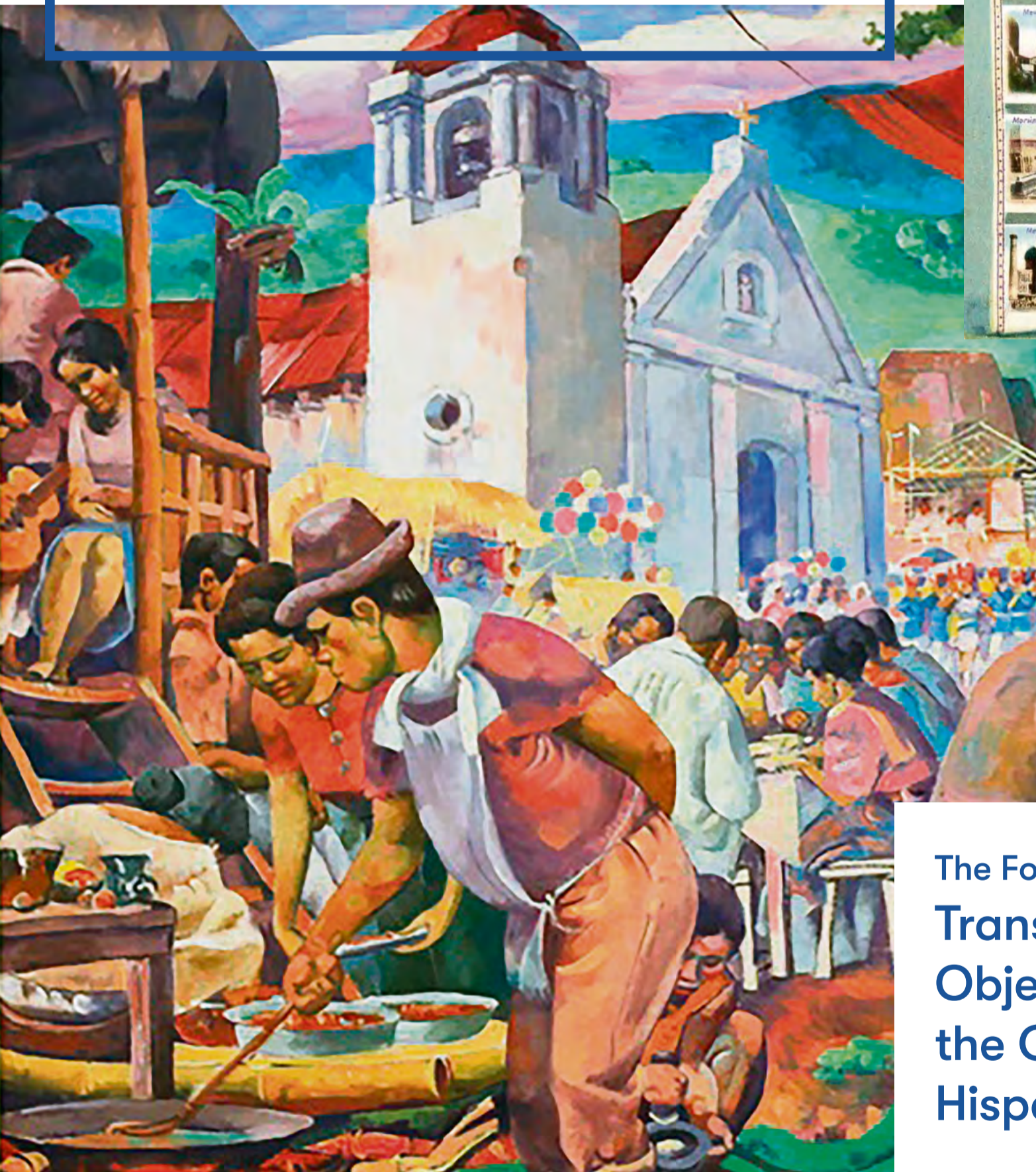iias.asia

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The Focus
Transcultural Objects from the Global Hispanophone

The Study
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IAS
International Institute for Asian Studies

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In this edition of The Focus

Transcultural Objects from the Global Hispanophone

Irene Villaescusa Illán

Objects are agents of change and mediators of culture. They blur and connect the cultural formations through which they pass, and they map out new world geographies.

This Focus explores a series of objects within the Global Hispanophone that have emerged from the contact among Spain, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. They comprise material objects and transcultural legacies, including artifacts, foodstuffs, music, and theater. Mindful of the colonial history that has brought Spanish-speaking countries and diasporic communities into contact, the authors trace the lives of these objects, and examine how they affect the cultures they traverse.

How are spice-covered peanuts and ornamental plants such as Jacarandas symbolic repositories of memories and identities? How might we center studies of colonial pasts and presents on the specificities of islands and their relationality with land and water? How did the musical instrument known as the *berimbau* travel to Brazil? And how does it connect to the *belembaotuyan*, played by the Chamorro people of Guam? How did the Philippine *sarswela* come into being? And what is a relief of the surrender of the Moroccan city of Tetouan doing on a church in the Philippines?

The story of material culture in the Global Hispanophone world is far from linear, nor is its presence geographically delimitated. Beneath the surface, hidden narratives of resistance, hybridity, and cultural resilience persist, birthing some ever-growing and renewing objects and legacies made from Spanish, Latin American, African, and Asian influences.

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 multisectoral approach to the study of Asia and actively involves scholars and experts from different disciplines and regions in its activities. Our current thematic research clusters are Asian Heritages, Asian Cities, and Global Asia.

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

On The Network pages

On page 53, we share two important new network developments, namely the establishment of the 'Collaborative Africa-Southeast Asia Platform' (CASAP) and the Airlangga Institute for Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC).

CAPAS is a groundbreaking new initiative, supported by IIAS, that strives for innovation in academic and public initiatives that promote a shared, genuinely South-South vision, in the original 'Bandung' spirit. The current partner universities are Universitas Airlangga (Indonesia), Kasetsart University (Thailand), Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal), the University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and the University of Zambia (Zambia).

The article 'The Bandung Spirit Anew: Introducing the Collaborative Africa-South East Asia Platform (CASAP)' explains the background, groundwork and ambitions of this new network, as well as the establishment of the Airlangga Institute of Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC). IIAS will work closely with AIIOC, starting with the joint organisation of ICAS 13 in Surabaya, Indonesia, from 28 July to 1 August 2024. The Call for Papers for ICAS 13 is on page 50.

In the previous issue, we highlighted four partners of the tenth edition of the ICAS Book Prize (IBP), which will be held this year. On page 54-55, we feature five more partners. On page 56, we announce the longlists of the IBP English language edition.

Information on fellowship opportunities at IIAS is on page 38.

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The Birth of the Airlangga Institute of Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC) and the Role of IIAS

Philippe Peycam

In the last few months, a number of significant developments have accelerated, all of which contributed to reinforcing IIAS's role as a strategic South-South-North facilitator in inter-institutional collaboration and capacity-building amongst partners in the South.

Fig. 1: A delegation from Leiden University visits various NGOs, universities, and government organizations in Indonesia. (Source: PKIP UNAIR, 2023)

One significant story to tell is the establishment of the Airlangga Institute of Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC) in Surabaya, East-Java, Indonesia. Like all transformative institutional developments, this one has a long genealogy. For years, Airlangga University (UnAir), located in the Eastern-Javanese industrial and historical port-city of Surabaya, found itself uncomfortably positioned as one of the country's best medical and legal academic centres, but one that struggled to found its original groundings in the humanities and the social sciences in comparison with a few establishments in the western and central parts of the island.

This feeling of being a bit left out was compounded by the fact that Surabaya, on the eastern part of the island, is relatively far from the capital of Jakarta. Its location makes it, however, the natural gateway to the vast region of Eastern Indonesia – a region that includes Bali, Eastern Nusa Tengara, Sulawesi, Maluku, and Papua – and beyond to Australia.

IIAS first entered into formal collaboration with UnAir in 2017, on the occasion of the launch of an institute-initiated programme, the Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET). The event took place in Surabaya. With its focus on supporting a collection of functioning 'ecosystems' in which a university closely interacts with local neighbourhood communities, SEANNET was the starting point of a partnership between UnAir and IIAS, a partnership built on the promises of a unique embeddedness of the university within its surrounding urban fabric. Kampung Peneleh, one of the close-by neighbourhoods, is one of the city's most emblematic communities, one also recognized nationally for its historical importance during the country's struggle for independence. Its intrinsic historical diversity was the focus of IIAS's first local engagement. It also became an exemplary case for a strong interaction between our two institutions. For myself, I learned to appreciate the maritime significance of Surabaya as a hub of multiple 'crossroads.' The city is indeed situated at the nexus of old seafaring trade routes, from that of the Malays, the Arabs, the Chinese, to the Dutch.

In the subsequent years, our interactions with UnAir continued to deepen. On a number of occasions, we were approached by our colleagues as they sought ways to better position the university and the city internationally. It was on my first post-COVID visit, in August 2022, that I realized something important was happening: an extraordinary alignment of planets within UnAir made it possible for a team of highly motivated colleagues from different faculties and disciplines to decide to work together toward creating a new institutional collaborative model built on UnAir-Surabaya's unique context. The new dynamics, coordinated by the Faculties of Humanities and Social and Political Sciences, with the support of the university's leadership, in close contact with civic and cultural actors in the city, quickly led to an expressed desire to partner with IIAS to invent an Indonesian counterpart to our institute.

Things progressed very quickly. On the suggestion of IIAS, a strategic roundtable was planned for early 2023. Airlangga University already hosted a Centre for African Studies, and members of the university had been already engaged with IIAS in helping to forge an original Africa-Southeast Asia humanistic platform. Moreover, UnAir and Leiden University have for many years nurtured a close collaboration in the areas of Medicine and Public Health, making the connection very natural. All of these previous collaborations effectively converged when UnAir and IIAS promoted the idea of a new institute-platform that should, from the outset embrace the support of different faculties, members of the civil society, as well as other Asian, African, and European partners.

This is exactly what happened in February 2023, with the organization of a strategic inter-faculty, local-international roundtable. With IIAS's assistance, the event brought together international colleagues from The Netherlands, but also from Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Thailand, and Singapore. The roundtable proved critical in helping shape both the organizational framework and intellectual outlook of the new structure. Even the entity's new original name was inspired by the central role of Surabaya as a continuing historical crossroads in the Indian Ocean maritime system. The concomitant stated support of four faculties capable of transcending internal university 'politics' shaped AIIOC's future governance and its vocation to act as a truly inter-disciplinary, trans-sectorial catalyst. Perhaps inspired by IIAS's pluri-functional approach, AIIOC's agenda was equally framed around a vision to concomitantly support activities of research, education, dissemination, and public services. The new institute's original intra- and inter-regional outlook, moreover, making a special place to Indonesian-/Southeast Asian-African connections, was also imagined on this occasion. The roundtable even recommended for AIIOC to be housed in a separate, visible, independent building in the city, so as to be both globally visible and accessible to local communities.

The cherry on the pie came from IIAS, with its offer to work toward organizing in Surabaya the first International Convention for Asia Scholars (ICAS) event of the post-COVID era, in collaboration with AIIOC and the whole Airlangga University, with the active participation of local civic and cultural actors.

It was on 8 May, on the occasion of a special 'Knowledge Mission' led by Leiden University, under the leadership of its President of the Board, Annetje Ottow, that AIIOC's establishment was made formerly public, along with the announcement of ICAS 13 Surabaya which is scheduled to take place during the period of July 28 – August 1, 2024.

Philippe Peycam, Director, International Institute for Asian Studies

Fig. 2: The UnAir Strategic Roundtable that led to the creation of the Airlangga Institute of Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC) in Surabaya, Indonesia. (Photo courtesy of Philippe Peycam, 2023)

One Year after the 2022 Pakistan Floods

Gul-i-Hina van der Zwan

It has been almost a year since deadly floods engulfed Pakistan. Last summer during the months of June and October, Pakistan was hit by catastrophic flooding, primarily caused by torrential monsoon rains. According to Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)[1], 1739 people died, including 647 children, and an additional 12,867 people were injured. Around 2.1 million people were displaced and stranded on the streets with no food, shelter, or medical assistance.

Fig. 1: An arial view photo taken during 2022 Pakistan floods. (Reproduced under a creative commons license. Image courtesy of Ali Hyder Junejo on Flickr)

This tragedy was unprecedented in terms of its scale and destruction, leaving the country in shambles with the loss of life, livelihoods, infrastructure, economy, and much more. In total, around 33 million people have been affected, with 897,014 houses destroyed and another 1,391,467 damaged. In terms of livestock, 1,164,270 livestock have been killed, most of them in the province of Balochistan. In terms of infrastructure, due to the destruction of 13,115 kilometres (8149 miles) of roads and 439 bridges, access across flood-affected areas was vastly hindered.[2] Over 22,000 schools were damaged or destroyed.[3] The country had to declare a state of emergency due to the disastrous situation on August 25.[4] Pakistan had never witnessed such a horrendous scale of devastation, exceeding the destruction caused by the 2010 floods.

What caused this and how did it happen?

As Pakistan receives monsoon rains every year, what changed last year? The year 2022 broke records with high and unusually intense rainfall. Moreover, the country was beset by a severe heat wave during the peak summer months of May and June, which contributed to the melting of glaciers in the North. All these factors inevitably link it to climate change-related vulnerabilities.

The geographical location of Pakistan – at the cusp of the Arabian Sea connecting with the Indian Ocean – makes it susceptible to a higher risk of climate change-induced calamities. With the sea surface temperatures rising and the ocean getting warmer, the increase in torrential rainfall wreaked havoc last year. The scorching heat waves and glacial melting worsened the devastation even further.

Although the whole country bore the burden of this calamitous flooding, the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan were most affected. Sherry Rehman, the Minister of Climate Change of Pakistan, said that Sindh and Balochistan received 784 percent and 500 percent more rainfall in the month of August as compared to their monthly averages, respectively. She called it a "climate-induced humanitarian disaster of epic proportions." She explained: "Needs assessment is being done, we have to make U.N.'s international flash appeal; this is not the task of one country or one province, it is a climate-induced disaster."[5]

The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, while visiting the flood-hit areas was utterly shocked by such a devastating scale of climate-induced destruction. He called it a "monsoon on steroids." The United Nations issued an urgent appeal for US$160m to provide help. Guterres stated that "Pakistan is a victim of climate change produced by the more heavily industrialized countries."[6]

Because one-third of the country was submerged in water, the flood-induced damages to infrastructure made it extremely difficult to provide relief aid across the country. The Indus highway in Sindh province, which connects it with the provinces of Punjab and Balochistan, was inundated by more than half a meter of water.[7] Due to incessant rainfall, flash flooding, and landslides, the dam reservoirs filled up. On the Indus River, which passes through the whole of Pakistan, the Tarbela Dam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province reached its maximum conservation level of 1550 feet (472 meters).[8]

Rescuing around 33 million people, including 16 million children, proved impossible. According to UNICEF, 3.4 million children urgently required humanitarian assistance to protect them from drowning, looming waterborne diseases, and malnutrition. Moreover, the estimates indicated that around 650,000 pregnant women were affected, out of whom 73,000 women were expecting to deliver within a month.[9] This extreme calamity will affect many more lives, and unfortunately, its impact will not subside for years to come.

The recovery and relief aid

Since the floods, relief aid and humanitarian assistance has come from various local and international partners – the Government of Pakistan; other countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and Saudi Arabia, among others; the European Union and other multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, United Nations agencies, and various INGOs, NGOs, private organizations, and local donors. The data compiled by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) under the revised "Pakistan Floods Response Plan 2022" indicates that, as of April 2023, only 58.4 percent of the total US$ 816.3 million required has been funded. The remaining US$339.8 million needs to be provided.[10] Since every component of the plan remains underfunded, it has critical implications for recovery and rehabilitation.

The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) shows that the total damages were around PKR 3.2 trillion (US$ 14.9 billion) with the total loss at PKR 3.3 trillion (US$ 15.2 billion), whereas the total needs have been estimated to be at PKR 3.5 trillion (US$ 16.3 billion). According to the report, the housing sector suffered the most damage at a cost of PKR 1.2 trillion (US$ 5.6 billion), followed by the agriculture, food, livestock, and fisheries sector at PKR 800 billion (US$ 3.7 billion). The damages for transport and communications stand at around PKR 701 billion (US$ 3.3 billion).[11]

Moreover, the PDNA Human Impact Assessment estimated that Pakistan's poverty rate may increase by 3.7-4.0 percent, pushing between 8.4 million and 9.1 million people below the poverty line. For the short term, the report recommends prioritizing the provision of social assistance, emergency cash transfers, health services, shelter, and the restoration of local economic activities, especially in agriculture.[12] However, the long-term recovery plan – "building back better" – should follow the policy of "pro-poor, pro-vulnerable, and gender-sensitive, targeting the most affected; strong coordination of government tiers and implementation by the lowest appropriate level; synergies between humanitarian effort and recovery; and a sustainable financing plan."[13] Besides, the focus also needs to be on building climate resilience, but what about climate justice?

Climate change: adaptation or climate justice?

The issue of climate justice is at the core of Pakistan's tragedy. If we examine Pakistan's greenhouse gas emissions, the country's contribution amounts to less than one percent of global emissions, yet it bears a disproportionate amount of climate-induced calamities. Pakistan has been ranked as the eighth most vulnerable country to climate crisis according to the Global Climate Risk Index.[14] It faces substantially higher rates of global warming as compared to the global average, and it is extremely vulnerable to life-threatening climate crises. This brings us to the ongoing debate on climate justice, which argues that the historical responsibility lies with the global polluters and wealthy countries and should not disproportionately impact the most vulnerable and poor countries, which, relative to the former, do not considerably contribute to climate change.

The UN Secretary-General rightly emphasized that since the Group of Twenty (G20) countries are responsible for contributing 80% of emissions, it becomes a moral responsibility for the wealthier countries to aid with recovery and resilience for climate-stricken calamities such as what Pakistan is facing.[15] This also points toward the systemic inequalities and injustices related to the broader Global North vs. Global South debate. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report of 2022 puts forth the argument of *double injustice*. Many developing countries have historically contributed a low percentage of global greenhouse gases (GHGs), but due to long colonial histories, they inherited high levels of vulnerability, development deficits, and structural inequities. Consequently, they are now bearing the burden of global climate change effects.[16] From the climate justice argument, the Global North and the industrialized countries must take more responsibility in proportion to the damage they are causing. As climate change is a global issue that requires global collective action based on a climate justice perspective, vulnerable countries should not be the ones suffering consequences for actions they did not commit.

In a similar vein, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has been vocal about the issue of climate justice during his national and international media appearances: "Global warming is a global crisis, but its effects are borne by countries which are the least responsible for its causes."[17] During the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference, commonly referred to as COP27, the Loss and Damage fund was set up for climate compensation for poor countries. This is indeed a positive step from the climate justice perspective; however, there is a long way to go in mitigating the irreversible climate-induced damages already incurred. We, as an international community, need to continue the joint efforts for reducing CO2 emissions, and to reach a net zero target for keeping the global increase below 1.5°C.

Way forward

A year later, in the ongoing aftermath of the horrendous flooding, Pakistan still faces a variety of challenges. Amidst escalating inflation, a trade deficit, huge foreign debt, and a lack of foreign reserves, the economic recovery has a long road ahead. As the monsoon rains occur every year in Pakistan, the danger still lingers for this year as well as for upcoming years. So, what can be done to mitigate the risk? What are the shortcomings at the governance level that can be addressed to facilitate the process and prevent this level of catastrophe in the future? Although immediate relief aid and humanitarian assistance remain an urgent need in the face of such calamities, there must be extensive preventive measures for the future. Pakistan needs to improve its institutional capacities for preparedness and development planning related to disaster risk reduction as well as enhancing the efficiency of response and recovery. It also needs to invest in climate-resilient infrastructure.

Given Pakistan's dwindling economy and substantial debt, more reliance on loans and foreign aid keeps the country in an unfortunate vicious cycle of dependencies. However, the immediate need for reconstruction related to floods remains a national priority, especially since the summer months are almost upon us. Given the precarious situation, Pakistan would need continuous support from the international community as well as the government and private sector to meet the pressing demands of domestic recovery and fiscal reforms for the long term. It is indeed a humongous task. It is also a tricky balance between carrying out fiscal reforms, improving the efficiency of public spending and revenue mobilization, building climate resilience, and continuing with rehabilitation and protection of the most vulnerable. It is my hope that in the future, better infrastructural setup, urban planning, and river management systems could also facilitate disaster response and recovery.

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Notes

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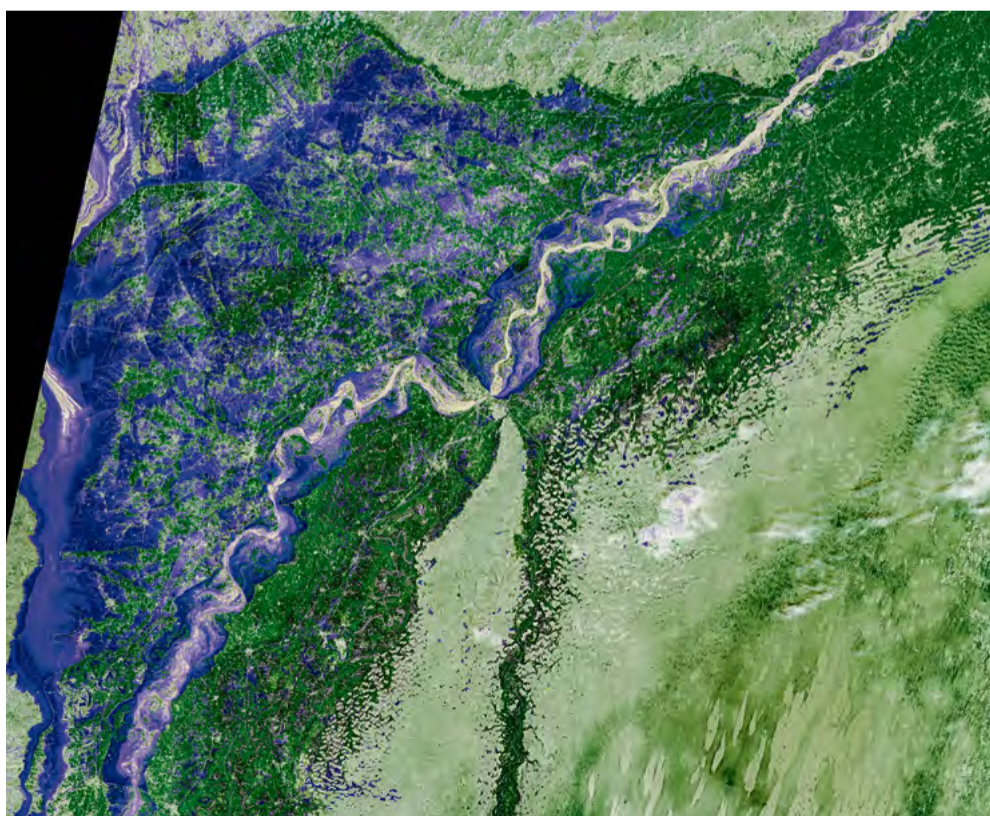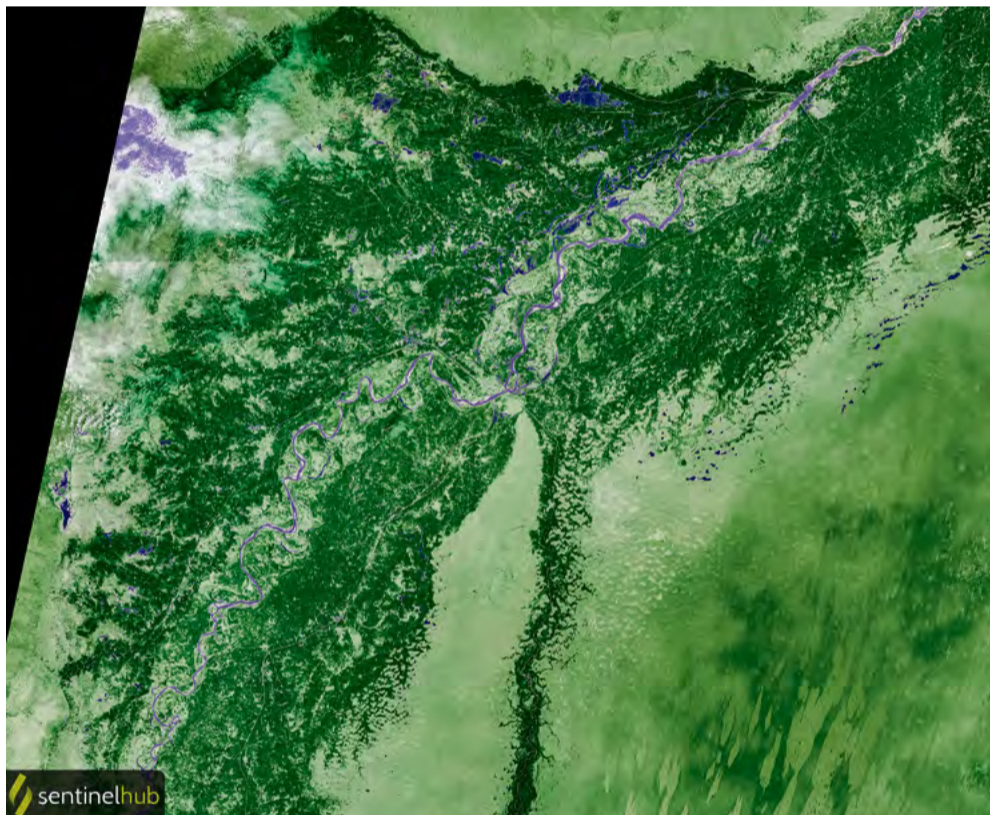

Fig. 2: Heavy flooding along the Indus River in Pakistan - Comparison between August 31st, 2021 (above) and August 31st, 2022 (below). (Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons user Pierre Markuse/Sentinelhub)

The Javanese Maps of 1825

A Story of Politics, Art, and Scholarship

Bernard Arps, Siti Muslifah, and Asti Kurniawati

European-style maps of Java exist in the thousands, but *Javanese* maps are exceedingly rare. Until recently only three specimens were known. In the National Archives of the Netherlands, a collection has recently come to light of eleven Javanese manuscript maps, dated 1825, depicting the districts of the regency of Semarang. Almost everything about these maps is a mystery. They belong together, but their visual aspects vary considerably. Some are real works of art. They turn out to be of great interest as artistic and scientific works produced at the interface of Dutch and Javanese colonial cultures, on the eve of the Java War (1825-30).

Fig. 1 (above): Map of the district of Tingkir.
(Source: Nationaal Archief)

In the monumental standard work *The History of Cartography* (1987–2015), Joseph Schwartzberg writes: "The few known surviving regional maps from the Malay world form a remarkably disparate group. In all, there are one map of western Javanese provenance, presumably of the late sixteenth century; another enigmatic and undatable batik map from either eastern Java or Bali; a third map from east-central Java, probably drawn in the mid-nineteenth century; and finally, a map from western Borneo tentatively dated 1826. There is no indication that any two of these were informed by a common cartographic tradition."[1]

The author was unaware that the National Archives of the Netherlands house a collection of eleven Javanese maps. Made in 1825, these depict the districts of what then was the regency (*kabupaten*) of Semarang, part of the residency of the same name. One of them is closely related to the third on Schwartzberg's list, which is kept in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, but the other ten are, as far as is known, unique. They are not mentioned in later studies about cartography in Southeast Asia, nor is the Paris map.

In 1876, the year the collection was acquired, the State Archivist described it as "eleven [maps] of Samarang Residency, produced by natives in their peculiar style, of which one is unlikely to find many

examples in European collections."[2] Not only are they works of art and cartographic science of a variety largely unknown. They are also sources of new scholarly insights into Javanese culture and history, as well as significant heritage produced at the interface of Javanese and European cultures.

Maps, makers, users

The eleven Javanese topographical maps in the National Archives are manuscripts of varying dimensions on conglutinated sheets of European rag paper. Most have colour codings in pastel colours, and their labels and legends are in Javanese characters. Their styles vary considerably [Figs. 1-2]. No contextual information survives about their provenance, but several have colophons that reveal that they were made by or for the *demang* (district head) of the district central to a given map. Inasmuch as the maps are dated, most purport to be from April 1825. Although they follow different cartographic standards, their dating, their being signed by a district head or his representative, and the fact that together they cover the area of Semarang regency, indicate that they were produced in the same historical context. Presumably, this was for the same purposes. These purposes, however, are unknown.

Who ordered the maps to be made is not mentioned. That this was an authoritative person or body is apparent from one of the colophons: the map in question is "respectfully presented" (*katur*) by the

"Commissioned Assistant District Head" (*Asisten Pulmak Demang Dhistrik*) on such and such a date. It may have been the office of the (Javanese) Regent or the (Dutch) Resident of Semarang.

The maps show, among other information, where the district in question bordered on other districts. They also depict major roads and rivers as well as the locations of towns, villages, and hamlets. Sometimes, other information is included as well – e.g., "parcels" (private estates, which were mostly owned by Europeans), a few specific buildings, natural features like volcanoes and even some trees, and the like. Some indicate distances along the main roads. All of this suggests that the maps served a variety of purposes relevant to the authorities: travel and transport, water infrastructure, administrative division, knowledge of habitation and the natural environment.

These were tense times. A few months later, the Java War would erupt (July 1825-1830), an uprising against colonial domination animated by the famous Prince Diponegoro.[3] The war would rage in some of the districts depicted on these maps. Less than five months after he signed and stamped his map, one district head, under the supreme command of a renowned Java-born Dutch planter, led 300 men to battle against an insurgent Javanese lord and his followers.[4] To be sure, there is no hint that these particular maps played a role in the war. But undoubtedly some of the area-specific technical knowledge recorded in them did. The maps and the uprising sprang from the same cultural and political ambience. Area, territory, roads and waterways, power, the European presence, colonial economics, population: these issues were on the agenda of both Dutch and Javanese rulers and lived among the inhabitants.

Have these maps ever been used? Their labels and legends are almost all in Javanese language and script, but some are provided with a Dutch clarification that reveals local knowledge. This suggests that the maps came into the hands of local Dutch authorities relatively soon. As noted, they may in fact have been made for the Semarang residency office. Although parts of the maps were thus perused by Dutch-reading and -writing people, whether Javanese-reading people ever used them is an open question. At any rate, over 50 years later, the maps were acquired by the National Archives from a book trader in Arnhem as part of the map collection of retired colonial official G. J. C. Schneither (1795–1877). Schneither had been private secretary to Governor-General G. A. G. P. van der Capellen (in office 1816-26) and owned many of the latter's archival records.[5] The maps may once have belonged together with these records. This would mean that they ended up in Batavia and were brought to the Netherlands by Schneither.

Certain features of the maps demonstrate that their makers were acquainted with

European maps or cartography. An evident case is the compass rose, which appears, in various shapes, on most of the maps. The maps' scales are never indicated and vary widely. Across different maps the same area tends to be represented with rather different contours. Usually the south is at the top, but not always. The colour codes vary as well, as do the other symbols, and not all maps provide the same types of topographic information. The rounded shapes and bright colours on the maps call to mind Javanese batik in the north-coast style. Some maps contain iconic symbols, such as the trees in Figure 1, that resemble manuscript illustrations from the scriptorium of the Regent of Semarang in 1812, whose style has been described by one of us as "unusual in comparison with other examples of Javanese pictorial art. While it cannot be called European, it is certainly more naturalistic than Javanese drawing generally."[6] It is clear, then, that Javanese cartography as represented in this collection was not strongly standardized (in line with Schwartzberg's impression quoted above), that the person or institution commissioning the maps did not stipulate strict and uniform rules for their making, and that (with exceptions) no measurements were taken as part of the surveying. At the same time, however, the maps were definitely not created in a pictorial and cartographic void.

The map of Srondhol District

As an example, let us briefly consider the map of the district of Srondhol [Fig. 2]. Cartographically and artistically this may be the most minimalist map in the collection. It is undated and unsigned. The different background colours denoting districts are listed in a key top-left. In the middle, top to bottom, runs a road. Another road runs to the left along the bottom. The former is the road connecting Semarang to the court cities in the interior, the latter is part of the infamous Great Post Road. Curly rivers criss-cross the map. In the top-right, three mountains loom. The map is dotted with more than 150 white blobs, each enclosing a toponym in Javanese script, symbolizing settlements.

In addition to these elements, the other maps depict more: bridges, milestones, stopping places, and numerous other features, varying from map to map. Thus there is no sign on the map of Srondhol of an interest in places of special cultural significance, like the location of the Battle of Srondhol or Jatingaleh 14 years earlier, where Dutch troops and Javanese from the inland royal courts failed miserably to prevent the British from establishing themselves in Java.[7] Even the military barracks that were in operation at Srondhol when the map was made are not marked. In similar vein, Gedhong Batu ('Stone Edifice'), the Sino-Islamic cave sanctuary and pilgrimage site that is famous to this day, is just another blob and name. There may

Fig. 2: Map of the district of Srondhol. (Source: Nationaal Archief)

be several reasons why such places or their unique features are lacking. Perhaps they were not essential to the map's function, or perhaps the requisite time, expertise, or local knowledge was unavailable. On the other hand, this map is one of only four or five featuring a separate background colour (here: yellow, or rather orange, in the bottom-right corner) to identify an area consisting of private estates, some of which (like on other maps) are identified by the names of their European lessees. Comparison with the other maps is likely to yield further meaningful patterns.

The map's iconicity is noteworthy, especially when contrasted with European cartography. The roads are grey and white, probably like the stone with which they were paved. Most of the rivers are painted light brown, their actual colour. Even the blobs with settlement names can be seen as iconic: Javanese hamlets and villages were enclaves in rice fields, dry fields, or wilderness. Some of the toponyms are descriptive, including Pasayangan (place of coppersmiths), Pandheyan (of blacksmiths), Pedhalangan (of puppeteers), Mranggen (of sheathers), and Pasapen (of pack-cows and their herders). No doubt in the bustling city of Semarang, such specialists and their work were much in demand. Unlike the rest of the map, the mountains – Mt. Ungaran and other volcanoes – are painted in perspective. Together with the placement of the labels, this positions the reader at the bottom, in the north, in Semarang, looking southwards towards the highlands in the interior of Java, beyond which the courts are located. Like in the other maps in the collection, Dutch

translations were later scribbled near some of the Javanese labels, by people with local knowledge who did not read Javanese.[8] But one label on this map was written in Roman letters from the outset: *Samarang* [Fig. 3]. This, the colonial metropole, was the mapmakers' vantage point.

Retelling the story behind the maps

These maps are of scholarly interest on several interconnected planes. Firstly, in their capacity as manuscripts, they are promising objects of art-historical, textual, codicological, and philological analysis, eminently suitable to serve as focal artefacts in a study of worldmaking.[9] Secondly, they provide insights into Javanese cartography, a field of study still in its infancy. The artistry of some of the maps is remarkable, but they are also significant as products of Javanese scientific practice. Thirdly, different as they are from the usual sources, these maps cast a new light on Javanese-colonial culture and its history. Their analysis and contextualization is yielding insights into Javanese spatial orientation and changing conceptions of area and place, as well as their visual representation. They reveal a variable interplay between Western and Native traditions regarding these matters. However Javanese they were, in key regards the maps were colonial by design. Their makers dated them in the Gregorian rather than the Muslim-Javanese calendar used at the courts. Not only did European elements feature among their cartographic

methods and conventions, the areas that formed the maps' basic organizational and representational principle were districts (*dhistrik, dhestrik*). These belonged to a European administrative division of Java that had been imposed quite recently. And indeed, European governors in the preceding three decades – Nicolaus Engelhard, Herman Willem Daendels, Raffles, Van der Capellen – had entertained a pronounced interest in mapping.

Fourthly, in conjunction with contextual study, the maps afford new insights into the history of Semarang and the areas to its south and east. This region was important for all of Java. By 1825, Semarang was one residency among many, but during the 18th century, under the VOC (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, United East India Company), the city had been the capital of the government of Java's North-Eastern Coast. The regents of Semarang[10] were patrons of arts and culture in the early 19th century.[11] The Dutch resident at the time the maps were made, H. J. Domis (1782–1842), had scholarly interests.[12] Towards the south, Semarang regency (and residency) bordered on the sultanate of Yogyakarta and the sunanate of Surakarta. The districts on the eleven maps are clustered around the northern two-thirds of the main thoroughfare connecting the Dutch administrative centre of Semarang and the former royal capital of Kartasura, where it forked to Yogyakarta and Surakarta. This major channel for travel, transport, communication, and interaction was of key political and economic importance. Just to the east of Semarang lay Demak, the location of the oldest and most venerable mosque of Java. The entire region was the theatre of serious socio-political tensions, which would soon erupt into violence.

Finally, as mentioned, these maps are Dutch–Indonesian cultural heritage. Apart from their general interest,[13] this gives them theoretical significance. In these maps, Javanese and Dutch components are fused into a rounded whole. This in itself is nothing special, but ostensibly these maps were produced in a period when the manner and degree to which Javanese and Dutch elements could be adapted to each other were still negotiable. This happened in different ways on these maps, allowing us to observe the give and take of intercultural (inter-scholarly, inter-artistic, inter-political) encounter comparatively within a single set of artefacts.

It is for these reasons that in 2022, a team of researchers based at Leiden University

in the Netherlands and Universitas Sebelas Maret in Indonesia – the authors of this article – joined hands to describe and interpret the collection and bring it to life.[14] The aim is to uncover the story behind these eleven maps, and to retell it in a jointly authored book.

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Notes

1 Joseph E. Schwartzberg, "Cartography in Southeast Asia," in *Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies*, ed. J. B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 766–767.
2 "elf [kaarten] van de residentie Samarang, door inlanders in hunnen eigenaardigen stijl vervaardigd, waarvan men waarschijnlijk in Europesche verzamelingen niet vele voorbeelden zal aantreffen" (L. Ph. C. van den Bergh, "Verslag van den Rijksarchivaris aangaande het Rijksarchief gedurende 1876," *Nederlandsche Staats-Courant* 91 (19 April 1877): 6).
3 Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1785–1855* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008).
4 A. W. P. Weitzel, *De oorlog op Java van 1825 tot 1830*, vol. 1 (Breda: Broese, 1852), 146.
5 See https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.21.007.57.
6 Bernard Arps, "Java and Madura," in Annabel Teh Gallop with Bernard Arps, *Golden Letters: Writing Traditions of Indonesia* (London: British Library, 1991), 97.
7 See William Thorn, *Memoir of the Conquest of Java, with the Subsequent Operations of the British Forces, in the Oriental Archipelago* (London: Egerton, 1815), 94–100 and the map between pp. 98–99, and J. Hageman, "De Engelschen op Java," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 6 (1857): 366–67.
8 As demonstrated by certain details of the Dutch clarifications.
9 Bernard Arps, *Tall Tree, Nest of the Wind: The Javanese Shadow-Play Dewa Ruci Performed by Ki Anom Soeroto. A Study in Performance Philology* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2016).
10 For more information on the regents of Semarang in this period, see: H. J. de Graaf, "Het Semarangse geslacht Bustam in de 18e en 19e eeuw: afkomst en jeugd van Radèn Salèh," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 135, nos. 2–3 (1979): 252–81.
11 Arps, "Java and Madura," 97–99.
12 Hans Groot, *Van Batavia naar Weltevreden: Het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen 1778–1867* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2009), 239–43.
13 From 20 February to 22 October 2023 several of the maps are on display in the exhibition "On the Map / Op de kaart" at the Nationaal Archief in The Hague. See https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/onthemap.
14 The first stages of the project are supported additionally by the Leids Universiteits Fonds / Fonds voor Zuidoost-Aziatische kunst, and the Philippus Corts Fund.

Fig. 3: Map of Srondhol, detail. (Source: Nationaal Archief)

Fig. 1 (below): A pith helmet made in Singapore, 1940s. Source: Overseas Chinese History Museum (Accession No. C10673).

The Pith Helmet in Chinese Communities

Cultural and Symbolic Transformations

Wang Wenxin

The pith helmet – also known as the "solar topee," "topi," or "safari helmet" – is a type of hat typically made from pith or cork material. Originally designed to shield the wearer from the sun and heat [Fig. 1], this headgear was adopted by European forces during the 19th century and gained widespread popularity in colonized regions. As such, it has become an iconic symbol of colonialism and is a reminder of the history of imperialism.

Fig. 2 (above): Group portrait of planters with Javanese house-workers and a Chinese foreman in the garden of Medan Estate Company, ca. 1885, 19.6 x 25.5 cm. Source: Tropenmuseum (Accession No. TM-60001281).

Fig. 3 (left): Portrait of two Chinese foremen of the Singkep Tin Maatschappij, 13 x 18 cm, Source: Tropenmuseum (Accession No. TM-10005290).

Fig. 4 (above): Sun Yat-sen holding a pith helmet at Wan Qing Yuan, 1905, 14.8 x 29.3 cm. Source: National Museum of Singapore (Accession No. 2010-03364).

Interestingly, in China, both Sun Yat-sen (孙中山, 1866-1925) and Mao Zedong (毛泽东, 1893-1976), two of the most prominent figures in the country's modern history, were known to wear pith helmets in public. This article explores the adoption of the pith helmet in Chinese communities, both within mainland China and beyond, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It will also examine how the helmet's cultural and symbolic meanings have transformed over time.

The Pith Helmet in Colonialism

The pith helmet has been around at least since the mid-19th century, when European colonial expansion into tropical and subtropical regions necessitated protective headwear for military personnel. The helmet was typically covered with white cloth and featured a cloth band (puggaree), as well as small ventilation holes. It was initially popular among military personnel and soon became widely worn by other Europeans such as police officers, explorers, archaeologists, botanists, and even tourists in Asia and Africa. While the pith helmet was deeply involved in European colonial activities, it also came to reflect a strong physical anthropological colonialism. The belief that light-skinned Europeans were more susceptible to the intense sunlight of the tropics than the natives further perpetuated the notion of European superiority.

In the mid-19th century, the Dutch East Indies saw the establishment of rubber plantations, which led to the widespread use of the pith helmet among planters. Europeans on these plantations often wore all-white outfits, including a distinctive jacket and trousers, accompanied by a white pith helmet. This attire served to distinguish them from the local labourers and signal their privileged status [Fig.2].[1] Additionally, the Dutch colonial police force also used the helmet while on patrol in the region, making the helmet a marker of distinction and a symbol of authority.

Towards the end of the 19th century, it became increasingly common for Chinese men in the Dutch Indies and Straits Settlement to adopt the fashion of wearing a pith helmet. This headwear was typically paired with a Western-style white suit known as *baju tutup* in Indonesian, which featured a low, single-layer collar. This sartorial choice was reminiscent of the outfits worn by the colonial elite, suggesting that Chinese communities were imitating the dress of their colonial overseers.

One example of this fashion trend among Chinese men is a series of photographs featuring employees of the Singkep Tin Company in the Riau Archipelago of the Dutch East Indies. The series was submitted by the company to the Colonial Institute Association in Amsterdam in 1915 in response to a call for visual material of the colony.[2] The photographs included several posed portraits of Chinese employees wearing pith helmets [Fig. 3]. This indicates that the pith helmet had already gained popularity among some local Chinese who had more interactions with the Western community through their occupations as company clerks and officials. Their dress made them distinct from new Chinese immigrants, or xinke 新客 ("new guests"), who stuck to traditional Chinese clothing.

The Pith Helmet and the Revolutionary Leader Sun Yat-sen

During the late 19th century, the rise of nationalism in Chinese communities, both within and outside China, was significant. Despite the fact that most of the Chinese men residing abroad were still adhering to the hairstyles prescribed by the Qing government, some Straits Chinese men initiated a movement to cut off their long braids hanging down their backs, a style associated with the Manchu's rule which they had deemed to be the cause of the nation's weakness and poverty.

The late 19th century also marked the beginning of Sun Yat-sen's political career. As the son of poor farmers, he received an education at a missionary school in Hong Kong. By the 1890s, he had attempted to organize overseas dissident Chinese groups against the Manchu rule. One of his target groups was the Straits Chinese. In 1905, Sun Yat-sen visited Singapore to meet with local revolutionary Chinese leaders. An historic photograph was taken at *Wan Qing Yuan* (later the "Evening Garden") during their meeting [Fig. 4], wherein Sun Yat-sen is wearing all-white clothing and holding a khaki pith helmet in his hands. Two Singapore-born *penarakans* (people of mixed Chinese and Malay/Indonesian heritage), Teo Eng Hock (张永福, second from the left in the front row) and Goh Ngo Sow (吴悟叟, first from the left in the back row), are also wearing or holding their own

Fig. 5 (above): Sun Yat-sen arrived at Guangzhou, July 17, 1917. Source: Shanghai Sun Yat-sen's Former Residence Museum (Accession No. unknown).

Fig. 6 (above): Portrait of Sun Yat-sen, 1930s, 151 x 75.2 cm. Source: National Museum of Singapore (Accession No. 2009-01786).

Fig. 7 (left): Mao Zedong (second from the left) in a pith helmet before his departure from Yan'an to Chongqing, August 28, 1945. Source: Chinese Photographers Association.

helmets. Teo apparently had his braid cut, like many of the men appearing in this photograph, including Sun.

This is the earliest known photograph of Sun Yat-sen wearing a pith helmet, and his entire appearance is notably different from what he previously wore in Honolulu, Hong Kong, and Tokyo. Considering Sun's situation at that time, it is evident that his attire was an attempt to connect with potential allies and followers of the Chinese communities in Straits Settlements. His clothing represents his efforts to establish a rapport with locals and garner resources through their financial support. His efforts paid off: the Singapore chapter of Tong Meng Hui (The Chinese Revolutionary Alliance) was successfully founded upon his visit, which assumed a pivotal role in the 1911 revolution to come.

The outbreak of the 1911 revolution marked the collapse of the Qing dynasty and resulted in the founding of the Republic of China the next year. Sun Yat-sen was a protagonist in this revolution and returned to China as its leader. From the late 1910s until his death, Sun frequently appeared in public wearing a unique style of pith helmet with an all-white suit [Fig. 5].[3] The helmet became a part of his public image in Chinese communities, to the

extent that even after his death, he was commemorated in Singapore as such [Fig. 6].[4]

The adoption of pith helmets by Chinese revolutionary leaders and Chinese men returning from overseas was a symbolic repudiation of traditional Chinese customs. It served as a manifestation of their allegiance to revolutionary principles, following in the footsteps of Sun Yat-sen and others. Over time, the pith helmet underwent a remarkable transformation from a colonial emblem to a cultural icon of revolution and nationalism. Its significance was underscored on August 28, 1945, when Mao Zedong flew from Yan'an to Chongqing, the wartime capital of China, to deliberate about the future of the Communist Party of China (CCP) and its relationship with the Kuomintang (KMT) in the aftermath of the second Sino-Japanese War. Mao's unusual decision to wear a pith helmet during his departure was likely deliberate, as he was well aware that what he wore would be the focus of media attention [Fig.7]. The headgear elicited a natural association with Sun Yat-sen, and by extension, with his political legacy, further cementing Mao's credentials as a successor to Sun.

The Pith Helmets as Chinese Goods

Although it is challenging to assess Sun's influence on the headgear of the masses, the popularity of pith helmets in Chinese communities since the 1920s was a testament to the success of his image. Local pith helmet hatters burgeoned in Asian cities such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Bangkok, and Guangzhou in the 1920s. Most of these were owned and controlled by the Chinese.[5] The use of alternative local materials instead of pith and cork made the helmets cheaper and more accessible to the general public, transforming them from expensive European imports into affordable and fashionable items. As a result, the pith helmet became increasingly indigenized, and its exotic status weakened.

With the development of national industry, the production of pith helmets underwent a transformation, with the indigenization of production and the use of alternative materials. The pith helmet became a "national good," associated with strong nationalist sentiment. One example of this transformation is seen

in the pith helmets produced and advertised by the rubber company of Tan Kah Kee (陈嘉庚, 1874-1961) in the 1930s. The advertisement is a rhymed poem, part of which reads: "They are half the price (of the imported ones). But how can they come so cheap? / Crafted by the hands of Chinese female workers, they should be promoted to recover the losses of our national interests. / Please show your sympathy and support. Make a purchase (of our products) and stand with us."[6]

The advertisement for the pith helmets emphasized their low cost and the fact that they were made by Chinese female workers, thus promoting the idea of supporting Chinese national industry, even though Tan's business empire was rooted in Singapore. By linking the production of pith helmets with Chinese nationalism, the advertisement shifted the cultural symbol of the helmet from "colonialism" to "revolutionary" and ultimately to "national" and "patriotic." This is also the transformation trajectory of this headwear in Chinese communities until it gradually became outdated in 1950s.

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Notes

1 Bellanta and Cramer's paper has scrutinized the so-called "tropical whites" worn with pith helmets in tropical societies colonized by European powers, indicating that this type of menswear was not peculiar to the Straits Settlement, but rather was popular in a much larger area including Asia and Australia. See Melissa Bellanta and Lorinda Cramer, "Tropical Whites: Hegemonic Masculinity and Menswear at the Crossroads of Australia and Asia, 1900—1939," *Gender & History* (2023), https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0424.12640.
2 Anouk Mansfeld, "Studio Portraits of Employees at the Singkep Tin Company, Riau Archipelago," in *Photographs of the Netherlands East Indies at the Tropenmuseum*. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers, 2012, p.126.
3 One of the pith helmets once worn by Sun Yat-sen is now preserved and exhibited at The Former Residence of Song Qingling in Shanghai, China. It is a normal Khaki pith helmet, and not the one that appears in Fig. 5, which had a thick and coarse surface, making it distinct in appearance.
4 Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (previously the Wan Qing Yuan) displays a modern oil painting on canvas entitled "Sun and Chinatown a Century Ago" which depicts Sun standing in the crowd and holding a white pith helmet.
5 Xianggang gongshang ribao bianjibu (香港工商日报编辑部), *Xianggang huazi gongchang diaochalu* (A Survey of Chinese Factories in Hong Kong 香港华资工厂调查录), Published by Gongshang ribao yingyebu (工商日报营业部), 1934, p.83; "Xinjiapo huaqiao zhongyao qiye zhi gaikuang: liu zhimaoye" (Introduction to the major companies of overseas Chinese in Singapore: No. 6 Hatters 新加坡华侨重要企业之概况:（六）制帽业), Qiaowu yuebao 侨务月报, No. 5-6 (1936), pp. 151-152; "Huaqiao zai xian zhi zhimaoye" (Overseas Chinese Hatters in Thailand 华侨在暹之制帽业), Qiaowu yuebao 侨务月报, No. 7-8 (1936), 106-107.
6 Nanyang Siang Pau (南洋商报), Feburary 4, 1924, p.12. Nanyang Siang Pau, or Nanyang Business Daily, was also founded by Tan Kah Kee. The Chinese poem reads as follows: 售价廉半数，何得许价宜。中国女工手，提倡挽漏卮。诸君表同情，须购我无弃。挽漏卮 wan lou zhi (lit. plug the hole in the wine cup) was a popular Chinese expression during that time, often used to convey the idea of "developing the national industry and recovering the losses caused by the dumping of forgein goods."

Anthropology in Timor-Leste

Highlights from the last twenty years

Alberto Fidalgo Castro

I will organize the works presented here by the countries where the research was produced: Australia, Brazil, Portugal, Timor-Leste. Also, as a final summary I will reflect on some of the most important features that the research has predominantly focused on.

Australian anthropology

One of the indisputable epicenters of anthropological research on Timor is located in Australia, more specifically at the Australian National University (ANU). A key figure is James J. Fox, who, through his students, has had a major influence on anthropological studies of Timor-Leste. Fox pioneered anthropological research at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS), where many scholars completed their doctoral dissertations on Eastern Indonesia.

Among those students, one who did fieldwork in West Timor was Andrew McWilliam. Now at Western Sydney University, he has conducted fieldwork among the Fataluku ethnolinguistic group and has published extensively on many topics, such as customary access to land, economy, and identity. While at ANU, he also co-supervised Angie Bexley's doctoral research. In her 2009 thesis *(Youth at the Crossroads: The Politics of Identity and Belonging in Timor-Leste)*, she explores the mechanisms that Timorese youth employ to express and create new identities differentiated from the victimization and politicization of previous generations that struggled for independence.[1] Michael Rose was another of McWilliam's students at ANU who did his 2017 doctoral dissertation with the Oecussi enclave as the ethnographic background. Entitled *Between Kase (Foreign) and Meto (Indigenous). Highland Spirits and Global Aspirations in the Oecussi Enclave*, Rose explores a theme with a long tradition in the anthropological literature of the Eastern Indonesian region: that of binary oppositions and how these modulate the idea of Timorese nationality and give meaning to large infrastructure projects.

Also at ANU, Dionisio Babo-Soares, a Timorese national, worked on his doctoral thesis (*Branching from the Trunk: East Timorese Perceptions of Nationalism in Transition*, 2003) on Timorese perceptions of their political history and national identity. Later, he also became interested in the political and legal construction of the Timorese State and how it considers the institutions of the traditional social organization.

In addition to Fox's alumni, other Australian anthropologists have conducted research on the country. One of these is Susanna Barnes, who is now at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. In the research for her doctoral study (*Customary Renewal and the Pursuit of Power and Prosperity in Post-Occupation East Timor: A Case-Study from Babulo, Uato-Lari*, 2017), she analyzes how what has been dubbed the "resurgence of tradition" in independent Timor-Leste can be defined as the way that the people shape and give meaning to their social interactions, drawing on some key features of their modes of existence such as "the flow of life" principle or the logic of precedence.

Lisa Palmer, a human geographer herself, has also made interesting contributions to the social and anthropological understanding of the country. In her works, she has analyzed human-environment relationships (especially with water) in the postcolonial context and has explored a range of encounters (case studies) with people related to Timor from her personal life. In doing so she has explored central elements of Timorese society and culture: the social institution of houses, the concept of *lulik* (taboo), etc.[2] Chris Shepherd, during his time at ANU, analyzed the process of rural development and environmental conservation in Timor from a historical perspective.[3] More recently, he has explored animism transformations through case studies of encounters with external actors (colonial and church ethnographers, naturalists, anthropologists).[4]

The beginnings of professional anthropological research in what is today Timor-Leste started during the last years of Portuguese colonial rule and came to a halt during the Indonesian occupation (1975-1999), when anthropological studies were mostly carried out under the close supervision of the Indonesian state itself. After the restoration of independence and the return of sovereignty, the first new nation of the 21st century witnessed the arrival of many anthropologists from different parts of the world eager to conduct fieldwork in a country that had been closed to foreign researchers for 24 years. In this piece, I provide an overview of the anthropological literature in Timor-Leste since the recovery of its sovereignty (2002) until the present day. My intention here is not to carry out a critical evaluation of the literature corpus of works done during this period, but rather to present a quick snapshot of the scholarly anthropological work that the country has witnessed.

Sara Niner has focused on analyses of the role of women in Timorese history, as well as their present role in the economy and politics. In addition, she has also investigated and has a strong focus on the relevance that Timorese women have in social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of the country.[5]

In addition to those mentioned here in more detail, it is also worth acknowledging the work carried out by other Australian-based academics such as Annette Marie Field (*Places of Suffering and Pathways to Healing: Post-Conflict Life in Bidau, East Timor*, PhD diss., James Cook University, 2004) and Pyone Myat Thu (*Negotiating Displacement: A Study of Land and Livelihoods in Rural East Timor*, PhD diss., ANU, 2012).

Brazilian anthropology

In Brazil we found a group of researchers led by two professors who conducted fieldwork for their doctoral dissertations in the early 2000s and have remained engaged in Timor-Leste's scholarship ever since: Kelly Silva with a 2004 thesis entitled (*Paradoxos da autodeterminação: a construção do Estado-Nação e práticas da ONU em Timor-Leste and Daniel Simião's As donas da palavra. Gênero, justiça e a invenção da violência doméstica em Timor-Leste*, 2005). Currently they both serve as professors at the University of Brasília. They have researched a range of topics on the formation of the nation-state of Timor-Leste and their articulation and relationship with other realities in the country, including analyzing the processes of social change brought about by the introduction of modernization paradigms. More recently, they have focused on the analysis of economic paradigm shifts at the local and national level.

Silva leads the Economic and Globalization Studies Laboratory (LEEG). Under her supervision, three doctoral theses have been defended in recent years: that of Carlos Andrés Oviedo Ospina, *De quem é a terra?" Práticas de governo e construções de Estado em Timor-Leste. Etnografía do levantamento cadastral no município de Ermera*, where he studies the cadastral survey procedures carried out by the state as an element of the modernization process that has caused the reification of the land; that of Renata Nogueira da Silva, *Tanbasá sa'e foho? Reprodução e transformação da vida social das casas sagradas no Timor-Leste pós-colonial*, about the patrimonialization processes of the country's *lulik* (sacred) houses and the way in which these institutions are experienced by the Timorese; and, finally, that of Alexandre Jorge de Medeiros Fernández, *Nação florindo nas casas: A produção de parentes e nacionais num ambiente camponês em Timor-Leste*, where he analyzes how the material environmental conditions of a region of the country (Oecussi) have contributed to the processes of subjectivation through which people identify themselves as members (relatives) from a house (descent group) and as Timorese nationals. For his part, Daniel S. Simião began an interesting work of visual anthropology from the Laboratory of Social Interactions' Images and Records (IRIS) that has crystallized at present into a couple of ethnographic films (*Sé mak sala tenkeser selu sala*, 2011 & *Pás ho dame*, 2009).

In addition to the research carried out at the University of Brasília, it is worth noting the research of Alessandro Boarccaech, who defended his doctoral thesis at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in 2011 and is currently working at the National

Fig. 1: People dancing during the inauguration of a sacred house in Maubara. (Photo by the author, 2011).

University Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL). His thesis, later published as a book (*A diferença entre os Iguais. São Paulo: Porto de Idéias*, 2013), presents an ethnography resulting from his fieldwork among the *humangili* population of Atauro island, focusing on religious phenomena and exploring the relationships between Catholics and local belief systems (i.e., ancestral cults and animism).

Portuguese anthropology

Portuguese anthropologists have also left their mark on Timor-Leste. One of them is Lucio Sousa, from the Universidade Aberta (UAb), who carried out his doctoral thesis (*An tia: Partilha ritual e organização social entre os bunak de Lamak Hitu, Bobonaro, Timor-Leste*, 2010) on the way in which some Búnak populations have reconstructed their social organization and their ritual practices in a context of sociopolitical change in a post-conflict situation.

Paulo Castro Seixas, first at Fernando Pessoa University and subsequently at the University of Lisbon, has researched urban post-colonial Dili in the context of transition. He has also examined the international relations of the country both with Portugal and, more recently, as a member of ASEAN.[6] From the University of Lisbon as well, there is Susana de Matos Viegas,[7] who has been conducting research in Timor-Leste among Fataluku language-speaking communities since 2012.

Other interesting work is carried out by the historian and anthropologist Ricardo Roque, who has worked on the history of colonial anthropology of Portuguese Timor and colonial mimesis – as a technology of power – of the colonial administration.[8]

Some other works that are worth mentioning are those written by the Dutch-Portuguese Maria Johanna Schouten and by Frederico Delgado Rosa. Although Schouten's main area of research has been Indonesia's Minahasa region, she has also produced an interesting body of work on history and anthropology, analyzing the historical partition of the island, researching the Portuguese colonial presence, and archiving anthropological studies of the country. Rosa, for his part, has mainly put his focus on the anthropological analysis of the ethnographies written by the Catholic missionaries during Portuguese colonial rule. Finally, we should mention Helena Borges, who in her doctoral thesis (*Crenças, atitudes e práticas de saúde reprodutiva em Timor-Leste: Uma abordagem intercultural*, Universidade Aberta, 2012) carried out a comparative study on beliefs, attitudes, and practices on reproductive health in ten of the 13 Timorese districts (now municipalities).

Timorese works of anthropological interest

Regarding the contributions made by Timorese researchers, we do not find the works of many professional anthropologists during this period. Although there were a few professionally trained Timorese anthropologists during the 1990s, most of them did not publish any academic works after 2002. This is the case for Father Apolinário Maria Apparicio Guterres, Father Filomeno Simão Jacob Abel, and Justino Maria Aparicio Guterres. All of them hold public positions in the service of either the state or the Church.

The only professionally trained anthropologist that published works after independence was a student of Fox, Dionisio Babo-Soares. His anthropological contributions came to a halt after he became an active member of the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (Portuguese: Congresso Nacional de Reconstrução de Timor, CNRT), a political party in which he served as Minister for the V, VI, and VIII Constitutional Governments.

In addition to the contributions made by Babo-Soares, those of Benjamin de Araújo e Côrte-Real, a sociolinguist analyzing themes of mambai oral literature, stand out. Also, some other important works were produced by Vicente Paulino, on communication and culture; Josh Trinidade, on the hybridization of the social organization of the state and traditional society and the notion of the *lulik* as the core of Timorese cultural values; Irta de Araújo, about the sacred aspects of Timorese midwives; and Valente de Araújo, on oral narratives and rituals of production.

Other countries

From the United States, the most interesting works in recent years have been those written by Laura Yoder, Prash Naidu, and Gabriel Tusinski. Yoder did her doctoral thesis (*Custom, Codification, Collaboration: Integrating the Legacies of Land and Forest Authorities in Oecusse Enclave, East Timor*, 2003) at Yale University on the forms of land management used by local institutions during the different political regimes through which the country has passed. Naidu, who works at Arcadia University, completed his thesis (*Sea-Change: Mambai Sensory Practices and Hydrocarbon Exploitation in Timor-Leste*, 2019) at the University of Michigan on the ways in which Mambai-language speakers in the Southwest perceive and make sense of socio-ecological changes in their living environment. For his part, Gabriel Tusinski (now at Singapore University of Technology and Design), analyzes in his thesis *The Spectral City: Cultural Belonging, Urban Space, and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Dili, Timor-Leste* (University of Chicago, 2015) how post-conflict urban architectural reconstruction projects and nation-building discourses revitalize indigenous Timorese sensibilities about kinship based on the idea of going home while. At the same time, Tusinski shows that Timorese frame these kinship practices as incompatible with democratic ideals. It is also worth mentioning the work undertaken by another one of James Fox's students, Andrea K. Molnar, at Northern Illinois University before her retirement. She conducted fieldwork among the Kémak-speaking people of Atsabe (Ermera) during the early 2000s and published several articles on political conflict and identity, as well as a book that provides an overview of the country's politics, history, and culture.[9]

From the United Kingdom, another anthropologist who has been doing interesting work is Judith Bovensiepen. A German national herself, she received her doctorate from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2010 and became professor at the University of Kent afterwards. She has worked on topics such as the stranger-king theory, precedence, binary oppositions, house societies, and the socioeconomic prospects of the country.[10] Also, under her supervision, Laura Bourke has recently defended her doctoral dissertation, *Reproducing Life After Conflict: Population, Prosperity, and Potent Landscapes in Timor-Leste* (2022), in which she explores the approaches and understandings that different agents (state, church, local communities, etc.) have towards reproduction in a post-conflict scenario.

Another scholar who did some research at the beginning of the 2000s was Alexander Loch, a German national who wrote his doctoral dissertation (later published in book form in 2007's *Haus, Handy & Halleluja. Psychosoziale Rekonstruktion in Osttimor*) on post-conflict dynamics in the country from a psychosocial reconstruction perspective. Also in Germany, Tanja Hohe did her doctoral research at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in 2004 (*Clash of Paradigms in East Timor. Introducing Anthropology into State-Building*), where she analyzed Timor-Leste's state-building process as a clash of paradigms between United Nations peacekeepers and those of the local populations.

In Denmark, at Aarhus University, Maj Nygaard-Christensen carried out her doctoral research on humanitarian interventions, democratization processes, and political imaginaries (*When Utopia Fails: Political Dreams and Imaginaries of Democracy in Timor-Leste*, Aarhus Universitet, 2010). Together with Angie Bexley, she also edited a volume on fieldwork in the country.[11] Another Danish National, Henri Myrttinen, did his 2010 doctoral dissertation (*Histories of Violence, States of Denial - Militias, Martial Arts and Masculinity in Timor-Leste*) at the University of Kwazulu-Natal (South Africa) on the relationship between the construction of male gender identity and urban violence among young Timorese.

In France, there is the 2018 doctoral thesis defended at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris by the cultural geographer Bruna Crespi (*Sacralité, rituels et développement chez les bunaq et tetun de la région de Suai, Timor Oriental*). In her thesis, Crespi analyzes the development of megaprojects in South Timor-Leste and the ways in which they affect local notions of territoriality.

In Spain, anthropological fieldwork in the country was carried out by a team from the University of A Coruña between 2006 and 2013. I did my own PhD dissertation (*Dinámicas políticas y económicas en el dominio ritual y la vida cotidiana en Timor Oriental. Estudios de caso desde la aldea de Faulara*) there, analyzing the role of rituals in rural society and exploring the transformations within the ritual domain which resulted from the processes of drastic change in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres.

Final remarks

In the first years of independence, anthropological exploration was closely linked to the need to enact specific policies for the construction and development of the country. At that time, a good part of the studies that were carried out within academia also focused their attention on the national reconstruction process. In this regard, the role of the United Nations in the construction of the Timorese nation-state has been extensively analyzed by authors such as Kelly Silva and Tanja Hohe. Likewise, research was carried out on the psychosocial reconstruction of a population that, after decades of suffering and struggle, was facing a new, more peaceful scenario. The relations between the state, local institutions, local forms of governance and existence can be found in research on the hybridization of the state-traditional society, justice, natural resource management, access to and ownership of land, and the local culture. Thus, we find that the initial explosion of works has focused enough on the analysis of social problems as well as on political anthropological themes with an applied perspective.

After the end of the United Nations missions, anthropological research has somewhat lost its strong applied orientation and has focused on other classical topics closer to academic anthropology: home societies, cultural values, identity, social hierarchies and precedence, modes of existence, society-state relations, and so on. Even while dealing with classical anthropological issues, the interest in analyzing the social problems of the country has been maintained.

Among all these issues, it is probably that of economic life that has received the most attention in recent years. Andrew McWilliam had already studied how economic security at the domestic and local level may be the underlying reason for the cultural revitalization of traditions in the country. He has stated that ritual exchanges experienced in the country could be seen as a palliative mechanism that was used to redistribute resources when Timor-Leste temporarily left the world market economy after its independence.[12] In my thesis, I also explore the issue of the regime of ritual exchanges, insofar as they convey the goods and means of production of local economies, suggesting that they would function as an informal economic social security network. Bovensiepen, on the other hand,[13] has been concerned about the country's visions of the future, especially with regard to economic infrastructure and oil exploitation macro-projects. More recently, Kelly Silva, Lisa Palmer, and Teresa Cunha have edited a volume specifically dedicated to analyzing how different relationships pertaining to supply, production, distribution, and consumption mechanisms are the result of the plurality of the modes of existence of the daily life of the Timorese.[14]

As a negative element, it should be noted that only a small number of Timorese nationals have done anthropological research. Most Timorese professional anthropologists have held positions of responsibility that have kept them away from scientific research. This, added to the fact that there is no academic institution specifically dedicated to anthropological research or teaching in the country, has been one of the elements that has impeded social anthropology on Timor-Leste being carried out by its own citizens. Having national anthropologists analyzing their own country would certainly enrich the quality of the anthropological analysis of it.

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Lessons from the (Post)colonial Hong Kong Protests

Pui Chi Lai

Since 2019, a few documentaries and films have been produced about the Hong Kong protests that emerged from the proposed Extradition Bill Amendment by the Hong Kong government. To name a few: *Inside the Red Brick Walls* (2020) directed by Hong Kong Documentary Filmmakers, *Revolution of Our Times* (2021) by Kiwi Chow, *The Hong Konger* (2022) by Ron Holwerda, and *If We Burn* (2023) by James Leong and Lynn Lee. These films depict on-site conversations and considerations, portraying the social unrest in Hong Kong society from the protesters' point of view.

The documentary film *Blue Island* (2022) by Chan Tze Woon also tells a story of protesters in Hong Kong. More specifically, it showcases several people who participated in the 1967 riots in Hong Kong, 1989 Tiananmen protests in Beijing, and the 2019 protest movement in Hong Kong. After watching *Blue Island*, I felt the urge to write an essay about protest movements in Hong Kong. The way in which the film depicts the three events alongside each other is very interesting and triggers a discussion on how to interpret these protests. In this essay I will reflect on the comparison of the 1967 riots and 2019 protests specifically, as they both took place in Hong Kong. The analysis of these two events will reveal that, while they emerged in different periods under different political and ruling regimes, there are indeed similarities between them. This provides a context to better understand the motives of protesters to participate in either one of the movements in Hong Kong.

Colonial and post-colonial Hong Kong

To put these events into context, a brief overview of the colonial and post-colonial development of Hong Kong is necessary. The British colonised Hong Kong in 1841 after the Second Opium War, and they officially withdrew from the territory in 1997. However, formally speaking, Hong Kong (together with Macao), already lost its colonial status in 1972. China argued that Hong Kong and Macao belong to China, and on its request, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to remove Hong Kong and Macao from the list of territories to which the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was applicable. Consequently, not only did these areas lose colonial status, but also their right to self-determination. However, Hong Kong was often still referred to as a colony, despite the absence of this formal status, because the British remained in this territory.[1]

It was not until 1984 that the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed by the United Kingdom and China to regulate the actual handover of Hong Kong from the British to the Chinese in 1997. The Basic Law and One Country Two Systems Principle would be implemented for 50 years to develop Hong Kong, including democratic developments, while the economic and political interests of both the United Kingdom and China were also considered. A salient detail is that Hong Kong itself was not involved as a negotiating partner in the plans for its future. Hong Kong society has often been referred to as an apolitical society.[2] However, the masses did not always keep silent, as the 1967 and 2019 protests show.

The 1967 riots and 2019 protests

In 1967, there was an industrial dispute at an artificial flower factory. Workers demanded immediate release of their arrested colleagues, punishment of lawbreakers, guarantee of the safety of the workers, and no interferences of the police force in labour disputes. However, the Chinese government intervened in this affair, and spurred by the Cultural Revolution in mainland China, the pro-communist leftists in colonial Hong Kong saw their chance to also challenge the British ruling power in this territory.[3] The industrial dispute evolved into wider anti-colonial riots with violent incidents, shaking the territory's politics. Protesters were arrested while acting against the British ruling power. However, the unrest in society did not remain for a long time, as the colonial government had the ability to respond properly to the unsatisfied Chinese masses. For example, housing solutions were offered for social improvement. Eventually, the Chinese people had no reason to fight against the government. Stability in Hong Kong society was restored, and the British colonisers remained the ruling power.[4]

In 2019, Hong Kong shook the world with a series of protests that emerged from the introduction of an Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill by the Hong Kong government. This amendment follows a criminal offence committed by a Hong Konger in Taiwan, who fled to Hong Kong and could not be extradited because of the absence of such an agreement. The Hong Kong government proposed to establish a mechanism whereby people in Hong Kong could be extradited to Taiwan, but also to Macau and Mainland China. The fear about this amendment was that no fair trial could be guaranteed for people extradited to China, considering its different legal system and practice. Eventually, the Hong Kong government withdrew the proposition of the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill. However, the 2019 protests took a lot of people to the streets, voicing their dissatisfaction towards the Beijing-favoured Hong Kong government, thereby jeopardising the power and position of the government in society. It started out as a peaceful protest, but violent incidents also appeared later. To counter the unrest, the National Security Law was passed and implemented in Hong Kong by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on 30 June 2020. Secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign parties is considered a crime under this law, which has a very vague and broad scope. While the law is not only restricted to the area and/or the people of Hong Kong, currently mainly people in Hong Kong are being arrested, prosecuted, and convicted. Judicial cases are handled by judges who are appointed by the Hong Kong government. Jury trials, a practice that was implemented by the British colonisers in Hong Kong following their judicial common law system, are put aside. Since the enactment of the National Security Law, in combination with the strict COVID-19 measures in Hong Kong, mass protests were not organised in Hong Kong anymore, and unrest in society seems to have faded away. But the question is whether stability in Hong Kong society is actually restored.

Legitimacy of the ruling power

Some may find it difficult to compare the 1967 riots and 2019 protests, as there are many differences between them. Both are generally addressed differently as riots and protests, respectively. The former emerged from an industrial dispute, while the latter emerged from a proposed law amendment by the government. The protesters in the colonial period were leftist-communists, while the protesters in contemporary Hong Kong are pro-democracy supporters. The event in 1967 was directed against the British colonial regime, and the events of 2019 were directed towards the Hong Kong and Chinese regime. As the 1967 riots emerged under the British, rights and freedoms were restricted due to the colonial context. Under the Sino-British Joint Declaration, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is implemented, meaning that during the 2019 protests, people in Hong Kong enjoy rights such as freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of speech, and rights to due process and a fair trial.

The similarity between the 1967 riots and the 2019 protests is that eventually, both events challenged the ruling power in Hong Kong, both equally striving for their own interests and rights. They reveal the complicated power relations in society, which change in time due to different situations and because of sociopolitical and cultural developments.

The 1967 riots and the 2019 protests in Hong Kong show the situation and developments of this society during the British colonial ruling period and the post-colonial period, in which Hong Kong operates as a Special Administrative Region. The events also reflect how the change of ruling power impacted the relationship between the government and society in Hong Kong. Despite the dissatisfaction of the Chinese masses in colonial Hong Kong towards the British ruling power, the legitimacy of the latter was not put at risk because the administration could deal with the social demands of the public. However, in contemporary Hong Kong, there seems to be a crisis of legitimacy. The question now is whether the ruling government is actually meeting the social demands of society by implementing the National Security Law, or whether this Law is rather a measure to repress social unrest. One may wonder if and how long Hong Kong will remain stable. This challenges both the Hong Kong government and the public to think about their interests. What are the aims and political directions for Hong Kong's future? (How) can the democratic development in Hong Kong evolve? This specific situation may also serve as an important case study for the international order on government-public relationships in their search for peace and stability in the midst of a changing society.

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Fig. 1 (above left): The 1967 Hong Kong riot.
(Photo by Roger W, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.)
Fig. 2 (above right): 2019 Demonstration in Hong Kong ("Demonstration Hong Kong 10" by Studio Incendo, licensed under CC BY 2.0.)

Is There Any Hope for Hong Kong?

Reflections on the History of Protests in Hong Kong through the Movie *Blue Island*

Lokman Tsui

If there is any hope for Hong Kong, as a place where we can be free to be ourselves, where we can decide our own future, it is in knowing that Hong Kong people have been protesting against repression, generation after generation.

On a rainy, windy and cold Sunday afternoon, I went to watch a screening of *Blue Island*, a movie about Hong Kong protests.[1] A friend of mine said he was afraid he would be "depressed for weeks" if he would watch it with me, so he would not go, to protect himself. If I am honest, I shared the same concern about watching a film that so clearly advertises itself as a depressing movie (the literal translation of the Chinese title 憂鬱之島 is 'melancholic island'). But I also felt a sense of duty to watch *Blue island*, a duty to bear witness, a duty to watch a movie about Hong Kong that is illegal for people in Hong Kong to watch under the current national security law.

After the screening, the director of *Blue Island* asked the audience a pointed question: "Are you more or less hopeful after watching the movie?" My first reaction was to let out a deep sigh because it was such a heavy question. My initial response was that after watching the movie, I felt less hopeful, not more. I felt that the movie showed a history of Hong Kong that seems to keep repeating itself, one where Hong Kong people suffer from a kind of intergenerational trauma we continue to pass on. I considered how we have been resisting, again and again, and how today's sorry state is where we have arrived. It is hard not to feel despair. But then I thought about his question a bit more, and I realize I do feel hopeful, about Hong Kong, maybe not in the short term, but more so in the long run.

I have been in Holland for over a year now. I am still trying to make sense of what happened to Hong Kong in the last few years. I participated in the 2014 Umbrella Movement and the 2019 protests. I lost my job as a university professor in 2020, and I left the city in late 2021. Hong Kong has been changing, for the worse, for a while now, but especially after the national security law came into effect in 2020. Some of my students are in jail for participating in a protest. A former colleague has been arrested for writing 'seditious' articles.[2] And independent news organizations, civil right groups, unions, and political parties have been shut down or left town.[3] Perhaps that is one reason why I wanted to watch this movie about the Hong Kong protests: to see how others make sense of what happened.

On *Blue Island,* protest, and identity

Blue Island narrates a story about Hong Kong through a retelling of its tortured past with political protests, not only covering the protests of 2019, but also the 1967 protests during the Cultural Revolution and the 1989 protests in response to the Tiananmen Square massacre. It is neither a traditional movie nor a documentary, but instead a hybrid of the two. By putting protests of three different generations side-by-side, the director invites a direct comparison. At first sight, what stands out is how different these events are. In one particularly memorable scene, an actor is asked to reenact a scene from 1967. He is in prison and facing a British officer, who is berating him for his role in the violent protests. The prisoner defends himself, passionately, by saying he is Chinese, questioning the officer in return, asking him what is wrong with loving and defending his country. This scene is then followed by another one with the same actor, who is now being asked to reenact a scene from 2019. Again, he is in prison and being berated for his role in the violent protests, but now the officer is Chinese. This time, the prisoner defends himself, passionately, by saying he is a Hong Konger. It is perhaps easy to point out the contradiction or even the hypocrisy between these two scenes – in one moment saying you are Chinese (not British), and in the next moment saying you are Hong Konger (not Chinese). Who are "we," really? But what struck me was how, in both cases, the authorities are trying to force an identity on their subjects, the people in Hong Kong. Together, they show how little freedom Hong Kong people have had, throughout history, to decide for ourselves who we are and who we want to be. This is an important reason why we protested. This is the freedom we fought so hard for, the freedom to be ourselves.

In the winter of 2022, I was messaging with a friend from Hong Kong. She told me she had changed jobs, to a pro-Beijing company. My friend is staunchly pro-democratic, but in today's Hong Kong, there are almost no pro-democratic companies or institutions left to work for. She was telling me how, even in this pro-Beijing company, people seem deflated, demotivated, just going through the motions. I was surprised and asked why. She said it was because they too know that in today's Hong Kong, there is little agency or freedom, that the authorities are the ones who decide. I nodded. In today's Hong Kong, even the pro-Beijing side seems to have little hope.

A Hong Kong that decides its own future

So let's talk about hope. In his book *On the Other Side of Freedom: The Case for Hope*, DeRay Mckesson helps us understand the difference between having faith and having hope.[4] He understands faith as the belief that a particular outcome *will* happen. In contrast, he says that hope is the belief that a particular outcome *can* happen. To have hope for Hong Kong, in other words, does not mean that I believe a free, fair, and open Hong Kong is destined or guaranteed to happen in the future. To have hope instead means that I believe Hong Kong someday *can* be free from political repression, to be able to make its own mistakes, and to decide its own future. To have hope is subversive, because the Chinese Communist Party wants you to believe that the story of Hong Kong is already written, that its future is set in stone, that whatever you do will not make a difference. But the reality is that we will not know until we try. In one memorable scene in *Blue Island*, the director puts two protesters in conversation with each other in a prison cell, one from the 1967 generation and the other from the 2019 generation. In today's Hong Kong, they are on opposite ends of the political spectrum. But what the movie also reveals is that they have something in common: in their own way, each generation, again and again, has been fighting oppression in Hong Kong.

It is easy to remember the failures, but less so the victories. So let us remember that in 2003, we successfully protested against Article 23, an attempt to enact a national security law in Hong Kong. And let us remember that in 2012, we successfully protested again against the moral and national education reform, which aimed to include textbooks in our schools that would want us to gloss over the Cultural Revolution (1967) and the Tiananmen Square massacre (1989). Let us also remember that in November 2022, people in China successfully protested against the government's incredibly stringent COVID-19 regulations.

Sometimes, hope springs from strange places. It was painful for me when I learned that one of my students was sentenced to jail for participating in a protest. I felt not only a sense of responsibility, but also a kind of survivor's guilt. I felt that we failed her. A bright, smart, young student now has to serve time in prison. I promised myself I would write to her, that I would be there for her, that this was the least I could do. But what surprised me, through our correspondence, is how hopeful my student is and how contagious such hope can be. I realize she is surprisingly strong and resilient, and yes, hopeful. She tells me she is working hard. She is trying to learn French, she likes reading *Game of Thrones*, and she reminds me to do the things she cannot do. To live life fully. To take care of ourselves and the people we love.

The protests might seem gone now. It might seem we have given up, with many of us having left Hong Kong. But if we zoom out, over the long run, the arc of Hong Kong's history shows that we will keep trying, that we will not give up. Altering Martin Luther King's famous statement, Mckesson reminds us that "the arc of the moral universe is long, and it will bend toward justice *if we bend it*."[5] If we bend it. In Hong Kong's case, there is no if, if, if. Bending it is what the people in Hong Kong have been doing, generation after generation. Knowing this does give me some consolation and solace, and indeed, hope.

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Fig. 1 (right): Hong Kong people lighting candles on June 4, 2020 (Photo by the author, 2020).
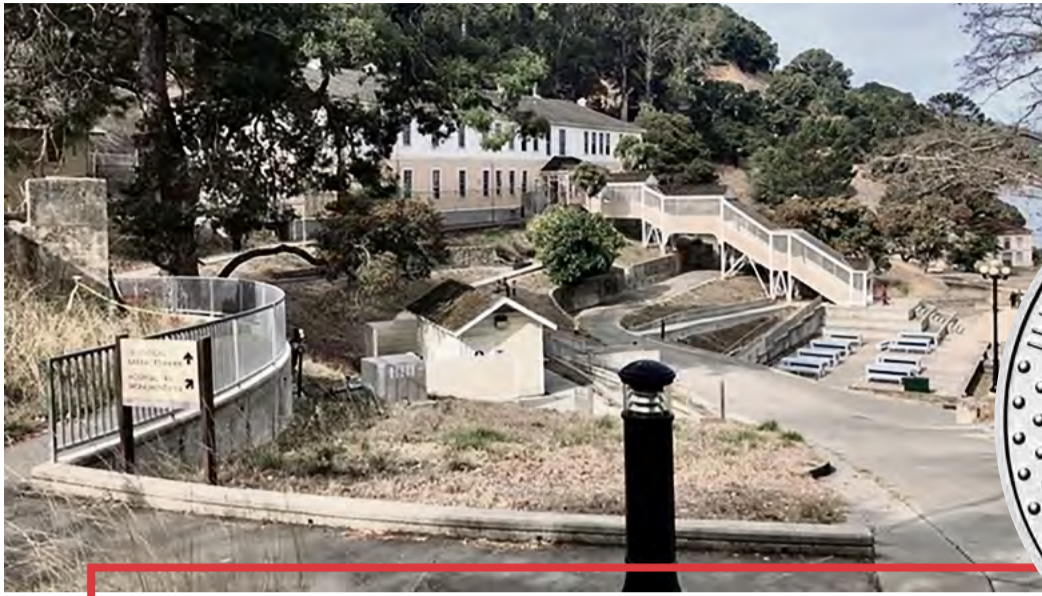Fig. 2 (below): Police guarding an empty Victoria Park on June 4, 2021 (Photo by the author, 2021).
Fig. 3 (top): Protesters against the anti-extradition bill, June 9, 2019 (Photo by the author, 2019).

Fig. 1 (above left): Angel Island Detention Barracks View. (Photo by the author).
Fig. 2 (above centre): Anna May Wong Quarter. (Source: US Mint website).
Fig. 3 (above right): Bunk Beds Angel Island Detention Barracks. (Photo by the author).

Resistance and "PerforMemory" amidst Pandemic-era Anti-Asian Hate

Unsettling Chronologies of Exclusion at Angel Island

Els van Dongen

The year 2022 marked the 140th anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act. A series of events in the San Francisco Bay Area revolving around the Angel Island Immigration Station re-engaged with questions pertaining to exclusion, migration, race, and incarceration amidst a new wave of anti-Asian hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, renewed immigration restrictions and border controls brought debates on immigration back to the foreground. This piece looks at two of these initiatives more closely and, drawing on Catherine Choy and Layla Zami, makes two central points. Firstly, it argues that these initiatives employ creativity as a form of resistance against Asian exclusion. In her recent book, *Asian American Histories of the United States,* Catherine Choy highlights three related themes in Asian American histories of the United States, namely "violence," "erasure," and "resistance." Resistance, in her view, is not just "reactive" – it is also a "creative force" that is "inextricably linked to the Asian American imagination." Individual expressions of creativity can meet and traverse with collective expressions, as well as instigate action across generations.[2]

Secondly, the piece argues that these expressions of creativity are manifestations of what Zami has termed "PerforMemory": they "*contemporize* the past" and as such function as both "a form of expression and an intervention." "PerforMemory" brings together "memory, movement and resistance" and thereby turns memory into "a site of moving resistance."[3] Zami uses the concept of "PerforMemory" primarily for dance choreographies that offer a powerful reinterpretation of history against institutionalized memory. However,

movement does not have to be restricted to bodily movement *per se*, but can also include the fluidity of music, images, the spoken word, or the choreography behind rituals. Relevant for the "PerforMemory" acts centering on Angel Island is that performers "circumvent chronology": memory becomes entangled with other forms of narratives and performances occur within "the 'present-tenseness' of the show*time*," thereby connecting with the past "outside of conventional chronologic and geographic boundaries."[4] To understand the centrality of Angel Island in the creative acts discussed here and how they challenge existing

chronologies, the piece first outlines the history of Asian Exclusion and the place of Angel Island Immigration Station in it.

Asian Exclusion and the Angel Island Immigration Station

Amidst the global gold rush, around 325,000 Chinese from southern China made their way to the settler colonies of North America and Australasia between 1850 and 1900.[5] Furthermore, the 1868 Burlingame Treaty between the United States

In October 2022, Los Angeles-born actress Anna May Wong (1905-1961) became the first Asian American woman to appear on US currency. The "Anna May Wong Quarter" was the fifth coin in the "American Women Quarters Program" that also featured author and activist Maya Angelou (1928-2014), astronaut Sally Ride (1951-2012), Cherokee Nation Chief Wilma Mankiller (1945-2010), and suffrage leader Nina Otero-Warren (1881-1965). Wong's inclusion in the series was as much a recognition of her professional achievements as it was an acknowledgement of the hardships Wong had faced in Hollywood amidst "yellowface" practices and anti-miscegenation laws. From the mid- to late 19th century onwards, discriminatory measures were enforced against the Chinese in the United States at both state and federal levels. In addition, during the Exclusion Era (1882-1943), "Chinese laborers" – referring to "both skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining" – were banned from entering the United States. The 1882 Exclusion Act was the first major US federal law that denied entry and citizenship to an "ethnic working group" because it allegedly threatened "the good order of certain localities."[1]

and China guaranteed mutual migration between both countries and enabled the US to acquire Chinese labor for the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad. With rising Chinese immigration and mounting economic crisis in the US, however, various constituencies began to debate immigration restrictions and citizenship rights.[6] The 1882 Act would initially last for ten years but was renewed in 1892 and 1902 and made permanent in 1904. In 1917, ethnic exclusion was furthermore expanded, denying entry to those residing in the "Asiatic Barred Zone." It was only in 1943, with the US entry into WWII as China's ally, that the Exclusion Act was repealed, but a national origins quota allowed only 105 Chinese to enter yearly. At last, in 1965, Congress passed the Hart-Cellar Act, which eradicated "race, ancestry, or national origin" as the foundation for immigration.[7]

Today, Angel Island in San Francisco Bay is a California State Park popular with hikers for its spectacular views of San Francisco, Marin County, and the iconic Golden Gate Bridge. Between the Civil War and the Cold War, however, the island served as a military base, a quarantine station to fumigate foreign ships and isolate passengers, and an immigration station. During WWII, it also functioned as a prisoner of war (POW) processing center for, among others, Japanese and German POWs. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants from over 80 countries were detained at Angel Island between 1910 and 1940 after arriving in San Francisco by boat. Europeans and first-class passengers generally received preferential treatment, whereas Chinese were specifically excluded following the Exclusion Act. They were detained for a period of a few weeks up to, in rare cases, nearly two years. For example, a stone in the memorial wall outside the Immigration Station reads: "Lee Puey You Gin, Longest Detainee of 20 Months—A Rice Bowl of Tears Nurtured." Admission was only gained after a long and thorough investigation process, especially because some Chinese immigrants attempted to circumvent Exclusion by "buying" places as pretend-relatives of legal Chinese immigrants, also known as "paper sons" (and daughters). Case files show, for example, that Chinese immigrant Chiu Yook Lon had to answer 143 questions before being admitted.[8] Questions detainees were asked included: "How many steps are there to your front door?" or "Who lived in the third house in the second row of houses in your village?" To ensure that answers matched, detainees would rely on coaching books and notes smuggled in by kitchen staff or by bribing guards.[9]

While Chinese immigrants constituted the largest group of detainees at Angel Island (an estimated 100,000), other notable population groups at Angel Island were Japanese (est. 85,000), South Asians (est. 8000), Russians and Jews (est. 8000), Koreans (est. 1000),

Filipinos (est. 1000), and Mexicans (est. 400). The Immigration Station at Angel Island "was designed with exclusion, not admission, in mind" in service of the Chinese Exclusion Laws and with Chinese being "singled out for long detentions and intense interrogations."[10] This explains why Angel Island, despite hosting detainees from many different countries, has a special place in Chinese historical memory. Its Immigration Station is also widely known through the more than 200 Chinese poems that were carved on the walls of the detention barracks by detainees, the discovery of which led to the movement to preserve the Station.

Even though the Chinese Exclusion Act is probably the most well-known Exclusion Law, other Asians were also banned from the United States and discriminated against in the decades that followed. Apart from the "Asiatic Barred Zone" mentioned above, in the 1920s, Japanese and Indian immigrants became excluded from US citizenship. State laws furthermore made non-US citizens ineligible for land ownership and outlawed interracial marriage. Hence, the Angel Island Immigration Station Museum also displays, among others, the exclusion of South Asians. For example, its exhibit features the front page of the August 1910 issue of *The White Man*, a magazine "devoted to the movement for the Exclusion of Asiatics." The front page refers to "the Hindu" as "the next big crisis after the Chinese." Restrictions against "Asiatics" were also justified as health protection measures such as preventing the spread of hookworm infections. Given Angel Island's place in the history of Asian Exclusion and immigration controls more generally, creative resistance in 2022 tied current anti-Asian hate not only to the Chinese Exclusion Act, but also to this broader history of exclusion.

Unsettling chronologies of exclusion at Angel Island in 2022

In May 2022, on a hidden corner of a wall in San Francisco's Chinatown, a poster urged passers-by: "Standing Strong for Inclusion: Join Us as We Commemorate the 140th Anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act." The poster was shared online among

Chinese communities, such as on the website of the Bay Area Chinese Genealogy Group (BACGG), a network of "family historians" in the San Francisco Bay Area. Its website stated: "Today, we are experiencing a dismaying rise in violent attacks on Asian Americans. We cannot afford to stay silent; we must instead stand together to stop the hateful legacy of this Act that our community continues to face."[11]

In this statement, the history of the Exclusion Act was tied to the current wave of anti-Asian hate crimes, and its authors called for commemoration-as-intervention. The "Standing Strong for Inclusion" event that readers were urged to join involved the sponsorship and partnership of the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, the APA (Asian Pacific Americans) Heritage Foundation, the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, the Chinese Historical Society of America, and others. On the morning of May 6, 2022, a memorial wreath was placed at the Chinese Immigrant Monument at the Angel Island Immigration Station. "PerforMemory" in this case also included the connection of memory, movement, and resistance through light and participation: a "Lighting the Darkness" display consisting of 140 candles, one for each year since the Exclusion Act was passed in 1882, was set up inside the detention barracks during the month of May 2022 on the occasion of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.[12]

"PerforMemory" also consisted of moving images: on the evening of May 6, as well as on consecutive Fridays in May 2022, an installation titled "Exclusion/Inclusion" by Felicia Lowe and Ben Wood projected videos about Angel Island onto the walls and guardhouse of the Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture (FMCAC) in San Francisco. On May 7, at the Chinese Culture Center in San Francisco, two short films by Felicia Lowe, *What's Your Real Name*, addressing the history of "paper names" and *Carved in Silence*, on the experience of being detained at Angel Island, were screened.

Linking past events to current concerns, the screening was followed by a session on present immigration questions. Finally, the program ended with artists Summer Mei Ling Lee and Stephan Xie reading out 140 names of Chinese Americans affected by

the Chinese Exclusion Act. As such, the linear chronology of 140 years was also reduced to the "present-tenseness" of the reading ceremony. Finally, following a procession led by Taoist priests, participants were invited to place flowers and photographs at an altar, where musician Francis Wong performed a blessing ritual. The "Standing Strong for Inclusion" poster also called for cross-ethnic solidarity in the form of a conference on "healing and solidarity" around the murders of Vincent Chin (1982) and George Floyd (2020), both of which caused massive outrage and, in the case of the latter, Black Lives Matter organized rallies.

Angel Island was also the focal point of a series of events organized by UC Berkeley's Future Histories Lab and Arts + Design Initiative in 2022-2023, including courses, public events, exhibitions, and performances. Apart from various UC Berkeley departmental cosponsors and campus partners, the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation was also a partner in the events series. In the series entitled "A Year on Angel Island: Migration Histories and Futures," Angel Island was a starting point to examine "race in America, global migration, and architectures of incarceration." Through "arts, design, and historical and landscape interpretation" the series served to "understand current events and envision better futures." The talks in the series were highly versatile and covered topics such as dance, theater, and incarceration; efforts to preserve the Angel Island Immigration Station; women painters of Japanese descent in Exclusion-era California; South Asian storytelling in Berkeley; Asian American histories of the United States; theater and "paper sons"; the Angel Island poems; and music and storytelling of Chinese Exclusion. As can be seen from these topics, the series put a spotlight on the history of racial exclusion in California and the United States amidst the renewed urgency of border restrictions, anti-Asian hate crimes, and refugee crises.

The series also contained a remarkable array of performances, such as Lenora Lee's multi-media dance project *Within These Walls*, performed by the Berkeley Dance Project and directed by SanSan Kwan. This piece had first been performed in 2017 at the Angel Island Immigration Station on the 135th anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Drawing on experiences of containment, performance in this context functioned "as a meditation on healing, resilience, and compassion."[14] Among other performances were *In the Movement*, which addressed family separation and immigrants' mass detention, and *Angel Island Oratorio*, a 60-minute oratorio for voices and strings based on the Chinese poems at the detention barracks. In both of these dance and musical performances, the "temporality of performance" would, in the words of Zami, "contemporize" the past and concurrently serve as a poignant intervention.

Another potent form of "PerforMemory" in the series was that of storytelling. In October 2022, sections of the musical *Illegal* by Skyler Chin and Sita Sunil were performed inside the Angel Island Immigration Station, combining music, comedy, kung fu, and the spoken word. Inspired by both the Chinese poems at the detention barracks and the experience of Skyler's grandfather, who arrived at Angel Island in 1923 as a "paper son," Chin and Sunil wrote the musical during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of a Yale workshop. The musical exemplifies how, in "PerforMemory," memory is created "as a repertoire colliding and colluding with the archive."[15] Indeed, the 26 songs of the musical drew on historical records, but by incorporating these into other narrative forms, such as rap, comedy, and song, a "circumvention of chronology" also occurred. Central to the story were the fictional characters Kee Lin, an up-and-coming martial artist, and her "paper brother," Slim Chin, both of whom fled China in 1926 and were subsequently detained at Angel Island. Historical accounts on which the musical drew include the interrogation processes of detainees, experiences of interpreters at Angel Island, and the Angel Island poems. Chin and Sunil explained how storytelling can be used "to respond to pandemic-era

anti-Asian hate, combat prejudice, instigate justice, and inspire empathy."[16]

In conclusion, these events and performances revolving around Angel Island were manifestations of creativity-as-resistance against renewed anti-Asian violence and the erasure of Asian Americans from US history. "PerforMemory" was a way to connect the past to present concerns and future hopes, and it functioned as both expression and intervention. Part of this intervention involved unsettling established linear chronologies by encapsulating memory within other forms of narratives. Similarly, in her own act of resistance, Choy's *Asian American Histories* starts in 2020 and moves back in time, with each chapter also moving back and forth in time to expose "multiple temporal origins of Asian American history" and connections and continuities such as Black and Asian American alliances.[17] As such, these interventions urge us to approach present injustices not so much as a linear question of origins as a zigzag question of perceived-endpoints-becoming-origins becoming everything in between.

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Notes

1 National Archives, "Milestone Documents: Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), Transcript." https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/chinese-exclusion-act#transcript. Accessed 27 February 2023. The starting point of the Exclusion Era is sometimes traced back to the Page Law of 1875, which restricted the entry of 'undesirable' immigrants.

2 Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Asian American Histories of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2022), xii, xiii. Quote from xiii.

3 Layla Zami, *Contemporary PerforMemory: Dancing through Spacetime, Historical Trauma, and Diaspora in the 21st Century* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2020), 28, 54.

4 Ibid., 146, 147.

5 Mae Ngai, *The Chinese Question: The Gold Rushes, Chinese Migration, and Global Politics* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2022), 32, 34.

6 Madeline Y. Hsu, *Asian American History: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 27, 29.

7 "Remembering 1882: Fighting for Civil Rights in the Shadow of the Chinese Exclusion Act" (San Francisco: Chinese Historical Society of America, s.d.), 29-31.

8 "Minor Daughter of a Merchant: The Story of Chiu Yook Lon: A Paper Daughter on Angel Island." Angel Island Immigration Station Museum.

9 Angel Island Immigration Station Museum; Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 88-90.

10 Lee and Yung, *Angel Island*, 8, 20. Exact numbers are hard to determine as a fire in 1940 destroyed much of the administrative records. See ibid., 16, 17, 20. Quote from 16.

11 Bay Area Chinese Genealogy Group website. https://bacgg.org/index.php/category/com-ann-et-event. Accessed 5 October 2022.

12 "Standing Strong for Inclusion" poster; "Lighting the Darkness," Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation website. https://www.aiisf.org/lightingthedarkness. Accessed 5 October 2022.

13 "Angel Island: Homepage," Future Histories Lab website. https://futurehistories.berkeley.edu/angel-island. Accessed 20 February 2023.

14 "Angel Island: Performances," Future Histories Lab website. https://futurehistories.berkeley.edu/angel-island/performances. Accessed 21 February 2023.

15 Zami, *Contemporary PerforMemory*, 59.

16 "April 21 & 28: Virtual Live Talk with Queens Public Library." Skyler Chin website. https://skylerchin.com/2022/04/19/april-21-28-virtual-live-talk-with-queens-public-library. Accessed 28 February 2023.
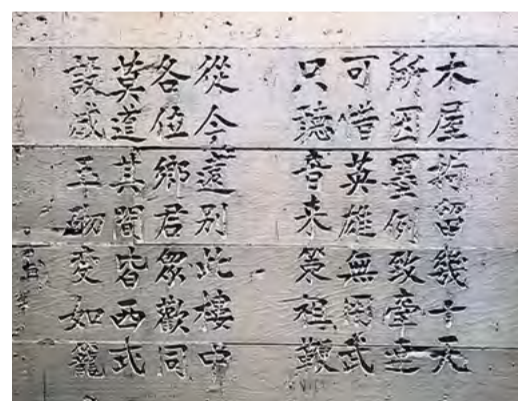
17 Choy, *Asian American Histories*, xvii.

Fig. 4 (above): Angel Island Detention Barracks Poem Known as 'Poem 135'. (Photo by the author).
Fig. 5 (right): Poster "Standing Strong for Inclusion." (Source: Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture)
Fig. 6 (below): Performance of Sections of the Musical *Illegal* at the detention barracks. (Photo by the author).

Temporary Dystopia

Shanghai in Absolute Lockdown to Contain the Omicron Variant

Harry den Hartog

From end of March until end of May 2022, Shanghai experienced one of the world's most brutal lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic, with serious consequences for daily life in this cosmopolitan city, and major impact on the global economy due to Shanghai's world port. A year later, Shanghai's urban economy is still struggling with consequences and many residents are suffering from the profound psychological impact of the unprecedented measures. As a resident of Shanghai since 2009, working for Tongji University's College of Architecture and Urban Planning, I experienced the lockdown in full. In this article I will try to explain some of the consequences of this lockdown for the city, work, and daily life, from a limited perspective due to temporary restrictions on freedom of movement, limited information provided by authorities, and censorship of social media.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, an initial lockdown was imposed late January 2020 in Shanghai and most of the country. After this first relatively light lockdown, daily life quickly returned, thanks to strict closure measures at the national border – hardly any planes flew and on arrival you had to be in strict solitary confinement for up to four weeks, even young children were separated – and additional measures for people in daily life, aimed for zero-COVID. Continuous controls, including QR codes and infrared cameras to measure body-temperatures were tolerated by most people. As a result of these measures people in China experienced a fairly normal life compared to the rest of the world between Spring 2020 and Spring 2022. However, there was always a possibility of getting trapped during recurring controls. If there was an infection detected, the entire building or neighborhood (or even district) was locked several days or weeks. This went so far that any building could be immediately hermetically sealed, a residential block, an office, a school, or a mall, often with hundreds still inside, even if only one close contact[1] was suspected. People inside were given food and sleeping mats while obliged to stay inside for at least 48 hours, followed by additional home isolation. If any positive case was found, everyone was immediately quarantined in a *fang cang* (centralized isolation centers). In everyday life, people joked that you should always take a toothbrush and extra underwear with you when you go outside. Although the number of infections was minimal, this caused stress and uncertainty.

Sudden lockdown without warning

This relative freedom came to an abrupt halt for Shanghai. On 28 March 2022, the local government announced a citywide screening round, due to a rapid rising number of positive Omicron cases, with all citizens in home-isolation for four days and everyone being tested twice, starting with first the Pudong half east of the Huangpu River (where most cases were traced), and from 1 April the Puxi half of the city west of the river, where I live. Opposed to official public calming announcements that everyone could go outdoors again after these four days, this as "temporary" announced measure did not stop, since the detected number of infections continued rising steep. On 1 April the Pudong half didn't reopen, which meant that the entire city was hermetically locked, a situation that continued until the end of May. In fact, many of my students who live on campus have been in isolation for three months and in some individual cases much longer.

In fact, most universities and schools went into a lockdown earlier than the rest of the city. Early March 2022, my university went

Fig. 1: Volunteer calling residents by name for PCR-test. (Photo by the author, 2022)

completely online because our campus, including many students and staff, got suddenly shut down after two students were detected as close contacts. Personally, I was lucky enough not to be on campus that day, otherwise I would have had to sleep there on the floor (mattresses and sleeping bags were provided on the second day). It gives me a feeling that schools are dealt with disproportionately. Recently (public) universities are increasingly monitored and there are even instruction meetings on political ideology.

As faculty member of a public university, between Spring 2020 and December 2022 I was required to take a PCR-test every time I crossed the municipal border. I needed to request digital travel permission from local authorities, and via cellphone data this was monitored. These rules were set by local authorities for all students and staff plus their relatives of public institutes. All my classes and workshops have been hybrid with screens and cameras in the classroom since Spring 2020, since half of my students were international students who no longer received visas.

During the lockdown there was no escape, a ride to the airport was almost impossible to arrange and easily cost many hundreds of euros per person due to a required driver with health certificate and license. This ride normally costs only one euro by metro, but all (public) transport stopped. In addition, there were no flights for two months, and afterwards only for exorbitantly high prices.

Further tightening of the lockdown

Following an inspection visit[2] by Vice-Premier Sun Chunlan on 2 April 2022 all local administrators of Shanghai were sidelined, and the national government took charge over the city, with very far-reaching consequences. Possibly as a reaction a prominent local public health administrator even took his own life that same day. The next day thousands of military doctors and caretakers were flown into the city, donned in anonymized hazmat suits, to provide the

needed medical care, and to further roll out a system of *fang cangs* over the city. Countless people were forcedly relocated there by buses.

Shanghai's suddenly implemented ruthless lockdown, overshadowed all previous lockdowns in China, in terms of social and economic impact. Other cities experienced (shorter) lockdowns at various times but received little international media attention (e.g., Yangzhou, Xi'an, and Shenzhen). Shanghai's more than two months long lockdown had an impact not only on the city and its residents but far beyond. Although the port partly still functioned, worldwide logistics chains got seriously disrupted, amplified by interruptions of the global prominent financial sector in this metropolis. Shockingly, a very large part of the inhabitants of this fashionable ultramodern city even struggled with shortages of food and medicines, especially during the first three weeks, with dramatic consequences.

Unlike previous lockdowns, this time lockdown meant staying indoors 24/7, without exemption, including pets. People who tested positive plus all close contacts (even those who tested negative), which usually meant the whole building or even neighborhood, were unceremoniously relocated to *fang cangs*, were everyone still got infected quickly because very poor hygienic conditions. Images of deplorable situations in *fang cangs* circulated on social media before being quickly removed by authorities. Several people in my network have experienced staying there and confirmed the horrible conditions. I would estimate that at least 100,000 people have been residing in such centers for weeks, ranging from convention halls to repurposed office buildings and even swimming pools and containers (without windows). People in these isolation centers no longer count in the statistics as citizens: they are administratively "outside the society" in order to project an imaginary "zero-COVID" situation. As a result, it was possible for Shanghai to publicly announce on May 1 that there were no new infections, while in reality this was absolutely not the case.

Many personal dramas took place. In addition to the aforementioned shortages of food and medicines, there were multiple cases of food poisoning due to spoiled foodstuffs. In dormitories there have been cases of inaccessible collective showers and kitchens, and even camera installment for control. In response to this, there were local uprisings – beyond the so-called "pots and pans riot" that made it into the international media[3]. Sadly, in my neighborhood I heard of more than a few cases of suicide, and I'm afraid this happened citywide.

(Diary fragment 14 April 2022):
"The food supply in my neighborhood is now reasonably in order, but that does not apply to large parts of the city elsewhere. Each neighborhood committee

determines its own policy. Several cases of mismanagement or corruption are now known, for example situations where some of the food and medicines donated by the government did not end up with residents but were sold on to third parties. From what I've heard, I have the impression that this is more common in new towns, perhaps because neighborhood management there is often outsourced to commercial companies rather than based on chosen volunteers from the neighborhood."

(Diary fragment 14 April 2022)
Fig. 2: Food distribution by volunteers. Notice the barrier tapes that are citywide along all sidewalks. (Photo by the author, 2022)

How could it get this far?

In all naivety, many people (including myself) thought that the virus would not strike on a large scale here. For that reason, many elderlies were not vaccinated in time. Although Omicron is considered as a less lethal variant, in densely populated China –with many enclosed spaces such as in elevators and subways – even with the most favorable calculations, the expected number of fatalities that could be prevented was according to some scientists up to 1.7 million people! Shanghai has the image of a modern city, but the national health care system is inadequate: in 2020, China had only 3.4 intensive care beds per 100,000 people, compared to an average of 12 in Europe (in Germany 29 beds). Thus, if the virus really gets free rein, it could have dramatic consequences.

In the second week of March 2022, the registration system that keeps track of PCR-test results collapsed due to overload. The construction of emergency hospitals and reception centers came to a halt because of insufficient staff. In Shanghai, there is a growing shortage of cheap labor since many migrant workers didn't return to work due to strict zero-COVID policies.

(Diary fragment 21 April 2022):
"The street scene is somewhat ghostly, empty, with red barrier tapes everywhere. Barricades of concrete and metal divide the city into compartments. The (happy?) few who are still allowed outside are limited in action radius to a few hundred meters. Due to lack of materials some barricades

are formed by stacked bicycles or wooden partitions. Most of the few people I meet outside are dressed in blue or white suits, unrecognizable and masked: guards, volunteers, and food couriers. Here and there a test street is open. There are also occasional coaches in which local residents are taken away to centralized isolation centers (the feared 方舱医院 or *fang cang*."

(Diary fragment 21 April 2022): Fig. 3: Bus with residents on their way to a *fang cang*. (Photo by the author, 2022)

City under total control

China's urban planning system is based on compartmentalization in neighborhood units[4]. In fact, these are lockable compounds. This system largely contributed to the swift containment of the first variants of the coronavirus: a citywide lockdown could be implemented within hours. This compartmentalization makes clear that the whole society at any moment can transform into an absolutely controlled – dystopian – state in the blink of an eye. Only a few hours passed between the announcement of the closure of the Pudong half and the actual closure on 28 March 2022, causing the other half of the city to hoard four days' worth of food. Through supervision by neighborhood committees and a system of cameras – often with face-recognition – and other digital means, the city turned into a ghost town. Neighborhood committees with volunteers under government supervision – all in hazmat suits – were made responsible for distribution of food and medicines, and coordination of PCR-test rounds.

Luckily, after the 2020 lockdown I moved into a smaller neighborhood with only 25 households. Most neighborhood units include hundreds of households, often more than a thousand. If one person in any neighborhood unit was identified as close contact, this entire neighborhood got fully locked for at least two weeks or deported to a *fang cang* in case of any positive test. In my neighborhood we were locked indoors between April 1-14. During this period, no one was allowed to go outside 24/7. Every three days we were called at

random times – sometimes even at night – to be escorted in small groups to a test center down the road for a PCR test. After 18 April I was told that I could walk outside the gate, though within the limits of my street, for one hour a day. Later, during May I found a way to extend my walking radius a little further outside. Compared to most other people in town this was a privilege, I think less than one percent of all neighborhoods were semi-open at that time. Hence, I was able to take many photos.

(Diary fragment 21 May 2022): "Although officially more and more people are allowed to go outside, people prefer to stay inside because everything is closed. Even squares and parks have been cordoned off. You also run the risk of catching COVID and thereby causing total neighborhood confinement, which your neighbors will not appreciate. After an hour of walking, I am very happy back home, because outside is too spooky. It looks like a movie set from a flopped B-movie, the type I'd rather not watch. A friend told me that *28 Days Later* by director Danny Boyle comes close."

(Diary fragment 21 May 2022): Fig. 3: Checkpoint on the border between two zones. (Photo by the author, 2022)

The lockdown ended officially on June 1. The old regime of local mini-lockdowns returned with – more frequent – sudden closures of neighborhoods, and even trains, and especially universities. This was often applied arbitrarily, with – in my opinion – possibly different motivations, especially when involving universities or old neighborhoods that are on a demolition list.

After the lockdown ended a network of 9000 test booths were rolled out, requiring residents to test every 72 or 48 hours, depending on the situation, in many cases even daily tests (self-tests are excluded). While I'm writing, this all feels surreal, like a nightmare, the massive scale, the anonymization and depersonalization, and tremendous impact in people's lives. It did happen.

Fig. 5: One of the 9000 PCR test booths installed after the lockdown. (Photo by the author, 2022)

Sudden end of the zero-COVID policy

The measures to contain the virus were brutal. The lockdown and aftermath in Shanghai have turned many into disillusionment and changed the public opinion about zero-COVID policy into quite negative, as expressed through social media and local protests. Some friends were temporary blocked by Chinese social media for posting critical messages. This growing unrest culminated in an uprising in multiple cities, especially in reaction to a drama in the city Wulumuqi (Urumqi), where people burned alive while they were locked in their building[5]. This rise is said to have contributed to a sudden end of the zero-COVID policy. This unexpected and unprepared end of the policy caused a wave of infections, making the streets literally empty again: this time because people voluntarily stayed at home out of fear, since authorities no longer offered protection or care. This was for many another big shock. Although the Omicron variant is relatively light, many people were insufficiently protected, still resulting in overloaded hospitals and many casualties (though until today reliable data is not publicly available).

Deglobalization?

What do the past three years mean for the city? For Shanghai, a city with relatively more empowered global oriented citizens, not only an exodus of international talents is ongoing, but also many well-to-do Chinese with connections or real estate positions abroad left. According to various sources, at least three quarters of all expatriates in Shanghai left. In fact, I myself left Shanghai from July 2022 until February 2023, to Hangzhou, since all teaching was online, and our campus was semi-locked. Today, April 2023, I am trying to reorient myself in Shanghai again, which is not easy. The streets are still noticeably quieter since many people left and others still prefer staying indoors. Even our reopened university campus is considerably quieter. Before the pandemic, the campus was vibrant with a range of daily activities, international conferences, seminars, workshops, and public lectures. This all has yet to resume since the lockdown. The campus is still closed to the public, only staff and students can enter.

The internationalization of Shanghai will not stop immediately but will probably enter a new phase. More than before, international companies are directly controlled by Chinese managers, including at least one-party member in order to ensure synchronization with the new ideology of the central government. Last two years, large numbers of high-educated Chinese with international experience have returned from long-term residence in North America and Europe, as a result of the pandemic but also because of new economic and geopolitical realities. Many jobs previously held by foreigners in Shanghai have been taken over by these returning Chinese, often with better connections and knowledge of the language and culture.

The informal sector is especially in danger of disappearing from the city. Wet markets became a target – since the first COVID-19 case was linked to a wet market in Wuhan – and are frequently bulldozed. Although there are exemptions and modern redesigned markets. Also, many informal traditional neighborhoods are undergoing major overhauls. This resulted from an official statement that the number of infections was particularly high in the original old town in the Huangpu district. Most of the old town is listed for drastic regeneration, which means demolition and rebuilding, usually for a different target group – mainly higher incomes – and adding to the existing shortage of affordable housing. This old town area is now mainly inhabited by low-skilled migrant workers, often subletters with no or temporary work contracts, crammed into too small spaces full of bunk beds and poorly shared sanitary facilities. Meanwhile, private homeowners who rent out these spaces usually live in newly built neighborhoods and wait for the moment that their old property is expropriated, which generates large sums of money for them. For local authorities, the post-pandemic situation created an opportunity to accelerate this

urban regeneration process, according to a tried-and-true process of eviction-demolition-construction. During the lockdown most extreme roadblocks were around this part of the city. [Fig. 1].

While globalization has helped cities grow in importance worldwide, and urban governments often act more decisively than national governments, during the lockdown the control in Shanghai was taken over by the central government. In the public opinion, the local (and actually later also the national) government has failed in its approach. During the lockdown sarcastic jokes circulated on social media that the fictitious "Shanghai yen" is worth only a quarter of the Chinese yen, suggesting that many of the wealthy will seek refuge (and investment) elsewhere. Attracting foreign investors and companies will be a lot more difficult, partly fueled by international tensions, resulting in many vacant buildings.[6] After two decades of openness, lightning-fast economic growth, and international opening up, there is a threat of a turn towards a new closedness. Another cynical joke circulating on social media during the lockdown was a manipulated video of Leonardo DiCaprio on the prow of the Titanic, turning around and hugging a masked moped courier who comes to deliver a meal. The cynical double message of this video is clear: food is the absolute top priority, and the socio-economic consequences of the lockdown brought this city full of glitter and glamor to the brink of collapse.

Yet, today, a year later, the city is recovering slowly. Those who didn't leave are still having a hard time, mentally and in terms of social security. Working hours increased to catch up with economic losses, it is even common now to work more than 6 days a week and skip holidays. Nevertheless, the city begins to bustle steadily and will undoubtfully reinvent itself, although with a lot of uncertainty.[7]

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Notes

1 "Close contacts" have been in vicinity of a person who has tested positive, for example, by traveling in the same train or visiting the same restaurant on the same day (not necessarily the same moment). A well-known example is an infected hairdresser as a result of which 90,000 people had to be tested: https://www. shine.cn/news/metro/2206096622.
2 Read more about Vice-Premier Sun's inspection visit here: https:// english.www.gov.cn/statecouncil/ sunchunlan/202204/03/content_ WS6248d2d1c6d02e5335328af2.html.
3 Also see: https://www.theguardian.com/ world/video/2022/apr/29/shanghai-residents-bang-pots-and-pans-in-lockdown-protest-video.
4 Chinese cities are subdivided in neighborhood units, a legacy of the Danwei system. Also see: Bray, David (2005). *Social Space and Governance in Urban China: The Danwei System from Origins to Reform*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
5 Also see: https://www.theguardian. com/world/2022/nov/27/anti-lockdown-protests-spread-across-china-amid-growing-anger-at-zero-covid-strategy.
6 Also see: Den Hartog, Harry (2021). Shanghai's regenerated industrial waterfronts: urban lab for Sustainability Transitions? *Urban Planning*, Volume 6, Issue 3, 181-196. DOI:10.17645/up.v6i3.4194.
7 This article is partly an updated further elaboration of an article that appeared in Dutch language on Archined: https://www. *archined*.nl/2022/05/metropool-in-de-houdgreep-welkom-in-dystopia.

International Treaties

The Foundations of Colonial Rule in Southeast Asia

Stefan Eklöf Amirell

From the early 17th to the mid-20th century, international treaties were a key instrument of imperialism in Asia and elsewhere, providing the legal and moral justification for European colonial rule and domination. Among the regions of the world that were affected by Western imperialism, Southeast Asia stands out for its long history of prolific treaty-making between indigenous rulers and colonial powers. In recent years, researchers have begun to explore many hitherto unknown facets of this history, thereby throwing new light on how colonial rule was established and implemented through a myriad of treaties and other written agreements.

Fig. 2: Front cover of the so-called Bowring Treaty, concluded between Siam (Thailand) and the United Kingdom in 1855, with the royal seal of King Mongkut, Rama IV. (The National Archives, Kew, Richmond. Photo courtesy of Pipad Krajaejun.)

Historical treaties have long been a subject of great interest in the colonial history of North America and New Zealand, where they have often been at the centre of claims and demands by Indigenous nations for justice and the restitution of land rights. In most parts of Asia, by contrast, treaties concluded during the colonial period have not been invoked for such purposes to any great extent. There the history of treaties and treaty-making has instead been approached mainly from the perspective of the history of international law or through the lens of so-called unequal treaties.

Asian treaties and the history of international law

The prominence of Southeast Asia in the history of international law can be traced to the beginning of the 17th century, when the Dutch East India Company called on the jurist and scholar Hugo Grotius to provide a legal justification for its seizure of a Portuguese vessel in the Malacca Strait. Around the same time, and in order to extend and justify its presence in Asia, particularly against the Portuguese and other European rivals, the company began to make written treaties or contracts with local rulers which regulated commercial matters as well as issues relating to politics and security.[1] Some of the treaties were negotiated on relatively peaceful terms, whereas others were made under threat of violence or following devastating wars or massacres of local populations by the Dutch. To this day, researchers disagree about whether treaty-making in Southeast Asia in the 17th and 18th centuries should be characterised mainly as equal and mutually beneficial or as unequal and rigged in favour of the Dutch and other European treaty parties.[2]

Regardless of the difficult questions about equality and voluntariness, a consensus has emerged in recent decades among historians and jurists on the importance of treaty-making between Europeans and non-Europeans for the development of international law during the early modern period. This insight has provided a much-needed correction of previous Eurocentric assumptions, according to which international law was believed to have originated in Europe and then spread across the world.

Unequal treaties

After the turn of the 19th century, the influence of non-European treaty-making practices and actors seemed to become increasingly irrelevant due to the greater economic, political, and military superiority of the European colonial powers and the shift from natural to positivist law in Europe. Treaties with supposedly 'backward' or 'uncivilized' nations came to be seen as a separate category, and from the beginning of the 20th century, such treaties began to be referred to as 'unequal treaties' or 'colonial treaties' in order to distinguish them from international treaties proper.[3]

For East and Southeast Asia, the notion of unequal treaties has been particularly influential as a framework for analysing treaty-making and imperial relations during the 19th and 20th centuries. In this context, unequal treaties are generally understood as characterised by non-reciprocity;

restrictions on the autonomy or sovereignty of the Asian treaty party; economic, social, and political concessions on the part of the Asian party; the granting of extra-territorial rights to Europeans; and sometimes the cession of territory. Often, unequal treaties were the result of threats in the form of so-called gunboat diplomacy or followed a war imposing European dominance.

The most well-known unequal treaty is the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing, which ended the Opium War between China and Great Britain and in which China, among other things, was forced to give commercial privileges and cede the island of Hong Kong to Britain. It was the first of a series of unequal treaties concluded between China and various European and other foreign powers during the following century. However, the use of the term unequal treaties to characterise China's compacts with imperial powers only emerged in the 1920s as part of a Chinese nationalist discourse aimed at strengthening China's national unity and international standing. As such, the concept of unequal treaties, like the notion of China's hundred years of national humiliation between 1842 and 1949, is at least as much political and ideological as historical or analytical.[4]

The concept of unequal treaties thus originated in East Asia but has also been extensively applied to Southeast Asia. However, characterising all treaties between European and Southeast Asian parties before the mid-20th century as unequal or colonial risks imposing a false homogeneity on the thousands of treaties that were concluded in the region between the early 17th and mid-20th centuries. In fact, the treaties varied greatly in form, purpose, and content – not only between different colonial powers, but also within each colony or region and over time. In contrast to the claims of European imperial propaganda, colonial rule was a patchwork of local agreements and relations between colonial and indigenous actors.
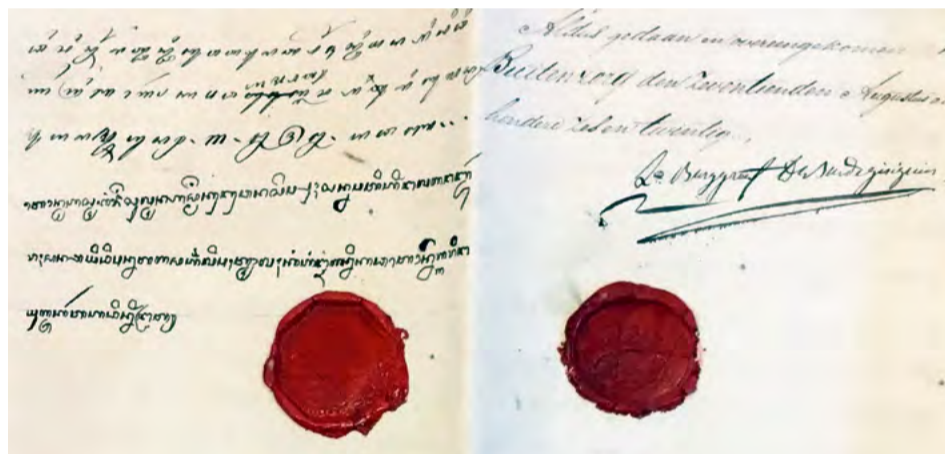

Fig. 1: Signatures and seals of a treaty between Sultan Hamengkubuwono II of Yogyakarta and the Governor of the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), Leonard du Bus de Gisignies, from 1826. The left column is written in Javanese and the right in Dutch. (Nationaal Archief, The Hague. Photo by the author.)

After most countries in Southeast Asia became independent around the mid-20th century, interest in the treaties made during the colonial period declined as the treaties came to be seen as more or less obsolete. Still, many treaties continued to be of fundamental importance. Most obviously, the national borders of present-day states in the region are for the most part the result of treaties made during the colonial era. Some provisions of the historical treaties have also led to overlapping territorial and maritime claims, with the long-standing dispute between Malaysia and the Philippines over north Borneo (Sabah) being the most well-known example. The fact that Malaysia is a federated state with a rotating monarchy whereas neighbouring Indonesia is a unitary republic can also be traced to the treaties that the British and Dutch signed with the indigenous rulers in their respective colonies.

Historians rediscover treaties

Colonial officials put great emphasis on treaties with indigenous rulers and the documents were copied and kept in different parts of the administration, both in the colonies and in the metropoles. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, collections of treaties were also printed for the use of colonial administrators. However, whereas the original treaties generally were drawn up in two or three languages – those of the Asian and the European parties as well as, frequently, a lingua franca, such as Malay in maritime Southeast Asia – it was almost invariably only the European versions that were copied and printed [Fig. 1]. This bias in favour of the European texts is still visible in the colonial archives and in published and digitized collections of treaties. An important task for historians is thus to consult the original treaty

documents, which often are preserved in Asian archives, and compare the translations and different versions of the texts. Sometimes these differed significantly, indicating that the involved treaty parties understood their agreement disparately.

Encouragingly, since the early 2000s, historians have begun to rediscover the importance of treaties for understanding the colonial period in Southeast Asia, as well as other parts of the world that were affected by European imperialism. The importance of Southeast Asian and other non-European actors and practices for the development of international law has become more widely recognised. Moreover, historians have begun to turn to treaties and treaty-making as sources for understanding the heterogenous, complex, and contingent nature of colonialism and imperial expansion and to move beyond the homogenising discourses of both imperial propaganda and much post-colonial history-writing. These research efforts promise to yield many interesting and unexpected results in the coming years and to throw new light on how colonial rule was constituted and maintained in Southeast Asia and elsewhere.[5]

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Notes

1   Charles H. Alexandrowicz, *An Introduction to the History of the Law of Nations in the East Indies (16th, 17th and 18th Centuries)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); Martine van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle: Hugo Grotius, Natural Rights Theories and the Rise of Dutch Power in the East Indies, 1595–1615* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Peter Borschberg, *Hugo Grotius, the Portuguese, and Free Trade in the East Indies* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2011).

2   Saliha Belmessous, "The Paradox of an Empire by Treaty", in idem (ed.), *Empire by Treaty: Negotiating European Expansion, 1600–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1–18; Martine van Ittersum, "Empire by Treaty?", in Adam Clulow and Tristan Mostert (eds.), *The Dutch and English East India Companies: Diplomacy, Trade and Violence in Early Modern Asia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 153–177.

3   Dong Wang, *China's Unequal Treaties: Narrating National History* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005); Saliha Belmessous, "What is a Colonial Treaty? Questioning the Visible and the Invisible in European and Non-European Legal Negotiations", *Comparative Legal History*, 2022, DOI: 10.1080/2049677X.2022.2131525.

4   Wang.

5   Thanks to Hans Hägerdal, Maarten Manse and Birgit Tremml-Werner for valuable input and comments.

Turks, Texts, and Territory

Imperial Ideology and Cultural Production in Central Eurasia

The 11th century marked the emergence of the originally nomadic Turks as a new political elite in the history of Central Asia and the Middle East. Under their powerful patronage, a new political culture arose in the Islamic world, inspired by an imperial rather than an exclusively Islamic outlook. This shift brought Persian into the limelight as a new cosmopolitan and imperial language across Central Asia, North India, Turkey, and Iran. Until a few decades ago, the received view was that the Turks, as nomadic rulers with a military background, needed Iranian bureaucrats to effectuate their rule over sedentary societies, and hence sedentarised themselves and adopted Persian culture in a one-way acculturation process. Though this view has been challenged in recent years, the idea of a dichotomy between the nomadic, uncivilised Turk, representing the "sword," and the sedentary, civilised Iranian, representing the "pen," persists in academic debate.

Fig. 1 (Detail) Garden scene from a *Bustan of Sa'di*, f.78v in original manuscript. Dated 1531-32 (938 AH). Painting attributed to Shaikhzada, written out by Mir 'Ali Husayni Haravi. Funding for this image is provided by the Aga Khan Program and the Stuart Cary Welch Islamic and South Asian Photograph Collection. Harvard Art Museums, 1979.20.

The selected articles presented here are written by the members of the project *Turks, texts and territory: Imperial ideology and cultural production in Central Eurasia* funded by the Dutch Research Council. They aim to further challenge this binary view by bringing in the vast but understudied resource of cultural production, approached as an integrated phenomenon, across media, languages, and genres. The spatial framework is provided by representative Silk Road cities, situated at present in different nation-states: Samarkand, Bukhara, Herat, and Tabriz. As capitals and nodal points of medieval Turko-Persian empires, each of these cities represents a particular stage in the development of imperial ideology and its expression by means of literary and artistic production, as preserved in various examples of cultural heritage, cherished today as symbols of national identity. The aim of this project was to map the interaction between imperial ideology and literary and artistic production in a diachronic and synchronic perspective, and to contextualize policies of heritage in the modern nation-states, which emerged from the premodern Turko-Persian world.

The Story of Joseph

Gabrielle van den Berg

The story of Joseph, in the Islamic tradition known as Yusuf, is widely known both from the Bible and the Qur'an. It found great popularity in the Turko-Persian world between 1000 and 1500, when it started to appear in a growing variety of genres. This culminated in the 15th century, when the poet 'Abd al-Rahman Jami composed his famous version of the narrative in the Timurid capital Herat. Earlier in the 15th century, the story became connected to one of the great names of Persian poetry: Abu'l-Qasim Firdausi, the poet who composed the *Shahnama* or Book of Kings, around the year 1000. The glorious pre-Islamic past as presented in the *Shahnama* was embraced in many ways by the Turkic and Mongol rulers who reigned over much of the Islamic world since the year 1000, and so was the moving and pious narrative of Joseph. How and why were the two brought together? This article explores the story of Joseph and its role in the cultural production of the Turko-Persian world, and discusses the connections between the story of Joseph, Firdausi, and the court culture of the Timurids.

Introduction: the emergence of Yusuf and Zulaykha

The story of Joseph features prominently in the Qur'an and its core elements therefore form part of the collective memory of many audiences in the medieval Muslim world. These audiences would be familiar with the Qur'anic narrative on Joseph, as related in Sura 12, which runs as follows:

The young Joseph tells his father Jacob about a dream, in which he saw eleven stars, the sun, and the moon prostrating before him. Jacob advises him not to tell these dreams to his brothers, in order not to provoke them. They, however, already resent the way their father seems to single out Joseph above all. The jealous brothers decide to lure him away from Jacob. On the road, they leave Joseph in a well, where he is found by caravan merchants and sold into slavery. He ends up in the household of a rich Egyptian. The wife of this Egyptian falls in love with him and tries to seduce him. When this is exposed, Joseph is falsely accused of seducing her; and even though he is proven innocent, he ends up in prison. There, his visionary dreams prove to be a blessing: they bring him freedom and a high position at the court of the Pharaoh, where he is ultimately reunited with his long-lost father and his brothers.

On the basis of this storyline, a wide variety of narratives started to circulate, many of which assigned a much greater role to the wife of the Egyptian merchant. She has no name in the Bible or the Qur'an; she is referred to in the Bible only as 'the wife of Potiphar.' In the many stories based on the Qur'anic tradition, her name is 'Zulaykha' or 'Zalikha.' Yusuf (Joseph) and Zulaykha became a proverbial couple, immortalized by numerous poets and writers, in a variety of genres, in Persian and other literary traditions. They became, for example, part of the rich imagery of lyrical Persian poetry, and poets such as Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273) and Hafiz (c. 1315-1390) frequently refer to the figures of Yusuf and Zulaykha as symbols of devotion, separation, and forbearance, knowing that their audiences were familiar with the story and could understand these often passing references.

For most poets and authors writing in Persian, not only the 12th Sura in the Qur'an devoted to Yusuf was a source of inspiration, but especially also the works that were inspired by Qur'anic narratives: notably the various versions of *Qisas al-anbiya*, or 'stories of the prophets.' There are a number of compositions with this title in Persian, such as the *Qisas al-anbiya* by the 11th-century author Naysaburi, transmitted via a considerable number of illustrated manuscripts.[1] There is also a version in Middle Turkic, completed in 1310 by Rabghuzi, which is important also for the study of the development of Turkic languages in Central Asia.[2]

In these works, storylines briefly presented in the Qur'an were taken up and built into more elaborate and longer narratives, which in turn served to inspire other authors. Elements of these narratives appear in a variety of literary genres in Persian – in lyrical poetry, but also in biographies of Sufi saints and in different types of verse romances.

The most well-known verse romance on Joseph in Persian is from the hand of the poet and Naqshbandi Sufi 'Abd al-Rahman Jami (1414-1492). It is a long narrative poem (*mathnawi*) of 4032 double verses, completed in 1483 and entitled *Yusuf-u Zulaykha*. It is one of the many works of Jami, whose patrons were the Timurid rulers in Herat, in particular the Timurid Sultan Husayn Bayqara (r. 1469-1506). In the courtly circles of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, Jami's fellow-poet, close friend, and disciple Nava'i (1441-1501) also played a considerable role. While Jami composed his *mathnawi* in Persian, Nava'i wrote mostly in Central Asian Turkish, usually referred to as Chaghatai at the time. Both languages played an important role at the Timurid court in Herat. Jami and Nava'i became patrons of literature, art, and architecture in their own right, and it is in this context that at the end of the 15th century cultural production in Herat thrived. The courtly elite commissioned richly illustrated manuscripts, many of which have been preserved and are now kept in libraries and museums all over the world.

The reception of Sa'di's *Bustan* at the Timurid court in Herat

One of the manuscripts produced at the court in Herat contains an iconic painting of the story of Yusuf and Zulaykha, made by one of the most famous painters in the history of Persian art, Kamal al-Din Behzad. This manuscript, dated 1488 and now kept in the Dar al-kutub in Cairo, is a copy of Sa'di's *Bustan* ('Orchard'). The poet Sa'di had composed this work two centuries earlier, in the second half of the 13th century, in his hometown Shiraz, a city which would become part of the Timurid Empire in the 14th century. The *Bustan* is a treatise in verse on morals and ethics, with many mystical overtones.

The painting that forms part of the 1488 manuscript copy of the *Bustan* depicts Zulaykha, trying to seduce Yusuf in a beautiful palace, where she chases him from room to room [Fig. 1]. It has often been noted that this palace, so central to this painting, does not occur in the text of Sa'di's *Bustan*. What Behzad's painting illustrates is a passage of only nine verses: it is no more than a short anecdote in the context of the *Bustan*.[3] Its text focuses on Zulaykha's lack of shame and false piety, and on Yusuf's exemplary modesty, self-restraint, and true dedication to God. The passage serves as one of the many anecdotes to expand on and to illustrate the concepts of shame and remorse, the topic of the ninth chapter of the *Bustan*.

The palace and its features, so prominently present on Behzad's painting in the *Bustan* manuscript, though not in the actual text of the work itself, also play a great role in Jami's *Yusuf and Zulaykha*. Jami completed this work in 1483, only a few years before Behzad painted the scene of Zulaykha seducing Joseph for the *Bustan* manuscript. There is no doubt that Behzad was aware of the contents of Jami's story and chose to make use of the strong visual elements he brought into the story.[4] The work of Jami would become a source of inspiration for many painters, and many illustrated manuscripts of Jami's *Yusuf and Zulaykha* exist.
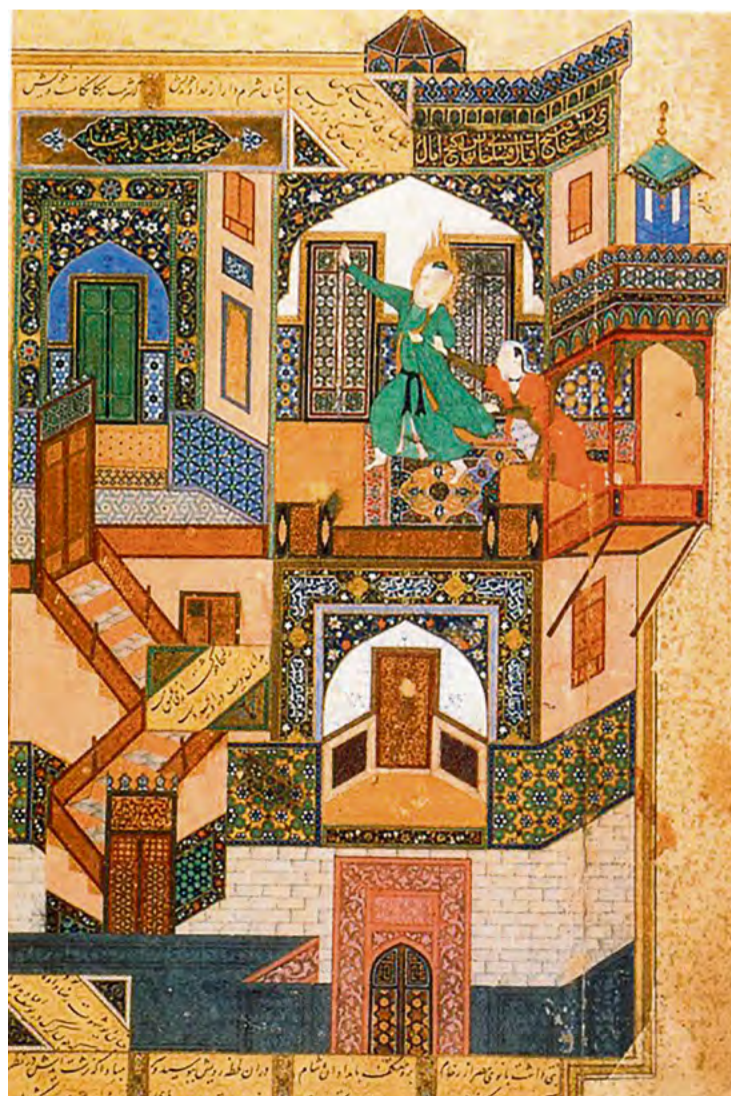
Fig. 1: *The Seduction of Yusuf*. Painting by Kamal al-Din Bizhad in a manuscript copy of Sa'di's *Bustan*, Herat, 1488. Dar al-kutub, Cairo, Adab Farsi 22, fol. 52v. [http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/ar-eg/Pages/HeritageCollection.aspx?hid=42; see also https://thingsthattalk.net/en/t/ttt:TqTbzG]

Fig. 2: Yusuf offered for sale, Zulaykha watches from her balcony. Painting from a manuscript of Shaykh Kamal al-Din Husayn Gazurgahi's *Majalis al-'ushshaq* ('Assemblies of lovers,' 1503-4), Ms. I. 1986, Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, fol. 5r. Late 16th century. From Almut von Gladiss, *Die Freunde Gottes. Die Bilderwelt einer persischen Luxushandschrift des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Berlin: Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2005, 8.
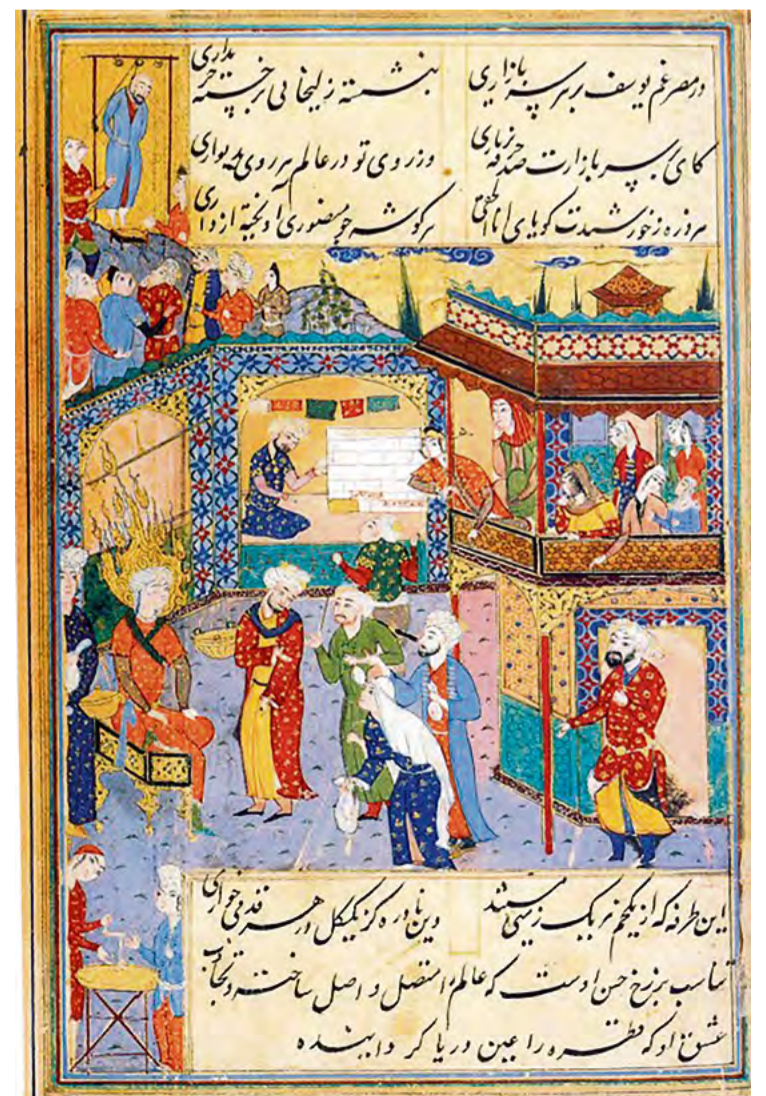
Fig. 3: *Egyptian Women Cut Their Hands at the Sight of Yusuf's Beauty.* Jami, Yusuf-u Zulaykha (1483), 5th narrative poem in *Haft Awrang* ('Seven thrones'). Painting from a manuscript copy of Jami's *Haft Awrang.* Safavid, c. 1565-1570, probably Shiraz. Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S.1986.55.1. [https://asia.si.edu/object/S1986.55.1/#object-content]

Jami's *Yusuf-u Zulaykha*: the Sufi context

Jami framed the story of Yusuf and Zulaykha as a Sufi narrative, in which Zulaykha, presented as a shameless and evil figure in many sources, is at the end redeemed and purified. This is not surprising: not only was Jami a Sufi himself, but also by this time Sufism had permeated society, art, and literature.

An example of the Sufi appropriation of the story is visible in a biography of Sufi saints written at the beginning of the 16th century by a successful disciple of Jami, Kamal al-Din Gazurgahi, who dedicated this biography (*Majalis al-'ushshaq*, '*Assemblies of Lovers*') to Sultan Husayn Bayqara. By the time Gazurgahi wrote this work, the story of Joseph was very popular and well known, also as part of a Sufi framework. The allusions in the passage on Yusuf and Zulaykha, obscure to the uninitiated reader, were no doubt very clear for the audience then. The following passage shows how Yusuf and Zulaykha had by this time risen above individuality. They themselves as well as their stories symbolize the obstacles and thorns of the Sufi path: "In the Egypt of Joseph's grief we find a Zulaykha, a high-ranked buyer, seated at every market's upper end [...] / Every atom of your sun speaks of 'I am the Truth' / Every corner is like a Mansur hanging from the gallows."[5]

The Egypt of Joseph's grief stands for the predicament of every Sufi, who is likened to Zulaykha. To reach the Sufi ideal of the annihilation of the self, it is necessary to face combat with the lower soul, of which Zulaykha is a symbol – and she therefore needs to go through poverty and longing, in order to reach this ultimate goal. This is also hinted at in a painting in one of the many 16th century manuscripts of *Majalis al-'ushshaq* [Fig. 2].[6] The centre of this painting depicts Yusuf being sold on a slave market. Here the rich merchant's wife Zulaykha sees Yusuf for the first time from her balcony, as she eagerly watches the proceedings. However, in a corner of the painting, we see in the distance a man hanging from the gallows, and this utter sacrifice, albeit in a different manner, is also what awaits Zulaykha. In *Majalis al-'ushshaq*, Gazurgahi does not go into the story of Yusuf and Zulaykha any further. Just like Sa'di and many other authors, Gazurgahi selected the element from the story that suited the goal of his work, knowing that his audience would grasp its meaning and context.

If we track the story's proliferation onwards, as it appears in Jami's *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* and likewise in Naysaburi's *Qisas al-anbiya*, we learn that Zulaykha becomes the laughing stock of a number of ladies in the city. This occurs once Yusuf is a slave in her household, because of her incurable passion for him. To restore her reputation, Zulaykha invites the ladies to a banquet and asks Yusuf to come in just when they are peeling citrons (*turanj*). Struck by Yusuf's beauty, they cut their own fingers instead of the fruit. This scene is very well-known, as it is also part of the Sura in the Qur'an devoted to Yusuf (12:30-33). In many manuscript copies of Jami's *Yusuf-u Zulaykha*, this scene is depicted very vividly: the blood runs from the hands of the ladies, enchanted as they are by Yusuf [Fig. 3].

In Jami's narration, the focus is very much on Zulaykha and her perspective. Instead of emphasizing her lack of shame and propriety, Jami frames Zulaykha's obsession with Yusuf as a pre-ordained given. He relates how Zulaykha saw Yusuf in a dream when she was still very young, and how she envisaged her union with him, the king of Egypt. But when a husband was presented to her, it wasn't Yusuf, though it was someone with a high position in Egypt. She is upset and desperate, as it was Yusuf she saw as her destiny. Jami's *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* follows the structure of a Sufi tale, and in a Sufi framework it is only natural that the protagonist fulfills his or her destiny after laying down all riches and conceit. This is exactly what happens to Zulaykha, who is utterly happy when she finally meets Yusuf for the first time as a new slave to her household. Jami gives a pre-history and a context to the scene of seduction, an important element of the story that is touched upon in many different sources.

As Jami's version is a stand-alone narrative poem of more than 4000 double verses, the story unfolds in much more detail. Yusuf and Zulaykha are separated for many years, and Jami extensively dwells upon the sufferings of Zulaykha. Towards the end of his narrative poem, she is described as utterly destitute, focusing only on her love for the lost Yusuf, whose name she repeats constantly. She grows blind, crooked, and poor, and she becomes a dervish, a vagabond who roams about in search for redemption. She finds redemption after many long years, when Yusuf finally reappears and restores her health. They marry and spend happy years together until, at long last, death tears them apart again.

Firdausi and *Yusuf-u Zulaykha*

Before the rise to power of the Timurid dynasty, there does not seem to have been any connection between the story of Yusuf and Zulaykha and Firdausi (d. c. 1020), the author of the *Shahnama* or Book of Kings, which dates back to the early 11th century.[7] Firdausi's *Shahnama* was a favourite with the Timurids. The work became increasingly important from the 14th century onwards, as a symbol of kingship and a vehicle for kingship ideology at the courts of medieval rulers in the Persianate world, many of whom had a Turkic background. Rulers commissioned richly illustrated manuscripts and, thus, prolonged and expanded the renown of the *Shahnama*. Interest in the *Shahnama* culminated in the year 1426, when the Timurid prince Baysunghur commissioned an illustrated manuscript with a new edition of the text, a task that took four years. This new edition was accompanied by a new preface, and it is here that Firdausi is mentioned for the first time as the author of a narrative poem with the title *Yusuf-u Zulaykha*.

The creation of Firdausi's *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* is related here to the tale of the disappointing reception of the *Shahnama* by the ruler Mahmud of Ghazna in 1010, who reportedly only paid a pitiful sum for the *Shahnama* presented to him, after which Firdausi went away in anger. The new preface commissioned by Baysunghur informs us that Firdausi went to Baghdad, where he wrote his *Yusuf -u Zulaykha*. That is the earliest reference we have of a Yusuf and Zulaykha story written by Firdausi.

The oldest manuscript that can be identified as a *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* ascribed to Firdausi dates from 1416. It is a jumbled manuscript of about 2180 double verses with 10 illustrations, preserved in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin (Ms. or. oct. 2302). In the catalogue it is described as an incomplete copy of *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* by an otherwise unknown poet called Amani.

The text of the narrative poem *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* as ascribed to Firdausi has not been studied extensively. According to Nasrollah Pourjavady, it is the earliest versification of the story in Persian and dates from the second half of 11th century. Its composition would then have coincided with the appearance of various versions of *Qisas al-anbiya*.[8]

This work, probably in a revised form, became connected to Firdausi from the early 15th century onwards. At this time many other narrative poems started to become part of the *Shahnama* manuscript tradition.

How does *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* fit in this corpus? The diverse corpus of narrative poems ascribed to Firdausi are characterized by the use of the *mutaqarib*, the poetic metre in which Firdausi's *Shahnama* is written. The *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* ascribed to Firdausi is written in this same metre. However, within the large group of narrative poems composed in the same metre as the *Shahnama*, and connected to Firdausi, *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* occupies a particular place. Other narrative poems ascribed to Firdausi are written as prequels or sequels to *Shahnama* stories. They often deal with the offspring or ancestry of the great Sistani hero Rustam. They are therefore often referred to as secondary or later epics, or as post-*Shahnama* epics. These works are clearly incorporated into the storyline of the *Shahnama* and connected to its contents.

The *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* ascribed to Firdausi followed a different trajectory. From the 15th century onwards, manuscripts started to appear in which the name Firdausi came up in connection with Yusuf and Zulaykha, and the work seems to have become regarded as a work of Firdausi, next to his *Shahnama*. In due course, it became included as such in literary histories and biographies of poets. Interestingly, the beginning of the earliest known *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* manuscript related to Firdausi (the Berlin manuscript dated 1416) includes a contemplative passage under the title 'The Apology of Firdausi' [Fig. 4]. In it, Firdausi offers an apology for his devotion to 'unjust and unwise kings,' framed in praise of the four rightly-guided caliphs. How can this passage be interpreted?

Apart from the increasing number of richly illustrated manuscripts of the *Shahnama*, commissioned by Timurid rulers, also the emergence of so-called post-*Shahnama* epics, described above, and the appearance of a *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* ascribed to Firdausi are evidence of the growing popularity of the *Shahnama* and its author in Timurid times. 'The Apology of Firdausi' in the text of the *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* ascribed to him suggests that the increased popularity of the *Shahnama* as a legitimizing tool among a Turko-Persian dynasties (such as the Timurids) also inspired a need to explicitly embed Firdausi in the Sunni Muslim framework these dynasties so successfully propagated and upheld. After all, the tradition about Mahmud of Ghazna's unkind reception of Firdausi's *Shahnama* also mentions the reason for this poor treatment: the rumour was that Firdausi was a so-called *rafizi*, an adherent of the Sh'i creed.[9]

Ascribing to Firdausi a work on a suitable topic, based on the Qur'anic narrative of Joseph, as well as bringing up in this same work Firdausi's acknowledgement of the four rightly-guided caliphs may be explained as a further justification of the elevated position of the *Shahnama* among the Sunni rulers in the Turko-Persian world.

However, the apparently forged relation between an early *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* versification, in the 15th century ascribed to Firdausi, does not seem to have had much impact. *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* ascribed to Firdausi never in any way competed with the late 15th-century *Yusuf-u Zulaykha* composed by Jami, who was evidently unaware of a connection between the topic of his work and Firdausi. It was his version of the story that much better suited the taste of the time and became hugely popular in the centuries following its composition.

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Notes

1   Rachel Milstein, Karin Rührdanz, and Barbara Schmitz, *Stories of the Prophets. Illustrated Manuscripts of Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 1999.
2   Al-Rabghūzī, *The Stories of the Prophets* (2 Vols.): *Qiṣaṣ Al-Anbiyā': an Eastern Turkish Version* (Second Edition), H.E. Boeschoten and J. O'Kane, Boston: Brill, 2015.
3   Sa'di, Bustan, ed. Gh. Yusofi. Tehran: Entesharat-e Khwarazmi, 1368/1989, 192, vss 3846-3857.
4   Lamia Balafrej, *The Making of the Artist in Late Timurid Painting*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019, 91-92.
5   Kamal al-Din Gazurgahi, Majalis al-'ushshaq, ed. Gholamreza Tabataba'I Majd, Entesharat-e Zarrin, Tehran, 1376/1997, 10.
6   As included in Almut Gladiss, *Die Freunde Gottes. Die Bilderwelt einer persischen Luxushandschrift des 16. Jahrhunderts.* Berlin: Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2005, 8.
7   François De Blois, *Persian Literature: a bio-bibliographical survey begun by the late C. A. Storey.* Vol V, Part 2. Poetry ca. A.D. 1100-1225. London: Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1994, 576.
8   Nasrollah Pourjavady, 'Genres of Religious Literature', in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. J.T.P. de Bruijn,chapter 9. London: I.B. Tauris, 2009, 273.
9   Nizami 'Aruzi Samarqandi, *Chahar Maqala*, ed. M. Qazvini, Berlin-Grunewald: Iranschähr, 1927, 55.

Fig. 4: Opening page of a manuscript of *Yusuf-u Zulaykha*, Berlin, Ms. Or. Oct. 2302, fol. 1b.

Power of Poetry in a King's Court

Sara Mirahmadi

Throughout the history of Iran, the kings of various dynasties had poets in their service to compose poems in their praise, recite poems, or in some cases, sing for them. We have evidence of the presence of minstrels as early as the time of the Arsacids (247 BCE. - 224 CE.) known as *gosans*. They were not only musicians and singers, but also poets whose traditions found their way to the court of the Sasanians (224-651).[1] Poetry did not die after the Islamic conquest of Iran in 651; rather it returned even more powerfully. Before long, the art of poetry became an essential subject for those who pursued knowledge at the time. Any learned man, if not a poet himself, was required to know the art of poetry and the great poets to some extent. Persian historical sources since the 9th century demonstrated a strong connection between prose and poetry by including verses in their texts. Therefore, in this short article, I will look at two historical sources which made use of poetry in order to answer an important question about this artform and its role: What does poetry bring to the table that makes it so desirable for the ruling class?

Poetry and history in the service of the Seljuqs (1040-1194)

It is not easy to put a label on the career of Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Rāvandī; he was perhaps what we call today a "Jack of all trades". According to the introduction of his book, *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr*,[2] he was from a village called Rāvand, in the vicinity of Kashan (south of Tehran). His family was famous in the field of calligraphy, and he learned this skill throughout his years of study as well. He writes about this in his book, saying that he could write in 70 different calligraphic styles along with bookbinding, gilding, and illumination.[3] His education was not limited to calligraphy, he also learned about history, poetry, and religion. One of his uncles, Zayn al-Dīn, who was particularly well-known for his calligraphic skills, was summoned by Sultan Ṭughril III (r.1176-1194) to the court of the Seljuqs to teach the Sultan the ways and secrets of calligraphy. As an apprentice to his uncle, Rāvandī was introduced to the court of the Sultan where he assisted his uncle in various calligraphic and book production projects.

Unfortunately for Rāvandī, Ṭughril III proved to be the last of the Seljuq Sultans and he was defeated by the Khvārazmshāhids in battle in 1194. Having lost his patron, after a period of frustration and disappointment, Rāvandī wrote a history of the Seljuqs and decided to offer it to Sultan Kaykhusraw I of the Rum Seljuqs (1192-1196/1205-1211), a branch of the Seljuq house ruling over Anatolia.

Like the author himself, it is difficult to put his book in a single category. Although *RŞ* narrates the history of the Seljuq dynasty, it also includes chapters on calligraphy [Fig.1], hunting, drinking, and shooting; the subjects which are mostly in the domain of boon companions (*nadīm*). A *nadīm* was supposed to keep company with kings and when necessary, advise them on various matters.

Apart from the arts of a *nadīm*, Rāvandī demonstrates his talent in poetry by including 2680 Persian verses in his book. Out of these 2680 verses, 654 were composed by Firdawsī and selected from various sections of Firdawsī's book, the *Shāhnāma* (the Book of Kings). The *Shāhnāma* was a long poem composed by Firdawsī in 1010 which narrates

Fig 1: Instruction on drawing letters in calligraphy in Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr, (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Division orientale, Supplément persan 1314, fol.171)

Fig 2: Ghazan Khan hunting, Jāmiʿal-Tavārīkh, (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Division orientale, Supplément persan 1113, fol.212r)

the story of Iranian people from the mythical era until the Islamic conquest of Iran. The *Shāhnāma* was received well in later periods to such a degree that other poets not only wrote poetry imitating the style of the *Shāhnāma*, but also copied the *Shāhnāma*; Sometimes the illustrated and gilded versions were produced by the order of kings. The *Shāhnāma* left an enormous impact on various aspects of Iranian history, particularly on literature.

As giving advice was considered one of the responsibilities of a *nadīm*, *RŞ* is replete with such topics, especially about how to rule with justice. Precisely at the beginning of the book, Rāvandī sets ancient Iranian kings as examples of just rulership for his patron, Sultan Kaykhusraw. In his introduction, after paying homage to the Sultan, he introduces Firaydūn, a mythical king in the *Shāhnāma* as an example of just rulership:

زمشک و ز عنبر سرشته نبود   فریدون فرخ فرشته نبود
تو داد و دهش کن فریدون تویی⁴   بداد و دهش یافت این فرهی

"The auspicious Firaydūn was not an angel, he was not made of deer musk and ambergris. He became fortunate by doing justice, if you do the same, you are also a Firaydūn."

Along with the above example which makes an explicit connection between Rāvandī's patron and the kings of the *Shāhnāma*, Rāvandī applies a different type of allegory as well. With the help of this device, Rāvandī attracts the attention of his reader to the scenes of the *Shāhnāma* implicitly:

نگشتی سپهر برین از برم⁵   نزادی مرا کاشکی مادرم

"I wish my mother did not give birth to me; I wish I was never born."

Here two situations are compared: the first in the *Shāhnāma* relates the story of a battle between Iranian forces and those of their enemies, the Turanians. The verse is said by an Iranian hero, Gūdarz, who is concerned about the aftermath of the battle. The second case, in the *RŞ*, is in the story of Sultan Ṭughril III, Rāvandī's first patron, where the opponents of the Sultan hear of his arrival; They were, as the verse states, terrified, 'wishing they had not been born'.

Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr contains ample references to the *Shāhnāma*, either explicitly connecting the Seljuqs to the ancient Iranian kings, or implicitly by applying the scenery of the *Shāhnāma* to Seljuq history. Although Rāvandī was among the first authors who made use of the *Shāhnāma* in this way and on such a massive scale, he was not the last one. In the following section, we will see how an Ikhanid historian also turned his attention to the *Shāhnāma*.

Poetry and history in the service of the Ilkhanids (1256-1335)

Khvāja Rashīd al-Dīn Fażl Allāh Hamadānī was a prominent historian and a vizier in the service of the Ilkhanid dynasty. He came from a family of physicians in Hamadān and before his appointment as vizier, he had practiced the family occupation. It was during the reign of the second Ilkhan, Abaqa (r.1265-1282) that he started to climb the ladder of power until he was appointed as the vizier during the reigns of two Ilkhanid Sultans, Ghazan (r.1295-1304) and Öljeitü (r.1304-1316). Ghazan ordered Rashīd al-Dīn, as the ruler's trusted vizier, to write a history of Chinggis Khan and his descendants [Fig.2]. The book, however, was only completed after the death of Ghazan and Rashīd al-Dīn decided to offer it to Sultan Öljeitü, Ghazan's brother and successor. The book, called *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*[6] (the Blessed History of Ghazan) was well received by the Sultan. He commanded Rashīd al-Dīn to add two other volumes, one on world history and another on geography which, together were called the *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh* (Compendium of Chronicles).

Rashīd al-Dīn's first volume, *TMG*, has 159 verses composed by 17 different poets.[7] Firdawsī, with 24 verses, is the poet whose poems have been applied the most in TMG. Like *RŞ*, we can see a clear effort to connect Rashīd al-Dīn's stories to those of the *Shāhnāma*. However, in this case, the heroes of the *Shāhnāma* are the primary focus:

همی رای شمشیر و تیر آمدش⁸   هنوز از دهن بوی شیر آمدش

"Even with the smell of milk still on his breath, his thoughts raced to the sword and arrow."

The original verse in the *Shāhnāma* belongs to the story of Rustam, the most famous hero of the *Shāhnāma*, and another hero, Suhrāb. Suhrāb is well-known in the *Shāhnāma* due to his early maturity and physical strength. When he was 14 years old, he fought with Rustam and nearly defeated him. In *TMG*, this verse is applied to describe the childhood of Ghazan, Rashīd al-Dīn's patron. The verse depicts Ghazan as a natural warrior, a quality which befits him as a king.

Apart from allegorical situations, Rashīd al-Dīn applies poetry in another way to link the Mongols to the *Shāhnāma*. In TMG, there are 46 verses which are not from the

Shāhnāma, but they were composed based on the style of the *Shāhnāma*. Though the origin of these verses is not known, the meter, vocabulary, and the imagery all remind the reader of the *Shāhnāma*; a heroic atmosphere which benefited the image of the Mongols rulers of Iran and helped to legitimise them as the rightful successors of ancient Iranian kings. The following verse is an example of this practice in *TMG*:

ز گرد سواران فلک تیره گشت⁹   برقند و روی زمین خیره گشت

"They went and all the earth sat in a daze, as the firmament turned to darkness from the dust kicked up by the riders."

The similarity of the above verse demonstrates itself more when compared to the verse of the Shāhnāma:

جهان پیش چشم اندرش تیره گشت¹⁰   چو بشنید رستم سرش خیره گشت

"When Rustam heard, his head sat in a daze, as the whole world turned to darkness before his eyes."

RŞ and *TMG* are only two examples of how and why poetry attracts the attention of kings. In the pre-modern era, court history and poetry were tools of propaganda for the rulers who wished to legitimise themselves or make themselves immortal by stamping their names in the pages of history. While various practices were in use according to the demands of the kings, Rashīd al-Dīn and Rāvandī sought to show their patrons as inheritors of the glorious ancient Iranian kings through the art of poetry.

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Notes

1 Mary Boyce, "The Parthian Gosan and Iranian Minstrel Tradition," *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society* 89 (1957), 17-18.
2 Hereafter *RŞ*.
3 Rāvandī, *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr*, ed. Mohammad Qazvini (Tehran: Asāṭir, 1386/2007), 40.
4 *RŞ*, 69.
5 *RŞ*, 371.
6 Hereafter TMG.
7 The numbers are according to Roushan's edition. (See: Rashid al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mirās-i Maktūb, 2015).
8 TMG, 1067.
9 TMG, 875.
10 Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, ed. Jalal Khaleqi Motlaq (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1987-2008), vol.2, 186.

Cross-Cultural Understanding

Mongol Political Rituals As Understood by Persian Scholars

Tobias Jones

As the Mongol Empire expanded westward in the 13th century, the lands of the Persianate world fell increasingly under Mongol dominion. The Mongols brought their own political and cultural norms, which their subjects were forced to adapt to. Various political rituals became part and parcel of life at court, and it became necessary for Persian scholars to engage with these rituals. These scholars, usually in political roles themselves, made use of Mongol terms when describing these moments of submission, reward, and penance.

Fig. 1: The fall of Baghdad to the Mongols. (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Division orientale, Supplément persan 1113, fol. 180v-181)

The Mongols in the Islamic world

After the initial conquests of the Mongols in the 1220s, they gradually established themselves as the masters of most of the Persian-speaking Islamic world [Fig. 1]. Mongol domination was completed with the establishment of the Ilkhanate in the 1260s by Hulegu (d. 1265), a grandson of Chinggis Khan (d. 1227), which would continue until the mid-14th century. Much of the Middle East therefore had to acclimate to Mongol ways of doing things. The Mongols regularly made use of Persian officials to run their administrations, and it was these officials who saw themselves as mediators between the nomadic Mongol rulers and their sedentary Muslim subjects. Officials like 'Ata Malik Juvaini in the 1260s and Rashid al-Din in the early 1300s also undertook the writing of histories of the Mongols. It is in these works that we see these officials' understanding of Mongol political rituals.

Favour, reward, service, and gifts

Mongol political rituals centred on symbolic acts of submission, and the performance of loyalty, both by the ruler in the form of favours and rewards, and by the subject in the form of outstanding acts of service. The ritual which showed the ruler's benevolence, gratitude, and provision to his subject is called *soyurghamishi* in Persian sources. This ritual involved the subject coming into the ruler's presence and receiving or asking for some sort of benefaction from the Mongol ruler. At times, the swearing of oaths also took place in this ritual, binding ruler and ruled to the great principle by which the subject provided utmost loyalty and service, and the ruler responded with protection, sustenance, and favour. Often, the first type of *soyurghamishi* granted was the subject's own life, showing the ruler's mercy and forgiveness, and putting the subject forever in the ruler's debt. More concrete forms of favours included money, precious gems, horses, and robes of honour, sometimes the very robes of the ruler himself.[1] *Soyurghamishi* often meant a change of status, a promotion or a confirmation of the position of a subordinate ruler. One of the most notable favours that a Chinggisid ruler could give was human: the control of a local group or a daughter in marriage. This was only conferred for the most significant political submissions or for the most dutiful service.

Fig. 2: The Ilkhan Ahmad Teguder receives an ambassador's gifts. (Bibliothèque nationale de France)

In return for such favours, subjects were expected to regularly show their own performance of loyalty, known as *tikishmishi*. This ritual was regularly a response to, or a presage to, the ruler's *soyurghamishi*. This ritual usually often involved kneeling, the offering of an alcoholic beverage, giving gifts, the sacred number nine, and the welcoming of the performer into the ruler's presence [Fig. 2]. It was the giving of gifts which was the most notable, showing the subject's willingness to hand over tribute or booty, a very important step in the loyalty process for the Mongol rulers. The gifts that were given could take many forms, but regularly included horses, the key to Mongol military dominance. With the performance of this ritual, subjects showed their continued or renewed submission to their ruler. It was regularly performed after a subject had committed a transgression. The symbolism involved performing the ritual outside the camp, then being let into the ruler's camp again. This act captured this passage from a state of disobedience and disfavour to a state of submission and intimacy.

Sharing a cup

Drinks were of huge importance to the Mongols, not only as something to be consumed, but as materials with symbolic meaning. Mare's milk, known as *qumiss* or *airag*, was poured on the ground in religious ceremonies and on the swearing of oaths, such as that of blood brotherhood, known as *anda*.[2] A specific ceremony called *otok* was a common occurrence in Mongol society, which entailed the offering of wine (or another alcoholic substitute) based on hierarchical status at important events. Persian chroniclers regularly mention the ritual of presenting a cup to a ruler, known as *kasa-giri*, which is likely a translation of the Mongol term. It seems that this Mongol tradition became a regular event in the Persianate world as well, and Persian chroniclers tell of this ritual often. At times, *kasa-giri* accompanied *tikishmishi*, in which the supplicant presented a cup or goblet to the ruler, and if the ruler accepted, the supplicant's request would be granted [Fig. 3]. Rejecting the cup was a sign of disfavour, and the supplicant would need to prove his loyalty. This ritual carried great meaning, and serious insult could be taken by those who believed it was performed in the wrong way.

Penance and forgiveness

Both *tikishmishi* and a new term, *uljamishi*, were rituals by which subjects could return from a state of disobedience into the ruler's good graces. It is notable that in both ceremonies, there were instances of rulers rejecting subjects' opportunity to perform the ritual. This indicates that the ruler was either irrevocably estranged from his subject, which would mean his execution was imminent, or that the conditions for the performance of the ritual had not yet been met. This latter case usually meant that a recalcitrant subject had not gone far enough in proving his loyalty. *Uljamishi* certainly carried the idea of penance. One of the most interesting cases we have where this ritual was performed was by three sons of Chinggis Khan, Ogodei (d. 1241), Chaghadai (d. 1242), and Jochi (d. 1227) (or Tolui d. 1232). In their conquest of Khwarazm, the sons were accused of arguing amongst each other and withholding booty from their father, the second of which was a much more serious crime. Chinggis was livid and refused to see them for days, until his commanders convinced him to allow the sons to perform *uljamishi* to him and receive his favour once more. These rituals were, thus, not only for foreign rulers and Mongol commanders, but applied even to the royal family itself.

While some of these terms faded into obscurity, others became key concepts within Persian political terminology for centuries. *Soyurghamishi* and *tikishmishi* continued to be used by Timurid historians of the early modern period. Meanwhile, the word *soyurghal*, linked to *soyurghamishi*, came to mean a hereditary land grant, and was used by the Timurids, the Safavids, and the Mughals. The continuity between Persian historians of different eras explaining the rituals of their Turco-Mongol rulers meant that these were familiar concepts to these scholars, who likely had to perform the rituals themselves at some point in their careers. These historians sought to explain Mongol political culture, and, while they often used Persian words to elaborate upon these ideas, they continued to speak in the cultural language of their Turco-Mongol patrons.

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Notes

1 See T.T. Allsen, 'Robing in the Mongolian Empire', in (ed.) S. Gordon, *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 305-313.
2 A. Birtalan, 'Rituals of Sworn Brotherhood (Mong. anda bol-, Oir. and, ax düü bol-) in Mongol Historic and Epic Tradition', *Chronica: Annual of the Institute of History*, University Szeged, Vol.7-8 (2007-2008), pp. 44-56.

Fig. 3: Tolui presents a cup to his brother Ogodei Qa'an. (Reproduction in Genghis Khan et l'Empire Mongol by Jean-Paul Roux, collection "Découvertes Gallimard" (n° 422), série Histoire)

24   The Tone
The Restored Splendours
of Timurid Samarqand
The past and present
beauty of a storied city

Fig. 1: Postcard depicting the state of the monuments at the turn of the 20th century. Postcard author's collection.

The Restored Splendours of Timurid Samarqand

Elena Paskaleva

Down through the centuries, Samarqand, situated in present-day Uzbekistan, has inspired poetic superlatives for the richness of its location, its flourishing economic and cultural life, and its dazzling architecture. Often described as the pearl of the Silk Roads, Samarqand is one of the oldest cities in the world situated in the Zarafshan Valley, the cradle of the intercultural exchanges along the Eurasian trade routes.

During the time of the Achaemenid Empire (c. 550–330 BCE) Samarqand was the capital of the Sogdian governors and merchants, who controlled the trade from Imperial China to Byzantium until the 11th century. In 329 BCE, the city was conquered by Alexander the Great and adopted the Greek name of Marakanda. Subsequently, Samarqand was ruled by a succession of Iranian and Turkic dynasties until the Mongol invasion by Chinggis Khan in 1220. Even though the city's history is very ancient, much of what attracts us to Samarqand today traces its origins in the era when the Central Asian conqueror Timur/Tamerlane (d. 1405) built his capital there around 1370. Timur's successors, notably starting with his grandson Ulugh Beg (r. 1409–1449), continued to adorn the city with monumental buildings. By the 19th century, when we begin to get foreign travel accounts, drawings, and photographs to document

the state of the monuments, most of the great structures were in ruins [Fig. 1]. Plans to rebuild or restore some of them were developed as early as the first Soviet years, but the most significant projects were not implemented until the last third of the 20th century, beginning in the years prior to Uzbekistan's declaration of independence in 1991.

The Shah-i Zinda Necropolis (11th-15th century)

The Timurid necropolis of Shah-i Zinda (The Living King) commemorates the Muslim martyr Qutham ibn 'Abbas (d. 677) who allegedly died in Samarqand trying to convert the local population. The complex is situated north of the city, on the southern slope of Afrasiyab, the oldest occupied hillside with archaeological layers dating

back to the middle of the first millennium BCE. The necropolis is one of the most sacred pilgrimage sites across Central Asia. The first structures at Shah-i Zinda including mausoleums and a royal madrasa (Islamic religious school) date back to the Qarakhanid dynasty (840–1212). The current complex consists of several mosques and mainly one-chamber mausoleums built after 1350, most of them dedicated to Timur's *amirs* (military commanders) and female family members. The ensemble comprises three groups of mausoleums: lower, middle, and upper connected by four-arched domed passages locally called *chartaq*. All facades along the main corridor are covered with lavish revetments employing ornaments executed in different techniques: carved majolica, glazed terracotta, polychrome overglaze and monochrome glazed ceramic, and tile mosaic. In particular, mosaic faience, was perfected under the Timurids after the 1390s, and some of the most exquisite examples are found at Shah-i Zinda. These tile revetments also protect the structures erected with baked brick from constant temperature fluctuations (very hot summers and cold winters), rain and dump.

The earliest images of Shah-i Zinda are recorded in the Turkestan Album (1872) commissioned by Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufmann (1818-1882), the first governor general of Russian Turkestan. Excavations of the site started in 1922 and continued until 1925. However, a systematic approach to the study of its architecture, archaeological layers and history did not begin until 1957 when the excavations were led by Nina B. Nemtseva (1926-2021), who worked at Shah-i Zinda until 2001.

After 2005 Shah-i Zinda underwent a massive restoration campaign throughout which new mausoleums were built. Original Timurid tilework was substituted by modern mass-produced tiling. The remains of the portal to the 11th-century Qarakhanid Madrasa (1066) were demolished. Several Qur'anic texts (3:169, 3:170) were added to the main entrance portal originally built in 1435.

The Gur-i Amir Mausoleum (late 14th-early 15th century)

The Timurid dynastic mausoleum of Gur-i Amir was commissioned by Timur in August 1404 for his beloved grandson of Chinggisid lineage and heir presumptive Muhammad Sultan (d. 1403). The mausoleum was erected in the southwestern part of Samarqand, adjacent to the pre-existing complex of Muhammad Sultan (late 14th century) consisting of a two-storey madrasa (to the east) and a domed *khanaqah* (Sufi lodge) to the west. All three structures are arranged around a central open courtyard with a main entrance portal to the north. The octagonal mausoleum is covered with a ribbed dome decorated with turquoise tile mosaic. The interior space is adorned with a dado of octagonal onyx tiles, crowned by a muqarnas cornice. Around the 1420s, Ulugh Beg refurbished the interior and the onyx tiles were gilded with Chinese lobe cloud patterns and lotus palmettes. The upper walls are decorated with papier-mâché details in gold and blue crafted from locally produced paper. The cenotaphs of Timur, his sons Shahrukh

and Miranshah, his grandsons Muhammad Sultan and Ulugh Beg, and Timur's spiritual consort Sayyid Baraka, are situated in the centre of the main mausoleum, surrounded by a carved marble screen. The actual burials and tombstones are in the crypt below, closed to the general public in accordance with Islamic burial rituals, in which the sanctity of the deceased should not be disturbed.

In 1425 Ulugh Beg erected a gallery to the east, which serves as the main entrance to the mausoleum. Most likely, this enlarged compound included another gallery to the south, of which only a few arches remain, and a monumental complex to the west with a central domed space. By the end of the 17th century, the madrasa had been abandoned and the dome of the *khanaqah* had collapsed. The two remaining minarets were also destroyed; the south-eastern one collapsed after a major earthquake in 1886 and the south-western one was ruined on May 18, 1903.

The systematic study of Samarqand's monuments was initiated in 1895 when the Russian Tsarist Archaeological Commission sent an expedition under the supervision of Nikolai Iv. Veselovskii. The expedition resulted in the publication of the only volume of the lavishly decorated catalogue *The Mosques of Samarqand* (1905), solely dedicated to Timur's dynastic mausoleum of Gur-i Amir and financed by Empress Aleksandra Fedorovna (1872–1918). This prototype of an officially politicized edition on Timurid architecture depicted Gur-i Amir as an idealized work of art, stripped of any religious or socio-cultural importance.

During the Soviet period, Gur-i Amir was remodelled in a series of restoration campaigns continuing into present-day. The central courtyard façade was completely redesigned by Galina A. Pugachenkova (1915-2007) and built in 1945 [Fig. 2]. The western remains of the Muhammad Sultan complex were excavated in 1952 by Nemtseva [Fig. 3], partially reconstructed, and the entrance portal to the north was renovated with reinforced concrete. During the celebration of Timur's 660th jubilee in 1996, the whole ensemble was refurbished and the minarets were erected anew. After 2008-9, new epigraphy was added to the central courtyard façade and many original Timurid tiles were substituted with modern majolica reproductions manufactured in Tashkent. In 2019, the UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay visited Gur-i Amir but no attempts were made to stop the constant refurbishments and ongoing demolitions.

Bibi Khanum Mosque and Mausoleum (1398-1405)

The Bibi Khanum Congregational Mosque (1398-1405) was conceived as the most significant architectural expression of Timur's rule. The mosque was the most ambitious building project initiated during his lifetime and can be visited today in a 20th-century restoration. It is very likely that the construction was never completed, which can explain the dilapidated state of the monument at the end of the 19th century [Fig. 4]. At the nadir of its decay, it had been reduced to the core of the main sanctuary, its dome having partially collapsed, and
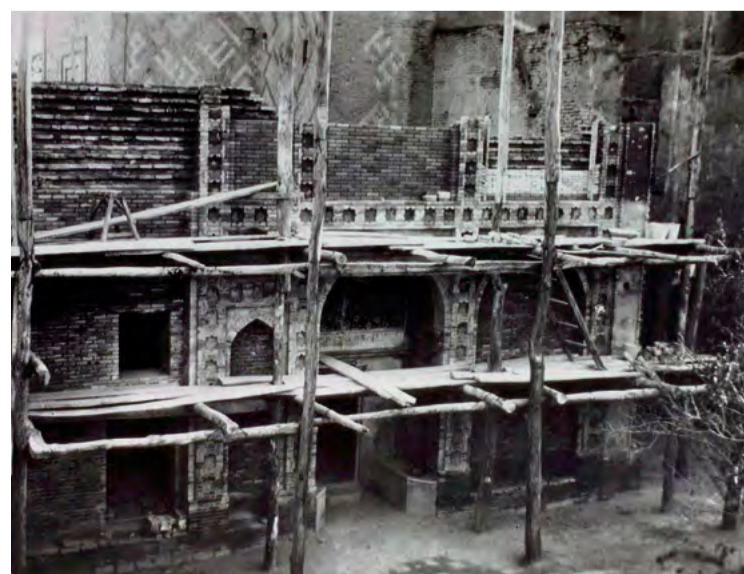

Fig. 2: Construction of the main courtyard façade of Gur-i Amir in 1945. Courtesy of the Central State Archive of the Republic of Uzbekistan (TsGARUz), R-2406, op.1, file 1365, page 13.

the iwan (monumental gate) of its façade consisting of a perilously suspended fragment. The small northern and southern mosques facing on the large open courtyard were also in ruins and without their domes. Nothing was left of the two-storey domed galleries that connected all these elements; only the north-western minaret had survived. According to the description of the Bibi Khanum Mosque in *Maṭla'- sa'dayn va majma'-i baḥrayn* (The Rise of the Two Auspicious Constellations and the Junction of the Two Seas) by 'Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi (1413-1482), masters from Basra and Baghdad modelled the *maqsura* (enclosure reserved for the ruler near the prayer niche), the *suffas* (elevations), and the courtyard after structures in Fars and Kirman. Silk carpets covered the open spaces. Craftsmen from Aleppo lit gilded lamps similar to heavenly stars in the inner domes of the mosque.[1]

A monumental Qur'anic stand as a material expression of piety was placed in the main sanctuary sometime after 1420. It was commissioned by Timur's grandson Ulugh Beg who is believed to have memorized the Qur'an with all seven variant readings. The stand is made of carved stone in relief and clearly bears his name. Its rich arabesques and poly-lobed details can be attributed to the iconography of Yuan porcelain prototypes that may have entered the Timurid court via the active caravan trade between Central Asia and China. With this in mind, China should not be regarded only as a trade partner but as an important source of imperial inspiration and emulation as it was the home of the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) established by Kubilay Khan (d. 1294). Timur and his descendants struggled for political legitimacy beyond the legacy of Chinggis Khan (d. 1227). The Yuan as the chief successor state of the Mongol empire may have constituted the most significant source for imperial visual vocabulary that was successfully reappropriated and transformed by the Timurids. Although Zhu Yuanzhang, a humble plebian turned general, succeeded in overthrowing the Mongol dynasty in 1368 and proclaimed himself as the first Ming emperor, taking the title of Hongwu (1328-1398), the continuous significance of the Yuan legacy for the Timurids should not be underestimated. Under Timur, there were several embassies to Ming China. The exchange of royal gifts and the intensity of the trade relations increased under Shah Rukh and Ulugh Beg; the first Timurid embassy arrived in China in 1387, followed by yearly tributes of horses and camels to the Ming court. The first known Chinese embassy to Timur was established in 1395. The Ming chronicles, *Mingshi* and the *Da Ming Yi Tong*, and the Ming Geography *Shi Si yü ki* refer to Samarqand as the "city of abundance," and mention "a beautiful building set apart for prayer to Heaven" situated in the north-eastern part of the city. It is highly probable that they refer specifically to the Bibi Khanum Mosque which had pillars of "ts'*ing shi* (blue stone), with engraved figures."[2] Even today, the stone of the Qur'anic stand has a blue-greyish tinge to it. According to the chronicles, "there is in this building a hall where the sacred book is explained. This sacred book is written in gold characters, the cover being made of sheep's leather."[3] The fact that the Ming chronicles explicitly mention the location of the richly-decorated mosque and refer to a particular Qur'an, only stress the importance of their artistic qualities and their symbolic association with the rulers of Samarqand.

The Bibi Khanum Mosque is also unique for the first usage of papier-mâché in its interior decoration. According to Borodina, the technique was imported from China.[4] The cotton paper was inexpensive, locally produced and sometimes repurposed for decoration. The architectural details were pressed into *ganch* (a form of local gypsum) moulds and consisted of seven or eight sheets of paper fixed together with starchy vegetable glue. In addition, papier-mâché was the only decoration applied on the interior domes. Each detail of the relief decoration was separately created and attached with iron nails onto the walls in order to form larger compositions. The upper surface of the papier-mâché ornaments was

Fig. 3: Detail of a tile mosaic fragment from the Muhammad Sultan Madrasa, Gur-i Amir, Samarqand. Pencil drawing by Nina Nemtseva, 1952. Courtesy of the Archive of the Agency for Cultural Heritage (GlavNPU), file C 723/H 50.

primed with *ganch* and gilded; the papier-mâché was used to create a relief surface under the gilding. In separate instances, *ganch* reliefs pasted over with paper were also applied under the gold surface. Examples of the latter practice can be found not only in the Bibi Khanum Mosque but also in the Tuman Agha Mausoleum at Shah-i Zinda and at Gur-i Amir. The Samarqand paper was famous for its quality and durability, and it was even exported. There were paper mills and storage facilities along the water canals (*aryks*) coming out of the Siyob Bazaar in the north-west of Samarqand.

The Bibi Khanum Mosque was comprehensively studied by Shalva E. Ratiia in the 1940s. Ratiia drew up the first restoration plans based on its ruins and produced reconstruction watercolours. Pugachenkova finalized the restoration plans for the mosque at the beginning of the 1950s. Further archaeological research was performed by Liia Iu. Man'kovskaia in 1967. After 1974, the restoration project was led by the architect Konstantin S. Kriukov, one of the most influential restorers in the Soviet period, who initiated the replacement of all brick loadbearing structures with reinforced concrete frames. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the collapsed domes of the side mosques were rebuilt with reinforced concrete and new tiling was inserted along the domes' ribbed outer shells. After 1985, the main sanctuary was adorned with massive pylons, decorated in mass-produced tiles. By the end of the 1990s, the epigraphic programmes were executed anew; two verses of Sura *al-Baqarah* (Qur'an 2:127-128) were added on top of the main sanctuary *iwan* of the Bibi Khanum Mosque.

During the urban regeneration of Samarqand prior to the 2007 celebrations of the city's 2750th anniversary, the whole

square between the Bibi Khanum Mosque and the Bibi Khanum Mausoleum (early 15th century) was completely refurbished. In 2005-6, the octagonal mausoleum, which had been reduced to ruins, was adorned with a new pseudo- Timurid dome on a high drum and rebuilt facades with arched portals. The outer wall of the Bibi Khanum Madrasa was built up above ground level with modern brick to replicate the presumed position of the original *guldasta* (corner towers). Although no traces of the madrasa remain, Soviet scholars have stylistically compared it to the Ulugh Beg Madrasa on Registan Square.

The Registan Square (15th-17th century)

Although the present layout of the Registan Square evolved during the 15th-17th centuries, the current state of the three madrasas (Islamic religious schools) is the product of numerous restoration campaigns. The northern and southern facades of the Ulugh Beg Madrasa (1417–1420), the oldest surviving monument on the square, were piles of rubble at the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, its entire courtyard had to be rebuilt and the epigraphic program designed anew.

The characteristic *hauz* (water tank) to the southeast was destroyed. One of the western minarets collapsed in 1870. In the autumn of 1918 it was noticed that the north-eastern minaret of the Ulugh Beg Madrasa had started to tilt. As a result, a lot of engineering effort went into the straightening of the original minarets along the Registan. The first reconstruction project was initiated in 1920 by Mikhail F. Mauer, the chief architect of Samarqand since 1917. After a decade of preparations, the north-eastern minaret was straightened in 1932 by the Moscow engineer Vladimir G. Shukhov. In the 1950s, E. O. Nelle produced the drawings for the straightening of the south-eastern minaret, the work was executed by the engineer E. M. Gendel in 1965.

The earliest restoration work at the Shir Dar Madrasa (1616-1636), the second oldest monument on Registan Square, was carried out by Boris N. Zasypkin and started in 1925. Unlike his later Soviet colleagues, in the 1920s, Zasypkin was pleading for "restorations aiming at supporting the ancient fabric of a monument and reconstructions substituting its lost structural parts."[5] Zasypkin was never in favour of reinventing the architecture of the Samarqand monuments and interfering with their medieval constructions by introducing new building materials. He insisted on collaboration with local craftsmen and masons, and on the usage of the original baked brick and locally produced alabaster.

What had been little more than a shell with a facade of the Tilla Kari Madrasa (1646-1660), the Shaybanid Congregational mosque from the 17th century, was completely re-built by the Soviet authorities. The much-photographed dome one sees today was added during a long restoration

campaign that ended in the late 1970s. There are no existing photographs of the original dome that collapsed after a major earthquake in 1818. Its spectacular gilded interior was restored in 1979.

In 1982 the Registan was revealed to the Soviet public in its presumed former glory, and the restoration team lead by Konstantin S. Kriukov honoured. The later Soviet restorations focused mainly on the rebuilding of the three Registan madrasas with reinforced concrete. As the main scientific adviser, Kriukov, believed that the exterior decoration was a sheer garment worn by the construction itself. Thus the refurbishment of all Registan madrasas with newly manufactured glazed tiling was merely a question of efficiency. The reinforced concrete dome shells were a manifestation of Soviet technological progress that would ensure the longevity of the madrasas beyond the frequent tremblors of Central Asian earthquakes.

Conclusion

With its rich cultural history, favourable climate, and verdant gardens, the oasis of Samarqand has always triggered the imperial ambitions of powerful rulers along the Silk Roads. They constructed their capitals there, erected mausoleums to commemorate their ancestors, and decorated the city with monumental mosques and squares. The impressive architecture of Samarqand is the product of prolific artistic exchanges combing and reinventing visual vocabularies brought to the city by captured craftsmen and enslaved builders originating from Damascus to Isfahan. However, motifs and skills were not directly reappropriated but were instead transformed in accordance with local Islamic aesthetics, availability of materials and building traditions. The westward transmission of Chinese designs was further encouraged by the thriving artistic, political, and commercial exchanges between the Ming and the Timurid courts in the first half of the 15th century. These creative endeavours resulted in a sophisticated and unique cultural production across the Turco-Persianate world. Unfortunately, the majority of the buildings and their decoration have suffered from the continuous earthquakes and historical vicissitudes that have marked Central Asian ever since. Some have been permanently lost, others have been heavily restored in the 20th and 21st centuries.

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Notes

1 Yakoubovsky, A.G. "Les artisans Iraniens en Asie Centrale à l'époque de Timour." *Art et Archéologie Iraniens, III Congrès International*. Izd-vo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1939, pp. 277-285, 280.
2 Situating the Bibi Khanum Mosque in the north-eastern part of the city can be accurate if we regard the location of the mosque in terms of the Timurid citadel. In the present urban plan of Samarqand, the mosque is situated in the north-western quadrant.
3 Bretschneider, E. *Medieval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources: Fragments towards the knowledge of the geography and history of Central and Western Asia from the 13th to the 17th century*, vol. 2. Kegan Paul, Trench, Truebner & Co. Ltd., 1910, pp. 258-270.
4 Borodina, I.F. "Decorative system of the interior space of the Gur-i Amir mausoleum in Samarkand." *Istoriia i kul'tura narodov Srednei Azii*. Edited by B. G. Gafurov and B. A. Litvinskii. Nauka, 1976, pp. 116-123, 117.
5 Zasypkin B.N. "Architectural Monuments of Central Asia. Problems regarding their study and restorations." *Voprosy Restavratsii*, 2, 1928, pp. 207-284, 211.

Fig. 4: The ruins of the Bibi Khanum Mosque at the end of the 19th century, view from the east. Postcard published by Fr. Raupach, Hirschberg-Schlesien, 1905. Author's collection.

Language and Transformation in Samarqand

Nicholas Kontovas

The city of Samarqand in modern day Uzbekistan has long been one of Central Asia's most attractive and diverse cities. Nestled in the heart of Eurasia at the nexus of the Silk Routes, Samarqand has drawn conquerors, traders, artisans, scholars, and missionaries from settled and nomadic populations far and wide for the better part of two millennia. It is perhaps no surprise, then, that Samarqand today is something of a linguistic oddity. Although surrounded by numerous Uzbek-speaking towns and villages, the historic centre of this second most populous city in Uzbekistan is predominantly – and staunchly – Tajik speaking.

Tajik is a variety of Persian, a language which has been widely spoken in Central Asia in some form or another since at least the 7th century AD. It is an Indo-European language, distantly related to English. Uzbek, by contrast, is a Turkic language, thus genealogically unrelated to Tajik, with a vastly different grammar and core vocabulary. While Turkic has also been spoken in the vicinity of Samarqand since around the middle of the first millennium, the spaces it has occupied have long been separate – both socially and, often, physically – from those in which Tajik has been dominant. While Turkic made some inroads as a language of literature and administration during the reign of the Timurids (mid-14th to early 16th centuries), Tajik remains a marker of identity and a prestige language for the inhabitants of the Old City.

Yet, faced with centuries of increasing pressure from Turkic through interaction and intermarriage with other parts of the city and beyond, Tajik speakers have unconsciously introduced more and more elements from Uzbek into their Tajik. While words are easy to weed out as insufficiently Tajik, aspects of grammar seem to have been less hard to filter out and, over time, Samarqandi Tajik has evolved into a sort of hybrid: a Turkic soul in a Persian body, to paraphrase Dawkins' seminal study on contact-induced language change.[1]

Fig. 1: The Sherdor Madrasa – a Timurid centre of learning at the heart of Samarqand's Old City. (Photo by the author)

Note on linguistic examples

This article contains examples from several languages: Samarqandi (Tajik), Standard Tajik, Early New Persian, Uzbek, and Qarakhanid (Turkic). For ease of reading, all examples are presented in Latin script. For Uzbek, Samarqandi, and Standard Tajik, I have used a regularised version of the mode of transcription used colloquially in Samarqand itself. For Early New Persian, I have used the recommended transcription system of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies; for Qarakhanid, for which there is no standard scholarly Latinisation, I have modified the system recommended for Ottoman Turkish.

This article also makes use of interlinear glossing, a convention for making linguistic examples more comprehensible to non-speakers of the relevant language(s). I have tried to keep linguistic jargon to a minimum and explain it where present, however the following abbreviations could not be avoided:

1S	1st person singular
2P	2nd person plural
3S	3rd person singular
ABL	Ablative
ACC	Accusative
EZ	Ezafe
INF	Infinitive
IPFV	Imperfective
PRES	Present
PTCP	Participle
REL	Relative particle

Context

In the only large-scale systematic study of the impact of language contact on the grammar of Samarqandi Tajik, Soper identified the extensive structural isomorphism between Uzbek and Samarqandi Tajik as what linguists now call "metatypy": the wholesale alignment of two grammatical systems through contact.[2] Yet, while Soper documented the phenomenon of grammatical isomorphism described above at the level of the individual noun and verb phrase, his untimely death meant that he was never able to delve deeper into the impact of contact on other aspects of grammar.

When I set out to conduct three months of field research on Samarqandi Tajik, my plan was to examine the structure of a lesser examined point of contact: relative clauses. This area of grammar is ripe for investigation from the perspective of language contact, not only because the standard structure of relative clauses in Turkic and Persian are so different, but because there are a variety of intermediate forms between the standard structures that may represent different stages of development in the transition from a more conservative Tajik system to a more Uzbek-influenced one.

After my first interviews, it became apparent that retention of conservative grammatical elements – either alongside or to the exclusion of an possible Uzbek-like alternative – existed in numerous common areas of Samarqandi grammar. Moreover, outside my initial object of study, I found other conservative or otherwise non-Uzbek-like structures which told an interesting story of the timing and nature of the language contact which otherwise makes Samarqandi Tajik so different to most other Tajik varieties. Given the extent to which Samarqandi has been reshaped on the model of Uzbek, it is surprising that there should be any elements which have escaped this otherwise nearly wholesale morphosyntactic restructuring. What follows is an attempt to explain why some of the most obvious conservative elements examined during fieldwork have remained.

Variation in adjectival phrase and relative clauses

My initial investigation into Samarqandi relative clauses revealed a staggering variety already, conditioned not only by various semantic and syntactic environments, but also by social factors.

Briefly, interlocutors employed three different structures for the building of relative clauses:

(a) Postposed with relative particle and finite clause
(b) Postposed with ezafe and participle
(c) Preposed with participle

Each of these strategies can be demonstrated with an example from the data. Strategy (a) employs a relative particle ki, as in standard Tajik:

(1) Samarqandi
kasi   ki   Samarqandī nest
someone   REL   Samarqandi   is.not
"someone who is not from Samarqand"

Strategy (b) employs a linking suffix, known in linguistic literature by its Iranian Persian name, the ezafe, along with a postposed participle or verbal adjective. This is acceptable in standard Tajik and other varieties of literary Persian (albeit without the possessive ending shown below) but it is not the preferred way of forming true relative clauses:

(2) Samarqandi
hamu savol-i   mepursidagem
                    (me-pursid-agi-yam)
that   question-EZ IPFV-ask-PTCP-my
"that question which I will ask"

Finally, strategy (c) in which the participle simply precedes the noun is the most Uzbek like:

(3) Samarqandi
har röz kor   me-kad-agi   odam
every day work IPFV-do-PTCP   person
"the person who works every day"

In my field research, use of the more conservative version (a) was restricted to those interlocutors who reported having received education in or significant exposure to standard Tajik, but even these interlocutors only used this version some of the time. Preliminary analysis suggests that the choice of a structure closer to the standard was conditioned by the formality of the interview environment, in which I as a foreigner speaking Tajik was considered less likely to understand local forms. As conversation migrated into the area of personal anecdotes, or as other native speakers of Samarqandi joined the conversation, the likelihood of these speakers to switch to other versions seems higher.

The reasons behind variation between versions (b) and (c) seem less clear. While most interlocutors without heavy exposure to standard Tajik preferred version (c), version (b) seems to appear more frequently where the length of the relative clause is shorter.

Interestingly, a similar distribution can be observed with the position of underived adjectives, which can appear both postposed with an ezafe and preposed. In the case of underived adjectives, however, frequency of the adjective seems to play a larger role in deciding one's preference in terms of position than length of the adjective phrase. High frequency, basic adjectives such as kalon "big" can appear in both types of constructions, but most frequently appear with the ezafe:

(4) Samarqandi
xone (xona-yi) kalon
house-EZ   large
"large house"

Certain fixed phrases seem also to have been lexicalised with an ezafe and postposed adjective:

(5) Samarqandi
choy-i   fomil
tea-EZ   green (of tea,
         formerly a brand)
"green tea"

In contrast, adjectives which are more distant from the "core" vocabulary of the language usually appear before the noun they modify:

(6) Samarqandi
mazador ovqot
tasty   food
"tasty food"

Samarqandi also has a number of adjectives derived from Russian – a language in which adjectives generally precede the nouns they modify. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that while some interlocutors reported that it was possible to employ Russian-derived adjectives in ezafe constructions, they displayed a strong preference for pre-nominal position when using them:

(7) Samarqandi
angliski zuvon
English   language
"the English language"

The imperfective prefix me-

Another conservative element of Samarqandi grammar is its use of a prefix me- to indicate imperfective aspect on the verb. In other words, it is used to indicate the quality of a predicate which remains conceptually incomplete by the time being referred to in the context of the utterance in which it appears.

Though verb forms with this prefix correspond semantically to verbs in Uzbek with the imperfective ending -a, it is easy to miss that, while many preposed grammatical markers in Samarqandi Tajik have moved to the end of the verb to match their position in Uzbek, this one remains in the same position which it occupies in Standard Tajik:

(8) Samarqandi
me-don-am
IPFV-know-1S
"I know"

(9) Uzbek
bil-a-man
know-IPFV-1S
"I know"

The position of *me-* in Samarqandi Tajik is perhaps even more surprising when one considers that, much like pre-posed adjectival elements, some varieties of Persian as recent as the 12th century have allowed the *hamē* element, from which *me-* is derived, to appear after the rest of the verbal complex:

(10) Early New Persian
bōy-l   jūy-i   Mūliyān
smell-EZ stream-EZ Muliyan
āy-ad   hamē
come-3S   IMPV
"The smell of the stream of Muliyan comes"
- Rūdakī, *Qaṣīda 121* (10th c. AD)

One reason that *me-* has remained at the front of the verb root may be that it seems to have fused to THE root to form a conceptual stem. Attesting to this is its phonetic reduction before verbs beginning with a vowel as well as a type of regressive assimilation we see with the vowel in certain monosyllabic stems:

(11) Samarqandi
my-ovr-am
IMPV-bring-1S
"I (will) bring"

(12) Samarqandi
möröt (< me-rav-at)
IMPV-go-3S
"she/he goes/will go"

This suggests at the very least that the type of contact with Uzbek that produced the dramatic changes in position that we see in Samarqandi Tajik affixes must have occurred long after *me-* lost the ability to appear post-verbally and attained its fixed in its current, highly integrated pre-verbal position.

Fig. 2: A statue of ʿAli Şēr Navāʾī, the national poet of Uzbekistan who spent time in Samarqand and was a prolific writer in both Turkic and Persian. (Photo by the author)

Prepositions that are still prepositions

While most varieties of Persian employ prepositions exclusively, in Samarqandi, most prepositions have become postpositions on the model of Uzbek case endings:

(13) Standard Tajik
ba Samarqand kay   omad-ed
to Samarqand when came-2P
"When did you come to Samarqand?"

(14) Samarqandi
Samarqand ba kay   omd-et
Samarqand to when came-2P
"When did you come to Samarqand?"

(15) Uzbek
Samarqand-ga qachon kel-di-ngiz
Samarqand-DAT when   come-PST-2P
"When did you come to Samarqand?"

Yet, much like the verbal prefix *me-*, several prepositions in Samarqandi Tajik seem to have escaped the migration of most prepositions to post-nominal position. The three most noticeable gathered during fieldwork are *broy* "for", *a* "from", and *qati* "with":

(16) Samarqandi
broy shumo
for   you
"for you"

(17) Samarqandi
a   injo dur na-rav
from here far not-go
"don't go far from here"

(18) Samarqandi
qati way
with him/her
"with him"

Curiously the last of these alternates with a much more common postposition *kati* of the same meaning:

(19) Samarqandi
man kati
me   with
"with me"

Unlike with the verbal prefix *me-*, however, there is no indication of a fusion between these prepositions and the nouns they precede. Why, then, should these particular prepositions not have become postpositions?

In the case of *broy* and *qati*, this may have to do with a fundamental difference between the meaning of these prepositions and those which became postpositions. Namely, *broy* and *qati* do not indicate a fundamental physical location or motion like most prepositions, but more abstract concepts. Cross-linguistically, these types of meaning are more likely to be encoded in case endings vs. pre- or post-positions, as they are in many Turkic languages, such as Uzbek. Perhaps, movement to the post-nominal position is fundamentally easier for those prepositions which are more "case-like" in meaning, a theory which makes sense at first glance, as they occupy the same slot in the noun phrase as a case ending in Samarqandi.

There are, however, two problems with this theory. Firstly, why, then, would there be an alternative form *kati* "with" which does behave like a postposition? This may simply be because it originated in a variety of Tajik where contact was intense enough to overcome the semantic pressure to remain a preposition. Mixing between dialects on a local level then led to a system in which both forms coexisted, which may incidentally explain why the two forms vary slightly in pronunciation.

Secondly, no such semantic explanation is possible for *a* "from," which does express a more fundamental spatial meaning. It may be that *a* remained at the front of the nominal complex because to move it to the end would have caused confusion with another postposition with a different meaning: the accusative/genitive suffix -*(y)a* derived from earlier -*rā*. While the latter has the form -*ya* after vowels, it is identical to *a* when used after a consonant, except perhaps

Fig. 3: The Siyob Bazaar in Samarqand, where much of the fieldwork for this research was conducted. (photo courtesy of Yoshi Canopus on Wikimedia, reproduced under a CC license. Accessed 10 March 2023)

for prosodic factors which have yet to be investigated:

(20) Samarqandi
a   bozor   oma -ysa -s
from market come PRES 3S
"He's coming (back) from the market."

(21) Samarqandi
Samarqand-a nag'z me-bin-et-mi
Samarqand-ACC good   IMPV-see-2P
"Do you like Samarqand?"

One piece of evidence to support this theory is that there is one context attested in my fieldwork in which *a* can indeed come after a phrase:

(22) Samarqandi
omdagem (< omd-agi-yam) boz   a
came-PTCP-my   again from
"since I came"

A follow-up question confirmed that it was also possible to place the *a* before the verbal complex or indeed to leave it out entirely (e.g. *omdagem boz*) without any difference in meaning, confirming that it was indeed equivalent to the preposition *a* and not some other morpheme:

(23) Samarqandi
a   omdagem (< omd-agi-yam) boz
from came-PTCP-my   again
"since I came"

(24) Samarqandi
omdagem (< omd-agi-yam) boz
came-PTCP-my   again
"since I came"

What is revealing about this construction is that the *a* appears not after the nominal element *omdagem* "my having come" in the verbal complex, but after an adverbial element *boz* "since, again." This is precisely a place after which the accusative/genitive case cannot exist, meaning that the *a* in this construction is wholly unambiguous. If it is indeed due to possible confusion with the accusative/genitive that *a* normally cannot act as a postposition, it would make sense that in unambiguous cases it could.

Participles in place of infinitives

A final construction in Samarqandi which is unlike Uzbek is one which is unique, insomuch as it is also unlike more conservative forms of Tajik. In Uzbek, to say that one must do something, one normally employs an infinitive verbal noun:

(25) Uzbek
ket-ish-im kerak
leave-INF-my necessary
"I need to leave"

Indeed, this is also possible in Samarqandi and other varieties of Tajik:

(26) Samarqandi
raft-an-am darkor
go-INF-my   necessary
"I need to leave"

There is, however, another construction of similar meaning also attested in our Samarqandi data. Here, however, the verbal noun is not an infinitive, but a perfective participle (i.e. "having gone"):

(27) Samarqandi
raftagem (< raft-agi-yam) darkor
go-PTCP-my   necessary
"I need to leave"

Using the equivalent morpheme in the same place is Uzbek is wholly ungrammatical:

(28) Uzbek
*ket-gan-im kerak
leave-PTCP-my necessary
"I need to leave"

That being said, in older varieties of Turkic attested in the region, one can indicate necessity using an older perfective participle -*mış/mış*:

(29) Qarakhanid
qamuǵ   tänsiz   iş-tin
all   iniquitous deed-ABL
yıra-mış   keräk
stay.far-PTCP necessary
"one must stay far from all iniquitous deeds"
- Yusūf Xaṣṣ Ḥācib, *Qutadǧu Bilig* (11th c. AD)

Though further research is required to support this theory, it is possible that this particular construction in Samarqandi Tajik is based not on analogy with modern Uzbek but on some older Turkic variety. Alternatively, or in addition to contact pressure from older varieties of Turkic, there may be some reason related to universal tendencies in grammar to form such constructions with perfective participles. The logic behind this, is that when one expresses necessity one normally expresses that a predicate should necessarily be completed. This is supported by data from other languages, but in the absence of a larger such pattern in Samarqandi Tajik it is impossible to say what rule cross-linguistic tendencies may have played in the formation of the -*agi darkor* structure.

Lessons from Samarqand

Samarqand has for centuries been a center of learning for those who would come to study, whether in today's universities, the madrasa's of the Timurids, or the Manichaean monasteries before them. My own lessons from Samarqand are more modest, yet no less important for the study of language contact: that often the things which have not changed as the result of ongoing contact are as interesting as those which have.

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Lording over the Centre of Asia

Manuscript Arts of the Abu'l-Khayrid (Uzbek) Khans

Jaimee Comstock-Skipp

In the 16th century, all the eastern Islamic empires were admixtures of Turkish, Persian, Mongol, Muslim, Iranian, and Central Asian elements. Specifically, they perpetuated Persian and Turkic literary and linguistic traditions, Islamic cultural and religious forms, and Mongol customs. The amounts of each of these ingredients led to dynastic differentiation that became markedly pronounced in the second half of the 16th century. The main dynasties of this region and time period were the Timurids (ended in 1506), Mughals (started in 1526), Safavids (started in 1500) and Ottomans (ruling across the century and extending either end), and Abu'l-Khayrids (commonly called Shaybanid Uzbeks, ruling 1500–1598). Although the final dynasty's administration was short-lived, the Abu'l-Khayrids had forced the Timurids out of Transoxiana (Central Asia) and made these princes begrudgingly relocate in India where they became the Mughals.

Based in Bukhara and Samarqand, located in modern-day Uzbekistan, the Abu'l-Khayrids at their height took control of territories from the western borders of China to the Caspian Sea, wresting eastern Iran and northern Afghanistan from the Iranian Safavids. Expansive Abu'l-Khayrid reforms in political centralisation and fiscal policies within Transoxiana predated those in Iran. As the rivals to the late Timurids, early Mughals and Safavids, and Ottomans, the Abu'l-Khayrids presided over a strategic region. All of these other dynasties' illustrated manuscripts and histories have been explored in detail, but in the case of the Abu'l-Khayrids, not even their courtly dynastic arts have been fully analysed, much less the commercial productions and those in ambiguous styles.

Illustrated manuscripts of the Abu'l-Khayrids are vehicles for many means of analysis. These can be grounded in the original era of Abu'l-Khayrid manuscript manufacture in the early-modern period, as well as in current geo-political contexts. The ramifications of better understanding topics and objects from the early-modern era radiate outward to illuminate the social, cultural, and political underpinnings of our modern age. Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts provide insight into deeper issues of sectarian coexistence and conflict, voluntary and forced migrations of artisans, and ethno-linguistic nationalities that continue to be negotiated in Muslim-majority countries. Designations of Persian and Turkish-speaking groups, and declarations of Sunni and Shi'ite adherence in faith, have delineated and dominated identities beginning in the 16th century. Moreover, recently-formed nations have harnessed Abu'l-Khayrid artistic heritage for political legitimacy and national aims, which underscores the importance of teasing out the cross-cultural and transregional factors shaping the original traditions.

Who are the Abu'l-Khayrids?

The dynasty I am designating by the name Abu'l-Khayrid has more often been labeled "Uzbek," "Bukharan," and "Shaybanid/Shibanid." Following the Mongol conquests launched by Chinggis Khan, the peoples who would come to be the Abu'l-Khayrids hailed from present-day Kazakhstan. Groups referred to in period sources as Qazaqs and Uzbeks had common Mongol origins but by the second half of the 15th century, they were on their way to forming different political factions. The term "Uzbek" as it applies to the 15th and 16th centuries names a tribal confederation descended from Jochi (d. 1227), the eldest son of Chinggis Khan. Following the death of the Great Khan, a line traced through Jochi's son Shaybani (who was active in the 13th century) ruled the Golden Horde in the northwestern sector of the Mongol Empire. Separate strains of these Shaybanids held power in Siberia, Khwarazm, and Transoxiana by the late 15th century. The Abu'l-Khayrid branch of the Shaybanids ruled initially from Samarqand, and later in the century from Bukhara. This group took root under Abu al-Khayr Khan who united various nomads of the Qipchaq steppe under the name "Uzbek" in the mid-15th century. Upon Abu al-Khayr Khan's death in 1467, his grandson Muhammad Shaybani Khan [Fig. 1] took over control and surpassed his grandfather's territorial gains.

The appellation "Shaybanid" has frequented scholarly literature to refer to these 16th-century Abu'l-Khayrid Uzbeks in Transoxiana, but this is in fact erroneous. "Shaybanid" technically applies to all of the Jochid ancestors specifically descended from Shaybani, the grandson of Chinggis Khan, and not this later Muhammad Shaybani Khan who was born 300 years later. It is for this reason that I use the more accurate term "Abu'l-Khayrid" to refer to the 16th-century administration that reconstituted and resurrected Chinggisid rule in Central Asia. This was initiated under Abu al-Khayr Khan, and the consolidation of power and launch of a new dynasty was successfully carried out by his grandson Muhammad Shaybani Khan.

As a dynasty, the Abu'l-Khayrids occupy a curious position in scholarship, trapped between ethnic and linguistic labels. They are at times considered "too Turkish" to be categorised alongside other dynasties with Persian-speaking administrators. The arts of the dynasty have more often been considered "too Persian" to be grouped with art forms from dynasties associated with Turkic-speaking regions. A majority of their illustrated manuscripts are rooted in literary traditions of Persianate book arts; whereas Turkish literary works mostly appealed to the Ottomans, the Abu'l-Khayrids preferred works of Persian poetry, more akin to the Safavids in Iran.

Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts in the 16th century

What constitutes an illustrated Abu'l-Khayrid manuscript? Many of these intact specimens and now-dispersed folios are not the result of unified workshop practices, and the staff of a previous dynasty frequently stayed on in a conquered region to carry out the projects of new overlords. Better understanding these elusive objects expands our knowledge of materials and eras, revealing transregional and cross-dynastic exchanges. There is ease affixing a provenance to a codex when illustrative programmes are uniform and styles distinctive and attributable to one courtly workshop, such as that in Abu'l-Khayrid Bukhara. Classifying intact manuscripts as products of one dynasty or one time period is more difficult when the productions are not of royal patronage. Thus, the ugly ones make life very difficult for the scholar, and I am particularly attracted to less-elaborately illustrated texts produced by artisans operating within the Abu'l-Khayrid domain who migrated across courts and commercial hubs during periods of dynastic rivalry and economic strain.

Bukhara is the city most commonly associated with the Abu'l-Khayrids, but its florescence would come later in the third decade of the 16th century under Muhammad Shaybani's nephew, the military commander and great khan (or political head) 'Ubaydullah bin Mahmud (r. 1514–1540, first in Bukhara then Samarqand). Samarqand would remain the primary political capital throughout the first half of the century. Captured and invited

Safavid artists formerly working in Safavid-controlled Herat contributed to Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts in this period, during the 1530s and through the 1550s in Bukhara [Fig. 2]. We encounter some of the finest of Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts that were made for 'Ubaydullah and his son 'Abdul 'Aziz, who was never the great khan and, therefore, had no need to relocate to Samarqand. He was able to fully harness Bukharan talent and satisfy his appetite for books. The same workshop later made manuscripts for subsequent Abu'l-Khayrid leaders who presided over Bukhara, Samarqand, and Tashkent in the middle of the century.

Bukhara finally surpassed Samarqand as the de facto capital in 1557 under 'Abdullah Khan bin Iskandar (great khan between 1583-1598). Manuscripts were produced for him in the late 1550s through the 1570s, at which point he lost interest in book arts. These works of his patronage have a distinctive manner of execution, with figures and compositions repeated across various works of predominantly Persian poetry. The 1560s through the 1590s were fruitful and prosperous years in the Abu'l-Khayrid domain, marked by strengthened political, cultural, and commercial exchanges with India, Turkey, and Muscovy. Despite this political success, art historians have tended to only comment on the "dullness" and derivative nature of painting in Bukhara during the second half of the 16th century. But the standardisation of the third period's figures and set compositions point to a well-run workshop and access to resources to produce so many manuscripts in a short amount of time.

Later in the century, 'Abdullah led the Abu'l-Khayrids to the heights of their political power and geographical expanse, taking the region of Khorasan from the Iranian Safavids, and Khwarazm for most of the 1590s. During his rule, 'Abdullah gifted some of his prized manuscripts to the heads of Ottoman and Mughal states. He died in 1598, and the Abu'l-Khayrid dynasty faltered soon after.

Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts in the 20th century

To date, Abu'l-Khayrid arts of the book have more often been swallowed up under the broader headings of "Islamic," "Persian," or "Iranian" that have circumscribed their analysis. (Note the couple in Fig. 3 with the amorous man and coy woman, which can hardly be labeled a devotional or religiously Islamic subject.) The Abu'l-Khayrids have been overlooked in Anglophone (as well as French- and German-language) studies of the "Gunpowder Empires," as have Abu'l-Khayrid visual forms. Their neglect is a result of political divisions in the 19th and 20th century that separated British-controlled and post-colonial South Asia on the one hand, and Romanov (Imperial Russian) and Soviet-administered Central Asia on the other.

Building on prior scholarship emerging in the early 1900s, the prolific British scholar on Persianate arts of the book B.W. Robinson produced a comprehensive classificatory scheme to catalogue manuscripts throughout the 1950s and 1960s [Fig. 4]. This is still used as the guide for museums and collections to label their specimens and for university courses to be structured. Art historians are indebted to the work of Robinson and others, although we are continually nuancing our knowledge of the major artistic styles associated with city names and dynasties included in his schematic, and those he left out. One such shortcoming in need of remedying is the absent Abu'l-Khayrid label in his diagram. This dynasty's artworks are represented in the tiny designation "Bukhara style" and its painting traditions appear as mere offshoots of the broader Safavid category, in turn spawning the Mughal and Khorasan styles beneath it. But Robinson was merely following British and European typological conventions which scholars over in the Soviet Union found problematic. In contrast, academicians in the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan criticised these approaches that placed Central Asian arts under Iranian headings.

Fig. 3: Album painting of lovers with pomegranate. Attributed to Bukhara, circa 1560s. Gift of John Goelet, formerly in the collection of Louis J. Cartier. Harvard Art Museums, 1958.68.

The geo-political and scholarly divisions that exist between Iran and Transoxiana today have their origins in the 16th century tensions between the Abu'l-Khayrids and the Safavids; the Great Game of the 19th century waged between Russia and Britain; and the later Capitalist-Socialist rivalries of the 20th century. The perceived factionalism between Iran and Transoxiana recurs in all historical periods. Degrees of Iranian influence—political and artistic—over Central Asia have long been contested, and vice versa; even in pre-Islamic polities and visual forms. Although the regions were linked in several capacities, some different and separate historical and cultural factors took place in and shaped Iran and Central Asia as in their art forms.

Historians writing in English have opted to group Abu'l-Khayrid manuscript arts under a broader Safavid heading, while Russian-speaking scholars have more stridently championed Central Asian artistic variants as local innovations independent of Iranian influence. But both reflect the politicisation and ideological dictates of academia. When 16th-century arts of the book from Central Asia are mentioned at all, many surveys published in English have forced Abu'l-Khayrid materials into classificatory schema divided by periods and schools that privilege the arts of the Safavid and Timurid dynasties, and associated these with the country of Iran. The genre of "Persian Art /Painting" was coined in the 1930s, at a time when the national, political, and cultural aspirations of Iran's Pahlavi dynasty were merging with the personal and professional ambitions of British, European, and American scholars to bring mutual benefit. The Iranian shah Reza Pahlavi (1878-1944) was keen to exaggerate Iranian power and territorial control throughout the ages and concurrently fund and promote interest in Persian art. The Iranian nation-state at this time was, thus, partly responsible in crafting the analytical framework adopted by European and English-speaking scholars of Persian-language manuscript arts. The resulting taxonomy placed Abu'l-Khayrid materials under Timurid and Safavid headings, separate dynasties altogether from the 16th-century Abu'l-Khayrid polity in Central Asia. Other western scholars relegated Bukharan productions to the provinces and margins, and affirmed Iran as the heart and centre of a larger tradition.

Turning to the Russian-speaking sphere: in articles written in the 1950s, academicians in the Academies of Sciences in the Soviet Socialist Republics used the terms *sredneaziatskii* (Central Asian) and *maverannakhrskii* (Transoxianan; Mawarannahr implies the lands beyond the Oxus River) when treating Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts. Their adamant assertions of independence from Iranian forms and their delineation of cultural borders paralleled

state messaging. Soviet scientists had an interest in promoting a rhetoric of indigenousness and regional character in their scholarship, demarcating cultural forms through difference. Despite this interest in specificity and differentiation, the Soviet Union throughout the entirety of its existence emphasised that it was the collective sum of constituent parts whereas the earlier Russian Empire of the tsar maintained the very colonial distinction between metropole and colony.

Akin to the threat of pan-Turkism, Persian-language manuscripts produced in Transoxiana also posed a similar problem of pan-Persianism/Iranism to the Soviets. Hence, scholars' emphasis on an Iranian-versus-Central Asian divide to break up the Persian-speaking fraternity. Codices of Persian poetry that had been written out before national lines were etched onto a map. They were ambivalent and ambiguous in that they were from communities that possessed Persian cultural features or that had historical connections to cities in Iran, so could be conceptualised as part of a broader, shared pan-Persian tradition.

The shared iconographic features of Timurid, Safavid, and Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts are undeniable. Different scribes living under various dynastic administrations wrote out the same titles of Persian and Turkic poetry. Anglophone scholars were keen to promote these commonalities as components of a broader unified culture, but Soviet art historians identified distinct regional identities distinguishing and isolating 16th century Central Asia from Iran. These English and Russian-speaking researchers were writing in parallel on the same Abu'l-Khayrid dynastic arts, at the same time, in the mid-20th century. However, due to impediments of language or politics, they do not seem to have been communicating with each other at this time. Having operated in two different geo-political zones (USSR and UK) with limited porousness over the previous decades, it is understandable that these scholars came up with different classificatory schema to treat Abu'l-Khayrid painted arts. They might have reached their

separate conclusions based on the materials available to them. To generalise their findings and approaches, I can state that despite the politicised tone in their writing, Soviet analysts of broader manuscript production in and around Bukhara had greater historical and contextual nuance than their British counterparts writing at the same time, though the latter possessed finer skills in formal readings and comparative approaches of art history.

Abu'l-Khayrid manuscripts today

Although dynastic borders take forms that differ from current nation-states, some dynasties get associated with national narratives more than others. Art is frequently co-opted to make nationalist and political claims of sovereignty, group affiliation, and exceptionalism. Manuscript arts of the early-modern period are no exception, and have become charged with the concerns of the modern present. All scholarship is grounded in time and place, and reflects the cultural milieu and the intellectual climate when it was written. The Islamic Republic of Iran has largely embraced the Safavid past for its promotion of Shi'ite Islam as state ideology. At the same time, Uzbekistan extols the refinement of the Timurids and its literary and cultural legacies. Yet the Abu'l-Khayrids continue to peer from the margins of history, not quite forgotten or harnessed to promote nationalistic concerns, but awaiting their day of full recognition.

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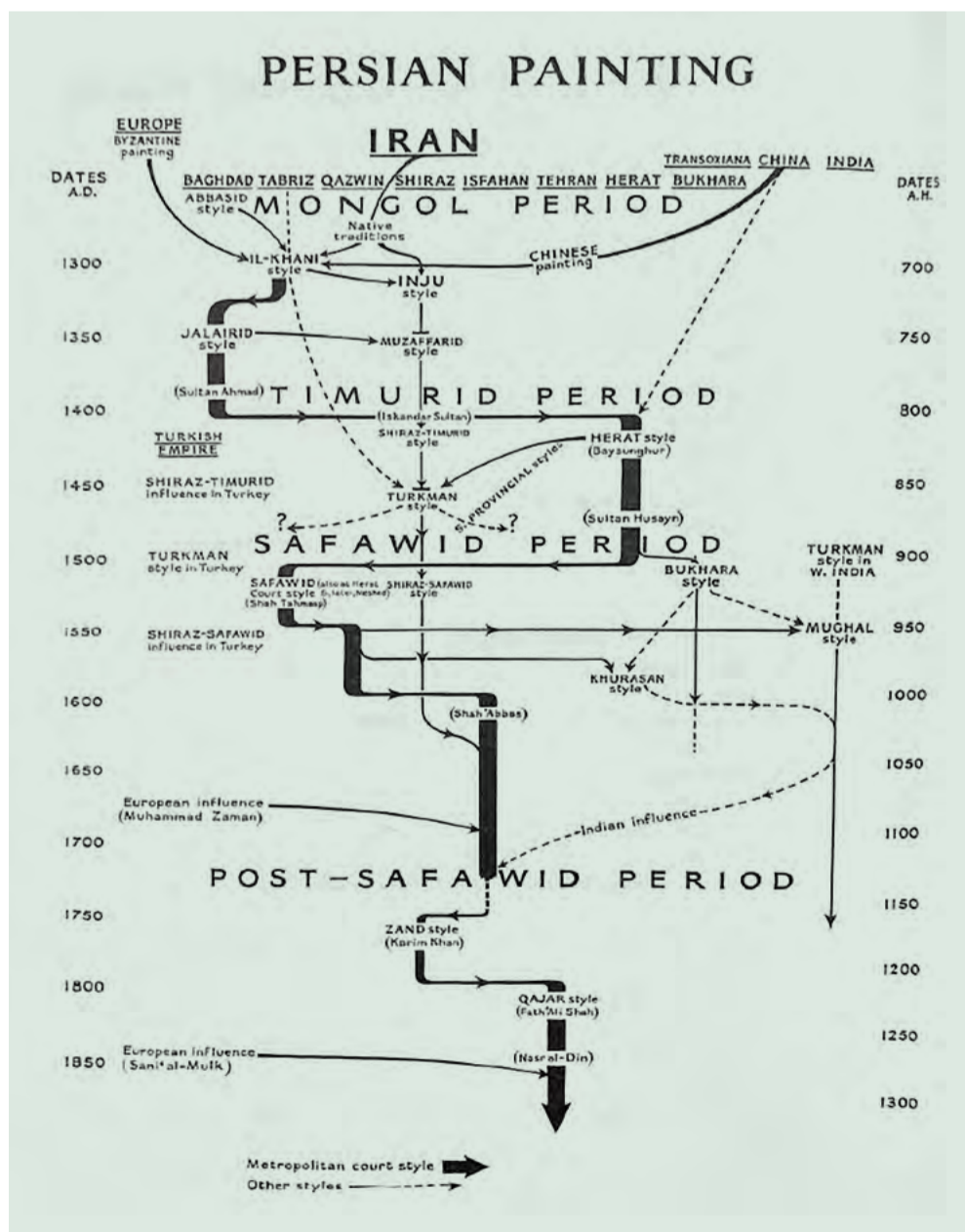

Fig. 4: Diagram of "Persian Painting" in B.W. Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from Collections in the British Isles*, London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1967. Crown Copyright operating under the Open Government License.

Media of Religious Morality in Indonesia

For *News from Australia and the Pacific,* we ask contributors to reflect on their own research and the broader academic field in Australia and the Pacific, of which it is a part. Our contributions aim to give a select overview of Asia-related studies in Australia and beyond, and to highlight exciting intellectual debates on and with Asia. In the current edition, we focus on the theme of "Media of Religious Morality in Indonesia."

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

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

In the current edition, we focus on the theme of "Media of Religious Morality in Indonesia." Our authors demonstrate how mediated forms of religious morality shape fundamental aspects of people's everyday lives, working conditions, education, national identity, gender, and sexuality. The information, communication, and entertainment media they discuss range from books (Millie) and films (Wejak and Winarnita) to apps (Yasih and Hadiz), and social media (Husein). Some of these media also function as platforms to reflect on and criticise the far-reaching social and political role and impact of religious morality in contemporary Indonesia.

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Technologies of Learning and Islamic Authority

Julian Millie

Over the last two decades, the uptake of media and communications technologies into religious practice has been a striking phenomenon in Indonesian Islamic society. It is commonly connected with the emergence of a Muslim middle class.[1] Islamic banking and financial products, social media, Islamic fashions, Islamic television drama, preachers with styles aimed at middle-class sensibilities, extended pilgrimage tours are markers of increased prosperity amongst the Muslim community. They also correspond to emerging loci of authority in the Muslim community. After all, new communications and media technologies involve the arrival of new forms of authority, and the weakening of others.

Communications technologies have effects more broadly than class division alone. They are also highly influential in one of the most significant divisions in Indonesian Muslim society, namely the one that differentiates traditional from modernist Muslims. A fascinating example of the relevance of technology to this ongoing divide is the 'yellow books' (*kitab kuning*), which are the texts used in the learning practices of traditional Islamic schools (*pesantren*).[2] This learning technology is certainly not new, but it has recently acquired an expanded political meaning.

In 2019, the Indonesian parliament passed the 'Pesantren Law of 2019.' This is the latest in a string of reforms,

Fig. 1: Students of the 'yellow books' internalise scholarly lineages when they study a text side by side with a commentary on it by a related scholar. (Photo by Julian Millie)

commencing in the 1970s, through which the Indonesian government has sought to bring the country's traditional Islamic schools – pesantren – within the orbit of state-provided education. The *pesantren* environment is a very hierarchical one, presided over by the figure known as *kyai* (equivalent to school principal), who is qualified to lead the community by virtue of qualities such as scholarly achievement, family lineage, and charisma. The Pesantren Law of 2019 formally affirms the *kyai* and *pesantren* as official components of the national education system. For the first time, the 'yellow books' are formally stipulated (in sub-article 1(2)) as a defining feature of *pesantren* education.

The books are distinctive due to the yellow paper on which they are printed. Their true uniqueness, however, lies in the way they express and affirm the traditional hierarchy of the *pesantren* world.

There is a close fit between the 'yellow books' and the hierarchical pedagogical styles of the *pesantren*.[3] Many *kyai* are known for their mastery of specific works, and advanced students often plan their study programs around the reputations of individual *kyai* who are renowned as teachers of specific works. Such students participate in learning practices that are heavily determined by the *pesantren* hierarchy: the *kyai* progresses through the book, translating and interpreting while the students take notes and listen. On finalisation, the student receives a qualification that ties their achievement to the name and reputation of the *kyai*. The completion of the book enables the student to become a new link in the teacher's genealogy.

The physical form of these books is shaped by this pedagogical context: the language is almost always Arabic, the mastery of which is a basic competency of the *kyai*. The books are written by scholars revered in lineages that are commemorated in the *pesantren*, space is sometimes provided under each line of text for annotations that are added during the face-to-face learning practices, and commentaries by other noted scholars are published in the spaces *around* the primary text. Based on these features, the yellow books are learning technologies that preserve the hierarchies and genealogies that define the *pesantren* world.

Other groups in Indonesia's Muslim community have moved past this media technology. Modernist Islamic educators

Fig. 2: Posters such as this one, photographed by the author in a *pesantren*, inform students about genealogies of teachers and scholars. (Photo by Julian Millie)

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Media of Religious Morality in Indonesia

Regional Editors
Edwin Jurriëns and Cathy Harper

The Region

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have adopted pedagogical styles from secular models that have enormous authority in Indonesia, and use the same classroom styles and textbook formats as are used in the non-religious educational system. They have largely abandoned this book technology, along with the hierarchies that it reflects.

Yet, for a numerically significant segment of Indonesia's population, the 'yellow books' must be preserved in Islamic education. Teachers in the *pesantren* watched on throughout the early and mid-twentieth century as modernists took up new learning technologies, ones that seemed more appropriate for evolving social and political conditions, but refused to 'downtake' the yellow books, realising their important role in preserving the distinctiveness of this religious segment.

That is why the statutory definition is so important. By defining the *pesantren* as an institution where the 'yellow books' are taught, the government is formally bringing the hierarchy of the *pesantren* environment closer to the centre of public life in the Republic.

This definition was opposed by modernists before the passing of the bill.[4] They queried, amongst other things, the way the bill constructs within the national education system a particular educational space specifically around the pedagogical traditions of a single segment. Behind this concern is a conviction that the national education system ought to be available universally for all Indonesians on equal terms.

As is often the case with Islam and public life in Indonesia, practical politics is part of the conversation. The current government has obtained crucial electoral support from the populations in which the 'yellow books' are authoritative learning technologies. The success of the current President, Joko Widodo and his party relied upon voters in these communities, especially in Java. The formal recognition of the *pesantren* and *kyai*, along with the financial largesse that might flow in its wake, are regarded by many as sweeteners for its voting constituency.

Although they do not feature in the media studies conversation about religion and emergent class, the 'yellow books' are a striking example of the connection between technologies of mediation and religious authority. What is under focus here is not the uptake of new technology by a Muslim segment, but a refusal to 'downtake' a specific mediating technology. The technology is essential to the preservation of a nationally significant Islamic culture. On the broader public stage, however, its affirmation within the national educational repertoire might turn out to be a fragmenting move.

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Being Religious and Nationalist in Contemporary Indonesia: Soegijapranata's Ethos

Justin Wejak

In 1940, Albertus Soegijapranata (1896-1963) was the first Indigenous Indonesian clergyman appointed by the Vatican to be a bishop in the East Indies. His episcopal position ended in 1963, the year of his passing. No one in his extended family ever imagined then that the Muslim converted-Catholic Soegija would one day become a priest, then a bishop, and ultimately an archbishop. Educated in a Dutch system first in the East Indies, then in the Netherlands, and with strong Indigenous roots in Java, Soegija became an uncompromised advocate for universal humanity and nationalism. His deep sense of humanity and his religiously diverse background enabled him to interact with people beyond his Catholic circle.

As Indonesia is preparing for the 2024 general elections, renewed concerns about the intersections between religious identity and nationalism are widely under discussion. With this in mind, Soegija's motto – "100 percent Catholic, 100 percent Indonesian"[1] – can be a source of inspiration for reflection on the theme of nationalism. The motto demonstrates his strong nationalist feeling centred on the message that to be Catholic is to be fully Indonesian. Such a maxim suggests that, even though Christianity was still closely associated with Western colonialism in the mid-twentieth century, the two identities – being Catholic and being Indonesian – are complementary, not contradictory. Christianity was then perceived as a colonial product and, therefore, suspected simplistically as an agent of colonialism.

To deconstruct this perception, Soegija, as reflected in his motto, tried to appeal to all Indigenous Catholics in the archipelago to show love of, and commitment to the country. The same motivation saw him actively involved in the national aspirations to bring about prosperity and social justice to the Muslim-majority nation. This partly explains why the Church has enhanced its ministry in education and healthcare post-independence. Education, in particular, is widely recognised as the key to Indonesia's future, as it equips the people of Indonesia with the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence. Soegija had an important role to play in this trajectory. Nationalism is a project; it is a project of the present for the future, as so well explained for Indonesia by Benedict Anderson, whose account remains formative for studies of contemporary Indonesia.[2]

A glimpse of Soegija's life and feeling of nationalism can be seen through the feature film – titled *Soegija* – produced in 2012 by Garin Nugroho.[3] This historical drama showcases Soegija's reflections on universal humanity that inspired his pursuit of nationalism.[4] It tells stories about the struggle for humanity during Indonesia's independence war (1940-1949), through the main figure of Soegija himself. In the film, Soegija is portrayed as a simple man, down-to-earth, and very close to the people. Even though he did not go to war to defend his newly independent nation, he was very involved in organising food for the needy during war time, and he opened the church doors to refugees for their safety. The film also portrays Soegija as a person able to conduct silent diplomacy, including quietly sending a letter to the Vatican demanding recognition for Indonesian sovereignty and independence declared in 1945.[5] For him, as depicted in the film, war dehumanises individuals and destroys civilisation. *Soegija* is a film about humanity, rather than about religion or Catholicism. Soegija is shown noting in his diary that humanity is the basis for nationalism and religion. Nationalities, languages, way of life, traditions, and modernity all belong to a common home of humanity.

According to the film director Nugroho, without the film, Soegija's reflective notes about humanity could have been lost, and his contribution to ongoing reflections on universal humanity and Indonesian nationalism could have been dismissed. After all, unlike Indonesia's first president, Soekarno (1945-1967) and Lieutenant General Soedirman (1944-1950), for example, Soegija was not a politically popular figure, given that he was merely a bishop of a numerically small religious minority in Semarang. Even though the film is fictional in style, it has a strong emphasis on the unity of Indonesia as a matter of importance above personal interests. The film conveys the idea of self-sacrifice for the sake of that unity and humanity. Like Soegija's motto, the film can be seen as a way to deconstruct the persistent view that Christians in Indonesia are less nationalist than their Muslim counterparts.

In fact, this majority-minority dichotomy was politically exploited during the gubernatorial election in Jakarta in 2017, where Ahok, now called BTP (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama), lost the election mainly because of his double-minority identity – as a Christian, and an ethnic-Chinese.[6] Ahok's political competitor, Anies Rasyid Basweden, was able to successfully play the 'identity politics' card. He was associated with a massive fear campaign exploiting religious symbols, such as heaven and hell, to convince Muslim voters to vote for him.[7]

In October 2022, Anies, who completed his term in office as the governor of Jakarta, was declared a potential candidate for presidency in the next general elections scheduled for February 2024. The declaration seemed to create a deep sense of angst among nationalists. There is fear that Indonesia's current secular nationalism may become more religious (Islamic) under Anies. While there was no sign of discrimination against the minority religions in Jakarta during Anies' time in office, people unfortunately remain worried that the religious nationalism movement will gain momentum if he becomes Indonesia's next president.[8] He may pave the way for religious radicalism to gain more influence and popularity.

The country's ideology of *Pancasila* and the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia may be put under threat. Specifically, as articulated in the Jakarta Charter, the first principle of Pancasila is "Belief in God with obligation to carry out Islamic Law for its adherents."[9] This may be revisited, potentially even accepted, to replace the current, more inclusive version of the first principle as given in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution: "Belief in the one and only God." Such a prescriptive change to the first principle would conceivably trigger more separatist movements in places of non-Muslim majority, such as Papua. Moreover, the introduction of Islamic Law in Aceh in 1999 could be seen as a manifestation of the full implications of the Jakarta Charter.[10] This has provided a still-extant window of opportunity for potential implementation of Sharia Law elsewhere in Indonesia associated with a vast Muslim majority. Clearly, then, the rights of religious minorities and those with more secular adherences and lifestyles could be severely limitted, as already evidenced in Aceh.[11]

Indeed, Soegija's motto – "100 percent Catholic, 100 percent Indonesian" – remains an important reminder of the potential pitfalls of the politicisation of religion and ethnicity. The politicisation of identity can dehumanise individuals, and weaken the principle of common sense and rationality in democracy. Soegija's ethos is worth revisiting for its renewed relevance in the lead-up to the 2024 general elections.

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Fig. 1: Photograph of Albertus Soegijapranata (1946) (Courtesy Wikimedia Commons)

Keeping Gender and Sexuality Issues in Indonesia's Public Discourse

Monika Winarnita

As part of the 'Contemporary Film as a Platform for Democracy in Indonesia' 2022 series at the University of Melbourne Australia, I was asked to give a talk on 'Gender and Sexuality' for the screening of the film YUNI directed by Kamila Andini in 2021. While preparing for the talk, I read the film review by Variety magazine describing it as a coming-of-age tale of a 16-year-old girl who is not prepared to follow tradition and become a teenage bride.[1] I cringed at the orientalist undertone and questioned what tradition the review was referring to, since it gave the impression that there is not a 'variety' but only a singular tradition. Therefore, at the screening I proceeded to tell the audience that it is said that there are 1,340 recognised ethnic groups in Indonesia. Not only is there more than one singular tradition, but tradition is also often syncretised with one or more of the six recognised religions (Islam, Catholic, Christian Protestant, Buddhist, Hindu, and Confucius or *Kong Hu Cu*), as well as varied localised expression and practices.

The film Yuni is set in a community of mixed ethnic and religious backgrounds, in a peri-urban area of West Java near the border with Central Java. Java is one of the most heavily populated islands. Forty percent of Indonesia's population is also of Javanese descent and about ninety percent are Muslim. Nevertheless, to contextualise the mixed community in the film, it is important to understand the variety of gender and sexuality norms present in Indonesia as well as the aspect of syncretised tradition and religion. Some of these issues are explored in studies by the following female anthropologists: Christine Helliwell on the Christian *Gerai Dayak* who stress sameness between genders;[2] Sharyn Graham Davies on *Muslim Bugis* who recognise five genders;[3] Lyn Parker on the Muslim Matrilineal *Minangkabaus* and the valued role of young women;[4] and Hildred Geertz on the Javanese who are known for their syncretic animistic belief of *kejawen*.[5] These Javanese individuals also practice a bilateral descent kinship system (equally recognising the mother's and father's sides). Identified Javanese gender norms associate men as having more reason or *akal* to overcome passion or *nafsu* which is associated with women.

The story of Yuni also focuses on the intersection of Islam with daily life and gender norms. The main premise of Yuni's story is the pressure she faces to be married straight after completing high school (presumably as a virgin or *perawan*) and the associated local belief that rejecting two marriage proposals brings the risk of never getting married at all. However, the proposals she received are not appealing to her; the second man wants her to become his second wife. A Muslim man can have up to four wives if he can prove that he is able to provide for them equally. This is stated in the Islamic *akad nikah* or religious ceremony which consists of the groom entering into an agreement with his bride's *Wali* or male guardian, usually her father, as a woman may not give herself independently in marriage. Nevertheless, the agreement ensures that her rights are covered in the case of divorce due to neglect or the inability of the husband to materially provide for his wife. A marriage ceremony often consists of two facets: the religious and the traditional. The Javanese part of the wedding ceremony includes a demonstration of subservience where the groom breaks an egg with his feet and the bride proceeds to wash them, which symbolises that she would serve her

husband who is the head of the household. Thus, deference and subservience are ideal forms of femininity as expressed in the combination of religious and traditional marriage practice found in both West and Central Java.

In the film, *Yuni* faces similar ideals of femininity for young woman, which existed at both the local and national level. Specifically, she is expected to obtain the valued, biologically deterministic role (*kodrat*) of being an *ibu*, a term for mother and wife. At the national level, this is symbolised through a state-sanctioned women's organisation called *Darma Wanita* that began during the Javanese president Suharto's New Order era (1968-1998). Indonesian women's roles are enshrined in the motto *Panca Darma Wanita*: "To be a wife first, then a mother, an educator, the guardian of her children's morals and a citizen last."[6]

Nevertheless, Indonesian women have used the *Ibu* identity strategically under the banner The Voice of Concerned Mothers or *Suara Ibu Peduli* (SIP) to demonstrate in 1998 against the high inflation of domestic goods caused by the corruption, collusion, and nepotism of the New Order authoritarian regime. This was an act of political motherhood that I called Strategic Ibuism.[7] Furthermore, post 1998 or during the *Reformasi* era, the women involved in SIP organised a conference to deconstruct '*Ibu*' and the New Order ideals of femininity.

Fast forward 20 years, gender and sexuality issues in the film Yuni have been a concern of a coalition of gender rights groups which includes members visibly showing their religious identity, such as Muslim women wearing headscarfs and Catholic nuns wearing their religious garb. Between 2017 and 2019, during International Women's Day, the gender rights groups along with LGBTIQ activists demonstrated annually in a street march. Their main demand was for the Indonesian parliament to ratify the 2016 draft law for the elimination of sexual violence (*RUU PKS*) a bill that also focusses on the issue of domestic violence. In addition, organisations present at the march such as SAPA or friends of Women and Children also demanded that the constitutional court amend the 1974 Law on Marriage to raise the legal age to 18.[8]

The result of these campaigns by gender rights organisations was that, after 6 years of deliberation, on 12 April 2022, the Indonesian Parliament passed the bill on sexual violence. The main opposition came from conservative religious parties such as the Prosperous Justice Party (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* or *PKS*), linked to the proselytizing Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt, who problematise the wording 'sexual relations' fearing it extends outside religious sanctioned marriage. Although the new bill on sexual violence has a limited scope, and it was watered down from the original 2016 draft, it has included forced marriage as illegal. However, a new Criminal Code Bill (*Kitab Undang Undang Hukum*

Pidana or *KUHP*), pushed by conservative religious parties, has been ratified by the parliament on December 6, 2022. Among other things, it will punish sex outside of marriage with a year imprisonment, which covers pre-marital, cohabitation, and same sex relations.[9] Street demonstrations, by gender rights coalition on International Women's Day and university students against the KUHP's curtailing of civil liberties including 'indecency' will also be illegal under this new criminal code.[10]

Earlier, on September 18, 2019, Indonesia did amend the marriage act and increased the age of legal marriage from 16 to 19 years old for both women and men with parental consent, and to 21 years old without parental consent. However, Ariane Utomo,[11] in a review of the book 'Marrying Young' argued that 'informal marriage' still exists and it will take more than a law to control this.[12] Specifically, the common practice of pernikahan siri (or informal religious marriage), seen as a solution to unplanned pregnancies and because premarital sex and cohabitation is now illegal (KUHP).

What is important to note is that under Indonesia's current marriage law (1974 Law ratified in 2019), both parties must hold the same religion, or one party must convert, requiring a ceremony conducted by a religious figure such as in a Church, a Hindu, or Buddhist temple who provides the registered certificate for the Civil Registry Office. If you are Muslim, the religious ceremony must be performed by an Imam at the Office of Religious Affairs who will provide the legal certification and registration. The book 'Marrying Young' however provides local cases across Indonesia discussing the variety of gender and sexuality norms related to how unregistered religious marriage is understood and practiced.

Another everyday practice of religion confronting young women that is addressed in the movie is the scene at the beginning whereby the Islamic student club had prohibited a rock concert because it feared such activities lead to sinful acts such as drug use, sex, and violence. This means that Yuni can no longer sing with her band. I wonder if Kamila Andini, the director of the movie, has included this scene knowing that three religiously devout hijabi-wearing 14-year-old girls who went to an Islamic Boarding School in a rural area of West Java in 2017 deliberately tried to break gendered and religious stereotypes with their viral funk-metal-rock band called the Voice of Baceprot.[13] Making global headlines, the band has about two million online views for their songs 'School Revolution,' 'God (please) allow me to play music,' and 'Not Public Property.' The last one is aimed at raising awareness against violations of women's rights with sales of their single recording donated to help victims of sexual violence and abuse in Indonesia. In recent media interviews, these young female hijabi musicians also talked about the backlash they faced, such as religious figures telling them to stop

performing the devil's music, but they also insist that religion and music can go hand in hand.[14]

The changing ideas on sexuality and religious morality is what *Yuni*'s director, Kamila Andini tries to address. Namely, she focuses on structural issues such as patriarchy, misogyny and ideals of femininity, as well as female agency in the face of societal pressure to marry young, or what Anissa Beta calls 'constructing Indonesian girlhood on film'.[15] The movie does so, she explained, using multiple elements: sound, the use of textures, and the colour purple. Purple is associated with passion or *nafsu*, and it is a gendered ascription to Javanese women. I ended the talk with what the director Kamila Andini has stated in her film festival interviews:[16] that she hoped that *Yuni*, based on a true story, is relatable and will keep the conversation going on gender and sexuality issues as part of public discourse, not only in the predominantly Muslim yet diverse country of Indonesia, but also internationally, so that depictions of this country in the media, which are often still orientalistic, can change.

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Fig. 1: Detail of online poster for Monika Winarnita's 'Gender & Sexuality in Indonesia' public lecture for the film Yuni at the University of Melbourne, November 2022 (source: https://events.unimelb.edu.au/arts/event/25010-yuni-gender-and-sexuality-in-indonesia)

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Regional Editors
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How Neoliberalism and Islamism Shape the Precarity of Gig Workers

Diatyka Widya Permata Yasih and Vedi Hadiz

Neoliberal economic restructuring has created fertile ground for precarious labour markets,[1] while promoting the marketisation of basic social services throughout the developed and developing worlds.[2] In Muslim majority countries, including Indonesia, the resultant rampant inequalities have provided the setting for mobilisations of the precarious urban poor under Islamic banners against perceived oppression or marginalisation of the *ummah* (community of believers). However, such narratives based on a religious lexicon have not always produced a collective will to resist the neoliberal agenda effectively.[3]

We argue instead that there has been a coupling of Islamism and neoliberalism in Indonesia in a way that conditions consent to, and compliance with neoliberal precepts. Clues are provided, for instance, in the way private enterprises,[4] and faith-based organisations,[5] have referred to Islamic values to promote productivity among middle-class Muslim workers.

Little, however, has been said about the precariat and neoliberalism in Muslim-majority societies. This article, therefore, delves into the influence of Islamist appeals on responses to growing precarity in Indonesia. The study on which it derives was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic (from April 2021 to October 2022), employing semi-structured interviews with twenty-five precarious gig workers who make a living as app-based motorcycle taxi (*online ojek*) drivers in Jabodetabek (Jakarta-Bogor-Depok–Tangerang-Bekasi).[6]

Our focus is on the way the urban precariat forges a kind of common sense to cope with socio-economic marginalisation based on available cultural resources.[7] Building on Italian philosopher Gramsci, we address common sense as a set of ideas that have arisen from the material conditions of precarious labour and life, but also shaped by distinct social and historical trajectories. As is well known, in Indonesia, this has involved past conflicts that make lexicons associated with state-dominated or linked nationalist and Islamist traditions more easily to the public than those having to do with liberalism, social democracy, or communism.

Micro-entrepreneurialism and collective organisation

Perceiving themselves as 'micro-entrepreneurs,' *online ojek* drivers accept that their well-being is primarily their own responsibility, thereby absolving the state and employers of significant liability. The self-perception is sustained by the classification of workers as "partners" rather than employees of gig economy firms, while the digitally-mediated work process in the gig economy also sustains the illusion that they have freedom over their labour. The idea that drivers can only rely on themselves – compatible with neoliberal individualism – is also reinforced by life experiences of moving in and out of precarious work in a context where secure long-term employment and welfarism have never been the norm.

For Gramsci, the reproduction of common sense takes place through everyday practices that lead to intuitive thinking.[9] Among the *online ojek* drivers we interviewed, this results in a kind of practical knowledge that is reproduced in self-help organisations typically referred to by their members as "communities."

It is through such communities that *online ojek* drivers practice a kind of collective solidarity by way of mutual assistance in the event of accidents and provision of information to help individuals navigate the street, as well as digitally-mediated labour controls. However, the communities indirectly tend to reinforce neoliberal individualism by reiterating the notion that members are primarily responsible for their own well-being and can expect little from the state or firms.

Significantly, religious activities are also typically organised by these communities. Through *pengajian* (religious meetings involving Quranic recitation and sermons), solidarity between drivers as members of a common *ummah* ("community") is strengthened, while simultaneously reinforcing the importance of personal morality in navigating work and life. Resilience is a major theme discussed in religious gatherings, enabling the interface between hard work and religious demands for individuals to persevere through all tests placed on believers by the Almighty. In this way, *online ojek* drivers' organisations provide a setting for the blending of Islamic moral precepts and neoliberal individualism.

It is true that some communities have sometimes enabled the collective organisation of *online ojek* drivers to demand improved working conditions. They have clearly enhanced *online ojek* drivers' awareness of shared grievances relating to labour practices, such as unfair dismissals. Nevertheless, they have achieved little in instilling the idea among drivers that they are workers, whose labour rights should be protected, with most members persistent in perceiving themselves as micro-entrepreneurs.

Morality and political sensibilities

Neoliberal-derived notions of entre-preneurialism have affected how *online ojek* drivers navigate their way through life and work, leading to the normalisation of their own precarity. Although a minority of drivers, especially those associated with Indonesia's union movement, insist that they should be legally considered as employees with formal labour rights, they are a clear minority.

Moreover, some that are linked to unions are hesitant to confront the state and employers. They tend to appeal to combinations of statist-nationalist or Islamist-derived paternalism, which expect governments, and those economically strong, to take care of the weak.

As a result, while drivers' communities can be helpful to individuals, they do little to forge robust strategies of resistance. They also embody the persistence of features of New Order ideology in democratised Indonesia – namely, hostility towards political liberalism as well as communism – as both enjoin some form of conflictual system of labour relations.[10]

At the same time, a kind of morality-based solidarity, mainly developed through socio-religious and mutual assistance activities, permeates through everyday life. Though drivers see such activities as apolitical, they open the door to *ummah*-based political mobilisations by competing elites. We have seen this in recent Indonesian history when such mobilisations have been required (usually during election time).

Some of these communities could potentially provide avenues for precarious urban workers to establish connections with Islamic party and organisational activists. This would explain the presence of many of the urban precariat in such events as the infamous Islamist mobilisations against the then-governor of Jakarta, known as Ahok, in 2016-2017.[11]

Workers in Indonesia often suffer from precarious working and living conditions. Because labour movements have been largely ineffective, workers have lacked social and political representation, even in the present democratic era.[12] Against such a background, urban precarious workers often resort to religious narratives to articulate their grievances, make sense of their social positions, and to navigate through life and work more generally. While this takes place at the level of everyday life, there are possible links with certain newer dynamics in contemporary Indonesian politics, especially the tendency for identity-based political mobilisations.

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Fig. 1: An *ojek* online driver. (Courtesy Afif Ramdhasuma on Unsplash)

Faith-based Polarisation and the Use of Social Media in Indonesia

Fatimah Husein

Indonesia is home to hundreds of diverse ethnicities, faiths, and religions. The relations between these ethnic and religious communities are generally harmonious. However, it has become clearer in recent years that working for social justice has become more difficult with the existence and the growth of religious polarisation. This becomes more apparent during political moments like elections[1] and, in many cases, lasts for much longer afterwards. It is strengthened by some research[2] that connects the backsliding of democracy with the emergence of polarisation that challenges pluralism and tolerance.

Several studies conducted by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society of State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta[3] and the Maarif Institute[4] also reveal that young people in Indonesia are an easy target for the spread of intolerant and radical ideas in environments of educational institutions. This data is strengthened by a study conducted in 2018 by the CisForm of State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga at eighteen Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia.[5] This study found a significant percentage of Islamism among students of the Islamic Education department (*Pendidikan Agama Islam*).[6] From around 600 Islamic Education departments spread across various colleges of Islamic studies, this department has contributed a considerable number of Islam teachers for public schools.

In another study conducted by the Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies (CRCS), Gadjah Mada University,[7] we analysed the spread of intolerant ideologies in the Indonesian Muslim community, and described efforts to counter them by religious and ethnic communities.[8] Our research studied four different Islamist groups to identify relevant trends, namely: (1) Aksi Bela Islam 212 ("Defend Islam Action on 2nd December") and post-212 groups, (2) Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, (3) Salafist movements using exclusivist housing, and (4) the Salafist piety movement as opposed to Muslim *laskar* ("paramilitarism"). Due to the limited space, I will only discuss the second group and its use of social media in spreading their ideologies.

Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (The Party of Liberation)/HTI is an international pan-Islamic political organisation whose goal is to unite Islam and politics under *al-Khilafah al-Islamiyyah* ("the Islamic caliphate system"), which encourages faith-based polarisation. In July 2017, the Indonesian government disbanded *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* as a social organisation. HTI, however, still continued to operate after this dissolution. Seeing as their leaders are still free to carry on with their operations, they have adopted different methods of operation.

Without officially associating their activities with HTI, they remain active both offline and online. Their offline strategy includes conducting *halaqoh* ("closed study circles") with more general Islamic names such as *Ngaji, Cinta Qur'an*. This has made it possible for individuals to participate in a variety of groups and to connect to online Islamic networks that are free from state restrictions, such as Indonesia Tanpa Pacaran ("Indonesia without Dating"), *Yuk Ngaji* ("Let's read the Qur'an"), and *Jaringan Pengusaha Rindu Syariah* ("Networks of Muslimpreneurs").

Their use of social media platforms has been successful and has found acceptance among many of the *hijrah* (spiritual migration) communities, utilising certain youthful expressions such as *NgeFast, NgeSlow*, and *Xkwavers*[9] as vocational and motivational training platforms to introduce their ideology. Committed participants through these "light" religious sessions, will then be recruited to join "heavier" sessions on HTI's ideology. One tagline of *NgeFast*, for example, reads:

> Kamu punya komunitas
> (you have a community)
> Kami punya program hijrah
> (we have hijrah program)
> Kita cocok deh kayaknya
> (I think we complement each other)[10]

Therefore, HTI continues to promote its ideas and actively seeks out new members behind closed doors. By capitalizing on the political opposition to the Jokowi administration and the notion that HTI is a victim of "Jokowi's anti-Islamic agenda," this organisation has been able to develop new bases of support in society.[11]

The above phenomenon seems to mirror some critics who state that the Indonesian civil society movement and the notion of Indonesian pluralism are a myth! Mietzner and Muhtadi's research is a notable example where they question the tolerance and cultural plurality of the followers of the biggest mass Muslim organisation of *Nahdlatul Ulama*. They argued that NU followers are by and large as intolerant toward religious minorities as the overall Muslim population in Indonesia, and in certain instances, they exhibit even greater intolerance.[12]

I do not agree with the argument that Indonesian tolerance is a myth. I realise that there are problems related to religious pluralism, but I argue that the Indonesian civil society movement is real as people on the ground are working and consolidating their efforts for interfaith tolerance, dialogue initiatives, and peace building movements. It is important to acknowledge that the increase of fragmented society and the spread of Islamism does not proceed in a linear direction. Various civil society organisations, indigenous communities, young religious leaders, and some inclusive religious organisations have made an effort to counter this radicalist tendency, including through the use of social media. These efforts, including those by youth and women, may not solve the problems, but are important actions that need to be acknowledged.

This dynamic response towards Islamism at local levels, however, does not seem to be apparent in the public discourse, and thus, tends to neglect arenas of contestation behind the main stage. By acknowledging various efforts toward social justice within current Indonesian socio-religious development, we will be able to value and expand the arenas of contestation behind the main stage, areas which have demonstrated genuine challenges to the expansion of Islamist movements' mobility.

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8 The study title is the "Enabling Environments for Radicalisation and Tolerance Promotion in Indonesia." The following discussion is mainly based on the study's findings and reports.

9 The term *Ngefast* and *Ngeslow* refer to a training program run by The Fast Training focusing on an intensive understanding of Islam and on being Muslim. The program is conducted in a relaxed way and targets young Muslims. Whereas *Xkwavers* (ex-Korean wavers) are those who had been formerly addicted to Korean pop cultures. The *Xkwavers* program targets this group to learn about Islam and to channel their enthusiasm to the religion.

10 https://ngefast.id

11 HTI media such as Media Umat, Muslimah Media Center, Khilafah channel consider government's counter-radical policy as against Islam. See "Jubir HTI: Rezim Jokowi Mengidap Sekularisme Radikal" https://mediaumat.news/jubir-hti-rezim-jokowi-mengidap-sekulerisme-radikal retrieved on April 14, 2020.

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Fig. 1: An online Islamic training program targeting former K-Pop fans (source: https://rufindhi.wordpress.com/2021/05/23/kelas-ngeslow-buka-batch-2-video)

Karin Zhou/Zee Hrw/Baqi/Sizuka/Suji Nim

Kak Mals/Cho Ahra/Zaa/Ediar/Katze Lee

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News from Northeast Asia
Northeast Asia as Seen
Through Data Analytics

Regional Editor
Ilhong Ko

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Northeast Asia as Seen Through Data Analytics

Ilhong Ko

In recent years, 'Big Data' and 'data analytics' have become the buzzwords of the research community. Some disciplines have been active in employing new digital technologies, while other disciplines have been less inclined to do so. In the case of Asian Studies, researchers specializing in East Asia have played a pivotal role in bringing about a 'Digital Turn' and are now actively engaged in several Big Data-related initiatives. In this issue of News from Northeast Asia, we examine how researchers based at Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC), faced with the need to develop flexible and open-ended approaches to fieldwork amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, have utilized text analysis as a useful research tool to gain new insights into the region of Northeast Asia.

Big Data analytics on Asia-related news articles can provide information on the key topics of interest concerning Asia, on how the topics of interest differ from country to country, and on how they change over time. This is demonstrated by Myungmoo Lee of Seoul National University Asia Center and Dohoon Kim of Ars Praxia in "Big Data Analytics of Northeast Asia's Top 10 News Topics." By identifying the common concerns shared by the countries of Northeast Asia, the results of the study may provide the basis for enhanced cooperation in the region.

Text analytics can also be usefully applied to smaller data sets that do not fall within the category of 'Big Data,' one such example being the contents of UNESCO's World Heritage List website. "Examining Asia's Cultural Heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List through Data" presents the results of text analytics that Minjae Zoh, Ilhong Ko, and Junyoung Park of Seoul National University Asia Center undertook on the 'Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)' content of 187 World Cultural Heritage Sites located in Asia. The results provide insights into both the distinctive and the universal aspects of the World Cultural Heritage Sites of Northeast Asia.

Ilhong Ko, HK Research Professor, Seoul National University Asia Center. Email: mahari95@snu.ac.kr

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

Big Data Analytics of Northeast Asia's Top 10 News Topics

Myungmoo Lee and Dohoon Kim

Text analytics are widely used to extract information and patterns from text. By applying a combination of such text analytics techniques to newspaper articles, priorities and patterns in the news can be identified. In an attempt to establish the Asia-related issues that concerned the countries of Northeast Asia the most in recent years, newspaper articles were analyzed by researchers based at Seoul National University Asia Center, working in association with staff from of Ars Praxia, a company specializing in big data analytics and digital contents creation. The analyzed data consisted of Asia-related news articles published in the English-language newspapers of South Korea, China, Japan, and the United States between January 1, 2020 and September 30, 2022.

The original data set comprised a total of 5,502,266 articles from 824 news outlets. In order to mitigate the bias arising from the fact that 4,796,149 of these articles came from American news outlets, additional sampling was undertaken. The data set that was analyzed consisted of the following number of articles: 46,036 (South Korea); 76,171 (China); 44,298 (Japan); 94,521 (USA). Topic analysis was undertaken on these articles using topic modeling, trend analysis, and semantic analysis techniques.

Using topic modeling, which is a machine learning technique that that analyzes unstructured text data in order to recognize latent topics, the top ten Asia-related news topics were identified and then their relative importance was established for each country. All four countries showed a high interest in economic crisis and energy related crisis. In addition, the North Korean nuclear crisis was commonly regarded as a topic of relative high interest in South Korea and Japan. On the other hand, cross-strait issues and security crises (which included issues such as tension in the Taiwan Strait and fishery disputes) were only a high-interest topic for Chinese news outlets.

Then how did interest in these ten topics change over time? In order to explore this question, trend analysis was carried out. The article frequency of each topic was calculated per quarter and changes in the frequency were traced over time. As illustrated in Figure 1, the number of articles on the COVID-19 pandemic was overwhelmingly high, with an average of 214,000 articles per quarter. However, in terms of relative acceleration, this topic had the lowest negative value (-3751.17), suggesting that interest in this topic will soon disappear. The economic crises of major Asian countries, on the other hand, is a topic characterized by both high frequency (130030.55) and acceleration (2735.57) in terms of average articles per quarter. This indicates that the countries of Northeast Asia and the United States expect this issue to become a constant threat in the near future. The Russo-Ukrainian war, believed to play a pivotal role in determining the direction of the international order in 2023, illustrated the third highest average frequency (50954.27) and the highest acceleration (3001.56).

Semantic network analysis was used to identify the keywords of interest, as well as the relationships between these keywords, for each of the four countries. The semantic network of the articles from the news outlets of all four countries reveals that 'engine' (of economic growth), 'COVID strategy,' 'energy supply,' 'technology,' 'cruise missile,' and 'stock price' were the most frequently occurring keywords [Fig. 2 see overleaf].

Fig. 1: Article frequency (X-axis) and acceleration (Y-axis) for the top ten topics (January 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2022). (Figure by the authors, 2023)
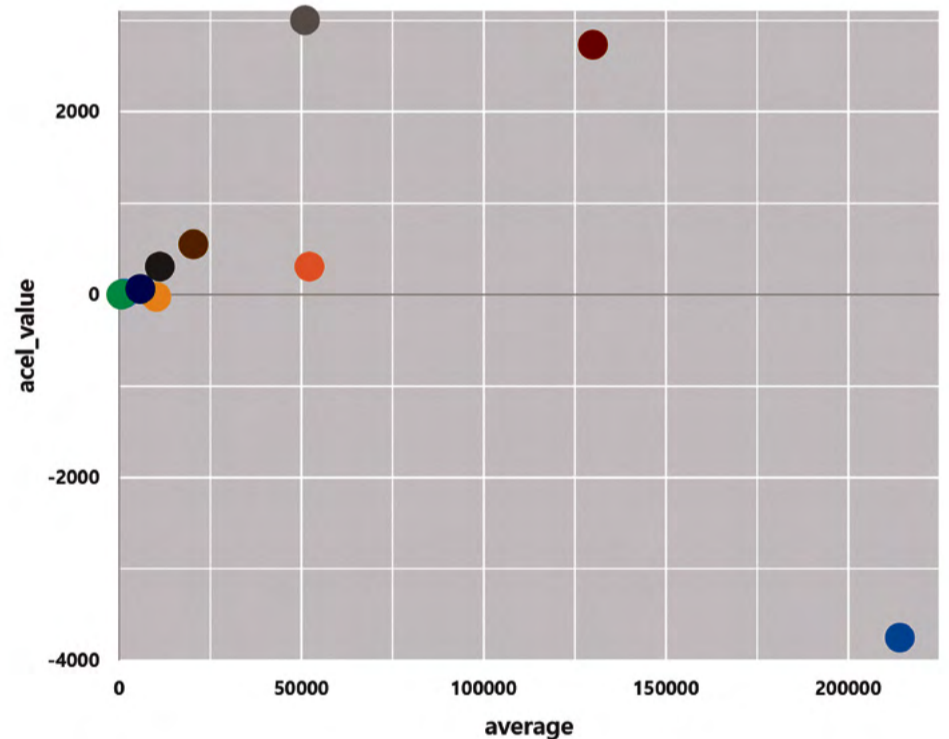
- The New Normal after the COVID-19 pandemic
- Climate change and energy crisis
- Russo-Ukrainian War
- US-China conflict and the new international order
- Response to the North Korean nuclear crisis
- Rise of social media opinion among the Asian MZ generation
- Asian immigration, migration, and the rise of multi-culturalism
- Economic crisis in major Asian countries
- Cross-strait issues and security crisis
- Hallyu culture and tourism

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Using the nodes (keywords) with the highest betweenness centrality values, the shared or unique key interests of each of the four countries were then identified and visualized, as presented in Figure 3. It can be observed that 'energy,' located in the center, was the key interest shared by all four countries. Common key interests are expressed as nodes placed between the respective countries, and unique interests are expressed as dots located along the periphery of each country node. Inflation (represented by 'price') was a common concern to the three Northeast Asian countries, and South Korea and Japan also shared concerns about the missiles launched by North Korea. It is of interest to note that, for China, 'health' was identified to be a key interest, alongside 'development,' 'security,' and 'trade.' This suggests that the government's handling of the pandemic at home has come to be regarded as a key issue affecting government stability.

These results of Big Data analytics clearly show the complex security risks that have emerged due to the geopolitical shifts of the post-COVID-19 era. With the possibility of escalating military conflicts, such as those between Russia and Ukraine, the concept of 'security' has expanded and evolved to include responses to climate and environmental crises, public health crises, the securing of value chains, protection of technological competitiveness, and well-controlled trade and economy. It will be interesting to trace the predictive nature of these results of big data analytics in order judge the viability of Big Data analytics as an alternative research tool for gaining insights into the region.

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Fig. 2 (below left): Semantic network of Asia-related news articles from the English news outlets of South Korea, China, Japan and the USA (January 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2022). (Figure by the authors, 2023)

Fig. 3 (below right): Shared or unique key interests as seen through Asia-related news articles from the English news outlets of South Korea, China, Japan and the USA (January 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2022). (Figure by the authors, 2023)

Examining Northeast Asia's Cultural Heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List through Data

Ilhong Ko, Minjae Zoh, and Junyoung Park

Fig. 1: Word cloud illustrating the most frequently occurring words in the official texts related to all of Asia's Cultural World Heritage Sites (n=187). (Figure by the authors, 2023)

The concept of 'World Heritage' was conceived and developed in the West by the UNESCO Organization in 1972, and since the establishment of the official World Heritage Convention, almost all Asian countries have actively designated their national heritage as 'World Heritage.' In principle, 'universalism' is at the core of the World Heritage Convention's concept of 'Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).' However, because this framework was shaped and cemented in the West, this means that Western standards were and continue to be applied to other parts of the world, including Asia. With this in mind, data analytics can be used to question whether a pattern can be found to decipher a particular 'Asian' characteristic or strategy in the case of the sites of Northeast Asia.

According to the World Heritage Convention, the region of 'Asia' is categorized under 'Asia and the Pacific.' As of 2021, a total of 187 cultural heritage sites were registered within the 'Asia and the Pacific' region. The findings from quantitative data analysis reveal that the inscription of sites located in Asia began in 1979, a year after the first set of World Heritage Sites became designated in 1978. Iran (with three Cultural Heritage Sites) and Nepal (with one Cultural Heritage Site) were the first countries to designate. With the turn of the 1980s, South Asia was responsible for pushing up the inscription rate in Asia and then, in the 1990s, Northeast Asia began to govern the fluctuation patterns of the region. From that point forward, the fluctuation patterns for site inscriptions in Northeast Asia are mirrored by the fluctuation patterns for the whole of Asia.

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Fig. 2-6 (right):
Word clouds illustrating
the most frequently
occurring words in the
official texts related to
a particular country's
Cultural World Heritage
Sites. (All figures by the
authors, 2023)

Fig. 2: China (n=37)
Fig. 3: South Korea (n=13)
Fig. 4: Japan (n=19)
Fig. 5: Mongolia (n=3)
Fig. 6: North Korea (n=2).

A total of 74 sites in Northeast Asia
have been inscribed onto the World Cultural
Heritage List: 37 sites in China, two sites
North Korea, 19 sites in Japan, three sites
in Mongolia, and 13 sites in South Korea. In
order to identify how each of the countries
of Northeast Asia perceive the way in which
the value of their cultural heritage should be
presented to the wider world, the OUV 'Brief
synthesis' texts, 'Criteria' texts, 'Integrity'
texts, and 'Authenticity' texts of the Cultural
World Heritage Sites for each country
were analyzed, with a particular focus on
frequently occurring concepts.

The word clouds that were produced
to visualize the most frequently occurring
words/concepts per country reveal some
interesting patterns that provide insights
into both shared and distinctive perceptions
regarding Cultural World Heritage among
the countries of Northeast Asia. The word
clouds presented in Figures 2-6 illustrate
that 'management' and 'protection' are the
common key concerns; this is also the case
for all of Asia, as can be seen in Figure 1.

However, some notable differences
can also be observed. In the case of China
and Japan, it is interesting to see that the
respective country names occur with high
frequency. In contrast to this, for South
Korea, the country name occurs with less
frequency. This may be because the South
Korean strategy of site inscription was to
appeal to their 'universal' value. The fact
that 'heritage' occurs with particularly high
frequency in the texts for South Korea –
reflecting the intention to objectify the sites
as (universal) heritage – is meaningful in
this context, particularly given the fact
that 'heritage' is an underused concept in
the texts of Japan.

Finally, it can be observed that in
the case of North Korea and Mongolia,
description of the sites themselves, rather
than *discourse on* the sites, features centrally
in the official Cultural World Heritage
documents. The fact that 'mountain' in the
case of Mongolia and 'tomb' in the case of
North Korea appear with high frequency
attests to this fact.

This study used the 'distant reading'
method of text analysis to deconstruct
the discourse on Cultural World Heritage
with great effect. Distant reading, a radical
approach to the study of a large collection
of texts that first emerged within the field
of literary criticism, but which has since
been used to great effect in numerous other
disciplines, made the study of the large
corpus of material associated with 87 sites
a feasible endeavor. By adopting this
method, the commonalities and differences
in the heritage related discourse of the
Northeast Asian countries could be identified,
allowing a transition from national to regional
narratives to take place. It is expected that
further analyses on Asian heritage-related
datasets using this approach will help bring
together 'Asian Studies,' 'Heritage Studies,'
and 'Digital Humanities.'

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Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

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Transcultural Objects from the Global Hispanophone

Irene Villaescusa Illán

Transcultural objects are objects that have circulated beyond their place of origin, and, in that movement, acquired new meanings, adopted new uses, and transformed their destinations. Transculturation refers to the transformations that occur between cultures that come into contact with one another, resulting in the creation of new and unique cultural forms. The study of objects (material and non-material) as examples of transculturation is therefore an invitation to reflect on the creation, mobility, and alteration of things as they encounter other things, other places, and other people.

Fig. 1: Chinese paella at the Legazpi Sunday Market in Makati, Manila. (Photo by the author, 2014)

Art historians, historians, and anthropologists have largely seen the exchange of objects as part of human beings' ways of learning, evolving, and relating to each other. Objects are therefore a source of knowledge. They speak and tell stories. What is more, in helping translate everyday practices from one place to another, they are agents of change and mediators of culture.

This Focus section explores the transcultural objects that have emerged from the contact among Spain, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. The essays gathered here are written by scholars in the fields of literary and cultural analysis, art history, and musicology. Their research on material culture extends our knowledge of the well-known transatlantic route that connected Spain with Latin American countries to lesser-known contact zones in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the Pacific. The transcultural objects discussed in this Focus section reveal the historical and cultural links between places such as Mexico and Japan, Brazil and Africa, and the Philippines and Spain. The study of the cultural contact between Spanish-speaking countries and diasporic communities (and the field of study within which it falls) has recently been termed Studies of the Global Hispanophone.

Mindful of the colonial history that has brought these cultures into contact, the contributors to this issue revise, expand, and attempt to decolonize our knowledge of such encounters by introducing us to lesser-known histories through a series of objects that still exist today. We understand transcultural objects here in broad terms as encompassing not only material objects but also examples of transcultural legacies that take shape, for example, in architecture, food and cooking, lyric theatre, and even islands.

Overall this collection of essays emphasises (1) the processes of transculturation that brought such objects into being and (2) their transculturating power: in other words, what they do to the cultures they traverse. Transcultural objects are firmly grounded in particular geopolitical locations and have often been cast as commodities exchanged between static cultures. This collection stresses how such objects blur and connect the cultural formations through which they pass, mapping out new world geographies. Ultimately, we hope to offer alternative cartographies of the globe by tracing the lives of the transcultural objects presented here.

Ignacio López-Calvo introduces us to the afterlives of transpacific material culture through a number of objects that attest to early-modern, 20th-century, and contemporary Japanese-Mexican transculturation. The objects include foodstuffs (spice-covered peanuts, shaved flavoured ice, and the condiment known as *chamoy*); techniques for distilling *tuba* (Philippine coconut wine) and *mezcal*; items of clothing (*China Poblana*, the Mexican national dress); and ornamental plants such as Jacarandas. López-Calvo puts forward the idea that each object functions as a symbolic repository of memories and identities that are transmitted from generation to generation, both among the Japanese diaspora in Mexico and back "home" in Japan. Likewise, López-Calvo also alerts us to how certain objects and social practices lose emotional value with the passing of time.

In "Islands of the Global Hispanophone," Benita Sampedro Vizcaya attends to islands as transcultural objects. Against visions of islands as picturesque tropical paradises, her lucid text proposes understanding historical islands as imperial spaces of exile, deterritorialisation, trade, enslavement, militarisation, and exploitation. Her claim that islands have often been the first (graspable, physical) object of conquest illuminates the colonial imagination, which Sampedro Vizcaya proposes should be assessed in tandem with the perspectives of island dwellers. In doing so, she emphasises the epistemological possibilities that arise from centring studies of colonial pasts and presents on the specificities of islands as well as their relationality with land and water. Her piece explores places such as Cuba, the Canary Islands, Annobón, and Fernando Poo (currently Bioko), which is situated off the West African coast.

Paula Park's piece follows the trajectory of the Brazilian musical instrument known as *berimbau* through its travels from Africa, presumably through the Philippines, to South America. In parallel with this, she also traces the itinerary of its counterpart, the *belembaotuyan*, played by Chamorro people in Guam. In admirable detail, Park explains the craft that goes into making these instruments. She also highlights their commonalities, which include the use of a gourd as the resonance box, the twangy sound they produce, and a possible link to an earlier string-bow instrument from Africa. Park also notes remarkable differences that arise when the *berimbau* and *belembaotuyan* are played in different locations or cultures. This piece tells a curious and truly global story about the *belembaotuyan*, which was presumably brought to the island of Guam by crews of the Manila galleons during way-stops in their journeys across the Pacific. Slaves, who were familiar with other versions of string-bow instruments from their homelands, started to play the *belembaotuyan* and make their own music. If nowadays the sound of the Brazilian *berimbau* is intrinsically linked to capoeira and Brazil, the research that Park has conducted on the *belembaotuyan* in Guam contributes to the study of material culture from what might be called the Latin Black Pacific.

From a different location, the Hispanic Philippines, Mario Quijano analyses the transculturation of a genre of lyrical theatre named *sarswela*, which became a popular form of entertainment at the turn of the 20th century. Quijano briefly traces the evolution of the genre from Spanish *zarzuela*. Having initially been written and performed in Spanish by Spaniards, it was later taken up by Filipinos (mostly) in Manila. Slowly, Filipino themes and genres (such as the love songs known as *kundiman*) were introduced into the performances. Philippine *sarswela* appeared in the context of an emerging nationalism fostered by artists and politicians. Its plays were written and performed in Tagalog and other Philippine languages; they were put on in Manila but also elsewhere in the archipelago. Anecdotally, Quijano comments on specific customs (such as issuing weather warnings and dispersing crowds of spectators who have not paid) that would often be considered part of how performances are managed. This piece is crucial for understanding the transculturating potential of art forms that, far from copying the (European) centre, represent symptoms of local creativity.

If theatres were built in the Philippines specifically for performances of *sarzwelas*, the construction of churches was a symbol of Christian conquest and colonialism, but also of artistic transculturation. In his analysis of a sculptural relief on the Church of Saint Joaquin in Ilollo (Visayas), Patrick Flores demonstrates that the Spaniards spread their images and pictorial rhetoric across the colonial world. Here, the imagery of the Spanish Reconquest (a combination of war, violence, and baroque expressionism) was introduced to the Philippines. The relief commemorates the surrender of Tetouan, the Moroccan city whose defeat at the hands of the Spanish in the 17th century became so emblematic of imperial power that it was reproduced thousands of kilometres away in the Philippines. In addition to admiring the distinctiveness of Catholic churches in the Philippines, Flores' text underscores the relevance of art and architecture as part of world art history.

It is clear from this introduction that linguistic transculturation is part of the lives and afterlives of these objects, whose original names, new names, alternative spellings, and adaptations are as necessary as they are innovative. Linguistic transculturation is also evidence of the glocality of transcultural objects: their existence (and meaning) in a particular place and time is the result of global influences. Foreign words in local languages are best understood by the communities in which they are created, and therefore where they feel at home. *Pista ng Angono* (or *The Fiesta of Angono*), a painting by Filipino muralist Carlos "Botong" Francisco [Figure 2], is illustrative, in its title and in its representation, of a Philippine town fiesta, which is uniquely familiar to the Philippine cultural imaginary.

In addition to offering our readers the opportunity to learn about transcultural objects from the Global Hispanophone and to show how this method and field of inquiry helps us to gain planetary consciousness, we hope to spark our readers' curiosity to know more about the lives of the things that surround us.

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Fig. 2: *The Fiesta of Angono*, 1960, by Carlos "Botong" Francisco (Image from WikiArt, reprinted under Fair Use copyright)

The Focus

The Afterlives of Transpacific Material Culture in Mexico

Ignacio López-Calvo

Cultural memory scholar Marita Sturken maintains that "Cultural memory is produced through objects, images, and representations. These are technologies of memory, not vessels of memory in which memory passively resides so much as objects through which memories are shared, produced, and given meaning."[1] Let's assume, then, that objects and images are technologies of memory and that their potential agency to narrate their history is worth analyzing. In the following paragraphs, I will focus on objects that contextualize Asian-Mexican cultural production. Indeed, one way to recover the Asian ethnic heritage in Mexico is through material culture, which could be considered, in Marxist terms, as the base (production forces, materials, resources that generate goods needed by society) upon which the superstructure (culture, identity, ideology, social institutions) rests, with the latter at times justifying the former.
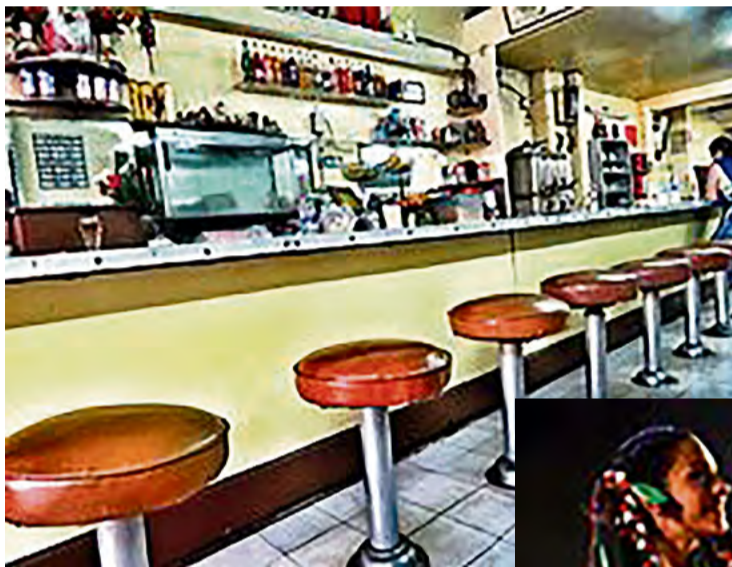
The agency of objects

Because the agency of objects may affect human beings, literary scholar Héctor Hoyos suggests, for an analysis of what he terms the "human-nonhuman continuum,"[2] "the task is to think of the past through the prism of things."[3] In his view, "nonhumans give and they receive; they domesticate us, we, them—intention is beside the point. Thus, a desire for sweetness informs our relationship with apples; for beauty, with tulips; and for intoxication, with marijuana."[4] From this perspective, cultural production by Asian immigrant communities and their descendants reflects, in the representation of their own chronotopes and symbolic objects, the sociality of their emotions.

Chinese Latin American narratives' expression of affect tends to present the image of the Chinatowns, *cafés de chinos*, or Chinese-owned shops as the quintessential loci of their immigrant experience [Fig. 1].

Likewise, Nikkei (Japanese overseas or persons living outside Japan who have one or more ancestors from this country) writing in Latin America embodies, in my opinion, a sui generis blend of nostalgia, cultural pride, and self-exoticization. Its collective structures of feeling share perceptions of the natural world, with cherry blossoms and Mount Fuji as privileged national symbols. Examples of recurrent motifs within the realm of material culture include the kimono, the *ofuro* (traditional Japanese bathtub), the bento box (single-portion takeout), and the *butsudan* (Buddhist altar). Along these lines, sushi, miso soup, and sake are considered emblematic national dishes and drinks. Traditional cultural practices that tend to be considered quintessentially Japanese are haiku writing, *hanami* (flower viewing), *ikebana* (art of flower arrangement), *origami; sadō* (tea ceremony), and *tanomoshi* (rotating credit association). Likewise, the *shamisen* and *taiko* drums are among the traditional musical instruments more frequently mentioned, just like sumo and kendo appear among the national sports and martial arts more practiced by characters in Japanese Mexican works. Each of these traditional objects, cultural expressions, and chronotopes (in which time and space merge to present the node or organizing center in a narrative where relations and contradictions are posited are sometimes resolved) function as symbolic repositories of Nikkei memories and identities. Yet, even though these collective structures of feeling are meant to be transmitted from generation to generation, they inevitably lose emotional value throughout the years. In any case, the analysis of material culture, just like that of literary (self-)representation, may be useful in the goal of restoring the cultural memory of disappearing or erased communities.

Early-modern material culture

Consider the following examples of transcultural Mexican material culture that contain traces of folk Asianness. First, the most emblematic example of Asian material culture coming to Mexico during colonial times is the China Poblana dress, associated with the city of Puebla [Fig. 2].

Fig. 1 (left): Café de chinos in Plaza Garibaldi, Mexico City. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons user Luisalvaz)

Fig. 2 (below): China poblana outfits at the Festival Cervantino in Guanajuato. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons user Juan Saucedo)

Fig. 3 (above). Fuente del Risco. (Photo by the author, 2020)

Various stories explain its origin. In one story, an enslaved princess from India (not China, despite the garment's name) named Mirnha is abducted by pirates, taken to Macao and then to Manila. Once in Mexico, she is bought by Spaniards in Puebla. It is said that people there called her "china," a generic label that is unfortunately still common in Spain and throughout Latin America, with the exception of Brazil, where Asians are instead Nipponized as *Japonês* or Japanese. Later, the Sosa de Puebla family purchased Mirnha and changed her name to Catarina de San Juan. Her outfits, according to the popular legend, inspired local women to blend, in transcultural fashion, the traditional clothing styles from India with Mexican indigenous ones, which resulted in the renowned China Poblana dress. It is characterized by a short-sleeve shawl embroidered with bright sequins, a blouse, slippers covered with green or red silk, and a two-part skirt: the upper part is made from green silk, and the lower one is often embroidered with flowers, birds, or butterflies. Yet, as Tatiana Seijas claims in *Asian Slaves in Mexico: From Chinos to Indios*, "In reality, we do not know who

designed the costume. Catarina surely had no part in this creation."[5]

The unique and emblematic Fuente del Risco, the fountain at the Casa del Risco Museum (Isidro Fabela Cultural Center) in Mexico City, represents another link to the material heritage of both Japanese and Chinese cultural influences in Mexico [Fig. 3]. It is located in the former home of Isidro Fabela (1882-1964), a Mexican politician, historian, lawyer, and diplomat.

This stunning, over eight-meter-tall fountain was built during the latter part of the 18th century and was joined to a wall in the courtyard by an unknown artist. Its international and eclectic decorations respond to the then common practice of using pieces of expensive tableware as ornaments. Among these pieces (*riscos* in Spanish, hence the fountain's name), one can find red, blue, and green *imari* porcelain from Japan as well as Chinese fragments, including three plates from the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1912) dynasties that were brought to the Spanish colony in the Galeón de Manila (Manila Galleon; also known as the *Nao de China* [The China Ship]). Shockingly, this gem of Mexican

Ultrabaroque art was once used as a latrine after the house's abandonment toward the end of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920).

Still within the early-modern history of Mexico, historian Paulina Machuca has studied the importation of the Philippine coconut palm to Mexico, along with the introduction of the production techniques of *tuba* (Philippine spirit elaborated from the sap of palm trees) and *vino de cocos* (coconut wine). These were brought by Filipinos to New Spain's (Colonial Mexico) western coast during the 17th century: "Coconut wine was the first distilled beverage that broke into the alcoholic beverage market in New Spain, around the year 1600. It was the first distillate that was produced, marketed, and consumed in a wide range of New Spain's territory, from the hot land of the Pacific to the mining areas of the north."[6] This Philippine distillation technique and the Asiatic *alambiques* (stills)[7] were imported during colonial times for the production of mescal, which often replaced that of coconut wine. According to Machuca, some of the so-called *indios chinos* (from what today are the Philippines, China, India, Borneo, Indonesia, New Guinea, and Sri Lanka) who were brought to colonial Mexico, and particularly to Colima, became wealthy thanks to coconut wine production. Therefore, the native product they brought along, the coconut palm, also "opened the door for them to a better and faster integration into New Spain's society."[8] Later, the need for additional workers demanded the addition of the colony's indigenous labor force to this industry, some of whom eventually became master *vinateros* (vintners).

Likewise, Ana G. Valenzuela Zapata, Aristarco Regalado Pinedo, and Michiko Mizoguchi have studied East Asian influences in the production of mescal along the coast of Jalisco. As they explain, by the 17th century, both the Arabic and the Asiatic distillation processes arrived on the Pacific coast of Mexico, where they were used to make spirits from coconut and agave.[9] They argue that some types of *shōchū* (a Japanese alcoholic beverage that is distilled from rice, barley, sweet potatoes, buckwheat, or brown sugar) are produced on the islands of Kyushu and Okinawa with the same distilling technique used to produce a type of mescal known as *raicilla* in El Tuito (Cabo Corrientes municipality) and Zapotitlán de Vadillo, as well as *mescal de olla* from Manzanilla de la Paz. This distillation technique, known in Mexico as *huichol* or Asiatic still, is called *kabutogama chiki* in Japan. Valenzuela Zapata, Regalado Pinedo, and Mizoguchi argue that distillation, introduced by the Spanish to Mexico, was implemented using different methods, rather than only via the coconut wine model, as some researchers suggest. They add that those individuals who were familiar with Asian distilling techniques

and who used different materials along the Mexican Pacific coast were not necessarily Asian themselves. This Eastern technique, simpler than the Arabic *alambique*, still survives on both continents.

Twentieth-century material culture

Another iconic referent of Nikkei cultural heritage in Mexico are the jacaranda trees that the Japanese immigrant Tasuguro Matsumoto (1865-1955), founder of the original Matsumoto flower shop in Mexico City, brought to Mexico from Brazil and Paraguay. As the story goes, President Pascual Ortiz Rubio (1877-1963; President 1930-1932) requested, from the Japanese government, a donation of cherry trees to plant them along the Mexican capital's main avenues as a symbol of friendship between the two countries. Thereupon, Japan's foreign minister asked Matsumoto about the feasibility of planting this type of tree in the Mexican capital. Matsumoto, who then happened to be growing jacaranda trees in his greenhouse, argued that the cherry tree was not the most appropriate one for Mexico City's climate, recommending the jacaranda instead. Thanks to the Matsumoto family, therefore, this city and other Mexican cities that followed its example enjoy stunning jacaranda trees from South America that bloom in early spring and that have become a symbol of Mexico [Fig. 4]. During World War II, Matsumoto, who was a naturalized Mexican citizen, offered his Hacienda Batán as a refuge for those Nikkei who were forced by the Mexican government to relocate to Mexico City at the request of the United States government.

One may likewise notice that in the Mexican city of San Luis Potosí, which has had a Japanese-Mexican community for several generations, people use the word *yuki* (snow in Japanese) for a type of shaved ice sweetened with flavored syrups, rather than the usual terms of *raspados* or *granizados*. Those who sell this treat are called *yukeros*. According to Ricardo Pérez Otakara, his grandfather, Fusaichi Otakara, first brought the *yukeras* to northern Mexico. Fusaichi, Pérez Otakara adds, was a descendant of a samurai who immigrated to Mexico in 1907, at the age of 17, and worked as a day laborer, a miner, and a cook (Suárez n.p.).[10] Having been trained as a samurai, he became, like many other of his countrymen, an anonymous soldier of the Mexican Revolution and served as a cavalry captain under Francisco I. Madero (1873-1913; President 1911-1913) and Francisco "Pancho" Villa (1878–1923). Years later, Fusaichi made a living in Nuevo León selling *yukis*. He was also the founder of the Asociación México-Japonesa del Noreste (Northeastern Japanese Mexican Association).

In yet another example of Japanese-Mexican transculturation, "Japanese peanuts" (*cacahuates japoneses* or *maníes japoneses* in Spanish) was invented in Mexico City by the Japanese immigrant Yoshigei (Carlos) Nakatani (1910-1992) in 1945 and were first sold in the capital's La Merced Market [Fig. 5].

Fig. 5: Cacahuate japonés (Japanese-Style Mexican Peanuts). (Photo by the author, 2020)

Fig. 4: Jacaranda en Avenida Sánchez Piedras de la Ciudad de Tlaxcala. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons user Isaacvp)

Before emigrating to Mexico, Nakatani had worked at a candy factory in his Japanese hometown of Sumoto, which made *mamekashi* (different types of seeds covered with flour and condiments). Years after his 1932 arrival, Nakatani decided to take advantage of his working experience in Japan: he cooked peanuts covered with a thick, hard, and crunchy coat of wheat flour and soy sauce. Today, Mexicans often mix them with chili powder and lime juice. Pressed to feed his eight children (the future visual artist Carlos Nakatani [1934-2004] and the recently deceased singer Gustavo "Nakatani" Nakatani [1949-2020] among them), he would distribute his "Japanese peanuts" throughout the market of La Merced. It is said that consumers would yell "¡Ahí viene el japonés!" ("Here comes the Japanese!"). Nipón, the company created by Nakatani and led today by one of his granddaughters, dominated the Japanese peanut market until 1980, when new brands like Sabritas and Barcel began to compete with Nipón, since Nakatani never sought a patent for the product. It is noteworthy that this type of peanut was called "Japanese" although it did not originate in that country. Unsurprisingly, the *cacahuate japonés*, now exported to Japan, is known there as "Mexican peanut," and the bag in which it is sold sports a mariachi with a sombrero and a big moustache. This raises the recurrent issue of how these terms of ethnic or national origin (Japanese, Japanese Mexican) often have no fixed meaning in Latin America: depending on the speaker and context, the term can mean Japanese, Japanese Mexican, or simply Mexican.

A final example of transcultural material culture that bespeaks Nikkei communities' long impact on Mexico is the *chamoy*, also known as *Miguelito*, a Mexican condiment made of dehydrated fruit, chili pepper, salt, sugar, and water, used in both powder and liquid forms. It is believed to have originated from *umeboshi*, a traditional Japanese dish made from pickled *ume* fruit (plum) with red colorant. The condiment was created in Mexico during the 1950s by Teikichi Luis Iwadare, a Japanese immigrant who decided to produce *umeboshi* with apricots, sometimes also plums or mangos, and to name it *chamoy*.

Failed transmissions

It is also noteworthy that not every object brought on the Manila Galleon has remained popular in Mexico. For example, the *mantón de Manila* (Manila shawl), a silk shawl originally made with chinoiserie-style motifs in China and derived from the *Filipino pañuelo*, was popular in colonial Latin America but failed to remain so. In Spain, it is still today considered a quintessentially traditional Spanish garment, worn, for example, by flamenco dancers and Andalusian women during festivities. The *mantón de Manila*, however, is believed to have influenced the designs of the Latin American *rebozo*, a long, flat garment handwoven from cotton, wool, silk, or rayon, like a shawl, and worn by Mexican women.

These objects tell us about "connected histories" (to use Sanjay Subrahmanyam's term):[11] they help us to interpret networks of cultural contacts and economic exchanges between distant populations at a global level. Simultaneously, they reflect historical changes on a small and large scale that challenge nation-based historiographical approaches. Material evidence of human circulation, distilling methods, goods like ceramics or clothing, and methods of candy- or condiment-making paints a rich history of those global networks that, for a long time, found in Mexico a principal connecting hub, thereby contributing to a decentering of European modernity. The mentioned Asian or Asian-influenced objects and folk traditions represent micronarratives that metonymically push us toward more encompassing, global-scale macronarratives. They encourage us to rethink Mexican history beyond its national borders and from a different vantage point, looking instead at often silenced cross-cultural connections and clashes (e.g., slavery, human exploitation, racism, predatory extractivism), intercontinental economic connections, and immigration. Consequently, Mexican history becomes inextricably linked to Asian countries such as China, Japan, Korea, and the Philippines.[12]

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Notes

1 Sturken, Marita. 1997. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 9.
2 Hoyos, Héctor. 2019. *Things with a History. Transcultural Materialism and the Literatures of Extraction in Contemporary Latin America*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 74.
3 ibid., p. 65.
4 ibid., p. 47.
5 Seijas, Tatiana. 2014. *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 27.
6 "El vino de cocos fue la primera bebida destilada que irrumpió en el mercado de bebidas alcohólicas de la Nueva España, alrededor del año 1600. Se trató del primer destilado que se produjo, comercializó y consumió en un amplio margen del territorio novohispano, llevándose desde tierra caliente del Pacífico hasta las zonas mineras del septentrión" (Machuca 2018, 20). Machuca, Paulina. 2018. *El vino de cocos en la Nueva España. Historia de una transculturación en el siglo XVII*. Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán y Fideicomiso Felipe Teixidor y Monserrat Alfau de Teixidor.
7 These still were used to make alcoholic beverages that were used in religious ceremonies devoted to Philippine ancestor spirits, nature spirits, and deities called *anitos* (ancestor spirits, nature spirits, and deities in indigenous Philippine folk religions).
8 "Les abrió la puerta para una mejor y más rápida inserción en la sociedad novohispana" (Machuca 2018, 179).
9 https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Influencia-asi%C3%A1tica-en-la-producci%C3%B3n-de-mezcal-en-Zapata-Pinedo/70b0b1d9df505eb18290a6ea7dddf22658e4c3fa
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11 Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. July 1997. "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia." *Modern Asian Studies* Special Issue: The Eurasian Context of the Early Modern History of Mainland South East Asia, 1400–1800m 31(3): 735–62.
12 This article is part of the introduction to my book *The Mexican Transpacific: Nikkei Writing, Visual Arts, and Performance* (Vanderbilt UP, 2022).

Islands of the Global Hispanophone

Islands of Empire

Benita Sampedro Vizcaya

Islands are material, physical, tangible spaces, and confined geographies, but also conceptual entities with the power to shape history and imagination and to connect dispersed localities. Islands forge patterns of transit, travel, and transcultural exchange, as well as human, political, and cultural entanglements. This article will contribute to an alternative map of island spaces embedded within the contours of the Global Hispanophone.[1] This map includes island territories and archipelagos – anchored across the Caribbean, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific – which were once touched by the Spanish Empire and are bound by its aftereffects: from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Hispaniola to Bioko (formerly known as Fernando Poo), Corisco, Elobey, and Annobón; from the Canary Islands, the Chafarinas, and the Balearic Islands to the Philippines, the Marianas, and beyond. Islands and archipelagos function as a constellation of fragments, small continents from which it is possible to reorganize the archive of the imperial oceanic immensity, advance new epistemologies, and retrace patterns of transit and connectivity, including cultural and political connections both past and present.

Islands and violence

In the conventional Eurocentric imagination, it is still difficult to avoid (and therefore to dismantle) the cliché of Columbus' first voyage to the Caribbean as a moment of epiphany, a breakthrough "discovery," albeit one with execrable consequences. As John Gillis has put it, for a 15th-century audience, "*Oceanus* [the Atlantic] ceased to be imagined as an impassable barrier and became the all-connecting sea."[2] It is from this period, the so-called age of exploration, that the Western semantic and conceptual distinction between islands and continents under which we still operate today derives: islands began to be defined by their relationship with water, and continents by their territorial contiguity. Gilles Deleuze's attempt at a more nuanced distinction between "continental islands" and "oceanic islands" adds, perhaps, a quantifying dimension to the two categories,[3] but it also reinforces the same binary paradigm between water, fluidity, and territorial and imperial expansion. Within the oceanic imaginary, the centrality of islands as spatial entities, both in the early Iberian imperial project of the Americas – and all along the West African coasts in the preceding decades – is indisputable, in geohistorical and in economic terms: "It was islands, not continents, that first lured Europeans offshore in the fifteenth century," Gillis asserts.[4]

In a collection of essays that places at the center of critical scrutiny the multiple figurations in which islands around the world have been used, imagined, and theorized, Rod Edmond and Vanessa Smith remind us that the colonial history of the Caribbean is inscribed in ocean trajectories as well as island locations and, furthermore, "some of the most brutal colonial encounters have occurred on islands, such as those of the Caribbean or Tasmania, where the license of enclosure has enabled campaigns of annihilation to be enacted upon local populations."[5] Yet the recognition of islands and archipelagos as distinctive spaces of knowledge and textual production and transfer, and as privileged loci of enunciation in the articulation of critical perspectives on empire, violence, transoceanic, and transcultural exchanges, merits further insistence. After all, managing power, empire, and postimperial fallouts from island spaces is a practice marked by a long trajectory.[6]

Taking advantage of islands as spaces that are naturally propitious for imperial expansion and for the colonial enterprise has been a ubiquitous trope, not only because of their potential as utopian spaces, but also because – as Edmond and Smith have expounded – both rhetorically and geographically speaking, "islands, unlike continents, look like property."[7] Especially in a maritime age, islands appeared more readily available for grab, possession, colonization, domination, and imposition of new regimes of violence. The Canary Islands and the Caribbean were among the earliest laboratories for Iberian imperial plunder and global connectivity, from the 1490s onwards. Earlier plantation experiments, pearl and gold mining, environmental degradation, human

Fig. 1 (above): Island of Bioko (formerly known as Fernando Poo), in the Gulf of Guinea, today part of Equatorial Guinea. (Map included in *The Diary of John Holt and the Voyage of the "Maria"*, Liverpool, 1948)

Fig. 2 (left): Map of the Island of Hispaniola, which contains the present-day countries of Haiti and Dominican Republic, by Nicolas de Fer, 1723. (Map courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library collection)

Fig. 3 (below): Selection of book covers from recent works by Annobonese writers. (Photos prepared by the author.)

exhaustion, transatlantic trafficking, and the repopulation of islands with new laboring communities, animal species, and exportable commodities, all invite us to think of the Canary Islands, Hispaniola, Annobón, and beyond as islands of empire, today bound under the badge of the Global Hispanophone.

Annobón (*Anno Bom* in Portuguese), an island on the Southern Atlantic crossing, and currently part of the Spanish-speaking Republic of Equatorial Guinea, fell under the Portuguese in 1473 and was transferred to the Spanish Empire in 1778. It has been repeatedly marked by historic and present-day violence, and by ongoing isolation, conditions that seemed to preclude any opportunity for agency and autonomy. Conventionally, it has been treated through the discursive prism of victim narratives. Yet, in the last couple of decades, there have been concerted attempts to recast a new island narrative through literary, journalistic, and artistic production by Annobonees authors. Island-born writers, performers, and plastic artists – including Francisco Zamora Loboch, Juan Tomás Ávila Laurel, Nánäy-Menemol Ledjam, Desiderio Manresa Bodipo, and Francisco Ballovera Estrada – have sought a liberational politics that might help to redeem their people from multiple forms of disenfranchisement, arising from former colonial oppression and current national political repression and environmental degradation.[8]

In their works, we can trace an attempt to reverse Annobón's marginalization by carving out a niche within global Atlantic and archipelagic literary and artistic topographies, erecting a new canon and exploring alternative forms of resistance at the crossroads of environmental politics and traditional practices. Yet, this effort to rewrite the island's character is both a contested rivalry among equally marginalized insular spaces and a shared reality within the broader Atlantic, Pacific, and Mediterranean contexts, and one not limited to the 15th- and 16th-century ventures. It continued in later periods in a myriad of reformulations. "Concurrent with the inter-imperial shockwaves incessantly destabilizing pre-eighteenth century territorialities, the islands and coasts of the Atlantic ... were subject to multiple invasions, repeated devastation, and demographic and economic violation," Hernández-Adrián asserts in reference to the Canary Islands.[9] Tensions between internal and external forces were the continuing predicament for insular spaces, simultaneously across and between inter- and intra-imperial territories under the same colonial designs.

Fig. 4 (right): Annobonese painter Desiderio Manresa Bodipo at work. (Photo reproduced with artist's permission.)

Carceral islands

This section features one concrete historical dimension of insularity that connected some of these island spaces of the Global Hispanophone in the second half of the 19th century. It serves to further highlight the role of these islands as sites of transfer, confinement, and punishment, as a result of the repressive politics of the Spanish imperial administration. It encompasses a succession of large-scale punitive relocations of individuals between islands, forced deportations, and island presidio experiences within the global contours of the late Spanish Empire. These experiences involved political, administrative, penal, and military transportation across the oceans, confinement and, ultimately, in the best of cases, freedom.

Within the realm of the Global Hispanophone, punitive relocations from the 1850s onwards originated most intensively in Cuba, but also in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, as well as in peninsular Spain, and they materialized in presidio sites in Spanish ultramarine territorial possessions off the coasts of both North and Sub-Saharan Africa.[10] The confinement sites were primarily insular (and occasionally semi-insular) Spanish satellite enclaves, considered peripheral to the metropolis, yet sometimes adjacent to it, or comprising an extra-territorial extension of it. They included the North African presidios of Ceuta, Melilla, and the Chafarinas Islands, in addition to insular spaces off the Atlantic coast of Africa, namely the Canary Islands and the island of Fernando Poo in the Gulf of Guinea. These offshore African prisons had a particularly grim reputation during the active period of these deportation politics (1850s-1890s): if Chafarinas was deemed the most inhospitable, Fernando Poo was consistently considered the most mortiferous.

Forced exile and deportation, as well as the confiscation of property, became regular methods of coercion, repression, and punishment by the Spanish administration. Such practices gained momentum from the 1860s onwards as a means of suppressing anticolonial movements, abolition struggles, and fights for independence. The Captains General of late imperial Spain were licensed with practically all-encompassing authority, which included the power to relocate colonial subjects extrajudicially, by administrative order. Meanwhile, the militarization of the insular colonial sites allowed for the extensive use of force to execute orders of confinement and deportation, as tools

to maintain colonial order at home, to provide labor supply networks in ultramarine territories, and to respond to anti-colonial insurgencies as deemed fit, without significant checks or balances. Militarization also facilitated deterritorialization, mass transportation across the Atlantic and the Pacific, and confinement in African islands as vehicles for targeting specific Caribbean and Filipino social groups defined by political affiliation, race, class, ethnicity, or social standing.

Although the administrative and judicial practice of deportation was systematically carried throughout the expanse of the Spanish Empire in the late 19th century, Cuba was the territory from which these deportations most intensively departed. This may be attributed to its concrete historical circumstances: in Cuba, the state was intimately linked to the plantation and post-plantation economy, and to abolition and post-abolition social readjustments: slavery was officially maintained until 1886, making it the last island to abolish it in the Caribbean. This was coupled with widespread racial repression, under the imagined imperative of disciplining a newly emancipated workforce. The racial, social, and political targets for deportation by the Spanish administration were, however, multiple, and localized political events (including the three wars of independence) often provided the colonial authorities with

the opportunity to address the perceived challenges posed by socially diverse groups, across blurred categories.[11] By 1860, the African island of Fernando Poo, which had fallen under Spanish control at the end of the 18th century, began to serve as the destination for a forcible eastward transfer of black Cuban emancipated subjects, used as a labor force and for colonizing purposes. Cuban political deportations to African presidios began in 1866, and they radically intensified after the outbreak of the Ten-Year War (1868-1878). The level of social danger perceived by colonial authorities in Cuba determined the distance, length, and site of the deportation, but commonly chosen destinations were the island of Fernando Poo and the Chafarinas Islands, as well as the Balearic Islands and the Mediterranean coastal presidios of Ceuta and Melilla. A new wave of Cuban deportations to some of the same insular locations took place in the outbreak of the so-called Guerra Chiquita (1879-1880). A last wave of Cuban political dissidents in the 1890s was associated with the War of Independence and the Cuban American War.

Islands of connection

For all these reasons, a recentering of the island as a critical site for engagement with transcultural exchanges in historical perspective is pivotal. It is understood, and even an essential premise, that the island does not necessarily function as an independent and isolated unit of analysis, but rather as one whose theorization is enriched when studied in relation to (and based on) its links with the archipelago, the coast, the maritime culture, and the imperial and postimperial history that underlies its present. This approach renders itself useful for a critical narrative reconstruction of imperial and postimperial historiography. But it is also posed as an intervention not to articulate a specific and intrinsically insular epistemology, but precisely because of its relation to colonial experiences, inter-territorial transits, and transoceanic connections. In this negotiation between the local and the global, island theorization can be understood not only as a place (or the epicenter) from which to approach the narrative textuality of empire and its aftermath, but also, and perhaps simultaneously, as a model of critical approach and inquiry in our contemporary engagement with transcultural exchanges.

In addressing the etymological valence of islands, Hernández-Adrián has termed this recentering of focus, from the mainland to islands, as "nissology": the study of islands on their own terms. This reconstruction of an oceanic geography and historiography from an insular vantage point might be useful, perhaps, for a critical understanding of the historical constructions according to which islands and archipelagos of the Global Hispanophone – in the Caribbean, the Gulf of Guinea, the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands, the Philippines, the Mariana Islands, and beyond – function as a constellation of territories both large and small, as

pseudo-continents from which it is possible to reorganize the archive of the imperial oceanic vastness. It goes without saying that each insular archive has its own ambitions, aspirations, particularities, but all contribute to a unique theorization of a critical space where past and present violence remains tied to imperial articulations.

This proposal to recenter the place of island and coastal histories within the Global Hispanophone in the mapping of transcultural exchanges renders the distinction between inside and outside, insular and mainland (and, perhaps by extension, bordering) more complicated and at times more diffuse. It favors connectivity and continuity over landmasses and borders. The paradox of the island, which makes it ever more productive from a critical and analytical standpoint, resides precisely in the fact that it simultaneously presents us with bounded and unbounded space: It is both a liminal area and a gateway. Ultimately, to think physically and figuratively from, through, and between islands and archipelagos is to engage with the very opposite of a totalizing oceanic version of past and present, space and place, empire and hegemony. It is to begin from premises of multiplicity.

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Notes

1 For a recent definition of the concept of the Global Hispanophone, see Adolfo Campoy Cubillo and Benita Sampedro Vizcaya, "Entering the Global Hispanophone", *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, Vol. 20, Issue 1-2 (2019): 1-16.

2 Gillis, John R., "Taking History Offshore: Atlantic Islands in European Minds, 1400-1800". Edmond and Smith, Eds. *Islands in History and Representation.* Routledge, 2003: 19-31, p. 19.

3 Deleuze, Gilles, *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974.* Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2004, p. 9.

4 John R. Gillis, p. 23.

5 Edmond, Rod and Smith, Vanesa, *Islands in History and Representation.* Routledge, 2003, p. 5-6.

6 See, in this regard, Benita Sampedro Vizcaya, "Archivos insulares y violencia imperial". Juan Manuel Escudero and Victoriano Roncero, Eds. *La violencia en el mundo hispánico en el siglo de oro.* Madrid: Visor Libros, 2010: 279-290.

7 Edmond and Smith, p. 1.

8 On the issue of the island of Annobón as a toxic waste site, see Cécile S. Stehrenberger, "Annobón 1988. Slow Disaster, Colonialism and the Franco Dictatorship". *Art in Translation*, Vol. 12, Issue 2, 2020: 263-287; and, on Annobón's state of pervasive abandonment, see Baltasar Fra Molinero's "Estado, religión, trabajo y hambre," *Revista Debats* Vol. 123, Issue 2 (April 2014): 92-105.

9 Hernández Adrián, Francisco-J., "On Imperial Archives and the Insular Vanishing Point: The Canary Islands in Viera y Clavijo's Noticias". Benita Sampedro Vizcaya and Simon Doubleday, Eds. *Border Interrogations. Questioning Spanish Frontiers.* Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008: 165-187, p. 168.

10 For a detailed study of these island exchanges, see Benita Sampedro Vizcaya, "Inscribing islands. From Cuba to Fernando Poo and back". Cecilia Enjuto-Rangel, Sebastiaan Faber, Pedro García-Caro and Robert P. Newcomb, Eds. *Transatlantic Studies: Latin America, Iberia, and Africa.* Liverpool University Press, 2019: 99-113.

11 For a detailed analysis of the history of these deportations, see Benita Sampedro Vizcaya's book *Caribbean Deportee Narratives and African Presidios: Carceral Systems of the Late Spanish Empire,* forthcoming with The University of Florida Press.

Fig. 6 (below): Confinement Island of Isabel II, part of the archipelago of Chafarinas, off the Mediterranean coast of Morocco, church and other buildings. *La Ilustración Española y Americana,* 1893. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Fig. 5 (above): City of San Antonio de Palé, island of Annobón, near São Tomé and Principe, today part of Equatorial Guinea. (Photo courtesy of UR-SDV on Wikimedia Commons)

Berimbaus across the Pacific?

On the Origins and Trajectories of the *Belembaotuyan* and the *Berimbau*

Paula C. Park

The *berimbau* (short for *berimbau de barriga* ["belly bow"]) is an Afro-Brazilian single-string bow attached to a dried-out gourd that is placed against the musician's stomach and moved back and forth to produce vibrato when played. The *belembaotuyan* (from *belembao* ["swaying of trees"] and *tuyan* ["stomach"]) is a musical bow from Guam that uses a desiccated gourd as resonator, which is also placed by the musician's stomach when played. The nearly identical introductory descriptions of these instruments point to the possibility of a common origin in Africa. Their comparable trajectories hint at the emerging concept of the Black Pacific.

Fig. 1: Berimbau players in the US, featuring Mestre Cobra Mansa, in 2003. (Photo courtesy of Sam Fentress on Wikipedia Commons)

Crafting and playing the instruments

There are, of course, differences between the two instruments based on where they are made and how they have evolved over time. The bow of the *berimbau* is made of scraped and sanded wild sweetsop tree wood, which can be naturally rounded to form a slight arc. After this preparation, the bow is typically varnished. The backbone of the *belembaotuyan* (pronounced belem'bao'TOO'dzan and sometimes spelled *bilembaotuyan*) is traditionally made of wood from Pacific rosewood or wild hibiscus tree. It is skinned, dried over a several days, and then flattened on four sides with a machete or a planer. Thereafter, the steps for each instrument's completion are quite similar: a metal string (*corda* for the berimbau and *alåmle*, from the Spanish "alambre" [wire], for the *belembaotuyan*) is tightly secured between the two ends of the bow, and the resonator is attached. A shell is placed at the top and bottom of the bow of the *bilembaotuyan* to prevent the string from touching it. The *alåmle* is oftentimes extracted from vehicle tires, and it is believed that before the arrival of automobiles, the string may have been made from wild hibiscus or pineapple tree fiber.

The wire in both the *belembaotuyan* and the *berimbau* produce twangy tones upon contact with a light stick. The tones and timbre in the *berimbau* are modulated with a small stone or a coin that is held in the musician's left hand. In the *belembaotuyan*, there are two primary tones as a result of a soft wire or string that attaches the gourd to the middle of the bow and goes over the larger wire string across the two ends of

Fig. 2: Master Jesus M. Crisostomo playing the belembaotuyan circa 1988. (Photo by Judy Flores, retrieved with permission from Guampedia)

the bow. *Belembaotuyan* tonal variation is further achieved by positioning the fingers of the left hand at the upper half of the bow beneath the wire and touching it to change the pitch. The *belembaotuyan* can be played solo or alongside singing or other instruments like a guitar. In capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian martial arts or dance form, the *berimbau* is accompanied by other percussion instruments as well as singing and clapping.

The placement of the resonator in the berimbau and the *belembaotuyan*, as well as the modes of holding each instrument when played, vary significantly. The gourd or *cabaça* in the *berimbau*, which is normally four- to five feet long, is attached to the lower end of the bow with a string. The resonator, the stone or coin, and the bow, which is placed vertically, are all held in the performer's left hand, while the right hand holds the wooden stick, together with a small basket rattle. The *berimbau* can be played standing or sitting [Fig. 1].

As mentioned earlier, in the *belembaotuyan*, the resonator (called *calabasa*, from Spanish "calabaza" [gourd]) is attached to the middle of the bow. The *belembaotuyan* can measure anywhere between four to nine feet – that is, almost double the size of a *berimbau* – and it is usually played sitting, with the bow held diagonally [Fig. 2]. The traditional posture for playing the *belembaotuyan* was leaning or lying on one's back [Fig. 3].

Possible origins and trajectories

Musical bows are found in various societies across the world, but in the case of the *berimbau*, there is no question that it is an African-derived instrument (predominantly from West, Central, and South African cultures) brought to Brazil through the transatlantic slave trade. According to ethnomusicologist Eric Galm, "there is no evidence of indigenous musical bows in Brazil. As a result, musical bows in Brazil have become iconic representations of African-descended culture throughout the country."[1] Galm documents how references to the *berimbau* and an array of bow instruments played exclusively by Black street vendors and beggars can be found in 19th-century European chronicles about Brazil. After the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888, the instrument disappeared from marketplaces, but through capoeira it gradually returned to the public view.[2] At present, the berimbau is one of Brazil's national icons, yet it is amply heard beyond the South American country as an essential instrument of capoeira, which is now popular worldwide.

As for the origin of the *belembaotuyan*, many ethnomusicologists contend that it too is an adaptation of African musical bows brought to Guam (a Spanish colony for over two centuries and a US territory since 1898) by way of the maritime transport of slaves and material goods. Guam in the Mariana Islands was an important stop for the so-called Manila galleons, which operated from 1565 to 1815 [Fig. 4]. Porcelain, silk, ivory, spices, and other luxuries were transported from Asia to the Americas in exchange for silver minted in Peru or Mexico. Guam was on the galleon's westward route. "Because of shipping and constant trade between Asia and South America," observes Therese Crisostomo Pangelinan, "a *belembaotuyan* player most likely stopped on Guam and introduced the instrument to the Chamorro people [indigenous peoples of Guam] more than 150 years ago."[3] And indeed, beyond the luxuries mentioned above, these transpacific galleons carried a number of material objects and cultural practices. Historian Paulina Machuca, for instance, has traced how a coconut wine called *tuba* arrived in New Spain from the Philippines around the year 1600. In doing so, she importantly mentions that coconut palms arrived in the Americas both from Africa to the Caribbean, Brazil, and Eastern Mexico, and also by way of the Pacific from the Philippines.[4] As such, if we were to accept the hypothesis that the *belembaotuyan* originated in Africa and arrived to Guam via the Manila galleon trade, it is still not clear whether it travelled first from Africa through Asia or directly across the Atlantic and the Pacific by way of the Americas.
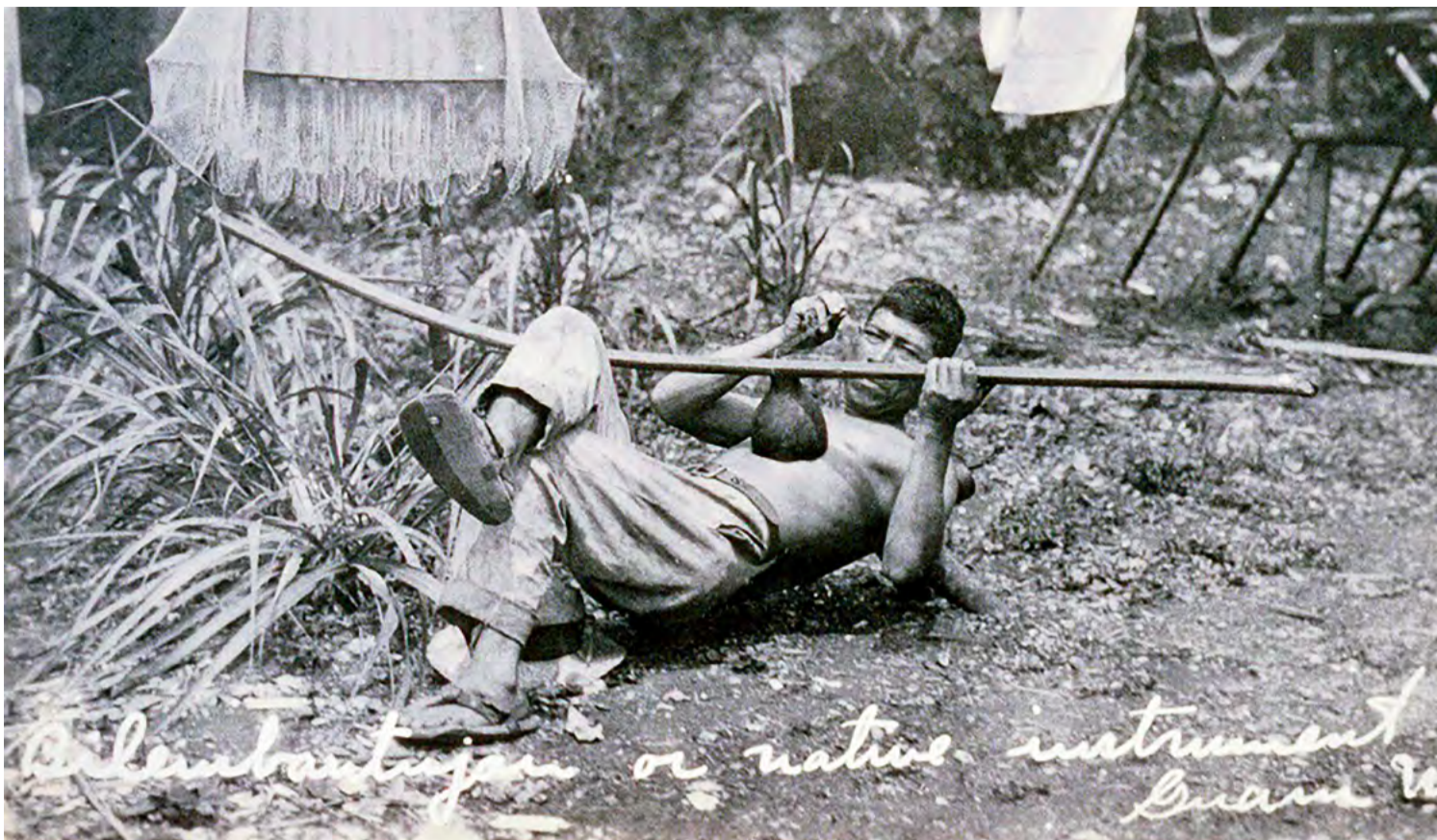
Fig. 3: Man playing the belembaotuyan in a reclined position before World War II. (Archive photo taken by Judy Flores, retrieved with permission from Guampedia)

Still others argue that the Chamorro people were playing the *belembaotuyan* prior to their contact with Europeans. Allan Nazareno affirms that "despite its unclear origins, all *bilembaotuyan* masters and practitioners believe in its pre-contact existence in Guam."[5] Delores Taitano Quinata, one of the most distinguished Chamorro makers, players, and teachers of the *belembaotuyan* at present, summarizes the disparate origin versions of the instrument as follows: "There are theories that suggest that the instrument has been introduced to Guam during the Spanish time through the galleon trade or through the seafarers, so even before then."[6] Elsewhere, Delores Taitano Quinata and her husband Joseph Quinata propose that the *belembaotuyan* is of African origin and was introduced in Guam by way of Indonesia through the Arab slave trade.[7]

Detours into the Filipino *barimbaw* and the Mapuche *birimbao*

It is worth noting the characteristics of a Filipino instrument called the *barimbaw*, whose name undoubtedly appears to be a slight variation of *"berimbau."* Filipino ethnomusicologist Raymundo Bañas proposes that the instrument "was probably introduced in the Philippines by the Chinese" and he goes on to compare it to "the *birimbaw* of Argentina," which he describes as a metal jaw harp, whereas the Filipino version is made of bamboo.[8] Both, he points out, require the player's mouth as resonator. Having said this, Bañas' illustration of the *barimbaw* [Fig. 5] is strikingly similar to the Chamorro *belembaotuyan*, clashing with his description of the Filipino instrument as a jaw harp. Bañas' mention of "the *birimbaw* of Argentina" may seem erroneous, but the Mapuche people,

whose ancestral land, the Wallmapu, spanned present-day Argentina and Chile, play a metal jaw harp that they call, in effect, *birimbao* or *trompe*.[9] Bañas was most likely fusing the characteristics of *berimbaus de barriga* (belly bows) and *berimbaus de boca* (mouth harps).

While there are hunting bows in the Philippines that have been used as musical instruments, Filipino ethnomusicologist José Maceda clarifies that the *barimbaw* (also spelled *barimbao*) in the Philippines refers to a jaw harp.[10] Musicians play this small hand-carved bamboo instrument by placing it across the mouth; they hold one end with one hand and make repeated finger strikes on the other end with the other hand. As such, it is similar to the Mapuche *birimbao*. After all, the spelling variations of "berimbau" confirm that it is an onomatopoeia of the twangy resonations produced by the diverse instruments it encompasses.

Barimbaw

The broadening reaches of the *berimbau* and the *belembaotuyan*

In addition to being central to capoeira, the *berimbau* in Brazil remains a symbol of Blackness and resistance. The instrument's traditional sounds are being constantly updated and fused with other musical styles. Indicative of this exciting evolution is the emergence of musical groups like Berimbrown, which was founded in 1991 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. Berimbrown (from *berimbau* and James

Brown) fuses funk, reggae, and rap with the rhythms of capoeira music. Its cofounder, Mestre Negoativo, remembers designing his first musical instrument as a child following an introductory capoeira book, but by using things around him: a stick for the bow, clothesline for the string, and a margarine tub for the resonator. "This gave a sound. Really bad, but it gave a sound," Mestre Negoativo recalls.[11] He eventually got a hold of a real *berimbau* and went on to become a capoeira *mestre* (master practitioner). Berimbrown's mixture of traditional, local, and popular musical styles stays true in a way to how Mestre Negoativo assembled his first berimbau: combining materials within reach.[12]

The *belembaotuyan* is traditionally played on special occasions, such as weddings and gatherings that the Chamorro call "fiestas." But as of late, like the *berimbau*, it is being performed for wider audiences in Guam. Whereas today the *berimbau* is a symbol of Afro-Brazilian identity, Chamorro ethnomusicologist Andrew Paul Mantanona Gumataotao affirms that the *belembaotuyan* is being revitalized in Guam as a symbol of Indigenous resilience.[13] It is increasingly more present in public venues, such as cultural festivals, and is becoming part of the musical culture of younger generations. An evident example of the latter is the recent publication of a children's book titled *I Lalai i Bilembaotuyan*, which centers on a girl named Lalai who learns how to play the *belembaotuyan* with her grandfather, Tåtan Bihu. Through the instrument, Lalai feels connected to him even after he passes away, and as she grows older, she is committed to teaching it to younger members of her family.[14]

Concluding thoughts

By comparing an iconic Afro-Brazilian instrument to an increasingly recognizable

Chamorro instrument, this article gestures toward the field of Black Pacific Studies, which relates the experiences, resilience, and cultural practices of Africans, Afro-descendants, and peoples from across the Pacific. Moreover, it highlights the decolonial potential of two fascinating instruments, crafted with natural and recycled materials endemic to Guam and Brazil, that continue to adapt to or contest the pressures of dominant cultural influences. They place both the Atlantic and the Pacific at the center of intercultural studies of global transmission.

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Notes

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2. Galm, *The Berimbau*, pp. 19-20, p. 161.
3. Crisostomo Pangelinan, T. "Belembaotuyan," *Guampedia*. www.guampedia.com/belembaotuyan-2 (accessed 10 Dec., 2022).
4. Machuca, P. *El vino de cocos en la Nueva España. Historia de una transculturación en el siglo XVII.* Colegio de Michoacán, 2018.
5. Nazareno, A. "A Study on the Effect of Spanish Culture on the Traditional Music and Dances of Guam." MA thesis, California State U Dominguez Hills, 2005, p. 20.
6. Rai Sablan, J., dir. *Belembaotuyan in the Modern Age*, 2014. www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUZHomx4Rqk (accessed 10 Jan., 2023).
7. Tano, K. "Lina'la' Chamoru: An Old Chamoru Instrument, the Belembaotuyan." *Pacific Daily News*, March 14, 2018.
8. Bañas, R. *Pilipino Music and Theater.* Manlapaz, 1975, p. 62.
9. Khano Llaitul, Mapuche trompe maker and player explains that the instrument was brought by the Spaniards, but it is now integral to Mapuche musical practices. "Historia del trompe para niñas y niños." www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFIB23Kgopo (accessed 29 Dec., 2022).
10. Maceda, J. *Gongs and Bamboos: A Panorama of Philippine Music Instruments.* U of the Philippines P, 1998, pp. 6-7. The *barimbaw* is more widely known as a *kubing*, its name in the Philippines' southern region of Mindanao.
11. Quoted in Galm, *The Berimbau*, p. 74.
12. For more on Berimbrown and other fusion styles in Brazil (electronic music, samba, blues, and classical percussion) that have featured the sounds of the *berimbau*, see Galm, *The Berimbau*, pp. 71-115.
13. Mantanona Gumataotao, A. "Na'là'la' i Taotao Tåno': Navigating the Performative Terrain of CHamorro reclamations." MA Thesis, U of Hawai'i at Mānao, 2021, p. 65. "Chamoru" and "CHamoru" are preferred spellings to contest colonial orthographic impositions and to assert Indigenous identity in Guam.
14. Payne, C. and J. Payne II, with illustrations by V. Cruz. *I Lalai i Bilembaotuyan.* U of Guam P, 2022.

Fig. 4 (right): 1750 nautical chart of the Pacific Ocean by the French map publisher N. Bellin. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Fig. 5 (Above inset in main text): Illustration of a barimbaw according to R. Bañas. (Image in Bañas, R. *Pilipino Music and Theater.* Manlapaz, 1975, p. 62)
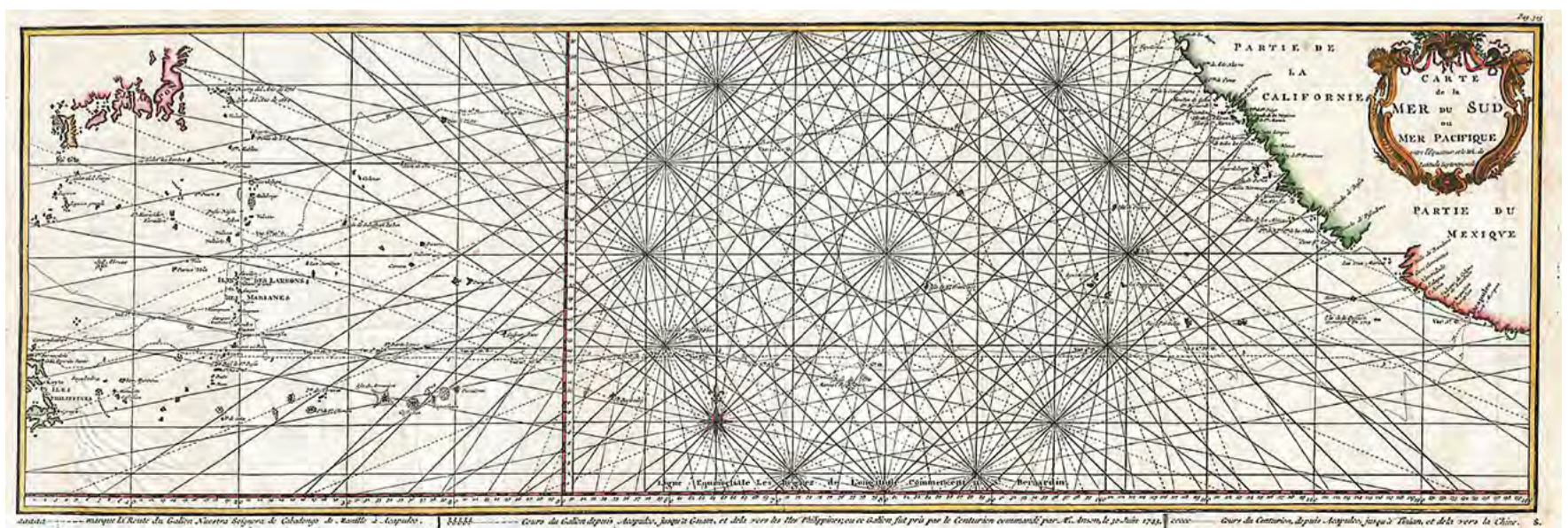
TEATRO DE BINONDO.

From Zarzuela to *Sarswela*

Scenes from Filipino Lyrical Theater

Mario Roger Quijano Axle

The genre of lyrical theater known as *zarzuela* developed greatly during the 19th century, becoming an important mode of entertainment in Spain. Part of its development occurred thanks to the trips it took to other parts of the Spanish-speaking world. Furthermore, zarzuela reached the Spanish colony of the Philippines, where the most relevant works of the repertoire were played. This form of Spanish lyrical theater (already an adaptation from European operas) coexisted in the Philippines with other performing arts such as European opera and a Tagalog form of popular theater. Local artists were trained to perform the new genre onstage, which, in turn, would later give way to a local creation called *sarswela*.

The arrival of the zarzuela

In the 19th century, Cuba and the Philippines were the two overseas geographies that remained part of the Spanish Empire after the independence of the colonies in the American continent. This circumstance kept the Philippines in touch with Europe and thus with a great deal of Western artistic expressions. Dramatic and lyrical theater companies performed during this period and made known the current repertoire of the West in the East. The first complete zarzuela staging in the Philippines was *El duende* [The Fairy], which occurred at the Teatro de Binondo in Manila on February 22, 1851. With a libretto by Luis Olona (1823-1863) and music by Rafael Hernando (1822-1888), it belongs to what is known as a *restored zarzuela* and was premiered at Teatro de Variedades in Madrid on June 6, 1849. In 1848, a group of political deportees arrived in Manila, among them Álvaro Carazo and Narciso de la Escosura

(?-1875), the latter of whom took over the Teatro de Binondo and began to stage works from the Spanish repertoire. On his return to Spain, Escosura encouraged the director of the theater company known as the Teatro del Balón de Cádiz, Manuel López de Ariza, to travel to the Philippines to carry out a few seasons of lyrical and dramatic theater. López de Ariza arrived in Manila in 1852, and naturally, the place where they performed was at Teatro de Binondo [Fig. 1]. They performed a repertoire that included mostly dramatic pieces: *Isabel La Católica* [Isabel, the Catholic Queen], *Diego Corrientes*, and some short theatrical pieces by Ramón de la Cruz (1731-1794) of humorous theme and usually of popular characters called *sainetes*. Additionally, a small work with music was staged: *El Tío Caniyitas* [Uncle Caniyitas] by Mariano Soriano (1817-1880). In the years 1878 and 1879, two of the most representative zarzuelas were performed in Asia: *Jugar con fuego* [Playing with Fire] and *El barberillo de Lavapiés* [The Little Barber of Lavapiés], both by Francisco Asenjo Barbieri (1823-1894). From then on, the history of zarzuela in the Philippines would be linked to the person of Darío Céspedes (?-1884), who, in 1881, created a zarzuela company at the space known as Coliseo Artístico, merely a kiosk that was suitable as a performance theater in the area known as Arroceros.

As press reviews from this period demonstrate, the most important titles of the Spanish zarzuela began to be known in 1855, when *Los diamantes de la corona* [The Diamonds of the Crown] by Barbieri premiered in Tondo, and Emilio Arrieta's *Marina* began to be played in 1860. It is significant that in 1877, the performing of Arrieta's *El Potosí submarino* [The Submarine Treasure], shows the presence of the Spanish *teatro bufo* – a genre of popular satirical musical theater transplanted from France to Spain by Francisco Arderius (1835-1886) in 1866 – into the insular repertoire. One of the best-known anecdotes around zarzuela in Manila concerns Guillermo Cereceda's *Pascual Bailón* [Pascual the Dancer]. It turns out that the "daring" dance scene performed in August 1886 (the French *can-can*) caused a reaction from the church, whose top representatives published a press note criticizing the performance.

A second breath for the zarzuela

The second phase of the zarzuela began in 1881 with the arrival in Manila of two Spanish artists who had made significant careers in the theaters of Spain: Alejandro Cubero (1825-1888) and Elísea Raguer. Cubero worked in the Philippines from April 1881 until March 1887, establishing one of the most important periods of the zarzuela in the Philippines. He died in Spain at the beginning of 1888. With the return of Cubero and Raguer to Spain, this episode came to an end, although Raguer returned to the Philippines in March 1888 and stayed until 1897, when she returned to Spain permanently. Not only they performed new plays, but they also helped professionalize Filipino actors and actresses that already had a certain career on the stages of the time. These included Práxedes Fernández, Patrocinio Tagaroma, Nemesio Ratia, and José Carvajal, among others.

Práxedes Fernández de Pastor (1871-1919), better known as Yeyeng, began her career at a very young age. She joined the Cubero's troupe and later organized her own company called FERSUTA, using the first syllables of three of its members surnames (Fernández, Suzara, and Tagaroma). On August 12, 1894, on the eve of her marriage to Ricardo Pastor y Panadés, she said goodbye to her audience at Teatro Zorrilla in Manila with a performance of Edmond Audran's *La Mascota* [The Mascot]. On August 18, she married and moved to Iloilo, where she lived until March 1899. After spending the next three years in Spain, she returned to Manila in February 1902. She was highly appreciated by the Filipino public and in the first two decades of the 20th century, she maintained the presence of the Spanish zarzuela and introduced the Viennese operetta, with plays such as *The Count of Luxembourg* and *The Merry Widow*. Patrocinio Tagaroma (1874-1926) also began her theatrical career at an early age. When Yeyeng married and retired from the theater, Tagaroma became the favorite of the public. Nemesio Ratia (1854-1910) was the only Filipino actor to seek a career in Spain. In March 1889, he embarked for Barcelona, later going to Madrid. On September 17, 1889, he had his debut at the Teatro Felipe in Madrid with *El lucero del alba* [The Morning Star]. By November of the same year, he returned to Manila, appearing at the Teatro Filipino on December 22. José Carvajal (1862-1928) was a Spanish mestizo who became notable as a comedian. On February 8, 1904, at Teatro Zorrilla, he premiered the zarzuela *Ligaya*, which he authored. At that time he became the director of the Hispano-Tagalog Theater Company. He also worked in the Company of Fernández Pastor. What Yeyeng became as a female performer, he achieved as a male. He was called the Prince of Filipino artists. It is possible to affirm that these two performers were the ones who continued the tradition of Spanish lyrical theater in Asia and made possible the transition to what would later become Filipino *sarswela*.

The creation of local plays

Among the development of lyrical activities, evidence of an artistic syncretism started to occur. Some texts of zarzuelas began to be translated into Tagalog, such as *Buenas noches, Sr. Don Simón* [Goodnight, Mr. Don Simon]. Apparently the first such translation into Tagalog, it was performed at Teatro de Tondo in February 1854. One year later, *El duende* was also performed in the Teatro de Sibacon. The zarzuelas that were showing during the second half of the 19th century were mostly works composed in Spain. But the zarzuela genre was so well received that some playwrights and musicians who settled on the islands began to compose works in Spanish with Filipino themes and characters. These local elements
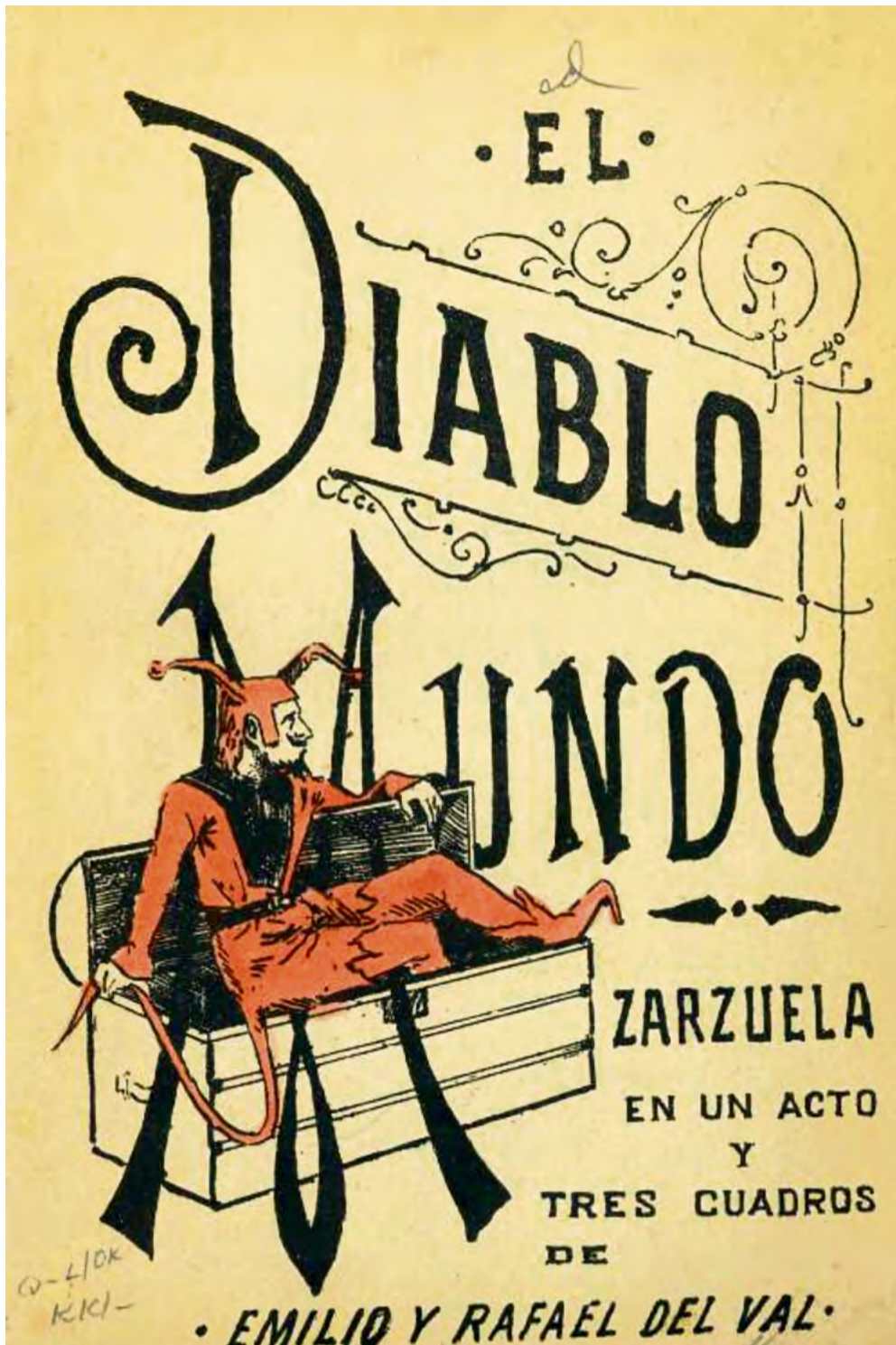
included a genre of traditional Filipino love song written in Tagalog, known as the *kundiman*, as well as texts in languages such as Tagalog or Chabacano.

The number of zarzuelas translated into Tagalog accompanied by vernacular music increased, but so did the number of local plays written and performed in Castilian. *Salir a tiempo de pobre* [Get Out of Poverty in Time] by Antonio Robles made its debut at Teatro de Binondo on May 18, 1852. Other outstanding zarzuelas written in Spanish from the Philippines included *El viaje redondo* [Round Trip], a one-act piece written in verse by Regino Escalera and Federico Casademunt with music by Ignacio Massaguer (Teatro del Circo in Manila, December 12, 1878); *Cuadros filipinos* [Filipino Scenes] by Francisco de Paula Entrala, which pointed out the excesses of Tagalog comedy and was premiered by the Alejandro Cubero's company in 1882; *Una novia de encargo* [A Custom Bride] in one act and in verse by Ricardo Castro Ronderos with music by Alfredo Goré (Teatro Filipino, March 1, 1884); and *El diablo mundo* [The Devil World], also a one-act piece by Emilio and Rafael del Val with music by José Estella (Teatro Zorrilla, October 25, 1893) [Fig. 2].

There were also plays in Spanish which premiered outside of Manila. Such is the case of the following piece (whose subtitles were even longer than the main title): *A 7 con 7 el pico o La llegada del "peso insular" y el fin de los contratos usurarios* [To 7 with 7, or The Arrival of "Island Pesos" and the End of Precarious Contracts], which was performed at the theater of Iloilo on March 22, 1896. The main title of this piece refers to seven Mexican pesos with seven Spanish *reales,* and *pico* was a unit of weight equivalent to 63 1/4 kilograms. This zarzuela is about the introduction of the island peso, or Philippine peso, an initiative implemented in 1896 by Minister D. Tomás Castellanos. The plan was meant to get rid of the Mexican peso, whose widespread presence caused a deep economic crisis in Philippine trade. At the end of the play, the Mexican peso, impersonated by an actor, is kicked out by the island peso and other allegorical characters.

In addition to zarzuela, there were theater performances in Spanish accompanied by music organized by arts and culture associations. Perhaps the best known example is the interpretation of José Rizal's piece *Junto al Pasig* [Next to the Pasig River], a short piece composed on request, to be performed by students of the Ateneo de Manila and staged at 6pm on Wednesday, December 8, 1880, at the academic institution. The few musical interventions that appeared in the performance were composed by Blas Echegoyen.

What is relevant about these works is the intention to include Filipino characters, situations, and customs, as well as the mixing of words and expressions in vernacular languages in the dialogue and the combination of Western musical genres and local ones. During this period there were many plays which did not include musical parts, but still tried to expose the diversity of Filipino society.

Local customs and practices

One of the peculiarities of zarzuela in Asia has to do with the general organization of the performances. This varied from paying homage to the actors to changes according to the weather conditions. The *función de beneficio*, for example, was a special performance designed to show admiration and support to the actors by providing them with splendid and lavish gifts offered by the public or government authorities. Additionally, there were the "hooks" to attract attendees, which consisted of either organizing raffles at the end of the show or providing free transportation if the theater was far from Manila, in a suburb of Tondo, for instance. This was especially important because performances used to end late at night.

Shows were also subjected to the weather conditions. Theater organizers arranged a practical communication system when it came to climate contingencies: if the performance was suspended because of bad weather, the public were notified by means of a red lantern placed at the top of the theater's flagpole. Additionally, a white lantern was placed on the two bridges over the Pasig River, the *Puente Grande* (later renamed *Puente de España*) and *Puente de Santa Cruz.* The former connected the areas of Binondo and Ermita, while the latter connected Ermita and Santa Cruz. Those on their way could find out before arriving to the show (crossing the river) that it had been cancelled.

The Teatro de Variedades in Manila had a particular building structure which made it possible for people to hear the show from outside. Consequently, those who did not enter for some reason, could stand and listen in from the outside without having to buy a ticket. The theater organization instructed the doormen to ask people to keep walking in order to avoid crowds outside the theater.

Filipino *sarswela*

In 1898, the Philippines ceased to be part of the Spanish Crown. With the beginning of a new century and the US occupation, the growth of a new identity began. In this quest for a national character, the community of theater people (singers, composers, musicians) were committed to incorporating the Tagalog language more assiduously in their works. The radical change was to compose works in Tagalog, within the format of the Spanish zarzuela, whose plots portrayed and reflected the sociopolitical discourses of the moment. This resulted in a syncretic genre called *sarswela.* Outstanding works thus emerged, such as *Walang Sugat* [Without Wound] by Severino Reyes (1861-1942) with music by Fulgencio Tolentino (1872-1940), which premiered at Teatro Libertad in Manila in 1902. Another was *Dalagang Bukid* [The Country Maiden] in 1917, featuring a *libretto* by Hermogenes Ilagan (1873-1943) and music by Leon Ignacio (1882-1967). *Dalagang Bukid* would later become the script for what has been considered the first Philippine feature film: a silent film of the same title, accompanied by subtitles in English, Spanish, and Tagalog. It was directed by José Nepomuceno (1893-1959) and released in 1919. *Walang Sugat* was made into a feature film in 1939. It was directed by Enrique Herrera-Dávila [Fig. 3].

With the arrival of new musical genres such as jazz and other artistic tendencies in the second and third decades of the 20th century, a genre from vaudeville, locally known as *bodabil*, began to take shape in Filipino theaters. Its best representative was Luis Borromeo (ca.1879-?), better known as Borromeo Lou, who since the early 1920s promoted the genre. The *bodabil* consisted of short light plays that interspersed singing, dancing, and comedians, whose purpose was merely to entertain and expand the type of leisure activities on offer for the population. Its political potential was also diminished. Unlike the *sarswela*, which could contain political manifestos and social criticism, the *bodabil* did not cause concern as a politically subversive activity. This new theatrical form and the commodification of cinema, which led to a notable increase in the number of theaters and to the transformation of existing theaters into spaces for film screening, brought an end to the *sarswela*, a Western pilgrim genre that was able to find its own voice in the East.

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Façade of San Joaquin Church

Patrick Flores

Fig. 1: Relief on the church façade.
Photographed by Jhunne Harold Manaay, 2002.

The scene of a war intertwined with a Catholic church is not, however, totally strange. In fact, the relationship between war and colonialism is foundational, as it inheres in the very project of colonialism. The image of Santiago Matamoros (Saint James, the Moor Slayer), a prominent icon of the Reconquista in Spain (8th century to 1492), is the dominant trope to be seen at the main gate of Fort Santiago in Intramuros, or the Walled City of the Spanish colonial rule in Manila, which was founded in 1571. The sight of Saint James trampling on the Moor reveals the militancy of the Counter-Reformation Baroque in light of Spain's campaign to triumph over its Muslim rulers.

According to scant data on the edifice, the Church of San Joaquin was built in 1869 during the tenure of its parish priest, Father Thomas Santaren, an Augustinian, with the help of the Spanish engineer Felipe Diaz. The town was "earlier known as Suaraga, Siuaraga, or Suaragan, a name derived from the Siuaga (now Siwaragan) River, which in turn was named after a venomous snake. It was an *encomienda* (the Spanish slave labour system that exploited the land and the people) in the southeast part of Panay Island under the guidance of Esteban de Figueroa. Christianization was initiated in 1581 by the Jesuits, to whom Figueroa donated the *encomienda* in 1585. In 1594 Panay Island was placed under Augustinian supervision by virtue of a royal decree."[1] The church was erected on a "plain overlooking the sea by Father Thomas Santaren, OSA and inaugurated in 1869. Its fabric is of white coral rock quarried from nearby shores and from the town of Igbaras. Halfway through the construction, an elaborate bas-relief was carved on its triangular pediment."[2] The blocks of coral stones cobbled together for the church came from Punta Malagting.[3] This "fortress church is pillared with nine pairs of strong buttresses...Statues of Saint Peter Regalado, Patron Saint of Bullfighters, and Saint Francis of Assisi."[4]

This relief is a subject of curiosity and, eventually, of art-historical attentiveness [Fig. 2]. Written on the pediment is the phrase *Rendicion d Tetuan*, or Surrender of Tetuan. As the title indicates, the scene references a conflict in Tetuan and its outcome, which is a surrender. Historical accounts lead us to the Battle of Tetuan in

Morocco in 1859, in which the army under the command of General Leopoldo O'Donnel routed the Moors, who were led by Prince Muley Abbas of Morocco. Here again, we see an iteration of the trope of war as a corollary or cognate of conquest.

Up to this day, it is not clear why this scene was selected to adorn the façade of the church. It is claimed, for instance, that such a gesture signified the "patriotism" of Santaren. It is also said that the father of Santaren fought in Tetuan, thus this tribute to the battle, which exhibits traces of polychromy and details of local flora. The visualization of the contending armies is not so clear. What is discernible are the masses of figures to indicate the protagonists of the battle and their interaction to offer a semblance of intense combat.

Close to San Joaquin is the Church in Miag-ao in honor of Santo Tomás de Villanueva. The pediment, like that of San Joaquin, is elaborately decorated, an ornamentation akin to embroidery. As it is described: "The pediment features San Cristobal clad like a farmer with rolled-up trousers, carrying the Santo Niño on his back and holding on to a lush coconut tree for support. They are flanked by guava and papaya trees, and ornamental urns adopted from *viñetas*, decorative clichés in engraved books."[5] The juxtaposition of the churches in San Joaquin and Miag-ao contributes to elucidating the Philippine mediation of Western Catholic iconography and the potential of the façade of the church to be a ground of depiction which is usually expected to come from painting via wood, tin, or canvas; or from graphic modes like drawing or printmaking. In this case, the publicness is distinct, as it forms part of the architectural system and the scenography of the town.

How is the Battle of Tetuan relevant to the social and visual history in the Philippines, and how did this event ramify in the histories of Spain, the Philippines, and Africa? Itzea Goikolea Aman contends that "The armed conflict took place in the territory between Ceuta and the plain of Wad Ras, yet in Spain the setting of the war was written and spoken about as a synecdoche for the whole African continent, as the locution 'war of Africa' shows." Amano elaborates: "The fluttering of the Spanish flag on top of the citadel of al-Manzari, named after the leader of the exiled Andalusis who had re-established Tetouan in the fifteenth century, signaled the Spanish capture of the city on February 6, 1860. The whole Army of Africa, scattered in different locations, celebrated the feat to the sound of the music played by the military orchestra." She then quotes excerpts of the memoirs of the chronicler Pedro Antonio de Alarcón to gauge the ideological potency of the Tetuan episode: "Tetouan for Spain! (...) [I proffer] a hymn of gratitude and praise to God as Columbus offered [it] in the Antilles, Cortés in the Andes, Balboa as he discovered the Pacific sea, Gama in Calcutta, and Magallanes in the Philippines; this cheer of triumph, glory and fortune will reverberate now in the whole universe, and it will awake the echoes of our name which still roam all over, in all the latitudes and all the continents through which our armies went awhile; and from America, Flanders, France, Germany and the whole of Italy, Greece, Constantinople, Asia and farther Oceania, from all the towns and cities in which the Spanish blood ran and in which the ashes of our ancestors rest a glorious sleep, will turn their sight onto Spain."[6] This worldly fantasy of consolidation in the name of Spain affirms the importance of the migrating imagery that found itself in the Philippines. Art history must begin in this instance of transfer, which is not a diffusion but a genealogy. It is a beginning, not an afterlife of Western extraction, nor a simulacrum of a privileged origin. In this regard, the San Joaquin image may be seen against a broader proscenium in both art history and theory of religion and colonialism. For the former, it prefigures arguably the first historical painting in Southeast Asia, the *Basi Revolt* series of 14 panels by Esteban Villanueva, dated 1821, mainly chronicling the revolt in the Ilocos region in the northern Philippines arising from the state control of the production and distribution of the ritual and everyday sugarcane wine called the *basi*. For the latter, the San Joaquin façade testifies to the need to enhance the discourse around political theology in which the ideologies of state, church, and art converge to produce the complexity of colonial culture

through the image that is politically and theologically competent to figure both history and salvation.

Clearly, the Battle of Tetuan, as emblazoned on the façade of the Church of San Joaquin, implicates a relay of relations between Spain, the Philippines, and Africa under the aegis of colonialism. Furthermore, it plays out a Reconquista imaginary to frame an annotation of colonial baroque in post-colonial art history. As a dialectical image, it registers resonantly in the intersection between history and art history. This occasions the possibility of a different historiography, and perhaps an alternative conception of art altogether, to animate and transform both disciplines. Sharply figuring at the outset is the trope of the Reconquista, or the recovery of the Spanish domain from Islamic hegemony. Transposed to an Asian colony, this trope sustains the colonial ideology of expansion, specifically the difficult conversion of the Muslim population in the island of Mindanao. It bears repeating that the main citadel of Manila under Spanish conquest, Fort Santiago, was named to exalt Saint James, the Moor Slayer, or Santiago Matamoros. Spain, the Philippines, and North Africa become the ambit of this reflection through an image that is simultaneously religious and aesthetic, nothing less than a world-historical imagination of what it means to claim a colony, on the one hand, and to struggle post-colonially, on the other.

The details of the image are not so discernible, owing perhaps to the attrition of the materials making up the relief. The viewer from afar can detect for the most part, as mentioned earlier, formations of armies placed along planes to indicate simultaneous action. This kind of perspective may have been determined by the format of the frieze-like façade, the better to convey a narrative that is also the image.

The historical source of the image has also not been remarked upon. Is it a print, a painting, a story told from memory? There have been other delineations of the event in art history, most notably those by Spanish artists like Mariano Fortuny and Salvador Dalí. Could their sources have been the same as those of the creative intelligence behind the San Joaquin relief?

Of interest is the presence of the Tetuan image in the Philippines, which testifies to the inter-local circulation of images and pictorial rhetoric across the colonial world. This colonial world was not confined to what we know of today as nation-states or regional identities. For instance, the relationship between the Philippines and Java is as vital and cogent as its relationship with Andalucia. It is from this conjuncture that another art history may proceed – not vertically or horizontally, but laterally and adjacently.
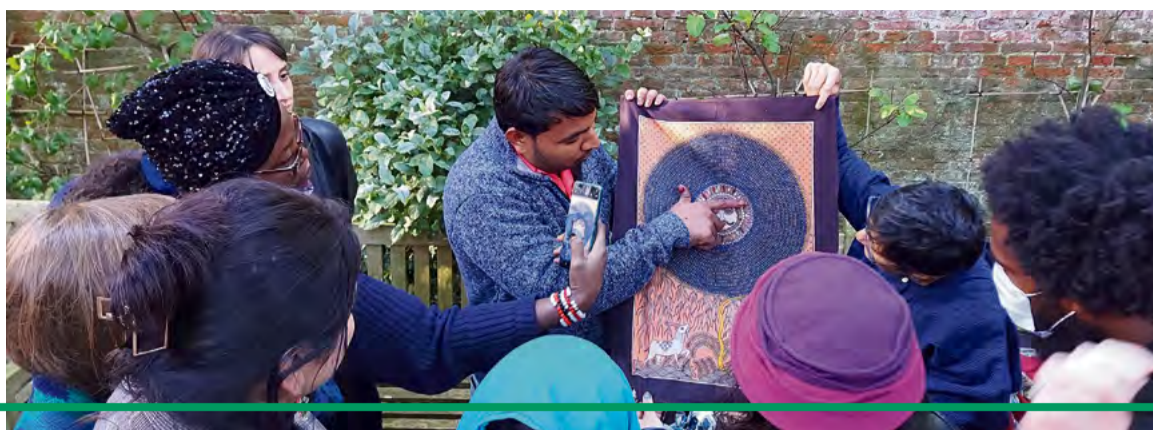
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Notes

1 Edgar Allan Sembrano, CCP Encyclopedia of Art: Philippine Architecture, with notes from Regalado Trota Jose (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2018).
2 Sembrano, CCP Encyclopedia of Art: Philippine Architecture.
3 San Joaquin, Iloilo, Philippines. Tourism Office of San Joaquin, n.p., n.d.
4 Sembarano, CCP Enclopedia of Art.
5 Regalado Trota Jose, "Major Works," CCP Encyclopedia of Art: Philippine Architecture, updated by Edgar Allan Sembrano (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2018), 254.
6 Itzea Goikolea-Amiano, "Hispano-Moroccan Mimesis in the Spanish War on Tetuan and its Occupation (1859-62)" Journal of North African Studies (London: Taylor & Francis, 24, no. 1, 2018), 9, https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/25444/.

The façade of the Church of San Joaquin in the city of Iloilo on the island of Panay in the Philippines is as intriguing as it is compelling [Fig. 1]. While many of the colonial churches in the Philippines built across the long duration of Spanish colonialism (16th-19th century), mainly reveal ornamentation, the images of sacred figures, and the bare nature of the architectural material, this particular façade uniquely stages a narrative of a war. It is a war that did not even happen in the locality.

Fig. 2: Rendicion d Tetuan. Photographed by Jhunne Harold Manaay, 2002.

Textiles and Artisans

Daan van Dartel, Lipika Bansal, and Kirit Chitara in Conversation with Aarti Kawlra

The Channel is the flagship podcast from the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS). Each episode delves into a particular Asian Studies topic from across the social sciences and humanities. Through a mixture of interviews, lectures, discussions, readings, and more, *The Channel* is a platform to connect scholars, activists, artists, and broader publics in sustained conversation about Asia and its place in the contemporary world. Listen and subscribe at https://iias.asia/the-channel or on your preferred podcatcher app.

Aarti Kawlra of Humanities *Across Borders* recently hosted a conversation with three guests: Daan van Dartel, Curator of Popular Culture and Fashion at the National Museum of World Cultures in the Netherlands; Lipika Bansal, a researcher, social designer, and the founder of Textiel Factorij in Amsterdam; and Kirit Chitara, an Indian artist specializing in *Mata ni Pachedi*, a traditional form of painting on cloth. In their conversation, they discuss their various efforts to foster new modes of collaboration in the arts, focusing on questions of curation, attribution, and creative production.

Aarti Kawlra: This is a conversation that we wanted to host as part of IIAS's work to really bring in different stakeholders around, for example, the idea of this cloth, *Mata ni Pachedi*, which is a beautiful artistic creation and a tradition from Gujarat. I wanted to ask Lipika to start this story as to how and why you've been working with artisans from India and mediating between the Netherlands and India.

Lipika Bansal: I started and founded Textiel Factorij in 2015, when I came to learn about how Indian textiles influenced Dutch traditional costumes. I got really intrigued by this long trade relation between the two countries and especially with textiles. I started investigating this. So first, we visited various museums here in the Netherlands, and then we did research in India and tried to find craftspeople who are still working with these very old techniques. Among them was Kirit Chitara. He works with bamboo-paneled textiles, but their specific tradition is the *Mata ni Pachedi* - *"mata"* means "goddess," so in their paintings the Mother Goddess is always central. So we asked him whether he would be interested to start this collaboration in 2016, and he was very excited because he would be able to work for the first time in a more international context.

Kirit Chitara: Many times we would call and talk about planning when I would go out of the country – for the first time in my family – to show the art. I was very excited, and I was very happy when Lipika told me that we will manage that. I also met Daan, and then I saw my grandfather's paintings in the Tropenmuseum. It was a very emotional moment, so I'm very thankful to Lipika for bringing me there.

Daan van Dartel: It started with Lipika approaching the Tropenmuseum with her idea of the Textiel Factorij, and then you started your project with the exchange between artists from India and the Netherlands. You visited our depot with some Indian artists in 2018, and among them was Kirit. That was the first time that I heard that this young guy from India, coming to visit us through Lipika, saw his grandfather's work in our depot, which was amazing! Our museum's intention, of course, is to show the local public information and knowledge from different cultures around the world, but also through the period of decolonization, which we are in now, we have to look at how we can make our collections also work for people where the collections come from. So this was amazing when Kirit visited and said, "Yes, this is my grandfather's work." That's hardly ever the case – that you have a collection and that the family of the maker is actually in your museum. What is also often the case is that makers in ethnographic museums were hardly ever recorded. In this phase of trying to decolonize collections, it's a very important aspect, so I was very thrilled to see Kirit and know now who made these objects.

Lipika Bansal: When Kirit visited, he could recognize all the stories. Each painting tells a different mythological story, and then within a painting you have multiple storylines. So for me, it was very exciting that he could share this knowledge directly with

Daan. Also, I feel that after he came to the Netherlands and then went back to India, he got more acknowledged there. He got more possibilities to do workshops across India.

Daan van Dartel: The second time Kirit came, I searched again in our collection and tried to find all the *Mata ni Pachedi*. We had about 12 pieces. I just did some research before this conversation, and I found an even older one in the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden collection, which Kirit did not see. I thought it might be interesting to share that cloth [Fig. 2]. That's the oldest one we have – we don't have an exact date, but it's from before 1956 because that is the date the museum acquired it at a Dutch gallery. We see this big red cloth with images that are familiar for the *Mata ni Pachedi*. It's red with black and white motifs, very often humans on horses or women in beautiful outfits. Who do we see in the center?

Kirit Chitara: In the center is a protective goddess, Jogani Maa. Jogani is one of the goddesses for protecting family members.

Aarti Kawlra: Lipika, it's quite obvious that there is a relationship that you promote as a designer – you call yourself a "social designer." It seems that there are two functions. One is a pedagogical function of educating through the museums, through the workshop that you conducted for us, through your blog piece. It's a kind of educational function, but also there is the function of promoting the work of artists and artisans who come from India in the Western world. What is that inspires you to do this?

Lipika Bansal: When I went back to India to find artisans who were still working with these centuries-old techniques, I thought it would be interesting to connect Dutch artists and designers to the craftspeople, and to reinterpret these techniques and maybe make new artwork and designs for museums. But

it was also about the stories of the people. When we did exhibitions in the Netherlands, we also shared the makers' names. It was not only the artist or designer from the Netherlands, but also the makers, so it was a joint collaboration. I tried to emphasize that it's really an equal collaboration. Both are involved in the making process, and based on reciprocity, they worked on it together [Fig. 3].

Daan van Dartel: This way of working that Lipika designed – as a social designer – is what we as a museum are moving towards as well. I think the role of a curator is no longer the one person who knew everything about collections and was the one to decide what was to be collected. It's much more collaborative now. In my practice, if I do something with makers, I want to hear what they think is work that would be fit for a museum. I would not choose myself, for example. I would ask, "What is it, from your perspective, that you think is relevant for this museum to have in its collection to be able to talk about your practice?"

Aarti Kawlra: I think it's now become very important in the 21st century that we create a new narrative around makers and artefacts in the global context. At least in Humanities *Across* Borders, we are really hoping that we can use artistic practice in a just manner. We have to change the way we even write about knowledge, and institutions like museums are very much implicated. Lipika, as a social designer, you are implicated. And I am implicated as a critical craft scholar. We are all circulating and part of this knowledge production.

This transcript has been heavily edited and abridged. The original audio includes a wealth of further details and discussion. To hear the full conversation, listen and subscribe to The Channel *podcast:* https://iias.asia/the-channel

Fig. 1 (above): Participants of HAB's *Textiles and Dyes as Transnational, Global Knowledge* in situ graduate school in the IIAS conference room gather around Gujarati textile artisan Kirit Chitara (located to the left in grey) and Textiel Factorij founder Lipika Bansal (located to the right in blue) as they hold up one of Kirit's textile designs, with him explaining the technique and meaning behind each part of the design. Textiles created by Gujarati artisans such as the *Mata ni Pachedi* are handmade and considered sacred. (Photo courtesy of Aarti Kawlra, 2022)

Fig. 2 (right): A *Mata ni Pachedi* textile depicting mythological imagery. (Image courtesy of Stichting Museum van Wereldculturen, RV-3333-1)

Fig. 3 (far right): Collaborative work created by Kirit Chitara and designer Eline Groeneweg, commissioned by Textiel Factorij. The sleeves were exhibited at Zuiderzeemuseum (Enkhuizen) in 2018 as part of the exhibition "Craft in Costume." (Photo by Gwenn Smit, 2018)

I C A S 13

Above:
An alleyway at
Kampung Peneleh,
Surabaya (Sketch
by Hongky Zein,
Urban Sketchers
Surabaya, 2019)

ICAS 13: Crossways of Knowledge
An International Conference-Festival
in Surabaya, Indonesia

The 13th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS 13) will be held in Surabaya, Indonesia, a thriving city with a rich history, from 28 July – 1 August 2024. As a major maritime hub, Surabaya has long acted as a crossway of peoples, ideas and goods. Today, it is a vibrant metropolis and a gateway to the Eastern part of Indonesia and Oceania, where modern skyscrapers scramble with canals and buildings from the colonial era, with vibrant neighborhoods/*kampungs* in which people from different parts of Indonesia live alongside descendants of Chinese, Arab and Malay settlers.

International Convention of Asia Scholars
ICAS 13: Crossways of Knowledge
28 July-1 August 2024
Surabaya, Indonesia
**Deadline for Submissions
25 October 2023**

ICAS 13 Surabaya represents a new phase in the IIAS's efforts to re-imagine the Academic Conference in the post-COVID world in which disturbed human-nature interrelations increasingly impinge upon daily life. We are convinced that in spite of the expediency of digital platforms, in-person academic events are still important, provided they embrace a place-based approach to questions of global relevance. We as organisers of this International Convention of Asia Scholars propose to host the meeting in Summer 2024 amidst the realities of Asia. To that end, participants will have opportunities to embed themselves within the local context, engage across regional and disciplinary divides and explore new practices of knowledge production.

ICAS 13 mobilises IIAS's networks of partner institutions and individuals from across the world but is embedded in the social, economic and ecological realities of Surabaya. Our primary local partner is the Surabaya-based Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR), together with its newly established Airlangga Institute of Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC). AIIOC is an autonomous international platform established on the initiative of four faculties at Universitas Airlangga: Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Public Health. AIIOC and IIAS's collaborative mission is to stimulate inquiry into the rich resources offered by the city of Surabaya and the people of East-Java as a way to create an experiential global-local Conference-Festival (ConFest) that celebrates diversity in collaboration within and beyond academia extending to civil society and the arts. Through our partnership, we are committed to organising a unique event comprising a sustained series of panels, interactive roundtables, poster sessions, methodological workshops and hands-on activities. In and around the ConFest venues, we will also host participatory local engagements as well as Book, Film, Food and Craft Fairs. 'Crossways of Knowledge', the title of the 2024 convention, evokes the multiple modalities and serendipities of contemporary knowledge exchange between academia and society. ICAS 13 consists of ten broadly defined themes including, but not limited to, *Human Futures*, *Prosperity*, *Histories*, *Media* and *Culture and Food and Health*. The goal is to facilitate transdisciplinary conversations and to link such conversations with local realities. On the submission website, each global theme is accompanied by a 'local context' note intended to highlight connections between heterogeneous Asian Studies research and the particular context of Surabaya, Indonesia.

Proposals that exhibit a commitment to diversity are encouraged. We look forward to welcoming participants to this novel experiment of academic-civic, local-global collaboration.

Check out the full call for proposals, theme descriptions and submissions portal at www.icas.asia.

ICAS 13 Book and Craft Fair

Publishers and institutes are invited to exhibit at the Book and Craft Fair at ICAS 13 to present their work to the large number of attendees. Should you be interested in exhibiting at ICAS 13, please contact us at: icas13@iias.nl.

We also welcome proposals for art exhibitions and workshops, see our submission portal for more information: www.icas.asia.

I I A S International Institute for Asian Studies

UNIVERSITAS AIRLANGGA · UNAIR

Print Journeys

For IIAS Publications, we invite authors and editors who have recently published in the IIAS Publications Series to talk about their writing experiences. What inspired them to conduct research? What did they encounter in the field? What are the stories behind their books? For more information on IIAS books, please visit www.iias.asia/books

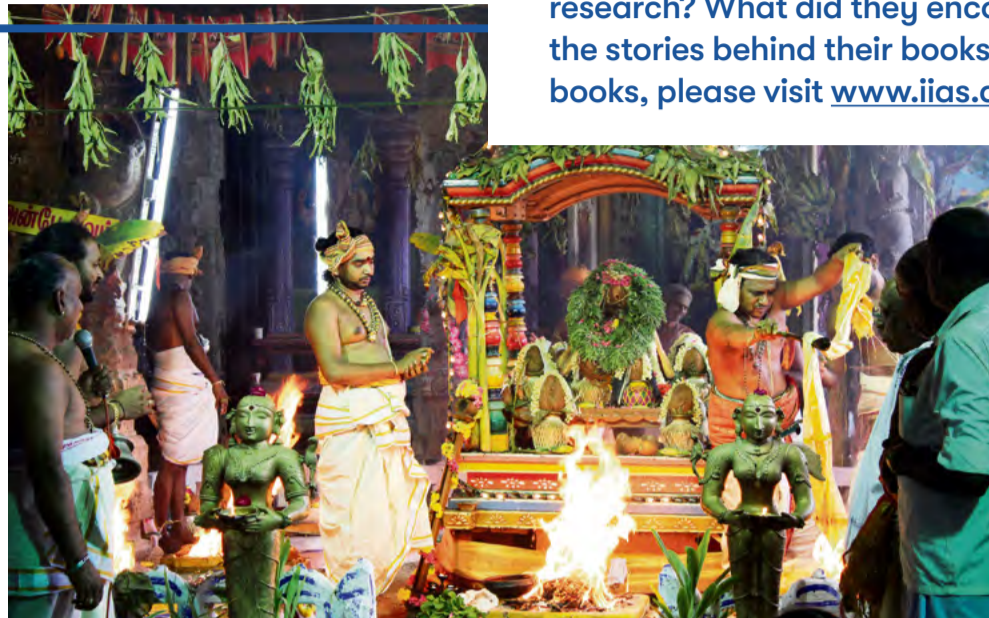## Writing the City of Infinite Temples

Emma Natalya Stein

The idea to publish my research on the city of Kanchipuram (Kanchi) with Amsterdam University Press as part of the IIAS Asian Cities series first arose at a bar in Shanghai during an Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) conference. At the time, I was working on a monograph about Kanchi that would trace the emergence of this South Indian city as a major royal capital and multireligious pilgrimage destination during the era of the Pallava and Chola dynasties (circa 7th -13th centuries).[1] It would present the first-ever comprehensive picture of historical Kanchi, locating the city and its more than 100 spectacular Hindu temples at the heart of commercial and artistic exchange that spanned India, Southeast Asia, and China [Fig. 1].

Research for the book began with my PhD, which I completed at Yale in 2017, in the field of the History of Art. I strongly felt that the purpose of publishing was to share that work with a broader audience with interests that extend well beyond the boundaries of traditional art history. I also sought the opportunity to contribute to a global dialogue about urbanism, infrastructure, water, land, and community. What better venue than IIAS? I am immensely grateful to the people who made the publication journey both efficient and enjoyable.[2] I am also appreciative of the anonymous peer reviewers, informal editors, and friends whose complex comments and hard questions only benefited the book. However, my deepest gratitude goes to the city of Kanchi itself, and to the people who so generously opened their doors and shared their local knowledge with me.

Layers of time

Constructing Kanchi: City of Infinite Temples creates a layered vision of Kanchi, from its establishment as a royal capital, to its present-day preservation of cultural heritage. This preservation ranges from archaeological monuments to a cycle of rituals and festivals that keep the city pulsing with life. In the first two chapters, I map Kanchi geographically, tracing the city's shifting contours and the emergence of a major pilgrimage route that led precisely through its urban core. The third chapter transitions outwards beyond Kanchi proper, to look at patterns of movement that linked the city to its hinterland. It also considers connections with multireligious urban capitals across a wider South Asian and Southeast Asian region. In the fourth chapter, I investigate colonial encounters with Kanchi and the shaping of the city's identity as a Hindu temple town.

Fig. 1: Festival at Ekāmbaranātha Temple, Kanchi. (Photo by the author, 2013)

Future of heritage

As a researcher, it is important to me that my work benefits the communities I study through the exchange of knowledge and sustained engagement with my research sites. I completed my long-term, Tamil Nadu-based fieldwork in 2016, and when I returned to Kanchi a few years later having completed my PhD, the local leaders and community activists organized a lecture (with Tamil translation), so that I could share my research with an audience that ranged from Masters students to respected elders within the society. I encouraged the students to take my findings and carry them forwards—work on manuscripts in languages I cannot read, interview the city's thriving silk weavers and study their genealogies, continue locating sculptures and architectural fragments in local temples (because even as I try to map all of them, more inevitably turn up), and pursue topics that lay beyond the scope of my project.

I returned to Kanchi again in February 2023 (for the first time since the onset of the global pandemic), and again I was invited to lecture, this time at Sri Sankara College of Arts and Sciences, Kanchi's foremost university. This time, however, the request was more specific. Rather than sharing my findings, the community asked me to speak about the future of Kanchi's heritage. In recent years, I have become increasingly interested in this question—in part through the two Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) conferences I have been part of, and by reading about other IIAS initiatives. How can I responsibly work with cultural heritage that, on the one hand, lacks the archaeological protection it needs in order to preserve its historical form, and that, on the other hand, continues to serve the shifting needs of its local populations in other ways?

During the decade I have been working in Kanchi, I have observed on multiple occasions the power of local efforts to revitalize cultural heritage sites that are in a state of distress. A remarkable example took place throughout the pandemic, at the temple of Airāvateśvara, an elegant, royally commissioned monument that dates to the eighth century and stands at the center of town. When I arrived in Kanchi for fieldwork in 2013, simply finding Airāvateśvara

proved itself a challenge. The temple was hidden behind a compound wall with a perpetually locked gate set back from the main road. Its superstructure had fallen down long ago, meaning it was impossible to see from the street. I was finally able to access the temple after many attempts and only through the kind assistance of a tea seller, whose shop stood directly adjacent to the site. I photo-documented the dilapidated structure, its friable sandstone walls badly damaged by nature and a century of informal repairs.

A month or so later, I arrived one morning to find the gate unlocked and cleaning underway. A generous donor had decided to sponsor a renovation and hired my friend the tea seller to oversee it. I was fortunate enough to be consulted about what should and should not be done to the temple itself. We agreed that, in the absence of conservation expertise, dusting and light cleaning would be sufficient. Over the next few weeks, the beautiful sculptures steadily began to emerge from behind the cobwebs and overgrowth, and, similarly, people began to return to the temple.

During the pandemic, the Airāvateśvara temple came into even greater prominence as a place for daily food distribution, a Tamil practice called *annadhanam*. This effort, which began in August 2021, is driven by that same tea seller, who cooks the food in giant pots at the back of his shop and wraps it neatly in banana leaf packets for the people who line up in front of the temple. Since 2013, what was an abandoned lot has again become an important sacred space and place of peaceful gathering.

I shared the Airāvateśvara's and other stories in my February 2023 lecture in Kanchi. Some people who attended will put their efforts in similar directions, and many have expressed their intention to do so. I am invited to speak at Sri Sankara College anytime I visit Kanchi. Having the community request the topic challenges me to ask new questions, observe my surroundings differently, rethink my findings in unexpected ways, and make new connections [Fig. 2].

Research continues

Since completing my monograph, I have published several articles that expand the purview of my study to look more in depth at connections between monuments and landscapes across South Asia and Southeast Asia. An article in *River Cities in Asia: Waterways in Urban Development and History*—another recent IIAS publication—argues that the drying and deterioration of rivers in and around Kanchi has contributed to the disappearance of settlements that once were prosperous, productive centers.[3] Another article, which is available open access, concerns the physical and cultural landscape around the Tirukkāḷiśvara temple, a site I did not have space to discuss in *Constructing*

Kanchi.[4] The research for that article led me to more systematically consider the communities that use the temples, and the ways in which they endure or transform over time.

Although I am a curator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Art, I do not plan to create an exhibition about Kanchi (a question I get asked not infrequently). I would not be able to responsibly or satisfyingly bring the experience of Kanchi into the galleries because it is so intrinsically bound with place. However, my fieldwork in Tamil Nadu—especially the ways in which I walked through Kanchi mapping and memorizing its landscape—informs my curatorial practice and draws me to topics and modes of display that engage the senses and inspire movement. My fieldwork is physically oriented, and I believe that visiting a museum is also a physical experience. I recently curated an exhibition titled *Revealing Krishna: Journey to Cambodia's Sacred Mountain*, which connected a Cambodian sculpture of the Hindu god Krishna lifting a sacred mountain with the actual sacred mountain where the sculpture was originally installed.[5] The exhibition included a range of digital experiences that required viewers to immerse themselves fully in the tropical landscape through sweeping cinematographic and photographic installations. In my future projects, I plan to build on this type of exhibition and continue to explore connections between art, architecture, and landscapes.

Kanchi is a place to which I will always return—it is the city that keeps on giving, a place that keeps revealing its multilayered history, and keeps transforming before our eyes. I hope that those who read *Constructing Kanchi: City of Infinite Temples* will be awed, as I am, by Kanchi's ability to continuously thrive.

Emma Natalya Stein is Assistant Curator of South Asian and Southeast Asian Art at the National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian, in Washington, D.C.
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Notes

1 Stein, Emma Natalya. 2021. *Constructing Kanchi: City of Infinite Temples.* International Institute for Asian Studies Publications, Asian Cities series. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
2 Especially Paul van der Velde, Mary Lynn van Dijk, Paul Rabé, and Philippe Peycam at IIAS, and Irene van Rossum and Jaap Wagenaar at the Amsterdam University Press. I am also grateful to have had the opportunity to present my research in a lunchtime lecture at IIAS (2019) at a stage where feedback was especially welcome.
3 Stein, Emma Natalya. 2022. "From the City to the Sea: Riverside Temple Networks in South India." In *River Cities in Asia: Waterways in Urban Development and History,* edited by Rita Padawangi, Paul Rabé, and Adrian Perkasa. International Institute for Asian Studies Publications, Asian Cities series. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
4 Stein, Emma Natalya. 2022. "Grounding the Texts: Kanchi's Urban Logic and Ambitious Extensions." In *Temples, Texts, and Networks: South Indian Perspectives,* edited by Malini Ambach, Jonas Buchholz, and Ute Hüsken. Heidelberg: Heidelberg Asian Studies Publishing. Open access download: https://doi.org/10.11588/hasp.906
5 https://asia.si.edu/whats-on/exhibitions/revealing-krishna-journey-to-cambodias-sacred-mountain/. The exhibition originated at the Cleveland Museum of Art, where the sculpture of Krishna Lifting Mount Govardhan resides and the digital experiences were created.

Fig. 2: Sri Sankara College of Arts & Sciences, Kanchi. (Photo courtesy of a Sri Sankara College staff member, 2023)

IIAS Research, Networks, and Initiatives

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

IIAS Research Clusters

Asian Cities

This cluster deals with cities and urban cultures with their issues of flows and fluxes, ideas and goods, and cosmopolitism 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.

International Convention of Asia Scholars

The International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) is the largest global forum for academics and civil society exchange on Asia. It 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 by IIAS in cooperation with local universities, cities and institutions and are attended by scholars and other experts, institutions and publishers from around 60 countries.

The 'ICAS Book Prize' (IBP) awards prizes in the field of Asian Studies for books in Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, and for PhD Theses in English. Twelve conventions have been held since 1997 (Leiden, Berlin, Singapore, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur, Daejon, Honolulu, Macao, Adelaide, Chiang Mai and Leiden. ICAS 12, organised with Kyoto Seika University, Japan, took place entirely online. ICAS 13 is scheduled to take place in Surabaya, Indonesia, from 28 July to 1 August 2024. For the Call for Papers, see page 50.

www.icas.asia

ICAS
International
Convention of
Asia Scholars

Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA)

The Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) is an inclusive, international network that brings together concerned scholars and practitioners engaged in collaborative research and events on cities in Asia, seeking to influence policy by contributing insights that put people at the centre of urban governance and development strategies. Its current flagship projects are the Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET) and the River Cities Network (RCN).

www.ukna.asia
Coordinator: Paul Rabé
Email: p.e.rabe@iias.nl
Clusters: Asian Cities; Asian Heritages

River Cities Network

The River Cities Network is a new transdisciplinary and global network to promote the inclusive revitalisation of rivers and waterways and the landscapes /waterscapes, cities and neighbourhoods that co-exist with them. Coordinated from the Urban Cluster of IIAS, it comprises over 40 project teams worldwide, each critically examining a local river-city relationship (the 'river-city nexus'). The Network's Board of Advisors includes prominent people in their fields from the Humanities, Social sciences, and Natural Sciences.

www.ukna.asia/river-cities
Coordinators: Paul Rabé
Email: p.e.rabe@iias.nl
and Satya Patchineelam
Email: s.maia.patchineelam@iias.nl
Cluster: Asian Cities

Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN)

This network focuses particularly on the border regions between South Asia, Central/East and Southeast Asia. The concerns are varied, including migratory movements, transformations in cultural, linguistic and religious practices, ethnic mobilisation, 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.

www.iias.asia/programmes/
asian-borderlands-research-
network
Cluster: Global Asia

Humanities *Across* Borders

'Humanities *Across* Borders' (HAB) is an educational cooperation programme, co-funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York, that aims to create shared, humanities-grounded, interdisciplinary curricula and context-sensitive learning methodologies at the graduate and postgraduate levels.

Twenty universities in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas contribute time and resources to this unique and innovative venture. The HAB partners are now in the process of signing a joint agreement that will bring them together in a vibrant international consortium, committed to building new humanist capacities at the inter-institutional level, including thematic projects, syllabi, and joint classrooms with other continents.

This new phase (2021-2026) builds on the groundwork laid during the first phase of the programme, under the title 'Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World' (2016-2021).

Follow the stories on the Humanities Across Borders Blog
humanitiesacrossborders.org/blog
www.iias.asia/hab
Clusters: Global Asia; Asian Heritages

Dual Degree in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe

The Dual Degree forms part of a broader ambition to decentralise the production of knowledge about Asia by establishing a platform for continuing dialogues between universities in Asia and beyond. The participating institutions – IIAS, Leiden University, National Taiwan University and Yonsei University – have established a fruitful collaboration in research and teaching, offering selected students the opportunity to follow a full year of study at one of the partner institutes with full credits and two MA degrees. Talks are underway with several universities in Asia and North Africa to joint this IIAS initiative.

www.iias.asia/programmes/critical-
heritage-studies
Coordinator: Elena Paskaleva
e.g.paskaleva@hum.leidenuniv.nl
Clusters: Asian Heritages

Africa-Asia, A New Axis of Knowledge

Africa-Asia
A NEW AXIS OF KNOWLEDGE

'Africa-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. 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.

An important recent development (in February 2023) is the birth of the "Collaborative Africa-South East Asia Platform (CASAP)", a groundbreaking new network involving two universities in Indonesia and three in Africa. See the article by Stacey Links et al. on this page.

www.iias.asia/networks/africa-asia
Coordinator: Stacey Links
Cluster: Global Asia

Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies

The Leiden Centre for Indian Ocean Studies brings together people and methods to study the 'Indian Ocean World', aiming to co-organize conferences, workshops and academic exchanges with institutions from the region.

www.iias.asia/programmes/leiden-centre-indian-ocean-studies
Cluster: Global Asia

The Bandung Spirit Anew

Introducing the Collaborative Africa-South East Asia Platform (CASAP)

Stacey Links, Lalita Hanwong, Adrian Perkasa

Kasetsart University, Bangkok. From left to right: Irfan Wahyudi, Lina Puryanti, Webby Kalikiti, Stacey Links, Mathew Senga, Lalita Hanwong, Philippe Peycam, Mamadou Fall (sitting).

In February 2023, a collective of scholars met to crystallize further what is now formally known as the 'Collaborative Africa-Southeast Asia Platform' (CASAP). Starting as far back as 2012, during the first Asian Studies in Africa Roundtable coordinated by IIAS in Lusaka, Zambia and the following establishment of the pan-African Association for Asian Studies in Africa (A-Asia), IIAS has expanded its work in connecting Africa and Asia through two successful subsequent international conferences in Accra, Ghana and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 2015 and 2018. While the 'Africa-Asia: A New Axis of Knowledge' meetings continue to be a flagship cross-regional event for IIAS and its partners, over time, a noticeable gap has arisen concerning the need for more formalized and ongoing exchanges between Africa and Asia. In particular, the focus on Southeast Asia, a region with unique relations with the African counterpart, has come to the fore.

While China-Africa relations have virtually become a field unto its own, and the economic developmental 'flying geese' models have presented areas for strong Africa-Asia engagement, Southeast Asia equally exemplifies a myriad of sites to explore. One dry season in 1955, in a major city in West Java, leaders from 29 governments of African and Southeast Asian nations gathered in Bandung to define post-colonial challenges commonly faced by all non-Western countries and how to collectively move forward as the Cold War exacerbated. This first Afro-Asian forum was attended by prominent world leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), U Nu (Myanmar), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Norodom Sihanouk (Cambodia) and Zhou Enlai (China), to name a few. The event also included representatives of the two Vietnams (Democratic Republic (North) and State of (South)), Thailand, the Philippines, Liberia, Gold Coast, and Libya, along with members from the Middle East and East and South Asia.

The Bandung Conference, often seen as a precursor to the Non-Aligned Movement, championed the idea of promoting the common interests of 'developing nations' during the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies. The enduring influence of this idea, known as the 'Bandung Spirit,' can still be felt today, especially amidst growing geopolitical conflicts. It is essential to emphasize the significance of sharing common interests and promoting the voices of an increasingly self-conscious Global South, to ensure that the wealth of experiences and knowledges from these parts of the world are equally included and circulated.

Beyond shared state-centric logics and narrow economically framed 'developmentalist' agendas, the regions and peoples of Africa and Southeast Asia share a fascinating intersection of cultures, identities, heritage, and languages. Given the potential for knowledge sharing and exchange these two regions offer, it is no surprise that a shared vision should emerge, now encapsulated by the CASAP initiative.

Laying the groundwork

In the guise of a first meeting, a number of individuals from what would become the Collective Africa-Southeast Asia Platform met in November 2022 in Saint-Louis, Senegal, to flesh out the forms and content of such a ground-breaking collaboration. Finding its raison d'être in the intersection of knowledge production and community engagement, in a spirit of hospitality characteristic of the two regions, CASAP has gone on to convene two milestone meetings in Surabaya, Indonesia, and Bangkok, Thailand, in February 2023.

The first of these meetings In Surabaya, Indonesia, laid the groundwork for collaboration between Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR) and three African universities, namely Cheikh Anta Diop University, the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Zambia. Meeting with the rector, vice-rectors, deans, and scholars from various faculties signaled the appetite, need, and potential transformative power such a collective could represent, spearheading a knowledge-based South-South partnership. The meeting brought together key persons from the founding universities to discuss opportunities and possibilities and to facilitate the establishment of the Airlangga Institute of Indian Ocean Crossroads (AIIOC).

This institute will be pivotal in fostering cooperation amongst a wide variety of knowledge producers and stakeholders in the South-South community. Most importantly, it is set to catalyze collaborations and exchanges between scholars and communities in Africa and Southeast Asia. The port city of Surabaya itself symbolizes a unique intersection and nexus of these existing connections, some of which have yet to be (re-)explored.

The meeting was particularly significant because it helped to ground the operations of the new institute on four functional pillars. First, AIIOC should be a center for interdisciplinary research. This stems from the fact that from the outset, the planned organization received the joint support of four key faculties at Universitas Airlangga: Humanities, Social and Political Sciences, Medical, and Public Health. The four disciplines should not be seen as a limitation but rather a strong departure point to move beyond the conventional setting of area studies. The second pillar is teaching or pedagogical activities involving graduate and undergraduate students. This institute should be a hub for African and Southeast Asian lecturers and students to conduct many programs such as exchanges, dual degrees, and shared courses. Third is public and civic engagement as the core agenda of AIIOC for promoting interactions between Africa and Southeast Asia, not only from and for academia but also for the public in general. This is connected to the last pillar, which makes dissemination a powerful outlet for knowledge circulation. It came as no surprise that the meeting agreed that the planned 13th edition of the International Convention for Asia Scholars (ICAS) to be held in Surabaya in the summer of 2024 should be AIIOC's first launching project. The new institute, together with IIAS/ICAS, along with other members and networks of CASAP, should be responsible for crafting this first post-Covid global academic /cultural public event.

The second founding meeting of CASAP was held between 21-23 February 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand, at Kasetsart University. With its original focus on tropical agriculture and 'sciences of nature,' Kasetsart University has a long history of collaboration with Africa. To celebrate this unique four-decade-long relationship between a Southeast Asian university and African higher education counterparts along with government agencies, NGOs, and individual experts, the Kasetsart University Africa-Asia Programme (KU-AAP) was established in 2020. A bit like in the case of AIIOC, KU-AAP aims to promote academic, cultural and professional linkages with African partners. In particular, through multi-disciplinary research and education, KU-AAP seeks to encourage public discussions within Thailand on the 'African factor.'

The CASAP network

The discussions in Bangkok culminated in the crystallization of the CASAP network, built as a 'collective' of like-minded individuals and institutions seeking to work together to encourage people-to-people, society-to-society interregional interactions, in the spirit of the vision first articulated in Saint-Louis du Senegal. The Surabaya and Bangkok discussions proposed several concrete themes, including but not limited to food, hospitality, heritage, environment, and sport, to be mobilized to explore the levels of commonalities and experiences between the African and Southeast Asian human realities.

CASAP sees itself as a collective venue that should help scholars, universities, and members of the community to innovate in terms of academic and public initiatives aimed at promoting a shared, genuinely South-South vision, in the original spirit of Bandung. By prioritizing research, education, and public engagement, the Collaborative wants to utilize the distinct capabilities and strengths of the current network of six universities in Southeast Asia and Africa to establish a program that actively involves the communities of the two regions, and those of the rest of the world.

Dr Stacey Links is the coordinator of the IIAS Africa-Asia Platform and Assistant Professor at Leiden University, the Netherlands. Lalita Hanwong is a lecturer at Kasetsart University, Thailand. Adrian Perkasa is a PhD candidate at the Leiden Institute for Area Studies and an IIAS-SEANNET Local Principal Investigator in Surabaya, Indonesia.

Other (supported) programmes include 'The Geopolitical Economy of Energy Transition: Comparing China's Belt and Road Initiative and the European Union'; 'The New Silk Road. China's Belt and Road Initiative in Context' and 'Green Industrial Policy in the Age of Rare Metals: A Transregional Comparison of Growth Strategies in Rare Earth Mining (GRIP-ARM)'. See www.iias.asia/programmes.

Illustration by Narutai Riangkruar

ICAS Book Prize 2023

Martina van den Haak
and Wai Cheung (IIAS/ICAS)

In 2023, we celebrate the tenth edition of the ICAS Book Prize (IBP). In the previous issue of The Newsletter (Issue #94), we highlighted four partners with whom we co-organise the different prizes of the IBP. In this issue, we highlight five more such partners. The IBP English Language Edition also features Dissertation Prizes in the Humanities and Social Sciences category. In this article, the Chair of the IBP Dissertation Reading Committee will share her experiences. Over the years, the IBP has become on the of the largest and most prestigious book prizes of its kind, and the IBP secretariat would like to thank all its partners for their continued support and enthusiasm.

Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO)

Co-organiser of the Japanese Language Edition

IDE-JETRO is one of the representative research institutes of social science in Japan, with more than a hundred resident research fellows and associate and visiting scholars from around the world. IDE-JETRO, since its establishment in 1960, has stood out for its multi-disciplinarity: scholars from area studies, economics, and political science work together and, each year, conduct over 160 research projects that cover a broad range of topics on developing and emerging economies, such as economy, society, politics, and international relations in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania. Based on its mission of "intellectual contribution to the world," the institute has yielded voluminous high-quality products, such as long-lasting area studies reports (e.g., Year Book of Asian Affairs) and IDE-GSM (a CGE model enabling detailed geographic-economic simulation). The institute also has a unique library specializing in collections of publications and documents from developing countries, including historically precious documents from previous Japanese colonies before 1945.

IDE-JETRO has also developed extensive networks with research institutes abroad, including the IIAS. Since IDE-JETRO and IIAS concluded an MOU in 2019, the two organizations have intensified existing collaboration in the form of workshops on challenges of urbanization in Asia. In 2022, the inter-organizational trust resulted in co-organizing the ICAS Book Prize (IBP) 2023 Japanese Language Edition by IDE-JETRO

and IIAS. While researchers and specialists of IDE-JETRO speak 28 languages to access local sources in countries of their interest, it is a core belief of the institute that it has an obligation to share insights in the Japanese language with those who are interested in developing economies, wherever they are living. Being one of the co-organizers of the IBP 2023 provides IDE-JETRO with a great opportunity to realize this belief, extending its reach to the next level.

Outcomes of the research by IDE-JETRO are stored in an institutional repository, the Academic Research Repository at the Institute of Developing Economies (ARRIDE, ir.ide.go.jp/), on its website (www.ide.go.jp/English.html), and in other public repositories such as J-STAGE (www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/-char/en). Under the open access policy promoted by the Government of Japan, and in the highest conformity with the institutional value of distributing high-quality outcomes from research, all publications from IDE-JETRO are digitized. Most are free to obtain and utilize as long as they are given appropriate credit, including e-books under a Creative Commons license. Please visit the above URLs to explore the research by IDE-JETRO.

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IDE-JETRO

Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC)

Sponsor and Organiser of the Korean Language Edition

Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) is a research and international exchange institute based in Seoul, South Korea. Since its launch in February 2009, it has pursued its mission to be a global hub of Asian Studies by integrating regional and thematic studies about Asia and the World. As of 2023, SNUAC comprises the HK+ Mega-Asia Research Project Group, seven regional centers, seven thematic programs, and the Asia Regional Information Center that collects and manages regional information and data. It has also laid a strong foundation for its mission through a wide range of supporting activities, fully engaging in building a network of Asian scholars and nurturing next-generation academics.

SNUAC has been working with ICAS to hold the ICAS Book Prize Korean Language Edition for the last eight years. From Chiang Mai (ICAS 10) to Leiden (ICAS 11) and Kyoto (ICAS 12), we organized and sponsored the Prize to introduce outstanding academic works written in Korean to the Asian Studies community. We are currently in the process of reviewing the 62 submitted books to select the original and path-breaking works for the 2023 Prize.

From the beginning, we organized book talk series of shortlisted books to disseminate the award-winning books to the general public beyond academia. We also had an Asian Studies book fair where award-winning titles of the ICAS

Book Prize in several languages were exhibited at the Main Library, sponsored by the Seoul National University Library. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, we started making the book talk series available on YouTube. Please visit the Korean IBP site to browse the winning books, citations, abstracts, authors' bio-notes, and book talk series by editions: http://snuac.snu.ac.kr/2023ibp

Over the editions, we set up our own rules for organizing the book prize. For example, when constructing the reading committee, we made it a tradition to include the award winners of the preceding IBP. In addition, after the shortlisted books are announced, the reading committee members are invited to preside over the book talk series. We hope that such good rituals will be added more in the coming years. Stay tuned for updates and news on the IBP 2023 Korean Language Edition!

https://snuac.snu.ac.kr

SNUAC
Seoul National University Asia Center

French Academic Network on Asian Studies (GIS Asie)

Sponsor and Organiser of the French Language Edition

It has been eight years now since GIS Asie joined the ICAS Book Prize to start the French Edition. Aurélie Varrel took over as secretary in 2018-19, with the support of Gosia Chwirot as acting secretary. Now that GIS Asie has co-organised and sponsored the French Editions of IBP three times, and based on this rich experience, we can develop some considerations about what is being published on Asia in French.

The number of books submitted has decreased from more than 30 in 2016-17 to hardly more than 20 for the 3rd and 4th editions. This is for good and not-so-good reasons. During the first years, we received many books that did not fit the requirements (coffee table books with light content, tourist guide books), and publishers now have a better understanding of the prize's characteristics. A second reason of more concern for us is the general decrease in books published in the humanities and social sciences, which also affects the field of Asian Studies.

In terms of content, the books reflect the interest of the French audience for the Far East with a dominant number of books on China, Taiwan, and Japan, as well as the specificities and strengths of French scholarship, namely with the presence of remarkable books on Vietnam/Indochina in almost each of our shortlists. Our committee's selections result from a fine balance between acknowledging these 'national' features and promoting original work on less-travelled paths, countries or topics.

Compiling the submissions allows us also to draw a vibrant panorama of scholars publishing in French. Two university presses, in particular, are well-known for their publications on Asia: Presses de l'Inalco and EFEO (Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient). The 3rd edition winner, *La réforme politique en Birmanie pendant le premier moment colonial (1819-1878)* by Aurore Candier,[1] was published by EFEO; among many reasons, the award intended to pay tribute to the skills and know-how of EFEO press for a volume that includes long texts in old Burmese. Overall, there has been an increase in the number of university press publishers in France over the past three decades, providing more options, especially for young scholars, somewhat paradoxically when we bear in mind the general decline in the number of books published. Beyond the university presses' circle, we should mention Editions des Belles Lettres, a century-old private publisher with a commitment to classical humanities and orientalism that extends to more recent topics and supports the publishing of new reference book series, such as the IBP French Edition winner in 2021: *Les Dynasties Qin et Han (221 av. J.-C.-220 apr. J.-C.)* by Michèle Pirazzoli and Marianne Bujard,[2] a volume that is part of a renewed « Histoire générale de la Chine » book series. We can mention also Société Française d'ethnologie, which maintains a medium-size press. They have published many monographs that made it to our shortlists, including the 1st winner, *Le parler des dieux. Le discours rituel santal entre l'oral et l'écrit (Inde)* by Marine Carrin.[3] For the 3rd edition, the committee shortlisted books coming from private, small-size, recent publishers that often develop innovative formats and publish volumes with rich visual content and on original or emerging topics, which is both a refreshing and soothing trend that deserves to be acknowledged. The IBP French Edition is indeed the only book prize for publications about Asia in French, hence a unique source of prestige for authors and publishers.

Although not eligible for the IBP, one should make a final mention here of the efforts of some authors and university presses to publish translations into French of books authored by Asian scholars (especially in Japanese). These efforts make their work known and encourage entering into dialogue with non-Asia specialists, which commands respect.

http://www.gis-reseau-asie.org

Notes

1 https://icas.asia/fr/ibp2021/la-reforme-politique-en-birmanie-pendant-le-premier-moment-colonial-1819-1878
2 http://www.gis-reseau-asie.org/fr/laureat-ibp-2019-french-edition-les-dynasties-qin-et-han-histoire-generale-de-la-chine-221-av-j-c
3 https://icas.asia/french-ibp-7-2017

South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development (SEPHIS)

Sponsor and Organiser of the Portuguese/Spanish Language Edition

Since 2017, SEPHIS has been the official organizer of the ICAS Book Prize in Portuguese and Spanish Languages, which has been awarded every two years to outstanding publications in the field of Asian Studies, engaging with SEPHIS's mission to promote the epistemological diversification of science, especially in fields where the challenges for a scholar from the South are more pronounced.

The South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development (SEPHIS) has its origins in the workshop 'Historical Dimension of Development, Change and Conflict in the South,' held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague in 1993. Over the years, SEPHIS has initiated, supported, and facilitated a large number of activities, particularly in the humanities, in relation to scientific and social policies. Initiatives have focused simultaneously on individual grants, training workshops, institutional capacities, knowledge production, preservation, and circulation.

We believe this book prize is an opportunity to further enlarge the scholarship on Asia and, in particular, to challenge the compartmentalization of the Global South promoted by the area studies division. Our book prize recognizes the editorial endeavor undertaken by both publishers and scholars based in countries where Asia is not necessarily a prestigious or consolidated field of study. As epistemological and institutional inequalities affect the dynamics of knowledge production, studies on Asia are still dominated by European and North-American academia. In this context, the SEPHIS-ICAS Book Prize seeks to challenge structural inequalities and deleterious biases that hinder scholars' careers in their endeavor to read and write about the world in its entirety.

SEPHIS foresees this award not only as a way to recognize the excellence of research and publications but also, and especially, as an active mechanism to produce a community of Asian Studies across languages and spaces, joining both Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking scholars. Since our first edition, publishers and authors from Latin America, Macau, Timor, Portugal, and Spain have submitted nearly 300 books in Spanish and Portuguese – making Spanish and Portuguese one of the largest linguistic community of publications submitted to the ICAS Book Prize. In this sense, it is a way of recognizing the collective commitment not only of researchers, but also of a long chain of professionals who are made invisible by the mechanisms of individual authorship: archivists, advisors, editors, reviewers, etc. Finally, ICAS-SEPHIS Book Prize has been conceived as an opportunity to promote equity and social justice. Accepting e-books from many places in the Global South reconnects us with SEPHIS's institutional mandate to challenge inequalities and actively promote equity policies in sciences.

SEPHIS's social media channels have directly reached nearly 10,000 scholars and institutions worldwide. The most striking result was when in 2019, with around 70 publications submitted for the Portuguese and Spanish editions, it became the second largest group of publications submitted to the prize after English. Nevertheless, we decided not to differentiate between the social sciences and the humanities, nor even between the two languages, in order to build bridges between the two academic and linguistic groups.

For our IBP 2023 Portuguese/ Spanish Language Edition, SEPHIS was joined by Casa Asia – a public diplomacy institution created in 2001, with the support of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to facilitate the exchange of cultures and projects of common interest between Spain and the Asia-Pacific countries in order to achieve better knowledge and mutual understanding. Partnering with Casa Asia invigorates and enhances what has been accomplished thus far, bringing renewed energy to our common goal.

https://sephis.org

From the Chair of the Dissertation Reading Committee

It is safe to say that since its inception in 2005, the ICAS Dissertation Prize has become one of the most important and competitive awards in the field of Asia Studies, both in the humanities and social sciences. It can be a career-changing moment for young scholars distinguished with this prize. But what is the story behind the curtains of this award? The winners of this edition, just like previous ones, will have the chance to share their feelings and experiences related to the ICAS Dissertation Prize at the Award Ceremony. However, one might wonder: how does being on the judging committee feel? That is, how does it feel to be an insider of this project?

As the Chair of the Dissertation Committee, I can share that there is excitement in exchanging thoughts with the readers: Allysa Parades, Do Young Oh, Jayati Bhattacharya, and Kathleen Gutierrez, brilliant scholars who do not mind the hurdles of scheduling online meetings in which 'good morning,' 'good afternoon,' and 'good evening' are all appropriate, reading 124 dissertations that were jointly submitted for this edition, and exchanging late-night and early-morning emails. There is, of course, the excitement about the chance to read, understand, and learn. Moreover, being a part of the Dissertation Committee comes with a sense of tremendous responsibility to continue the mission of Alex McKay and Paul van der Velde: to judge fairly and with criteria of true excellence in mind. We aim to select the theses not because of the impressive resumes of the authors but because of the ways their work influences the 'state of the art': theses that are analytically impeccable; theses in which the authors deliver what they promised; theses which expand the existing theses; theses that are supported by evidence and are methodologically flawless.

And what can we choose from in this edition? Unsurprisingly, in the humanities, the tendency is towards historical studies; in the social sciences, towards anthropological and sociological studies. However, the trend is also to use methods and theories that answer the research questions rather than those that are 'traditionally' associated with a particular discipline. Moreover, although it seems that most dissertations, perhaps reflecting geopolitical significance, are concerned with China and India, this trend is not as clear as it used to be. This poses an interesting question about the future of Asian Studies: will scholarly interest be 'fairer' towards 'different countries and regions'? For example, in the Humanities category, we received quite a few studies on Japan, but cross-regional and cross-national studies seem to be much rarer. Environmental, feminist, and queer studies continue to attract young researchers, reflecting some of the biggest challenges in the contemporary world. A noteworthy observation is that there is a shift towards a more detailed analysis of 'political economy' and political and geopolitical circumstances.

Even though we do not consider the authors' backgrounds in the judging process, we still strive to increase inclusiveness. Thus, we were happy to receive more theses from less popular (in terms of submissions) parts of the world (for example, Germany and Finland) and less-privileged places (for example, India). Last but not least, reading dissertations in this edition reveals how many research and personal plans have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unexpectedly, this is a truly shocking chronicle of our joint – although unequal - battle against the virus.

**Dr. Anna Romanowicz,** Jagiellonian University, Krakau, Poland

ICAS Book Prize 2023 – English Language Edition

On behalf of the ICAS Book Prize Reading Committees, it is our pleasure to announce the longlists of the ICAS Book Prize - English Language Edition. We would like to thank everyone who has submitted nominations! We are extremely grateful to all the Committee members in the four categories for their time and energy in this process so far. They put in a tremendous effort in reading and judging all the submitted books and dissertations for this edition! Below are the longlists for the Books in the Humanities and Social Sciences in alphabetical order of authors' surnames. These lists, together with the **Dissertation longlists,** can be found on this website: https://icas.asia/ibp-2023-english-longlists

Humanities Longlist
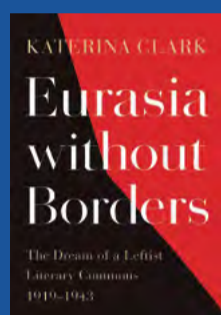
Katerina Clark
Eurasia without Borders: The Dream of a Leftist Literary Commons, 1919–1943
The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2022
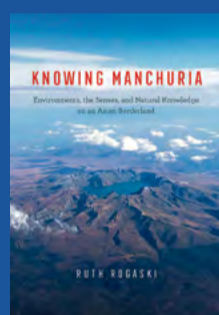
Ruth Rogaski
Knowing Manchuria: Environments, the Senses, and Natural Knowledge on an Asian Borderland
The University of Chicago Press, 2022
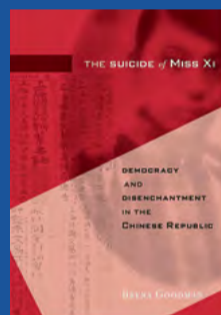
Bryna Goodman
The Suicide of Miss Xi: Democracy and Disenchantment in the Chinese Republic
Harvard University Press, 2021
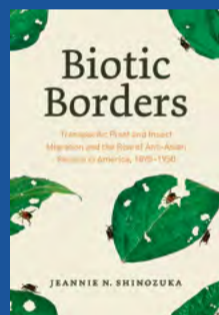
Jeannie N. Shinozuka
Biotic Borders: Transpacific Plant and Insect Migration and the Rise of Anti-Asian Racism in America, 1890–1950
The University of Chicago Press, 2022
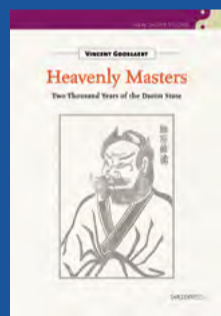
Vincent Goossaert
Heavenly Masters: Two Thousand Years of the Daoist State
The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press and University of Hawai'i Press, 2021

Maria Montt Strabucchi, Carol Chan and María Elvira Ríos
Chineseness in Chile: Shifting Representations During the Twenty-First Century
Palgrave Macmillan, 2022
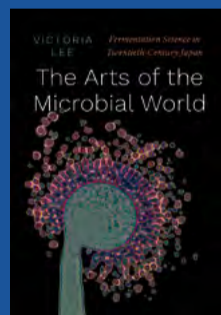
Victoria Lee
The Arts of the Microbial World: Fermentation Science in Twentieth-Century Japan
The University of Chicago Press, 2021
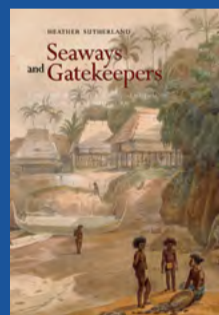
Heather Sutherland
Seaways and Gatekeepers: Trade and State in the Eastern Archipelagos of Southeast Asia, c.1600–c.1906
NUS Press, 2021
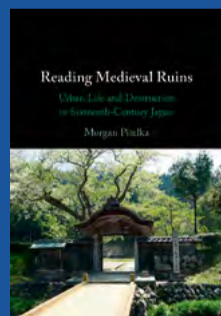
Morgan Pitelka
Reading Medieval Ruins: Urban Life and Destruction in Sixteenth-Century Japan
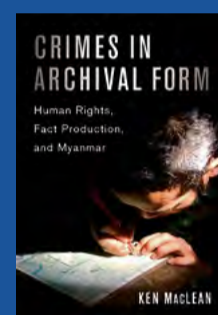Cambridge University Press, 2022
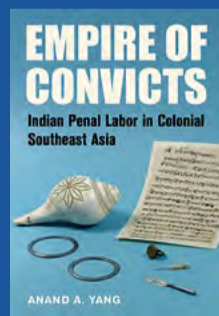
Anand A. Yang
Empire of Convicts: Indian Penal Labor in Colonial Southeast Asia
University of California Press, 2021

Social Sciences Longlist

Simon Avenell
Asia and Postwar Japan: Deimperialization, Civic Activism, and National Identity
Harvard University Asia Center, 2022

Ken MacLean
Crimes in Archival Form: Human Rights, Fact Production, and Myanmar
University of California Press, 2022

Eyck Freymann
One Belt One Road: Chinese Power Meets the World
Harvard University Asia Center, 2020

Antje Missbach
The Criminalisation of People Smuggling in Indonesia and Australia: Asylum Out of Reach
Routledge, 2022

Syed Irfan Ashraf
The Dark Side of News Fixing: The Culture and Political Economy of Global Media in Pakistan
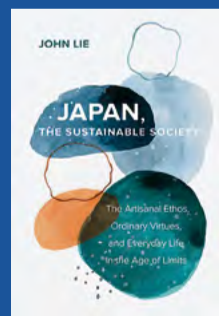Anthem Press, 2021

Sylvia Tidey
Ethics or the Right Thing? Corruption and Care in the Age of Good Governance
HAU Books, 2022
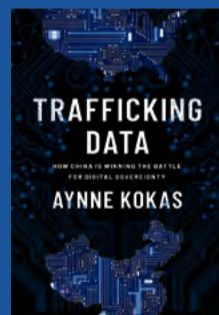
Aynne Kokas
Trafficking Data: How China is Winning the Battle for Digital Sovereignty
Oxford University Press, 2022

Shobana Shankar
An Uneasy Embrace: Africa, India and the Spectre of Race
Hurst Publishers and African Arguments, 2021

John Lie
Japan, the Sustainable Society: The Artisanal Ethos, Ordinary Virtues, and Everyday Life in the Age of Limits
University of California Press, 2021

Timothy M. Yang
A Medicated Empire: The Pharmaceutical Industry and Modern Japan
Cornell University Press, 2021

The shortlists of all eight Editions – English, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese/Spanish and the Hong Kong Studies Article Prize – will be announced by summer 2023. Check our website for the latest news.

www.icas.asia

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