

# The Newsletter

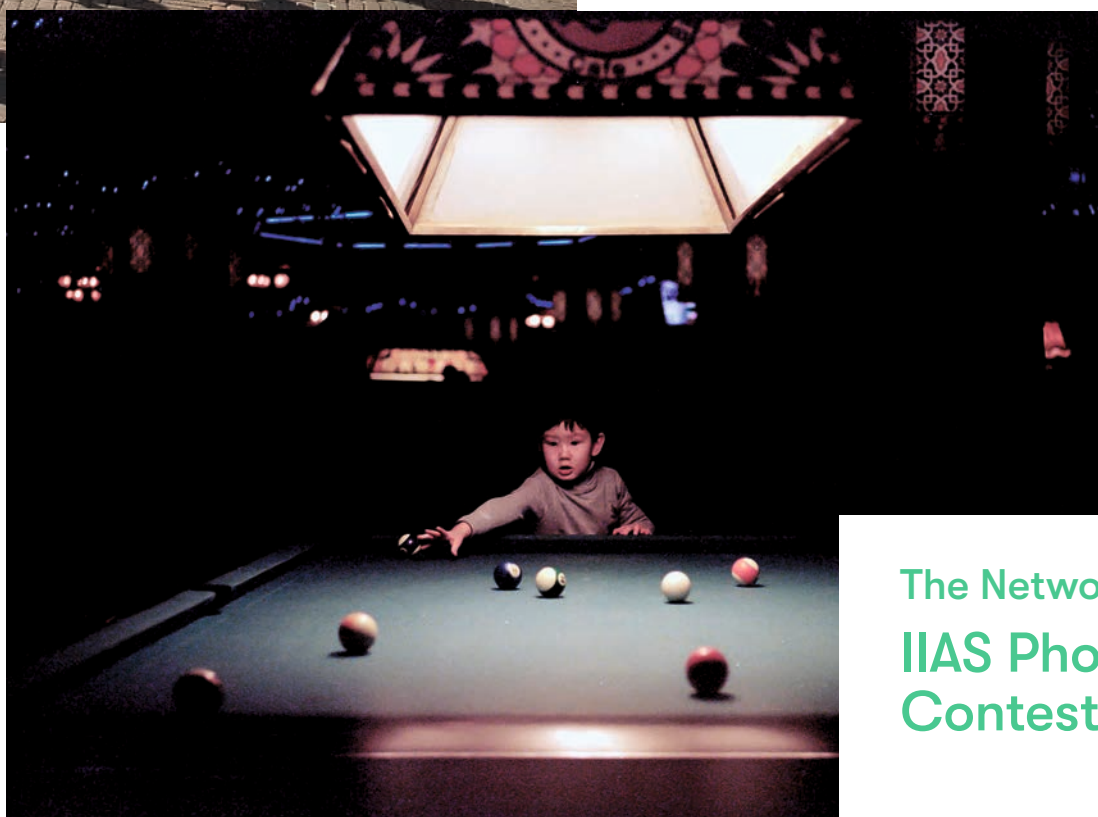


The Study  
**Bàu Trúc:**  
The oldest extant  
pottery village  
in Vietnam,  
and possibly  
Southeast Asia



ICAS 11

## Embracing Leiden



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IIAS Photo  
Contest Award

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**In this edition of the Focus****Beyond the nation? The transnational and its limits**

Ethan Mark

In a context of increasing liberalization and expansion of cross-border flows of human, economic, and intellectual capital, scholarship has moved increasingly towards a questioning of the 'nation' as the dominant determinant of history, identity, politics, economics, culture, and social life. Across the academic disciplines, attention has turned to the transnational, focusing on cross-border flows and dynamics that go 'beyond the nation'. The questioning of the claims of the nation-state might be the trend, but in scholarship or indeed in the structures and thoughts that organize and govern everyday life, leaving the nation behind is often easier said than done.



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

**In this issue**

A number of pages in this issue are related to our biennial conference ICAS, which was this year bigger and better than ever! Find a brief (photographic) overview of ICAS 11 on pages 4-7, admire the winning photos of the ICAS photo contest on pages 50-51 (includes a link to all shortlisted photos) and on pages 48-49, enjoy a glimpse into the calligraphy workshops that took place during ICAS 11 at the IIAS offices.

Looking back at 'Reading Leiden: An Experiential School' (pp.46-47) is a report of the first Summer School of the Humanities across Borders programme that took place from 11-15 July in Leiden. It was organised for the researchers in the various HaB projects in West Africa, Asia and South East Asia to experience and test the heuristic pedagogies encouraged by the HaB programme by 'reading' Leiden, focussing on the neighbourhood, storytelling and craft. IIAS research programmes, networks and other initiatives are described in brief on pages 54-55. Our latest announcements can be found on page 52, and information about the IIAS Fellowship programme can be found on page 53.

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'.

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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Asian Studies

# Reinventing the academic conference

Philippe Peycam



Two months have passed since the 11th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS 11) in Leiden concluded. In the memory of most of the participants I met or talked to it was probably the best ICAS event we have ever organised. A number of reasons can be invoked. One of them, which has been repeatedly pointed out, is the particularly smooth organisation, a mark of the outstanding professionalism displayed by the IIAS-hosted ICAS team or 'Secretariat'. It was also the extremely friendly and dedicated team of staff and volunteers, many of them students at Leiden University, who gave a human face to the whole organisation. It was also the beauty of the old city of Leiden and the experience of walking between venues along canals and cobblestone streets. Also, the perfect weather: not too cold, not too hot.

Behind this collection of factors, was a number of choices that were made, and the adherence to certain values that inhabited the minds of the organisers. They proved critical for what I consider to be a reinvention of the academic (area studies) conference model.

## In the community

It was first the idea of fusing the conference, the university and the city of Leiden into one single experiential thrust. That the activities of the entire event could take place simultaneously in different venues and spaces, contributed to blurring the lines between spheres dedicated to academic activities and public areas or 'commons', where citizens move freely.

Associated with this embeddedness is the fact that ICAS events have become platforms on which different modes of intellectual expression and exchanges are allowed; this, in addition to the usual panels enshrined in more prescriptive modes of communication. Of course, panels and roundtables are important, and they constituted the bulk of all the discussions that took place. But there were other modes of conversation: interactive visits to museums and their (Asian) collections, use of facilities such as local theatres for music and film showings, municipal buildings turned into art exhibitions, public parks in which acts of 'embodied knowledge' were demonstrated, a café-community centre turned into an open platform where participants discussed issues related to academic freedom (an IIAS initiative managed by its fellows). Perhaps the most emblematic of all events was the opening ceremony in the Hooglandse Kerk, one of the city's largest churches, an event preceded by a 'procession' through the old city centre, led by the city mayor.

This embedment of the conference stresses the civic role of academic pursuit, and that of its designated institutions. ICAS now runs an inclusive space in which different social

stakeholders – from academic to cultural institutions, from citizen associations to cities and regions – work hand-in-hand to promote scholarly knowledge in society. It was particularly refreshing to see the 444 year-old Leiden University engage with its societal and urban environments and closely work with the organising partners, IIAS and the French Academic Network for Asian Studies (GIS Asie), to serve the large community of scholars and practitioners of the world.

## A horizontal model

ICAS 11 in Leiden was a diverse platform in which no group – regional, national, disciplinary – overshadowed another. There was a balanced proportion of participants from Asia, Europe, North America, but also Africa, Latin America, and Russia, representing a wide array of academic disciplines and other forms of knowledge, from visual arts to journalism, social activism, diplomacy and policymaking. The variety of thematically defined events, moreover, rather than disciplinary or regionally-bounded ones, facilitated exchanges between people with different focus or backgrounds.

The 'horizontal' model of academic exchange, inclusive of the diversity of actors, did not call for 'keynote speeches' or top-down interventions by a handful of pundits setting the terms of discussions. There were a multitude of meaningful interventions delivered across the whole event. This diversity of approaches or positionalities does not of course preclude a common aspiration for an epistemological overarching coherence, what David Lowenthal describes as an elusive quest for the unity of knowledge. It just recognises that no single form of intellectual expression can claim exclusive ownership on knowledge-sharing.

Put together, these qualities contributed to making the ICAS 11 Leiden event a memorable experience for all its participants.

## Asia and Europe, Asia in Europe.

One key question for the organisers was how to negotiate the 'European' character of ICAS 11 to avoid falling into the old reification trap. With the motto 'Asia and Europe, Asia in Europe', our aim was to revisit the relation between the two constructed entities of Europe and Asia by acknowledging their existence while pointing to their own entanglement, hence the 'in Europe'. The conference touched on multiple sites of human agency in which the two world regions are enmeshed: transregional migrations, cultural intertwining as a result of past colonial and postcolonial connections, economic and political forms of integration, with for instance the Chinese-led Belt and

Road Initiative. What we sought to instil in the discussions is the need to problematise those reified notions that are Asia and Europe as well as those of the nation-states within them.<sup>2</sup>

An acute awareness to history was what allowed the organisers – IIAS, Leiden University, and GIS Asie – not to shy away from past legacies. It was the opening speech by Judi Mesman, Dean of the Leiden University College (LUC) in The Hague, who acknowledged the legacy of Dutch colonialism in Indonesia and the need for the youth in the Netherlands to learn about this chapter of their country's history. Judi organised the ICAS 11 pre-event entitled 'Asia and Europe: Histories of Entanglement' including discussions on the experience of young Dutch with Asian backgrounds growing up in a European city environment. There was the Experiential School 'Reading Leiden' organised by the IIAS Humanities across Borders programme in which young scholars from Asia and Africa dissected the city of Leiden and its multiple Asian and African connections, this with the collaboration of Leiden-based cultural organisations, reversing the trend of western/northern scholars doing their 'field' study in the south. Many other initiatives within ICAS contributed to this effort toward the decentring and recentring of Europe vis-à-vis Asia and the world.

All in all, these efforts to blur the lines appeared to have caught the imagination of the participants (as well as other citizens), individuals and institutions, who did not mistake ICAS Leiden for a European conference on Asia. They saw ICAS 11 as a global knowledge sharing event, with the added value of being situated in one regional cultural setting. In this way, Europe's relevance in Asia knowledge production was not only stripped of its old tinsels, but it found itself enhanced as a legitimate global centre of knowledge on and with Asia. This may be the enduring legacy of ICAS 11 Leiden.

Philippe Peycam  
Director IIAS

### Notes

- 1 The choice of appellations as broad and vague as 'Europe' and 'Asia' means, moreover, that a multiplicity of centres exist in the two regions. The European Alliance for Asian Studies, a platform representing institutions from different parts of Europe including GIS Asie and IIAS, played a very active role in ICAS 11.
- 2 One of the pre-conference meetings organised by the Engaging with Vietnam network named its own event 'Vietnam and Europe, Vietnam in Europe', pointing to the hybrid character of both European and Vietnamese notions as a result of many connecting threads woven throughout history.



Top left: Opening parade to the Hooglandse Kerk official opening and ICAS Book Prize awards ceremony.

Top right: Volunteer handing ICAS 11 bag to an attendee.

Above: Some of the winners of the ICAS Book Prize 2019.

Left and below: Attendees gathering at the Hooglandse Kerk for the ceremony.

# ICAS 11 Embracing Leiden

Paul van der Velde

“How the weather will be, nobody knows!” is how I ended my article ‘ICAS at 21 – ICAS 11, Leiden’ in the previous edition of *The Newsletter* (<https://www.icas.asia/the-newsletter/article/icas-11-leiden>) Now we do know! The sun started to shine the very moment the ICAS 11 parade was set in motion, and it stayed with us for the duration of the convention.

The parade led the 2300 ICAS participants to the Hooglandse Kerk where they were welcomed by the sounds of the 17th century church organ, culminating in Beethoven’s *Alle Menschen werden Brüder* (*Ode to Joy*). In the church’s luminous atmosphere the opening ceremony played out, in which welcome words and the ICAS Book Prize (IBP) ceremony were interchanged by the musical composition *Wind Flow between Asia and Europe* in which musician and singer Enkhjargal Dandarvaanchig carried us to the steppes of Mongolia on the waves of his unbelievable tonal register.

This special composition by Henri Tournier was one of the contributions of our co-organiser GIS Asie, the French Academic Network for Asian Studies, but certainly not the only one, because for the first time more than two hundred academics from the Francophone world participated at ICAS. We were also happy to welcome a fairly big delegation of Asia scholars from the Russian Federation. Likewise the presence of many colleagues from Africa and Latin America was new. This was partly a result of ICAS’s involvement in the organisation of conferences in those continents, with the University of Ghana, the University of Dar es Salaam and the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, during the past four years. This cooperation also resulted in the foundation of the Africa-Asia Book Prize and the addition of the Spanish/Portuguese edition of the IBP, which had a flying start with no less than 66 submissions. (<https://icas.asia/en/icas-book-prize>).

Embedded in a wide variety of cultural events the 550 sessions of ICAS 11 went smoothly, bringing together academics and professionals from 75 countries against the background of Leiden city, which, with the cooperation of the Mayor’s office, was turned into one great big conference space (ICAS 11 programme book: <https://tinyurl.com/ICAS11programmebook>). Steffen Rimner, president of the IIAS Alumni Association wrote: “I have talked with numerous colleagues all of whom told me just how impressed they were with the conviviality and the unique community brought together throughout the conference”. The conviviality was certainly enhanced by the 120 student volunteers who wisely spent part of their holiday assisting us in creating such a youthful and enthusiastic atmosphere.

When contemplating ICAS 11, I am reminded of Paul Gauguin’s *D’où venons-nous/Que sommes-nous/Où allons-nous* (1897), which shows the embrace of the Pacific culture and people, not as the other but as the human. That’s the direction in which we are moving, no matter where we come from. Join us and find out what and who we are at the next edition of the International Convention of Asia Scholars in Kyoto in 2021.

Paul van der Velde  
ICAS Secretary, IBP General Secretary,  
and IIAS Publications Officer  
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Left: Setting up the ICAS 11 signage for the day.  
 Right: Film screening room and attendees.  
 Below left: Entrance lobby of the Kamerlingh Onnes building.  
 Below right: Discussions taking place in the ICAS 11 Academic Freedom Space.



“Through ICAS 11 I gained much more connection with scholars from worldwide [...] moreover, the awards winners during the Opening Ceremony motivated me to do my work the best to become like them in the coming future”  
 Su Sandy Htay



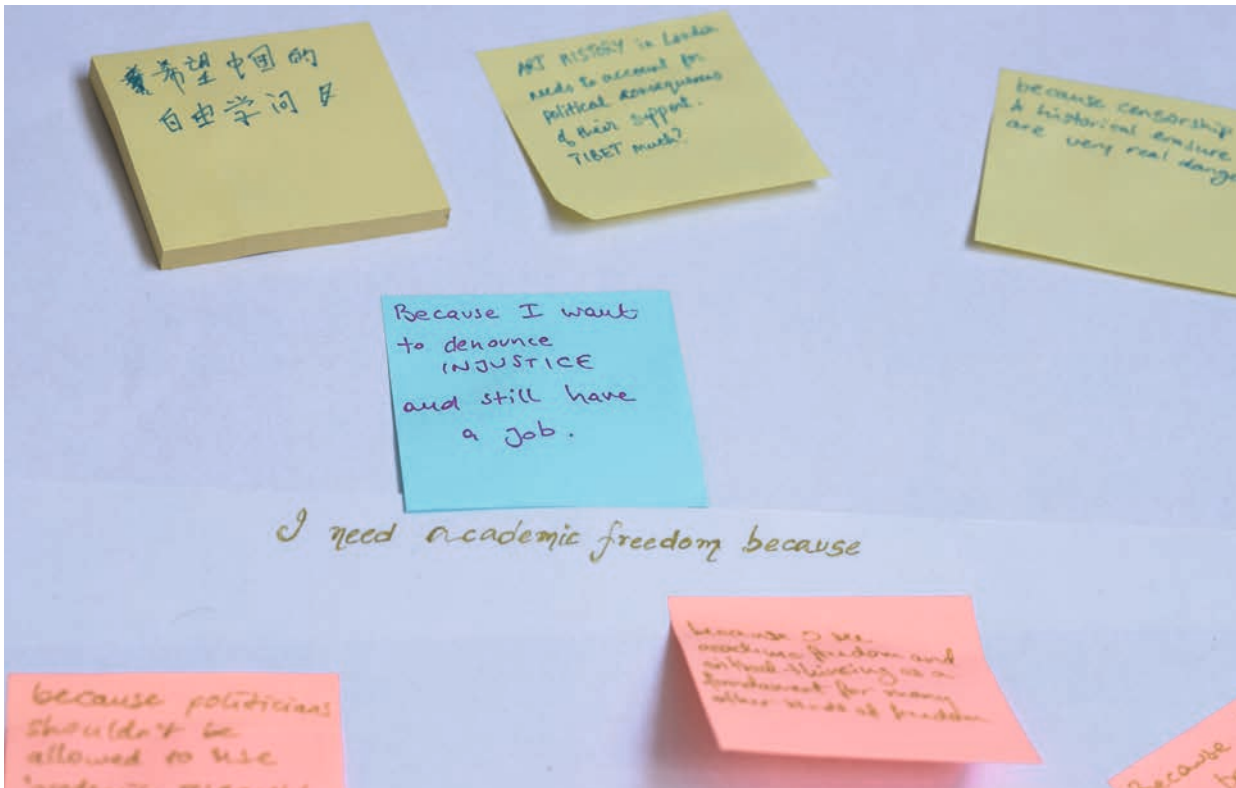
 Universiteit Leiden
  GIS ASIE  
 French Academic Network on Asian Studies

 International Institute for Asian Studies



Top: Food market at Pieterskerkplein.  
 Above: Thomas Voorter and Sonja Zweegers of IIAS at the IIAS exhibition booth.  
 Far right: IIAS-SASS joint forum at ICAS 11.  
 Right: Paul van der Velde, ICAS Secretary with Aurélie Varrel, GIS Asie Director.





"I would like to say that you did a fantastic job with ICAS! It was the first conference I ever attended where I thought, "Wow! I am really getting my money's worth!" I also really appreciated the student volunteers [...] always ready with a smile to direct me in the right direction. Thank you again for all of your hard work in making this ICAS a big success!"

Thomas Patton



Top left: Closeup of the 'ICAS 11 Academic Freedom Space' comments board.

Top right: Conference participant taking a selfie with an ICAS 11 volunteer.

Above: Participants at a reception in the IIAS garden.

Right: Panel session.

Below left: IIAS Director Philippe Peycam and Professor Oussouby Sacko signing the MoU for ICAS 12, to be hosted by Kyoto Seika University (Japan) in 2021.

Below right: Professor Phan Le Ha, founder of 'Engaging with Vietnam' (its 11th edition took place during ICAS 11) at the opening reception, dressed in traditional costume in honour of a special performance during the opening.





Fig. 1 (left): Group photo of 'The 49ers' prior to departure to Denmark, 1973 (photo by Christina Santos Madsen).

Fig. 2 (below): Filipina and Danish chambermaids at Hotel Richmond, Copenhagen, 1972 (photo by Gitte Kabéll).



# Laboring pioneers and pioneers of labor export

Nina Trige Andersen

The first batch of Filipino workers in Denmark arrived in the years 1960-1973 and thus prior to the formal institution of 'labor export' as a Philippine state policy in 1974. However, some of the Filipino Pioneers, as this generation calls themselves, were already facilitated by labor officials. Tracing their histories complicates and expands the dominant narrative of the emergence of the Philippines as a 'labor brokering state'.

This essay is based on my book *Labor Pioneers. Economy, Labor, and Migration in Filipino-Danish Relations, 1950-2015*; a story told from the margins about events that changed the global economy, local labor market structures, and urban geographies during the second half of the 20th century. Through the lives of Filipinas recruited for chambermaid jobs in Copenhagen from the 1960s onwards, the emergence of transnational labor trading is traced. As a framework for understanding the economic, political, and social circuits that the Filipina chambermaids in Copenhagen became part of – and organized in response to – the architecture of international labor policies is unraveled along with local and transnational trade union strategies, association histories, and emergence of social and religious networks in Denmark, the Philippines, and in-between.

I focus here on the years surrounding the Philippine Labor Code of 1974; on the political visions, the pragmatic practices, and the bureaucratic logics that shaped the Philippine state's experiences with labor brokerage to the world. The Labor Code of 1974 is widely known and referenced within migration studies, and at the same time its emergence and implementation are understudied and often misinterpreted. By asking questions from the margins of migration history – the recruitment of Filipinas for chambermaid jobs in Copenhagen in the 1960s and 1970s – new insights may be gained.

## The Filipino Pioneers

Migration from the Philippines to Denmark has, schematically put, occurred in three major waves. The first arrivals between 1960-1973 – during the so-called 'guest worker era' of Europe – called themselves the Filipino Pioneers. This was before the Philippine government formally instituted labor export as a policy, which happened with the adoption of the Labor Code of 1974 under which the Overseas Employment Development Board (OEDB, today Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, POEA) was set up, but for some

of the Filipino Pioneers their recruitment was indeed facilitated by labor officials.

I argue that the Labor Code of 1974 was not the beginning of state-managed labor export in the Philippines; rather it was the institutionalization and systematization of state practices that had been ongoing for decades. Furthermore, preparations and experiments with labor export that specifically led to the adoption of the Labor Code of 1974 predated the boost in demand for Filipino labor in the oil-producing countries in the Middle East – a demand which is often cited as the trigger of state brokered labor export in the Philippines. In fact, until 1976, the OEDB placed more workers in Europe than in the oil-rich Arab countries.<sup>1</sup> Even if the OEDB from 1976 onwards deployed significantly more workers to countries such as Saudi Arabia than to Europe, at the time of preparing and implementing the Labor Code of 1974, it was to countries such as Denmark that Philippine officials supplied labor. Like other 'guest workers' in Europe at the time, the Filipino Pioneers were recruited by the manufacturing industry, but primarily they were hired for service jobs. In the case of Denmark particularly in Copenhagen hotels and Copenhagen Airport.

The second wave of migration from the Philippines to Denmark followed in a moderate but steady flow from the late 1970s to the 1990s. The post-1973 arrivals were largely employed in the same sector, often the same workplaces, as the Pioneers. Most obtained their residence permits through marriage to Danish citizens or permanent residents, since nearly all other legal options became unavailable with the so-called 'immigration stop' that was adopted in late 1973. The labor offered by the Philippines was still in demand worldwide, despite multiplying obstacles to legal migration.

The third wave of migrants from the Philippines to Denmark began in the late 1990s. The annual number of Philippine citizens

entering Denmark rose remarkably from fewer than 200 to more than 2,000 by 2008.<sup>2</sup> This mirrored a general trend in migration from the Philippines to Europe. Between 1998 and 2006 the official numbers of land-based deployed workers to Europe rose from around 15,000 to almost 60,000.<sup>3</sup>

## Immigration stop and continued migration

In both Denmark and the Philippines, the year 1974 constitutes a monument in migration history. The Philippine government adopted the Labor Code that instituted labor export as a state policy and laid out the organizational foundations for state-brokering of labor migration. The Danish government conversely implemented new restrictions on immigration; from 1974 new work permits to third-country nationals were formally suspended, and so were work permits for relatives of migrants already employed in Denmark. Nonetheless, by the late 1970s, Denmark was still on the list of countries served by the OEDB. The immigration stop in Denmark and in many other European countries at this point in history – ending an era of active guest worker recruitment by private employers as well as states – was never a 'stop' but rather a reconfiguration of migration. Thus, Philippine officials remained active in Europe with 'marketing missions' of their new product: labor. As for the Philippine workers who kept arriving in Europe, including Denmark, the reconfiguration of migration through legal restrictions but continued recruitment rendered their laboring lives still more precarious.

... they "created the perfect distraction from confronting problems in the domestic economy".

## Reconstructing the archive

The Filipino Pioneers migrated through a combination of individual initiative, targeted job postings, networks of local agents,

systematic recruitment efforts of international hotel chains, chain migration dynamics, and facilitation from Philippine labor officials. One illustrative example of this is the group who became known as 'The 49ers'. These 49 women were recruited directly in the Philippines at the request of the management of Hotel Scandinavia in Copenhagen – built as a joint venture between Scandinavian Airlines and the American-owned hotel chain Western International. The job interview sessions held in Manila were conducted by the HR manager of the Singaporean Shangri La Hotel – who was a former colleague of the American CEO, Mr. Ellis, who had been hired to run the Danish hotel. Some of the 49 women had been recommended for the job interview by relatives already working in Denmark, some had been tipped by local agents in their villages, and some were referred by the Philippine Department of Labor. When The 49ers left for Copenhagen with one-year contracts as chambermaids in November 1973 – shortly before the Danish immigration stop was adopted – they were accompanied by a Ms. Garcia from the Department of Labor in the Philippines (in the group photo, fig. 1, taken prior to departure, Ms. Garcia is sitting next to the Danish staff manager, Axel Christiansen).

Not many details of 1960s and 1970s state-managed labor export from the Philippines are provided in existing historical accounts, and many documents from this period have been lost or are inaccessible. The Philippine Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), and the Philippine International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) testify that they either have no or cannot locate the original sources from the enterprise of deploying workers abroad from the time before the late 1990s. Former labor officials who worked with labor export in the 1970s cite a policy of keeping such files for only five years, and thus not really archiving them.

The primary source material found from the 1960s to the 1990s has been scarce and consists primarily of Annual Reports and other published papers from the DOL/DOLE and the OEDB. Minutes from board meetings, records of training programs, reports from labor



attachés stationed in Europa, or material from 'marketing missions' in Europe, for instance, have so far been impossible to locate. The ILAB might in fact have some files dating back to the 1960s, but not 'organized and recorded', and it has so far not been possible to gain access to the non-organized part of the archive.

Since the archives of private individuals, of state institutions and civil society organizations in Denmark and the Philippines only hold fragmented pieces of the history of how labor export emerged as a state policy in the Philippines, much relies on secondary sources and not least oral history. A main part of the empirical material for my inquiry consists of formal interviews and informal conversations with various groups of informants: migrants in Denmark and their relatives still residing in the Philippines, trade unionists in Denmark who were engaged in the organizing of Filipino workers, and (former) labor officials in the Philippines (primarily those involved in labor export in the 1970s).

### Labor as stock, surplus, and export

Prior to the Labor Code of 1974, labor attachés were assigned to locations where Filipinos had for decades been deployed to service primarily American employers, such as Guam, Honolulu, and San Francisco. In 1956, The Manila Employment Office was established, tasked with managing and stabilizing the employment situation of the country, including encouraging domestic as well as overseas migration, and as a parallel structure the Overseas and Fee-charging Employment Agencies Unit was created. During the Vietnam War, Filipino construction workers and technicians were recruited to build and maintain the infrastructure of American military camps and bases in Guam, Thailand, and Vietnam. Among those who went to Vietnam as civilian workers during the war was the mother of Christina Santos Madsen, who later herself followed the migration-for-work tradition of her family, when she went to Denmark as part of The 49ers.

From 1970, Philippine labor attachés were deployed to new destinations such as Canada, and countries in Africa and Europe, more specifically West Germany and the Netherlands, and a Philippine labor attaché in Geneva worked closely with the International Labour Organization.<sup>4</sup> In West Germany the labor attaché office was opened in response

to particularly a demand for Philippine nurses, says Jose Brillantes, who later in the 1970s was stationed as labor attaché in Bonn, where he also had responsibility for the Scandinavian countries.<sup>5</sup>

State-organized training programs had also been put in place to facilitate 'emigration' within targeted professions. The 'yearly output' of those trainings was monitored by the Department of Labor, which had by then begun speaking about the workforce in terms of 'stock', 'surplus', and 'exportation', and in 1973 noted that foreign employers – including from Denmark – increasingly "preferred to hire through the public employment offices".<sup>6</sup> Between 1970 and 1973 it was particularly the temporary overseas contract work that expanded, as opposed to prior overseas labor flows of which the majority had been permanent migration. The monthly newsletter *Overseas Employment Trends* was introduced to analyze the outflow. Many of those who left the Philippines as contract workers ended up re-contracting while abroad; some of them eventually becoming permanent emigrants.

The ties between Denmark and the Philippines were also strengthened during these years. In 1969 the Danish consulate moved its office to the compound in Intramuros where the Department of Labor was located, and in 1971 Denmark tripled its official representation in Manila. Hjalmar Ibsen, who was appointed Consul General for the Philippines in Denmark in 1966, wrote in his memoir that it was a time when Denmark had a labor shortage and actively encouraged foreign workers to come to Denmark. "The Philippines sent a large contingent", Ibsen wrote, so much so that soon one would encounter Filipinas in "practically every hotel".

What changed with the 1974 Labor Code was not the actual endeavor of state engagement in sending workers abroad, but the scale in numbers, the degree of institutionalization, and the political priority given not just to labor export but also to the Department of Labor as such, headed by the influential minister Blas F. Ople, one of President Ferdinand Marcos's most loyal allies.

### The man with the vision

The labor officials who were involved in OEDB in the first years of its existence unanimously point to Ople as the man with the vision of how prominent labor export could become in the Philippine economy. Indeed, Ople got to work on these prospects immediately after taking

office in 1967. By 1970, the Philippine state had signed contracts with several African states – for instance Kenya, Ethiopia, and Sudan – to provide middle- and high-skilled workers for the educational sector, population programs, well-digging, etc., and between 1969 and 1971 Filipinos were deployed to at least 25 different countries, though 80 percent of them still went to Guam or South Vietnam. When the Vietnam War ended in 1975, many Filipino construction workers followed their employers to construction sites in the Middle East,<sup>8</sup> and thus the mass deployment of workers from the Philippines to this part of the world was also connected to events outside of domestic Philippine politics, rather than a mere cause or effect of the Labor Code of 1974.

By the summer of 1971, Labor Secretary Ople and his department had worked out an interim set of policies, rules, and regulations for a systematic overseas labor program. This prepared the ground for the first big jump in scale that occurred between 1971 and 1973, when the number of registered contract workers placed abroad went up from a few thousand annually to more than 14,000 in 1972 and more than 36,000 the following year (not counting those who migrated by their own efforts or through private agencies).<sup>9</sup>

Manolo Abella, who worked in the Board of Investments and later Department of Labor in the 1970s, describes Labor Minister Ople as "the one who really saw the larger picture and the looming opportunities" in labor export.<sup>10</sup> Marcos gave Ople the freedom to totally reorganize the Labor Department; Ople fired dozens of officials and instead recruited young people straight from university. Many of them were leftists, and some of them involved in the resistance against Marcos and Martial Law, but they eyed an opportunity to contribute to creating decent jobs for their compatriots. However, most of these jobs would be overseas, and often not that decent.

One of the new recruits was Maria Alcestis Abrera-Mangahas, who became an officer in the Placement Department of the OEDB from its creation in 1974, and from 1978 Deputy Executive Director. "Ople was a visionary, I've never seen anyone like him before or after. So much was going on at that moment", says Alcestis Abrera-Mangahas, forty years later.<sup>11</sup> "He opened the minds of young people, brought us in and gave us senior positions, trusting our capacities. It was heady, intense, and exciting in those days", she recalls. Abrera-Mangahas was from the outset what could be called a critical supporter of the 'labor for migration' strategy

of the Philippine state: "We had to keep asking ourselves: Do we want to shape this thing, or do we want to stay out? I think we did right to stay in. But true enough, it morphed into a huge business". The labor officials transforming labor migration into a state export enterprise actively "changed the market by boosting demand for Filipino manpower", Abrera-Mangahas says, and they "created the perfect distraction from confronting problems in the domestic economy".

### Reinterpreting from the margins

In Europe, from the 1960s onwards, Filipinos were recruited mainly for the healthcare and the service sectors – in the latter case often for so-called unskilled work, even if many of the migrants had formal education. Already by 1976, the global – and not least European – demand for Filipino service workers was so great that the OEDB created a special branch to "organize an effective recruitment and placement program" for this worker category: The Household and Service Workers' Unit.<sup>12</sup>

This part of migration history has been marginalized in the accounts of how the Philippine state shaped its labor export policies, as a result of several factors, not least a gendered bias in research. For example, male workers in construction and manufacturing – such as those recruited for the oil-producing Arab states from the mid-1970s – have been paid more attention in both labor history and migration history than women workers in the service sector. Thus, the early labor migrations from the Philippines to Europe were understudied, despite the fact that Europe was the destination of one in every four Philippine temporary migrant worker in 1975.<sup>13</sup>

In the case of Denmark, women from the outset made up the majority of migrants from the Philippines, and they were first and foremost recruited for a particularly hidden form of service labor, namely chambermaid jobs; labor that is explicitly supposed to go unnoticed. In the book *Labor Pioneers*, these women – their life stories, their work experiences, their organizing practices, and their translocal networks – are at the center. From the narratives that emerge from tracing these working women at the margins or outside existing historical accounts, transnational labor trading policies, labor market structures, and labor unionizing histories are reinterpreted.

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Fig. 3 (above left): Presidential wife Imelda Marcos (red dress) received by Filipinos in Denmark, July 1983, at inauguration of the training ship MS Filipinas, given as a 'gift' from the Danish state to the Philippines.

Fig. 4 (above right): Signing of state loan agreement from Denmark to the Philippines, initiated under the Social Democratic government in the late 1960s.

Fig. 5 (right): Filipino Association of Denmark (FAD) receives Philippine ambassador to London, Jose Manuel Stilianopoulos, at the house of General Consul for the Philippines in Denmark, Hjalmar Ibsen. In front row Sister Pilar, who in the late 1970s was sent from the Philippines to Denmark to assist in the religious care of the growing Filipino community (photo by Marc. R. Dicapay/Filipino House).





2019 Hong Kong anti-extradition bill protest. Image reproduced under a Creative Commons license. Courtesy Studio Incendo on flickr.

# Hong Kong Studies in the future continuous tense

Yiu-Wai Chu

On 16 June 2019, Hong Kong caught the world's attention when reportedly two million people took to the streets to force, among others, the Chief Executive to officially shelf the extradition bill that, as widely believed by Hong Kong people, would jeopardize the 'one country, two systems' framework of the Special Administrative Region. Four days before the history-making rally, the government tried pushing through the immensely controversial bill despite heated opposition. Had it not been for the lockdown of the Legislative Council building due to crowds of angry protestors who were brutally dispersed by countless rounds of tear gas and rubber bullets, the bill would have been passed, and the title of this essay might have arguably become *Hong Kong Studies in the past tense*.

## A perfect storm

According to Albert Chen, Cheng Chan Lan Yue Professor in Constitutional Law at the University of Hong Kong, the attempt to push through the extradition bill that involves a rendition arrangement between Hong Kong and Mainland China, "generated a 'perfect storm' in Hong Kong that was completely unnecessary and avoidable".<sup>1</sup> While I agree that this 'perfect storm' was avoidable, I would also argue that more controversies will evolve as Hong Kong has been hopelessly bound by the unprecedented confluence of neoliberal capitalism and state capitalism in the age of China. The conflicts as well as collusion between two capitalisms have generated a persistent storm in the Special Administrative Region. The recent US-China trade dispute, which is not just about trade, may usher in a new era of 'one world two systems' global order, and Hong Kong, an inseparable part of China and its window to the world, would be trapped in the eye of the storm. That said, this essay focuses on Hong Kong Studies rather than the extradition saga – and how that will end is still anyone's guess.

Hong Kong's increasingly marginal, minor position, especially after the Umbrella Movement and the subsequent (s)election of Carrie Lam as the new Chief Executive in 2017, has become a predicament as well as condition for the Special Administrative Region. In his speech delivered after he inaugurated the new Hong Kong administration on the final day of his three-day visit to Hong Kong to mark the 20th anniversary of the resumption of Chinese sovereignty, President Xi Jinping addressed Hong Kong as a "plural society" with "different views and even major differences on some issues"; however, he also warned that "any attempt to endanger China's sovereignty and security, challenge the power of the central government", or to "use Hong Kong to carry out infiltration and sabotage against the Mainland is an act that crosses the red line and is absolutely impermissible".<sup>2</sup> By 'red line' he was making it clear that the Central People's Government has zero tolerance for challenges to its authority.

Meanwhile, after Hong Kong's reversion to China in 1997, both China and the West wanted to retain Hong Kong's status as a "capital of free-wheeling capital",<sup>3</sup> and therefore spawned a myth of status quo that 'froze' Hong Kong as a commercial city. According to, for example, the official website of the Greater Bay Area administered by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau: "Hong Kong will facilitate and support the economic development of the region, with a view to enhancing the role and functions of the Greater Bay Area in the country's two-way opening up".<sup>4</sup> Finance, trade, and STEM education are held in esteem, given that the emphasis is on economic development. At this particular juncture, integration with the Mainland, whether Hong Kong likes it or not, has become a

topic that is of the utmost importance for any consideration of the future of Hong Kong culture and the city per se. In order not to become a mere part of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Studies, it is pertinent for Hong Kong Studies to respond to the Greater Bay Area blueprint.

## Hong Kong-Mainland integration

Whether the plurality of Hong Kong culture and society will disappear or not is a key question to ask as Beijing has become more proactive in incorporating the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau into the Mainland. However, it is wrong to argue that Hong Kong Studies as an academic discipline is emerging "as an area studies field in its own right, edging out from the shadows of China Studies" after the Umbrella Movement in 2014.<sup>5</sup> To set the record straight, the Hong Kong Studies Programme, an academic programme that offers B.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. curricula at the University of Hong Kong, was launched in 2013 (not to mention those Hong Kong Studies-related research programmes and centres, such as the Hong Kong Cultural Studies project of The Chinese University of Hong Kong launched in 1993, over the past few decades; more details are provided in Elizabeth Sinn's 'Reflections on Some Early Moments in Hong Kong Studies', her keynote address delivered at the First Annual Meeting of the Society for Hong Kong Studies.<sup>6</sup> The desire to understand the distinctive culture of this former British colony seems to still be haunted by the spectre of Orientalism, which sees only what one wants to see.

Although the emergence of Hong Kong Studies should not be understood only in the aftermath of the Umbrella Movement, it is not unreasonable to see Hong Kong Studies as a discipline to refuse to let Hong Kong characteristics be gone in the age of China. I have argued elsewhere that "[g]iven the continuous disappearance of Hong Kong and its cultures, it is important for Hong Kong Studies to imagine how to keep its erasure—which seems inevitable in the age of China—visible/legible".<sup>7</sup> At the same time, however, it is equally important to remember that it is not possible for Hong Kong Studies to move out of China's shadows. Just take the above-mentioned annual meeting of the Society for Hong Kong Studies as a convenient example. Most if not all of the twenty panels featured papers in one way or another related to China.

Back in the 1990s, people might have thought Hong Kong would be able to change China. Now that China has changed (but not by Hong Kong), if not become, the world, Hong Kong must rethink its future in this special context. Inspired by Lawrence Grossberg's *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense*, which offers "a modest proposal for future formations of cultural studies",<sup>8</sup> I would use this essay as a prolegomenon to explore

the future work of Hong Kong Studies. For the future of Cultural Studies, Grossberg highlighted the importance of going beyond the established Eurocentric border. Hong Kong Studies, trapped in the 'perfect storm' mentioned above, must be inscribed between Eurocentric and Sinocentric borders.

## Imagining a future

As perceptively noted by Arif Dirlik in 'The Rise of China and the End of the World as We Know It', the PRC is a rising power in search of a paradigm that may provide an identity of its own that may also be appealing to others.<sup>9</sup> Its paradigm appeals to others by following international standards, but in some respects only. Because Hong Kong is the place where the impact of the rise of China is most acutely felt, a proactive consideration of the role of Hong Kong Studies within emerging formations of global modernity with Chinese characteristics would be inevitable. What has made Hong Kong distinctive in the world is not only its role in global capitalism, which is in a sense not genuinely different from other global cities, but also its distinguishing humanities-related aspects. For this reason, the study of the socio-cultural values of Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region of China carries long-term significance for Hong Kong Studies as an academic discipline. Toward this end, research on the inheritance and transmission of Hong Kong culture and its values, as well as their reception and transformation in the Mainland, is pertinent to the future development of the discipline, which will also contribute a vital dimension to related fields such as China Studies and Asian Studies.

As such, Hong Kong Studies can and will continue to shed illuminating light on politically engaged analyses of the changes and social challenges that confront the world today, with far-reaching theoretical implications for related areas. Grossberg believed that culture can be an effective mediator, universal and specific at once, and the new generation of scholars must foster an "open-minded and progressive vanguard of intellectual and political movements to come".<sup>10</sup> In the Hong Kong context, progressive vanguards cannot but take a step further to consider the (im)possibility of Hong Kong Studies in relation to the 'one world two systems' global order. It is in this sense that the future continuity of Hong Kong has to be understood.

## Postscript

Since the writing of this essay in early July 2019, many unforeseen and even unimaginable events have happened in Hong Kong during the summer of protests. At certain junctures people were deeply worried that the uniqueness of the Special Administrative Region would vanish. Despite Carrie Lam's formal withdrawal of the extradition bill on 4 September 2019, there is still no obvious end in sight. Given the highly

volatile situation, the difficulty faced by critics is that their works will almost always be outdated before publication. Without a crystal ball, it is not possible to speculate how the worst chaos in Hong Kong's history will end, and it is beyond the scope of this short essay to examine the civil unrest in detail. That said, I decided to keep the original version and just added this postscript, which is not intended to be a review of developments that have occurred since the essay was written, but rather a footnote to underscore the importance of Hong Kong as well as its vulnerable situation in the new global order.

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# Interpreting the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

Deborah Giustini



Few events bring the world together like the Olympic Games. With preparations for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in full swing, Japan is also bracing for another kind of competition: securing interpreters for the games. Ever since its election, Japan has been taking advantage of its role as host of the most prestigious global sporting event to reshape its multilingual dialogue and international communication industry, in order to provide increased access to language services and facilitate interactions between Japanese and foreign sportspeople, dignitaries, officials, and tourists.

in their localities and composed of different elements, such as bodily and mental activities, material artefacts, knowledge,

emotions, skills, and so on.<sup>3</sup> There is a wide set of scholarly literature on the dynamics and economic histories of organisations, work, and markets as practices in the Western World, but there is hardly any study on labour practices in the Japanese context, that is, on the ways in which work can be investigated as an interconnected flux of experiences, competence, materiality, and emotionality. My work aims at partially filling this gap and investigates the language industry in Japan, with a focus on the profession of interpreting, exploring dynamics, performances, and organisations of mediated communication services in terms of expertise and market relations.

When I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Tokyo, I had just developed a socio-historical perspective on the genealogical orientation of the language industry in Japan,<sup>4</sup> as I was particularly interested in how the professional practice of interpreting emerged, was perpetuated, and changed in the context of the neoliberal Japanese labour market and in view of recessions. Now an integral part of international society and economy, interpreting was only recognised as a profession after the Second World War, when the Nuremberg Trials (1945-1946) in Germany and the Tokyo Military Tribunal for the Far East (1946-1948) in Japan judged war criminals in the presence of the Allies.<sup>5</sup> A number of interpreters, found mainly amongst multilingual diplomatic and army personnel, were appointed to translate in real-time the trial proceedings to eleven different country representatives and to hundreds of legal professionals and spectators, getting to grips with a technique never used before, that of 'simultaneous interpretation'. The technique would be made possible by technological innovations, with interpreters working in isolated 'booths' and connected through a cable system of headphones and microphones. The tribunals enforced professional norms of neutral, accurate rendition and of invisible positioning, so that the interpreter's role was shaped as that of an inbetweeners ensuring trust and communication between all parties without any intrusion. Institutionalised by the first United Nations General Assembly in 1946, interpreting became part of international multi-linguistic proceedings, and recognised as a stable entity. Through the involvement of local practitioners, interpreting was then officially

made a profession by a process of circulation and integration that set up its codes of practice, ethical norms, associations, and training.<sup>6</sup> However, it was at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics that interpreting in Japan gained real nationwide recognition as a fully-fledged profession, and captured the interest of public and media alike as a glamorous, exotic profession practised worldwide by multilingual individuals. Whilst I was in Japan connecting with interpreters, institutions, and organisations for data collection, I met two retired professionals who had worked at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. In her interview, one of the informants, 75-year-old 'Mariko' recalled: "Japan's government and the Olympic organising committee had appointed junior and senior university students with knowledge of English. Almost nobody was able to speak English at the time (laughs) and they had a very hard time recruiting interpreters. During and after the Olympics everybody got interested in interpreting, people wondered how it was possible to do it, what magic tricks lied behind interpretation". Mariko was an exception, having picked up English in her childhood thanks to her father, who spoke it and pushed her to gain an international attitude and to later work for governmental agencies promoting foreign relations. Another participant, 74-year-old 'Mizue' stated instead: "They appointed me to work for the Olympics and the Paralympics. We did training for one year, and a teacher came from the US – the training was every Saturday, sometimes held at the Japanese Red Cross. We took a lot of conversation classes, to practice spoken English and get a chance to do some basic interpreting, because we seldom had chances to speak with native people. It was also a very informative experience, a lot of cultural information provided about countries and sports. I remember that I was also in charge of the 'international club', and assisted and translated for many people who were visiting Japan from overseas for the event".

The 1964 Tokyo Olympics celebrated Japan's re-emergence and progress on the world stage as an open, economically confident nation, spending the equivalent of its national budget on a major transformation project to modernise the city's infrastructure, adding momentum to a country finally showing signs of post-war recovery.<sup>7</sup> But the legacy that lives on also symbolised the coming of age of interpreting as a thriving niche of the Japanese labour market, which recognised the importance of interpreters to bridge languages and cultures as powerful mediators beyond the Olympic events, and particularly for business and political development.

It was right after the 1964 Tokyo Olympics that Japanese pioneer interpreters acted as the driving force behind the establishment of the country's language industry. Many of them had taken part either in the international games, or in the 'productivity programme' developed during the American occupation to help post-World War II Japan's industrial recovery.<sup>8</sup> Equipped with experience on the international stage, with foreign language knowledge, and with interpreting skills, these novel interpreters anticipated the new direction of the market for linguistic services in Japan at a time that this still did not exist. They founded the first agencies offering language and event organisation services, soon to be followed by training schools to educate the next generation of language specialists.<sup>9</sup> As corporations, organisations, and people adapted to globalisation, interpreters allowed Japan to communicate with the world, rooting economic and cultural growth into a vast network of carefully vetted language services. The role of the language industry and the demand for interpreters has increased dramatically in Japan since the 1964 Olympics, to the point that just the 5 top language service providers alone generated a total revenue of 300 million dollars in 2018.<sup>10</sup>

## Interpreting new developments beyond the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

Although the 2020 Tokyo Olympics are likely to create new waves (and awes) of demand of interpreting skills and services in Japan, the mindset required to thrive in the market is changing as well. Technological developments are reshaping the Japanese language services industry, which is increasingly working to adhere to customer-specific corporate languages, to grant terminology consistency, and to increase quality and productivity.<sup>11</sup> The 2020 Tokyo Olympics are no exception in their attempt to connect Japan with the rest of the world, both through human and machine interpreting. As such, the games may raise fascinating avenues of inquiry regarding scenarios of innovation of the Japanese language industry, offering insights into a "further way in which lives of people hang together and co-existence takes place [...] as the effect of the joint work of human practices and the performativity of materials".<sup>12</sup> Against this backdrop, we will have to observe the impact that interpreting at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics has on multilingual competence for understanding new directions of globalisation and interconnection in the Japanese labour market and society.

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## The Olympics: a matter of international communication

The Olympic Games are considered to be the foremost international sports competition, with more than 200 nations participating. For the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games, an estimated 20 million overseas tourists will visit Japan and thousands will attend Olympic events, with an already confirmed US\$ 3 billion in domestic sponsorship revenue, 3.5 million tickets already sold, and an expected total additional revenue of US\$ 5.6 billion.<sup>1</sup> To maximise opportunities of economic growth and internationalisation, Japan is preparing to provide the best visitor experience to guests from all over the world, including specialist sports and general assistance interpretation services, ensuring that everyone can communicate and enjoy their visit, no matter the languages they speak. According to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics organising committee,<sup>2</sup> more than 35,000 volunteers and professional interpreters will be onsite to offer language assistance, and the Nara Institute of Science and Technology researchers are working on a lag-free interpretation system and app to instantaneously translate the games' Japanese commentary into 27 languages. Whether performed entirely by humans or mediated by AI technologies, interpreting will play a major role in a variety of Olympic settings, with interpreters drilling their skills to connect visitors and residents and save them from the potential chaos of language barriers.

## Interpreting the past and the future of the Tokyo Olympics

The practice theory turn in social research has produced abundant studies of the world as being populated by 'practices': routine actions and behaviours that are meaningful to people

Fig. 1 (top): 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games logo, by Kenjiro Sano.

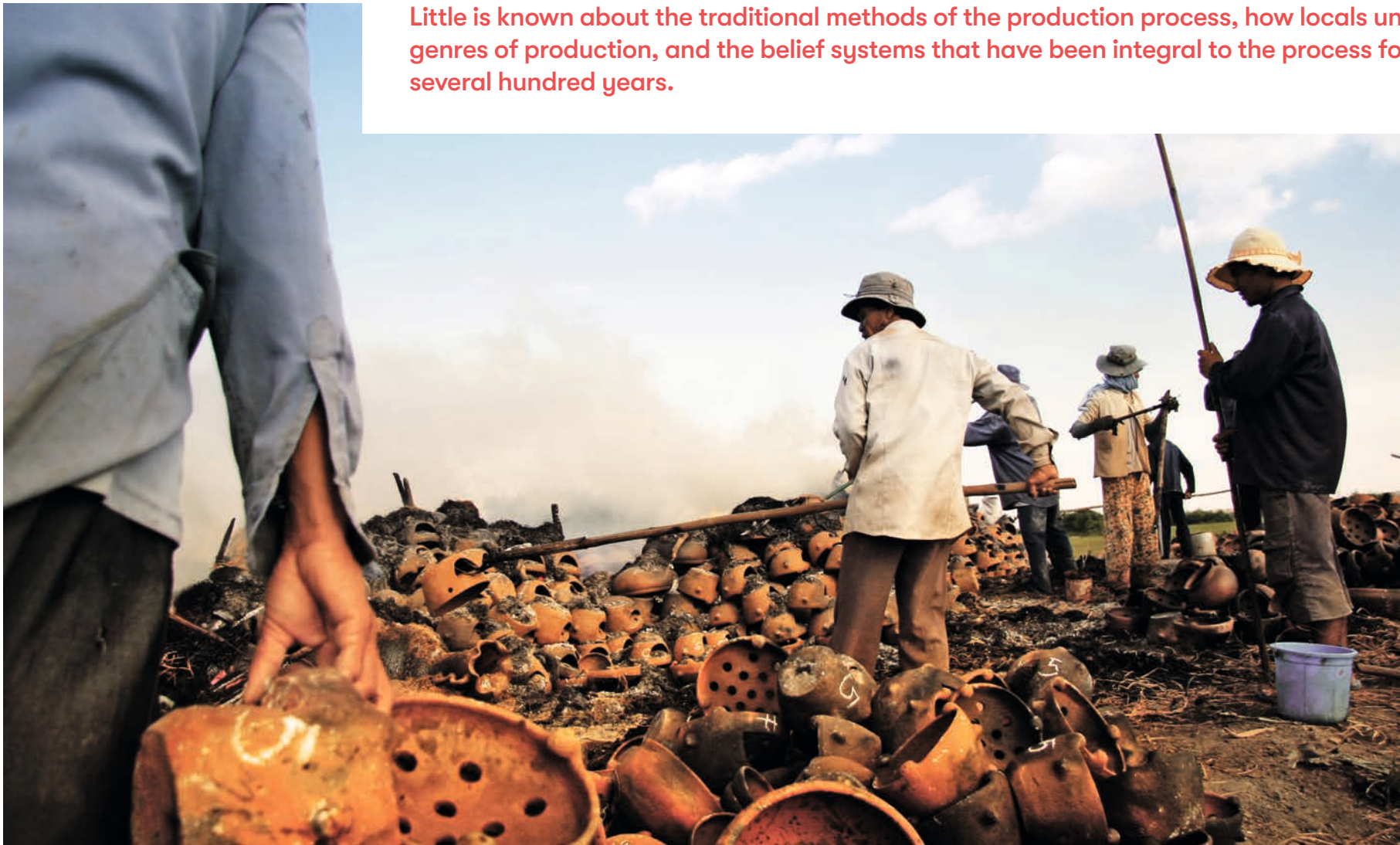
Fig. 2 (above left): Sound-proof booth used by interpreters for simultaneous interpretation. Photo taken by the author.

Fig. 3 (above right): Booklet used by Japanese interpreters at the Tokyo 1964 Olympics. Photo taken by author, booklet courtesy of an informant.

# Bàu Trúc: The oldest extant pottery village in Vietnam, and possibly Southeast Asia

Trương Văn Món (Sakaya)  
and William B. Noseworthy

Palei Hamu Craok – mostly referred to by its Vietnamese name Bàu Trúc – is a small village in the town of Phước Dân (Ninh Phước District, Ninh Thuận province, Central Vietnam), internationally known for its production of pottery. The sale of traditional ceramics, including agricultural products, cookware, and even children's toys, brings busloads of tourists to the village every year. Little is known about the traditional methods of the production process, how locals understand the genres of production, and the belief systems that have been integral to the process for the past several hundred years.



Left: Open-air firing of Cham pottery. Photo by Inra Jaya, all rights reserved.

Bàu Trúc is a short motorcycle ride from Phan Rang-Tháp Cham city in Central Vietnam; just 9 KM to the south, off National Highway 1A. It would be easy to miss were it not for the occasional tourist bus. Today, the settlement lies in two of Phước Dân town's quarters: the 7th and the 12th Quarter. As per statistical measures in 2018, enough people (nearly 3000) reside in the 7th Quarter for it to be considered a small town in its own right, and the current population is 94% ethnic Cham. By comparison, the 12th Quarter houses just around 2000 people and only 45% ethnic Cham, with the remainder being ethnic Vietnamese.

Palei Hamu Craok takes its name from the Austronesian Cham language of Southeast Asia. The term *palei* is a descriptor used to apply to villages and small towns; *hamu* refers to rice paddy land; and, a *craok* is a protrusion of land found just upstream of the conflux where two streams meet. The village dates to before the 12th century and even possibly before the 9th century. During the reign of Minh Mạng [r. 1820-1840 CE], the Vietnamese annexed the area and gave it the name 'Vinh Thuận', which is still used by Vietnamese who reside in the area. However, in 1964 there was a massive flood in the province, and the people of Palei Hamu Craok were forced to move the center of their settlement to a nearby area, adjacent to a lake called Danaw Panrang – Panrang being the original Cham

name for the largest city in the area, and Danaw being the Cham word for 'lake'. Since another meaning of *panrang* is 'area of many bamboo trees' the local Vietnamese came to call the new settlement 'Bàu Trúc' or 'Bamboo Lake'.<sup>1</sup>

The characteristics of the area are very similar to many other Cham villages and towns in Ninh Thuận province. There are few large old-growth trees, while rice fields are plentiful, with thanks to irrigation networks. Such settlements are associated with matrilocality and families living close to one another are generally from the same kinship network. After death, remains are interred in an old grave site, known as a *kut*. Currently, there are 13 clan groups and each clan has 50 to 60 families. Families tend to own land collectively, sharing rights and obligations, and are thus also responsible for the standard upkeep of the ancestral grave sites and shrines associated with their clan. Houses are built according to customary regulations [*adat*] regarding the positioning of the buildings. Within a single family complex, there may be several structures, including a *sang yé* [customary house], one or two *sang mayau* [two-story houses], a *sang tuai* [guest house], one or two *sang gar* [one story, horizontal house], and a *sang ging* [kitchen]. Each development also contains a well to the east and a vegetable garden in the southeast. From 2005 through the present, however, such

traditionally oriented housing developments have begun to disappear. New houses tend to follow Vietnamese adaptations of European modernist architecture.

## Spirits of the place: a divine inspiration for pottery

Although the origins of Palei Hamu Craok are shrouded in history, contemporary residents generally have a common understanding of their past. Most trace their lineages to an ancestral deity: Po Klaong Can. Po Klaong Can was a mandarin of Po Klaong Garai – a king of the Champa civilization who ruled the vicinity from 1151-1205 CE. Po Klaong Can helped the villagers of the area to run out enemy armies and brought them to settle in a new area: Hamu Craok. He also showed them a clay pit and taught them about pottery. Consequently, locals deified him as 'the God of Pottery' and built a temple for him. They built the temple (*Danaok Po Klaong Can*) in the center of the village field [*tambok min*]. In 1967, they moved it from the old village [*palei klak*] to a new location 2 km west of the new settlement (f. 1964). In 2014, the new temple was damaged by weather and the community raised funds to reconstruct the structure. The current building (10x8m) is supported by three trusses, which stretch across two rooms, with the main temple door facing east. The inner sanctum (3x8m) includes the

main shrine, which features a stone *linga-yoni* altar (0.5m tall) with the face of Po Klaong Can on the *linga* aspect. A second smaller stone altar (0.4m tall), just to the left, features the god's wife, *Nai Hali Halang Tabang Măh* ('Po Nai' colloquially). On the right-hand side of the entrance to the temple a small *nandin* statue represents the steed of Shiva. These statues were repurposed from a 9th-century temple burned by a 'Jawa army' in nearby Phước Hữu commune.<sup>2</sup> However, they only came into the current residents' possession in 1967.

Traditional Cham pottery methods, inspired by Po Klaong Can's teachings, have consistently been dependent on natural forces, relying upon the proper balance of wind, sun, and rain. Hence, the popular belief that weather events and spiritual forces connected to the weather have a direct impact on successful production. Divine forces in Cham religions have the power to punish or bless an individual, family, or whole community. Thus, some potters even make small offerings of rice wine, eggs, betel nuts, fruit, rice cakes, and other gifts for daily offerings at household shrines. They also prepare more complex, lavish gifts of rice, cakes, soup, bread, fruit, rice wine, eggs, chickens, flowers, and goats to offer at the temple four times annually for 'The Opening of the Temple' [*Péh mbang yang*] in the first month of the Cham calendar, the 'Fire-god Ceremony' [*Yuer yang*] during the fourth month of the Cham calendar, the *Katé* ceremony during the seventh month of

the Cham calendar, and the 'Goddess Ritual' [Ca-mbur] during the ninth month of the Cham calendar. While these four holidays are performed at many similar shrines and temple sites, for Palei Hamu Craok their meaning is localized: the goal of preserving the sacred knowledge of pottery production is a central aim to each. The religious rituals additionally serve as a reminder that younger generations must uphold the profession, remaining grateful to the minds and hands that came before them.

### Po Klaong Can's methods: perfected through practice

As mentioned above, villagers may believe Po Klaong Can, who lived in the 12th and 13th century, was a historical figure who became a god and taught them pottery. However, according to the research of art historians, historians, anthropologists, and archaeologists, many characteristics of the pottery methods practice at Palei Hamu Craok are from earlier Champa methods and possibly even the pre-Champa Sa Huỳnh culture (around 3000 BP). Shared production process, types of vessels, and methods of firing pottery outdoors can be found at Sa Huỳnh sites. This has led some academics to suggest that the methods of Palei Hamu Craok are the oldest in Southeast Asia.<sup>3</sup> Although this assertion has not been confirmed through comparative work, it appears safe to claim that Palei Hamu Craok is the oldest extant production center in Vietnam today. Older sites of production are no longer producing pottery using traditional methods, even though materials necessary for making Palei Hamu Craok pottery are simple. One only needs access to clay, sand, firewood, straw, and rice husks for firing. The sand, mixed with clay collected from the nearby Quao River (3 km northwest), includes lithium particles, collected from nearby streams and rivers during the flooding season. The natural characteristic of this particular clay source is extraordinary in that it has a high degree of adhesion. Furthermore, the supply never runs low. Residents take from the pit sparingly and the supply regenerates every six months

with natural flooding cycles. To retrieve the clay, potters dig holes 0.5-0.7m deep, across an area of 1m<sup>2</sup>. After the collection the hole is filled and rice can be planted on the spot. Within another six months, there will be new clay to harvest.

After the clay is collected, it is dried, then soaked in water in a hole for about 12 hours. Next, the clay is mixed with sand at a 1:1 ratio. The potter uses their feet and hands to knead the clay [juak halan] until plasticity is achieved. Some hand-tools are used for working the clay, yet they are minimalist traditionally made tools, such as a big bamboo loop used to curve the glossy raw clay [kagoh], a smaller bamboo loop used to thin the clay body [tanuk], a knife for cutting and etching decorative patterns [dhaong], a stick to poke holes in the clay [tanay], a small cloth used to smooth the surface of the clay when wet [tanaik], and a comb used to create wave patterns [tathi].<sup>4</sup> The tools are used variously in four stages. The first is creating the primary form [padang gaok], wherein the clay is shaped into a 'pumpkin' [kaduk] and then set upon a clay 'anvil' [taok jek]. Starting at the base of the kaduk, the potter uses their hands to create the basic shape of the ceramic piece (20-30cm high). Next, the potter expands the size of the shape, connecting the base and working the sides upwards. They use the kagoh to brush around the body in order to rub out the fingerprints, smoothing the body and mouth, before rubbing the body with the cloth (tanaik), thus making the clay glossy. In the second stage, the potter rubs the piece smooth [tanaik uak gaok]. The potters wrap the tanaik all the way around their hand and gently touch it to water before rubbing the body of the piece over and over, to roll across the mouth of the piece, creating a bell-shaped or cupped mouth, with a standing rib, around the whole outside of the lip of the mouth of the piece. In the third stage, decorative motifs are added [ngap

### Traditional Cham pottery methods [...] have consistently been dependent on natural forces, relying upon the proper balance of wind, sun, and rain.

bingu hala]. The potter might use another piece of cloth, seashells, plant flowers, or even leaves to create patterned motifs. Traditional motifs include jagged, sharp lines, waves, patterns of vegetation, and numerous sea motifs created with shells. As a result of market demands, these patterns have become much more sophisticated in the past decade. Human and animal motifs following classical Champa art styles have increasingly been added to the repertoire. In the final stage [kuah gaok], pieces are left on a forming platform to dry and then brought to a shady place to prevent cracking. When completely dry, the potter will shave the bottom of the ceramic from the platform using a tanuh and the firing stage can begin.<sup>5</sup>

Cham pottery is only fired outside, and thus there are no kilns involved. Materials for firing include wood collected from the forest during the dry season, and straw along with rice husks collected from rice fields after harvest. Potters stack the pots according to size, with the largest items at the bottom and the smallest at the top, forming a giant cube structure. The pieces are then surrounded by slabs of very dry wood (20-30cm high). The pile is covered with a combination of straw with husks mixed in. Husks ignite better, but straw burns more consistently and helps ignite the wood, so this combination ensures that the fire will light quickly, burn hot, and burn consistently for about two to three hours. After firing, a natural drying plant-based glaze can be added to the pieces for extra decoration if desired. Hence, the production process is a form of traditional pottery that is virtually timeless, as the potters use many sophisticated techniques, but they are all worked by hand. From clay preparation and gathering to shaping the pieces, to firing, the potter works entirely with their own hands, only with the aid of very simply hand-tools. A Palei Hamu Craok potter's skills must be finely tuned through years of training, to correctly follow the stages of production day in and day out, from one year to the next.

### Style & form: the contemporary art

There are roughly five general categories of production for Palei Hamu Craok's pottery, which we can organize according to style and function of the pieces. The first are large pots [gaok praong] and small pots [gaok asit] that are generally used for cooking food or gathering and storing drinking water. They have round bottoms, small mouths, and comparatively large round bodies. They are generally at least 20cm high, and the diameter near the base of the pot is an average of 15cm with a mouth roughly 5cm in diameter. The walls of these pots are generally around 0.8cm thick. The pots in the second category – called klait or glah – have a full bell mouth, short neck, drooping shoulders that flow downward, and a full middle body with a smaller round bottom. They are limited in their use for cooking and quite standard in size: 20cm high, 10cm in mouth diameter, and walls an average of 1cm thick. The pots of the third category – jek and khang – are commonly used to store all kinds of substances, from water to salt, to rice. These are slightly rounded at the bottom, with a standing cupped mouth, a standing neck, sloping shoulders, and a round body. They are mostly 40cm high, have a 15cm diameter for the mouth, and an even thicker walls, generally 1.2cm thick. The pots in the fourth category do not have particularly standard measurements, but are mostly comprised of ceramics that might have straps attached to them, with two to three 'legs'. They have full cupped mouths and flat bottoms. They are predominantly used as portable stoves [wan laow buh njuh] or braziers [wan laow dhan] on which cooking pots can be placed for heating. They are generally shallow. Individual water storage pots [kadhi] also fit into this category. Finally, the last category includes purely decorative pieces and toys. These might be for children, or to hang in the home, and commonly take

the shape of animals or include animal motifs, such as water buffalo [kabaw], cattle [limaow], humans [manuis], and trumpet-like instruments [halan padet].

Although the first through third categories have historically been the most produced, styles have gone through significant changes in the past two decades. Around the late 1990s, to keep up with production demand, more and more men began to turn towards pottery, which had traditionally been a predominantly female profession. Furthermore, while the most common pots in the past were small pots [gaok gom, klait] used to cook soup over the larger stove pots, and large pots for containing water [buk], more and more decorative pieces in the fifth category have begun to be produced. Now, the fifth category is beginning to blend with the others, as the more 'traditional' pots are also growing increasingly ornate. Flower vases, variations of water pots, light boxes, statues of classical deities of Champa associated with Champa temple-tower complexes such as Shiva and Nandin, Brahma, Vishnu, and Apsara dancers have also become more popular. These new designs certainly represent the desire to establish niche markets for the production of Palei Hamu Craok ceramics. However, they also represent the revivalist interests of artisans themselves, who have grown increasingly connected to classical Champa through their works. The result is new designs that are simultaneously creative and evocative, mostly produced by a new, younger generation of artisans, whose works have become popular in urban areas across southern Vietnam and are now used to furnish homes, cafes, restaurants, hotels, and seaside resorts.<sup>6</sup> These works have grown in popularity to such an extent that by the 2010s somewhat regular shipments of Palei Hamu Craok pots were being sent internationally as well. Indeed, the centuries-old process of traditional pottery, inspired by the god Po Klaong Can, represents an intangible heritage of the global community.

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Above: Artisans work the clay predominantly by hand. They use only the most simple tools. Photo by Inra Jaya, all rights reserved.



Fig. 1 (above): General Eduardo Manahan Año shakes U.S. Marine Corps Lance-Corporal Barrett's hand at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows Beach, Hawaii, 2017. Photo: Corporal Robert Sweet. Image in Public domain, from [www.pacom.mil](http://www.pacom.mil).

Fig. 2 (right): Balikatan 2019 Combined Arms Live-Fire Exercise, Tarlac, Luzon, Philippines. Photo: Sergeant 1st Class John Etheridge, U.S. Army. [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Balikatan_2019_Combined_Arms_Live-Fire_Exercise_Tarlac_Luzon_Philippines).



# Praetorian network politics in the Philippines

Mesrob Vartavarian

The recent rise of right-wing demagogues issuing unsettling challenges to liberal democracies has garnered no shortage of academic commentary. Populists have deployed inflammatory rhetoric and contrarian policies to slaughter more than a few sacred cows. Nevertheless, such figures face structural constraints to enacting their unorthodox agendas. In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte's demagogic warlordism has been contained by an extensive praetorian network. For the past five decades, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have constructed, consolidated, and sustained a power network that exercises influence over local, national, and supranational affairs. Since Marcos's ouster, civilian politicians hoping to remain in power have had to accommodate these extraconstitutional praetorian interests.

## From colonial enforcers to the oligarchy's soldiers

Under Spanish rule, Philippine military forces wielded despotic power over society on behalf of foreign overlords. Armed service overseas served Spanish colonial, rather than domestic proto-national, concerns. The mercenary character of Philippine troops disconnected them from indigenous communities. Subalterns viewed soldiers with deep suspicion, whereas soldiers themselves remained reliant on the privileges granted by alien political elites. American rule developed, but did not fundamentally alter, this coercive structure. Philippine Scout and Constabulary units projected power through society more effectively than their Spanish-era predecessors, yet they remained an internal army geared toward domestic repression.<sup>1</sup>

American policymakers handed off this revamped security apparatus to their Filipino charges as they indigenized the colonial state. Oligarchic elites directed army units towards external defense during the Commonwealth era (1935-1942), while retaining the Constabulary for internal security. However, social upheavals generated under Japanese occupation precipitated an embedded agrarian insurrection that necessitated a military shift towards counterinsurgency. Special operations coupled with civic action programs aimed at winning hearts and minds made the AFP a more visible presence in postwar Philippine society. Soldiers protected oligarchs from leftist movements and derived substantial benefits from continuing American

assistance. President Ferdinand Marcos spent his first term in office (1965-1969) cultivating military support for his creeping authoritarian takeover by distributing state patronage to key units and senior commanders. Having tasted power, the AFP supported the imposition of martial law in 1972 as a means to expand its prerogatives and influence.

## Praetorian politicization and network expansion

As the most autonomous element of the Marcos regime, the Philippine defense establishment derived lasting benefits from authoritarian rule. Increased budgets, weapons procurements, illicit rackets, and the formation of militias enriched and empowered the military to a point where it could no longer be controlled. The AFP maintained separate linkages with the United States, an imperial benefactor that could provide vast quantities of supranational patronage. Marcos managed to endow his kin and cronies with huge wealth while keeping most of them loyal. He could not, however, prevent senior military officials from carving out autonomous means to enrichment. Defending these means ultimately came before defending the regime.

Authoritarian rule promised extensive socioeconomic development, but only ended up exposing resource-rich provinces to a new layer of plunderers. Regime predation was particularly virulent in the Visayas and eastern Mindanao. These crony-run zones became epicenters of the Communist Party of the

Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) insurgency. Consequently, cronies allowed military units to partake in their fiefdoms' illicit economies in exchange for praetorian protection.

Marcos's corruption of the military ultimately expanded praetorian political networks beyond his control. While an officer's commission brought great social prestige to men of humble means, it seldom led to great wealth. This changed under martial law. Budgetary increases and slush funds obtained from the United States in return for sending civic action troops to Vietnam garnered the loyalty of senior officers. Personnel expanded exponentially. The AFP grew from a force of 35 thousand in the late 1960s to over 113 thousand in 1976.<sup>2</sup> Military liaison officers inserted into corporations became the main points of contact for foreign investors. They received percentages and kickbacks in exchange for facilitating contracts.

Personnel expansion and provincial counterinsurgency allowed the AFP to embed its predatory practices across the archipelago. Insurgencies put a premium on military protection and corporations regularly paid off commanders to provide security. Senior officers also engaged in smuggling, extortion, and black market weapons sales. Ending hostilities would only cut into profit margins. As a result, counterinsurgencies became institutionalized. Giving the military a vested interest in seeing conflicts continue made them very difficult to end. Civilians in insurgent zones were subjected to strategic hamlet programs, sexual violence, torture, and extrajudicial killings. Militia units of the Civilian Home Defense Forces committed some of the worst abuses. These

units worked in tandem with local commanders, providing a force multiplier and plausible deniability for atrocities brought to light by church and human rights groups.

Most infractions were initially confined to fringe areas. In the mid-1970s, 85% of the military's combat troops were based in Muslim regions. After 1980, the CPP-NPA insurgency gained traction as crony rule ran much of the Visayas and eastern Mindanao into the ground. This compelled Marcos to widen the swath of territory subject to military repression. By 1984, 50% of the AFP was deployed to Christian areas of Mindanao, including most of its special forces.<sup>3</sup> More and more Filipinos were exposed to AFP brutality and criminality over time.

AFP linkages with the United States predated and circumvented the Marcos regime. From 1950 to 1976, 16 thousand Filipino servicemen received training in American military schools and academies.<sup>4</sup> This consolidated transnational connections between the two defense establishments and gave Washington valuable intelligence on Philippine military developments. American strategic priorities for the AFP shifted as the 1970s progressed. A gradual rapprochement with the People's Republic of China altered the AFP's remit from external defense to internal security. Vietnam-era surplus weaponry, most of it designed for counterinsurgency, was sold in increasing quantities to the Philippines. These newfound capabilities helped contain Muslim separatist aspirations, but they also raised civilian casualties. Furthermore, escalating state violence against leftist groups only increased popular support for the CPP-NPA.

In addition to facilitating predatory enrichment, counterinsurgency campaigns created deep divisions between junior and senior ranks. Recent graduates from the prestigious Philippine Military Academy were brutalized and politicized as state violence turned inward. They faced execrable conditions in combat zones as well-connected commanders siphoned off resources to line their own pockets. Having experienced severe depravation, junior officers felt entitled to demand reform and play a larger role in Philippine society. By 1985, the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) had emerged to issue an open challenge to the Marcos regime. Made up of junior officers with combat experience in Mindanao, it had the support of defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Constabulary chief Fidel Ramos. The Enrile-Ramos faction took heed of growing cleavages within the military and sought to coopt rebellious elements. In linking up with a groundswell of praetorian discontent from below, they gambled on drawing enough military support for their position when they turned on Marcos after the 1986 snap election. The Pentagon had expressed avid support for RAM in congressional testimony.<sup>5</sup> Senior U.S. defense officials felt Marcos was losing control of the country to the communists and a communist victory would mean losing highly strategic military bases. Only the AFP could short-circuit this slow motion collapse, hence American planners encouraged its politicization. The Enrile-Ramos-RAM nexus might not have toppled the regime, that required massive support from social activists and religious groups, but it did fragment Marcos's coercive phalanx. Forces still loyal to the regime were reluctant to fire on colleagues surrounded by unarmed demonstrators. Faced with burgeoning popular and praetorian opposition, Marcos had no choice but to flee.

Senior defense officials utilized authoritarian rule to construct lucrative predatory rackets and deepen linkages with the American military establishment. The AFP managed to institutionalize counterinsurgencies that provided rents, weapons, and plunder. Factional rivalries remained rife but would gradually be contained under Ramos's leadership. Faced with deepening political unrest, the military abandoned Marcos and focused on defending its privileges.

### Cacique restoration, praetorian consolidation

It is unnecessary, at this late date, to provide an extensive reiteration of cacique restoration under the Aquino administration (1986-1992).<sup>6</sup> Corazon Aquino used the popular mandate gained from rallying People Power to declare a revolutionary government in 1986 that vested her with legislative and executive authority. This allowed her coterie to promulgate a constitution in 1987 that restored most old cacique families to power. Yet, a widespread communist insurgency meant that the privileges of a politicized military would have to be confirmed and extended. The rapid dissipation of cacique legitimacy among social activists compelled the national oligarchy to dispense ever greater quantities of patronage and protection to military commanders who kept reformist movements in line. This further consolidated praetorian network power.

The Aquino years saw an increasingly coherent praetorian bloc drive itself into the heart of Philippine national politics. Military factionalism was reduced as Fidel Ramos sidelined rivals and consolidated AFP influence over civilian officials. Ramos began his association with the Aquino government as AFP Chief of Staff. After a short period as Aquino's defense chief Enrile was replaced by General Rafael Ileta, a seasoned soldier marginalized during the Marcos era because of his opposition to the declaration of martial law. Ileta quickly dismantled Enrile's network in the defense establishment by purging the latter's clients.<sup>7</sup> As this occurred, Ramos consolidated his hold over Aquino, using the threat of RAM-directed coups as leverage. By early 1988, Ramos had assumed the defense portfolio and gradually brought RAM to heel. Most officers jailed for their role in the attempted December 1989 coup came under his protection and were later granted amnesty.

Upon winning the 1992 presidential elections, Ramos established the National Unification Commission (NUC) to facilitate a negotiated settlement with all rebel forces in the country. Although the NUC had some success in curtailing Muslim and NPA insurgents, it appears to have been primarily directed at incorporating RAM rebels into government. Negotiations made mutinous soldiers into legitimate political players. Gregorio Honasan, RAM's principle leader, used this opportunity to relaunch his career and win a senatorial seat in 1995. With one of their own in Malacanang, military coups became redundant. Ramos reined in extraconstitutional praetorian violence in exchange for consolidating the AFP's institutional privileges.

Failure to fully end provincial insurgencies after Marcos gave AFP senior officers continuing access to conflict rents. Beyond justifying defense budgets, unrest kept protection prices high. Corporations continued to pay commanders for security while rank-and-file soldiers extorted money from urban and rural inhabitants across insurgent zones.<sup>8</sup>

Post-People Power developments also witnessed the increasing use of militias. Marcos had expanded militia organizations as a counter-force to the military's growing power. Yet, almost immediately, militia formations fell under the influence of local AFP commanders. AFP-militia linkages deepened further after 1986. The military armed and encouraged anti-communist vigilante groups such as *Alsa Masa* (masses arise) and *Tadtad* (chop-chop) to combat the NPA. Several groups were inspired by various forms of quasi-Christian fanaticism that viewed leftists as godless heathens. They subjected suspected dissidents to sexual violence, murder, and mutilation, often displaying dismembered corpses as a warning to potentially disloyal communities.

AFP commanders transferred vigilantes into more regimented paramilitary formations as needed. Although given more advanced weaponry and training, they lost none of their brutality. In addition to standard usages, such as giving the AFP plausible deniability for human rights violations, militia expansion gave the military added muscle to let loose on tribal minorities, small farmers, and peasant squatters. The need for military and militia coercion increased as Philippine logging and mining industries boomed at the turn of the twenty-first century. These low-intensity counterinsurgencies, interspersed with periodic accelerations, impeded genuine sociopolitical reform and confirmed praetorian power.

All this reached a high point during Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's presidency (2001-2010). As Joseph Estrada's vice-President, Arroyo came to power after the former's downfall during a second People Power revolution in 2001. Lacking electoral legitimacy, she had to construct a political coalition with powerful predatory groups inside and outside civilian government.<sup>9</sup> A strategic alliance with the United States aimed at combating Islamic extremists provided aid and training that kept the AFP happy. Arroyo skillfully deployed the patronage available to incumbent Philippine Presidents to clinch alliances with senior military officers and provincial warlords. This won her re-election in 2004, but only through the use of staggering violence and fraud. Few were fooled by the subterfuge. Several impeachment attempts followed and were defused with further corruption. Junior officers in the AFP frequently rumbled at presidential plunder and delayed promotions, going so far as to attempt a coup in 2006. The coup was aborted when senior officers refused to join and exposed the conspirators. Continual government dysfunction led to resurgent leftist activism in the countryside. These political headwinds made Arroyo all the more committed to her military and warlord allies. 2006 saw an acceleration of counterinsurgency operations by the AFP and its paramilitary associates.

In Nathan Gilbert Quimpo's view, the Arroyo administration was a predatory regime that corroded state institutions into mechanisms solely geared toward extracting wealth from society.<sup>10</sup> Since the turn of the

twenty-first century, Philippine institutions have mutated into criminal enterprises that cannot be reformed, only dismantled and replaced by more democratic ones. Quimpo's point is well taken, but the degree to which the state's coercive institutions have achieved autonomous means of predation and the ability to impose conditions on chief executives merits further consideration. Presidents neglect praetorian network interests at their peril.

In more recent years, the military has tried to recast itself into an external defense force. The AFP disgorged itself of the Philippine Constabulary, now called the Philippine National Police, in 1991. Riddled with corruption and responsible for numerous abuses, the Constabulary could be discarded and left to handle domestic order issues while the AFP focused on defending national frontiers. Fidel Ramos was the main architect of this initiative. Ramos came from the core of the armed forces' counterinsurgency establishment.

He knew who the rotten apples were, how to marginalize or redistribute them, and could reduce bloated budgets without facing criticism from AFP ranks. Government posts, rather than conflict rents, appear to have been the primary mode of praetorian

accumulation during the Ramos era. Yet, this trend was reversed during Estrada's and Arroyo's administrations as the AFP was deployed to crush internal dissent.

Nevertheless, Arroyo's reestablishment of close relations with the United States after 9-11 allowed the AFP to reconsolidate linkages with its traditional supranational patron. Closure of U.S. military facilities in 1992 removed fixed territorial infringements on Philippine sovereignty. The bases had drawn sharp criticism from nationalist groups who claimed that the Philippines languished under neo-colonial American oppression, a charge not easily refuted by conservative elites. Rather than using the War on Terror as a pretext to reconstruct military bases in the Philippines, American policymakers emphasized close human relationships with senior AFP officers. Joint training exercises and arrangements allowing for the rapid deployment of American military forces onto Philippine soil in the event of external, namely Chinese, aggression provided the AFP with patronage outside Malacanang's direct control. Counterinsurgency operations throughout the Sulu archipelago were depicted as defensive measures against foreign jihadists radicalized in island Southeast Asia or the greater Middle East. In addition, AFP commanders continued to profit from illicit economic activities conducted across highly porous maritime zones. The praetorian network was well entrenched by the time Duterte came to power.

### Praetorian constraints on warlord rule

Rodrigo Duterte's iconoclasm stems less from his foul-mouthed tirades and devotion to extrajudicial violence than his political origins. Coming from a peripheral elite family based in southeastern Mindanao, Duterte spent the 1980s and 90s deepening his hold on Davao City. As mayor, he successfully marginalized and coopted NPA violence while encouraging multinational investment. Japanese and Chinese corporations repatriated substantial profits as Duterte minimized NPA extortion. Having imbibed radical revolutionary ideology, and reaping rewards from Chinese investors, the mayor harbored a deep dislike for the United States. He attempted to expand on these connections by sidelining American strategic interests in the Philippines after assuming the presidency. Yet, on catapulting from Davao City to Malacanang, Duterte entered a more crowded political landscape than Marcos initially had to deal with. In addition to restored caciques, he encountered a praetorian network that had spent thirty years entrenching its power. At first, Manila's structures of illicit accumulation demonstrated their plasticity by accommodating the Duterte clique's entry into national patronage networks. Presidential

control over pork barrel projects and budgetary transfers guaranteed outward obedience among most Manila politicians. Unlike Marcos or Ramos, however, Duterte had not spent prolonged periods hovering around the center of power. He lacked a solid Manila client base that previous parvenu oligarchs mobilized to consolidate control. As Duterte began to threaten established patrimonial and political relationships he faced significant praetorian pushback. AFP senior officers did not comply with Duterte's attempted tilt toward China as this would jeopardize training, weaponry, and security guarantees provided by the United States. Furthermore, the AFP felt Chinese military base construction throughout the South China Sea impinged on Philippine territorial sovereignty. Given their purported focus on external defense, the generals simply could not oblige. Senior military commanders appear to be ignoring Duterte, even going so far as calling in American special operations forces during 2017's Marawi City siege without the president's prior knowledge. In addition, the AFP has thus far refused to take part in the Drug War, at least as it is being waged in major metropolitan areas, for fear that individual units would be corrupted by engaging in extortion or mutating into de facto drug gangs beyond their superiors' control. Moreover, Duterte's initial efforts to broker a peace with the CPP-NPA have collapsed, further increasing his reliance on the AFP. The Duterte challenge has indeed shaken up the Philippine political scene, but it has also demonstrated the resilience of incumbent power structures.

Duterte's rise proves that a warlord with a compact support base can win the presidency when he forms opportunistic alliances with Manila elites and deploys demagogic rhetoric. This combination allowed a local warlord to become a national oligarch. Upon entering office, however, the limits of parvenu oligarchic power became readily apparent. Praetorian network interests have placed severe constraints on national warlord rule. Combat operations against the NPA continue and the U.S. alliance has remained intact. Rents associated with these realities still flow into praetorian hands. Baring a major political rupture, Duterte will, like Arroyo, have to construct an oligarchic-praetorian coalition that maintains established interests if he wishes to remain in power beyond current constitutional limits.

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# The military's role in Indonesia's democracy

## Misguided perception?

Hipolitus Yolisandry Ringgi Wangge

Shortly after the presidential election results were announced by the Indonesian electoral commission (KPU) on 21 May 2019, there was massive mobilization to reject the official outcome. Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo's victory was challenged not only by his opponent Prabowo Subianto, a former general and son-in-law of long-time dictator Suharto, but also by Subianto's supporters or so-called sympathizers who come mostly from various Islamic groups. The protest turned to riots in Jakarta on 22 and 23 May. The Indonesian police arrested a few political figures for their alleged connection to the riots and suspected implication in treasonous activities against the current administration.<sup>1</sup> The arrests included two former army generals: Soenarko, a former special forces commander, and Kivlan Zein, a former commander of the army strategic command. A number of (former) army officers, including Ryamizad Ryacudu, an Indonesian defense minister, expressed their disagreement with the arrests. Soenarko was later released from detention with a guarantee from an Indonesian military commander and a (retired) senior minister. The release reflects a privilege owned by the military and its former officers in Indonesia. Jokowi himself, as the reelected president, determined the importance of calming down the military by holding a closed meeting with a number of generals.

In modern Indonesian history, the Indonesian military (TNI) has never been far removed from the country's political crises, including the 2019 post-election riots. It is not only an Islamic political identity that has shaped the country's narrative in the last decade, as argued by certain scholars,<sup>2</sup> but also the military's politics, which still find its ground long after the downfall of Suharto's regime. The question is not whether there is a re-emergence of the New Order political model, in which the military actively pursued formal or institutional political roles, as highlighted by political commentators in 2015.<sup>3</sup> The perception is that the military in fact never abandoned this role in democratic Indonesia. The reforms, which dismantled active political roles of the military, were neither able to curb TNI's aspirations to meddle in civilian political and social life, nor to assure that TNI carry out its professional duty in defense-related matters and respect human rights in conflict areas.

### Democracy for an undemocratic institution

The democratic system does not merely require military subordination to civilian authority, it must also assure that the military upholds democratic rules that emphasize an apolitical stance, transparency and accountability. By law (No. 34/2004), TNI officers are prohibited from involvement in political activities unless they retire from active service. However, this requirement does not stop TNI political aspirations, since

there are no internal or external instruments to control such ambitions.<sup>4</sup> The situation is reminiscent of the authoritarian regime under Suharto.

The democratic transition, which was also marked by internal reforms of the TNI along with an economic crisis and student protests in the waning days of Suharto's period, remains only partially accomplished. The perception that the TNI has completed its reform by demolishing its political and social involvements, focusing solely on national defense, has turned out to be misguided. In the late 1990s, internal reforms were demanded under international and national pressure, and the military could no longer count on the weakened Suharto regime for protection. As a result, the military had no choice but to pursue a democratic agenda.

However, once the crisis and transition passed, the military reconsolidated its power by gradually meddling in civilian life, from political to social spheres. In the democratic era, when some active high-ranking officers publicly expressed their political aspirations, even the TNI and several ministerial and state agencies signed agreements in which they assigned the officers not only to defense but also to non-defense tasks, such as farming, forestry, and education. Hundreds of 'underemployed' senior officers continue to be installed in a broad range of civilian ministerial and institutions. For instance, the recent initiative by the Indonesian Ministry for Energy and Mineral Resources to appoint a mid-ranking Air Force officer as their director of disciplinary affairs, exhibits not only the increasing role of military in civilian affairs, but also shows the submissive attitude of civilians.<sup>5</sup>

As for the issues of human rights and military businesses,<sup>6</sup> transparency and accountability are critical. Unfortunately though, the military avoids holding accountable those officers who have allegedly abused their power. Some who have been implicated in past cases have even received promotions.<sup>7</sup> Ironically, the Indonesian public in general, and even parliament, have displayed no interest in pushing forward the unfinished military reform agenda as a public discourse.

### Papua as the remaining battlefield

Another military reform agenda concerns the military's presence in West Papua. Over the years, the TNI and its security approach have created more problems than solutions, particularly related to the human rights of indigenous Papuans. An Amnesty International report documented 69 cases of suspected unlawful killings, of mostly indigenous Papuans, by security officers between January 2010 and February 2018.<sup>8</sup> In addition, there has been no legal follow-up of three prominent human

rights cases in Papua in which the military was involved: the Wasior incident in 2001, the Wamena incident in 2003, and the Paniai shooting in 2014. All of which reflect how the military continues to act with impunity in Papua.

The recent demonstrations and riots in Papua display the excessive use of force by the military and the police in dealing with the Papuans and their long-running protests towards the central government.<sup>9</sup> The massive deployment of military personnel has resulted in collective trauma and memory of violence that remind the Papuans of past suffering. Such deployment has been undertaken without clear oversight from the executive and legislative bodies as mandated by the law No.34/2004. The use of live ammunition by security forces has led to a large (and increasing) number of civilian deaths of indigenous Papuans. The heavy-handed military response to peaceful protests intimidates Papuan society, as seen recently in Jayapura and Wamena on 23 September 2019. The result was more turmoil and violence.

Moreover, the ongoing armed conflict between the Indonesian military and the pro-independence group in Papua's Nduga reflects the failure of the military presence to provide basic security in Indonesia's easternmost area. A series of counterinsurgency operations in Papua since the area became part of Indonesia in 1969 have drawn a public backlash from indigenous Papuans. As I observed during fieldwork in Papua, memories of suffering endure for the majority of indigenous Papuans, particularly those in the highlands where many of those operations took place, including the home of the now displaced Nduga.

The key to conducting a successful counterinsurgency operation is not to control the area with a heavy hand, but to win the hearts and minds of local indigenous people. Such a strategy depends on popular consent from locals to underpin joint operations to defeat local insurgents. However, the counterinsurgency operations led by the Indonesian military and police, to hunt the pro-independence fighters, have created a backlash rather than local support. Locals resist military authority, disobey curfews, and some even rejected the basic supplies distributed by security officers in the early days of the conflict in December 2018. The military reform has clearly failed to take root in Papua.

### Jeopardizing democratic principles

All in all, the role of the Indonesian military in their democratic country raises serious concerns. Much of its internal reform agenda, such as focusing on defense-related tasks, upholding transparency and accountability, and carrying out its professional duty in conflict areas, is not comprehensively pursued

Left: Copy of the first book on Indonesian Military Politics written by Abdul Haris Nasution, a former army general and a defense minister [Tjatan-Tjatan Sekitar Politik Militer Indonesia, Jakarta: Pembimbing, 1955].



by civilian authorities. In addition, the lack of institutional and external controls to contain the political aspirations of senior military officers jeopardizes democratic principles.<sup>10</sup> Sadly, Jokowi will most likely show no political will to resume the stalled military reform, as, in his second term, he still relies heavily on retired generals. And Indonesian democracy will still strive not to avert the reemergence of the New Order, but to force the military, an undemocratic institution, to follow democratic rules and principles.

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## Follow the Maid

Nicole CuUnjieng Aboitiz

A component of contemporary globalization is a flow of labor that Saskia Sassen has called “the return of the serving classes”, (Sassen 2000: 510) though in Southeast Asia I struggle to locate an era from which they ‘returned’. The intimate domestic labor of female service has long been a defining feature of upper-middle and upper-class households; what has changed are the transnational and national dimensions, the social and bureaucratic ritualizations, and the political-economic import of that labor.

Joining the Philippines, Indonesia has become one of the main domestic labor supply states globally, particularly since the 2004 passage of the ‘National Law on the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas,’ which cemented large scale labor emigration as part of the country’s development plans. While the framework of state-sanctioned labor export is broad, the reality is fairly narrow: until 2010, between 60–80 per cent of all emigrating laborers were Indonesian women in domestic service (p. 5).<sup>1</sup> This phenomenon is marked by its intimate dimensions – madam-maid relationships and close cohabitation – but, as Olivia Killias’s anthropological study shows us, it is also part of a large scale, transnational, and bureaucratic process. It is the process and infrastructure of care migration that Killias carefully studies. Hardly the smooth transnational flows imagined by globalization, opacity, friction, and explicitly national interests and dialectics characterize the domestic care chain.

Focusing on one chain stretching from a rural Javanese village to Malaysia, Killias brings ethnographic detail to an uneven process involving brokers, recruitment agencies, state bureaucrats, maid agencies, individual maids, and contractors. This is a contribution to the literature, which has tended to focus on maids’ situations in their places of work, rather than on the process of becoming a maid and the multiple regimes involved therein. In this, Killias brings novel focus to the temporal dimension of the work

Reviewed title:

### Follow the Maid: Domestic Worker Migration in and from Indonesia

Olivia Killias. 2018.

Copenhagen: NIAS Press  
ISBN 9788776942274

as well insightful analysis of the discourses of mobility. There is the structured legal regulation of time through visas, residence permits, and fixed two-year overseas contracts and the segmented but often looping cycle, as the Indonesian state encourages migrant domestic workers both to leave and to come home. More individually, there is a ‘right’ time to go abroad, which is connected to women’s life cycles. At the village level, young, single women migrate to large cities on Java to work as live-in domestic helpers ‘in search of adventure’ and is so common as often to be considered a rite of adulthood. Only once married and with a child, meanwhile, are women deemed ‘ready’ to work abroad.

Killias shows how mobility is controlled and discursively legitimized from multiple perspectives. Women’s travel overseas is reframed as dutiful worship – as *halal* (p. 44) – and the explicitly domestic nature of her work (p. 68) is emphasized to leave the traditionally male right to mobility intact. It is deemed socially inappropriate for women to travel long distances unescorted, thereby making mobile male brokers indispensable if young women are to leave their villages. These brokers take on a role of protector for the women, which gives them additional discretion and power. She also notes that as much as this gendered labor division requires male brokers in Indonesia it also requires female agent professionals in Malaysia. Female maid agents in the destination country are the intermediaries between the employers and the maids, and as in the home where the ‘maid issue’ is generally understood to be a woman’s issue, it is also assumed that a female agent better understands the demands of such work and “can approach

the maids more closely”, as one agent put it (p. 144) – thereby propelling Malaysian women professionally in this industry.

*Follow the Maid* pierces the modernist assumption that contracts necessarily bring about fairer working conditions, showing instead how a system of bonded labor has reappeared – one that draws from colonial indenture programs. Late-19th to early-20th century indentured laborers became indebted to their employers to cover their migration fees (leading to the panic around ‘runaway’ laborers). The same holds for Indonesian migrant domestic workers today, but through a particularly gendered understanding of mobility. Whereas male migrant workers in Indonesia must borrow money from their networks in order to initiate their emigration processes (USD 600–1000), female migrant workers can emigrate essentially for ‘free’ (USD 50 in minor fees) (p. 66) because their perceived lack of mobility makes them more easily indentured and controlled as such, enabling employers to take on more comfortably the upfront ‘risk’ of the investment.<sup>2</sup>

Before they go abroad, women enter into the liminal space of the recruitment agencies – ‘total institutions’ where they are trained to become overseas maids and await placement. Indonesian Law No. 39/2004 “permits private recruitment agencies to detain prospective migrant workers provided they are treated ‘reasonably and humanely’ and in accordance with implementing legislation” (p. 109) despite contravention of the basic human right to freedom of movement. In addition to the physical confinement, women are stripped of their mobile phones and of the contact information of relatives and friends in their countries of destination; a single pay phone for hundreds of women is provided and visiting times are restricted (p. 112). While the agencies construct a threat of young, mobile, female sexuality to legitimate their practices, Killias argues, that it is instead financially motivated, as the demand for Indonesian domestic workers outstrips the numbers actually willing to go, and agencies wish to control their ‘share’ of the supply (p. 113). Shorn of their hair, their clothes, makeup, perfume, and even photographs of their family (p. 112; 116), Killias’s ethnography of these total institutions shows the creative and subversive ways in which women on the inside distinguish themselves amid efforts to

homogenize them as exchangeable, sanitized, even defeminized laboring bodies, as well as how they help one another and interpret their liminal state. At the end of the day, Killias concludes, the agencies only minimally train the women in care work; the emphasis is on cultivating patience and submissiveness (p. 122) – key traits needed in order to work in the most intimate spaces under highly controlled hierarchical relations.

Focusing on Asian migration within Asia allows Killias to disrupt the migration studies literature, which largely developed out of a focus on migration to Europe and North America. It also is no small matter, as between 2006 to 2016 over 2.5 million Indonesian women worked as domestic help in Malaysia alone (p. 5). An interesting point was the construction of national difference between Malaysian madam and Indonesian maid. A maid agency Killias visited in Malaysia created a board with photos of run-down wooden houses with the caption ‘This is what my home back in Indonesia looks like’ (p. 145). “By portraying Indonesian domestic workers as backward and poor, Malaysian agencies define them as different from their employers, sometimes in primordial terms”, she writes; which “allows employers to imagine themselves as modern, urban and middle-class” (p. 147).

Indeed, Killias’s attention to semiotics and to discourse is one of the most rewarding and successful aspects of this excellent study. I only wish more time had been spent on the domestic work performed within Indonesia as a crucial part of the inurement and acculturation integral to such hierarchized forms of living and working. The flagrant inequality that frames and enables live-in domestic service is deeply present on Java, without any need to travel to Malaysia. I would imagine that in the process of becoming a maid the most crucial step is the cognitive processing of and acculturation to inequality that enables one to live within another socio-economic class’s existence, with ‘patience and submissiveness,’ without that class meaningfully interacting with your mode of existence in return. That would happen first on Java, and most crucially so. The first rite of internal migration is rendered quickly here as young women in search of adventure in the city, but it seems to me there is a missing prior step. Indeed, Killias gives a tantalizing glimpse of the complexity of the arrangements and hierarchies involved therein, particularly on pp. 74–76 when she discusses the difference between *ngenger* and *pembantu* practices, and an employer’s embarrassment at verbally acknowledging the existence of their *ngenger* arrangement in front of Musri, the domestic worker, herself (p. 75). She mentions that activist reports have placed renewed focus on it, in which the “legacy of ‘pre-modern,’ ‘slave-like’ *ngenger* arrangements is said to shape contemporary paid domestic service on Java” (p. 75). Nevertheless, *Follow the Maid* is an excellent ethnography, indeed. Would that we could encourage Killias to follow the maid still deeper and on and on.

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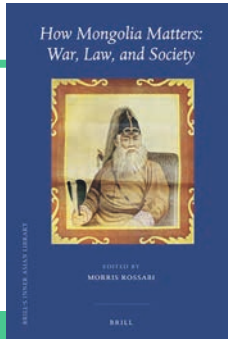
#### Notes

- 1 That proportion has since decreased due to an Indonesian moratorium on sending domestic workers to Saudi Arabia, one of the largest global markets, and an attempt by the Indonesian government to increase non-domestic labor emigration. However, the numbers remain staggering, with between 100,000 and 500,000 Indonesian women emigrating for domestic service every year for the last decade (p. 6).
- 2 Even domestic workers’ returns to Indonesia are managed, with officials approaching workers in the luggage claim areas of airport terminals, ushering them to separate zones, instructing them to deposit their money in certain banks, and escorting them home through a licensed bus companies (p. 42).

Southeast Asian workers enjoying their day off by playing bingo, Hong Kong. Image reproduced under a Creative Commons licence courtesy ‘Istolethetv’ on Wikipedia.

## How Mongolia matters

Simon Wickhamsmith



Reviewed title:

### How Mongolia Matters: War, Law, and Society

Morris Rossabi (ed.) 2017.

Leiden: Brill  
ISBN 9789004343405



View of unnamed Mongolian village. Image originally posted on the AFRC website. Reproduced courtesy of US Air Force. Photo by Master Sgt. Linda Welz.

Mongolia's critical placement, in the enveloping grip of Russia and China, has long been a source of discord and challenge, as much intellectual as military or political. The attraction of the Soviet Union following that country's revolution to those who wished to develop Mongolia as a more modern and progressive nation, was in part that it was not China, and now that China and Russia are seeking to prove themselves in 21st-century discourses such as science and technology, in financial investment and mining, Mongolia again finds itself as a quiet but important player in the Asian polity. But this pales somewhat, of course, beside its significance on the world stage at key moments over the last eight centuries, and it is upon a deeper understanding of this significance that the essays in *How Mongolia Matters* are focused.

*How Mongolia Matters*, in fact, is a Festschrift for Morris Rossabi, who has contributed greatly to scholarship geared to explaining Mongolian history through recourse to original documents and to painstaking multi-perspective research. In his introduction, Rossabi bemoans the mythology which 'enshroud[s]' Mongolian historical scholarship, and rightly claims that 'the overturning of these myths is essential if an accurate portrayal of the role of the Mongols and Inner Asians in history is to be produced' (p. 2).

The 10 essays which make up this book, indeed, seek to overturn some of these myths though focusing on specific aspects of Mongolia's history, from (roughly) the Chingissid period to its current democratic post-Soviet incarnation. They range in theme from the Tumu incident of 1449, in

which the Oirats captured the Ming Emperor (in Chapter 1 by Johan Elverskog), to post-Socialist Mongolia as a nuclear-free zone (in Chapter 10 by Jargalsaikhan Enkhsaikhan), from the Mongols' efforts to prevent a rider's leg from making contact with the horse's flank (in Chapter 8 by Pamela Kyle Crossley) to the influence of the Mongols upon jurisprudence and legal systems (in Chapter 6 by Bettina Birge). The breadth and depth of the scholarship here is such that this volume could provide an interested reader with a good overview of the contribution of the Mongols to the development of Asian and Eurasian sociopolitics.

Two papers in particular caught my eye. The first is James Millward's analysis of the Manchu, Mongol, and Tibetan translations of, in Millward's most apposite clarification (p. 21), 'not so much...what the ancient Chinese meant as what the Qing Court meant when it used' the Chinese term *huairou yuanren* (怀柔远人) during the Qianlong period. As someone who works with these three languages, but not with Chinese, I was struck by Millward's insightful and creative use of these translations to explore the way in which the Qing translators rendered the already ambiguous idea of *huairou yuanren* in equally ambiguous terms, employing 'similar ambiguities between soft and hard, spontaneous and induced approaches to achieving the accommodation of these people [the Mongols, Tibetans and Manchus] from far away' (p. 31). While I would quibble that perhaps, for the Qing, the Manchu language during the Qianlong was not especially distant, either geographically or emotionally, as Millward is suggesting, his point about the powerful effects of translation is well made. If support is needed for the value and suitability of New Qing History, and for the refocusing on the documentary, historiographical and linguistic study of the Qing from the viewpoint of sources in languages other than Chinese, and from actors other than the Han, then this short article offers precisely that.

The second essay which I wish to discuss is Yuki Konagaya's 'Modern Origins of Chinggis Khan Worship', which revisits the thorny question of how Chinggis Khan's place during the turbulent decades of the 20th century is to be understood. Though she modestly refers to 'the minor but tangible evidence'

(p. 154) which she has unearthed in support of the fact that, in Inner Mongolia during the 1940s, the Japanese honored Chinggis Khan, and that ordinary Mongolians were focused more on Tibetan Buddhism than on Chinggis Khan, these are interesting findings nonetheless. Konagawa's use of portraits of, and songs about, Chinggis Khan focuses attention on how culture responded to his image, and she nicely contrasts this with the tragic circumstances surrounding D. Tömör-Ochir's promotion of the 800th anniversary in 1962 – catalyzed by his own experience, whilst hospitalized in China, of preparations for that country's own impending commemoration – of Chinggis Khan's birth, which was likewise founded on image management, in the form of postage stamps, books and public celebrations. More such research is needed to develop a clear idea of how Chinggisid imagery was developed and manipulated on both sides of the Mongol–China border during this period, and how this has been handled in recent years. Certainly, in my own realm of modern Mongolian literature, there is great thematic and stylistic variation to be explored in literary works about Chinggis Khan written after 1990, and this is clearly replicated in the use of his image in advertising, the arts and culture and, of course, in politics. Konagawa's contribution, then, is a most welcome stimulus to further study of this important subfield.

The social and political machinations which form the hub around which this collection revolves is complex and, at times, fraught, yet these are exemplary essays, presenting the historical material, and its ramifications, in ways both accessible and illuminating. This, fittingly, is very much in keeping with the spirit in which Morris Rossabi has always presented his own work. In conclusion, to redirect Michael Brose's opening tribute to Rossabi to those represented here, this book is not only well-researched and well-considered, but is welcome for its 'deep analytical insight spun out in persuasive, accessible prose, and always favoring an approach that looks, if even slightly, outside the box' (p. 69). Would that all books dealing with complex areas of humanities inquiry be so expertly presented.

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## Thailand: shifting ground between the US and a rising China

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Reviewed title:

### Thailand: Shifting Ground between the US and a Rising China

Benjamin Zawacki. 2017.

London: Zed Books  
ISBN 9781783608690



This book shines a useful light on Thailand's foreign relations since the end of the second World War. Benjamin Zawacki creates a great contribution to the study of Thailand's triangular relationship with the United States and China, examining the way in which Thailand could situate itself among greater powers. The book presents a succinct and well-informed analysis and investigation on Thailand's efforts to maintain, balance and bandwagon positions with greater powers. The author argues that at the end of the Cold War the United States became a choice for Thailand to strengthen its relationship with. China has risen in power during the 21st century and, as a result, the relationship with China has also been a fundamental concern of Thailand.

In the earlier stage from the commencement of the Vietnam War in the 1950s, Thailand's relationship with Washington was close, particularly in terms of helping to maintain regional peace and security. However, after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, Thai elites shifted Thai foreign policy behavior towards China. The United States seemed to disregard

the increasing power vacuum in its relationship with Thailand. The re-emergence of China's engagement with Thai diplomatic relations has been generally welcomed among Thais. This has provided enhancement of economic cooperation between the two countries.

The book has been divided into two parts, consisting of 10 chapters. Zawacki chronologically examines the evolution of Thailand shifting positions between the United States and China over the course of time. Thailand was selected by Zawacki as a single case study and has presented as a well-written piece of work, adopting a content analysis approach. The deeply rhetoric descriptions illustrate the challenging positions that Thailand has faced since the end of the Second World War.

The author focuses in the first part of the book on examining the historical events of Thai diplomacy and its relationship with the United States and China, from the early post-war period in 1945 up to Thailand's election in 2001 in which Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was victorious. In the second part, the author examines Thailand's triangular relationship with the United States and China from 2001 to 2014.

The examination of the American–Thai relationship during the Cold War mainly focuses on the military forces. An interesting point is uncovered, especially regarding the complex relationship with the United States and China towards the end of the Cold War. This bilateral relationship with the United States was a key feature in the formation of Thailand's political characteristics in controlling security and armed forces throughout the Cold War period. The deepening relations with Washington continued up until the regional conflict in Indochina in the late 1980s.

Nevertheless, Thailand had doubts about the next phase of America's diplomatic relationship with Thailand after the end of military base usage in the country. At the same time, Sino–Thai relations became much closer after 1978, following Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia. The critical circumstance of the Cambodian–Vietnamese War led Thailand to come under pressure with its security interests. Therefore, Thailand became cautious in its relationship with the United States and China as well as being determined to contain the Vietnamese and Soviet influence in Southeast Asia. Afterwards, China became a significant partner in Thai foreign affairs, as Thailand developed proactive relations towards Beijing in the early post-Cold War era, particularly in economic engagement. On the other hand, Thailand was still tied in its relations with the United States, for example during the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997–2001, in which Thailand suffered from economic collapse. Thailand needed to remain close with the United States, which was demonstrated by following American-led international order in the form of the IMF package and Washington consensus, despite requiring a painful transition period for Thailand's economic restoration.

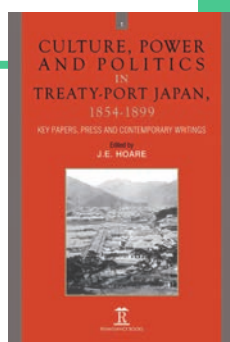
# A Friendly Disposition and Orderly Demeanour

## Sources and Resources on the Japanese Treaty Ports

Ian Rapley

Early on in Jim Hoare's academic career, his PhD supervisor William Gerald Beasley suggested that he would not remain always 'a treaty port man'. Beasley was both wrong and right: Hoare's professional life in the UK's Foreign & Commonwealth Office took him far beyond the subject of his doctoral research, but his fascination with the site of 19th century contact between Japan and the Western powers persisted alongside his day job. This two volume set represents a selection of sources collected by Hoare over 50 years of research, covering a broad array of material, both primary and secondary, on topics as varied as treaty texts and negotiations, economic history, the language of the ports, and whimsical poetry produced by their residents.

There are two groups for whom I think that this collection will prove of most interest. Firstly, I think that the combination of primary and secondary material will be a useful inspiration for undergraduate and perhaps also masters level students in search of a research topic. The diversity and range of different subjects engaged within the selection should provide students with a wealth of ideas to chase. So whilst this is not a cheap collection, it is one for which hopefully many university libraries will be able to find a home. The second audience for which I think the collection will be of interest is more established scholars, as a tool for



Reviewed title:  
**Culture, Power and Politics in Treaty-Port Japan, 1854-1899 (two volumes)**

J. E. Hoare (ed.) 2018.  
Folkestone: Renaissance Books  
ISBN 9781898823612



Section of a Japanese print showing three US officers, believed to be Commanders Anan and Perry, and Captain Adams, who engaged in opening up Japan to the west. Image held in the public domain reproduced courtesy of Wikipedia.

understanding the scope of existing research on the treaty ports, and a prompt to inspire us to look at them anew.

I think that it is fair to say, without any slight on Hoare or other scholars featured in this collection, that the Japanese treaty ports have tended to be less central to the historiography of modern Japan (at least in the English language) than their importance in the second half of the 19th century might suggest. In the UK, the figures best known for their work on the subject have tended to occupy positions outside conventional university research posts (such as Hoare, that other great British scholar-diplomat, Hugh Cortazzi, or the writer Pat Barr, for example) and much of the higher profile work on them has tended to be more pedagogical in approach than usual research monographs (e.g. John Dower's work at MIT Visualizing Cultures), or has focused on making available primary material (Fred Notehelfer's *Japan Through American Eyes*, Routledge, 2001). This is, again, not to denigrate the value of the material that has been produced – quite the opposite: it

is to argue that the discipline as a whole has tended to overlook research on a subject of considerable importance and interest. Indeed, these volumes suggest to me that, in the wake of global and transnational turns, the time is right to place the history of the treaty ports back into the heart of the field.

The extensive introduction lays out the history of Hoare's research and the makings of the collection, as well as a brief history of the ports' establishment and lifespan. I think it is notable, however, that relatively little space is devoted to consideration of the analytic significance of the material and the subject: for example, why are the treaty ports important, what are the pressing questions about them and their inhabitants, and what does this body of material as a whole tell us? Perhaps, after a lifetime working on the topic, the answers to these questions are so self-evident as to not require consideration, but I would suggest that they are the sort of things that we should be considering more explicitly as we continue to research the treaty ports of Japan.

This is an exercise already in progress: Douglas Howland, Simon Partner, and Steven Ivings, amongst others, have recently produced work on the ports, their inhabitants, and the ways in which they were administered. The treaty ports are a complex topic, and admit multiple perspectives, as revealed by the different approaches in this collection and these more recent researchers' work. On the largest scale, one can think of them within the context of Japan, as Hoare's collection does, or as parts of a broader Asia/Pacific network (an approach taken by Brunero & Puig's recent *Life In Treaty Port China And Japan*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2018). There is also a more micro-level spatial dimension. Jeremy Taylor's article on the Bund in Volume 1, as well as other pieces on the architecture of the treaty ports, and indeed the classic 1860s survey of Japan and China by Nicholas Denny, all indicate that the construction and layout of the ports merits

examination and interpretation. The ports were also home to a wide range of inhabitants: representatives of the Western Powers, of course, but also Japanese and other Asians (notably a large number of Chinese labourers, something highlighted by an essay in Volume One by Hoare himself, as well as more recent work by Eric Han). What is more, the Western residents comprised a mix, too: diplomats, traders, soldiers, sailors, missionaries, and, increasingly, 'globetrotters' passing through. In handling this mix, new models such as Mary-Louise Pratt's idea of the 'contact zone' and the school of 'new diplomatic history' seem ideally placed to bring new insights to bear on the topic.

Reading this collection, then, is a reminder of the significance of the treaty ports, the value of the work already produced on them, and the potential for applying new insights and methods.

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Marine Corps General Joe Dunford meets with Thai Army General Ponpiapat Benyasri, 2018. Image originally posted on the DoD website, reproduced courtesy of the US Dept. of Defence. Photo by Officer Dominique A. Pineiro.

In the second part, Zawacki scrutinizes major characteristics of the triangular relationship between Thailand, the United States and China, from Thaksin's period to the military government in 2014. During Prime Minister Thaksin's term (2001–2006), Thailand received strong support from China in terms of trade and investment. This illustrated that Thailand could balance itself against or bandwagon with China. While Thailand enjoyed itself with Beijing's economic ties, Thai-US relations visibly

remained apparent in 2001–2006. Due to Washington's announcement regarding the War on Terror after the 9/11 incident, Thai troops were deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq. Being a good ally with the United States in the war against terrorism had been questionable, due to sensitivities over the southern insurgency circumstance in the deep South of Thailand. The enrichment of Thai-US relations then temporarily ceased after the Thai military intervened in politics in September 2006.

In addition, Zawacki demonstrates the shift of Thai diplomacy towards China in 2006–2014. China had been more proactive than the United States in terms of economic competitiveness, both bilaterally and regionally. The 2008 financial crisis that emerged in the United States limited the opportunity to drive the idea of a free trade area in the Asia Pacific region. The opportunity of economic growth in Asia was given to China. Thailand deemed that China should become an interested partner

in economic cooperation, including defense – offering the benefit of cheaper weapons. Even though the relationship with the United States in military cooperation continued, China-Thailand military ties progressively improved during 2011–2014. Chinese hegemony had expanded over the United States in the Straits of Malacca, Indian Ocean and South China Sea. Thailand took a new opportunity to extend its alliance. The strategic cooperation therefore led Thailand to concern about economic diplomacy with China.

Thailand has, indeed, changed its position much over the last decade, focusing on the shift in triangular relations. These shift pathways, however, tend to focus much on the way in which Thailand deals with two great powers – the United States and China – in terms of economy and defense. The author's work is richly descriptive and provides great fluency and timing in an elegant and original work. I highly recommended this book as an example of the study of Thailand's diplomacy towards great powers. Finally, I would provide a niche suggestion here. As a reader whose interest in the theme of Thailand's foreign relations is aroused, I expect to read more publications specially regarding the decision-making process of small states such as Thailand in developing their foreign policy towards bilateral relations with great powers such as the United States and China. This could help readers to comprehend the purposive actions of the policymakers in Thailand and other states that are influenced by the great powers.

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## India, modernity, and the great divergence

Caleb Simmons

Reviewed title:  
**India, Modernity, and the Great Divergence: Mysore and Gujarat (17th to 19th C.)**

Kaveh Yazdani. 2017.  
Leiden: Brill  
ISBN 978004330788

Kaveh Yazdani's *India, Modernity, and the Great Divergence: Mysore and Gujarat (17th to 19th C.)* is a thorough account of the social, political, economic, and technological innovations in Mysore and Gujarat during the period of inquiry. From the breadth of material and sources covered by the author it is a remarkable resource for examining the processes through which Mysore and Gujarat developed during this critical moment of the colonial encounter.

Kaveh Yazdani's book covers a wide range of materials largely because of his approach to periodization (to which I will return and devote the bulk of this review); however, this approach at times becomes burdensome for the reader

because of the book's organization. The book is very large by contemporary monograph standards, an impressive 669 pages. This is divided into only an introduction and four chapters, one of which is the epilogue. The material on Mysore and Gujarat is divided into two massive chapters that make up the bulk of the book, 246 and 196 pages respectively. These chapters are subdivided into sections with further subsections and conclusions, but the overall argument and narrative are too easily lost amongst the many details and directions. Readers who are familiar with some of Yazdani's other publications should not expect the same succinct argumentation, but for the reader willing to put in the time and effort there are many things they will discover of great value throughout its pages.

*India, Modernity, and the Great Divergence* takes as its primary premise that historical periodization is flawed. This critique resonates with almost anyone who is working on historical issues, especially through a World History lens. Particularly, Yazdani takes umbrage with the periodization of modernity, which is at the center of his study. For the author, the rise of modernity was/is a process; a process that unfolds over a long period of time over several 'historical stages and encompassed a number of core regions within Afro-Eurasia and beyond the 16th century, also the Americas' (p. 23). He explains following the work of Sanjay Subrahmanyam that modernity slowly develops over a long process of transition. He continues by defining modernity:

To give a very condensed and abbreviated definition, it can be suggested that, in a very broad outline, modernity radically transformed the economic, social, political, judicial, military, epistemological, cognitive and techno-scientific structures of society, as well as the basis of energy consumption. Significantly, human social relations and the relationship between humans and nature, humans and society and humans and God/ Gods were transformed in a way unknown to 'pre-modern' humans (p. 23).

With this definition Yazdani attempts to provide a 'holistic' approach to modernity that will help us to understand the long process of transition better than a 'reductionist definition of modernity that either emphasizes socio-economic, political or epistemological factors' (p. 23). By broadening the definition of modernity to be holistic, the author sees modernity everywhere and far before most people date early modernity. Therefore, Yazdani creates a new periodization scheme in which modernity is contrasted to the ancient: 'Indeed, modernity undermines the old and substitutes ancient forms with new ones, despite the continuity of an array of persistent traditional elements' (p. 23). In this new periodization scheme that he proposes, modernity is pushed back in time to a new early modernity that could be called 'nascent or budding modernity' between the 10th and 15th centuries (see p. 35 fns 88 and 89 for other scholars who have taken similar approaches). Next comes 'middle modernity' that existed from the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries, which led to 'late modernity'.

While I admire Yazdani's attempt to rethink periodization, he ultimately undermines his own broader point about the transitional process of modernity and a holistic approach by reifying periodization. Periodization can be a helpful heuristic to help historians think through broader trends, but periodization cannot be so rigidly defined. Especially if one considers the multiple and manifold processes

of change that develop at different places and at different times and in different forms for each of these aspects that Yazdani includes in his definition of modernity and in this study. Certainly, if one looks hard enough there will be some elements associated with modernity that extend earlier than the 10th century; however, the author rigidly fixes the earliest form of modernity in the 10th century: 'I am of the opinion that tracing back the advent of modernity to a period before the 10th century seriously undermines its analytical utility' (p. 35 fn. 88). Logically, then Yazdani is falling into the same traps as those he critiques who do 'not sufficiently acknowledge the significance of the era preceding 1500 in the formation of modernity' (p. 36). So, why fix a date at all? Why not allow for the ambiguity that exists in the development of any of the ideas, economic structures and technological advances that are discussed?

The rigidity of the dating mechanism employed by Yazdani in his introductory chapter became even more perplexing for this reader when in the conclusion to the chapter on Mysore under Tipu Sultan the author claimed that Mysore was in a state of only 'semi-modernization' (p. 351). The author continues to explain this conclusion, which, to summarize and oversimplify, meant that the kingdom was modern in some respects but not in others. How is it that in 'late modernity' a major kingdom in international politics of the time could be considered 'semi-modernized' and moreover that its 'semi-modernization had feet of clay' (p. 354)? In the opinion of this reader, the author would have been better served to consider modernity as an ambiguous term that includes a myriad number of connotations that have roots in any number of traditional practices and beliefs and that each of these arose over time in different ways and in response to different stimuli. Otherwise, he falls prey to the same reductionist flaws for which he critiqued other scholars, just with different dates in brackets (i.e. the discussion in the epilogue regarding the transition from 'middle modernity' to 'late modernity' closely resembled many other writings that have called the same period 'early modernity').

To conclude this review, however, I must say that I admire the attempt by Yazdani to rethink periodization because it is always fraught with many snares. While I think that this attempt at re-periodization was ultimately unsuccessful, the process of thinking about our assumptions regarding historical periods is a generative process and was a welcome exercise. Additionally, this attempt in no way takes away from the wealth of information that the author provides on both Mysore and Gujarat.

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## Thai in vitro

Katja Rangsviek

Reviewed title:  
**Thai in Vitro: Gender, Culture and Assisted Reproduction**

Andrea Whittaker. 2015.  
New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books  
ISBN 9781782387329



The first in vitro fertilization (IVF) baby in Thailand was born in 1987, less than a decade after the first success had been made in the United States. The technology and its rapid expansion in Thailand has been portrayed as a sign of modernity and Thai excellence. *Thai in Vitro* is a study of assisted reproduction in Thailand but yet so much more. Like an onion, the authors skillfully peel away the layers of gender, culture, kinship, class, spirituality and even nationalism that are involved in the quest to fulfill the wish for children. Throughout the nine chapters of this book, the reader clearly hears the voices of the men and women in treatment as well as the practitioners, including doctors, nurses and technical staff. It is these voices that guide us through a journey of assisted reproduction in Thailand.

Childlessness (chapter 2) in Thailand is a state of incompleteness. Upon marriage, couples are expected to have children as soon as possible. Children are highly valued in Thai society. They cement the relationship between the parents and carry on the family name. The inability to have children is mostly blamed on women who are perceived as not trying hard enough or even being bad people whose karma is not good enough for a child to want to be born. The pressure to have children

# Cochin forests and the British techno-ecological imperialism in India

Courtney Work

This book adds to the growing body of literature on ecological or environmental history focused on colonial forestry practice. It narrates the phases of British forest extraction in Cochin State from 1812–1963. Using rich archival material from the Cochin state, the book provides an intimate view of the processes through which the British gained control of Cochin forests, and what they did with that control. This is the main contribution of the book – excavating and presenting documents from the imperial state alongside the letters and reports from the Cochin state. The author argues that British colonialism marks an ‘environmental watershed’ in the Cochin region and is an example of technological imperialism. Such has already been argued and the data added from this study further validates this argument.

## Why you should read this book

Sebastian Joseph offers convincing evidence to refute all claims to conservation objectives stated in the policy documents from the British. He argues that the Forestry Department created by the British in Cochin was only for the purpose of exploiting the forest, and the regional level archival material he provides reveals the ‘true colonial nature of forest policies’ (p. 6). British policies in Cochin state include building a tram into the deep forest to increase state revenue through forest exploitation, putting forest land in ‘reserve’ for the future, and extending the tram to improve security and access to markets in Cochin. The archive exposes each policy as fallacy. The tram did facilitate forest exploitation and timber exports flowed freely and profitably into Britain. The benefits were one-sided, however, and it failed to increase state revenue as the costs

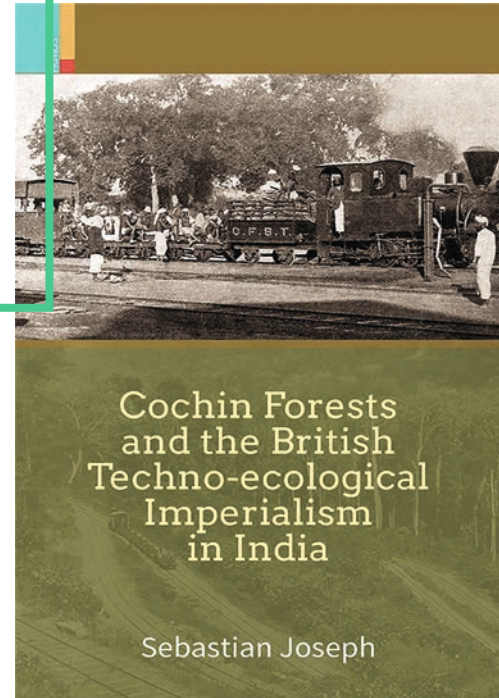
Reviewed title:

## Cochin Forests and the British Techno-Ecological Imperialism in India

Sebastian Joseph. 2017.

Delhi: Primus Books  
ISBN 9789384082659

of upkeep and maintenance fell to the Cochin state. Similarly, the forest lands put into ‘reserve’ were not reserved for conservation or for future Cochin generations, rather they were reserved for other Europeans developing plantation agriculture enterprises. Finally, the expansion of the tram lines had no other effects than to increase timber extraction, with Britain as the primary beneficiary. Throughout this process, the author documents regional authorities questioning and calling for the cessation of these extractive activities. They cite multiple reasons for their displeasure, among them auditing irregularities awarding large sums to the forest department and the tramway company; theft of timber by British subjects; corrupt forest officials; and localized climate change. The words of regional authorities in Cochin are harbingers of the words of human rights and environmental activists today. Adding insult to injury – and also mimicking contemporary development initiatives – during the second world war the residents of Cochin faced rations on firewood and timber, while the British government took all the wood they needed to fuel their war efforts. The presentation of this data in parallel – with the voices of regional officials juxtaposed to the voices of the imperial state and the tram company effectively draw out the social and environmental contradictions of British forest policies in Cochin state.



## Why and how the book should have done more

The main story emerges through five short chapters, the most important of which outline 1) colonial forest policies in Cochin, 2) the creation of the tram, and 3) the aggressive tactics through which the British maintained control of the area forests through 1963, despite local resistance. The data for these sections is rich and Joseph pulls on important strings that resonate through the larger story of rapacious colonial enterprises globally. Unfortunately, the nugget of data he mines regarding the Cochin tram and British practices of forest exploitation are not sufficiently connected to those larger narratives. The first two chapters, on 1) historiography and theoretical positions, and 2) colonial policy antecedents, are thin and insufficiently present the scope of scholarship on environmental history and colonial interventions in the now ‘developing’ world. Despite claiming to take a ‘global world systems’ theoretical approach (pp. 31–38), this entails little more than noting the importance of the British Empire as an ‘exceptional global ecological moment in world history, and the ... transformation of natural systems into legible colonial spaces’ (p. 27). It is a slim volume and beyond deepening the theoretical and historical context mentioned above, the presentation would have benefited from at least two more chapters. The first would discuss the British

railroad project in India, which had strong implications for the Cochin tram and also for colonial extraction projects globally. The second would deepen the discussion about British forestry in India to include a discussion of British policies in other colonial contexts and colonial forestry practices in general. These are key issues. For an experienced reader, the volume makes a useful contribution. But it does not adequately situate that contribution in the larger field of scholarship critiquing colonial extraction and gives an incomplete picture.

## Critique, theoretical and intellectual shortcomings

The only glaring concern with the overall treatment is the author’s insistence that the pre-colonial states had a ‘spiritualistic outlook’ that evolved in an ‘eco-sense’, through which the ‘administration of the forest wealth did not collide with the interests of the people’ (p. 50). This is unfortunate. There is scant evidence provided for his conclusion that the pre-colonial state did not ‘collide with the interests of the people’. It is in fact unlikely that all people benefited equally from the pre-colonial state. The evidence provided in this volume shows quite clearly (although not explicitly noted by the author) that colonial policies mirror contemporary ones in which reforms, reserves, and conservation areas are more important as archival material than actual practice. The contemporary archive of United Nations and World Bank documents reveal similar policies for conservation and caretaking in so-called developing states whose debts increase while the benefits of development accrue outside the state apparatus. In this context, it seems naïve to suggest that previous states were any less or more rapacious than current ones – although suggesting as much is a common legitimizing trope. Joseph brings this out in colonial histories that vilify the pre-colonial state to justify their interventions into forest policy. While it is possible that early kings were actually afraid of the unknowable power of ‘nature’ – certainly palpable as the planet reasserts control over the interestingly dubbed Anthropocene – but, there is no evidence to suggest that pre-colonial records claiming conservation and caretaking of the population are any more true than the colonial documents claiming the same cited in this text. It is more likely that pre-colonial states took as much as they could, and left much behind. Despite the author’s romanticism for the pre-colonial Indian states, this is a useful addition to our growing arsenal of data against colonial abuses and the environmental destruction caused by state formations, present and past.

Courtney Work

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is heightened by the centrality of motherhood for Thai women’s femininity. This is paired with fears of desertion by their husbands who might abandon them for a younger, more fertile woman. Men, however, are not immune to the issue as fertility is equated with potency and virility. Thus, parenthood is important to couples to feel complete as well as to fulfill their respective gender roles. Adoption is not seen as a viable solution due to the lack of a biological connection to the child. Further, the existence of birth parents is seen as highly problematic. For these reasons, couples who can afford the treatment opt for assisted reproduction.

On the quest for parenthood, couples engage with a ‘sacred geography of fertility’ (chapter 3) as well as with modern biomedicine (chapter 4). To increase their chances of getting pregnant couples visit religious sites and make offerings to spirits and deities asking for babies. The offerings given which are often for sale at the temples may appear as commercialization but are understood by Thai people as part of an exchange of gifts that allows them to negotiate with the god. The sites visited spread over a wide religious spectrum, including Buddhist temples, Chinese or Brahmin deities as well as animist spirits. This praxis of appealing to religious forces for help is not in opposition to medical treatment or a final resort after all other measures have failed.

It is, rather, a form of care that ‘complement[s] and enhance[s] other forms of intervention’ (p. 73). The medical treatment itself also has its own kind of enchantment. To achieve their goal of having a baby, couples undergo a number of medical procedures and protocols within the liminal space of the clinic. It is the clinic that helps to transform couples into families but also offers a space where unsuccessful couples can come to terms with their losses. The clinic is also a liminal space because despite all the medical intervention successful treatment remains a mystery.

The mystery of assisted reproduction is in no small part in the hands of doctors and other professionals. This ‘clinical ensemble’ (chapter 5) is seen as benevolent and in a very literal way the givers of life. This fits well into the highly prestigious status that doctors have in Thai society that goes well beyond the realm of medicine. However, assisted reproduction has a very low chance for success leading to almost inevitable disappointment. Such failure to reproduce is placed on the couples (mainly the women) but also lead to disillusionment with the doctor. ‘[T]he image of the doctor as that of a healer with special moral status and expertise may transform into an image of a doctor as a businessman engaged in profit-making activities’ (p. 153). This doctor–patient

relationship and commercialization of medicine that Whittaker points out here open up more opportunities for future research, also beyond reproduction.

The women and men that are seeking to have children through assisted reproduction both have their own agency that functions within their relationship, the wider kinship group and society at large. While some women willingly undergo infertility treatment out of a desire for a baby, this is not the case with every woman. Some have no desire to have children or they are fertile while their husbands are not. The decision of these women to undergo treatment is part of a ‘patriarchal bargain’ (chapter 7) in which women give up some of their agency or are subjugated to male control in form of their husband or doctors in exchange for a secure relationship, fulfillment of their gendered roles in society or obligation to the kinship group. These bargains are made under constraints specific to Thai society, such as the status of women in society and relationships, high moral emphasis on motherhood, male sexual privilege and related concepts of fidelity, the continuity of bloodlines and the perception that children make the couple complete as a relationship and as individuals. While these concerns are overwhelmingly more relevant to women, it should not be overlooked that

men, too, are under pressure to father children. Male fertility has been culturally linked to strength and power. Further, men are pressured to produce an heir and to continue the bloodline as well as help their wives achieve motherhood. Assisted reproduction and other related technologies ‘give [infertile] men hope’ (chapter 8). However, they remain marginalized in the fertility clinics and academic studies of assisted reproduction. Here Whittaker has made some inroads into the role of men in infertility treatment and their feelings about it.

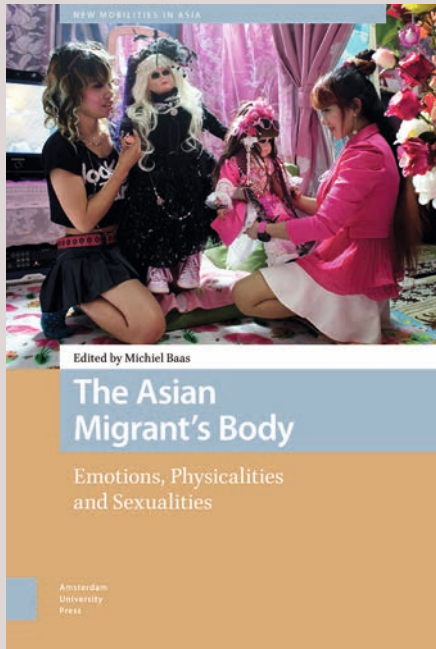
With *Thai In Vitro* Andrea Whittaker, has continued her work on reproduction in Thailand and created what could be called a trilogy. In her first monograph she focused on reproduction and giving birth, while in the second, she explored the issue of abortion. That her third monograph is about assisted reproduction creates a logical continuation of her inquiry. The book is of the same highly detailed ethnographical spirit but also offers insightful theoretical analysis. I would highly recommend reading this book to anyone who is seeking to understand the inner workings of Thai society. Its implications go well beyond its subject matter.

Katja Rangsvik

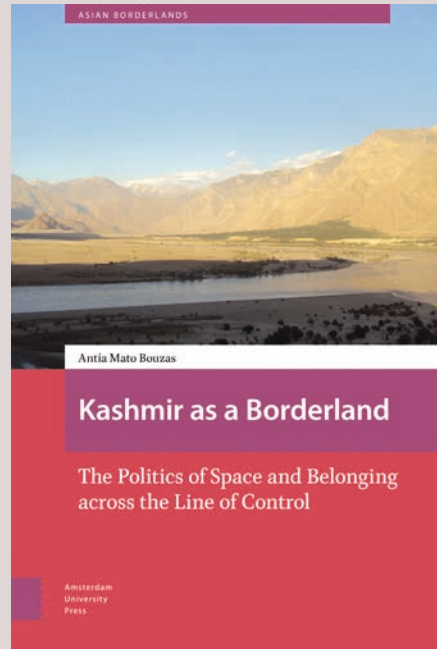
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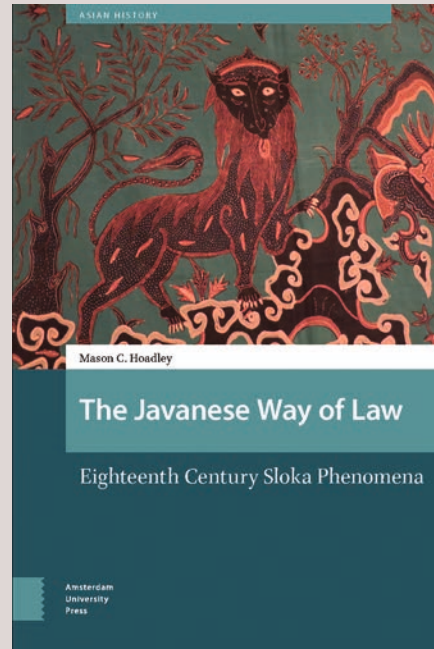
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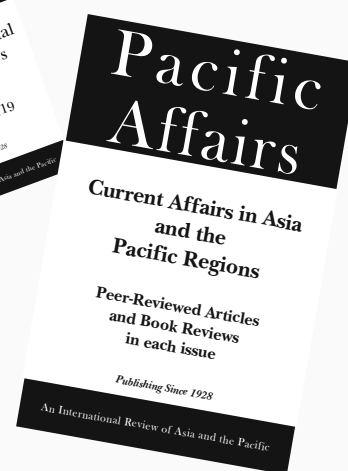
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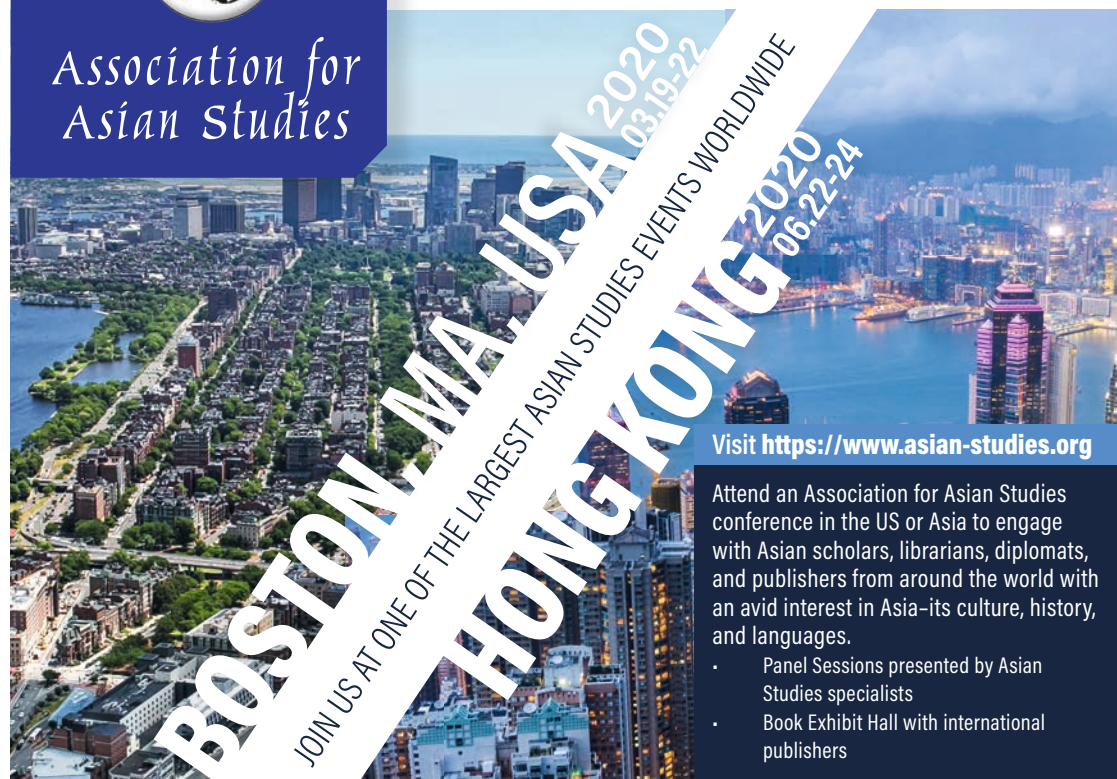
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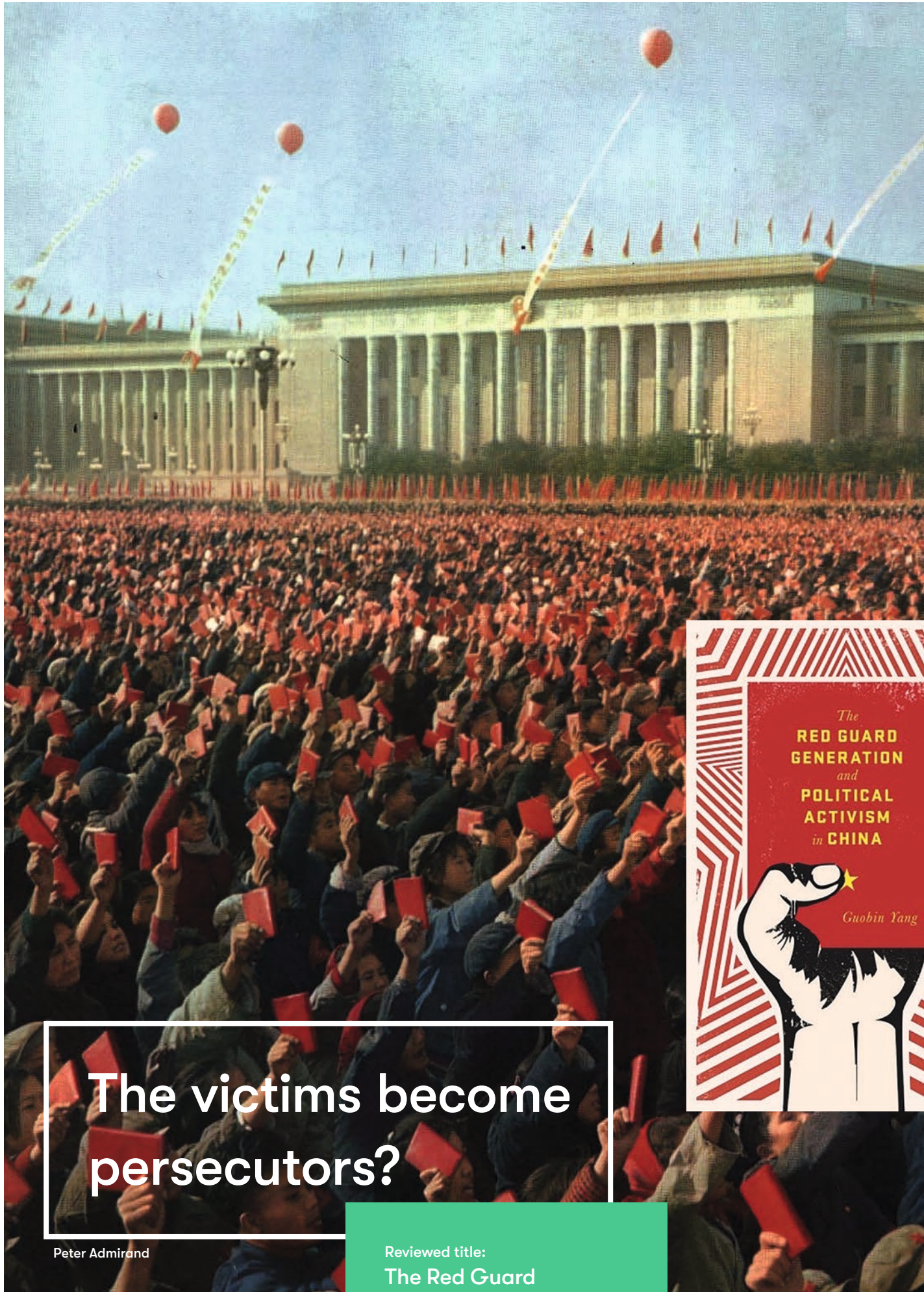
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The victims become  
persecutors?

Peter Admirand

Reviewed title:  
**The Red Guard  
Generation and Political  
Activism in China**

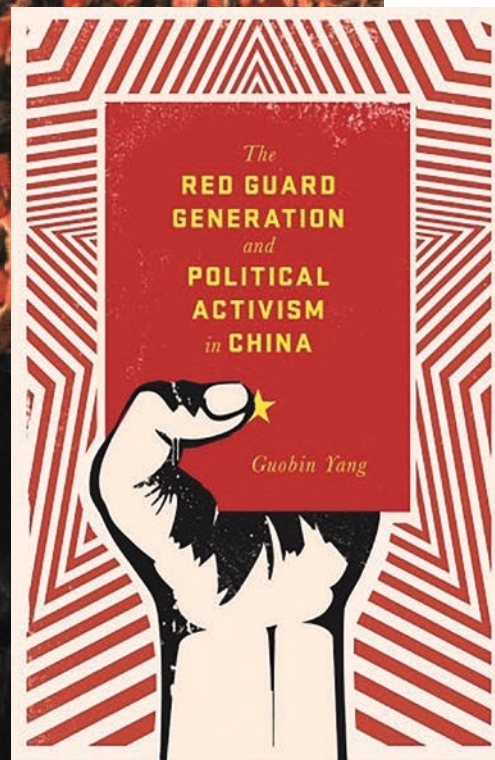
Guobin Yang, 2016.

New York: Columbia University Press  
ISBN 9780231149648

Children, apparently, are always the most deprived. In scores of Holocaust testimonies; within various totalitarian regimes; or in the context of child soldiers and in urban gangs: it is often the indoctrinated children who are most feared. The same fear and desolation lingers when discussing the Red Guards: images of little children, waving their Little Red Books, quick to pounce on their teacher; children whose own parents are afraid and cautious, watching what they say at home; fearing their own sons and daughters. Red Guards – children and teenagers, really – desecrating temples, holy places, books. Not only is it important to ask who they were, but also who they are? The Red Guard generation, as they are called, remain alive in vast numbers, but the path from who they were to who they are is more complicated, and paradoxical than might be guessed.

While memoirs like Wenguang Huang's *The Little Red Guard: A Family Memoir* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2012), or the collection of narratives in Yarong Jiang and David Ashley's *Mao's Children in the New China: Voices from the Red Guard Generation* (Abingdon and

New York: Routledge, 2000) are more lucid and absorbing, Guobin Yang's *The Red Guard Generation and Political Activism in China* provides functional and needed background and analysis to how the Red Guard generation continues to impact contemporary Chinese society. The work is based on over two decades of interviews, historical documents, and life histories – many previously not available in English. Its aim to be scholarly, particularly in sections employing various theoretical jargon – performance theory of collective violence or 'the routinization of liminality' (p. 15) are less successful than analysis of a range of voices and texts, from diaries and letters to newspaper accounts that give glimpses into the range of views felt and experienced by the Red Guard generation. The work is thus



Red Guards in 1967. Source: China Pictorial, 1967. Image in the Public domain, courtesy on wikipedia.

comprehensive but is pitched at an unclear audience. Just as Huang's bestselling memoir is not mentioned, neither for example, are other popular, cross-over texts like Louisa Lim's *The People's Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) or the writings of Liao Yiwu. Quoted poetry or diary entries are often banal, which shows the ordinariness of the youth involved, but also limits the book's impact and reach.

A key preliminary point: where there are deprived, soul-destroying children, armed with AK-47s as in Liberia, or pummeling their teachers during China's Cultural Revolution, there are the responsible adults, lurking, admonishing, teaching, and threatening in the background, using and abusing these kids as weapons. Such children are indoctrinated in perverse ideologies, taught in schools, drinking in the poison fed to them, as Alfons Heck, for example, depicts in his memoir, *A Child of Hitler: Germany in the Days When God Wore a Swastika* (Phoenix, AZ: Renaissance House, 1985).

How much, if any, the children, too, can be blamed, is obviously a complicated and messy question, though human rights lawyers and leaders generally focus on rehabilitating such children, most pronounced, for example, in Ishmael Beah's bestseller, *A Long Way Gone* (New York: Sarah Crichton Books, 2007). At what point, though, do child victims-turned-perpetrators become responsible for the choices they make as adults? And, how can those persecuted by totalitarian regimes grow up to then support the same regimes that caused their families so much suffering? Such accounts for the divided, or factionalized identities and memories, that play a big part in Yang's text.

### You reap what you sow

Mao unleashed the furore of the Red Guards through his verbal support of youth gangs in the 1960s (Yang also credits municipal and party leaders, p. 30), and used them until they were becoming a force threatening his own rule and aims. Once Mao expressed his disfavour, as Yang writes: 'The Red Guard movement came to a dramatic end on July 28, 1968' (p. 93). Then followed the *zhiqing* (sent-down youth) movement, where urban kids in the millions, many who were (once) devoted Red Guards, were sent down to live in the countryside with the peasants, to learn true communist ideology. It also minimized their urban impact and relieved pressure on urban unemployment. For most of these youth, hard lessons were learned, and with it, a sense of disillusionment. Many sought return (legally or illegally) back to the cities, and years later came to regret their lost years of education while the next generation seemed more prepared and employable. With time, they also looked back at this period with rose-tinted nostalgia: an example of the factionalized memories Yang highlights.

Many of the contemporary Chinese communist leaders also experienced hardship during that time, like current President Xi Jinping. His family had members persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, yet he later responded to such suffering, not with rebellion or serving as a witness to stop others' suffering, sadly, but by climbing up the power ladders and now enforcing (and adding to) the ideology of the Party. Such princelings, as they are often called, support these regimes, according to Yang, in part 'because they have an emotional attachment to the culture in which they had come of age' and because of their sense of entitlement (p. 179). It is a very important question, though greater depth, and perhaps, an interdisciplinary approach, is needed in trying to answer it.

Likewise, the cult of Mao has seesawed among various generations, declining after his death in the 1980s but with Mao fever returning in the 1990s (p. 168). The same sad spectacle also occurs in the former Soviet Union, with many wishing for return of Stalin – even among those whose families were once persecuted by Stalin. Such fractionalized memories, even within the same people, adds to the disunity and confusion. For some of the once-zealous *zhiqing*, they became more open to protesting injustice, a process they had learned as Red Guards supporting the Communist Party, and provided grounds for failed protests movements like the Democracy Wall Movement. Most accepted a greater need for economic development and economic freedom (without a concurrent call for social freedom and human rights) – a mantra of China's economic growth today. The 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, so it goes, failed, but the lessons were education and economic growth were the keys to success – lessons many of the *zhiqing*, but especially the princelings, came to learn.

If we return to fear: are the children really worse? The Red Guards were tools destroyed by the communist leaders; and tragically, those that learned this, were themselves crushed in various failed uprisings. The rest either learned from these failures and so keep quiet; turn to nostalgia and try not to think of past hardship; or have become adult versions of those that once corrupted and sent them down, whether into the countryside or into violence. If victims become persecutors, what hope remains for justice?

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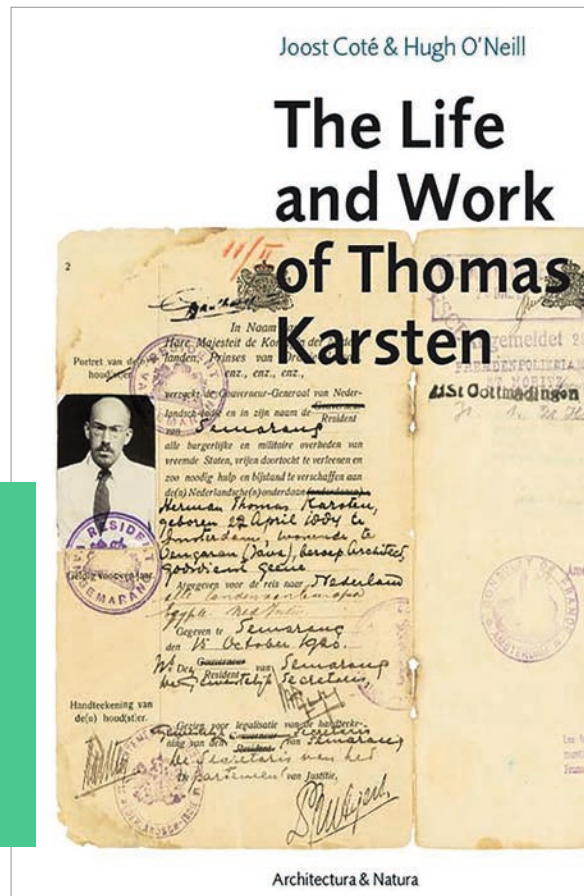
# In search of modernity: urban planner and architect

Hans Schenk

Reviewed title:  
**The Life and Work of Thomas Karsten**

Joost Coté and Hugh O'Neill. 2017.

Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura  
ISBN 9789461400598



The Dutch architect and urban planner Thomas Karsten lived and worked in the Dutch East Indies from 1914 until his death in a Japanese detention camp near Bandung in 1945. Trained at the Polytechnic School of Delft he started his career as an architect in the mid-Javanese town of Semarang. Soon, however, his interest extended to the young field of town planning. In this capacity he advised many governments of the rapidly expanding towns and cities in the colony, and moreover he became a thriving force behind the institutionalisation of the management of urban planning. His writings – in periodicals, reports, and diaries – together with several Indonesian and Dutch secondary sources form the basis of this book on Karsten, ‘the first extensive, holistic study of the man and his multifaceted life and work’ as Joost Coté and Hugh O'Neill conclude (p. 325). Indeed, the ten essays in the sizeable book cover a wide range of aspects of Karsten's life and are presented to the reader in a definitely positive setting. Pauline van Roosmalen writes on his role in defining and establishing town planning in the Dutch colony and Helen Ibbitson Jessup on his detailed involvement in Javanese architecture. The remaining eight essays are written by Coté (Chapter 4), O'Neill (Chapter 3) and one by the two authors together. They cover his architectural activities and ideas, preceded by chapters on his education and brief overviews of different parts of his life.

## (American) modernity

As an architect, Karsten created a number of offices and similar buildings, in a functional style and ‘above all, rational’ in O'Neill words in his chapter *The Architect at Work* (p. 147) and he was not shy in applying new technologies such as reinforced concrete. However, he took care to bring forms and spatial principles of the essence of Javanese architecture and European traditions together under the banner of universal laws of ‘good form’ as a bulwark against ‘the “brutish” colonial world’ (p. 82). O'Neill describes in much detail a sizeable number of his buildings, accompanied by many page-size old and new photographs and drawings, while Jessup has focused in detail on Karsten's search for a blend of Western and Javanese architecture primarily based on his work of alterations to the palace of a prince of the pseudo-independent state of Surakarta on Java, again with an abundance of illustrations.

Digging a bit deeper, the authors came across Karsten's uneasy position in the last and turbulent decades of the Dutch colonial society. His ideal was, as Coté and O'Neill put it in their conclusive essay, ‘to secure a better world’ where ‘wise leadership, a supportive technology’ would govern over ‘a community of self-reflective individuals ...

to reform a harsh, exploitative, and selfish world’ (p. 324). This ideal was, according to Coté and O'Neill, not translated into a radical political position though and he certainly did not have a politically independent Indonesia in view. Karsten rather foresaw, in the words of Coté in the introduction to this book, that ‘Westerners like himself could provide Indonesians with the necessary leadership to point the way to the future’ (p. 16). Karsten focused on the improvements of the daily lives of the inhabitants of the expanding cities in terms of improved standards of housing and other buildings, and ‘good form’ – carefully designed houses, offices, markets, neighbourhoods, and cities. Coté notes, however, in his essay *Defining a Cultural Blueprint*, that Karsten ‘must have recognised quite soon that something more than modern buildings was required if a modern harmonious society was to emerge’ (p. 88). The authors occasionally deal with, though invariably briefly, the sources of inspiration in this blend of form and societal structure in Karsten's thoughts. Both Coté and O'Neill stress the importance of his *Wanderjahre* in Germany after his graduation in 1909 until he went to Semarang. His contacts with the *Deutscher Werkbund* – a group of artists, architects, and craftsmen who aimed to qualitatively improve production by initiating collaborations between the arts, industry, and crafts – form a key to understanding Karsten's work for the authors. Hence, a lengthy article of the young Karsten on the *Deutscher Werkbund* has been included as an annex in this book.

Quality as Karsten's hallmark can be seen as a denominator of the essays by the four authors, though it is worded, and perhaps disguised, under the banner of modernity. This term and its derivatives pervade the biography, and are used by the authors in every conceivable context to situate Karsten's actions and thoughts. As such should modernity lead to enlightenment, characterise the mindset of the new Indonesian urban middle classes, shape their new houses with their conveniences in an improved urban *Kampung*, and in newly planned neighbourhoods, and form the future harmonious mix of Indonesians and Dutch. Modernity as an analytical tool is a concept that is difficult to digest, but the authors could have done more to clarify their assessments and observations of the broad spectre of Karsten's mindset. However, they do offer a possible key and justification for their abundant choice for the term ‘modern’ – Van Roosmalen notes in the context of Karsten's 1919 expansion plan for Semarang that ‘America was seen as exemplifying modernity par excellence’ (p. 278), and Coté devotes a paragraph on Karsten's admiration for what he calls ‘American modernity’ under influence of his trip to the United States in 1930 (pp.

111-115). The key is, following Coté's analysis, ‘the modern age of rapid travel, extensive technological change and cultural evolution’ (p. 113). The cultural evolution refers to less tangible and certainly remarkable aspects. America's race relations and his assessments of a strong social cohesion and collectivism as a result of assembly-line capitalism, as I would put it, are mentioned but unfortunately not commented upon by Coté.

## Urban planning

Nine of the ten essays in this book deal with Thomas Karsten as an architect. Only one focuses on his contributions to town planning in the Dutch East Indies and thereafter in Indonesia. Van Roosmalen gives an account of the history of town planning, or rather, modern town planning, after the legal formation of urban local governments in the colony in 1903 and the subsequent attempts to control the rapid urban growth and steer it into the best spatial channels. A major and early impetus for urban reform was given by the Semarang-based pharmacist Henry Freek Tillema who forcefully brought the need for measures to improve public health forward with ample supporting documentations and who, to some extent, paved the way for Karsten, who was asked by the municipality to draw a sizeable extension plan. The result (finalized in 1919), according to Van Roosmalen, was a ‘functional, harmonized and organic’ plan, ‘more extensive and comprehensive than any previous town

plan in the Indies’, and reminiscent of the young Dutch/European tradition of urban planning (p. 274).<sup>1</sup>

Semarang's plan made Karsten the most influential town planner in the colony almost overnight. Van Roosmalen gives a clear account of the steps taken by several municipalities on the road to sociospatial planning and the roles Karsten played in this respect until the Japanese occupation. A report on Indies town planning, presented at a conference of local administrators in 1920 became ‘an influential theoretical treatise as well as a practical handbook for planners’ (p. 279; included as an appendix in this book). A second report, of which he was a major author, the ‘Explanatory Memorandum on the Town Planning Ordinance for Municipalities on Java’ that appeared in 1938, became the legal and methodological foundation for town planning in Indonesia since 1948 until its replacement in 1992, and has probably been the most influential document underlying Indonesia's urban planning for a long time.<sup>2</sup> Van Roosmalen concludes that Karsten played a fundamental role in the field of urban planning, and adds lyrically that the ‘tangible evidence of the surviving picturesque lanes and boulevards in cities like Semarang and Malang, will continue to inspire his counterparts in today's Indonesia’ (p. 303).

Finally, an unavoidable remark is that its content does not show clear signs of much editing. An introduction and outline would have improved the accessibility to and coherence in the ten studies in their mutual relation, while various duplicates exist in several essays, e.g. on Javanese architecture. In spite of this observation and of some critical remarks elsewhere in this review, it is a thorough and profound set of essays, written by four of his admirers and brought together in a book that also includes some useful additional background information such as Karsten's bibliography and a few of his publications (translated). Moreover, it is a book on a certainly remarkable man at work in the Dutch East Indies. Apart from the considerations of what ‘made Karsten tick’, important decades of architectural and planning history of the Dutch colony and independent Indonesia have been documented, brought together, and presented to, hopefully, many readers in this book.

Hans Schenk  
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## Notes

- 1 However, one has to add that these urban plans did not contain the important component of social housing, as in Europe.
- 2 This report has unfortunately not been included in this book. However, it has been published in an English translation, in: W. F. Wertheim et al. (eds) 1958. *The Indonesian Town, Studies in Urban Sociology*. The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve Ltd, pp.1-76.

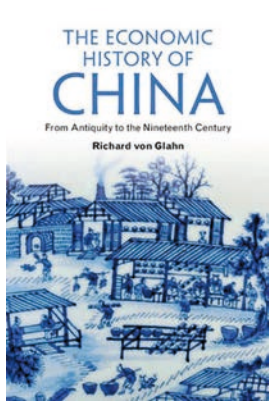


Djohar Passage. Market designed by Ir. Herman Thomas Karsten (1884-1945). Image reproduced under a creative commons license, courtesy Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands on wikipedia.

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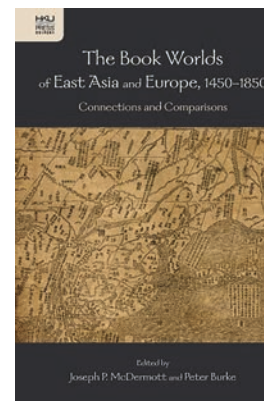


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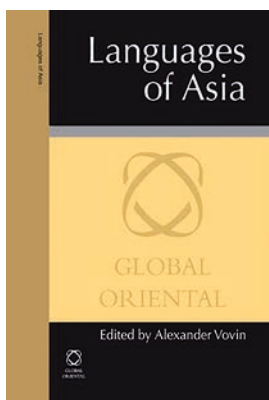
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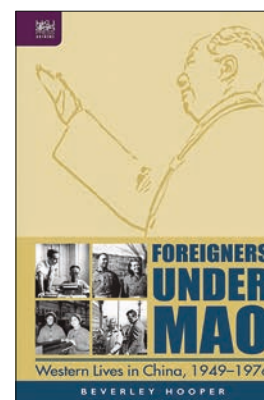
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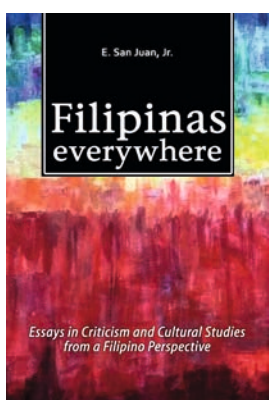


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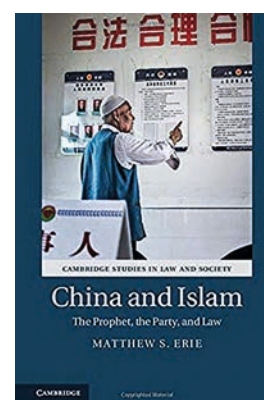


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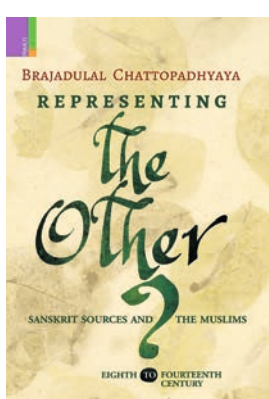


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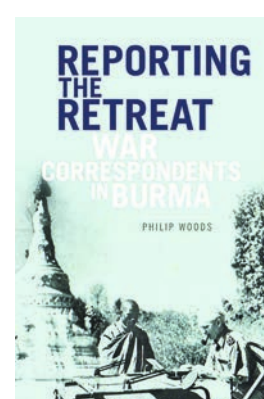


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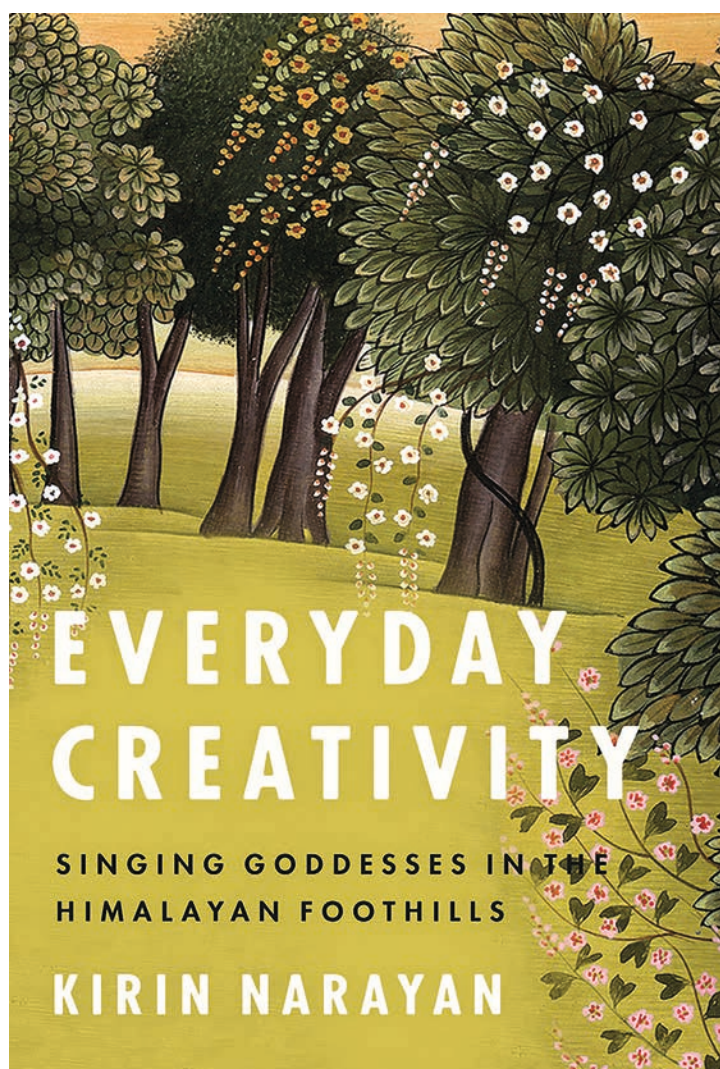
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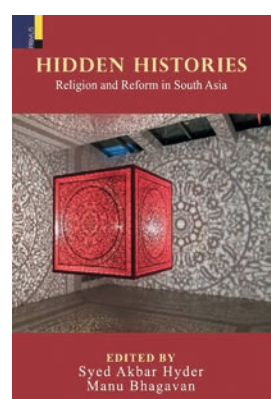
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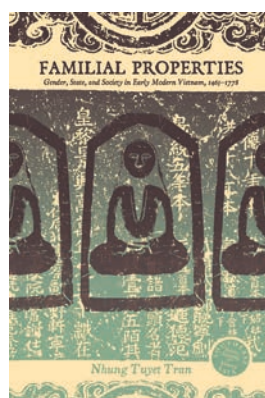
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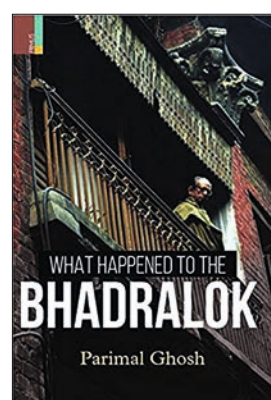


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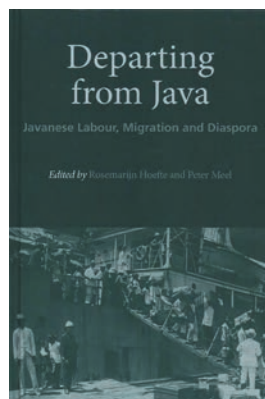
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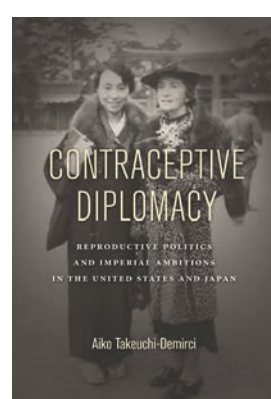
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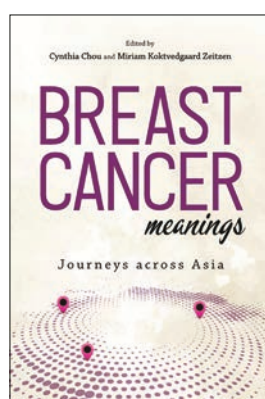
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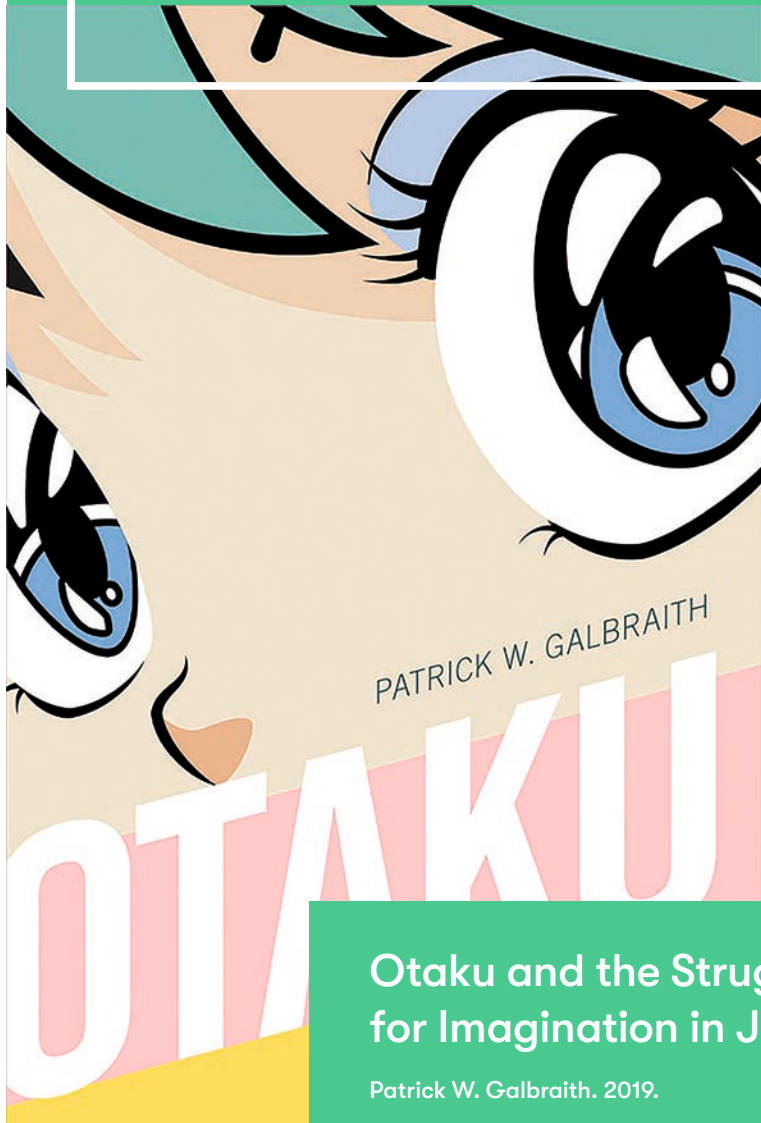
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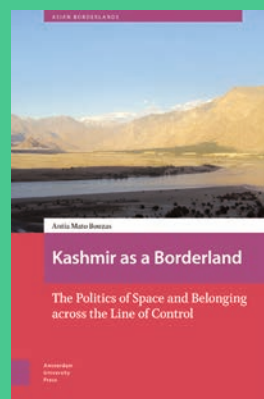
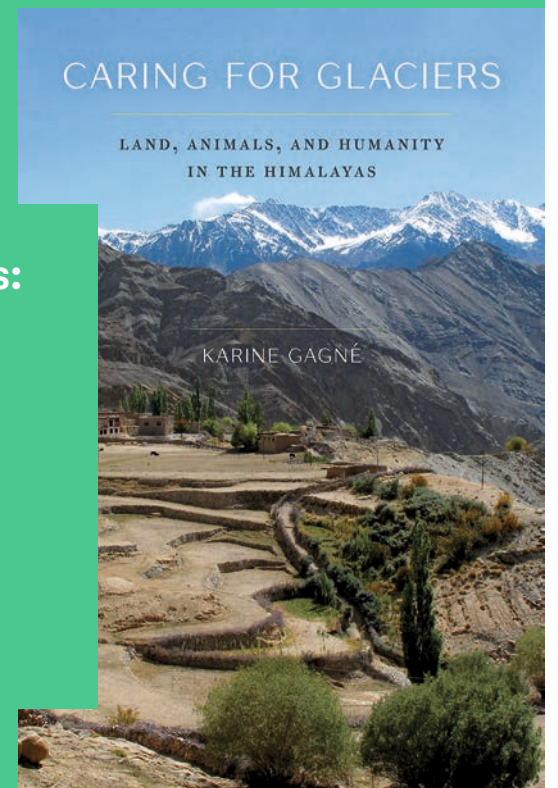
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# Beyond the nation? The transnational and its limits

Ethan Mark

Nationalism, as Benedict Anderson famously argued in his landmark 1983 *Imagined Communities*, has proven a most tenacious modern animal—however invented, imagined, or constructed it may be. Issuing a word of caution to a long line of scholars who had prematurely and naïvely predicted its demise—in particular those to the political left, who were the most numerous and hopeful among them—Anderson declared, “the reality is quite plain: the ‘end of the era of nationalism’, so long prophesied, is not remotely in sight. Indeed, nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time”.



Yet in the period since Anderson issued his declaration, as the tensions of the Cold War cooled and were superseded by idealistic visions of a globalized ‘world without boundaries’—in a context of increasing liberalization and expansion of cross-border flows of human, economic, and intellectual capital—scholarship in the liberal arts and social sciences has moved increasingly towards a questioning of the nation and the nation-state as the dominant frame and determinant of history, identity, politics, economics, culture, and social life.

Across the academic disciplines, attention has turned to the transnational, the regional and the global, focusing on cross-border flows and dynamics that go ‘beyond the nation’.

## The transnational and the national remain intertwined

The effort has yielded considerable breakthroughs in terms of broadened and redefined academic understandings with

regard to issues such as Eurocentrism and processes of social inclusion and exclusion, nation- and empire-building, colonization and decolonization, along with more general notions of society, culture and identity formation, with impacts both intellectual and political. Still, in a conversation on the subject among leading historians published in the *American Historical Review* in 2006, for example, it was observed that transnational history “is in danger of becoming merely a buzzword among historians, more a label than a practice, more expansive in its meaning than

precise in its application, more a fashion of the moment than a durable approach to the serious study of history”. The questioning and transcendence of the claims of the nation-state might be the trend in many (if not all) of the humanities and social sciences, but whether in scholarship or indeed in the structures and thoughts that organize and govern everyday life, leaving the nation behind is often easier said than done.

Continued overleaf on page 30

Continued from page 29

Border-crossing discourses such as Pan-Asianism, for example, are often read romantically by growing numbers of contemporary scholars as representing agendas and worldviews genuinely transcendent of the nation. Upon careful examination, however, whether produced in the past or the present, Pan-Asian rhetoric often turns out to be much more about negotiating a place for one's own nation and its interests within a particular international configuration of power and prestige than about abandoning borders as such. Be they Asian or European, references to shared identities and interests among groups of nations rarely translate directly into a rejection of the tenets of nationalism, and can just as well serve to reinforce them. Institutionally meanwhile, in the context of an increasingly economically interdependent East Asia, for example, the prevalence of state funding available for research with a transnational theme is just one ironic example of how the discursive trend towards the transcending of national borders can itself be driven by old-fashioned national (or indeed neo-imperial) interests. As one Japan scholar noted in the mid-2000s, "nowadays every self-respecting Japanese university needs its own Asia (Pacific) center, and interdisciplinary research with a transnational focus has more or less become the norm for obtaining funding".

More generally in political, economic, social, cultural and institutional life, consciously or unconsciously, the nation-state and 'the national interest' remain very much at the center of things, both defining and constraining the terms upon which we engage the world beyond. In much of the global South, the liberalization and expansion of cross-border capital flows and the growing power of international institutions has not necessarily led to a strengthening of political or ideological trends in favor of a rejection of the claims of the nation-state; in places such as India and the Philippines, aggressive, unabashed nationalism appears to be making a resurgence. Meanwhile in the global 'North', as readily symbolized by the 2016 Brexit referendum result and the election of Donald Trump, unprecedented transnational and global interconnection and interdependence appear to have paradoxically contributed to an unheralded revival of nationalist sentiments, above all in many parts of the global 'North' that were, until recently, the loudest champions of a borderless world. The transnational and the national thus remain inextricably intertwined and mutually implicated.

### The contributors to this Focus

Seeking to unravel such apparent paradoxes, graduate students and faculty from the eight universities that together comprise the Consortium of Asian and African Studies or CAAS (Leiden, INALCO, SOAS, the National University of Singapore, Hanguk University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Shanghai International Studies University, and Columbia University) gathered in Leiden in the autumn of 2017 for the conference *Beyond the Nation?: The Transnational and Its Limits*. The conference was supported by the Leiden Asia Centre and the International Institute for Asian Studies. In their presentations and discussions, they asked: Across the humanities and the social sciences (as well as the wider world), how and why has the transnational been understood, imagined and pursued—and how and why might this be done in the future? Within a historical as well as contemporary world still largely bound by the institutions and interests of the nation-state, to what extent can the nation be transcended—and to what extent is this desirable? The selected papers that follow in this Focus engage such questions through a variety of thematic, disciplinary, and locational lenses.

In a special, updated and shortened version of his keynote lecture 'Identities in the transnational lifeworld: individual, community and nation', Pralay Kanungo surveys an increasingly global diversity of transnational actors who nurture roots in two or more national spaces, weighing a complex of variables that determine the push and pull of transnational flows: the roles of multi- and international organizations and NGOs versus those of national states, the 'top-down' of government policies versus the 'bottom-up' of civil society. Conversely, he calls for greater attention to the role of transnational forces in fostering nationalism, not only among the relatively privileged populations of the global north but also among the 'subalterns' of the global south.

In 'Translating culture to transcend the nation', Masato Kato probes the ironies and limits of the transnational as reflected in the activities and rhetoric of Tenrikyō—a Japanese religious movement that reckoned with a problematic wartime history of national affiliation by ostensibly distancing itself from the nation—as practiced in a postwar France exhibiting a growing interest in things Japanese. "The ambiguity surrounding Tenrikyō's cultural identity in relation to Japan," he argues, "means there is a discursive vacuum in which social actors can interpret the relationship between Tenrikyō and Japanese culture" in diverse ways.



Ulug Kuzuoglu unveils the 'transnational narrative of the making of pinyin'.

In 'The Eurasian origins of pinyin', Ulug Kuzuoglu unveils a transnational narrative of the making of the modern Chinese national script stretching from the Ottoman Empire to the Soviet Union, thereby affirming the innovative potentials of a transnational approach to histories hitherto hidden within national boundaries. Highlighting a complex competition and co-optation not only of linguistic and technological agendas but also of politics and worldviews, Kuzuoglu's multilingual and multiregional research seeks to unravel the history of Chinese scripts as a cross-border history of information and communications.

In 'The rise of the capital state and neo-nationalism', Alexander Svitych deploys a classic work of political economy by Karel Polanyi as a lens through which to analyze and compare populist reactions to neo-liberal reforms in three Asian cases not normally compared in conventional scholarship: Australia, Korea, and Japan. Nor are Japan and Korea conventionally the first nation states that would come to mind in scholarly considerations of populism, but Svitych finds strong reasons for assessing them via an 'old' analytical framework that would indeed seem to carry renewed regional and global relevance.

In 'Encountering Chinese dialect opera among the twentieth century Southeast Asian diaspora', Beiyu Zhang reveals an ambivalent interplay of the national and the transnational as highlighted in the historical rise and fall of a local Chinese performing art form that thrived precisely through the crossing of state borders between China and Southeast Asia, even as its main audience comprised emigrants with roots in the same Chinese subregion. In the context of the Cold War and the processes of postcolonial nation-building that together reshaped the global and regional order in the second half of the twentieth century, however, state agendas, identifications, and loyalty demands were redefined and intensified. Adaptation to such developments brought new opportunities but also an eventual displacement and undermining of the Teochew opera's original appeals and identity.

In 'Revisiting the Calcutta Improvement Trust in early 20th century Calcutta', Tania Chakravarty surveys the transnational and its limits as revealed in ideas and debates surrounding issues of city planning in late colonial British India. In the approaches of civil engineer E.P. Richards and sociologist Patrick Geddes, she thereby highlights the field of urban planning in this specific time and place as a terrain characterized by globally shared interests in health, and the reduction of poverty and overcrowding that had potential to transcend the conventional colonizer/colonized boundary. Yet when it came time for putting ideas into practice, such boundaries inevitably returned with a vengeance, as it were the "imperatives of the imperial economy" that prevailed, "downsize[ing] planning schemes into an underdeveloped and extractive model that saw people as subjects and not citizens".

Finally in 'Strange intimacies: reading for migration and prostitution in Kang Young-sook's *Rina* and Oh Jung-hee's *Chinatown*', Joo Kyung Lee explores how the themes of migration and prostitution converge in two works of modern Korean literature, thereby participating in what she calls "a post-nationalist discourse of displacement" that simultaneously highlights the role of nationality, race, gender and class in both constraining and compelling mobility. While the narrative pattern of interaction between them may be irregular, Lee nevertheless observes a "perverse relationship between migration and prostitution, which renders movement erotic and prostitution migratory". Drawing upon Giorgio Agamben and Michel Foucault, she thereby seeks to interrogate why literary representation so often reduces female bodies in movement to prostituted bodies, and highlights the irony of the contemporary migrant body as the body upon which "the most regulatory power is invested" even as it is not subject to the biopolitics of any single nation.

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Alexander Svitych analyses and compares populist reactions to neo-liberal reforms.

# Identities in the transnational lifeworld

## Individual, community and nation

Pralay Kanungo

Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Light, has gone global—from the White House to 10 Downing Street. While applauding the contribution of the Indian diasporic community in the UK during her Diwali message in 2017, then-British Prime Minister Theresa May simultaneously invoked Hinduism and Lord Ram, appealing to other diasporic communities for harmonious and peaceful co-living in multicultural Britain. I celebrated the same Diwali evening at the Indian Embassy in the Hague, where guests from diverse communities and nations—from the Indian diaspora and Indian-Surinamese-Dutch community to the South Asian and global diplomatic community—enjoyed Indian samosas and sweets and danced to Bollywood tunes. When travelling home by public bus after the event, to my surprise the driver greeted me in Hindi. Enthusiastically he introduced himself as Raghuvir, a synonym used for Lord Ram, and insisted I stood beside him throughout the entire journey.



Happy Diwali. Image courtesy Nitin Badhwar on Flickr. Creative commons license.

It was an engaging conversation. Raghuvir told of his grandfather who migrated from India to Surinam in the 19th century as an indentured labourer. The family continued to follow the Indian tradition and his father gave Indian names to his children, taught them Hindu epics and the Hindi language. Though Raghuvir had never been to India, he loved Indian food, festivals, culture, and Bollywood, and boasted of having a large collection of Hindi CDs. Demonstrating his talent, he sang a line from a popular Hindi song. Then he referred to Surinam, his land of birth, as his *Desh* (nation/Motherland) and community, expressing a deep emotional connection. Decades ago, he had migrated to the Netherlands in search of better opportunities, and had become a Dutch citizen.

With this Diwali narrative I hope to set the context, to reflect on the contemporary transnational lifeworld, and to understand how in this globalised world, identities of individual, community and nation undergo transformations through a range of activities, which involve networks of individuals and communities, transcending national borders.

### Transnational lifeworld

The transnational lifeworld is complex. Transnationalism provides the key to understanding how links between places are initiated, evolved and sustained and how changes occur not only in the spheres of family and kinship but also in the realms of citizenship and the nation-state. Transnationalism helps us to understand how political, economic, social and cultural processes and activities extend beyond national borders, and how individuals, communities and states engage with multiple identities within a fluid global context. Transnationalism embraces a plethora of issues: families, migration circuits, identities, social networks, public spaces, public cultures, capital flows, trade, services, policies, citizenship, corporations, inter-governmental agencies, non-governmental and supra-governmental organizations.

Today, large numbers of people have diverse 'habitats of meaning', or they live in social worlds that are stretched between physical places and communities in two or more nation-states. Multiple habitats bring in multiple experiences, constitute multiple cultural repertoires, and construct multiple identities. A number of factors in each habitat influence identity formation: history, belongingness, stereotypes, exclusion, cultural difference, ethnic segregation, access to resources, socio-economic hierarchies, rights and duties, strategies of mobilisation, etc. Multiple contexts create a 'transnational social field', a 'transnational village', and 'translocality', etc., presenting a complex set of conditions that influence the construction and transformation of social identities. These multi-local/transnational identities shape everyday lives of individuals and form the basis of their community and political engagement within and across each of the places.

### Debates and issues

In the early 1990s, transnationalism came into focus in migration studies research. Social anthropologists Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Christina Blanc-Szanton argued that trans-migrants were not 'uprooted', but firmly rooted both in their host and home countries, maintaining multiple linkages and bringing together their societies of origin and settlement.<sup>1</sup> For Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo and Patricia Landolt, economic transactions primarily determined the existence, scale and intensity of transnationalism.<sup>2</sup> Some scholars observed that the parents' country of origin seemed to loosen across generations, thus raising doubts over the longevity of transnationalism. Yet the idea survived and various explanations surfaced.

Studies showed that not only transnational 'ways of being' (activities, practices, networks, etc.) but also 'ways of belonging' (solidarity, reciprocity, etc.) acted as crucial parameters for the establishment and maintenance of the transnational lifeworld. For some other scholars, kinship and group solidarity should not be treated as given conditions for transnationalism, as they could be constructed and even dismantled in transnational space. Researches also addressed how and why transnationalism emerged, was maintained, transformed or dissolved not only by factoring in the impact of global capitalist penetration, but also analysing the economic, cultural and social resources of migrants, nation-state migration regimes and border politics.

### The state-transnationalism relationship

Transnationalism has been often been equated with spontaneous cross-border mobility and practices that take place independently of the nation-state. Immigrants, non-state actors like global NGOs, transnational corporations, worldwide media, immigrant entrepreneurs and cross-border personal networks are seen as key agents and drivers of cross-border flows. Thus, state involvement is by and large ignored. A problematic distinction is also made between nation-state initiatives termed as 'international' and civil society-driven activities as 'transnational'; in reality, both overlap and are often closely connected.

The state-transnationalism relationship is complex. While some find states as the final arbiters in the international system, today, nation-states operate under structural constraints proportionate to their status in the world-system. The burgeoning supranational institutions further constrain the state by regulating flows of capital, goods and people across national borders. In the era of economic globalization, supra-national quasi-state entities like the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Union restrain and weaken the nation-states.

Yet despite these constraints, states cannot be simply seen as exit and entry points for migrants; the state plays the crucial role of a critical mediator in transnational processes either by being proactive or reactive.

Proactive state transnationalism means that the state may make 'the first move' towards creating new global social or trading networks, thus igniting the latent potential among immigrants for transnational demographic and financial flows; for instance, the role of the People's Republic of China in migration management. The state may also adopt policies to promote and regulate cross-border flows; for example, the recent surge in the demand for dual citizenship and right to vote in Europe, Africa and Asia, propels states to consider adopting policies to help their diasporas at home and abroad. When a state responds to transnational activities that non-state actors or migrants have already initiated, it is reactive state transnationalism.

While recognising state-driven transnationalism or 'transnationalism from above', it is important to bring in 'transnationalism from below', underlining the active role of migrants, grassroots movements and transnational entrepreneurs. Transnationalism from below, it is argued, acts as a 'counter-hegemonic' movement enabling migrants to become autonomous communities, without being completely controlled either by the host or the home state.

### Factoring in subaltern sites and people

Thus, nation-states do contribute to the shaping of transnationalism. Today, from Europe to the United States, the rise of right-wing populism and the backlash against immigrants have led to the introduction of assimilation-oriented policies. This has come as a sequel to the increased securitization of migration since 9/11, which had already restricted migration options. Moreover, in Europe, 'transnational nationalism' is propagated by a variety of transnational networks of nationalist parties, movements and individuals focusing on racial, anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant agendas. Although dissimilar in ideology and agenda, various right-wing nationalist forces do attempt to form a transnational alliance and a common platform. These political developments give a clear signal that the connection between the nation and transnationalism must be examined seriously.

Further, major discourses on transnationalism primarily focus on the first world metropolises as sole sites of transnationalism, mostly ignoring how the global social and economic forces shape the lives of a large number of subalterns in the global South. The erasure of these subalterns from the dominant discourses does not mean that they are outside the orbit of transnationality. Despite being citizens of a nation-state, they barely enjoy citizens'

rights due to their inaccessibility to basic resources. With the onset of neoliberalism, forces of global capital further push them to the margins, accentuating their precarity. Moreover, when a poor person from Bangladesh or a Rohingya from Myanmar crosses the border, being pushed out either by poverty or religious persecution, they face no less hostility and persecution in the land of arrival. This leaves no option for the subalterns of the South but to put up resistance against such unequal and oppressive globalism. Thus, a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of contemporary transnationalism must factor in subaltern sites and people.

The transnational lifeworld, carrying multiple meanings, constituting multiple identities and involving multiple sites, actors and social relationships, manifests how identities are being shaped in the contemporary world. The multi-faceted structure, character and experience of the transnational lifeworld demonstrate that individuals, communities and states play a critical role in constructing transnational identities and in sustaining this complex lifeworld. This complex interplay was evident when 50,000 Indian-Americans thronged into Houston stadium on a Sunday morning in September 2019 to participate in the "Howdy, Modi!" event to greet the Indian Prime Minister in the presence of President Donald Trump. The 4-million Indian-Americans do not belong to the genre of Raghuvir's ancestors, who remained economically and socially marginalised and had little choice to stay connected to their motherland. On the other hand, the postcolonial highly skilled Indian-American migrants enjoy enormous economic, cultural and political capital both at home and in the host nation. Hence, the Indian state and the diasporic community today work in tandem; as the Indian state has the largest diaspora in the world and is the top recipient of remittances (79 billion dollar in 2018), it obviously stands by the Indian-Americans against Trump's anti-immigrant policies. Trump of course attempts to woo Indian-Americans and exploit the Indian Prime Minister's popularity among the community for his electoral prospects. In this complex emerging context, the transnational lifeworld needs deeper reflection.

Pralay Kanungo

DAAD Guest Professor, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University; and IAS Fellow.

### Notes

- 1 Glick Schiller, N., Basch, L. & Blanc-Szanton, C. (eds) 1992. *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*. The New York Academy of Sciences.
- 2 Portes, A., Guarnizo, L.A. & Landolt, P. 1999. 'The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2):217-237.

# Translating ‘culture’ to transcend the ‘nation’

## Cultural activities of a Japanese religion in France

Below left:  
Association Culturelle  
Franco-Japonaise de  
Tenri in central Paris.

Masato Kato



It is probably not unusual for expatriates in general to take advantage of cultural resources of their country of origin to make a living abroad or for other purposes. Japanese expatriates are no exception in this regard, as noted by Harumi Befu in his discussion of the globalisation of Japan.<sup>1</sup> The implications may not be simply about using cultural resources for one’s living, however, when a religious group that proclaims a culturally dissociated religious message uses cultural resources associated with Japan. What does it mean for them to use such cultural resources? This article addresses this question through the case of a Japanese religion known as Tenrikyō<sup>2</sup> as it operates in France.

### Tenrikyō and its postwar cultural dissociation

Tenrikyō originated from a movement/faith community that centred around a woman named Miki Nakayama (1798–1887). After her death in 1887,<sup>3</sup> the movement started to become institutionalised and later gained official recognition as an independent faction of Sect Shinto [Kyōha Shinto] in 1908.<sup>4</sup>

As was the case with other contemporary movements, Tenrikyō developed against the background of Japan’s modern nation-building. During the years from its sectarian independence in 1908 to the end of WWII in 1945, Tenrikyō’s official doctrine and practices were to a large extent influenced by the regulation and ideology of the government that entailed contribution and service for the state. In the aftermath of Japan’s defeat in the Pacific War in 1945, however, the religious organisation announced an initiative called ‘restoration’ [fukugen] as an effort to restore the teaching to the original as taught by Miki. This process led to a major reconfiguration of the doctrine and faith practices, and as a consequence many aspects of the teaching came to be marked by abstracted interpretations of cultural particularity and historical roots. For instance, doctrinal discourses that were marked with Japan-centred interpretations were altered in such a way that signifies more abstracted meanings. Moreover, Tenrikyō left the Sect Shinto Union [Kyōha Shinto Rengōkai] in 1970 and eventually removed some of the major Shinto-related ritual materials.<sup>5</sup> This could be seen as Tenrikyō seeking to restore its teaching in such a way that divorced itself from the nation and culture of Japan.

### Tenrikyō’s cultural strategy in France

It is against this historical background that this article proceeds to analyse Tenrikyō’s cultural activities in France in the postwar period. In the early 1970s, the religious organisation founded two legally separate organisations involving a ‘religious’ association (Tenrikyo Mission Centre in Paris, or *Tenrikyō Pari Shutchōsho*, which was later renamed Tenrikyo Europe Centre, or *Tenrikyō Yōroppa Shutchōsho*) and a ‘cultural’ association (*Association Culturelle Franco-Japonaise de Tenri*, or *Tenri Nichi-Futsu Bunka Kyōkai*) in and near the French capital. The founding of the cultural association, which was intended to help gain visibility and legitimacy of the religious group (and its name ‘Tenri’) through the promotion of cultural exchange between France and Japan, coincided with a period of growing interest in the Japanese language<sup>6</sup>

(and later with the popularity of Japanese popular culture such as anime and manga<sup>7</sup>) in France. Aside from its main activity of a Japanese language school, the cultural association has promoted various kinds of cultural activities, including one-off events as well as continuous ones such as courses in calligraphy, flower arrangement, and tea ceremonies. As far as the relationship with the religious tradition is concerned, the cultural association conducts no formal activity of proselytisation as per the French legal regulation concerning non-religious associations.

### Negotiating the boundary between Tenrikyō and Japan

One may wonder how followers who have been involved in Tenrikyō’s propagation in France make sense of the use of cultural resources associated with Japan in light of the culturally dissociated doctrinal discourses and practices in the postwar period. The ambiguity surrounding Tenrikyō’s cultural identity in relation to Japan means there is a discursive vacuum in which social actors can interpret the relationship between Tenrikyō and Japanese culture. There are indeed diverse manners in which those followers understand the roles of cultural activities. Notable in this regard is that these followers—almost all of whom are Japanese nationals—understand the term ‘culture’ in an abstract or general sense rather than particularly in relation to Japanese culture as currently promoted through the cultural association. Expressed during interviews with these followers is the view that the cultural activities represent one way of contributing to French society in response to the public interests in Japanese culture in particular and cultural activities in general. In another yet related view, it is emphasised by several people that religious traditions in general promote cultural activities as part of their propagation efforts, and therefore it is logical that Tenrikyō conducts such activities. In this frame of reference, Tenrikyō’s cultural activities are understood as an integral part of religion’s propagation efforts—regardless of the kinds of cultural resources they employ. The understanding of ‘culture’ in their view is in line with the underlying characteristics of Tenrikyō’s postwar doctrinal discourse, which de-emphasises the cultural and historical contexts.

Interestingly, however, there was a case in which the abstracted understanding of the term culture led to re-particularisation of Tenrikyō’s postwar doctrinal discourse and related ideas. This was expressed by one of the former presidents of the cultural association as his personal opinion both in his unpublished writing as well as during an interview. In his view, the Japanese language as used in Tenrikyō’s ritual is identified as a sacred language in a rather universalistic sense, with Japanese culture and the language being stripped of their cultural

particularity. It is indicative, however, that he thereby paradoxically accords a special status to Japanese culture and language in relation to others. Intriguing in his case is that the particularity associated with the geographical location of Tenri as well as the Japanese language used in Miki’s writing was discursively subsumed under the universalistic understanding of culture, which in turn gave special status to Japan and the Japanese language in a spiritual sense. Put differently, the perceived particularity of the location and the language is not directly connected to Tenrikyō’s doctrinal discourse, but rather mediated through the universalistic postulation of the concept ‘culture’. This suggests that the abstraction of the term culture can work in both ways, allowing certain cultural characteristics to be attached to or detached from the teaching of Tenrikyō.

### Concluding remarks

The case of Tenrikyō in postwar France provides a distinctive picture of a Japanese religion that seeks to transcend the nation by translating culture. In its expansion into the French cultural context, Tenrikyō sought to transcend the national boundary by drawing on the resources and representations associated with Japan at a time Japanese language and culture were gaining popularity in France. In so doing, the followers involved in Tenrikyō’s propagation in France construed the term ‘culture’ in a universalistic or abstracted sense, discursively detaching the meanings of culture associated with Japan. In one case, which is by no means fully representative of followers involved in Tenrikyō’s propagation in France, the abstract construction of the meaning of culture paradoxically led to the re-particularisation of the otherwise culturally dissociated doctrinal discourse. In this sense, Tenrikyō in France has been able to transcend the nation through culture in terms of responding to the popularity of Japanese culture as well as in a sense of discursive negotiation, provided that the abstract postulation of ‘culture’ avoids the particularisation of the meaning. When abstracted, the term ‘culture’ has multiple implications for a religion that seeks to expand transnationally, and in this sense the case of Tenrikyō can provide insights into the ways in and the extent to which a religion can transcend the nation by translating the culture that is associated with the nation in which it developed.

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- 2 In this article, I follow the convention of using diacritical marks for Japanese words including names of religions, except where religious organisations concerned use unmarked ones as English proper nouns.
- 3 In Tenrikyō’s official doctrine, Miki Nakayama’s death is referred to as “physical withdrawal” as she is believed to still be alive as the ‘Shrine of God’ [*kami no yashiro*].
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# The Eurasian origins of pinyin

Ulug Kuzuoglu

In 1931, Chinese and Russian revolutionaries in the Soviet Union joined hands to devise the Chinese Latin Alphabet (*Latinxua sinwenz*, CLA), the mother of contemporary *pinyin*. While the significance of the CLA in the history of Chinese language and script reforms is beyond doubt, its exact kinship to *pinyin* remains murky, for the CLA was markedly different from *pinyin* not only in its ideological make-up, but also in its letter-composition. *Yuyan* 语言 [language], for instance, was written as *yjan* in the CLA in the 1930s; or *Ladinghua* 拉丁化 [Latinization] was written as *latinxua*. The 'y' of *pinyin*, in other words, was originally written with a 'j'; 'h' was written with an 'x'; and 'yu' or 'ü' with a 'y'. Trivial as it may seem, an archaeology of these letters offers a history unlike the ones written before.

Latinization in China has largely been described either as the product of nationalism and modernization, or the outcome of Western colonialism and social Darwinism. The history of the CLA, however, compels us to question these established narratives and resituate Chinese Latinization within a greater Eurasian media history that stretches from the Ottoman Empire to the Soviet Union, and explores the technological impact of new communications technologies on non-Latin scripts, of which Chinese was one. In particular, understanding the letters of the CLA requires a novel focus on the long history of Arabic script reforms across Eurasia.

## Call for separate letters

In the 1850s, a few decades prior to the invention of the CLA, Muslim and non-Muslim reformers in the Ottoman Empire and Russian Transcaucasia began rethinking the possibilities and limitations of the Arabic script. Their intellectual tribulations started almost immediately after the introduction of the telegraph into the Muslim world during the same decade, which challenged the Arabic script and imposed a new epistemology of writing. Telegraphic messages were transmitted via the Morse code, which was originally invented for the 26 letters of English. As opposed to Latin letters, the majority of Arabic letters were written differently depending on their position in a word—the letter 'ghayn' غ, for example, was غ as the initial, غ in the middle, and غ at the end of a word. The Morse code, however, demanded the dissection of each word into its letter-sound components, and designated each letter-sound as a separate entity that corresponded to a combination of dots and dashes. As such, when transmitting the word 'ghayn-ghayn-ghayn' غغغ, the telegraph operators had to send each letter separately as غ غ غ.

During the following decade, intellectuals from the Ottoman, Russian, and Iranian Empires were in conversation with each other regarding the future of the script, and for them, even more pressing than telegraphic communications (with Morse code) was the question of typography. The industrialization of the printing press in the nineteenth century, exemplified by the global dissemination of the movable metal type, imposed a similar epistemology of 'separate letters' for typesetting. Because of the number of glyphs and the various ways of combining letters, an Arabic-lettered type case had more than 500 sorts, i.e., metal types; and depending on the kind of calligraphy used for printing (e.g., *ta'liq*) the number could surpass 2000. The reformers used the exorbitant size of type cases to justify their call for separate letters, which, they argued, would increase efficiency and optimize labor not only in typesetting, but also in reading. In the eyes of the reformers who were surrounded by Latin, Cyrillic, Greek, Armenian, and Georgian alphabets, the future of a productive knowledge economy lay in separate letters.

The first proposals for a new alphabet in the Muslim world were not based on the Latin alphabet (fig.1). Some argued for a reformed Arabic script written in separate letters, while others proposed the use of Armenian letters or a combination of Cyrillic and Latin letters. It was only in the 1910s, in the aftermath of the Russian imperial reforms of 1905 and the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, that the Latin alphabet emerged as a serious contender to other script proposals. The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Great War in 1918 strengthened the position of the Latin alphabet even further, as many reformers saw it as the embodiment of material and mental progress during national reconstruction. Amid incessant debates in the post-imperial Russian and Ottoman space, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan was the first to officially Latinize its Arabic script in 1924.

## Revolutionary, Dunganese, and Chinese Latin alphabet

The modernist values of efficiency, productivity, and progress that the Latin alphabet supposedly embodied turned out to be critical for the Bolsheviks, who promised a new socialist civilization based on the same principles. Indeed, during the 1920s, socialist thinkers in the USSR were preoccupied with the so-called Scientific Organization of Labor [*nauchnaia organizatsiia truda*], an industrialist creed imported to the Soviet Union by Aleksei Gastev (1882-1939). An aficionado of American Taylorism, Gastev established dozens of institutes and utilized cutting-edge technologies to optimize bodily movements and increase labor productivity. His philosophy of efficiency extended into the realm of language and writing as well, which he claimed could also be measured and optimized in order to achieve ultimate mental productivity.

The Latinization Movement in Azerbaijan was coming to fruition in the midst of these debates. Even Lenin himself took a personal interest, allegedly claiming that "Latinization [was] the Great Revolution in the East!" After all, eyes, hands, fingers, typewriters, printing presses, and telegraph operators all functioned within a network of humans and machines, linked via the script. The Latin alphabet seemed to offer the remedy that the socialists were searching for all along—in fact, many claimed that even the Cyrillic alphabet could be Latinized for an internationalist socialist civilization!

While the Latinization of the Cyrillic alphabet never took place, the revolutionary fervor reached a peak in 1926 with the First Turcology Congress in Baku, where more than a hundred participants representing various nationalities discussed the future of the alphabet in the world. After heated discussions, the Latin alphabet was selected as the new medium of intellectual production not only in the Turco-Muslim world under the USSR, but also in the rest of the non-

Western world where socialism offered a strong alternative to extant political and economic conditions. Thus, in 1928, the Unified New Turkic Alphabet (UNTA) was devised by the socialist internationalists to Latinize the Arabic script across the Turkic world (fig.2). And starting in the same year, the UNTA was exported to non-Turkic and non-Russian lands as well, forming the material basis of not only Latinized Kurdish, Persian, and Mongolian alphabets, but also of the first Chinese Latin Alphabet.

But before the Chinese Latin Alphabet, came the 'New Dunganese Alphabet' [*novyi dungsanskii alfavit*]. The Dungans were Chinese Muslims who had emigrated to Central Asia during the turmoil in Xinjiang in the 1870s, and settled in present-day Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. While it remains an unexplored subject, the Chinese Muslims had been using the Arabic alphabet to transcribe Mandarin sounds, possibly since the thirteenth century, when the Mongol rulers invited Persian and Arabic scientists to present-day Beijing. The Chinese Muslims maintained the tradition of using Arabic letters, known as *xiaoerjin* 小兒錦, to write in their own tongues until the twentieth century (fig.3). And in the 1920s, those in Central Asia, i.e., the Dungans, were already in the process of reforming the Arabic alphabet itself to bring it closer to Dunganese, a dialect of Mandarin. With the wave of Latinization, however, the Dunganese revolutionaries decided to adopt the UNTA, which was invented to Latinize the Arabic alphabet in the first place, and apply it to their centuries-old *xiaoerjin*. That was the New Dunganese Alphabet (fig.4).

## Pinyin, an imperial lingua franca

When the Chinese and Russian revolutionaries began working on the Chinese Latin Alphabet during the same years, they already had the New Dunganese Alphabet as a template to work with, and they by and large kept its letters for the CLA. The origins of the CLA's quixotic letters that I have noted at the beginning of this essay, may thus be revealed. Why was the 'y' of *pinyin* written with a 'j' in the CLA, as in *yjan* 語言? Or why was 'h' written with an 'x'; or 'ü' written with a 'y'? The response lies in the Latinization of the Arabic alphabet itself, because the 'j' of the CLA carried a secret Arabic *ya* ي; 'x' a secret *ha* ح; and 'y' a secret *waw* و, the historical traces of which have been forgotten in scholarship. The CLA of the 1930s, in short, was born out of a Eurasian history, written in Arabic letters.

Alas, it did not live long. Stalin's increasing Russification policies culminated in a USSR-wide Cyrillicization campaign in 1938, which brought an abrupt end to the revolutionary Latinization Movement. Following the failure of internationalism in the USSR and the start of the 2nd World War, the Chinese Communist Party shelved the CLA in the 1940s. And when *pinyin* was finally invented in 1958, it neither had the revolutionary audacity to eliminate the Chinese characters, nor the internationalist vision of a former era. The new letters of *pinyin* instead stood for Mandarin as an imperial *lingua franca* that the Han imposed on their multi-ethnic frontiers—but that will be the subject of a future essay.

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From left to right: Fig. 1: The Qur'an transcribed in an invented separate-lettered alphabet (Tbilisi, 1879). Fig. 2: The Unified New Turkic Alphabet of the USSR, 1928. Fig. 3: An example of *xiaoerjin*: Arabic script used for transcribing Mandarin. Fig. 4: The New Dunganese Alphabet (1928) and the phonetic correspondence between the UNTA, *xiaoerjin*, and Cyrillic letters.

# The rise of the capital-state and neo-nationalism

Lessons from the Asia-Pacific

Alexander Svitych

## Neo-nationalism as a counter-movement against marketization

A critical political economic perspective can be particularly useful to understand the neo-nationalist phenomenon. More specifically, the rise of neo-nationalism points to the contemporary relevance of Karl Polanyi's intellectual arsenal, crystallized in his magnum opus *The Great Transformation*.<sup>1</sup> One of the significant ideas in this classic work is that of the 'double movement' demonstrating the antagonistic relationship between the drive towards the 'utopian' free market and the inevitable societal 'counter-movement'. Polanyi famously argued that societies would demand social protection against the process of marketization. Neo-nationalism can thus be interpreted as a renewed Polanyian moment whereby pro-market restructuring of the state under the auspices of neoliberal globalization generates genuine grievances exploited by populist nationalists.<sup>2</sup> And although Polanyi focused on the industrial Global North only, his insights are well applicable in the Asian context.

Arguably, three sets of inter-connected factors must be considered to appreciate this 'transformation-protection' dynamic in full: institutional change, social demand, and political supply. At the structural level, nation-states have undergone pro-market re-configuration to facilitate expanded commodification, manifested in such broad processes as the rollback and privatization of public services; an increase in corporate power at the expense of labour; and financialization and transnationalization of economies. At the level of subjective legitimacy, sections of the working and middle classes perceive these changes as a threat to their socio-economic standing, generating resentment at the political establishment for 'leaving them behind'. In turn, at the political entrepreneurship level, populist leaders and parties 'plug into nationalism' through a set of rhetorical and discursive strategies to provide an organizational outlet for channelling these insecurities and anxieties.

In sum, from a Polanyi-inspired perspective, the appeal of populist nationalism reflects fundamental problems of state transformation and the ensuing erosion of old economic and social structures. Neo-nationalism, then, has emerged to compensate for the real and perceived inability of the state to shield citizens from the corrosive effects of market fundamentalism. As sovereignty of the state has yielded to 'sovereignty of the market', nations have expressed their discontent through voting for neo-nationalist parties, among others means of venting off frustration. Disenfranchised voters gravitate toward these forces and embrace identity-based solutions – often in exclusivist and scapegoating forms – to channel away their insecurities and anxieties triggered by the pro-market restructuring.

## Empirical referents

To give the first illustration from the Asia-Pacific region, the structural changes in the national economy and state formed a fertile breeding ground for Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party's (ONP) vision of a homogeneous

We are witnessing the rise of neo-nationalism – a surge of populist nationalism in the contemporary phase of globalized development – embodied in the support for populist nationalist leaders, movements, and parties across Europe, the Americas, and Asia. The years 2015–2016 alone saw Donald Trump's ascendancy to presidency in the US, the triumph of Brexit in the UK, and Rodrigo Duterte's uncompromising drug war in the Philippines. On the Right, populist forces tap into ethnic nationalism by opposing immigration and multiculturalism; on the Left, they invoke civic nationalism and juxtapose the 'pure people' against the 'corrupt elites'.

Australia. As in other advanced industrial nations, Australia had undergone a radical restructuring of the economy and state, the process underpinned by the ideology of 'economic rationalism' (Australia's term for neoliberalism).<sup>3</sup> The transformation began back in the 1970s under Gough Whitlam's Labor government and gained momentum in the 1980s. The subsequent advancement of policies and practices to deregulate welfare, labour, and finance under the Hawke-Keating (1983–1996) neoliberal governments signified a break with the tradition of the 'Australian Settlement'.

The pro-market re-regulation and ensuing declining capacity to fulfil the social contract towards working and middle class Australians translated into experiences of relative deprivation and status anxiety, as well as disillusionment with 'politics as usual'. In the absence of meaningful alternatives, the ONP offered a simple populist message to harness fears of material and social displacement: give a voice to 'ordinary people' or 'the little man' so that every 'bloke would have a fair go'. On the vertical axis of identity construction, the ONP drew the boundaries of Australia to exclude the elites who failed to protect the people from economic and social dislocations. On the horizontal axis, there was a juxtaposition against the more 'privileged' groups, most notably welfare recipients, Asian migrants, and Aborigines who were seen to challenge the 'Australian way of life'. Yet, although the ONP relied on ethno-migrant cleavage to mobilize voters against the Aboriginal, Muslim, Asian 'Others', the people's racial sensibilities did not exist in a vacuum.<sup>4</sup> Rather, they became especially acute and were available to be politicized in the time of anxiety over social welfare sustainability, job security, and redistribution stemming from the structural changes in the country's political economy. In a solution resembling other neo-nationalist forces, the ONP offered a chauvinistic vision of 'Fortress Australia' as a response to these changes.

In South Korea, although no institutionalized populist nationalism emerged, left-wing 'progressive' parties such as the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) and its successor the Unified Progress Party (UPP) displayed some elements of it. Rooted in the democratic and labour uprisings of the late 1980s and the formation of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), DLP was established in 2000 and gained 13 per cent of the vote at the 2004 general election, capitalizing on the post-1997 (Asian Financial Crisis) reforms and the new proportional representation law. DLP represented the marginalized 'underclass'

– workers, farmers, and the urban poor – and opposed the ruling conservative Grand National Party's policies, from privatization of public utilities to hostility towards North Korea.<sup>5</sup>

Although the DLP and UPP lacked the elements of populism and radicalism most commonly associated with European neo-nationalist parties, they were outsider challengers nonetheless; they mounted a third alternative to the liberal-conservative system of South Korea's post-democratization period. Thus, analytically they represent a nascent form of Polanyian 'counter-movement' against the encroachment of the market. Both parties dissolved or were banned by 2014,<sup>6</sup> yet the political void was filled by the 2008 and 2017 'candlelight protests'. The former was sparked as a reaction to the government's decision to reopen South Korea's beef market to the US, and originated in the critique of neoliberalism within the Korean leftist circles. The trigger for the more recent massive protests was the 'Choi Soon-sil gate' of 2016–2017, which culminated in the ousting of president Park Geun-hye, accused of embezzlement and collusion with the country's biggest *chaebols*. Yet while the protests may have had a lot to do with the specifics of Park's regime, grievances had accumulated over the years. From a comparative perspective, although Koreans appear to have lost patience with their political system in line with the political alienation trend elsewhere, their response presents a more progressive and civic manifestation of the Polanyian 'double-movement' dynamic.

Finally, the radical right in Japan is multi-layered and appears to be distinct from Western counterparts in two aspects: a staunch emphasis on historical revisionism, as demonstrated by the multiple instances of glorifying the pre-war Japanese Empire; and nativist sentiments against close neighbours (most notably Korea) rather than migrants.<sup>7</sup> However, as the sociologist Michael Pusey has argued, economic restructuring creates a "defensive need for 'communities of memory' in which social resistances to commodification congeal in revived memories and imaginary constructions of shared experience".<sup>8</sup> With the overall neoliberal consensus in the incumbent and past governments, acts such as the restoration of the National Foundation Day or the Prime Minister's worshipping at the Yasukuni Shrine make intuitive sense. These symbolic appeals to national greatness serve as a psychological coping strategy for citizens who hope for improved socio-economic standing, especially those who lack other markers of social status, such as education or occupation.



Cartoon showing William Jennings Bryan/Populism as a snake swallowing up the mule representing the Democratic party. US Judge magazine, 1896. Image in the public domain on Wikipedia.

## Conclusion

The state, capital, and identity politics are intertwined. In contrast to previous waves of marketization, which saw an anti-market response from the state, the third wave of neoliberal globalization brought about re-regulation of the state for market. This development, in turn, has created a climate favouring political mobilization in the form of, albeit not limited to, populist-nationalist counter-movements.<sup>9</sup> Neo-nationalism as a new form of 'identity politics' has already become an inevitable part of global political reality, and needs to be studied through a broader social theoretical and comparative perspective. Understanding this phenomenon as a Polanyian counter-protective movement reminds us that the process of untamed market expansion – facilitated by the state – can cause deep divisions in societies. There is thus an inextricable link between free market reforms, declining state legitimacy, and identity-based mobilization.

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# Chinese dialect opera among the twentieth century Southeast Asian diaspora

Beiyu Zhang

From the early twentieth century, Chinese dialect opera [方言戏] troupes followed the movement of Chinese immigrants to the various ports and cities of Southeast Asia, a region that was oftentimes referred to by the Chinese as 'the South Seas' [Nanyang 南洋]. The travelling of the Teochew opera (the dialect opera mostly patronised by Teochew immigrants in Bangkok, Malaya and Singapore) and its films, from hometown Shantou to the Teochew diaspora in Southeast Asia, reveals the dynamics of Sino-Southeast Asian interactions, channelled through long-existing native-place ties. In the Cold War era, Teochew opera practitioners endeavoured to maintain their old native-place ties by designing new routes of travelling in order to circumvent tensions that had made Sino-Southeast Asian interactions almost impossible. However, in the ensuing period of nation building, Teochew opera faced more difficult struggles in choosing between the 'national' and the 'diasporic', because of its 'unwelcome' historical linkages with homeland China.



Front cover of promotion material accompanying the gramophone record for the 1962 Teochew opera film 'Tan San and Ngo Nian' ('Chen San Wu Niang' 陈三五娘). Available from NUS Library, <https://tinyurl.com/hs-opera>.

## Pre-war demographic patterns and diasporic routes

Following in the footsteps of fellow countrymen, Teochew opera troupes left their home villages and embarked on long journeys to Southeast Asia. Their tour routes revealed a complex web of travel, underpinned by the distinct demographic patterns pertaining to the Teochew immigration in Southeast Asia. Bangkok was generally the first stop in Southeast Asia for Teochew immigrants and their opera troupes, who mostly originated from the region Chaoshan 潮汕.<sup>1</sup> Firstly, Bangkok had the largest number of Teochew-Chinese, compared with other Chinese settlements in Southeast Asia. Such a sizeable Teochew diaspora in Bangkok made their hometown soundscape—the Teochew opera tours and performances—a daily supplement for people's ritual and entertainment needs. Secondly, Bangkok was the entrepôt not only for trading, but also for cultural exchanges; from here the Teochew opera troupes were transported into the hinterland as well as the larger region of Southeast Asia.

Teochew settlements expanded further into the interior thanks to the completion of Thailand's northern and southern railways. The improvement of transportation also

greatly enhanced the mobility of Teochew opera troupes, meaning they could cross borderlands to places such as Indochina and British Malaya. Or they could opt for a much faster and easier itinerary by taking a steamship from Bangkok to Singapore. During the first half of the twentieth century, local diasporic conditions, such as the Teochew demographics in Siam/Thailand and improvements in transportation technology, determined the ways in which opera troupes conducted their tours transnationally.

## Reaching out in the Cold War era

The Cold War cast a shadow over the established travelling patterns. Communications and interactions along the Sino-Southeast Asian migrant corridor became especially unstable due to the geopolitics in Asia. The Teochew opera, which had relied on the transnational tours, became entrapped in national/colonial frameworks that imposed their own political agendas onto the art form. In the opera's place of origin Chaoshan 潮汕, top-down nationwide reform was enforced to turn the traditional folk practice into a diplomatic tool,

intended to battle for the hearts and minds of the Chinese in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. Teochew opera troupes were assigned with an important political mission: to bring reformed socialist art to Hong Kong in 1960. They were particularly successful, judging from the enthusiastic responses from the Hong Kong Chinese. The mission even stirred up a 'feverish craving' for Teochew opera, which brought about new business opportunities in the entertainment market of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. Two CCP (Chinese Communist Party)-endorsed left-wing film producers in Hong Kong (New Union and the Great Wall) began to collaborate with the Mainland troupes, making seven Teochew opera films in all, between 1960 and 1965.<sup>2</sup>

The choice of Hong Kong as the first diasporic reaching-out was based on deliberate political and cultural considerations. Post-war Hong Kong was where East and West intersected, prospering economically and culturally as a result. As a British colony, Hong Kong was a gateway through which the PRC could disseminate its socialist propaganda to non-communist countries through the operations of Hong Kong's left-wing filmmakers. In order to pave a smooth road for the circulation of left-wing opera films in Southeast Asia, different flexible strategies were developed so as to cover up the true identity of the film producers, or put in another way, to direct people's attention away from the ideological underpinning in order to pass the film censorship.

The initial Hong Kong (filmmakers)—Mainland cooperation opened up such a lucrative market that many non-left-wing, and sometimes purported right-wing supporters, such as the Shaw Brothers, began to form transnational cooperations between Hong Kong studios and Southeast Asian theatres. These Teochew opera practitioners and filmmakers were constituents of the Shantou—Hong Kong—Southeast Asian operatic nexus. Their role as 'cultural entrepreneurs', moving between the PRC and the Southeast Asian market, was far more than that of mere intermediaries; they created their own cultural ventures by infusing the commercial dynamics that could only be bred in Hong Kong's post-war society. So in the cultural arena, the political impasse of the 1950s and the 1960s was more imagined than real.

## Caught between the 'national' and the 'diasporic'

In addition to the gloomy atmosphere of the Cold War, struggles for independence

and nation building were the priority of many Southeast Asian countries. Projects for national identity construction stood central, and exploring ways in which to use transnational opera tours to serve the national interest became popular. Singapore's nation building in the 1970s and 1980s struggled to balance the de-territorial migrant history with the formation of a unified national identity. Chinese street opera (performed by troupes of Teochew, Cantonese, Hokkien and Hainanese operas) had integrated expressions of tradition, sub-ethnic 'Chineseness' and a de-territorialised diasporic practice. It thus became an embarrassing existential manifestation on the path to Singapore's nation building and modernisation. The heritage-making of Chinese street opera brought about a more profound result of displacement. Specifically, the displacement took place both literally and metaphorically. In a literal sense, the physical displacement of the street opera performances from their original religious sites to designated spaces of the modern HDB (Housing and Development Board), Hong Lim Park, and lastly to indoor theatres. Partly as a result of, or parallel to, such a physical transformation, the displacement of the opera's 'Chineseness' had a more far-reaching impact in a metaphorical sense, whereby identity and language had to be restructured for the sake of nation building. Rooted in the sub-ethnic dialect culture, Chinese street opera found itself uncomfortably framed in the national culture undergirded by the official ideology of multiculturalism and pragmatism. Such an irreconcilable gap between a traditional dialect culture and modern state ideologies determined the transient nature of Chinese operatic heritage-making, and it was eventually doomed to fail.

For opera practitioners, there was a more profound displacement of Chinese street opera as a diasporic livelihood and a de-territorialised living tradition. Unlike the state, which saw the heritage-making of Chinese street opera as a tool for nation building, opera practitioners saw it as the key to form their subjectivity: where they came from, who they were/are and why they held onto it. Their memories of the distant homeland in China and numerous places during their diasporic travelling were all contrary to what had been enforced upon them—a national belonging and identity that only restricted their diasporic mobility and endangered their livelihoods.<sup>3</sup>

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## Notes

- 1 Chaoshan 潮汕 is the contraction of the names of its two administrative areas: Chaozhou 潮州 and Shantou 汕头. It is a region defined by its culture and linguistic uniqueness in the eastern part of Guangdong, encompassing three main cities: Shantou 汕头, Chaozhou 潮州 and Jieyang 揭阳. It is the origin of the Teochew dialect that is mostly spoken by native populations of Chaoshan and overseas Teochew Chinese in Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.
- 2 'Su Liu Niang' 苏六娘 was produced by New Union in 1960. In 1961, New Union continued with 'Gao Qinfu' 告亲夫 and a documentary film about the socialist opera college in Shantou: 'Ruyan Yingchun' 乳燕迎春. Two other films, 'Nao Kaifeng' 闹开封 and 'Wang Maosheng Jinjiu' 王茂生进酒 were made in 1963. Another important left-wing film producer, Great Wall Movie Enterprises, made 'Chen San Wu Niang' 陈三五娘, in 1962.
- 3 Chua Hong Kee, Oral History Interview, National Archives of Singapore, 11 April 2007; Chng Gek Huay, Oral History Interview, National Archives of Singapore, 14 January 1988.

# Revisiting the Calcutta Improvement Trust in early 20th Century Calcutta

Tania Chakravarty

Even though Calcutta ceased to be the capital of the British Indian Empire in 1911, it still continued to be an important administrative and economic centre and port city of British India. During and after the First World War, the city was subjected to forces of economic depression, political devolution and migration that in turn led to changes in configurations of urban space and forms of built environments, conceptions of urban governance and the provision of urban services. As a colonial space, Calcutta continued to be the very 'other' of the Western cities, but the exigencies of health and improvement pushed the civic planners working in Calcutta to transcend the boundaries of nation and embrace the transnational.

## E.P. Richards and slum repair

In 1911, the Government of Bengal created the Calcutta Improvement Trust (CIT) to improve conditions in Calcutta. It was created as an independent entity, headed by a British Indian Civil Service official – Cecil Henry Bompas. Its objectives were to open up congested areas, construct or alter roads, provide ventilation through open spaces, construct new buildings, acquire land for urban development, and rehabilitate displaced communities. The immediate cause was a pandemic that spread from the interior of China after 1894 to the ports of Asia and Africa, killing an estimated seven million people by 1914. A civil engineer named E.P. Richards was given the task to create the working constitution of the CIT.

Richards had moved to British India in 1908 and become the executive engineer of Madras Main Drainage. In September 1912, Richards became chief engineer of the CIT. He drew extensively from various town planning projects in Europe and America for his report on Calcutta, which he finished and published in 1914. He included a sociological map, colour coded by land use, and material on Italian and German approaches to city planning.<sup>1</sup> Richards was much influenced by Georges-Eugène Haussmann's planning of Paris (France), and sought to apply his methods of circulation and ventilation while structuring a road-building plan for Calcutta. Drawing on the working-class housing operations of Birmingham (England), and suburban development programmes of Letchworth (England) and Milan (Italy), Richards tried to build upon such programmes to tackle the growing problems of overcrowding, congestion and filth in the city.

Early twentieth century India has predominantly been studied as a time of colonial domination and anti-colonial nationalist struggle. However, it was also a period when India was drawn into two World Wars and subjected to the uncertainties of the global economy. The nationalist struggle precipitated questions about national poverty, the welfare of the poor, and the legitimacy of the colonial government. Such political contestations took cues from transnational imaginings of what modern governance was and what it should do – thoughts that even penetrated certain ranks of colonial officialdom. This paper looks at how the city of Calcutta became a site of this trans-national (urban) imagination.

In his 1914 report, Richards put great emphasis on low income housing and suburban development as a necessity in urban government, favouring the method of 'slum repair' or 'slum mending' already in use in British cities. Remedy by slum repair required (persuading) owners to make their property sanitary and habitable, whilst the municipal authority would remove obstructive buildings in a judicious and inexpensive manner in order to open up congested spaces. Richards visited the city of Birmingham in 1912-1914 to gain first-hand knowledge of the experiment. He was received by Dr John Robertson, the Health Officer of the city. Accompanied by Robertson, Richards inspected a considerable area of 'reformed' courts and slums. According to Richards, the effect of removing obstructive buildings; opening up one or both ends of courts to the nearest street; enforcing repair of the property; paving the surfaces of yards and open spaces; providing excellent and durable but cheap washhouses and up-to-date water closets; and planting trees and putting light ornamental railings and gates to prevent ingress of vehicular traffic on to the paving, was most striking and pleasing and produced a highly satisfactory living environment. Richards was especially impressed by the healthy, bright and clean appearance of the children and women, and by the freshness of air and abundance of light in the reformed areas.<sup>2</sup>

Another way in which Richards sought to ease demographic pressure and bring cleanliness, health and order to Calcutta was to create good communication channels to the suburbs. Richards drew inspiration from the garden city movement and was in favour of setting apart definite areas for suburban development as done in Milan and Genoa.<sup>3</sup> He was aware that compared with those of Western cities, slums in Calcutta were very many times more extensive. Overcrowding in Calcutta slums was much greater than European slums. Slums in Calcutta had the highest recorded mortality for tuberculosis and infant mortality and the highest infantile death rate in the world.

Richards determined the reason behind the origin of Calcutta slums was mostly twofold. Firstly, there was a lack of efficient byelaws

and their rigid enforcement both in the past and present. Secondly, the lack of main roads for rapid transit to external areas, and lack of suburban land preparation, forced people of meagre incomes to crowd within the slums of Calcutta.<sup>4</sup>

## Patrick Geddes and folk planning

While Richards was drawing upon more concrete examples of town planning schemes from the Western world, Patrick Geddes, a Scottish sociologist and town planner, who produced several reports on Indian towns, believed that town planning was actually 'folk planning'. In 1918, he undertook a survey for CIT and forwarded a planning scheme for a particular neighbourhood (Barra Bazar) in Calcutta. While Richards tried to create what he believed to be a 'more satisfactory urban environment' within his Western-conceived cultural framework, Geddes was particularly critical of programmes that ignored the needs of people and destroyed the housing and social life of the urban community, especially the urban poor. He believed that the plans for a future could only be drawn after unravelling the dominant social pattern of a community. To tackle the decay of urban settlements, Geddes invented a method that he called 'conservative surgery', which proposed minimum demolition and disruption to achieve maximum improvement in the city. But Geddes was no isolationist. Keeping in line with the 'Outlook Tower' that he established in Edinburgh in 1892 (in which a visitor started with familiar scenes of his own city and finished with the global viewpoint of a citizen of the world), Geddes proposed a holistic form of planning, connecting the city, the nation and the international.

Writing just after the First World War, Geddes was aware that large scale demolition would lead to business losses and dislocation for the entire labouring population.<sup>5</sup> While Geddes always expressed caution about demolition, he was practical enough to realize that in some areas there was no alternative. Geddes' support for demolition of certain areas did not mean that he abandoned his pet method of conservative surgery. He believed that residential areas could be improved by demolishing individual unsanitary houses instead of whole blocks. The spaces created could be converted into small open areas and parks, and provide much relief to the local residents. Geddes wanted more investment in the existing housing stock. Too often, he urged, buildings were judged on superficial grounds, "so that dirty whitewash, broken plaster, and bad smell are enough to evoke a cry for demolition; for these only need easy cleansing and brightening, and economical repair".<sup>6</sup> He suggested that, in its own way, the Calcutta Municipality could take a step forward and grant loans to citizens for repairing their houses. Geddes felt that investment in housing was too strictly seen through the prism of financial gains and losses in the market. He wanted the governing classes to invest in housing so that, socially at least, they could expect returns in the form of

a satisfied and prosperous working class.

Neither Richards nor Geddes was ignorant of the relation between overcrowding and urban poverty in early twentieth century Calcutta. Although both these town planners put forward very different methods to tackle the problem of urban congestion, both emphasized the importance of maintaining a healthy workforce within the boundaries of the city as an integral task of governing the city. Both sets of plans were premised on seeing Indian residents as 'productive agents', i.e., as beings who can generate wealth if they are looked after properly. However, none of the schemes propounded by these townplanners could be successfully applied by the CIT. Herein lie the anxieties of colonial governmentality—the need to make profit and the need to regulate life in its most beneficial state.<sup>7</sup>

Imperatives of the imperial economy downsized planning schemes into an under-developed and extractive model that saw people as subjects and not citizens. Although the Trust was initiated in 1911, its operations continued well into the 1920s and 30s. Led by colonial bureaucrats and civil engineers, the Trust sought to undertake large scale land acquisitions and road development projects. Once slums were cleared and roads were built, it increased the value of the surrounding land, which made it impossible to rehouse the poor population in the same area. The operations of the Trust led to commodification of urban land and the opportunity to profit from reselling the land to wealthier clients. This profit helped to further sustain the operations of the Trust, as it went on to undertake more large scale infrastructural projects (although most of them ended in failures), which included a canal drainage system, suburban development and building of a secondary port. Unlike Geddes (and to a lesser extent Richards), who associated urban development with the development of its citizen body, the Trust linked development to profit based on material infrastructure and divested from society itself.

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## Notes

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- 2 Richards, E.P. 2014. *The Condition, Improvement and Town Planning of the City of Calcutta and Contiguous Areas: The Richards Report*. Routledge, p.328.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp.360-361.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p.30.
- 5 Datta, P. 2012. *Planning the City: Urbanisation and Reform in Calcutta 1800-1940*. New Delhi: Tulika Books, pp.257-258.
- 6 Geddes, P. 1919. *Barra Bazar Improvement: A Report by Patrick Geddes*, p.33.
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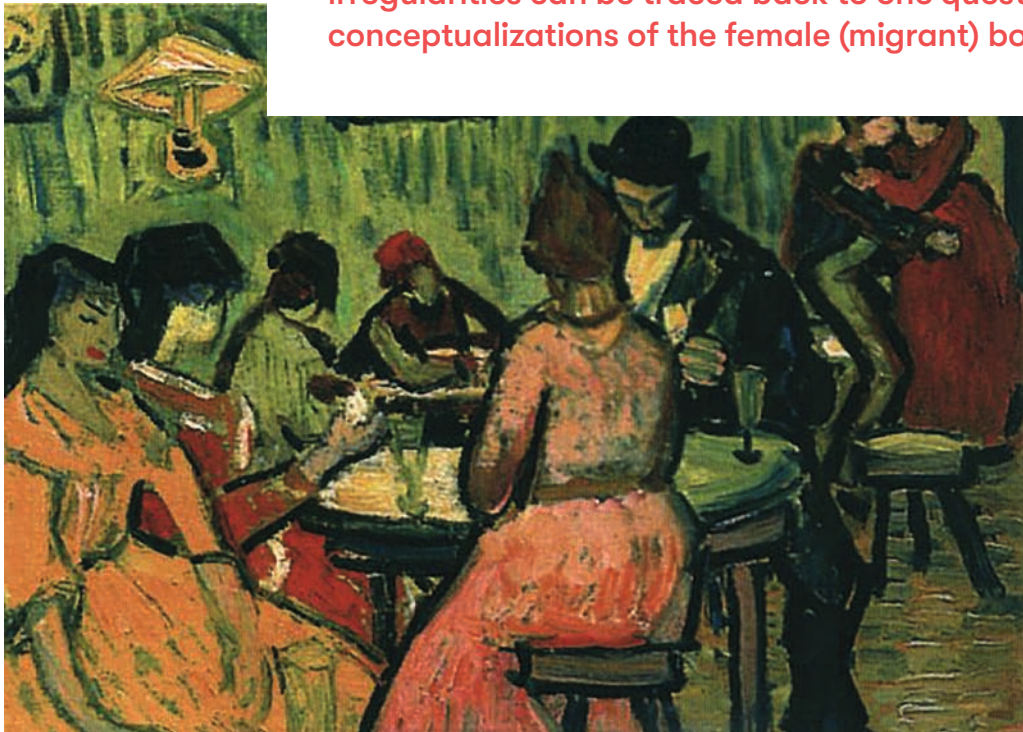
Above: 'Jagannath Ghat Road Construction' (Annual Report of CIT, 1929). Courtesy: British Library.

# Strange intimacies

## Reading migration and prostitution

Joo Kyung Lee

What does it mean to have a body, to be in movement and to be female at the same time? I approach two works of modern Korean literature, Kang Young-sook's *Rina* (2011) and Oh Jung-hee's *Chinatown* (1979) with this question.<sup>1</sup> These works demonstrate that the trajectories of migration and prostitution often intrude upon one another. While such convergences and divergences may not form a regular pattern, I observe that such irregularities can be traced back to one question, one that deals with conceptualizations of the female (migrant) body.



The Brothel, 1888. Vincent van Gogh. Image in public domain courtesy Wikipedia.

In Kang's novel, we follow Rina's unidentified journey from her birth country to her final destination, country 'P', via a third country, a trip which greatly resembles that of North Korean defectors, although the novel resists any identification. This journey involves presenting her as a "body in movement", leading an existence of "bare life".<sup>2</sup> In Oh's short story, we peek into the unnamed narrator's analeptic story of her youth in a certain unidentified Chinatown (presumed to be Incheon, Korea), where different forms of migration come together – domestic migration (such as the narrator's family), Chinese immigrants, and US soldiers and military prostitutes/comfort women. In both narratives, themes of migration and prostitution make inadvertent encounters. There exists a perverse relationship between migration and prostitution, which renders movement erotic and prostitution migratory. In this paper, I study this relationship and question why female bodies in movement are often 'reduced down' to or represented as prostituted bodies, and how such intersections occur in literary representations, while also taking into account the ethics of representation. E.P. Richards and slum repair.

Notable in the two works are the ways in which representation complicates and obfuscates a clear understanding of migration and prostitution as central themes to the narratives. There are elements of voyeurism and reverse-voyeurism (not-telling and dis-identifying) that resist a rather traditional understanding of migration and prostitution in their representations. In *Chinatown*, the nature of the space, in its seeming immobility as an urban settlement, resists an evident understanding of mobility and mobilization. While people are in complete movement, they are simultaneously under a sedentary guise, as they are considered to be constantly building houses. But the very idea of building new houses is a sign of migration and of an inflow of population into the city. Among the currents of movement are foreigners and the military prostitutes – the former of whom are largely characterized as Chinese immigrants,

with the sporadic apparition of Americans (soldiers) – and more importantly, the latter of whom individually occupy rooms and small parts of houses otherwise occupied by families, as the narrator observes. Moreover, there are complexities attached to that very figure of the military prostitute, in how she is commodified, utilized, prostituted, yet then self-prostitutes and ultimately reclaims the experience. These are comparable to the protagonist Rina, in the way she is trafficked and commodified in the beginning of the novel and how, increasingly, she prostitutes herself, allowing her some agency in the prostitutional schema readily legible in the lives of female individuals such as herself.

Similarly in *Rina*, the protagonist's journey of prostitution-migration resists clear-cut definitions of prostitution and migration. There is something repetitive in her futile migration, as she is forced back to her origin numerous times and has to embark on the same journey again; movement becomes a fundamentally flawed concept for Rina. Her movement cannot be traced according to the common understanding that the longer one travels the further one is away from the place of origin. Moreover, Rina cannot travel directly to country 'P' and has to enter through a third country: her world is one of selective mobility, wherein people can move and/or be mobilized according to nationality, race, gender and class. Nevertheless, her immobility is, intriguingly, precisely what causes this movement, thereby granting a peculiar form of migratory liberty.

### Bodies and motion

This very kind of selective im/mobility and entry are a direct result of the practice of national sovereignty (if we can give it so much credit), and consequently a migrant has an anxious relationship with sovereignty. In the introduction to his book *Homo Sacer*, Agamben questions how "the realm of bare life – which is originally situated at the margins of the political order – gradually begins to coincide with the political realm,

and ... [the two] enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction". He imagines the "nucleus of sovereign power" as "the production of a biopolitical body."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the migrant body becomes an unimaginable object here: a bare life, yes, because during migration the migrant is considered only as a body and nothing more, and no other wish to utilize the body than to mobilize. The migrant body is imagined with no will to labor nor to entertainment, because migration is of utmost importance (unless labor is forced or necessary). The migrant body is one that is not subject to a singular nation's biopolitics, precisely because it is untraceable. At the same time, the migrant body is the ultimate biopolitical object; drawing from Agamben, it is the body upon which the most regulative power is invested, and the most manipulative too. A body in biopolitical regulation, is in a way always in movement, because bodies are treated and consumed as commodities, passed around in the limits of sovereign power.

Rina's body, on top of this, is a female body, and this makes it the ideal subject for commodification. And how better to commodify a woman other than as a prostitute? Rina's forced and willful participation in the prostitutional schema provides evidence that as a female migrant body, she is not only transient and ephemeral in her migratory presence, but also that the prostitutional schema is readily legible: the metanarrative of commodification and prostitution was already prefigured, which is perhaps why Rina is unsurprised at having been fooled into prostitution. That is, despite not having lived through such experiences previously, Rina may carry (or may have carried) with her knowledge or even 'memory' of the schema, in her very being as a female migrant. Yet, does a pre-knowledge of the metanarrative mitigate the effects of violence in any way? In the metanarrative of the prostitutional schema, it no longer matters whether she has been prostituted or prostitutes herself. Yet, this 'indistinction' poses an ethical conundrum: undertones of trafficking are left unnoticed once we say that being prostituted and prostituting oneself are of the same register. Eventually, this puzzling enigma is traceable back to the language of sex. When we overwrite narratives of sex only through the encounter or the intercourse, the relational aspect of sex ceases to exist, and hence its textures are overlooked. This is more problematic from an ethical standpoint, when we consider cases in which an unjust power dynamic is present (i.e., rape). That is, it is quite striking how often exploitation and agency are confused regarding bodies in movement; modes of violence seem to be retranslated when they meet migrant bodies.

### Bodies, language, and narrative

To return to one of my initial statements, there is something migratory in the erotic. Or, a different way to put it is: there is something of motion in the metanarrative of sex, and moreover of prostitution. When the relation is

represented through the activity and the body, the narrative is composed of the body parts engaged. There is a sense of fleeting encounter between two entities and parts of the body which seem so discrete and detached from the entity; such body parts can also be imagined as replaceable because they are so discrete, and more so with prostitutional relationships. This allows a strange proximity between the two bodies, not yet fused together, and remaining disparate; the proximity is that very realization of the disparateness as well.

Michel Foucault writes in *The Utopian Body* that "Maybe it should also be said that to make love is to feel one's body close in on oneself. It is finally to exist outside of any utopia, ... between the hands of the other. Under the other's fingers running over you, all the invisible parts of your body begin to exist."<sup>4</sup> What becomes of the body in the metanarrative of sex? It is a moment when the "invisible parts of your body begin to exist" – and in way of flipping this argument in another direction, this coming to existence of the unforeseen parts of the body is also a form of discretization, a realization not of the body in its entirety but in a certain myopic way. The sex of the individual may serve as a synecdoche for the entire body, hence the body only imagined in parts only where there is a gaze; the body only comes to be realized, to be physicalized under the gaze.

This transience and ephemerality of the encounter can, eventually, be traced back to the figure of the migrant. Imagining their departure and arrival, and their everyday lives, becomes difficult. The migrant's identity becomes nothing more than a reflection of that very movement (while no real human identity can be so illusory or transitory for that matter). Such 'illusory ephemerality' is also observable in the figure of the prostitute, who repeats a transitory pleasure. Then, what does it signify for figures such as Rina, who are doubly removed and implanted into the realm of the transient? How do we – everyone engaged in this experience of literature – represent them, and how are they represented in these works of literature? How do we read them?

### Representational quality of the female migrant

Indeed, this paper is an effort to read for these experiences, and especially the less visible migrants in global histories of migration. I argue that both works participate in a post-nationalist discourse of displacement and migration. Here, what determines the legibility of certain narratives? What about narratives such as these that resist legibility? The two works I read put this paradox into question precisely by avoiding identification of the narratives. Then, what does it mean to tell (or not tell) a story about migration? In the works' decision to un-tell the story and dis-identify, there seem to be elements of voyeurism and reverse-voyeurism; can voyeurism be a safe space in this case? I attempted to answer these questions through a literary analysis of Kang's *Rina* and Oh's *Chinatown*, through analyzing the representational quality of these literary works, and moreover through an incessant conversation with our understanding of migration and prostitution today.

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### Notes

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# Jokowi's election victory

Prospects and challenges

# ISEAS

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Above: A voting bulletin. Image reproduced under a Creative Commons license on Wikimedia.

As predicted by many polls, Joko Widodo (Jokowi) won the April 2019 presidential election, allowing him to serve the country for another five years. The 2019 election was a replay of the 2014 election where Jokowi defeated former military general Prabowo Subianto. In the 2019 election, Jokowi's margin of victory improved by a meagre 4.7 per cent despite the developmental policies introduced during his first term. What can Indonesians expect from Jokowi's second term? Will he be more aggressive in pushing for economic reforms and how will he handle greater political polarisation in the country?

The ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute's Indonesian Studies Programme presents the following three articles to highlight the challenges confronting the president. On the economic front, though Jokowi promised to improve Indonesia's business environment through deregulation and eradication of corrupt practices, the country's decentralised law-making process has slowed down his efforts. On the religious front, his choice

of conservative cleric Ma'ruf Amin as vice-president has raised questions as to what this would mean to pluralist and moderate voices in the country. Lastly, how will the Jokowi government manage the increased polarisation of Indonesian society? The election results show that while Jokowi remains popular in Java, he lost significant support in Aceh and West Sumatra. Uniting the nation will be Jokowi's biggest challenge.

## The 2019 Indonesian elections. Between the opinion polls and the polling booth.

Hui Yew-Foong



Above: Lists of candidates for Indonesia's 17 April 2019 elections. Image reproduced under a Creative Commons license on Wikimedia.

On 17 April 2019, 158 million Indonesian voters went to the polls to elect their president and vice president, as well as four different levels of legislative representatives. This proved to be one of the most challenging elections in Indonesian history, as it was the first time that Indonesia held the presidential and legislative elections simultaneously. As expected, the presidential election overshadowed the legislative elections.

The 2019 presidential election was seen as a replay of the 2014 presidential election because the same presidential candidates, namely, Joko Widodo (popularly known as Jokowi) and Prabowo Subianto (hereafter Prabowo), were facing off against each other again. What was different were the vice-presidential candidates. Under pressure from his coalition, Jokowi had selected the 76-year-old conservative Muslim cleric Ma'ruf Amin (hereafter Ma'ruf), who was chairman of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) and former supreme leader of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia. This was seen as a tactical move by Jokowi to combat the image that

he was anti-ulama (Islamic scholar) and not religious enough. On the other hand, Prabowo picked Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno (hereafter Sandiaga), former deputy governor of Jakarta. As one of Indonesia's most successful young entrepreneurs, the then 49-year-old Sandiaga was seen as having strong appeal to the 42 million millennial voters and someone who could speak authoritatively on the economy.

Another difference between the 2014 and 2019 elections was the fact that Jokowi ran in 2019 as the incumbent and part of the political establishment, with a coalition of 10 political parties behind him while Prabowo had only five parties supporting him. Whereas in 2014 he was a commoner and an outlier challenging

the Jakarta elite as a populist reformer, Jokowi had to justify his re-election in 2019 with his track record.

After the nominations for presidential candidates were formally announced on 10 August 2018, no less than 39 surveys conducted by 20 different institutions were conducted to find out how the electorate would vote. Most of the more reliable surveys found Jokowi-Ma'ruf's support rate to be between 50 and 60 per cent, while Prabowo-Sandiaga's support rate tended to range from 30 to 40 per cent, thus giving Jokowi-Ma'ruf a lead of about 20 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Opinion polls conducted about a month before the election by most reputable pollsters, such as the Center for Strategic

and International Studies (CSIS), Charta Politika, Indo Barometer and Lingkaran Survei Indonesia (LSI) Denny JA, all pointed to a comfortable win of 18-20 per cent for the Jokowi-Ma'ruf pair.

The surveys also suggested a 'coattail effect' on the electability of political parties. The parties of the presidential candidates, the Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle (PDI-P) and the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra), were expected to benefit from the popularity of the presidential candidates and lead the pack. The Golkar Party, National Awakening Party (PKB), Democratic Party (PD), Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), National Democratic Party

## Economic challenges facing Jokowi in his second term

Siwage Dharma Negara

After winning the presidential elections in April this year, President Jokowi's focus will be on boosting economic growth to 6% per annum in his second term. To surpass the current 5% growth rate, Indonesia needs to boost both investment and exports growth simultaneously. This will not be easy given today's unpredictable global economy and rising protectionism around the world.

Although Jokowi's administration has improved the country's rank in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business from 120th in 2014 to 73rd in 2018, Indonesia can still do more to make herself attractive to international investors. The current US-China trade tensions are a good case in point. Indonesia has not been able to attract significant benefits even though manufacturers are relocating from China to Southeast Asia. This is because foreign investors find Indonesia's neighbours, such as Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand, more attractive as new production bases. In view of Indonesia's lack of competitiveness, President Jokowi has promised to accelerate structural reforms in the areas of human resources, infrastructure, and institutions. These factors are important for improving Indonesia's competitiveness in the global economy.

Stronger growth is needed to create decent jobs for an estimated 3-4 million new workers each year. In his first term, open unemployment declined slightly from 5.9% in 2014 to below 5.3% by 2018. Nevertheless, the declining official unemployment figures disguise the real employment situation. More than half of the total workers in Indonesia are engaged in informal employment. Youth unemployment has reached as high as 17%.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the labour force is dominated by

low skilled labour, with about 40% of the total labour force armed with only primary school qualifications, while only 9% of the labour force have a university degree.

This has been complicated by an ongoing structural change in the labour market. Rapid technological change, especially in IT-related activities, requires Indonesia to train and equip its labour force for the new economy. However, Indonesia's educational performance continues to lag, despite significant increases in education sector funding over the past decade.<sup>2</sup>

Given this concern, Jokowi has re-emphasised that in his second term, his administration will focus more on human capital development. To boost human capital quality, Jokowi's administration will continue to spend 20% of its annual budget on education. This spending will complement the expansion of a number of social policies such as conditional cash transfer for poor households through the Family Hope Programme (PKH); the Health Care and Social Security Agency (BPJS Kesehatan); and the pre-employment card (Kartu Pra-Kerja). Though these programmes may seem populist in nature they are critical in supporting lower income households and the unemployed. However, implementation challenges such as financing, targeting, and monitoring remain complex. Specifically, improving the targeting mechanism and inter-jurisdictional coordination are the biggest challenge for effective service delivery.

President Jokowi also plans to reduce the regional inequality by "building from the peripheries (villages)", and spending generously on infrastructure to improve connectivity across the nation-wide land, sea and air areas. However, not all things are

moving smoothly. For instance, his flagship *tol laut* (sea highway) project may face financing difficulty given a wide imbalance between the supply and demand of ships needed to transport goods between Java and the outer islands. Jokowi's proposed plan to shift the capital from Jakarta to East Kalimantan is also challenging. He hopes that capital relocation will boost development outside Java and thus promote regional equality. However, considering the current infrastructure bottlenecks, attracting investors to the outer islands such as Kalimantan might be wishful thinking. The recent major blackout across West Java and Greater Jakarta might make investors think twice about the state of infrastructure in the country, especially on the outer islands.

Finally, all government spending commitments (for infrastructure, education, social programmes and subsidies) will eventually have to face the reality of a weak financing capacity. The country's persistently weak tax revenue is a structural issue which will constrain the implementation of various government policies and programmes going forward.

Maintaining macroeconomic stability amidst growing global uncertainties will be high on the agenda. Jokowi administration will maintain an expansionary fiscal policy to counter the slowing growth momentum. The country's persistent weak tax effort is likely to carry on, dragging the overall fiscal balance down as his administration continues with gradual tax policy reforms. On state spending, there will hardly be any significant changes to the existing expenditure priorities such as infrastructure, education, health and various social safety-nets programmes.

Considering the complexity of regional and multilateral trade agreements, Indonesia will prioritize bilateral trade and investment deals that are considered beneficial to its domestic economy. One case in point is China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Jokowi's administration has been keen to join BRI as it is perceived to be an opportunity to support his infrastructure ambitions. While there are no official BRI projects in Indonesia to date, there has been a significant increase in Chinese FDI since 2016.

However, China's investment to Indonesia has declined by 29% to \$2.4 billion in 2018 because of US-China trade tensions.<sup>3</sup> Indonesia will have to look for other alternative sources to compensate for China's FDI dip.

In conclusion, success in attracting FDI will depend partly on the progress of Indonesia's deregulation process and policy reform. However, policy reform at the sector and sub-national level will be more difficult. There are still too many problematic local regulations that hinder investment. While Jokowi's administration has tried to scrap some of such regulations, the Constitutional Court has ruled that the central government cannot annul regional bylaws. The Court's decision will adversely affect the deregulation process and hinder investment.<sup>4</sup> Finally, Indonesia needs to reform its outdated labour regulatory regime in order to accommodate the development in digital economy and new types of industries. However, a strong political will is required when dealing with trade unions, and it remains to be seen if Jokowi can surmount all his second term challenges.

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### Notes

- 1 'Unemployment Rate by Age Group, 2015-2018', *Statistics Indonesia*; <https://tinyurl.com/urag2015-2018>; accessed 21 August 2019.
- 2 Pellini, A. 2016. 'Indonesia's PISA results show need to use education resources more efficiently', *The Jakarta Post*, 18 December 2016; <https://tinyurl.com/pellini18dec2016>; accessed 21 August 2019.
- 3 'China Turun ke Posisi 3 Negara dengan Investasi Terbesar di Indonesia', *Kompas.com*, 30 July 2019; <https://tinyurl.com/chinaindoinvest>; accessed 21 August 2019.
- 4 Wirayani, P. et al. 2017. 'Red tape "wardens" legally win', *The Jakarta Post*, 7 April 2017; <https://tinyurl.com/wirayaniredtape>; accessed 22 August 2019.



Above: Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno. Image in the public domain, courtesy Wikimedia. Published and distributed by the Government of Republic of Indonesia.

(Nasdem), United Development Party (PPP) and National Mandate Party (PAN) were expected to have a good chance of crossing the electoral threshold of 4 per cent of the votes and getting into parliament. On the other hand, the People's Conscience Party (Hanura) and the new political parties – Indonesian Unity Party (Perindo) and Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) – seemed unlikely to meet the threshold and therefore may not be represented in the new parliament.

The surveys also reported the demographic characteristics of the supporters of both pairs of presidential candidates. The Jokowi-Ma'ruf pair was more likely to attract rural voters and those with low and medium education, and

has overwhelming support from Catholics and Protestants. In addition, younger voters and those with higher income tended to support the Prabowo-Sandiaga pair.

There were also clear geographical patterns related to support for Jokowi and Prabowo respectively. Results of the 2014 election indicated that Jokowi had stronger support in Central and East Java, and much of the rest of Indonesia. Prabowo's strongest support came from the provinces of West Java and Banten, as well as various parts of Sumatra. Surveys suggested that this general picture would remain largely the same for 2019, although there were some differences on the outcome for West Java, Banten and Jakarta.

On 21 May 2019, the General Elections Commission declared Jokowi the winner of the presidential election with 55.5 per cent of the votes against Prabowo's 44.5 per cent. The 11 per cent lead was smaller than what the surveys suggested, but it was significantly larger than the 6.3 per cent lead he had in 2014.

As for the political parties, the 'coattail effect' was not as pronounced as predicted, although PDI-P and Gerindra did lead the pack with 19.33 per cent and 12.57 per cent of the votes respectively. Also as predicted, Hanura and the new political parties did not cross the electoral threshold and would not be represented in parliament, suggesting

that the smaller and new parties will face an uphill task in trying to get a foothold in national politics.

While there is no conclusive evidence on the demographic characteristics of supporters for both pairs of candidates, the geographical voting patterns are more apparent. In fact, not only are the geographical voting patterns of 2014 generally upheld, they have also deepened in 2019. While Jokowi won a greater percentage of the votes in 2019, the provinces where he has the majority of votes decreased from 23 (out of 33) to 21 (out of 34). Correspondingly, Jokowi's majority has increased substantially in provinces such as Central Java, East Java and Bali, whereas Prabowo's majority in Aceh and West Sumatra has jumped significantly as well. The general pattern is that Jokowi's support has deepened in Javanese and non-Muslim majority areas, while Prabowo's support has deepened in non-Javanese Muslim majority areas.<sup>2</sup> It remains to be seen if these broad religious and ethnic fault lines will continue to be a mainstay of Indonesian national politics, and whether future presidential candidates will exploit them.

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### Notes

- 1 Opinion polls and survey findings used in this article are summarized from Yew-Foong Hui, Made Supriatma, Aninda Dewayanti and Benjamin Hu, 'Preview of the 2019 Indonesian Elections', *ISEAS Perspective* 2019/24 (9 April 2019); <https://tinyurl.com/iseas942019>; accessed 26 August 2019.
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## The implications of a Ma'ruf Amin vice-presidency in Indonesia

Norshahril Saat



From left to right: Ma'ruf Amin, Joko Widodo, and Ahmad Muhtadi Dimiyathi. Image in the public domain, courtesy Wikimedia. Published and distributed by the Government of Republic of Indonesia.

The Joko Widodo (Jokowi)-Ma'ruf Amin pairing beat their opponents Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno in the Indonesian presidential election in April this year. Observers were initially surprised by Jokowi's choice for vice-president, who was known to be a conservative and controversial ulama (cleric). Given Ma'ruf's track record of advocating for greater Islamisation, there were expectations that he would use the vice-presidency to pursue unfinished business in the Ulama Council of Indonesia (MUI), of which he was also Chairman. Such business would include the strengthening of the shariah economy and finance, as well as encouraging greater halal consumption and halal tourism.

Ma'ruf is a member of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest organisation in Indonesia. Although he started off as a politician, he really made his name as the leader of MUI. In 2000, Ma'ruf headed the Fatwa committee in the MUI, a very influential post in determining religious opinions for the whole of Indonesia. After the toppling of the Gus Dur government in 2001, Ma'ruf became more active in MUI and, as a result, the organisation became a channel for his influence.

Although MUI fatwas are not legally binding, the committee nevertheless issued many controversial fatwas during the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) presidency (2004-2014).<sup>1</sup> In 2005, the committee issued a fatwa called 'SIPILIS', a term coined to demonstrate its anti-secularism, anti-liberalism, and anti-pluralism position.<sup>2</sup> Ma'ruf as committee head signed off on the fatwa. The fatwa described the three labels loosely without explicating their complexities. For example, pluralism was described as the understanding that all religions are equal and no one religion can

claim to be the only correct one. Liberalism was defined as the use of reason to describe the Quran and Sunnah. Secularism was described as the separation of worldly affairs from religious affairs. The fatwa neither offered examples to better govern Indonesia nor did it take a position on an Islamic state. Under Ma'ruf's leadership MUI also reaffirmed its 1980 position on the Ahmadiyah sect not being part of Islam. This position was used by radicals to persecute Ahmadiyah followers. Similarly, MUI issued a fatwa questioning the legitimacy of Shias, and did not correct a fatwa from the East Java chapter of MUI that declared Shias deviant. Again, MUI's problematic claim has allowed groups to harm followers of the sect in what is famously known as the Sampang Shia problem in East Java.<sup>3</sup>

As MUI leader, Ma'ruf lobbied legislators in the DPR (House of Representatives) to pressure the government to conform to his Islamic agenda. A 2012 interview with Ma'ruf indicated that MUI's role was to give inputs to legislators and the government. He opined that the way Indonesians live and participate as citizens are guided by shariah. He also believed that MUI had a role in advising the constitutional court.<sup>4</sup> His influence extended beyond MUI. For example, he also served on the Wantimpres, or Advisory Council to President Susilo, stepping down in 2014 and taking up the chairmanship of NU and MUI the year after.

Ma'ruf made decisions that had profound political implications. The most prominent example was his role in the 2016 protests against then-Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok). In a campaign speech, Ahok observed that Muslims should not be deceived by religious leaders who had interpreted verse 51 of Al-Maidah. Ahok eventually lost the

Jakarta gubernatorial elections in 2017 and was jailed for blasphemy. Ma'ruf served as a key witness in the court case testifying that Ahok had indeed committed blasphemy.

What will a Ma'ruf vice-presidency look like for the next five years? Ma'ruf dresses traditionally in a sarong (a piece of cloth wrapped around the waist) and skull cap, but his views on economic, social and cultural issues pivot towards Islamic revivalism. He is a champion of the Islamic economy and finance, and is an advocate for the National Syariah Board in MUI. This institution oversees shariah banking and finance, and advises banks offering Islamic transactions. It is a legal requirement for shariah banks to host advisors from the National Syariah Board. These shariah advisors may decide if bank transactions meet Islamic requirements and whether they contain *riba* (interests), which is forbidden in Islam.<sup>5</sup>

Many MUI leaders, including Ma'ruf, have also called for 'moral' entertainment. They have been actively pressuring the DPR to pass the anti-pornography law. In 2012, MUI expressed displeasure when American pop artist Lady Gaga was scheduled to hold a concert in Jakarta. MUI also lobbied for legislation on halal consumption to be finalised in 2014, towards the end of the SBY administration. There was a tussle between MUI (a quasi-state institution) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs over who had the authority to issue the lucrative halal labels. It was decided that the ministry had authority over licensing while MUI could only perform an advisory role with a panel of experts who determined if products met Islamic guidelines. Lastly, Ma'ruf was also in favour of shariah tourism, not to mention the building of shariah hotels and shariah spas to meet the demands of the conservative middle

class.<sup>6</sup> According to Ma'ruf, shariah tourism catered for the consumption requirements of Muslims. One could see this as encouraging tour operators to engage MUI's services such as appointing shariah advisors and applying for halal certification, all of which would incur fees to MUI's gain.

While Ma'ruf will probably revisit his Islamisation policies as vice-president, it is unlikely that he will want to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state. Ma'ruf may even ask Jokowi to undertake a more Islamic-inclined foreign policy, with his involvement in objections to the plight of the Palestinians suggesting so. However, any fears that Ma'ruf Amin will change Jokowi's governing style is unfounded given the limited powers of the vice-president. Ma'ruf was once a Wantimpres member under the Susilo government, yet his influence was limited. Ma'ruf's involvement in mass rallies, for example in the Ahok case, was more of him capitalising on such platforms, riding on the unhappiness of a few groups, rather than him being the mobilizer. Where Ma'ruf differs from Jokowi, he will have to defend his ideas before the broad spectrum of Indonesian society. He cannot be too conservative in front of the progressive camp, and those from Muhammadiyah, NU's rival, who also form part of Jokowi's presidential advisors. Early signs are there that Ma'ruf will seek to be conciliatory rather than push his conservative views in public. For example, he recently noted publicly that he regretted his involvement in the Ahok case, citing his duty as head of MUI. Also, in a speech made in Singapore, he downplayed his conservative beliefs and appeased his audiences with the use of populist terms such as Islam Wasattiyah. Whatever agenda Ma'ruf has in mind, he will have to contend with the checks and balances of a diverse Indonesian society.

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- 1 Majelis Ulama Indonesia. 2015. *Himpunan Fatwa MUI Sejak 1975*. Jakarta: Sekretariat Majelis Ulama Indonesia.
- 2 The acronym was derived from 'syphilis'.
- 3 Ibid. note 1, pp.95-101.
- 4 Dr KH Ma'ruf Amin. 2012. 'Ijtima'akan bahas isu penting kebangsaan dan kenegaraan', *Mimbar Ulama*, Edisi Khusus Ijtima' Ulama, pp.70-72.
- 5 Saat, N. 2018. *The State, Ulama and Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia*. Amsterdam University Press, p.134. This is also based on an interview with Ma'ruf Amin on 3 December 2012.
- 6 From Ma'ruf's opening speech during the 24th anniversary celebration of LPPOM-MUI (Assessment Institute for Foods, Drugs, and Cosmetics Indonesia Council of Ulama), in which he touched on syariah tourism.

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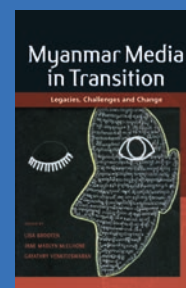
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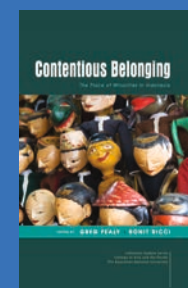
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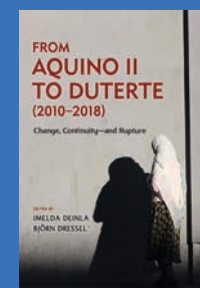
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# Borders on Chinese Maps

Elke Papelitzky

The most eye-catching feature on the mid-16th century general map of China in Luo Hongxian's 羅洪先 (1504–1564) influential atlas *Guangyu tu* 廣輿圖 is a long black strip north of China labelled *shamo* 沙漠: the Gobi Desert (fig.1). Visually, the desert very clearly separates China from the 'northern barbarians', depicting a seemingly impenetrable border. For decades, Luo Hongxian's vision of the desert shaped the way Chinese mapmakers portrayed the Gobi Desert, emphasizing this natural border.

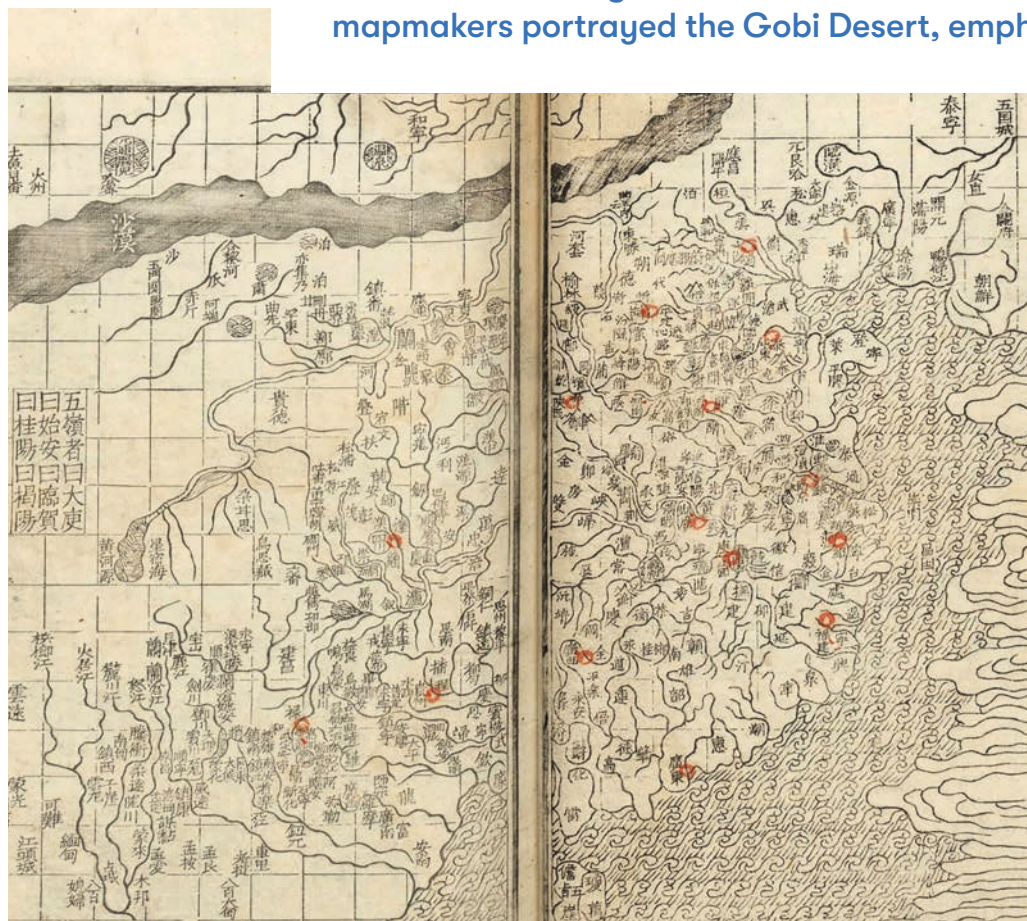


Fig. 1: Section of the general map of China from the 1566 edition of the *Guangyu tu*. Courtesy of the Harvard-Yenching Library.

Later adaptations of the map, however, while keeping the shape of the desert based on the *Guangyu tu*, changed the symbol used for the desert: some mapmakers used little dots as a symbol for the sandy desert, and others just left the strip white with black contours. Maps depicting the desert in such a way were made throughout the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1912), well into the 19th century.

Not all borders on Chinese maps appear as prominent as the Gobi Desert. In this section, four scholars will introduce different aspects of mapping borders and borderlands in Ming and Qing China. Sometimes, borders are even curiously missing, as Mario Cams discusses in his contribution. Qin Ying describes how in late 19th and early 20th century Yunnan, changes in the political situation resulted in officials having to quickly adapt to new circumstances. Gu Songjie introduces a mapping project that aimed to deepen knowledge of the northeastern borderlands in the 18th century. And as the Gobi Desert is a natural and not a political border, Stephen Davies looks at the border between land and sea on Chinese maritime maps.

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## At the borders of Qing imperial cartography

Mario Cams

Qing China's Kangxi (1661–1722), Yongzheng (1722–1735), and Qianlong (1735–1796) emperors each produced large atlases of the empire they ruled, entitled *Huangyu quan(lan) tu* 皇輿全(覽)圖 [Overview Maps of Imperial Territories]. Different editions were produced during each of these reigns, some in the form of atlases, some in the form of large multi-sheet maps.

### Maps without borders?

The Kangxi atlas covers Qing controlled territories and adjacent tributary lands such as Korea and Tibet. To this, the Yongzheng map (see [QingMaps.org](http://QingMaps.org)) adds all of the Russian Empire up to Riga and Asia Minor, whereas the Qianlong map expands this scope even further to include the northern subcontinent and the Arabian Peninsula. This raises the question of how the Qing depicted its borders on these "Overview Maps of Imperial Territories".

A quick look shows that no borders are depicted in the north, including in areas where the successive maps expanded their scope; there is no trace of a border between the Qing and Russian empires, for example, despite the existence of two border treaties, Nerchinsk (1689) and Kyakhta (1727). Another example is the apparent absence of the Qing–Korean border. In contrast, in the southwest of Qing territories, dotted lines trace the border that Yunnan province shared with what is now Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam. Similarly, although only on the Kangxi and Yongzheng maps, dotted lines surround unmapped blank

pockets in Guizhou province that constituted tribal lands. Thus, it seems external borders in the southwest are clearly indicated, whereas legally confirmed borders in the north and northwest did not find their way onto these large multi-sheet maps. How can we explain this paradox?

### Space versus territory

A closer look reveals that borders internal to the Qing are emphasized and exaggerated. One such border is the Willow Palisade, long since in disrepair by the time these atlases were produced, which separated Mongols from Manchus and runs from the Great Wall northeast of Beijing all the way around Mukden (Shenyang) and Kirin Hoton (Jilin), with one stretch branching off towards the (undepicted) border with Korea. On the other hand, there is the Great Wall itself, most of it built as a defensive structure during the late Ming precisely in order to keep the Manchu at bay. Like the Willow Palisade, this border is greatly exaggerated, giving the false impression that it formed one uninterrupted and uniform wall from east to west (fig.2). With this, Qing court maps stress one of the hallmarks of Qing rule: the separate administration, territorially defined, of Manchu, Mongols, and Han (later also including the Tibetans and the mostly Muslim population in the 'western regions' *xiyu* 西域).

The absence of legally defined external borders combined with a strong emphasis on internal borders can be understood by considering the difference between imperial

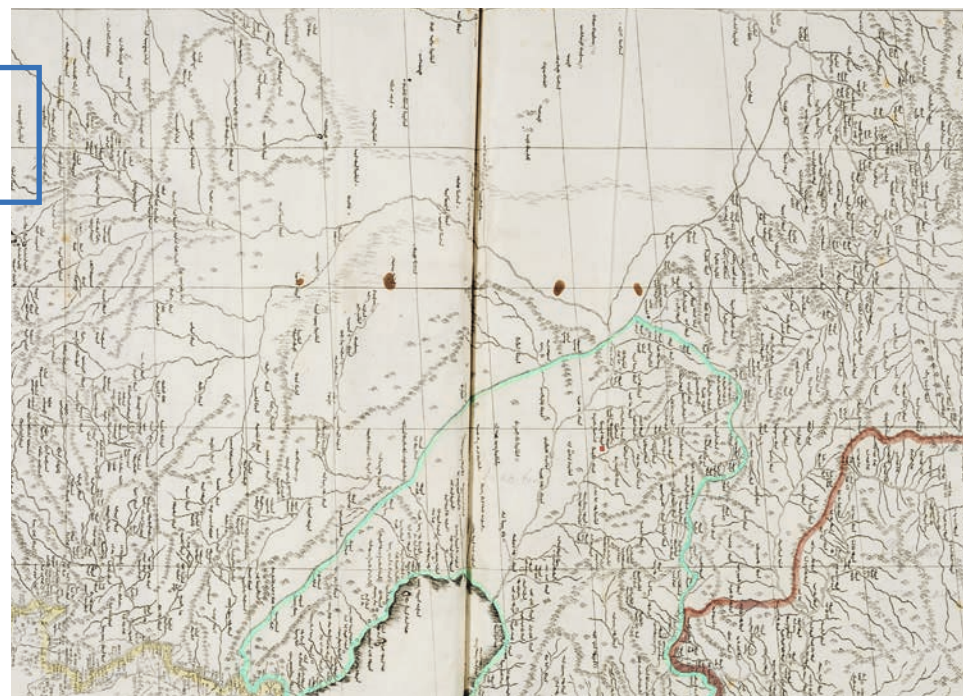


Fig. 2: 1719 copperplate version of the Kangxi-era multi-sheet map. Borders highlighted in print and in colour include the Willow Palisade (centre, in green); and the Great Wall (bottom left, in yellow). Although colour was also applied to highlight the border between Qing and Korean lands (bottom right, in brown), this border is not indicated on the print itself. About 40–64 cm. Royal Library of Belgium, LP VB 11.283 E (2), fol. 10. Reproduced with permission of the Royal Library of Belgium, Brussels.

territory and its prerequisite, imperial space. Taken as a whole, these maps communicate Qing space and therefore leave open the possibility of further expansion and conquest, particularly in the direction of the court's northwest-oriented gaze. On the other hand, it was imperative for this minority-ruled empire to distinguish between the Manchu, Mongol and Han territories it effectively controlled. Beyond this, Tibetan and Korean tributary lands were also covered under the imperial umbrella, but these lands are mostly separated by river systems so that no border needed to be drawn. In the southwest, where the dotted line delineates Yunnan, we are in fact also dealing with an internal border of sorts, separating the province from more

tributary lands (left blank in this case). The fact that provinces are also separated by a dotted line where no natural border is present confirms this thesis.

In short, whereas these court maps as a whole communicate a universal and therefore a theoretically borderless imperial space, they clearly distinguish among the imperial territories, including tributary states that made up and defined the Qing order. In other words, it is not at the edge but at the very center of these maps that we find ourselves at the borders of Qing cartography.

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## Mapping borders in times of uncertainty

Qin Ying

In 1889, the government office *Huidian guan* 會典館 [Office of Collected Statutes] ordered every province to collect and make maps of their territory. As a result, a year later, a special office for making maps was established, and in 1892, the *Huidian guan* made a second announcement, specifying the technical regulations for the project. The resulting atlas that combined the surveys from all provinces was titled *Daqing huidian yutu* 大清會典輿圖 [Maps of the Great Qing by the Huidian Office].

Every province exceeded the given time limit of one year, most of them finishing within three to five years. Some of the maps were printed, while some were manuscript drafts when the provinces sent the maps to the *Huidian guan*. The quality of the maps varied from only slightly updated old maps to excellent new surveys. On the *Yunnan quansheng yutu* 雲南全省輿圖 [Complete Maps of Yunnan Province], the atlas of Yunnan Province made for the *Daqing huidian yutu*, for example, only the regions around the capital of Yunnan used new surveying techniques, while other parts of the province continued to use old mapping material, only updating the legends, and adding a grid with latitude and longitude. This situation of the mapping of Yunnan province is partly representational of other regions in China at that time.

Today, at least four manuscript sets of the atlas of *Yunnan quansheng yutu* are extant. Two of them are kept in Beijing, one in Chengdu, and one in Kunming. As the border between China and French Annam was disputed and undergoing changes during the time when the maps had to be sent to the *Huidian guan*, studying these maps and other maps of Yunnan related to them, reveals how late Qing central and local government officials carefully edited information about borders.

In 1896, the previous governor of Yunnan and Guizhou, Song Fan 崧蕃 (?-1905),

presented the maps to the emperor. From his memorial to the throne, we learn that there were indeed officials in Yunnan province who compiled the maps. Material from every county arrived in the provincial capital, Kunming, where a committee combined the information from all around Yunnan and corrected errors.

After the completion of the maps in 1894, the political situation changed at the border between China and French Annam, and a year later, Mengwu 猛烏 and Wude 烏得 (today in northern Laos), were signed over to French Annam in a treaty after the Sino-Japanese war. As the office for compiling the *Daqing huidian yutu* urged the province to quickly send the documents in 1896, the compilers of the Yunnan province atlas only had time to add notes to each instance of Mengwu and Wude appearing in the atlas

in each of the four editions, explaining the disputed nature. The governor of Yunnan also sent another copy of the atlas to the Guangxu emperor (r.1875–1908), and two further copies were archived in the local government – a standard administrative procedure. This is why we have four similar drafts of the *Yunnan quansheng yutu* today.

The *Daqing huidian yutu* also influenced new local gazetteers. While the map material in Ruan Yuan's 阮元 (1764–1849) *Yunnan tongzhi gao* 雲南通志稿 and the 1894 *Yunnan tongzhi gao* 雲南通志 was still based on surveys of the Kangxi and Qianlong periods, Tang Jiong's 唐炯 (1829–1909) *Xu Yunnan tongzhi gao* 續雲南通志稿, printed in 1898 and 1901, already uses the new mapping style of the *Daqing huidian yutu* (fig.3). In his gazetteers, Tang Jiong provides clear written descriptions about the situation of the French-Chinese

border at Mengwu and Wude, thus accomplishing what the compilers of the *Yunnan quansheng yutu* had not been able to do due to time constraints. His two editions of the *Xu Yunnan tongzhi gao* were produced in Sichuan, and so one set of the *Yunnan quansheng yutu* is now collected in Chengdu.

The manuscripts of the *Yunnan quansheng yutu* are important documents as they preserve the original outline of the maps presented to the central government. Their editing history shows us that late Qing mapmakers paid great attention to changing borders and that they and compilers of gazetteers reacted quickly to new political situations.

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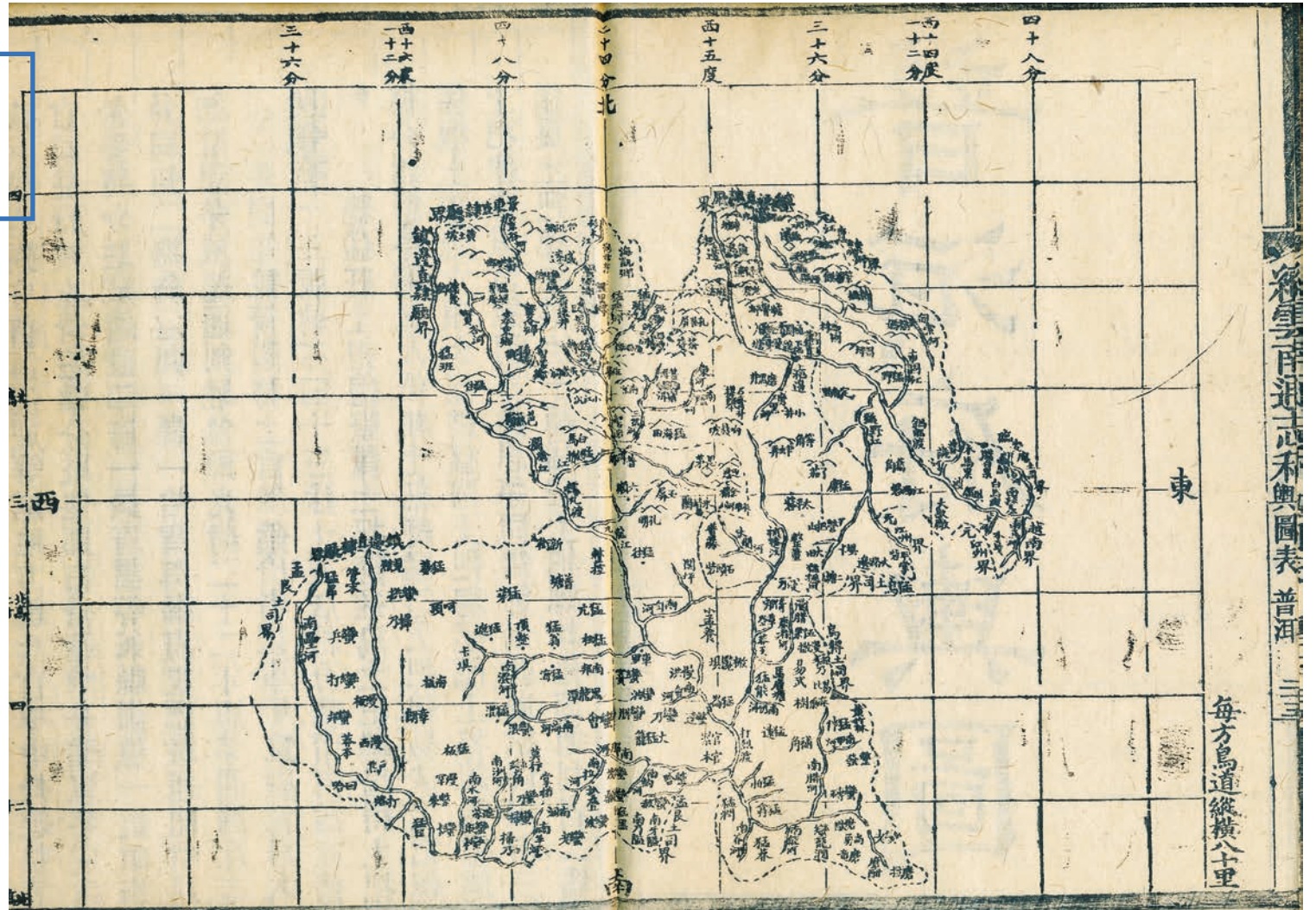


Fig. 3: The Map of Pu'er 普洱 from Tang Jiong's *Xu Yunnan tongzhi*. At the Southwestern border, Mengwu and Wude are marked. Courtesy Wu Yee Sun Library – University of Macau.

## Maritime maps as painted screens

Stephen Davies

Early modern Chinese maritime maps are intriguing when one looks at them as a seafaring navigator. When one reads them, that is, as expressions of a perceived relationship between the worlds of land and sea. They speak of an earlier world of humanity when the sea was the alien other, the great void.

A modern nautical chart at large scale has crisp lines and clearly contrasting colours showing the exact locus of points along which land becomes intertidal zone, and intertidal zone becomes sea. At smaller scales only one line and two contrasting colours suffice: this side land, that side sea. In both cases the lines are continuous, delineating a given coastline with a precision dependent on scale. In all cases the delineations are tightly anchored to a geodesy and a geography that allow us to identify any specific point on a coastline and, depending on scale, read off its position to within  $\pm 5$  metres and, if it has a toponym, read that as well. It tells a sailor with precision where the dangers lie and how to avoid them as well as showing with precision how to find the way into and out of safe havens.

Whether we are looking at the so-called 'Zheng He map' contained in Mao Yuanyi's *Wubei zhi* 武備志 [Treatise on Armament Preparations], one of the many coastal maps of China like Chen Lunjiong's 陳倫炯 *Yanhai quantu* 沿海全圖 [The Complete Map of the Coastline], or one of the 'coastal view' guides like the Yale Maps (fig.4), the message is different. There is neither geodetic nor geographical precision, nor were such intended. As Sinologists note, that isn't what such maps are about. In relation to Qing maps as Ronald C. Po nicely, if somewhat opaquely puts it, "the maritime space claimed by the Qing court did not have an exact boundary. Instead, time and space were the foundation of Qing justifications for sovereignty over its maritime frontier".<sup>1</sup>

What's interesting to the sailor is that the coastline on such maps is as much absence as presence. Yes, there is a more or less elaborate depiction of something separating the sea from any coastal and inland features shown. Yes, there are various very general textual descriptions of what's where. There is a toponymy, though a very selective and

often an inconstant one. But exactly – and the emphasis there is on 'exactly' – where and how the sea joins the land and the land the sea, and how a seafarer may make in safely from 'out there' to a sought haven 'in here' is ignored as, in a sense, irrelevant. The world of the sea is what it is: separate, as if lying on the other side of a vast, dense fogbank that begins inland and stretches a few miles out to sea. Between it and the world of the land lies a zone with forts and lookouts, mountains and islands which poke up through the fog, but the inlets and river mouths, shoals and shallows are at best vague contrasts perceived as the fog swirls, thins and thickens. We see an opaque barrier, penetrable only with difficulty, not an enabling interface.

Even the few score maritime route books, or rutters, have a similar take. Almost all begin and end when the mariner is at sea in the offing. On the intricacies of the inner coastal zone they are largely silent.

From a navigator's perspective the border between land and sea in such sources is indeterminate and yet absolute. The depictions are a way of saying that from out there to in here, or in here to out there, you must be someone who is authorised, or you must find someone who is authorised, to enter or leave. Here is here, there is there, and passage between the two should not be free or easy.

The few examples of what would seem to be the mariners' own 'coastal view' guides also have this distanced take on the coast itself. The coast proper in all its infinite detail

reduces to the occasional salient feature – an island, a rock, a shoal, a promontory – that swims out of a general indeterminacy as something to be avoided, that marks a turning point, or signals where the mariner can pray, get water, or anchor. But to penetrate the inner fastnesses of the land behind the nebulous coastline more detailed knowledge must be sought from those who guard it.

The sea and the land are not an interpenetrating whole at the junction of which terrestrial transport gives way as seamlessly as possible to its seaborne kin. So, on Chinese maritime maps the borderlines along which lie the places where such awkward – even abnormal – exchanges happen are not precisely shown, no more than are the ways to and from them. There is no making plain the way. Nor should there be. Each to their own.

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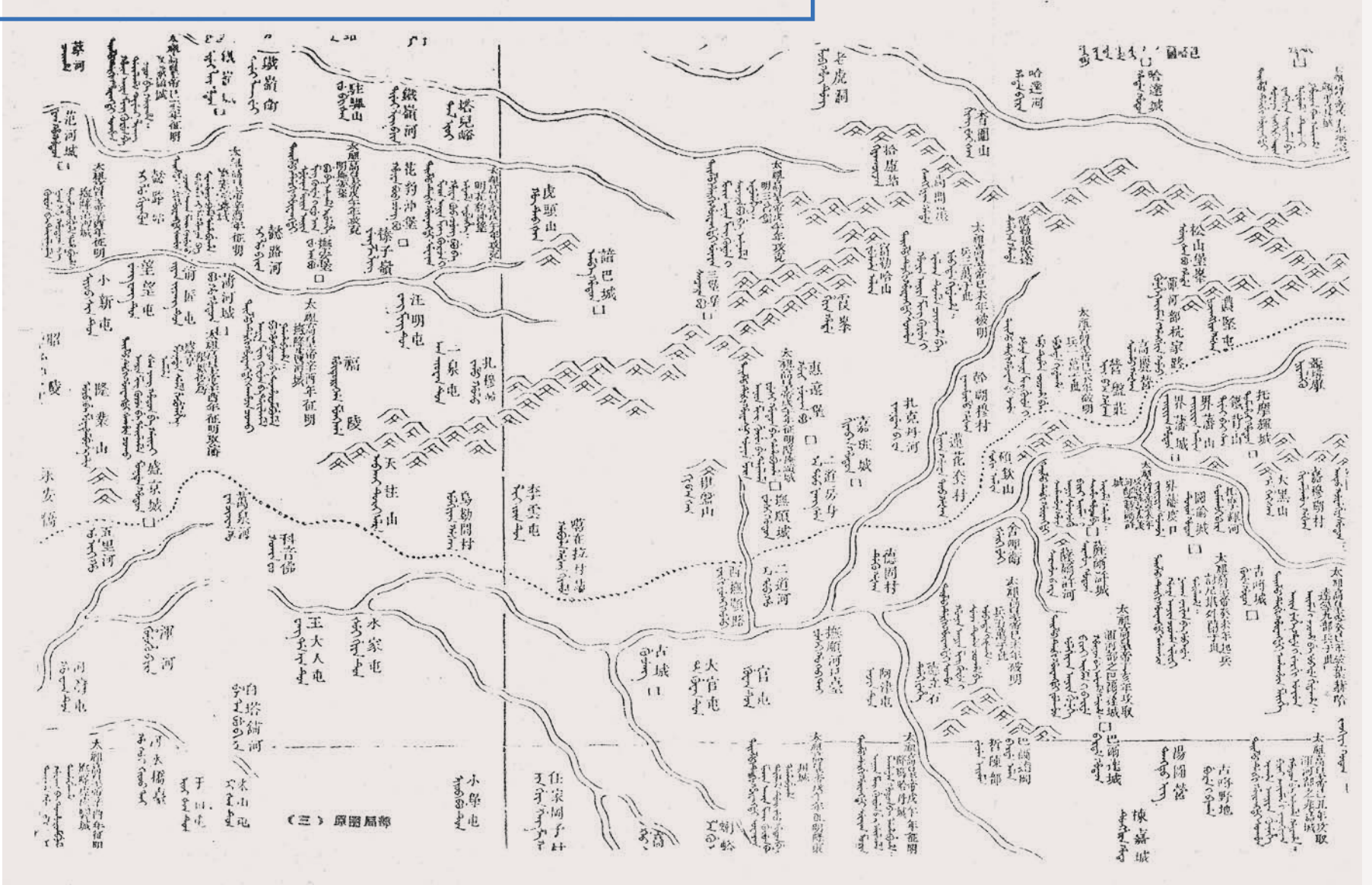
### Notes

- Po, R.C. 2016. 'Mapping maritime power and control: a study of the late eighteenth century *Qisheng yanhai tu* (a coastal map of the seven provinces)', *Late Imperial China* 37(2):98.

# Mapping Manchuria. A brief study of the Territorial Map of Military Deeds in Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilongjiang

Fig.5: The Territorial Map of Military Deeds in Shengjing, Jilin and Heilongjiang. Courtesy Qingchu shiliao congkan 清初史料叢刊.

Gu Songjie



In 1775, the Qianlong emperor (reigned 1735–1796) read through the Old Manchu Archives [Manwen laodang 滿文老檔] and discovered that they mentioned many places in Manchuria, but he could not find a map that showed the location of these places. As he considered it important to have a map of the homeland of his ancestors, and in order to preserve the Manchu identity, he initiated a mapping project of this region,

resulting in the Territorial Map of Military Deeds in Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilongjiang (fig.5) [Shengjing, Jilin, Heilongjiang dengchu biao zhu zhanji yutu 盛京吉林黑龍江等處標註戰績輿圖]. Qianlong's goal for this Map of Military Deeds was to commemorate his ancestors and to display the military achievements of the conquest in China's northeast before the Manchus had established Beijing as the capital of the Qing in 1644.

To make the map, Qianlong ordered officials to check the Old Manchu Archives, the Gazetteer of Shengjing [Shengjing zhi 盛京志], and the Venerable Records [Shilu 實錄] and to list place names mentioned in these sources. Qianlong wanted the lists to be sent to the garrison generals of Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilongjiang so they could survey their provincial capitals and surrounding areas. They were supposed to measure the distance between the places and the provincial capitals, to check if places had changed their names, and to see if there were any famous mountains, rivers, and stories connected to these places about the Manchu ancestors. They would then compile a single map of the three provinces.

The officials followed Qianlong's order and surveyed north-eastern China. They used one of the Qianlong editions of the Overview Maps of Imperial Territories (see Mario Cams' essay in this issue) as the basis for their new map and through this large-scale investigation, more than 700 places were identified, which had not been indicated on the Overview Maps. On 20 May 1776, the Shengjing governor-general Hong Shang 弘晌 (1718–1781), sent a folded draft map of the three provinces Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilongjiang to the emperor, with red labels affixed to places in Shengjing, pink labels affixed to places in Jilin, and white labels affixed to places in Heilongjiang. The Qianlong emperor decreed, "Use the draft of the map of places such as Shengjing and Jilin [as a base] for drawing a comprehensive map, and make annotations on the map describing the various [military] achievements [of the Manchu people] in Manchu and Chinese".<sup>1</sup>

The main editors of this map, the ministers Šuhede (1710–1777), Agūi (1717–1797), and Ingliyan (1707–1783) proposed to enlarge the dimensions of the map. They sent the following memorial in the summer of 1776, suggesting a format that was eventually used for the annotations of military deeds: "... All the achievements that happened at certain places [mentioned] on the map will be described [as a note] under the respective place name with the year and month the achievement took place indicated".<sup>2</sup>

The note next to Sarhū Mountain, for example, reads: "In the third month of the fourth year Tianming 天命 [April/May 1619], 470,000 Ming soldiers came to attack from different directions and so Emperor Taizu 太祖 [Nurhaci, 1559–1626] gathered 60,000 soldiers in this place".

The editors combined 2,313 place names – of which over 700 appeared on a map for the first time – with 144 annotations in both Manchu and Chinese. It took them two years to complete the map project and in May 1778, the Map Bureau [Yutu fang 輿圖房] requested compensation for the work. By that time, Šuhede had already passed away, so Agūi had become the minister in charge of the project. Two months later, in July 1778, Agūi, together with other ministers presented the map to the emperor. The Map of Military Deeds was handed over to the Hall of Military Excellence [Wuying dian 武英殿] for publication in March 1779 and was subsequently printed.

This map made by the Qing government added more than a third of place names compared to previous maps. This way, the north-eastern borderlands became much better known and the map is a valuable document for studying Qing dynasty knowledge of the borderlands and the place names of the people at the north-eastern border.

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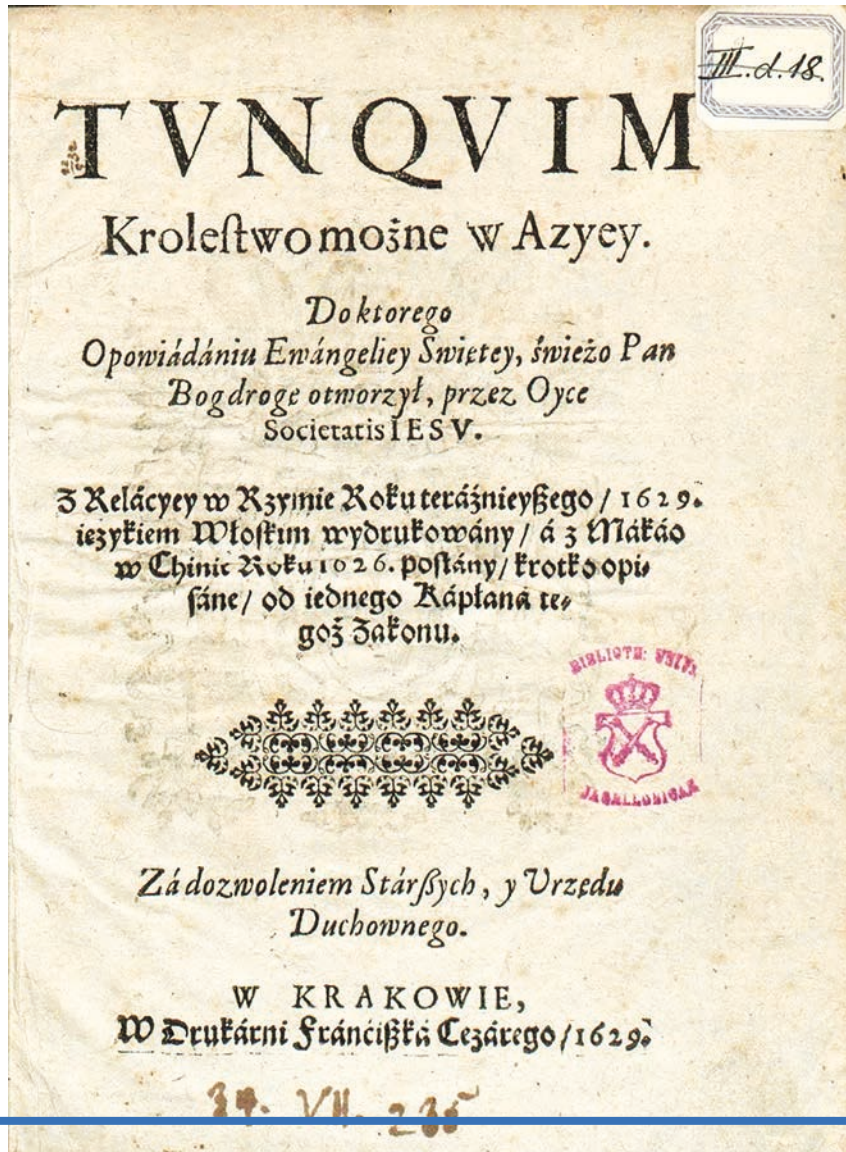


Fig.4: One sheet of the Yale Maps showing the important navigational landmark Cōn Sān Island. Courtesy Yale University Library.

Notes

- 1 First Historical Archives of China, memorial 05-08-030-000007-0033, 1778.
- 2 idem.

Below: First page from Fryderyk Szembek's treatise on Tonkin dated 1629, digitalised as a part of Orientalia Polonica project.



## Understanding Asia: a view from the Polish perspective

Kamila Junik-Łuniewska

Asian Studies as a separate field of study was introduced at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków in 2013. Assuming five years as the necessary time span for a student to complete the BA and then Masters, 2019 saw the first generation of alumni specializing in various topics concerning Asia. Jagiellonian University's engagement with Asia and also the tradition of Asia-related (and Asia-centred) studies in Poland both go far beyond these mentioned years. However, the last years were crucial in developing a methodology of both teaching about and researching Asia in Poland, in which the Institute of the Middle and Far East, the youngest unit of the Faculty of International and Political Studies and a new member of the European Alliance for Asian Studies, has a leading role.



### European Alliance for Asian Studies

The European Alliance for Asian Studies is a co-operative platform of European institutions specialising in the study of Asia. The aim of the Alliance, established in 1997, is to bring together the varied competences and expertise on Asia and Asian Studies found in Europe, strengthening this rich and unique tapestry of academic endeavour found in this region. The Alliance, moreover, facilitates a multi-level communication channel between its members, while it sets out to raise public awareness on the scholarly excellence they offer to the benefit of their constituencies and national and transnational environments.

The Alliance represents a community of institutions sharing a desire for transparency, collegiality and solidarity beyond national, institutional or disciplinary boundaries. It encourages collaborations, synergies and intellectual emulation among European academic institutions involved in Asian Studies and in collaboration with partners from Asia and the rest of the world.

The Alliance seeks to build high-quality border-transcending research, teaching and public services, including scholarly networks within Europe and beyond. It also encourages linkage between academic and non-academic actors, aiming to develop a model of how Asian studies in European academia could respond to political, economic and heuristic shifts and contexts.

The Alliance is not intended to merge the respective institutes, or blur their individual strengths, but rather to provide a framework for co-operation. Partners in the Alliance use the multiplicity of approaches, expertise and connectivities present in the network to strengthen research, teaching, collaboration and outreach.

Such a dynamic network works on various scales of expertise: (1) institutions based on policy-oriented research and competence; (2) institutions that seek to apply their Asia expertise beyond single locations and university frameworks, and (3) institutions combining research and teaching Asian Studies with an emphasis on humanistic and linguistic knowledge.

#### Members of the Alliance

As of 1 July 2019, the European Alliance for Asian Studies includes:

- the Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS), Heidelberg;

- the Center for East Asian Studies at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (CEAO);
- the Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies (CESEAS), Lund University;
- the Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia (CRIA), Lisbon;
- the Department of Asian Studies, Palacky University, Olomouc;
- the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne;
- the Faculty of Economics, University of Coimbra;
- the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Hamburg;
- the Groupement d'Intérêt Scientifique Études Asiatiques (GIS Réseau Asie), Paris;
- the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden;
- the Institut Roman de Studii Euro-Asiatice (IRSEA), Bucharest;
- the Institute of the Middle and Far East, Jagiellonian University, Krakow;
- the Institute of Studies on Asia, University of Torino;
- the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), Copenhagen;
- the School of Oriental and African Studies, London;
- the Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale";
- the University of Vienna.

#### Website

The new Alliance website, [www.asiascholars.eu](http://www.asiascholars.eu) intends to mirror the spirit of participation and sharing of its members, providing information on conferences and calls for proposals (grants, summer schools, fellowships, positions). The website disseminates information on open access, enabling members and the public at large to construct and share knowledge and data. It is a unique vehicle to learn from the partners' developments, their plans and their expertise.

#### Secretariat

The contact address for the Alliance is the International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden.

Please contact dr. Willem Vogelsang, [w.j.vogelsang@iias.nl](mailto:w.j.vogelsang@iias.nl) for further information.

The aim of this article is to introduce the main ways in which Asia has been approached in an innovative and interdisciplinary manner at the Institute of the Middle and Far East. How do we – its faculty – teach to understand the complexity of Asian contexts in order to equip the students with certain knowledge and skills, useful also in the rising business and economic environment in Poland and abroad. The emphasis will be put on the interdepartmental and international cooperation and projects both already conducted and planned for the nearest future.

#### 'We teach how to comprehend the world': Asian Studies in Kraków

Although the Jagiellonian University (JU) has a long history of 656 years, the Faculty of International and Political Studies was brought to life in the year 2000. Its founding mission was to disseminate the achievements of the theoretical thought and research applied in the humanities and social sciences. The actions taken were aimed at ensuring the highest quality of scientific research (especially of interdisciplinary nature) and didactic effects – under the motto 'We teach how to comprehend

the world'. The studies developed in the fields of International Studies, Political Science as well as Area Studies focused on dynamically changing relations between cultural, political, economic, and social factors in the Western world, but also – what is most important here – in the Non-Western Civilisations (i.e., Asia, Africa, South America, and the post-Soviet region). During almost 20 years of its existence, it has grown into 16 separate fields of study, conducted both in Polish and English, and in cooperation with international institutions. Among the subjects offered, the most popular are: American Studies, Latin America Studies, International Migrations, Political Science, Russian Studies, European Studies, Cultural Studies, and Asian Studies.

Initially, Asian Studies were a specialty within the field of Cultural Studies, and concentrated mainly on the Middle and Far East. The two modules were organized at The Chair of the Middle and Far East – established around the same time as the Faculty. Its founder, the late Professor Andrzej Kapiszewski, himself a diplomat and an erudite, saw the urgent need and importance for Asia-centred research in the globalizing world – but not only in the shape of studies on the region, but also as an in-depth multidisciplinary research. His dream and vision have been expanded

by his successors: Professor Adam Jelonek, who managed to transform the Chair into the Institute, and Rev. Professor Krzysztof Kościelniak, who developed a separate Asian Studies programme taught since 2013.

The exceptionality of the idea behind our Asian Studies lies in the combination of methodologies applied. They grew out of experience of almost 12 years of teaching, comprehending, and rethinking Asia. What distinguishes Asian studies from Cultural Studies is primarily a strong connection with the new directions and studies on social, political and economic phenomena in a given region. The uniqueness of the direction is evidenced by its interdisciplinary approach, and justified, above all, by the reference of the studied issues to their historical, philosophical, cultural, and religious contexts. The distinctive feature of the studies is the possibility – or rather the necessity – of mastering the language, characteristic for the region or country concerned, at a practical level. Students who develop interest in language as such have the opportunity to participate in advanced courses in business language or translation.

The teaching program was prepared based on several innovative solutions, the most important being the departure from the Orientalist perception of Asia in exchange for focusing on regional studies. In a wide spectrum of modules of teaching not only Oriental language classes (Arabic, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Hindi, but also Bahasa Indonesia, Urdu, Turkish) can be found, but also classes related to the multifaceted specificity of the region, which can be grouped into the categories: culture, society, politics, security, and economy. For this – in a very short span of time – our Asian Studies have already been honoured (twice) with the prestigious Polish distinction 'Studies with a future'. The study programme also aims at linking academic education with practical knowledge, by developing specific skills and competences to analyse social, political and economic cultural phenomena of the given region/country. It enables meetings with diplomats, practitioners of special services of public administration and business, but also gives the opportunity to participate in workshops, conferences and Summer Schools, as well as apply for numerous scholarships to Western and Asian countries. In this way, Asian Studies have been strictly customized according to the needs of the labour market, the diagnosis of which remains the subject of our on-going analysis. The Institute is very sensitive to market trends, including the increase of socio-economic contact between Poland and Asian countries, but also the dynamically raising number of Polish business ventures implemented by taking into account the opportunities and growing needs of the Asian markets.

### International cooperation: Europe and beyond

The Institute of the Middle and Far East actively cooperates with many institutions all over the world on the basis of international agreements signed at the faculty as well as the university level. Its students and employees take part in both Polish and foreign research projects. It also participates in the European Erasmus Programme, and maintains wide international contacts with universities in China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Israel, Syria, Algeria and Kuwait, successfully running a Visiting Professors' Programme for the last two years. In this context, I would like to mention two most advanced collaborations with Asian institutions, namely with Kobe University in Japan and with Beijing Foreign Studies University in China.

Since 2017 The Institute of the Middle and Far East has had an intensive cooperation with Kobe University, which is a top-rated institution of higher education in Japan. Both Kobe University (KU) and the Institute have also exchanged students. The cooperation has been ongoing at the level of teaching staff thanks to the Erasmus+ Program as well as on the basis on the mutual agreement signed in 2017 (which was extended in June 2019). During the 2018/2019 academic year KU

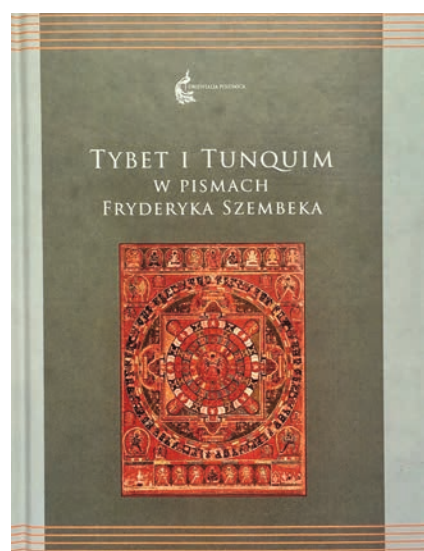
sent professors to give lectures on Japan and provide consultation time at the Institute within the framework of the 'Kobe Lectures Series2: Contemporary Japan in Global Perspective'. The lectures comprise topics such as 'Poland-Japan relations in high/pop and contemporary culture', 'Question of atomic energy in Japan: political and economic aspects' and 'Multiple modernities in comparison: focusing on the case of Japan and its meaning to the world modernization', to mention but a few.

The Institute of the Middle and Far East includes in its structure the first and the largest Model Confucius Institute in Poland. It was co-established by the Beijing Foreign Studies University and the Jagiellonian University in Krakow in 2006 as the first Confucius Institute in Poland. From its inception it has been very active in teaching about China and promoting Chinese culture in various ways. It conducts Chinese language courses at different levels for students and the general public of every age, including business Chinese and Chinese for children. In fact, the Confucius Institute has developed an impressive cooperation with a few local schools, not only providing them with Chinese classes, but also facilitating the possibility to make Chinese compulsory in one of them. Several books, including the first all-level Chinese language textbooks in Polish, have been published under the Confucius Institute's auspices.

Besides the Jagiellonian University, the Institute also collaborates with other universities in Krakow, and holds lectures and courses for the elderly. It also supports young scholars of contemporary China in conducting research in various fields, recommends students to study in China on scholarships provided by the Institute and promotes the exchange of students and scholars between the Beijing Foreign Studies University and the Jagiellonian University, playing a crucial role in enhancing bilateral relations between China and Poland.

### Orientalia Polonica: preserving Polish heritage of Asia

Implemented under the auspices of the Jagiellonian Library and in cooperation with the Faculty of Philology (i.e., the Institute of Oriental Studies) and the Faculty of International and Political Studies (i.e., the Institute of the Middle and Far East) of the Jagiellonian University, the project *Orientalia Polonica. Polish traditions of research on the Orient* aimed to initiate and conduct a long-term research and editorial works on publications by Polish researchers and authors (for the period of 17th until the end of the 19th century), dedicated to four cultural traditions of the Orient: Arabic, Turkish, Iranian, and Indian. This joint project was developed between 2013 and 2018 in order to prepare for print and to publish the selected material in the form of research books (historical, literary, linguistic, biographical, etc.) and literary resources (such as translations, adaptations and outlines) related to the culture and tradition of the Orient. The concept grew from the notion that a rich scientific heritage of significant importance for culture-forming processes occurring in Poland is now almost completely forgotten and often poorly known (or quite unknown) even among specialists. Historical and



Reprint of two Fryderyk Szembek's works (on Tibet and Tonkin), published in 2015 - one of 12 volumes published within the *Orientalia Polonica* project.

political circumstances have often resulted in an interruption of research continuity in Polish humanities (including the tradition of Polish research on the Orient). The aim of this project was therefore also to restore the little-known or forgotten scientific heritage remaining within the thematic scope of the project to the Polish academic community – a heritage that is an integral and constitutive part of Polish identity in its cultural and national dimension.

Paraphrasing the quote by the famous Polish poet, C. K. Norwid, that a nation without memory is a nation without identity, the authors of the project emphasized that the processes of defining one's identity may occur in confrontation – also through research – with the 'other', the 'unknown'. In this context, works thematically related to the Orient belong directly or indirectly to the Polish cultural canon, at least through their authors (Mikołaj Rej, Ignacy Krasicki, Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Joachim Lelewel, and others).

Polish culture, like any open culture, in its history has assimilated many diverse elements, both eastern and western. The evidence of diffusion and osmotic absorption of the components of the Eastern culture (even by xenophobic denial of this culture), although clearly present in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, has so far remained a little neglected. National or cultural identity is neither endogenous, nor permanently defined, and shaping the national identity is an unending historical process. The intention of the authors of the project was to address that part of the process which was associated with learning about and assimilating the broadly understood East in Polish literature. There are a great many examples of this type of textual evidence, which so far were little studied or even unknown. Besides, as compared to the awareness of the culture-forming role of the Western heritage in shaping the Polish national identity, the influence of the widely understood East, especially in the period mentioned, remains rather little studied.

When choosing the materials for reediting and reprinting, the authors of the project considered their originality and uniqueness, date of writing (it had to be before 1900), cognitive and culture-forming significance, lack of re-editions or studies, and their thematic scope (association with any of the five cultures: Arabic, Turkish, Iranian, Indian, and Chinese/Far Eastern). The work of the members of the research team included in particular: querying the source texts of the selected authors and conducting research on their work and biography; writing introductions, afterwards and/or comments, which have then been published in the critical editions of individual works, as well as the editorial elaboration of individual volumes.

The re-edited material comprises 2 volumes, which were published between 2014–2018. All the selected source texts have also been digitalized and can be accessed through the platform of the Jagiellonian Digital Library available under a separate tab: Projects - *Orientalia Polonica* at: [jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra](http://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra). As a result, the forgotten intellectual achievement of Polish researchers and orientalists has been restored and included in the contemporary discussion, not only in Poland, but also abroad, on the occasion of various international conferences, etc. The project – planned for continuation in the coming years – also enabled the integration of the representatives of the Jagiellonian Asia-oriented research units. It has also strengthened awareness of the need to continue the tradition developed by earlier generations of researchers, especially those who were associated with Krakow.

### Current project: focus on Bangladesh

In January 2019, the Jagiellonian University and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bangladesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the Bangabandhu Centre for the Studies on Bangladesh. The Centre starts operating from 1 October 2019 within the structure of the Institute of the Middle and Far East.

Named after Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first President of Bangladesh, it is the first such centre in Europe. It is intended to encourage,



Bangabandhu Centre.

support and develop knowledge and understanding of Bangladesh, Bangladeshi history, society, languages, and culture, in Poland and in Europe. In the context of growing importance of Bangladesh in (South) Asia's socio-economic sphere, and its place in the so-called 'Asian Century', it also seems important to grow academic ties with the best universities in Bangladesh, as well as with Western educational institutions, conducting with them joint research on Bangladesh.

The Centre's scheduled activities may be grouped into a few sections. Firstly, Bangabandhu will enhance the quality and number of academic courses offered by the Institute by organizing courses on Bangladesh related topics (including a Bengali language course). The courses shall be taught by academics based at the Institute and by visiting scholars from Bangladesh and other countries. Secondly, visiting scholars will also be expected to take an active part in intensive workshops (on Bangladesh and South Asia related topics). In case of such workshops, the credits earned will be transferrable between universities within the EU. Another important task will be building up the Institute's Bangladesh Studies teaching resources and enhance the Bangladesh related resources of its library.

Apart from its educational purposes, the Centre is expected to serve as a platform to facilitate research on Bangladesh in every aspect. This includes research fellowships for the staff of the Institute, but also joint initiatives such as organizing Bangladeshi Studies conferences and Bangladeshi Studies academic seminar for scholars from Poland and Europe. To make the knowledge and understanding of Bangladesh and South Asia more broadly available to students, to the wider academic community, and to the general public, a Bangladesh Lecture Series will be organized. Within the Series, scholars and experts from the field of Bangladeshi Studies – from Bangladesh and other countries – will present their lectures on Bangladeshi issues.

### Future prospects

The change of approach in Asia-oriented research, which was the foundation stone of the Institute of the Middle and Far East almost 20 years ago, happened in a response to changing realities of the world, growing importance of Asian countries, and the need of skilled professionals in various sectors of administration and economy. To borrow from the motto of the Faculty of the International and Political Studies, 'We teach how to comprehend the world', the main focus here is to 'Teach how to comprehend Asia' in its complexity, and also be able to deliver an in-depth research and study programme on Asia, maintaining the political, social, cultural, and economic contexts, as well as the historical and traditional background. In this light, the *Orientalia Polonica* project provides a significant link between present-day research and the Polish academic achievements of the past. It also indicated possibilities of cooperation between institutions, be it on the faculty level, or – what is more essential – on international level. This is, among others, important because of the shrinking space for humanities in academia and the somehow alarming rush towards automation all over the world. As a relatively new member of the EAAS, a platform consisting of European Institutions dealing with Asia, we are open to all kinds of collaboration, seeing it as an opportunity not only to share our expertise and experience, but also to learn from our partners and, together with them, make our joint voice stronger in the contemporary world.

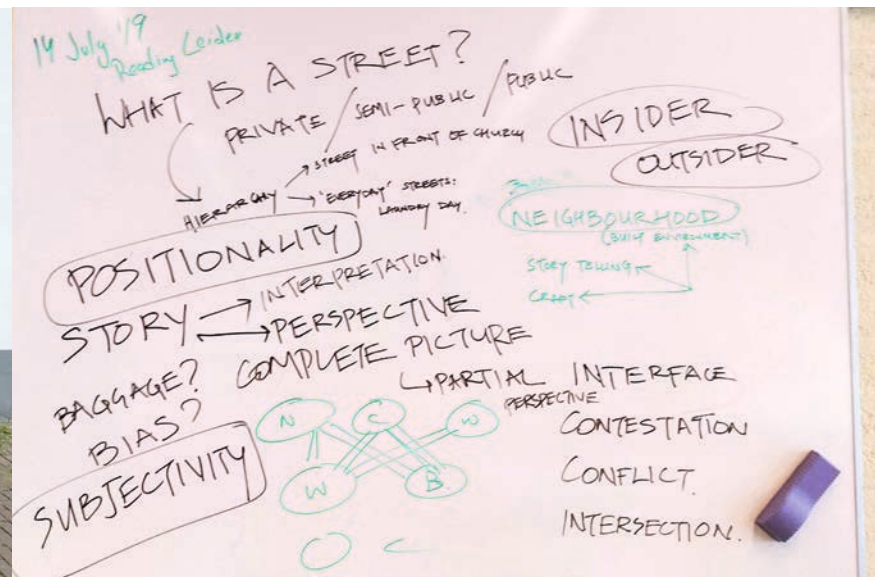
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# Looking back at 'Reading Leiden: An Experiential School'

11-15 July 2019, Leiden



In the period of 11-15 July 2019, the Humanities across Borders<sup>1</sup> programme organised its first summer school, *Reading Leiden: An Experiential School*, for the researchers associated with its projects in parts of West Africa, Asia and South East Asia. The aim of the school was to collectively experience and test the heuristic pedagogies encouraged by the programme. The school was both an experiential and experimental exercise in learning through in-situ immersion. The participants were divided into three groups through which they had to filter their experience of 'reading' Leiden. These were: Neighbourhood, Storytelling and Craft. For each day, a theme was identified and the activities of the day were organised accordingly.



Top: Orraya curious about herring, at the Saturday market. Photo by Aarti Kawlra.  
Above: Who's heritage? What is heritage? Krupa Rajangam.  
Left: Exploring built structures through Then and Now. Photo: Cheryl Jacob.

## Walks, lectures and workshops

On 11 July 2019 Laura Plezier and Willem Vogelsang guided the group through eighteen sites around Leiden, recalling their history, stories and design. The theme of the day was 'town and gown', focussing on the transition of Leiden from its industrial background to a city wherein a university has come to play a central role. The sites visited included the Beestenmarkt, Lakenhal, Brug, Marekerk, Harteburgkerk, old Brill offices (publisher) and the Bakkerij, Hooglandse Kerkgracht, Hooglandse Church, houses of the Pilgrim Fathers, the Burcht, Korenbrug, Stadhuis, Politiebureau, Van der Werf park, house of Jan Steen, Pieterskerk en Hofje van Lannooy, Academie Gebouw, Hortus botanicus, Gravensteen, and some more as we came across them. The walk was peppered with personal anecdotes and details that helped the researchers 'read' Leiden.

For most participants the tension between Leiden's Catholic past and transition to a Protestant space in the seventeenth century, also reflected in which churches (Protestant or Catholic) were allowed to be built or who could access facilities like alms-houses and orphanages, were surprising. Such differences highlighted how these can also cross cultures and boundaries of space. Rather than the seeing them from the 'western' gaze, the key was in experiencing Leiden through the researcher's own gaze. This perspective was encouraged throughout the school and was a liberating experience for many.

Su Sandy, an MA student from Myanmar: "I came to notice that things and words in our daily-life have their own stories and we can learn about the history and the communities

behind them". While at the eleventh century Burcht of Leiden (fortress), Laura encouraged us to imagine it not as we see it in 2019, but to locate ourselves around 1650 when it was turned into a theme park and a labyrinth. To experience the same place as a defence structure, a theme park with statues and a labyrinth, or a pub where now two majestic trees grow, helped us to understand and experience how a city interacts with the built structures and the different meanings a place can have at different periods of time.

The walk around Leiden was followed by a lecture by Paul Rabé (coordinator of IIAS's Urban Knowledge Network Asia - UKNA), who located the growth of Leiden as a university town, and helped us to recognise the tensions that emerge in spaces where such transitions take place. Thomas Voorter, IIAS, led the following session with a discussion on the dynamics of creating narratives through the online HaB 'Accession Card' (the HaB digital repository in the making). Day 1 ended with a brief by Maria Zwanenburg, an independent indigo practitioner and artist, about what to expect on the second day and how craft is an embodied practice. The focus of day 2 was 'craft practice'.

On 12 July, the second day, the researchers went to the Museum de Lakenhal.<sup>2</sup> While on the first day the information was more historical, the tour of the space that once ensured the quality of the woollen cloth produced in Leiden, gave the researchers a deeper sense of craft practices. Jori Zijlmans, the textile curator, patiently explained the processes through which the quality was ensured before the cloth went to market and the importance of the guild in the trade network. Through her explanation, we could also de-sanitise the many paintings that adorn the Museum, where the dyers and

weavers all look squeaky clean and happy, and child labour is portrayed in very subtle forms.

This tour was followed by a mad dash through the rain for a lecture by Maikel Kuijpers, who as an archaeologist looks at the production of craft in the Bronze Age. His documentary *The Future is Handmade*<sup>3</sup> shows how craft is actually "a way of exploring and understanding the material world" and as Maria reflected, "craft is a different type of knowledge [perhaps] different from academic knowledge but knowledge nonetheless". The lecture brought out a range of reflections for many of the researchers who come from spaces where traditional crafts still play a major role. At Taiwan National University of Arts, the course Blue across Borders was introduced in 2017 (supported by HaB) with the aim of bringing a shift in the perception of art and craft, and to take the students out of the classroom. Through a blend of classroom teaching, workshops and working through the process of dye making and dyeing, indigo is used to explore and understand the world through its many layers.

In continuation of the theme, two other visits – Museum Leids Wevershuis<sup>4</sup> and a craft brewery Pronck<sup>5</sup> – brought different types of realisations. Win Win Soe from Myanmar found it revealing that in her country handicraft does not find much space in terms of exposure or preservation even though it is found in all corners, whilst in Leiden, currently mainly a university town, crafts (specifically weaving<sup>6</sup> and indigo dyeing) are being preserved through the efforts of individuals (often volunteers) as sites of memory and cultural heritage after they were mostly lost in the 1970s.

On the second field visit of the day to Pronck, we were exposed to yet another revival of a craft, which had become lost

in the twentieth century Netherlands with industrialisation: beer production. Benjamin Wegman, a former tax lawyer turned brewer, explained the brewing process of the seven flavours of Pronck beer. Mesha Murali (research assistant, Centre for Community Knowledge, Delhi), shared the following words: "Craft was an area that I had very little knowledge and understanding of. When we were told that we would be looking at 'craft' as a methodology, the first thing that came to mind was that we would be looking at 'traditional' practices. This understanding of craft came from the way craft is perceived in India, as a practice that is 'traditional' and dying out. However, after our visits to the Wevershuis and Pronck brewery in Leiden, a different meaning of craft started to take form. The discussions and presentations during and after the visit made me realise that craft has more to do with technique, ideas and scale than just history. For instance, the brewery that we visited sold 'crafted beer', but had no link to the traditional forms of making beer. From the equipment used to the factory itself, everything was 'modern'. But since there was a certain time investment and thought put into the kind of ingredients and resources sourced for the production of beer, the people working at the factory saw it as craft rather than factory production".

The second day ended with a briefing by Surajit Sarkar (Associate Professor and Coordinator at the Centre for Community Knowledge (CCK), Ambedkar University Delhi) about the theme of 'storytelling'. He guided the group in how one can read a place and what to observe or take note of.

The third day started with an exploration of the Saturday market in the city centre. During the previous days the researchers had experienced the craft, culture and history of

Leiden, but the Saturday market was a riot of experiences – sensorial, business practices, cultural and kinaesthetic. As Dutch participant Milan Woudstra shared after hearing the experiences of the others: “Being with a group of international students from very different countries and cultures also stresses the fact that what I consider to be normal, is not normal or a common practice and sometimes even special for others, but it also made me realize that there are many similarities between us despite the ethnic differences and distance between the countries we live in. Discussions and questions (some of which I was not able to answer) about words, phrases, practices, and traditions in Leiden made me think more deeply about why we do the things we do and what it means to do them”.

When we visited the same location on Monday, none of us recognised the place. It was silent, empty and lacked the vibrancy of the market. This was a glaring contrast to what we had experienced on Saturday but there was another layer of experience underneath it. For most of the participants, while the Saturday market brought out a livelier ambience of Leiden, it was far more subdued than what most of us experience in similar markets in our respective countries. As Orraya Chawan, a researcher from Chiang Mai University said, “at the Saturday market I touched the colourful lifestyle of Leiden people, like the songs of the fishmongers as they sold herring to customers, and I had a chance to talk with an old couple who were sitting around the market. Observing the everyday practices of Leiden people, for me, was a way to understand their culture”.

Amid the sounds, smells and products at the Saturday market, there was a reversal of gaze. Karim Diallo, researcher from Mali, took a photo of a mother with her three children on a bicycle. When asked, Karim explained that while he is used to women in Mali taking care of the family and being so involved, to see the same in Leiden was unexpected. The other point that struck him, and Grégoire Kaboré (research assistance Institut Sciences des Sociétés, Burkina Faso), was unlike in their countries where people make a point of driving their car to market as a marker of their status, people in Leiden ride bicycles irrespective of their status. They both experienced Leiden through reading it from their own experiences rather than through formal textual orientation.

The market exploration was followed by a guided tour of the Sint Anna Aalmoeshuis by one of the Trustees. While we learnt about the purpose and history of the alms-house, founded in 1492 as a place of refuge for poor widowed women, Fidelia Ametewee (project assistant, Institute of African Studies, Ghana) solemnly reflected on how women in disadvantaged circumstances are treated in almost all societies. We learned that everything the women owned became the property of the alms-house upon their death. This condition often cut (cuts) across borders of cultures, countries, level of development and time.

During our days in Leiden the city organised the ‘Rembrandt Days’, which included public re-enactments of daily life activities during Rembrandt’s lifetime. One of the tableaux we came across depicted the washing and drying of clothes out on the streets, as one may have

encountered in 17th century Leiden. It helped us to see the space as it once was when the city was still a textile town, not its current sanitised urban space. Some re-enactments invited onlookers to participate, and so Mesha and Fidelia became part of the guild of surgeons in Rembrandt’s painting *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp*.

We continued on to the Lipsius building, where Aarti Kawlra (Academic Director of HaB) stitched together the experiences and observations of the researchers with the pedagogical tools of the school and the value of such tools in humanising research and underlining that knowledge sits also with the people, places, words, things, and not only tomes of academic outputs.

The fourth day (14 July) started with a mentoring session by Krupa Rajangam, conservation architect and founder of Saythu (heritage conservation and management). Her session helped us to “understand ‘place’ at the interface of the built environment, crafts, communities and local histories”. The discussions focussed on the dynamics of representation or reading a place – how does one ‘present’ or ‘represent’ what we have ‘read’, and our role in it. This was reflected in Murali’s feedback, “[l]istening to people from different cultural backgrounds share how they experienced and understood the city of Leiden, made me more conscious about my latent assumptions about the city. For instance, during the sharing session after [Krupa’s] workshop I noticed how I had taken for granted some of the aspects of ‘everyday’ in Leiden that other participants found unusual or interesting. Upon further thought I realised that this assumption of a ‘given’ lifestyle in a European city came from my exposure to various movies (Hollywood and Bollywood) over the years. I was already expecting to ‘see’ a certain kind of lifestyle, culture and architecture that the movies had depicted and when encountered by the same in Leiden they never appeared to me as something different from my home city, until pointed out by other participants. After this realisation, I was very conscious to take a step back and introspect my thoughts and ‘readings’ of the place, and how media influenced them and other experiences back home”.

Liling Huang (Associate Professor, Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University) led the briefing for the next day’s theme on “built environment”. She helped the researchers bind together the experiential and mechanical aspects of taking neighbourhood as a pedagogical tool to understand places, people, and words. The next excursion led the researchers to Valk Windmill Museum. As we were staying at the nearby Mayflower Hotel, the windmill had become a familiar object. The guided tour changed that perspective and helped, once again, in gaining an insight into how objects and places can influence the layout of spaces. As the guide covered the sails and showed the knots with which to tie the ropes, we realised how such skills (and others), though not commonplace, need to be seen as part of embodied practices, a lens that each one could use in their own cultural spaces. A structure that served the purpose of grinding the flour for the surrounding

villages, the mill became a tool to understand economy, technology, urban planning, human relations and practices.

With 15 July dawned the last day of the school. For the first half of the day, the researchers were divided into two groups. One group visited the Bio-Science Park, led by Michel Leenders and Willem Vogelsang; the second group visited Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken,<sup>7</sup> led by Susan Suèr. Both field visits gave each group a different perspective of urban anthropology of the same city. Susan led the group to the archival room and showed the kinds of records and artefacts that Erfgoed [heritage] Leiden holds; she then led the group to the reading room where the researchers were given folders with old pictures of seven buildings – Van Wijk, Scheltema, Zuurdeeg, Meelfabriek, Broodfabriek, Brill Publishers and Lichtfabriek. The researchers were tasked with finding them in the online archives and then locating them on the map spread out on the table. Afterwards, the group went on a walk led by Xiaolan Lin (HaB Programme Manager) to visit the same sites and see the changes in the built-environment.

The second group was given a guided tour of the Bio-Science Park. The Park was a very different kind of built-environment from what the researchers had come to expect from Leiden. The Bio-Science Park is the largest cluster of life science university buildings in the Netherlands, and the tour highlighted how an expanding campus interacts with the different stakeholders and interests.

This theme of ‘interaction’ was carried forward by two talks from two very different perspectives. The first talk was a lecture by Michel Leenders from Leiden University, on Leiden University and its expansion; and the second was by representatives of a neighbourhood group. Leenders discussed the different phases through which the university town has expanded, and briefly discussed the cost of human relations in that expansion. He talked of the on-going phase of yet another expansion of Leiden University and negotiations over relocation of residents who live close to the Lipsius building. This relocation would make the expansion possible but has been fraught with tension. In the second talk, Giny and Theresa of the neighbourhood group shared their experiences of interacting with the representatives of the university and their refusal to move to alternative places. These final lectures really aided the participants of the school, who were complete strangers to a textile industrial-turned-university town, to read Leiden through a range of experiential pedagogies. The school closed with a canal tour of Leiden and celebration.

### The take-away

The five-day summer school, *Reading Leiden*, applied pedagogies such as guided walks, interviews, storytelling, craft, etc. to make sense of the world. The school was directed at the ways in which we experience the world around us and why such an approach in research and teaching should be given due place. The school participants were researchers from Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali,

Senegal, India, Myanmar, Taiwan, Thailand and the Netherlands. With the exception of two participants, all are researchers in projects associated with the Humanities across Borders (HaB) programme.

What is the purpose of such pedagogies? How do we locate them? What is their value? These are some of the lines of enquiry that we collectively and individually explored in course of the five days. How were individuals, many first-time travellers to a foreign country, expected to ‘read’ another foreign place, culture, people, organisation, and site? What is ‘reading’ a place? How do we understand and locate information, process it and convert it into knowledge? How to express this to others who were either familiar with Leiden or even those who weren’t?

Fidelia observed that “participating helped me gain more knowledge into how personal backgrounds and cultures affect the approach to research, because what you already know affects what you don’t know.” Baba Coulibaly commented that HaB pedagogies “promote alternative teaching techniques grounded in local realities, by fostering closer connection with the teaching media within countries.”

The ‘reading’ of Leiden was peppered with perplexity, wonder, reflexivity (with one’s culture and an alien one), as well as realisation of similarities and differences. It pushed us to question the lenses through which we look and understand the world around us. It made us question the factors that influence our lenses and the place(s) they come from. It pushed us to understand and experience the complexity, and paradoxically, the simplicity of using concepts like words or stories, place making, crafts as sites of constructing knowledge rather than as mere examples. As Surajit Sarkar commented on the approach of the school, “it brought human experiences of the city, looking at human interactions, building understanding, discovering and appreciating human as a universal theme or subject”. The audience voiced the same observation when on 19 July 2019 the three groups presented their ‘reading’ of Leiden at the Roundtable *Reading Leiden: Some Insights from the Humanities across Borders School*, at ICAS 11 ([www.icas.asia](http://www.icas.asia)).

As part of the school, the researchers were asked to upload an image/recording or any material to the ‘HaB Accession Card’, a platform that makes digital storytelling through smaller pegs. By bringing to fore the voices of the people in the field, this is a unique repository of fieldwork and engagement. These exercises further helped to encourage self-reflection and to understand how such a tool can in fact become a tool of and for research. In addition, on every day of the school, the researchers experienced Leiden through food. Whether it was the abundance of bread in the Dutch diet, to herring, to eating Thai, Italian and Greek food in the Netherlands, food was one of the ways in which we commonly experienced Leiden. Through *Reading Leiden: An Experiential School* the researchers gained an understanding that research is a dialogue between different forms, experiences and sites of knowledge.<sup>8</sup>

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### Notes

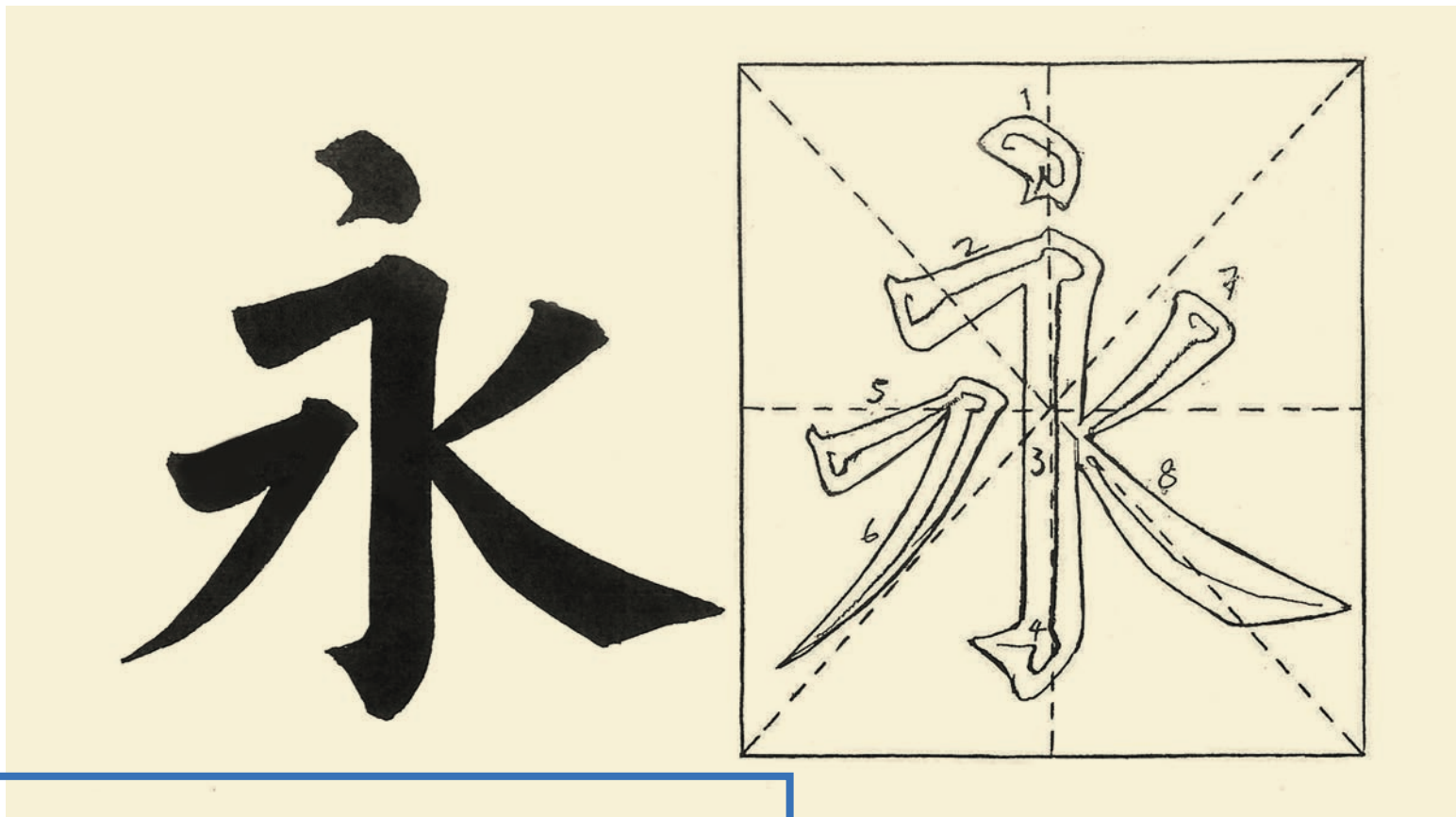
- [www.humanitiesacrossborders.org](http://www.humanitiesacrossborders.org)
- [www.lakenhal.nl](http://www.lakenhal.nl)
- [www.craftsmanship.net/the-future-is-handmade](http://www.craftsmanship.net/the-future-is-handmade)
- I would like to thank Anneke Fennema and Herbert van Hoogdalen who guided us at the Museum Leids Wevers Huis and the trustee of the Sint Anna Aalmoeshuis.
- <https://brouwerijpronck.nl>
- Weaving in Leiden is bordering on decline and only around 25 women in and around Leiden are involved in the efforts to continue the practice.
- <https://www.erfgoedleiden.nl>
- I would like to thank everyone involved in organizing the school and those who have given their valuable time to reflect on this article at the draft stage.



Above: Fidelia and Mesha in action in Rembrandt’s *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp*. Photo: Arkupal Ra Acharya.

Right: worksheet used in the workshop of the character 'yong' (eternity), demonstrating the eight fundamental strokes.

Below: Lantingji Xu attributed to Feng Chengsu, Tang dynasty, ink on paper. Palace Museum in Beijing. Image reproduced under a creative commons license courtesy of Joanhappy3000 on Wikimedia.



## Sharing the art of the brush

Sandra Dehue

As part of the ICAS 11 Cultural Programme, two calligraphy workshops took place in the IIAS building at Rapenburg 59. Based on the enthusiastic reactions of the participants, they turned out to be a great success, not in the least thanks to their inspired and skilled instructor, Cara Yuan.

Cara had designed the workshop in such a way that it was both a cultural journey and the opportunity to experience the subtle working of the brush itself. It was limited to a maximum of 15 participants per workshop because Cara wanted to be able to give her attention to all the participants while they were trying out the brush themselves. Before the participants set to work, Cara introduced the Four Treasures of Chinese Calligraphy (brush, ink, inkstone and paper), while touching upon its long history and lasting significance and role in contemporary Chinese society.

A Chinese brush, made of different types of animal hair, is round and pointy and has a very different effect than a western paintbrush. Moreover, it should always be held vertically, in a 90-degree angle with the surface of the paper. When you see Cara at work, explaining calmly and clearly what she is doing, it all seems very doable, but when you try it yourself, it's not that easy. It requires not only a steady hand, which is difficult enough, but also an insight into and a grip

on the subtle interaction between brush, ink and paper, whereby the outcome is directly influenced by applied pressure, inclination, speed, and direction. When drawing a line, which may be straight, curved, have a round or straight bend, and may end with a hook, the brush must be lifted and placed back in the right place, without it ever coming off the paper. To put beauty in a stroke, it is thicker and thinner, darker and lighter, in different places, which can be accomplished by variations in the energy exerted. The right shape may be achieved by distributing the pressure unevenly over the brush, with just a little more pressure on one side than the other. Cara had the participants practice with the character 'yong' (eternity), which demonstrates the eight fundamental strokes.

The ink consists of soot and a binder (glue) and comes in ink sticks, which are rubbed with water on an inkstone until the calligrapher is satisfied with the consistency of the liquid ink. The inkstone itself contains no ink. They come in many shapes, sometimes beautifully decorated, and typically have a flat part to rub the ink on

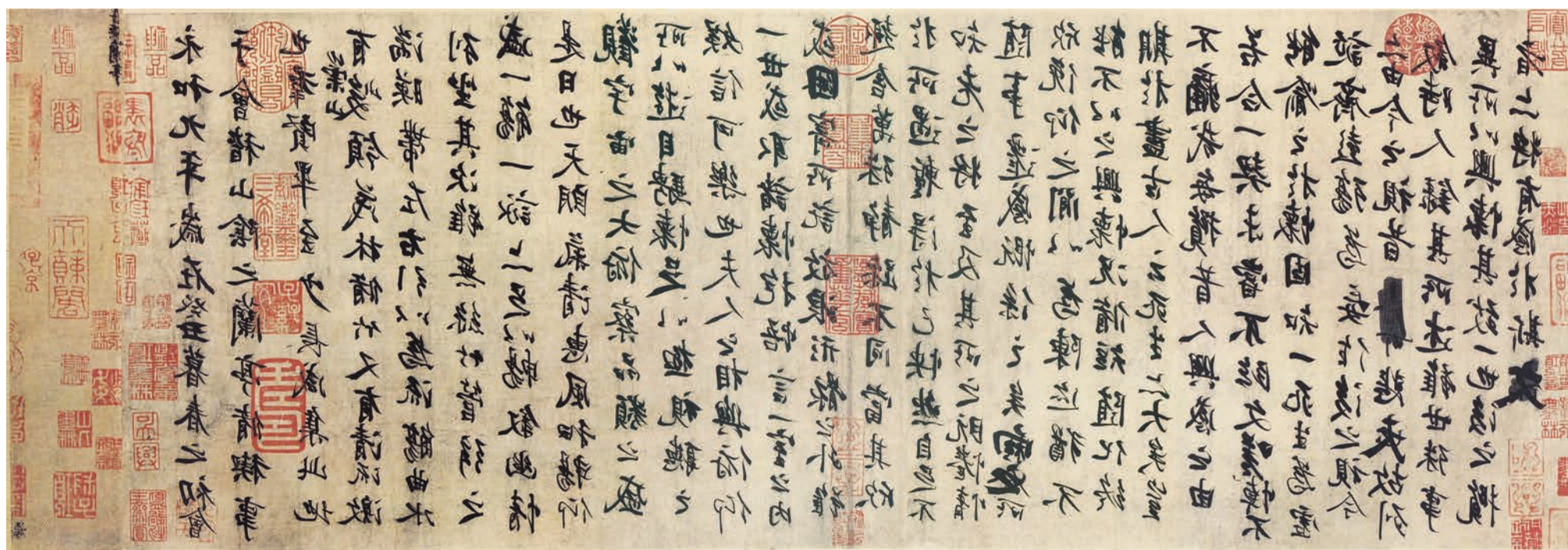
and a reservoir for the liquid ink. The quality of the ink, how much ink the calligrapher allows the brush to absorb, and how much he lets flow on the paper all affect the result.

The type of paper also has a significant impact. Rice paper, for example, absorbs the ink much more strongly than ordinary drawing paper, which has a strong effect on the interaction between brush and paper. Other objects used include paperweights to hold down the paper, brush rests, and brush washers (used to dilute the ink on the brush if it gets too thick), and water droppers to gently add water when grinding the ink stick on the inkstone.

Not surprisingly, as Cara explained, Chinese calligraphy is regarded as one of the highest forms of art in China. A good piece of calligraphy, most importantly, conveys emotion; the state of mind of the calligrapher is crucial, the result personal and unique. After the workshop, Cara told me the story of the 'Preface to the Poems Composed at the Orchid Pavilion' (or Lanting Xu) by Wang Xizhi (303-361), who is regarded as the greatest calligrapher in Chinese history. In 353, Wang

invited a large group of literary friends to his Orchid Pavilion. They sat down alongside a stream and held a drinking contest. Wine was sent floating down the stream and the nearest person to where it stopped had to compose a poem, or drink three cups of wine. By the end of the day, they had produced 37 poems and Wang wrote his famous Preface on the spot. Because the text contained some errors, he decided to rewrite it a few days later, but no matter how hard he tried, he was unable to capture the atmosphere from that day by the stream, in his handwriting. Dissatisfied with his new work, he decided to stick with the original text. Cherished as a masterpiece, it was handed down for generations, and many copies were made by other calligraphers. The original is now lost; legend has it that it eventually came into the hands of Emperor Tang Taizong (598-649) of the Tang Dynasty, who admired Wang's work so much that it was buried with the Emperor in his mausoleum. Today, only copies remain, errors and all.

Chinese calligraphy is not just something from the classical past, but a living art







Left: The participants at work in the IIAS conference room.

Below: Cara explains the strokes of the character 'yong' to the participants.

form, practised by many, and not just in the 'scholar's studio'. To illustrate this, Cara showed a photo of people working on a piece of calligraphy, using a huge brush and water, on the tiles of a park in Beijing.

### Participants

The participants had different motives for joining the workshop. Most of them already had some experience and wished to learn more, for example, about the difference between Japanese and Chinese calligraphy. For others, it was a new experience, as it was for our very own Newsletter designer, Paul Oram, who also attended the workshop. With his affinity and love for graphic design, he didn't have to think twice when he saw that this workshop was being offered. In the space of just two hours, it was, of course, impossible to do full justice to all aspects of Chinese calligraphy, let alone the enormous history and culture that goes along with it. However, based on the feedback I received, I can safely conclude that the introduction was widely appreciated, and indeed a great success.

*This workshop was a highlight for me during my week at Leiden, and I feel truly blessed to have had this opportunity. Thank you so much Cara for that wonderful teaching, of the skill, and its philosophy, all within the span of an hour!*

*The way that the workshop was organised, with all the authentic material, the brushes, the ink sticks and ink stones, and Cara shared with us her very special ink stone which was a gift from her father ... it all added to us appreciating how it is an art in itself, with so much of tradition, skill and philosophy in it. From the carefully thought out strokes for beginners' practice to the character that we learnt, 'eternity', it felt very surreal, and resonated at a deep level.*  
– Sonali Mishra, University of Delhi.

### Cara Yuan

Cara Yuan is a professional artist, photographer and calligraphy teacher. She was born and raised in China. Her father is an artist, specialised in Chinese painting, her grandfather a Chinese calligrapher. She started Chinese calligraphy at a very young age, exhibiting her work in China and Japan before her 20th birthday. In 1998, Cara moved to the Netherlands to study at the Amsterdam University of the Arts to become a teacher. Cara's work as an artist (Chinese water-based ink techniques, abstract painting and photography) is characterised by a mix of Eastern and Western influences. Visit her website at: [www.carayuan.nl](http://www.carayuan.nl)



# IIAS Photo Contest Award Ceremony in the IIAS garden

Sandra Dehue

CAS 11 marked the conclusion of the 25th year of existence of the International Institute for Asian Studies, one of the co-organisers of ICAS 11 and the home-base of the ICAS Team. On 17 July, we welcomed guests to a sunlit reception in the garden of our stately house along the Rapenburg canal in the centre of Leiden. It served a double function, being both the venue for the Award Ceremony of the 2019 IIAS Photo Contest and for the member meeting of the European Alliance for Asian Studies.

Fortunately, the renovation works of our building, which dates to the early seventeenth century, had been stopped for the duration of ICAS. Our garden had been adorned with beautiful plants and (small) trees, on loan from the Leiden University Botanical Gardens (one of the partners in the IIAS Cultural Programme), and we were good to go. Throughout the ICAS week, the garden had already served as a pleasant and quiet meeting place for quite a few participants. The weather was glorious, the atmosphere cheerful, and having a drink and a bite to eat while standing or sitting in the garden with old and new friends was truly wonderful.

The reception was attended by participants of the ICAS programme and others who were curious to see the nerve centre of ICAS and IIAS as well as members of the IIAS board and Academic Committee. Ironically, only a few members of the IIAS staff could attend, as most of them were of course busy managing the conference. Also present were delegates of the European Alliance for Asian Studies. Established in 1997, the Alliance brings together universities and academic institutions from throughout Europe. Its members were prominently presented at ICAS 11, and they organised several panels and workshops.

With its secretariat co-managed by IIAS and NIAS in Denmark, the reception served as a meeting place to discuss new developments concerning Asian Studies in Europe.

## IIAS Photo Contest 2019

The reception was also the venue for the Award Ceremony of the IIAS Photo Contest 2019. Earlier this year, we launched a photo competition to involve our contacts in our birthday festivities in a creative way, just as we did on the occasion of our 20th anniversary in 2013. For the competition, we had invited photographs based on two themes. The first focused on '25 years of IIAS', asking for photos of IIAS-related events and activities. The second theme related to the special motto of ICAS 11, namely 'Asia and Europe. Asia in Europe'.

Nearly 230 photographs were submitted, and the final selection was made by a jury of three. The six best photos, three per category, along with twenty-one further photos on the jury's joint shortlist were displayed inside the IIAS offices. There was also a continuous slide show with all the entries on the big screen TV in the IIAS conference room. The winners were announced in a speech given by IIAS Deputy Director Willem Vogelsang; three of them were present at the reception and could be congratulated in person.

Space here is limited, with room only to print the winning pictures on these pages. However, we have published the 21 shortlisted photos on our website. Most of these pictures fall into the category 'Asia and Europe. Asia in Europe'. While this ICAS theme dealt with various contemporary social and geo-political aspects of the centuries-long contacts between Europe and Asia, the photo competition concentrated on the visual evidence of these contacts. The call for photographs formulated it as follows: "Asia and

Europe have a long history of mutual exchange and influence, reflected both in past relics and contemporary phenomena, including art, knowledge, philosophy and religion, diplomatic ties, trade and industry, and diaspora. Let your imagination roam free!" It yielded a wide variety of interesting and fun pictures.

It was a real pleasure to receive and view so many marvellous and interesting images. I would like to thank everyone for sending in their photographs, and for the joy they brought. I would also like to take the opportunity here, to again thank my colleagues who sacrificed precious time in their busy work schedule around the organisation of ICAS, especially Elske Idzenga, who was part of the core ICAS Team, and Aafke Hoekstra. As members of the jury, they went through all the entries and descriptions with great attention. Thanks also to Thomas Voorter for the IT support and Annemarie van Leeuwen for organising the reception!

This was my first ICAS, and I am very happy to have had the opportunity to share in the experience. Contributing to the ICAS Cultural Programme (e.g., organising the two calligraphy workshops taking place at IIAS, see next page), I have gained a better appreciation of the enormous amount of work done by the ICAS team and the professionalism involved. The best part, however, was to get a taste of the 'ICAS vibe' first hand. It was so wonderful to see so many people from so many different places connect — some of them during the reception at IIAS.

I hope you enjoy the pictures.  
The shortlisted photos can be found here:  
<https://tinyurl.com/2019IIASphotocontest>

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3 winners attending the award ceremony.  
From top to bottom: Mesha Murali,  
William Peterson, and Emmanuelle Peyvel.



## Winners in the category 'IIAS events and activities'



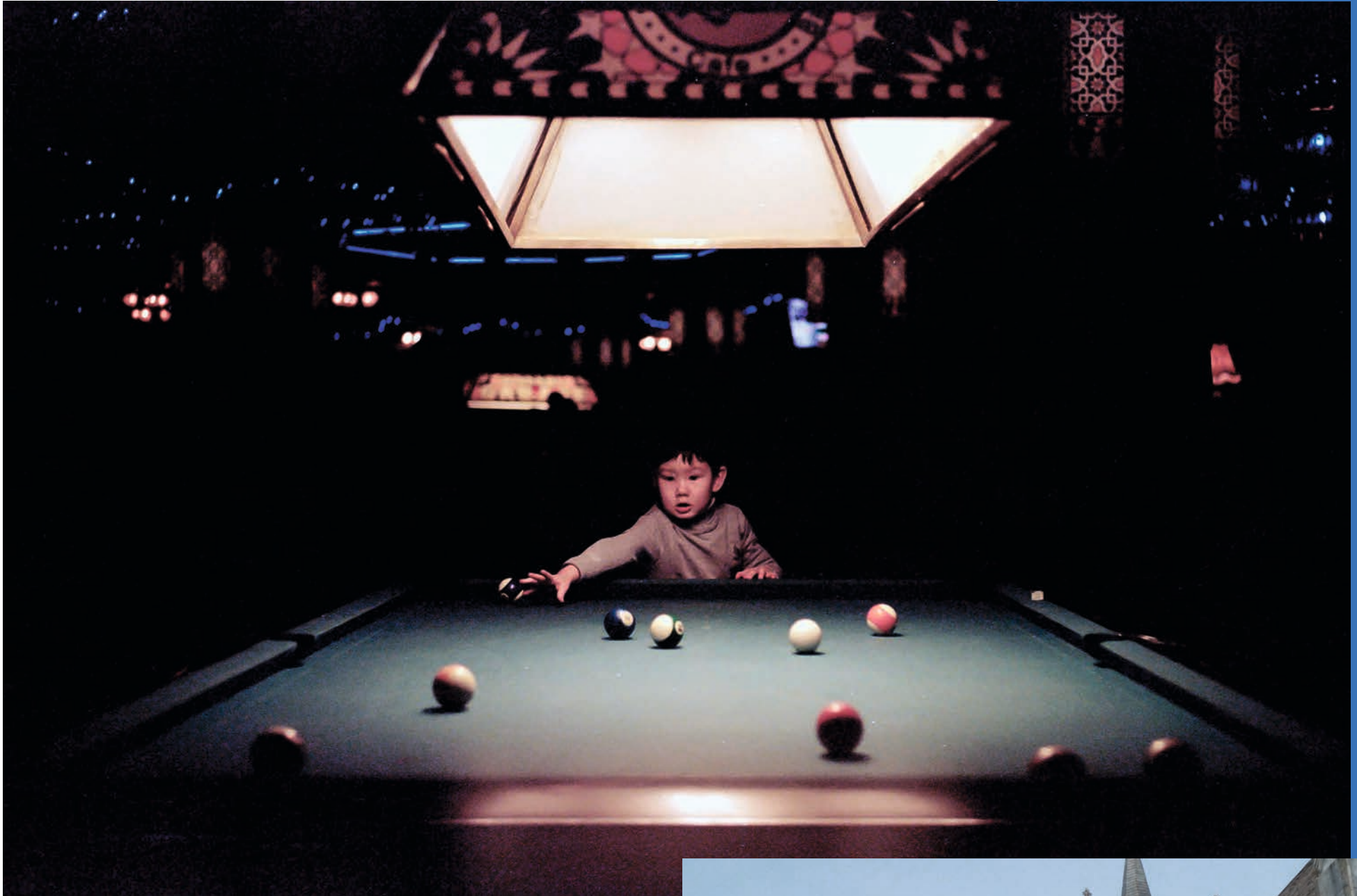
Below: Mesha Murali, *Bhool-Bhulaiya*  
Photo taken as part of the documentation process for the Mehrauli Neighbourhood Museum, part of the Urban Heritage and Civic Services Conference 2016, organised by Centre for Community Knowledge at Ambedkar University Delhi and IIAS. As the sun starts to set, local residents start to gather on the steps of Adham Khan's Tomb (Dehli, India) locally known as Bhool-Bhulaiya, eagerly waiting to view the annual Dussera procession, one of the many festivals celebrated in the neighbourhood.

Above: Christine Berg,  
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble  
Performance during the ICAS 7  
opening ceremony, Hawai'i, 2011



Above: Maria Sheila Garcia Medina,  
ICAS 10 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2017.  
Moments before participants arrived  
for the opening ceremony.

## Winners in the category 'Asia and Europe. Asia in Europe'



Above: Jukka Aukia  
Local boy playing with billiard balls  
in a Western sports bar in downtown  
Shanghai, 2016



Above: William Peterson, Boys and girls at the Voyadores Festival in Naga City, Bicol, Philippines, in 2017. At the Voyadores Festival, which runs in conjunction with the massive Peñafrancia Festival, Asia's largest Marian religious event, boys and girls engage in 'street dancing' in competitive teams. In this dance, the boys play the part of the 'voyadores' who row in small boats tethered to a barge that returns the sacred effigy of Mother Mary, known locally as 'Ina', to her permanent year-round home in a basilica upriver.



Right: Emmanuelle Peyvel, Honeymoon in Bana, Vietnam  
This photo was taken in Bana's hill station, in the center of Vietnam. First established by the French settlers, the original buildings are long gone. The station was entirely rebuilt as a French village imitation by Vingroup, a Vietnamese joint stock company. The village has its own cable car station, castle and cathedral. Associated with French romanticism, the station is a popular backdrop for honeymoon photos.



19 October 2019  
14:30-16:30

Venue: Rijksmuseum,  
Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands

## IIAS/Rijksmuseum Annual Lecture: The Kingdom of Śrīvijaya

We warmly invite our readers to this year's IIAS/Rijksmuseum Annual Lecture by Professor Emeritus Pierre-Yves Manguin of the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient.

### The Lecture

A century after its 'discovery' by George Cœdès, what is the current state of knowledge about this powerful Malay maritime polity? How can such a prestigious kingdom in its time remain so elusive for archaeologists and historians today? Its origins, the location of its political centre in Southeast Sumatra, its territorial extent, the nature of its political and cultural influence have all been the subject of heated debates since 1918. Research carried out during the last three decades has settled many issues, but still leaves numerous riddles unanswered.

### The Speaker

Pierre-Yves Manguin is an emeritus professor at the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO, French School of Asian Studies). His research focuses on the history and archaeology of coastal states, trade networks, and ships of Southeast Asia. He has led archaeological work in Indonesia (South Sumatra and West Java) and Vietnam (Mekong Delta) and published on themes related to maritime history and archaeology of Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean and South China Sea.

### Registration

Admission is free, but please register using the web form provided on our website ([www.iias.asia/events](http://www.iias.asia/events)) or send an email to [a.van.leeuwen@iias.nl](mailto:a.van.leeuwen@iias.nl)

## UKNA symposium: Ambivalent Infrastructures

28-30 November 2019

Venue: Dimapur,  
Nagaland, India



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Large critical infrastructure projects are expanding at great speed across Asia. This symposium brings together scholars and policymakers to interpret their functions, meanings and wide-ranging implications for cities and their hinterlands and to contribute fresh thinking about what the boom in these projects tells us about Asian city-making, nation building, and the place of cities and their residents in the global political economy. The symposium of the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) is jointly organised by:

- Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD), Center for Community Knowledge and School of Global Affairs (CCK and SGA), India
- Government of Nagaland
- Hong Kong University (HKU), Faculty of Architecture (HKU)

- Kohima Institute, Nagaland, India
- New York University Shanghai (NYUSH), China
- International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Netherlands

The Call for papers is closed, but we welcome attendees. If you are interested in attending this conference as a listener, please send an email to Mrs Xiaolan Lin at [x.lin@iias.nl](mailto:x.lin@iias.nl)

Information: [www.iias.asia/events](http://www.iias.asia/events)

## IIAS Masterclass on the progress in Śrīvijaya studies

17 October 2019  
15:00-17:00

Venue: Leiden University,  
The Netherlands

In conjunction with the IIAS/Rijksmuseum Annual Lecture (19 October) Professor Emeritus Pierre-Yves Manguin of the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient will give a masterclass, *Between myth and history: the hierarchy of sources for Śrīvijaya*, for students, taking place in Leiden on Thursday 17 October. Using data gathered for the study of the elusive polity of Śrīvijaya, this masterclass will discuss the issue of the hierarchy of sources for the ancient history of Indonesia. It will make a case for an

approach combining textual, archaeological, and ethnographic sources and methodologies.

Students from different disciplines are welcome to attend. To prepare for the masterclass, we will send you a digital syllabus, including some background readings. Please register by 14 October.

Information: [www.iias.asia/events](http://www.iias.asia/events)



## IIAS National Master's Thesis Prize 2019

### IIAS offers an annual award for the best national master's thesis in the broad field of Asian Studies, in the Netherlands

#### The Award

- The honorary title of 'Best Master's Thesis' in Asian studies
- A maximum three month stipend to work at IIAS, in order to write a PhD project proposal or a research article

#### Criteria

- The master's thesis should be in the broad field of Asian Studies, in the humanities or social sciences
- The thesis must have been written at a Dutch university
- Only master's theses which have been graded with an 8 or higher are eligible
- The thesis must have been evaluated in the period 1 Nov 2018 - 31 Oct 2019
- Both students and their supervisors can apply

#### Submission

Please submit four hard copies of the master's thesis and a cover letter including the grade awarded and your contact details.

Submissions should be sent to:  
Secretariat  
International Institute  
for Asian Studies (IIAS)  
P.O. Box 9500  
2300 RA Leiden  
The Netherlands

Application deadline: 1 November 2019  
For further information email: [iias@iias.nl](mailto:iias@iias.nl)

# IIAS Fellowship Programme

## In the spotlight

The International Institute for Asian Studies annually 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. Meet our fellows at [www.iias.asia/fellows](http://www.iias.asia/fellows)



Iris Farkhondeh

University Sorbonne  
Nouvelle – Paris 3, France

Editing a Sanskrit satire  
in sunny Leiden

My research in Leiden centres on the *Samayamātrkā*, a satirical work composed by the 11th century Kashmirian author Kṣemendra. In this satire, Kṣemendra tells us how a cunning matron teaches a young courtesan the tricks of the trade. One gets the impression that the men who surround them are the main subjects of the satire, whereas the ways of the matron and the courtesan somehow command admiration. However, the two characters are definitely depicted as con-artists.

In general, the main topics of Kṣemendra's different satires are bigotry or feigned morality, affectedness, overzealousness and, more in general, hypocrisy. However, more often than not, it seems that under Kṣemendra's pen, literary pleasure has the upper hand on the desire to edify. Kṣemendra's Sanskrit is both difficult and fun to read. The author frequently plays with the polysemy of words. The text is far from easy and still riddled with uncertain readings. I translated the whole *Samayamātrkā* into French as an appendix to my dissertation on 'the representation of female characters in the Sanskrit literature of Kashmir, 8th-12th centuries' (defended in November 2017 at University Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3).

During my stay in Leiden as a Gonda fellow with IIAS, I have been working on a critical edition of the *Samayamātrkā* that I am preparing on the basis of the *Śāradā* manuscript (preserved in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute) and of manu-scripts of the Stein Collection (Oxford's Bodleian Library), also considering the readings of the two existing editions of the text.

I have spent most of my time here in the Asian Library, which somehow has become my second home in Leiden, or maybe, even my first. With the rich Indological collection, inherited from the Kern Institute, its extended opening hours, and its unobstructed view of the gorgeous, lively skies of the Netherlands, the Asian Library is indeed an ideal place for an Indologist to take up residence, even on Sundays, if one's in the mood.

After my fellowship in Leiden, I will be spending six months at the University of Hamburg as a fellow of the Cluster of Excellence 'Understanding Written Artefacts: Material, Interaction and Transmission in Manuscript Studies', where I will work on my new project on *Śāradā* manuscripts. I was already looking forward to reading Sanskrit with Professor Isaacson in

Hamburg. Now that he is the Numata Visiting Professor at Leiden University, I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in his reading rooms – kindly organised here in Leiden by Professor Silk. I am also very pleased that I was in Leiden during the meeting of the 'Skandapurāṇa project'; it was a precious opportunity for me to spend a few hours with Professor Bisschop, Professor Yokochi and Professor Bakker to see how they are working on the edition of this text.

Besides my research, I also practice *Bharatanatyam*. On 12 September, I was very happy to be able to share my love for this Indian classical dance by presenting a dance piece during the '444 Years of Humanities Festivities' in the Leiden *Stadsgehoorzaal* theatre ('City Auditorium'). The very rich museums of the Netherlands, the beauty of the city of Leiden, its contagious *joie de vivre*, and its many cats were all very precious to me and I am already looking forward to coming back! I would like to thank the staff members of IIAS, my colleagues, my friends in Leiden and all the nice people I have met and who have made my stay so pleasant.

## IIAS Fellowship possibilities and requirements



### Apply for an IIAS fellowship

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.



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

When applying for an IIAS Fellowship, you have the option of simultaneously submitting an application for an additional two months of research at the Collège d'études mondiales of the Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme (CEM-FMSH), in Paris, France, immediately after your stay in Leiden.

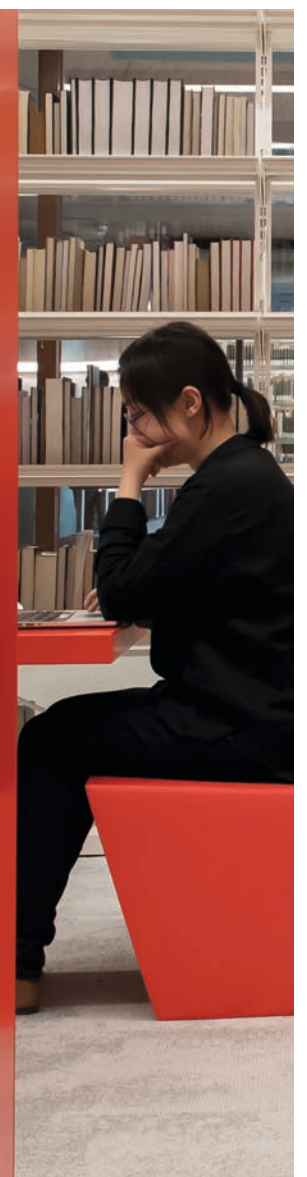
Application deadlines: 1 March & 1 October



### Apply for a Gonda fellowship

For promising young Indologists at the post-doctorate level it is possible to apply for funding with the J. Gonda Foundation of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) to spend three to six months doing research at IIAS.

Application deadlines: 1 April & 1 October



Information and application forms:  
[www.iias.asia/fellowships](http://www.iias.asia/fellowships)

# 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](http://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)



The Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) is an inclusive network that brings together scholars and practitioners engaged in collaborative research and events on cities in Asia. It seeks to influence policy by contributing insights that put people at the centre of urban governance and development strategies. The emphasis is on immediate problem solving as well as on the identification of long-term, transformative processes that increase the scope for the active engagement of people in the creative production and shaping of the city in Asia. The UKNA Secretariat is at IIAS, but the network comprises universities and planning institutions across China, India, Southeast Asia and Europe. Its current flagship project is the Southeast Asia Neighbourhoods Network (SEANNET).

[www.ukna.asia](http://www.ukna.asia)

Coordinator: [Paul Rabé](mailto:p.e.rabe@iias.nl) [p.e.rabe@iias.nl](mailto:p.e.rabe@iias.nl)

Clusters: [Asian Cities](#); [Asian Heritages](#)

SEANNET is a four-year project (2017-2020), supported by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation (New York, USA) that seeks to develop a multi-disciplinary body of knowledge on cities in Southeast Asia through the prism of the neighbourhood. Through case study sites in six cities (Mandalay, Myanmar; Chiang Mai and Bangkok, Thailand; Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Manila, Philippines; Surabaya, Indonesia), SEANNET seeks to engage the humanistic social sciences in a dialogue with urban stakeholders as co-contributors of an alternative knowledge on cities. It seeks to achieve this through a combination of participatory field-research,

## Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET)

in-situ roundtables and workshops, academic conferences, publications, and new forms of pedagogy developed in collaboration with local institutions of learning. The second ambition of SEANNET is to help shape and empower a community of early career scholars and practitioners working on and from Southeast Asia. To that effect, SEANNET research teams in the six neighbourhoods comprise international and local scholars, students from local universities, and civil society representatives, working together with neighbourhood residents.

[www.ukna.asia/seannet](http://www.ukna.asia/seannet)

Coordinators: [Paul Rabé](mailto:p.e.rabe@iias.nl) [p.e.rabe@iias.nl](mailto:p.e.rabe@iias.nl)

and [Rita Padawangi](mailto:ritapadawangi@suss.edu.sg) Singapore University of Social Sciences [ritapadawangi@suss.edu.sg](mailto:ritapadawangi@suss.edu.sg)  
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, Unanittibb, 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.asia/programmes/indian-medical-research-network](http://www.iias.asia/programmes/indian-medical-research-network)

Coordinator: [Maarten Bode](mailto:m.bode@uva.nl) [m.bode@uva.nl](mailto:m.bode@uva.nl)

Cluster: [Asian Heritages](#)

## Indian Medical Research Network



## Double Degree in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe



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.

[www.iias.asia/programmes/critical-heritage-studies](http://www.iias.asia/programmes/critical-heritage-studies)

Coordinator: [Elena Paskaleva](mailto:e.g.paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl) [e.g.paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:e.g.paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Cluster: [Asian Heritages](#)





## Humanities across Borders: Asia & Africa in the World

**C**o-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.

Follow the stories on the [Humanities across Borders Blog](http://Humanities across Borders Blog) [humanitiesacrossborders.org/blog](http://humanitiesacrossborders.org/blog)

[www.iias.asia/hab](http://www.iias.asia/hab)  
Clusters: [Global Asia](#); [Asian Heritages](#)

## Africa-Asia, A New Axis of Knowledge



**A**'frica-Asia, A New Axis of Knowledge' is an inclusive transnational platform that convenes scholars, artists, intellectuals, and educators from Africa, Asia, Europe, and beyond to study, discuss, and share knowledge on the intricate connections and entanglements between the African and Asian world regions. Our aim is to contribute to the long-term establishment of an autonomous, intellectual and academic community of individuals and institutions between two of the world's most vibrant continents. We aspire to facilitate the development of research and educational infrastructures in African and Asian universities, capable of delivering foundational knowledge in the two regions about one another's cultures and societies. This exchange, we believe, is a prerequisite for a sustainable and balanced socio-economic progress of the two continents. It is also an opportunity to move beyond the Western-originated fields of Asian and African area studies—something that would benefit Asian, African and Western scholars alike.

[www.africasia.org](http://www.africasia.org)  
Cluster: [Global Asia](#)



## Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN)



**T**his 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.

The 7th ABRN conference, *Borderland Futures: Technologies, Zones, Co-existences*, will take place in Seoul, South Korea, 5-27 June 2020.

[www.asianborderlands.net](http://www.asianborderlands.net)  
Coordinator: [Erik de Maaker](#)  
[maaker@fsw.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:maaker@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)  
Cluster: [Global Asia](#)

## Energy Programme Asia (EPA)

**T**he new joint research programme between IAS-EPA and the Institute of World Politics and Economy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing is entitled *The Political Economy of the Belt & Road Initiative and its Reflections*. It aims to investigate the policy, policy tools, and impacts of China's Belt and Road Initiative. By focusing on China's involvement with governments, local institutions, and local stakeholders, it aims to examine the subsequent responses to China's activities from the local to the global-geopolitical level in the following countries: Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Hungary, the West Balkans, and Russia.

The first research-oriented meeting with scholars from China and the Netherlands took place during ICAS 11, Leiden, July 2019. The next international conference will be held at the CASS-Institute of World Economy and Politics, Beijing, China, in 2020.

[www.iias.asia/programmes/energy-programme-asia](http://www.iias.asia/programmes/energy-programme-asia)  
Coordinator: [M. Amineh](#)  
[m.p.amineh@uva.nl](mailto:m.p.amineh@uva.nl); [m.p.amineh@iias.nl](mailto:m.p.amineh@iias.nl)  
Cluster: [Global Asia](#)



## Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies

**T**he 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.

[www.iias.asia/programmes/leiden-centre-indian-ocean-studies](http://www.iias.asia/programmes/leiden-centre-indian-ocean-studies)  
Cluster: [Global Asia](#)

## The New Silk Road. China's Belt and Road Initiative in Context

**T**he International Institute for Asian Studies has recently started a new project of interdisciplinary research aimed at the study of the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese government, with special attention given to the impact of the 'New Silk Road' on countries, regions and peoples outside of China.

[www.iias.asia/programmes/newsilkroad](http://www.iias.asia/programmes/newsilkroad)  
Cluster: [Global Asia](#)

## International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS)



**W**ith 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 and Leiden).

ICAS 12 will be held in Kyoto, Japan, 24-27 August 2021.

Website: [www.icas.asia](http://www.icas.asia)  
IAS/ICAS secretariat:  
[Paul van der Velde@iias.nl](mailto:Paul van der Velde@iias.nl)





# Micro Era

## Media Art from China



Top left: Lu Yang, *Delusional Mandala*, 2015. Single-channel video, colour, sound, 16'27" (Video Still), © Lu Yang/Société.

Top right: Zhang Peili, *Opposite Space*, 1995. Two-channel video installation with surveillance cameras and TV displays, colour, 500 x 140 x 350 cm (Installationview China Artistic Avantgarde Movements, Centre d'Art Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain, 1995), © Zhang Peili/Boers-Li Gallery.

Below left: Cao Fei, *Asia One*, 2018. Single-channel video installation, colour, sound, 63'20" (Video Still), © Cao Fei/Sprüth Magers & Vitamin Creative Space

Below right: Fang Di, *Minister*, 2019. Single-channel video installation, colour, sound, 60', © Fang Di/Vanguard Gallery, Photo: David von Becker.



Group Exhibition  
Kulturforum  
5 September 2019 – 26 January 2020  
Matthäikirchplatz  
Berlin, Germany

With its many museums, libraries, and philharmonic concert halls, the Kulturforum near Potsdamer Platz is one of Germany's leading sites of art, culture, and learning and is exceptional for the enormous diversity of the arts showcased there. From 5 September 2019 to 26 January 2020, Kulturforum will present the group exhibition 'Micro Era- Media Art from China'. Invited by the Nationalgalerie, the two artists Cao Fei (1978) and Lu Yang (1984) asked the artists Fang Di (1987) and Zhang Peili (1957) for a dialogue. The exhibition is curated by Anna-Catharina Gebbers with co-curators Victor Wang and Yang Beichen, and curatorial advisor Pi Li.

'Micro Era' is tied in with the 2001 group exhibition 'living in time. 29 contemporary artists from China' (<https://www.smb.museum/en/exhibitions/detail/living-in-time.html>), which showed how contemporary Chinese artists have responded to the economic, political, ideological but also technological changes in China since the 1980s. This approach is now continued with 'Micro Era'.

### Installations and single-channel videos

From documentary film images, and the adapted use of classical film language to the aesthetics of Japanese Anime, the works of this exhibition focus on and explore the relationships between mind, body and technology – with installations and single-channel videos ranging from the 1980s to the present. Historically, within the Euro-American context, video art is often regarded as a democratising art form – through the rapid circulation of information and global events by fast-access technologies. Cao Fei, Fang Di, Lu Yang, and Zhang Peili scrutinise the seductive thesis of this democratisation by reflecting in their visual language the mass production of goods as well as how images and virtual subjectivities are produced and consumed, and how we understand our world through imaging technology. At the same time, in the cross-generational exhibition with documentary, narrative and installation references and the expansion into virtual space, the central directions in the development of media art in China are presented.

### The artists

Cao Fei (born in 1978 in Guangzhou, living in Beijing, China) combines in her films and installations social comments, pop-cultural aesthetics as well as references to surrealism and documentary film. Her works reflect the rapid, chaotic changes that are taking place in today's Chinese society. For 'Micro Era' Cao Fei presents her works 'Asia One' (2018) and '11.11' (2018) for the first time in Germany. The multimedia installation, which is about the logistics sector, conveys the hyper-real vision of a near future and shows the effects of accelerated economic growth, technological developments and globalization on society. Cao Fei wished to see the young multimedia artist Fang Di as a dialogue partner on her exhibition area.

Fang Di's works (1987, Shenzhen, Guangdong, China) deal with issues of racism in a broader geopolitical context. By incorporating film materials from news and documentaries, his works combine various visual languages in order to critically examine these interconnections. Fang Di's first large-scale institutional presentation in Europe so far is based on his work experience in Papua New Guinea for a Belt and Road Initiative company (which has been pooling China's interests and objectives to build up and expand intercontinental trade and infrastructure networks between the People's Republic of China and over 60 other African, Asian and European countries since 2013). His activities in the South Pacific Island Nation allowed him, analogous to embedded journalism, an intimate documentation of the current social situation.

Lu Yang (1984, Shanghai, China) interweaves virtual and physical architectures in her installations. The artist lures the viewer into the hells of images of an augmented reality and manipulated emotions symbolically represented by transcranial magnetic stimulation. With knowledgeable references to traditional Buddhism, techno religions, cyber feminism and Japanese subcultures, her works circle around gender stereotypes, beliefs in science and post-human ways of life. For 'Micro Era', Lu Yang has embedded the largest ever presentation of her works in an installation reminding us of the labyrinthine constructions of Comic Cons. She asked her former professor Zhang Peili for an exhibition dialogue.

Zhang Peili (1957, Hangzhou, China) is a pioneer of multimedia art and crucial to the development of the Chinese avant-garde and the emergence and spread of Chinese video art. His early work is often associated with the socio-political events that occurred during the heyday of the '85s New Wave movement, which led to the fact that the notions of *xingwei yishu* 行为艺术 [performance art] and *yingxiang yishu* 影像艺术 [video art] were canonized in China. For 'Micro Era' Zhang Peili presents pioneering video art pieces such as 'Opposite Space' (1995).

For further information about this exhibition and the Kulturforum go to: [www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/kulturforum/exhibitions/detail/micro-era.html](https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/kulturforum/exhibitions/detail/micro-era.html)