptual and methodological framework for evaluating improved riverfronts is developed. These cases are examined using schematic drawings and then classified based on aspects of the physical environment shaping the river-edge relationship.

Category 4: Urban policy perspectives and innovations related to rivers and other urban water bodies

'Recovering the stream: contestation about river access as a catalyst for eco-city development in Suwon City, South Korea'
Youngah Guahk, IN-EAST School of Advanced Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany

In Suwon, an industrial city of 1.2m inhabitants located not far from South Korea's capital Seoul, a small river, the Suwoncheon stream, had been covered with concrete in the context of rapid economic development during the 1980s and 1990s – a decision taken in order to provide for additional road construction and car parking facilities. While local businesses initially welcomed the idea, a popular movement formed soon after the construction, objecting to the project on both ecological and cultural grounds. This paper charts the contestation process and the effects of political mobilization around the issue of environmental protection, demonstrating the important implications that contestation over river access can have in an industrial city in Asia.

'Division and marginalization in the lower Brantas Basin: a longue durée approach'
Anton Novenanto, Department of Sociology at the Brawijaya University, Indonesia

This paper focuses on the genealogy of the Porong River in East Java, to which humans have made various modifications and alterations despite the fact that it is man-made. Public and academic attention to the river has been increasing following the unnatural, ongoing Lapindo mudflow starting in May 2006. Using secondary historical data and collective memories of the locals, the paper addresses human-

nature relation as a two-way, rather than a one-way process: on the one hand, environmental change and modification should be perceived as a consequence of the reciprocity; and, on the other, nature has its own natural process and environmental modification affects human society.

'What transnational planning visions have done in Red River, Hanoi in Vietnam'
Ms. Sujee (Suzy) Jung, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University (USA)

Since 2005, Hanoi City has hosted numerous transnational collaborators and riverfront planning experts to upgrade the Red River. This ambitious project was initiated to facilitate Hanoi City's rapid urbanization and industrialization by developing and connecting both sides of the Red River's banks. By taking a dialectical perspective, the historical review examines three aspects of this initiative: first, the future-oriented global visions to make a world-class Red River in Hanoi; second, contrasting local realities as a challenge against the previous proposal; and third, local planning authorities' efforts to reconcile the gap between the first two.

'Hybrid riverscapes: governing river cities beyond land and water dichotomies – the Yamuna in Delhi, India'
Alexander Follmann, Institute of Geography and the Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne, Germany

The inherent complexity of environmental change along urban rivers requires a change of perspective going beyond binary conceptualizations of water/land, river/city and nature/culture. By linking a discourse analytical approach with theoretical concepts from governance research and urban political ecology, the conceptual paper develops the framework of hybrid and outlines an innovative conceptual framework to study environmental change and governance in river cities. Using the case study of Delhi's riverscapes along the Yamuna, the paper focuses on the multiple city-river relationships from the 1970s to current processes of urban environmental change.

'Narmada water on Sabarmati river: a ship of Theseus?'
Parthasarathy Rengarajan, Gujarat Institute of Development Research, India

Ahmedabad has had a long and complex relationship with the River Sabarmati. Whereas the city once depended on the Sabarmati River's water for domestic and other uses, it later started ignoring the river and the slums on its banks and let sewage and industrial effluents flow downstream. In a more recent development, city administrators have built a riverfront to cash in on high land values abutting the river. The river is now a pond with gates on either side and is filled with water from the Narmada River. This paper analyses a Theseus's paradox, which is essentially a thought experiment raising the question whether the River as an object that has had all of its components replaced remains fundamentally the same object.

Note

- 1 UKNA (Urban Knowledge Network Asia) is an inclusive network that brings together concerned scholars and practitioners engaged in collaborative research on cities in Asia. Consisting of over 100 researchers from 17 institutes in Europe, China, India, and Southeast Asia, the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) represents the largest academic international network on Asian cities. UKNA's Secretariat is hosted by IIAS in Leiden, the Netherlands.

Double Degree in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe

Elena Paskaleva (LIAS; IIAS) and Sandra Dehue (IIAS)

In September 2017, the Double Degree Programme in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe for the first time welcomed students from Taiwan and South Korea to Leiden in the Netherlands, and Leiden students were in turn able to study in Asia. We invited four students to share their impressions and experiences with studying in Leiden and Seoul. The institutes involved in the Double Degree are Leiden University (Netherlands), National Taiwan University (Taiwan) and Yonsei University (South Korea). Discussions are ongoing with other Asian institutions to join this unique trans-regional educational platform.



The initiative is part of a wider ambition of IIAS to decentre the production of knowledge about Asia by establishing a continuing dialogic platform between universities located in Asia and Europe. The programme benefits from the input of renowned heritage expert Professor Michael Herzfeld (Harvard University) who serves as Senior Advisor to the 'Critical Heritage Studies Initiative' of IIAS, and who has been working with IIAS for some years to promote the field of critical heritage studies through courses, workshops, conferences and publications.

The Double Degree includes a one-year MA programme at Leiden University, which upon completion is recognised as part of a two-year MA programme in Taiwan and South Korea. The institutions involved in the Double Degree consider Asia as a fertile source of both theoretical and methodological insights in the highly contested area of heritage. Since colonial times, European-based concepts and technical approaches to conservation have dominated the understanding of heritage in Asia, in most cases through a top-down

Current Students

Anna Tonk

Anna Tonk (25) graduated in February 2017 with an MA degree in Asian Studies from Leiden University. She is currently enrolled at Yonsei University.



“Throughout my studies I changed fields multiple times, from Philosophy and Art History in Utrecht to Asian Studies in Leiden. When I finished my pre-master, I discovered the Double Degree Programme in Critical Heritage Studies and something clicked. History, art, social issues, practical problems such as management, and people who genuinely care about the world, were combined in this great field of Critical Heritage Studies.

In Leiden, I was introduced to the complexities within the concept of heritage and I also gained more confidence in my practical knowledge. My interest in heritage grew that year, as we were offered a myriad of methodologies and perspectives. I realized that this field gives me a varied set of academic tools, but also a field to venture in further. I learned that academic study does not have to be only theoretical, but also reflects on the realities by which people and their environment are affected.

At Yonsei University in Seoul, I am experiencing studying abroad for the first time. Although I thought a year was rather long, it is actually giving me the opportunity to hone my academic skills, test my critical thinking, and to learn a lot about myself. The semesters are packed with readings, assignments and engaging topics that give room to experiment with the different perspectives on heritage that I have learned in Yonsei and Leiden.

As a master's student with no background in Korean Studies, I have had some difficulties. Looking back on my first semester, a big lesson for me was that I still feel more comfortable with source material in English and doing interviews in English. Yet Korea is fascinating, and doing research here provides me with more insight and motivation to perform and explore. I found that there is much to discuss about heritage and that each individual case is different, even within the same country. While the exercises focus on Korean Studies, they are also enabling me to look into other heritage cases outside of Korea.

After graduation, I envisage multiple options for 'critical heritage studies' as a beautiful career path. I am not letting go of my aspiration to pursue a PhD, but I might try my hand at being a heritage worker first. Despite still searching for my place within this field, this has become a journey that I plan on never ending.”

Mingyuan Cheng

Mingyuan Cheng (25) is a master's student from the Department of Anthropology at National Taiwan University. She is currently following the Double Degree Programme at Leiden University.



“After staying in Leiden for about half a year, I can only love this canal city more and more. Leiden University is the oldest university in the Netherlands, offering wonderful research resources and teaching in the Humanities. With the new Asian Library, which just opened in September 2017, Leiden University's research opportunities focusing on Asia have been vastly enriched. The Leiden courses allowed me to interact with many people from almost every part of the world, with their distinct cultural background and perspectives, which has broadened my understanding of different societies while establishing solid friendships.

A much greater advantage to following the Double Degree Programme in Critical Heritage Studies is the opportunity to be part of the IIAS community. Situated in the town centre, IIAS brings in and links researchers from around the globe with their special concerns about Asia. The lunch lectures are one of my favourite events held by IIAS. I can highly recommend students to attend these lectures to learn more about cultural and economic issues in Asia without making any effort to travel far, while recharging oneself by the inspiring researchers and mouth-watering food.

During the 'Critical Approaches to Heritage Studies' class, fieldtrips were organized for us to the Textile Research Centre and the Leiden Heritage Archive in order to explore the history of Leiden, with a special focus on heritage conservation. Not only did I, each week, gain a deeper understanding of heritage from various angles, I also learned a lot from the very positive dynamics of the class while reflecting on my own work after presentations by my classmates of their case studies.

With both international and Dutch students living in this lovely city, life in Leiden is full of excitement and cultural diversity. The most enjoyable moments are exchanging our recipes and food cultures with each other, talking more about our own cultural roots, and joining festivals such as 'Leiden's Ontzet' and the 'Sinterklaasfeest' to experience local culture. It is always delightful to start a day by having a cup of coffee in a café alongside one of the canals, cycling through historical lanes, or doing grocery shopping at the street market every Wednesday and Saturday.

The first semester has come to an end, and I benefit greatly both from the courses and lectures provided by IIAS and Leiden University, and also from the experience I gain here every day. I never regret coming to Leiden to pursue the Double Degree Programme!”



imposition of ideas and processes. It is this hegemonic discourse, usually promoted by developmentalist states in Asia and elsewhere, as well as various processes of indigenous response, that the Double Degree Programme is highlighting.

The curriculum of the Double Degree allows students to explore the contested character of all representations of culture, the plurality of notions of heritage in Asian and European contexts, and the way distinct and conflicting values of indigenous, local communities and official state discourses are negotiated.

The programme focuses in particular on the politics of heritage and the questions of its legitimacy. Who controls heritage? What is the role of heritage in the constructed narratives of nationalism? How is heritage being used as a cultural practice to shape the discourses on nation-building and nation-branding?

Contact

If you would like to know more about the Double Degree Programme in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe, please contact the coordinator at Leiden University, Dr Elena Paskaleva, e.g. paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Website

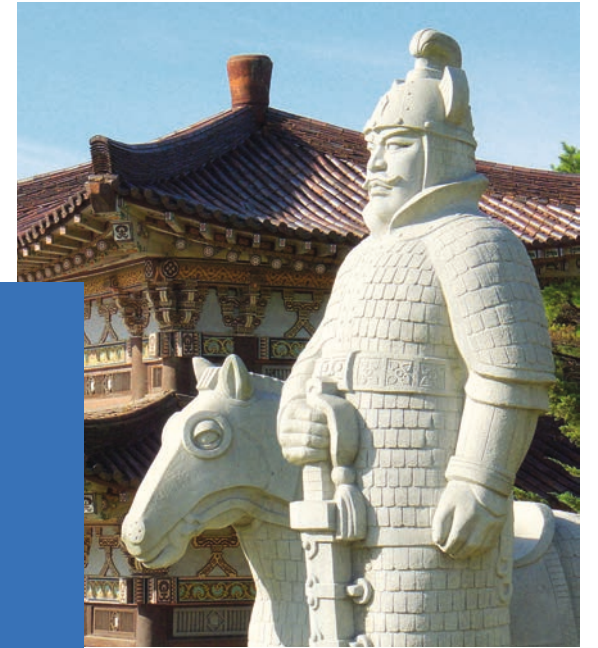
www.ias.asia/critical-heritage-studies

Partner institutions

Leiden University, the Netherlands
Leiden University Institute for Area Studies (LIAS), in cooperation with the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS)

National Taiwan University, Taiwan
Department of Anthropology (College of Liberal Arts), Graduate Institute of Building and Planning (College of Engineering)

Yonsei University, South Korea
Graduate School of International Studies



Current Students

Hyunmi Kim

Hyunmi Kim is a master's student of International Studies at Yonsei University. She is currently following the Double Degree Programme at Leiden University.



“Five months have passed since I came to Leiden as the first student of the Double Degree Programme from Yonsei University. Even though it may not be enough to thoroughly grasp every aspect of the program, I would like to share my experiences and impressions so far.

First of all, Leiden University offers various courses for MA students in Asian Studies that are not provided by Yonsei University. Especially for those who are interested in Asian culture and heritage, it will be fascinating to take the relevant classes. At the same time, it is possible to take courses from different tracks under Asian Studies, which offer a comprehensive perspective not only on heritage but also on Asia in general.

Students who apply for this program can also apply for the LExS grant that significantly reduces the tuition fee (In 2017/2018, LExS reduced the tuition fees for Leiden from EURO 16,600 to EURO 2,006). Students who apply for a LExS grant may also apply for a special grant from IIAS, to the sum of EURO 500 per month for a period of ten months.

Leiden University professors are responsible for and passionate about their classes and the students. They are always willing to help the students with any difficulties they may encounter, and try to collect students' opinions in order to improve the courses. In addition, there are abundant opportunities to participate in special seminars and lectures with diverse heritage-related topics. Various institutions at Leiden University organize a wide range of seminars and lectures related to culture and heritage in Asia. Since these are normally open to all Leiden University students, it is a good chance to learn about recent research on relevant issues and to get to know other people with shared research interests.

However, there is also a weak point. Even though the title of this Double Degree Programme is 'Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe', almost all the courses in Leiden deal only with Asia as it is part of the Asian Studies programme. Therefore, a student who wants to learn about European culture and heritage may find it difficult to find relevant courses. Last but not least, I would like to sincerely thank IIAS for offering me this wonderful opportunity and supporting me in all the practical issues that I have encountered. I am sure that this experience will serve as a crucial foundation for the development of my future career.”

Calvin Hung

Calvin Hung is a master's students from the Graduate Institute of Building and Planning at National Taiwan University. He is currently following the Double Degree programme at Leiden University.



“Since I am in the Netherlands, let's speak in a Dutch way, which usually means openly and straightforward. I enjoy studying in Leiden more than I expected, except for the weather, and, sometimes, the administrative efficiency of the school. As the program is set to be one year, the pace of the semester is pretty fast. It's tiring to deal with the reading materials of 5 courses every week, including learning Hindi as a new language. However, after reading the materials and discussing them in classes, I learned a lot, including thinking from different perspectives.

For example, in the class on 'Material Culture of the Silk Road in Central Asia', I learned that the borders of central Asian countries were created by the USSR in the Stalin era. The design of the artificial borders was one of the strategies of governance by the Soviet Union. These socialist republics were established in different years in order to shape the idea of mono-ethnic countries. The Soviet Union also settled many minorities in Central Asia, including thousands of Koreans. The complexity of national identity and ethnicity in Central Asia affects the governance of heritage in this region.

The case that fascinates me a lot is the 'Manas Epic', which is seen as the national epic of Kyrgyzstan. But in the old version of 'Manas', the Kyrgyz were usually depicted in a negative narrative. The question of who decides what is whose heritage is a highly

political question. From cases in Central Asia, as well as the topic of my own thesis about the Earth Gods Parade in Shezi region in Taipei City, I find that the authorities usually hold the strongest power on the recognition of heritage. Other actors, such as local residents, often face the paradox of whether to adapt to the discourse of heritage by the authorities or to build up a new discourse. In the case in Taipei City, local residents nominate the religious ritual as municipal intangible heritage, claiming its uniqueness to all citizens in Taipei City. To me, the idea of a certain heritage expression as being valuable to all citizens is very debatable. Is it not much more accurate, and valuable, if a heritage is seen as a statement of memories and culture of a (large) group of people? I am still contemplating my answers, but I enjoy the process of being critical.

Before coming to Leiden, I had few ideas about critical heritage studies. Although knowing that Leiden is one of the most reputable places for Asian Studies in Europe, I didn't have a clear picture of my student life here. But now, with teachers willing to give their best, being surrounded by other hard-working and diverse students as well as the historical city of Leiden, I am blessed to be on the path of critical heritage studies”.

Asian food: history, anthropology, sociology

Summer School,
Leiden,
the Netherlands,
25-29 September 2017

Ajda Flajs and
Mary Hyunhee Song

Leiden University in the Netherlands enjoys a world-wide reputation for its expertise on Asia and its many Asian collections, which recently have been brought together in the newly built central 'Asian Library'. To coincide with its official opening in September 2017, the LeidenAsiaCentre and the Shared Taste Project at Leiden University, together with the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) jointly organised a Summer School devoted to the academic study of Asian food.

Entitled 'Asian food: history, anthropology, sociology', the Summer School endeavoured to illustrate the landscape of interdisciplinary research on and study of Asian food, and food in general, in the intertwined areas of history, sociology and anthropology, while providing the participants with an opportunity to rethink their own research from a multi-disciplinary perspective. It was attended by seventeen international master's and doctoral students from different disciplinary backgrounds and with varying research interests in Asian food. The Summer School was led by the international experts Dr Nir Avieli (Ben Gurion University, Israel), Prof Anne Murcott (SOAS, University of London, UK), Prof Katarzyna Cwiertka (Leiden University, the Netherlands) and Prof Anne Gerritsen (Leiden University/Warwick University, UK).

After words of welcome from the international experts and introductions by the participants, the students and lecturers had the opportunity to discuss various topics amongst themselves, from current interests to future research plans, while enjoying an Indonesian dinner buffet. The opening evening of the Summer School was concluded with the screening of the film *The Lunchbox*. Anne Sytske Keijser, lecturer of Modern Chinese and Chinese literature and film at Leiden University, introduced the film and briefly explained the importance of lunchboxes in modern Indian society.

The second day started with an introduction by Anne Murcott and Nir Avieli, who discussed the general ideas behind different approaches to the study of food. A variety of topics were discussed, including questions on ethnicity, ethnic food and local food; the distinction between analytical concepts and everyday vocabulary; and meanings of 'exotic' and 'strange' to ethnographic fieldwork. Their introduction was followed by talks on Asian food history by Anne Gerritsen and Katarzyna Cwiertka. Gerritsen chose a general angle, dwelling on the concept of how history can be regarded as a foreign country, and explained that food can be approached as a historical subject through material culture, tracking its changes through time. In her lecture, Cwiertka discussed the topic of food packaging and how packaged food is viewed mostly from a food perspective without giving enough attention to wrapping and packaging.

On Wednesday morning we visited the local market in the Leiden city centre, where we could experience the atmosphere and structure of markets in the Netherlands. After this, we visited the Leiden Museum of the Ethnology where we discussed various objects related to food and cultural/ethnic spheres. The museum visit was followed by a session in the Leiden University Library, which has extensive special collections of national and international fame, among which unique manuscripts, maps, atlases, prints, drawings and photography from East and West. The aim of the library session was to examine how library resources can be integrated into the study of food, as well as to make the participants more aware of the different



kinds of resources that might be used in their own research. Beforehand, each student had selected one item from the collections that was made available for further study during the session. In addition, each student had to explain to the other participants why he or she had selected this object and what was special about it. Although time was too short for detailed analyses and research, we all did get a first impression of the value for one's research of all objects discussed. Among these were, for example, the 17th century twelve-volume *Herbarium Amboinense* by George Rumphius, a Dutch colonial map, and Clusius' *Libri Exoticorum* (1605).

The Summer School also provided the opportunity for each student to discuss one's own research with one of the international experts in person, which was valuable for developing new thoughts and ideas for research and how to proceed with our research in the future.

During a public evening event, Katarzyna Cwiertka gave a lecture entitled 'Soy sauce - taste and beyond'. The lecture was followed by a soy sauce-tasting workshop provided by Alexander Bakker, the very passionate owner of *Flair for Flavor*, a business that imports natural flavour products from Asia.

The fourth day started with an instructional talk by Nir Avieli and Anne Murcott on how to conduct our fieldwork at the *Visserijplein* Market and the *Markthal* in Rotterdam. We wandered around these two different types of markets and conducted our own 'fieldwork express', as one of the participants described the experience. The first stop was the open farmers' market at the *Visserijplein* in the immigrant neighbourhood of *Bospolder Tussendijken* in the western part of Rotterdam. This place is heavily influenced by various backgrounds. We could already feel this when we arrived in the street leading up to the market, with its many shops with signs in Arabic or Chinese. In the market place, Turkish, Moroccan, Chinese and Dutch stands exist next to each other and each one sells something typical belonging to their culture, be it fish, vegetables, fruit or the Dutch cheese and chips.

Our main goals were to determine what kind of space the market was, the feeling it gave to its visitors, how to record data and where to record data, as not every space

is appropriate for this. For instance, a crowded alley between two stalls is not an appropriate place to take out your pen and paper. We were also instructed to look not only for social interactions between sellers and buyers but also how people behave towards food and amongst themselves. In the end we were not only examining food on the market, but also social regulations of the market place, as well as significant social categories.

Our second stop was the *Markthal* in Rotterdam, a food hall that transformed the market into something fashionable and into a place where people spend their free time and enjoy the food on offer for longer periods of time. Places like the *Markthal* are covered areas that form a hall as the name already suggests, and they cater to people as meeting places, where different foods and cuisines are on display. Unlike farmers' markets, where food is bought for home usage and where social interactions are not considered the main focus of the place.

On Friday, the groups presented and shared their wonderful findings and reflections from the previous day's 'fieldwork express'. After the Summer School wrapped up with feedback from the participants on how

they had experienced the intensive week, we concluded the session by discovering Leiden from a different perspective, namely from the water during a lunch on a boat while exploring Leiden's canals and discussing urban development.

The five-day workshop went fast, but the Summer School enabled us to grasp fruitful ideas for our future projects. We learned much, not only from the lectures but also from the assignments, discussions and conversations with the international experts and our fellow participants, whom we are all more than happy to meet again in the future as colleagues. Lastly, we are grateful to all the international experts and supporting staff members who organised the workshop and gave us this opportunity to gain these productive experiences.

Ajda Flajs (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) & Mary Hyunhee Song (CEAS, University of Turku, Finland) – Summer School participants.



Reclaiming the 'workshop' as collaborative pedagogy

Françoise Vergès



The two-day symposium *Reclaiming the 'Workshop' as Collaborative Pedagogy* was held at the Cogut Center for the Humanities at Brown University in the framework of the IAS programme *Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World* (hereafter: HaB). It was organized by Françoise Vergès, Visiting Professor at the Cogut Center and Advisor to the HaB program.



Holding a symposium connected with the HaB program at the Cogut Center for the Humanities at Brown University offered many opportunities: debating with US scholars working in the tradition of alternative pedagogies in a country in which women and minorities often had to build their own institutions in a context of their exclusion; debating of the present and future of humanities in a context of assault and privatization; presenting HaB; and strengthening the global network of institutions and individuals that are experimenting in alternative pedagogies.

The point of entry was to present practices and experiments around knowledge production, conducted since 2013 by anthropologist Aarti Kawlra and myself in the sustained context of collaboration under the Mellon-funded IAS programs *Rethinking Asian Studies* (2013-2016) and *Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World* (2016-2020). The workshops and Summer Schools we co-organized and oversaw in Chiang-Mai (2014), Jaipur (2015), Accra (2015) and Chiang-Mai (2017) led us to critically question and expand our own disciplinary frameworks and methodologies. We observed that the classroom, seminars and field contexts nevertheless progressively spiraled to subtly reproduce a pervasive hierarchy of knowledge and deeply entrenched gender biases. We became attentive to any spatial arrangements that institute a relation of authority, based on implied superiority of knowledge position; to the question of translation; to the contamination by a business vocabulary that imposes 'outcomes' or 'end results' rather than paying attention to the need for slowness, moments of silence, meditation, laughing and resting. Though we are aware that the business world is fast-integrating these methods for better efficiency, we nonetheless trust our method of collaborative pedagogy, which is always done in situ, hence open to setbacks, doubts and revisions as we go.

Facilitated by and through IAS's global network, our collaborative inquiry has developed in spaces outside of formal disciplinary borders and academic settings, and has been galvanized by our shared passion in search of craft itineraries and practitioners. Being attentive to embodied knowledge and open to surprise in the ordinary – the unexpected answer to an unframed question – we became interested in challenging the division between pedagogy for higher education and pedagogy for the people, between 'high' and 'low' education and between technical and humanistic education.

We planned to explore an *ecologically grounded humanistic pedagogy* that would deploy entry points of the everyday: memories and languages, food and health, art and performance, livelihood and dwelling. It was the method we had applied at a curriculum development workshop on 'Environmental Studies' in Mandalay in July 2017. However, we were also open to new axes of discussion. We invited the students who were present to join us, so that there would be no spatial division between professors and students.

The participants were: Amanda Anderson, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English and Director of the Cogut Center for the Humanities at Brown University; Tricia Rose, Chancellor's Professor of Africana Studies and the Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America at Brown University; Yoko Inoue, artist and visiting faculty member at Bennington College; Tharapi Than, Assistant Professor in Burmese Studies, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb; Gaye Theresa Johnson, Associate Professor Chicana/o Studies, UCLA; Debjani Bhattacharyya, Assistant Professor of History, Drexel University; Philippe Peycam, Director of IAS; Ariella Azoulay, Professor of Modern Culture and Media and Professor of Comparative Literature, Brown University; Trica B. Keaton, Associate Professor of African and African American Studies and Associate

Professor of African Diaspora Studies, Dartmouth College; Thomas Asher, SSRC; Aarti Kawlra, Academic Director of the program 'Humanities Across Borders'; and myself, Françoise Vergès.

Given the political context in the USA, many interventions were around censorship and political pressure in the universities. Gaye Theresa spoke of what it meant to teach "under and against terror", of rethinking pedagogy in the context of "collective anguish". Teaching to 800 undergraduates in a single course, and where many of her students are undocumented, she suggested a "radical politics of love" to facilitate courage and encourage the idea of a possible future. Tharapi Than, who has students from communities under assault, wondered if 'safe spaces' were really preparing students for the brutality of the outside world. Her presentation led to a very interesting discussion around the notions of safety, violence and non-violence. One student asked if that meant 'turning the other cheek' and another "what to do if the other does not love you back?" Tricia Rose intervened to remind us that non-violence as a passive movement is a myth, that violence has never generated a world we want, and that healing places are needed.

Ariella Azoulay, who saw pedagogies as processes, led the discussion towards the invisible role of the perpetrator: How to bring white students to acknowledge their inheritance as white perpetrators because it should be their responsibility to find out about their own privileges. In the debate that

Symposium,
Cogut Center
for the Humanities,
Brown University,
27-28 October 2017

followed, Aarti Kawlra discussed subjectivity in the classroom and the pedagogy of laying bare the concealments. Trica Keaton exposed the threats of censorship that could lead to self-censorship in order to protect students and to avoid serious problems of employment. She recalled many instances of direct repression in academia in this year alone.

Philippe Peycam, Debjani Bhattacharyya and Amanda Anderson presented examples of pedagogical practices. Peycam narrated his experience in Cambodia setting up a research center and a library and archive. Bhattacharyya told us how she taught her students the way in which power inscribes itself in the environment, by taking them on a guided tour through the campus. Anderson described the humanities program at the Cogut Center – team-taught courses, facilitating the creation of communities of students outside of bonded departments – and stressed that humanities are there to keep the problematic alive rather than searching for solutions. Questions were raised about the position of authority in which teachers put themselves when they are making syllabi of pedagogies of dissent. Is there a way it can be done collaboratively? Racism was often evoked. Tricia Rose asked: How do you make structural racism accessible

We are interested in challenging the division between pedagogy for higher education and pedagogy for the people.

to people? How do you explain the take-over of color blindness, meritocracy, and individualism by structural racism?

I had asked participants not to read a paper but to address the topic in ten minutes however they wanted.

This made for a manifold approach but what finally appeared as common threads were the understanding that humanities are under assault by forces such as governments or groups, that students constitute a very diverse community in which gender, class, status, and civic rights intersect, and that rethinking pedagogy is an urgent task. Tools and references are there, we must trust what we have – which is usually a lot – and not start from what we should have; we must nurture collaboration, empathy and a respectful environment. We must always pay attention to the ways in which hierarchy insinuates itself in a setting. Altogether, it was a very fruitful conversation. To teach is to un-learn.

More information

www.ias.asia/research/humanities-across-borders-asia-africa-world

The program is co-funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York, USA.

Follow us at www.humanitiesacrossborders.blog



Follow the Humanities across Borders Blog (www.humanitiesacrossborders.blog) to stay informed about the activities, projects and people of the IAS programme *Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World*.

Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World (2017-2020) is a four-year IAS programme for global collaboration

on humanistic education, carried out by twenty-three leading institutes in Asia, West Africa, Europe and the United States, and their local partners in Asia and Africa. Its functional goal is to mobilise the development of a global consortium of universities and their local partners interested in fostering humanities-grounded education. Its substantive vision is that of an inclusive and expanded humanities.

To this end, the program will initiate methodological interventions in teaching and research to surpass narrow disciplinary, institutional and ideological agendas in the production of knowledge.

The programme facilitates border-crossing meetings, workshops and other collaborative pedagogical formats, organised by its partners together with their local civil society

agents and actors with the objective to shape a curricular matrix and framework for humanistic education across borders. These activities are carried out in the framework of fourteen projects, focusing on such themes as food, embodied practices, voices of dissent, language, memory and migration, in all their dynamic articulations in the world.

Partition in Bengal

Looking back after 70 Years

Rituparna Roy

The original idea for the conference was mine, but it could not have turned into a reality without the active involvement of and support from my eminent co-convenors and their respective institutions: Prof. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay (Head, School of History, Philosophy, Political Science & International Relations, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ; Director, NZIRI), and Dr Jayanta Sengupta (then Director, IM and Chief Curator, VHM). The conference was hosted by the Indian Museum (IM) and Victoria Memorial Hall (VHM), and sponsored by and The Ministry of Culture, Government of India and The New Zealand India Research Institute (NZIRI).

Focus on Bengal

Entitled, *Partition in Bengal: Looking Back After 70 Years*, the conference not only looked back on the momentous events of 1947, but also on their aftermath. We felt it worthwhile to have this regional focus because Bengal's experience of the Partition has been significantly different from that of the Punjab, and because it continues to affect life, especially along the borderlands, to this day.

As is well known, the Partition has inspired two generations of outstanding historical scholarship, with interesting new turns in historiography in the last three decades: the focus of attention shifting from causes to experiences, and from national to regional histories of partition; exploring experiences of women and Dalits; bringing de-colonisation and migration into the discussion; and the digital archiving of oral histories in the last decade. Significant research has also been done on literature and cinema addressing the Partition. The conference aimed to take stock of these achievements, envisage new directions in 'Partition Studies' and broadly discuss the continuing ramifications of the Partition in the cultural and political life of Bengal.

We were fortunate to have two very distinguished Chief Guests for the opening of the Conference: Ms Joanna Kempkers, New Zealand High Commissioner to India; and Prof. Sugata Bose, Member of Parliament, and Gardiner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs at Harvard University. The keynote was delivered by Prof. Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata. Prof. Samaddar enquired afresh into the political categories of 'people' and 'population' – the first considered to be the subject of the nation and the other the subject of government – and showed how, during partition, these categorical distinctions broke down and there was a mutual displacement of roles. His talk forced a re-thinking of the accepted notions of nation, popular sovereignty, and modern statehood.

A new generation of scholars

Aiming for a diversified group of speakers, both in terms of disciplinary and geographical background and age, we invited a variety of distinguished as well as early-career scholars to the conference. Prof. Bandyopadhyay was especially keen on having young scholars participate, as he had recently examined a number of most impressive doctoral theses on the Partition and felt that it was important to include this work by a new generation of Partition scholars. This turned out to be one of the defining and most successful aspects of the conference. In fact, after the conference, a number of senior scholars noted on Facebook that the new work they had encountered was both inspiring and encouraging. Among the topics addressed were, for example, the

2017 marked the 70th anniversary of India's Independence and Partition. In August 2017 in Kolkata, a conference to commemorate the event was held, which focused on the experience in Bengal where the aftermath continues to affect life to this day.

problems of nation-building on the ground: the administrative consequences of the Partition (Anwesha Sengupta, Institute of Development Studies, Kolkata); post-colonial predicaments of migrants and refugees at border crossings (Haimanti Roy, University of Dayton, USA); the difficulties of renewing lost linkages in a partitioned land (Debdatta Chowdhury, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata). These papers were mostly the products of painstaking archival research. Some of their findings astounded us, such as the story of Joymoni, an elephant from the British Forestry Service, who, after the Partition, was stranded indefinitely between India and East Pakistan as bureaucrats on either side of the new Bengal border refused to own him!

Wide range of topics

Other ways the Partition was remembered were through literature and films, oral testimonies of women, and Dalit literature. One of the latest developments in Partition Studies has been the focus on the experiences of Dalits, bringing in a whole new angle to an already complex history. As a pioneer in this field, Prof. Bandyopadhyay presented some of his latest findings in a Panel on 'Partition and Dalits', held together with Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury (Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata) and Dr Sarbani Banerjee (Techno India University, Kolkata). While the two senior scholars focussed on the challenges faced by lower caste refugees stationed in various camps in West-Bengal (1950-1961) and the way they contested government rehabilitation policies, Sarbani spoke about Dalit literature. Through two key texts, a memoir and an autobiographical novel, she examined the role of space (such as trains, railway stations, hospitals and prisons) in shaping the Dalit Bengali refugees' consciousness and how their experience differed substantially from that of upper caste refugees.

Oral testimonies of female survivors of Partition, gathered over several decades, were the subject of papers by Dr Aparajita Dasgupta (Lady Brabourne College, Kolkata) and Prof. Subhoranjan Dasgupta (Jadavpur University, Kolkata). Incidentally, Prof. Dasgupta (along with the late Prof. Jasodhara Bagchi), was one of the first to unearth, way back in the 90s, the stories of Bengali women's trauma and triumph during and after the Partition – which significantly contributed to the feminist turn in Partition historiography.

Quite predictably, there was a lot of attention for history, but, as a literary scholar, I especially cherished the papers on literature and films. One of the most engaging presentations in the conference was by Prof. Krishna Sen (Calcutta University), who spoke about Bangla fictional narratives of the Partition from West Bengal (a series of short stories, a trilogy, and two award-winning novels). Drawing on Toni Morrison's terminology of a special kind of remembering and forgetting in Beloved ('disremembering' and 'rememory'), Sen argued that these Partition narratives either try to disremember a traumatic past in an attempt to adjust to modernity and globalisation in Kolkata or re-create an/other mythic 'East Bengal' that is co-eval neither with East Pakistan nor Bangladesh, even though those locations still exist.

Conference,
Kolkata,
August 2017



There were two very interesting papers on film. Prof. Sreemati Mukherjee (Presidency University, Kolkata) spoke on the enduring appeal of *Meghe Dhaka Tara* [*The Cloud-capped Star*], a Bangla novel of the 60s, and its many adaptations over half a century on celluloid and in theatre. Dr Bhaskar Sarkar (Univ. of California, Santa Barbara) engaged with the documentary *Char: The No-Man's Island* (2012) to speculate on the fissured futures on the Bengal border, where life is lived out in a perpetual liminality.

While most papers were directly related to the Partition and its aftermath, there were a few that, very interestingly, engaged with the subject indirectly. Prof. Nandini Bhattacharya (Bardhaman University, West Bengal) revisited Rabindranath Tagore's identity-debates, enunciated in several of his writings (both fiction and non-fiction) as illuminating ideologies of sub-continental partitions. Prof. Ananya Jahanara Kabir (University College, London) invited us to re-think the Partition by exploring an intangible dimension, namely the memories of the sights, sounds and smells of home, carried by migrants to and from the city of Kolkata. Dr Barnita Bagchi (Utrecht University, the Netherlands) brought together feminist utopian studies and memory studies in her delineation of the solidarities between two key feminist figures that emerged in pre- and post-Partition Bengal: Sufia Kamal and her beloved older friend Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, who banded together in a desire for the utopian.

All the Panels were followed by vibrant 'Q&A' sessions. We were fortunate to have three eminent Chairs: Professor Emerita, Supriya Chaudhuri (Jadavpur University, Kolkata), Prof. Moinak Biswas (Jadavpur University, Kolkata); and an award-winning filmmaker and Prof. Bhaskar Chakrabarty (Calcutta University).

Kolkata Partition Museum, media coverage

The Conference ended with a roundtable, during which I formally broached the idea of a Kolkata Partition Museum. Pointing out the resonance of a similar idea in India, where a partition museum in Amritsar opened in 2016, I argued that museums are the next logical

step in Partition Studies, following the digital archiving of oral histories in the last decade. I shared with the audience my vision of such a museum as well as the work I had done so far in its conceptual stage. My museum idea was hotly debated in the open discussion that followed the roundtable. While lauded, its enormous challenges were emphasised. Most present seemed to prefer a digital archive or an archive with a space for exhibitions and public events. This way, the huge budgetary, administrative and logistical requirements of a museum could be bypassed. Not to speak of the political risks, given the sensitive subject-matter. Two of my co-panellists provided some very constructive suggestions for an archive, which I very much found worth pursuing. The museum idea was covered in two local vernacular newspapers ('Anandabazar Patrika' (ABP) and 'Aajkaal') and on 'All India Radio' (AIR), which broadcasted interviews with Prof. Bandyopadhyay and myself. Reporting about the conference, ABP highlighted the museum proposal, while 'Aajkaal' carried a more analytical piece, touching on the other topics covered in the conference.

Conferences are an inevitable part of an academic's life. But seldom are they as inspiring as this one proved to be to me. I learnt a lot over two days of deliberations and it was rewarding to see an academic event being acknowledged in the media, but the best part for me were the new friendships formed as well as a sense of fresh solidarity with a community of scholars united by their common passion for Partition Studies. It was so much more than I could have hoped for!



Dr Rituparna Roy is currently an Affiliated Fellow at IIAS (Leiden) & Guest Faculty in the Department of English at Presidency University, Kolkata. Her current research interests lie in memorialisation: she has undertaken a project that aims at the establishment of a Partition museum in Kolkata.

She is the author of *South Asian Partition Fiction in English: From Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh* (AUP:2010) & co-editor of the ICAS volume, *Writing India Anew: Indian-English Fiction 2000-2010* (AUP:2013). www.royrituparna.com

Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies

The Indian Ocean has long brought together communities, countries, cultures, ideas and objects. As such, its study has the potential to link the local with the global and build bridges between geographical areas (Africa, Asia, Middle East and Australia) as well as academic disciplines. The Ocean also provides helpful ways of thinking about circulation, mobilities and the littoral societies whose destinies largely depend on it. For these reasons, IIAS and other institutions in Leiden have joined forces to continue to study the Indian Ocean inclusively and innovatively. With numerous lectures, conferences, workshops and other academic events organised in 2017 and many more in the pipeline for 2018, we proudly present the Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies.

Studying the Indian Ocean in Leiden?

The Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies brings together people and methods to study the 'Indian Ocean World'. Supported by numerous individual and institutional collaborations, we aim to provide a global platform for scholars working on connections and comparisons across this axis of human interaction. We are interested in scholarship that cuts across borders of places, periods

and disciplines. As an old academic and intellectual centre, Leiden has historically been crucial to engagements on the Indian Ocean. Today it hosts a great variety of relevant resources and expertise, sprawled across different departments and disciplines. With IIAS as a global facilitating platform, the Centre not only unites the multitude of local resources, but also links them to national and international experts in the field.

IIAS, and with it, the Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, is currently facilitating

an inclusive international platform bringing together scholars and institutions from the Indian Ocean World and beyond. The aim is to co-organize conferences, workshops and academic exchanges with institutions from the region. Such collaborations include the University of Dar-Es-Salaam, Université de La Réunion, Ibn Battuta Foundation in Colombo, University of Calicut, National University of Singapore, along with other international partners such as the African Association for Asian Studies (Accra), the Social Sciences Research Council (New York), and Michigan University.

The Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies will actively participate in the upcoming second international conference *Africa-Asia, A New Axis of Knowledge*, which will be held in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania, 20-22 September 2018. We will support at least one thematic panel and, together with other international partners, we aim to participate in roundtables focusing on the Indian Ocean tinyurl.com/aanak2

Thematic Focus

We approach the Indian Ocean in the broadest sense of the term. To address its connections and mobilities and help cultivate synergies between scholars and projects focusing on the Indian Ocean, our areas of interest include:

- Climate and ecology
- Circulations in art, culture, religion and heritage

- Economic connectivities and socio-political geographies
- Forced and voluntary mobilities
- Law, state and society
- Linguistic and ethnolinguistic connections
- Networks and circulations of peoples, ideas and ideologies
- Port-cities, shipping, littoral societies and coastal histories
- The 'insular' versus 'continental' Indian Ocean
- The Indian Ocean as a space of creolization
- The Indian Ocean 'in the world' (global connections, links to the rest of Africa, Middle-East, Americas, Europe, Asia, etc.)

Future updates and collaborations

For information about the centre's coordination, affiliated scholars, upcoming Indian Ocean lectures in Leiden, international workshops, and many other events, please visit our website and Facebook page, and of course the IIAS website.

If you are an Indian Ocean scholar looking for an opportunity to present your work in Leiden, we look forward to hearing from you!

Website: tinyurl.com/leidencios
Facebook page: tinyurl.com/leidencios

Three upcoming conferences

In 2018, the International Institute for Asian Studies is co-organising three major international conferences, which are open to anyone with an interest in the themes addressed. It is no longer possible to submit proposals for these conferences.

Korea and Vietnam in the Modern and Contemporary Ages: Comparisons and New Connections

1-2 June 2018

Venue:
Seoul National University,
Asia Centre,
Seoul,
South Korea

Read more about this conference in the Focus section of this issue (pp.29-42)

The intricate patterns that emerge when considering Vietnam and Korea side by side in the modern age stretch into every field of academic enquiry, whether historically, geographically or culturally. Comparison and connection taken together offer a grip on the rich and complicated intertwined narratives of the Korean and Vietnamese States from the late 19th century onwards. The conference's heuristic purpose will be to (re)connect the two countries as subjects of History and articulate their trajectories diachronically, yielding changing perspectives on Vietnam and Korea.

This is the second part of a two-part conference organised by Seoul National University Asia Centre (Seoul); Vietnam National University (Hanoi); International Institute for Asian Studies (Leiden); Leiden University (Leiden); École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris).

Information and registration:
www.iias.asia/koreavietnam



13-15 August 2018

Venue:
American University
of Central Asia,
Bishkek,
Kyrgyzstan

Borderland Spaces: Ruins, Revival(s) and Resources

The 6th conference of the Asian Borderland Research Network will focus on the generative and productive capacity of border spaces, which is urgently in need of being addressed. How are borderlands in Asia creating alternative spaces for heritages, self-definition and the extraction of resources? How can these cases serve to rethink social theories of various kind?

Organised by the American University of Central Asia, the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and the Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN).

Information and registration:
www.asianborderlands.net

Africa-Asia, a New Axis of Knowledge – Second Edition

20-22 September 2018

Venue:
University of Dar Es Salaam,
Dar Es Salaam,
Tanzania

Building on the multiple encounters, interactions and dialogues initiated at the 1st Africa-Asia Conference (Accra, Ghana, 2015), this second conference seeks to deepen the explorations of new realities, and long histories connecting Africa and Asia.

Organised by the University of Dar-es-Salaam (UDSM, Tanzania), Association for Asian Studies in Africa (A-ASIA, Accra, Ghana) and the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS, Leiden, the Netherlands). In partnership with: Muziris Institute for the Indian Ocean Studies, University of Calicut (Calicut, Kerala, India); International Institute for Asian Studies (Leiden, the Netherlands); Leiden University (Leiden, the Netherlands); University of Michigan (UM, Ann Arbor, U.S.); Université de La Réunion (La Réunion, Fr.); National University

of Singapore (NUS, Singapore); Social Science Research Council (SSRC, New York, USA); Center for Asian Studies (CAS, University of Ghana (Accra, Ghana).

Information and registration:
www.icas.asia/africas



IIAS Research, Networks, and Initiatives

IIAS research and other initiatives are carried out within a number of thematic, partially overlapping research clusters in phase with contemporary Asian currents and built around the notion of social agency. In addition, IIAS remains open to other potentially significant topics. More information: www.iias.asia

IIAS research clusters

Asian Cities

This cluster deals with cities and urban cultures with their issues of flows and fluxes, ideas and goods, and cosmopolitanism and connectivity at their core, framing the existence of vibrant 'civil societies' and political micro-cultures. Through an international knowledge network, IIAS aims to create a platform for scholars and urban practitioners focusing on Asian cities 'in context' and beyond traditional western norms of knowledge.

Asian Heritages

This cluster focuses on the uses of culture and cultural heritage practices in Asia. In particular, it addresses a variety of definitions associated with cultural heritage and their implications for social agency. The cluster engages with a broad range of related concepts and issues, including the contested assertions of 'tangible' and 'intangible', concepts such as 'authenticity', 'national heritage' and 'shared heritage', and, in general, with issues pertaining to the political economy of heritage.

Global Asia

Asia has a long history of transnational linkages with other parts of the world, thereby shaping the global order, as much as the world at large continues to shape Asia. The Global Asia Cluster addresses contemporary issues related to Asia's projection into the world as well as trans-national interactions within the Asian region itself. In addition IIAS aims to help develop a more evenly balanced field of Asian Studies by collaborating in trans-regional capacity building initiatives and by working on new types of methodological approaches that encourage synergies and interactions between disciplines, regions and practices.



Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA)



Consisting of over 100 researchers with affiliations at 17 institutes in Europe, China, India, and Southeast Asia, the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) is the largest global academic network on Asian cities of its kind. Its overall 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. Between 2012 and 2016, extensive EU-funded, research staff exchanges were carried out, focusing on China and India. The success of the UKNA synergy encouraged the network's partners to carry on its activities, among others, expanding their orientation to include urban development in Southeast Asia in the framework of the 'Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network' programme (2017-2020).

www.ukna.asia
Coordinator: [Paul Rabé](mailto:p.e.rabe@iias.nl)
Clusters: [Asian Cities](#); [Asian Heritages](#)

Supported by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation (New York, USA), this programme (2017-2020) is about research, teaching and dissemination of knowledge on Asia through the prism of city neighbourhoods and urban communities in six selected Southeast

Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET)



Asian Cities. The aim of this micro-local framework of scholarly and civic engagement is to generate alternative, generalisable paradigms on city neighbourhoods. Its second ambition is to shape and empower a community of early career scholars and practitioners working on/from Southeast Asia who will contribute to the growing body of humanistically informed knowledge on Asian cities.

Also see pp.44-45 in this issue.

www.ukna.asia/seannet
Coordinator: [Paul Rabé](mailto:p.e.rabe@iias.nl)
Cluster: [Asian Cities](#)

IIAS supports the work of the Indian Medical Research Network, which aims to stimulate social-cultural and social-historical research on Indian medical traditions such as Ayurveda, Unani, 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 middleclass Indians and Europeans.

www.iias.nl/indianmedicine
Coordinator: [Maarten Bode](mailto:m.bode@uva.nl)
Cluster: [Asian Heritages](#)

Indian Medical Research Network



Initiated by IIAS, this programme involves Leiden University in the Netherlands, two Institutes at National Taiwan University in Taiwan and one at Yonsei University in South Korea. Discussions with other possible partners in Asia are ongoing. 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 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.

Also see pp.46-47 in this issue.

www.iias.nl/critical-heritage-studies
Coordinator: [Elena Paskaleva](mailto:e.g.paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl)
Cluster: [Asian Heritages](#)

Double Degree in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe





Humanities across Borders: Asia & Africa in the World

Co-funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (New York, USA) this new IAS programme (2017-2020) for global collaboration on humanistic education is carried out by a consortium of twenty-three leading institutes in Asia, West Africa, Europe and the United States, and their local partners in Asia and Africa. Its goal is to mobilise the development of a global consortium of universities and their local partners interested in fostering humanities-grounded education. Its substantive vision is that of an inclusive and expanded humanities. To this end, the program will initiate methodological interventions in teaching and research to surpass narrow disciplinary, institutional and ideological agendas. The programme facilitates border-crossing meetings, workshops and other collaborative pedagogical formats in its partner geographies. Jointly conducted, these events aim to shape a curricular matrix and framework for humanistic education across borders.

Also see p.49 in this issue.

www.ias.asia/research/humanities-across-borders-asia-africa-world
Clusters: **Global Asia; Asian Heritages**

Asian Studies in Africa



Since 2010, IAS and partners in Africa, Asia and the USA have been working on an initiative to promote the study of and teaching on Asia at African universities. The initiative constitutes a first attempt to sustain a humanities-informed South-South knowledge platform with connections between other academic centres in Europe and North America, but also Latin-America and Oceania. A roundtable in Chisamba, Zambia (2012) led to the establishment of the pan-African 'Association of Asian Studies in Africa' (A-ASIA). A-ASIA held its three-day inaugural conference in Accra, Ghana, in September 2015, entitled *Africa-Asia, a New Axis of Knowledge*. Organised with the support of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) and IAS, 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.

Next conference: *Africa-Asia, a New Axis of Knowledge – Second Edition, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 20-22 September 2018*. Also see pp.6 and 51 in this issue.

<http://www.icas.asia/africas>
Cluster: **Global Asia**



Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN)

This network focuses particularly on the border regions between South Asia, Central/East and Southeast Asia. The concerns are varied, ranging from migratory movements, transformations in cultural, linguistic and religious practices, to ethnic mobilisation and conflict, marginalisation, and environmental concerns. ABRN organises a conference in one of these border regions every two years in co-operation with a local partner.

Next conference: *Borderland Spaces: Ruins, Revival(s) and Resources, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 23-25 August 2018*. Also see p.51 in this issue.

www.asianborderlands.net
Coordinator: **Erik de Maaker**
maaker@fsw.leidenuniv.nl
Cluster: **Global Asia**

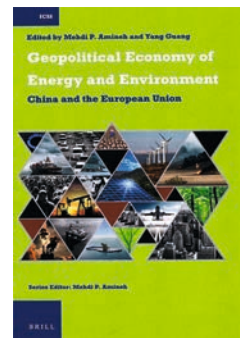


Energy Programme Asia (EPA)

The latest and second joint research programme of the IAS Energy Programme Asia carried out with the Institute of West Asia & African Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences was entitled *The Transnationalization of China's Oil Industry (2013-2017)*. It analysed 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.

Publication: *Geopolitical Economy of Energy and Environment China and the European Union* (Medhi P. Amineh, Yang Guang, 2017).

www.ias.nl/research/energy-programme-asia-epa
Coordinator: **M. Amineh**
m.p.amineh@uva.nl; m.p.amineh@ias.nl
Cluster: **Global Asia**



Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies

The Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies brings together people and methods to study the 'Indian Ocean World', aiming to co-organize conferences, workshops and academic exchanges with institutions from the region. Together with IAS, the Centre facilitates an inclusive and global platform bringing together scholars and institutions working on connections and comparisons across the axis of human interaction with an interest in scholarship that cuts across borders of places, periods and disciplines.

The Centre will be participating in the international conference *Africa-Asia, A New Axis of Knowledge – Second Edition in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania, 20-22 September 2018*. Also see p.51 in this issue.

www.ias.asia/research/leiden-centre-indian-ocean-studies
Cluster: **Global Asia**

Centre for Regulation & Governance (CRG)

The IAS 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.

Cluster: **Global Asia**

International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS)

With its biennial conferences, International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) is the largest global forum for academics and civil society exchange on Asia. Founded in 1997 at the initiative of IAS, ICAS serves as a platform for scholars, social and cultural leaders, and institutions focusing on issues critical to Asia, and, by implication, the rest of the world. The ICAS biennial conferences are organised in cooperation with local universities, cities and institutions and attended by scholars and other experts, institutions and publishers from 60 countries. ICAS also organises the biennial 'ICAS Book Prize' (IBP), which awards the most prestigious prizes in the field of Asian Studies for books and PhD theses in English, Korean, Chinese, French and German (more language editions are planned for the future).



Ten conventions have been held since 1997 (Leiden – Berlin – Singapore – Shanghai – Kuala Lumpur – Daejeon – Honolulu – Macao – Adelaide – Chiang Mai).

ICAS 11 will be held in Leiden, the Netherlands, 16-19 July 2019. See p.6 in this issue.

Website: www.icas.asia
IAS/ICAS secretariat:
Paul van der Velde icas@ias.nl



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

Eva Ambos

The heritagization of the (post-)war in Sri Lanka
15 May 2017 – 15 March 2018

Mehdi Amineh

Coordinator Energy Programme Asia (EPA)
1 Sept 2007 – 31 March 2019

Kunthea Chhom

Sanskrit elements in Old Khmer language: a case-study of boons and curses in epigraphy from ancient Cambodia
1 March 2018 – 31 May 2018

Jatin Dua

A sea of protection: piracy, trade, and regulation in the Indian Ocean
1 Oct 2016 – 31 July 2018

Ana Dragojlovic

1 June 2018 – 31 January 2019

Melinda Fodor

The Ānandasundari by Ghanas̄yāma. A revised critical edition with annotated translation, introduction and glossary of selected words
1 March 2018 – 31 Aug 2018

Manpreet Kaur Janeja

The aesthetics of schools meals: distrust, risk and uncertainty
1 Oct 2017 – 31 July 2018

Pralay Kanungo

Visiting Professor, India Studies Chair (ICCR) *Indian politics*
1 Sep 2013 – 30 June 2018

Neena Talwar Kanungo

The arrival of digital democracy in India: social media and political parties
1 July 2016 – 30 June 2018

Carola Erika Lorea

Metaphor, meaning and oral exegesis: the upside-down language of the songs of Sāadhanā
1 Jan 2018 – 30 June 2018

Charlotte Marchina

Rethinking land use in the era of the Anthropocene (Mongolia, Russia, China)
1 Feb 2018 – 31 Aug 2018

Bindu Menon

Migrant cartographies: migrant media in the Gulf Council cities
1 Aug 2017 – 31 May 2018

Katsunori Miyazaki

1 April 2018 – 9 Sept 2019

William Peterson

Asian self-representation at World's Fairs
1 Jan 2018 – 30 June 2018

Saraju Rath

Indology
1 Jan 2018 – 31 Dec 2018

Rituparna Roy

Kolkata Partition Museum project
1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018

Lena Scheen

1 Jan 2018 – 28 Feb 2018

Bal Gopal Shrestha

Religiosity among the Nepalese Diaspora
1 Jan 2015 – 31 Dec 2018

Xiaosen Song

Vietnamese women in the process of modern Vietnam's nation-building
1 Oct 2017 – 30 Sept 2018

Sanderien Verstappen

Rerouting relations: navigating emergent Muslim and Hindu spaces in rural India
1 Sept 2017 – 30 April 2019

Tingfai Yu

Class as a method to localise queer studies: towards inter-Asian articulation
1 April 2018 – 31 Jan 2019

Qiaoyun Zhang

Cultural heritagization in times of crisis: a Chinese experience
1 Sept 2017 – 30 June 2018

In the spotlight

Bindu Menon

University of Delhi, New Delhi, India
Migrant cartographies: migrant media in the Gulf Council cities

“While working on my last project, on a specific set of amateur films made by the Muslim filmmakers of the small region of Malabar in the northern part of the Indian state of Kerala, I was drawn to the utopian/dystopian space of the Persian Gulf city. The cities of the Persian Gulf, their landscape, petro-modernist architecture, precariat workforce, neo liberal economy and a perpetual temporariness of life in the cities was not to be missed in most of the videos that I watched. I decided to bring my training in cinema and media studies to understand the cities of the Gulf - on the one hand the special economic zones for media production,

designed as spatial products that migrate around the world combining knowledge and industrial economies, and, on the other, a variegated mélange of videos, vlogs and industrial media productions. In my search for the everyday life of media in Gulf cities and my transition from a more historical and textual method of research to ethnographic methods, there wouldn't have been a better place than IIAS to firm up my project and argue out my not yet fully formed postulates.

At IIAS, I found a community of scholars, mainly anthropologists on Southeast Asia and South Asia, who inhabit a world of everyday interrogation of the field, practice, and 'truth' that is produced from anthropological enquiry. From different institutional backgrounds, diverse locations and disparate areas of research - such as media, food, refugees of East Bengal, heritage, magic, rituals, money lending and architecture - yet bound by our enquiries, we struck up conversations in IIAS forums and in the numerous cafes along the *Nieuwe Rijn* that are the life veins of this city. The marvellous collection of books at the Leiden University



Library and the library services have been crucial in my reading in this brief period. Apart from the current work, as it happens, I was simultaneously working on my book manuscript *Coming into Cinema: The worlds of the Region in India 1920-1950*. My manuscript explores the sensory regimes, conceptual turbulence and aesthetic allegiances of the formation of regional cinemas and cinema publics in India, with a focus on the south Indian language of Malayalam. Pouring myself over the final drafts and other writings over quiet evenings with other colleagues made me realise the gift of time that I have, away from teaching, to steep myself in work in this 17th century building. My many knowledge pursuits - modern South Asia, cinema

and visual culture, migration and urban studies - have benefitted from the informal conversations during the IIAS lunch lectures and the Modern South Asia Seminars and film screenings. At IIAS, I have also been fortunate to be in conversation with the networks of South Asian Studies, Indian Ocean Studies and the IIAS Asian Cities and Global Asia research clusters. Additionally, the amazing early film collection of the Eye Film Archive in Amsterdam and the Leiden University photograph collections at the Kern Institute have sparked an interest in me to go back to the film archive, this time to think about circus and world cinema. From here, I will return to the Indian Summer and an intensive semester of teaching at Delhi University, occasionally dipping into the recesses of memory to cherishing those quiet hours of writing, only to be interrupted by the voice of a colleague somewhere else in the building.”

Also read [Bindu Menon's](#) article in this issue of the Newsletter, on page 11.

William Peterson

Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia
Asian self-representation at World's Fairs

“I am thrilled to return to IIAS, this time for six months from January to July 2018 while on sabbatical from my home institution, Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia. My time here in 2013 contributed to the successful completion of *Places for Happiness: Community, Self, and Performance in the Philippines* (University of Hawai'i Press), which was a finalist for the 2015 ICAS Book Prize in the Social Sciences. This time, in addition to finishing a book chapter on a religious festival in the

Philippines, I will be spending the bulk of my time completing the manuscript of my third monograph, *Asian Self-Representation at World's Fairs*, under contract with Amsterdam University Press. International expositions, or 'World's Fairs', remain the largest and most important stage on which millions of humans routinely gather to directly experience, express, and respond to cultural difference. While Asian representation at the hands of colonizing powers and unscrupulous Western impresarios at international expositions has been widely documented, there has been no correspondingly engaged analysis of contemporary Asian self-representation at these events. This book is concerned with the imaginative worlds called into being within Asian country pavilions at these events, where the performative has become the dominant mode for communicating directly with and imprinting on the bodies of spectator/participants.

My previous experience here suggests that the combination of Leiden, the university's location and resources, as well as the stimulating and supportive, but relatively 'chill' environment of IIAS are ideal in supporting my research at this phase in its development. My current research project required significant periods of fieldwork at World's Fairs (Shanghai, Milan), as well as sometimes hectic, time-pressured archival research on the expositions in San Francisco (1915), New York (1939/40 and 1964/65) and Brisbane, Australia (1988). The sane, calm environment of IIAS will enable me to organize, interpret, and productively utilize these research materials, crafting the remaining key chapters necessary to complete the book. Because the Asian Studies library resources here are among the best in the world, anything in print that I need supplement and support my research is here.



As this is my third teaching/research residency in the Netherlands, I have research colleagues locally across a number of disciplines, primarily at the Universities of Leiden and Amsterdam. Thus there are unique opportunities for feedback on my current research and synergies available to support future research proposals that are not present at my home university, making this an ideal place to both write up my research and get my bearings for the next research project!”

Become an IIAS Fellow

IIAS Fellowship possibilities and requirements



The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, the Netherlands, invites outstanding researchers to apply for an IIAS fellowship to work on a relevant piece of research in the social sciences and humanities. We are particularly interested in researchers focusing on one of the Institute's three thematic clusters: 'Asian Heritages', 'Global Asia' and 'Asian Cities'. However, some positions will be reserved for outstanding projects in any area outside of those listed.

Global Asia

The Global Asia cluster examines examples of and issues related to multiple, trans-national intra-Asian interactions as well as Asia's projection in the world. Historical experiences as well as more contemporary trends are addressed.

Asian Cities

The Asian Cities cluster deals with cities and urban cultures with related issues of flows and fluxes, ideas and goods, cosmopolitanism and connectivity at their core, framing the existence of vibrant 'civil societies' and political micro-cultures. Through an international knowledge network, IIAS aims to create a platform for scholars and urban practitioners focusing on Asian cities 'in context' and beyond traditional western norms of knowledge.

Asian Heritages

This cluster focuses on the uses of culture and cultural heritage practices in Asia. It addresses a variety of definitions associated with cultural heritage and their implications for social agency. The cluster engages with a broad range of related concepts and issues, including the contested assertions of 'tangible' and 'intangible' and, in general, with issues pertaining to the political economy of heritage.



Combine your IIAS fellowship with two extra months of research in Paris

When applying for an IIAS Fellowship you may also opt for an additional two months at the Collège d'études mondiales of the Fondation maison des sciences de l'homme (CEM-FMSH), in Paris, France.

Application deadlines: 1 March and 1 October

There are two additional fellowships available with which to carry out research at IIAS. Please note, these have their own particular application deadlines:



ASCL-IIAS Joint Fellowship

This joint fellowship offered by IIAS and the African Studies Centre Leiden is intended for researchers specialising in Asian-African interactions. 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.

Application deadlines: 15 March and 15 September

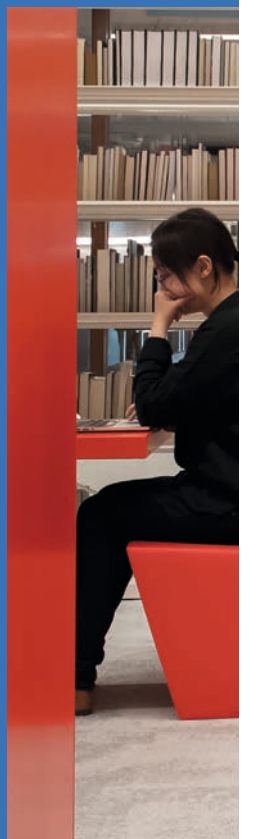


Gonda Fellowships for Indologists

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.

Application deadlines: 1 April and 1 October

Information and application forms:
www.iias.asia/fellowships



Van Gogh & Japan

In the spring and early summer of 2018, the Van Gogh Museum will present *Van Gogh & Japan* – a major international exhibition on the influence of Japanese art on the work of Vincent van Gogh. The show, which will comprise around 60 paintings and drawings by Van Gogh and a rich selection of Japanese prints, will highlight the painter's all-embracing admiration for this art and how fundamentally his work changed in response to it. Exceptional loans from museums and private collections from all over the world will be brought to Amsterdam; this is the first time that an exhibition on such a scale has been organized on this theme.

International Exhibition
Van Gogh Museum
23 March – 24 June 2018
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Under the spell of Japan

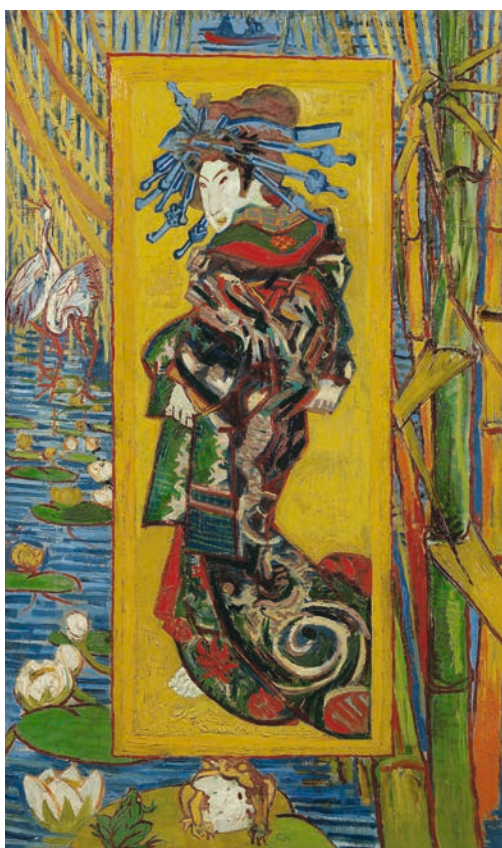
Van Gogh's discovery of Japanese printmaking proved decisive to the direction he would take as an artist. He fell under the spell of the *ukiyo-e* – 19th-century Japanese colour woodcuts – during his time in Paris (1886–88), and began to collect these prints on a large scale. What Van Gogh admired so much in these colourful images were the unusual compositions, the expanses

of bright colour and the attention to details from nature. Van Gogh swiftly came to view Japanese art as a benchmark for his work, as shown by his letters from Arles, where he had moved in early 1888 with the idea that the South of France was “the equivalent of Japan”. He learned there how to “see with a more Japanese eye”. *Van Gogh & Japan* shows how Van Gogh increasingly worked in the spirit of his Eastern example, with the emphasis on a colourful and distinctive palette.

Special loans

Famous paintings and drawings by Van Gogh from museums and private collections all over the world will be brought together in *Van Gogh & Japan*. *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*, 1889 (The Courtauld Gallery, London), a fragile work that has not left the UK since 1955 and has not been in The Netherlands since 1930, will return to its ‘spiritual home’ at the Van Gogh Museum ahead of The Courtauld Gallery’s closure for a major transformation project in autumn 2018. The Japanese print in the background of this important self-portrait testifies of Van Gogh’s great love for Japanese art.

Another highlight of the exhibition is *Self-Portrait*, 1888 (Fogg Art Museum, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA), in which Van Gogh painted himself as a *bonze* – a Buddhist monk from Japan. The work shows the extent to which Van Gogh identified with the Japanese. Other special loans include the *Portrait of Madame Roulin (La Berceuse)*, 1889 (Art Institute of Chicago), *Undergrowth with Two Figures*, 1890 (Cincinnati Art Museum), *La Crau with Peach Trees in Blossom*, 1889 (The Courtauld Gallery,



Top: *Almond Blossom*. Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, February 1890 Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). Oil on canvas, 73.3x92.4cm. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation).

Middle: *Bridge in the Rain* (after Hiroshige). Paris, October–November 1887 Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). Oil on canvas, 73.3x53.8cm. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation).

Bottom left: *Courtesan* (after Eisen). Paris, October–November 1887 Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). Oil on canvas, 100.7x60.7cm. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation).

London) and *The Arlésienne* (Madame Ginoux), 1888 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). They will be shown alongside Vincent's ‘Japanese’ works from the Van Gogh Museum, such as *Courtesan* (after Eisen), 1887, and *Almond Blossom*, 1890. In addition to Japanese prints from Van Gogh’s own collection, a large number from other collections will also be on view, including *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, 1829–33 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) by Katsushika Hokusai.

Collaboration

Van Gogh & Japan is a collaboration with Hokkaido Shimbun Press and NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), the

Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art in Sapporo, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and The National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto. The exhibition is being held at these three Japanese museums in 2017–18, and will be shown at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam from 23 March to 24 June 2018.

Simultaneously to *Van Gogh & Japan*, The Mesdag Collection in The Hague will show an exhibition about *Mesdag & Japan* (7 March–17 June), with a focus on the collection Japanese applied art, collected by Mesdag himself at the time he opened his museum in 1887. The collection consists of more than 200 objects, ranging from Samurai swords to Satsuma vases. The Van Gogh Museum has managed The Mesdag Collection since 1991.