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< Theme:
**Asian
Homosexualities**

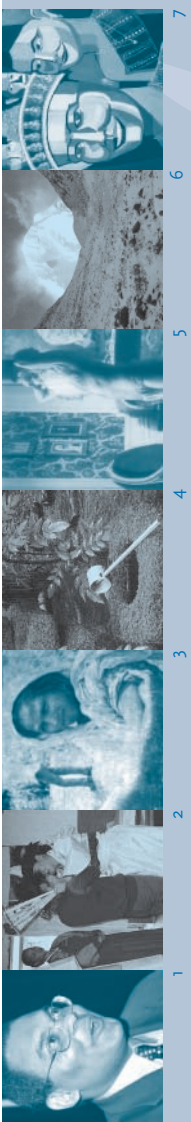
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IIAS NEWSLETTER

International Institute for Asian Studies

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Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat

Forum >
General

14 June 2002
Amsterdam, the
Netherlands

Al-Qaeda al-Sulbah (The Solid Base) is the first multinational terrorist group of the twenty-first century. While past and present terrorist groups generally have a national base, limiting their terrorist campaigns to a single theatre, al-Qaeda is an umbrella organization waging multiple campaigns both against the West and against Muslim regimes friendly to the West. In addition to its core force of 3,000 members, al-Qaeda has established linkages with two-dozen Islamist groups. Driven by the ideal of a universal jihad, al-Qaeda has been able to politicize, radicalize, and mobilize Muslims throughout the world. With its global reach, al-Qaeda presents a new kind of threat hitherto unimagined by counter-terrorism practitioners and security and intelligence professionals.

By Rohan Gunaratna

Between pre-modern Afghanistan and post-modern continental United States via Europe and Asia, al-Qaeda has built a state-of-the-art terrorist network for moving funds, goods, and personnel recruited from around the world to reach its targets. It is the painstaking and steadfast construction of this network over many years that enabled al-Qaeda to mount 9/11. Al-Qaeda's targeting reflects its sophistication as a professional terrorist group. After the East Africa bombing – a land suicide attack on a US diplomatic target – the US strengthened security at all US missions overseas. However, instead of another land suicide operation, al-Qaeda mounted a sea-borne suicide operation. After al-Qaeda attacked the USS Cole in October 2000, the US invested in perimeter security. However, al-Qaeda evaded these measures and struck America's most outstanding landmarks from the sky. Al-Qaeda planned to strike the US once more with a radiological dispersal device using Jose Perdilla, an American Muslim, an operation that was disrupted at the reconnaissance stage. As it is al-Qaeda's doctrine to learn from its experiences and failures, it is most likely to use the lessons learned for a future attempt at destroying its third target, the US Congress. And as terrorist groups employ cost-effective tactics, al-Qaeda is likely to use civilian infrastructure once again to attack Western targets.

In keeping with its founding charter authored by Sheikh Dr Abdullah Azzam in March 1988, al-Qaeda is the 'spearhead of Islam', 'the pioneering vanguard of the Islamic move-

ments'. Because of the inspirational value, al-Qaeda's gives preference to suicide attacks. Attacking highly prestigious and symbolic targets is difficult, requiring extensive planning and preparation over a long period of time across several countries. To strengthen Islamic movements worldwide al-Qaeda – together the Islamic Movement of Taliban and the Maktab al Khidamat lil Mujahidin al-Arab – has trained several tens of thousands of Western, Middle Eastern, African, Caucasian, Balkan, and Asian Muslims.

Decentralization

Al-Qaeda's training infrastructure has gravely suffered as a result of US intervention in Afghanistan since October 2001. However, al-Qaeda began decentralizing, opening new training facilities for recruits from Mindanao in the Philippines to Pankishi Valley in Georgia, long before 9/11. In forming the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders in 1998, al-Qaeda networked with and in some cases co-opted groups – from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Far East to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in Central Asia and the Salafist Group for Call and Combat in North Africa. Telephone intercepts indicated that in early 1999 at the request of al-Qaeda's head of external operations Abu Zubaida, the MILF opened special camps for training foreign recruits. These camps were all situated in what is called the Abu Bakar complex, which was later overrun by the Philippine military. At that point, another al-Qaeda associate – Lashkar Jundullah – established a facility in Poso,

continued on page 4 >

Editorial

In the previous editorial, this publication was described as a platform for Asian Studies in a broad sense. Readers' reactions suggest that the paper is perceived to be more than just a mixed bag and that many appreciate the choices we make. Within the field of Asian Studies, the *IIAS Newsletter* could see its task as being to pick up new and promising areas of research. Obviously, simply stimulating any uncharted area whatsoever is not a justifiable goal in itself, but I do find it worth pursuing to provide a space for themes that, whilst specifically Asian, are of universal interest. In this issue, international security and Asian views on genomics and biotechnology feature prominently alongside more traditional and equally important topics in fields such as linguistics and economics. One field of research that has emerged over the last decade has therefore been chosen as the current theme, namely 'Asian Homosexualities'. Here, Giovanni Vitiello has managed to compile articles of both a generally descriptive and personal kind. These articles, and those on international security, biotechnology, and genomics show how issues may be of universal interest, but at the same time may be potentially divisive. The specific articles in this theme, however, not only stimulate this field of research, but also provide an insight for those in other fields. To my mind, this can only be fruitful for further discussion and understanding.

Regarding the newsletter itself, it is my pleasure to announce that my colleague Lena Scheen, who collaborated in the completion of this past issue, will continue working at the IIAS, while Natasja Kershof has now joined us as editor for the issues to come. We hope you appreciate this issue and as always welcome your comments. < **Maurice Sijstermans**

Director's Note on ASEM 4

On earlier occasions we emphasized the crucial importance of the ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) as a unique instrument for dialogue, cooperation, and inter-civilizational understanding between the European and Asian countries participating in the ASEM.* Not all our readers will appear to be informed about the recent summit in Copenhagen, yet with decisions taken by the heads of state – at times reaching a practical level – it could be useful to take note of this summit and the decisions.

Director's note >

By Wim Stokhof

On the web links listed below you will find the chairman's statement of the ASEM 4 summit. In a previous director's note, it was suggested that if we really want ASEM to become engrained in the daily life of ASEM states' 'inhabitants', more attention ought to be given to the numerous initiatives ventured by various sectors from civil society (a bottom-up trajectory) such as universities, research groups, sport associations, professional associations, labour unions, think-tanks, and artists. It was proposed to introduce consultative forums such as a workers' platform and a research platform – just like the Asia-Europe Business Forum or the newly planned taskforce – where decisions could be shaped and advice formulated. In the current chairman's statement, however, not much can be found about enhancing links between ASEM and sections of civil society. Although this can easily be explained by the fact that ASEM is a construct invented by heads of state (a top-down trajectory), we believe that this lack of interest in connecting with ASEM's basic constituency is a missed chance.

As you can see from the chairman's statement, the leaders discussed quite a range of topics: terrorism, education, human resources development, environmental cooperation, enhancement of ASEM cooperation, and the Korean Peninsula. In addition, it was decided to set up several conferences



and meetings. What will really happen after these gatherings is difficult to predict. ASEM is in need of well-planned long-term comprehensive programmes with concrete deliverables, good monitoring, evaluation, reporting procedures, and relevant down-to-earth follow-up activities. Decisions must be taken and carried out in terms of clear objectives, effective instrumentation, timetables, sound sustainable financing, and a smoothly running non-virtual (!) secretariat.

It cannot be denied that the ASEM dialogue has proved to be essential in building mutual awareness and understanding between our two regions. The ASEM process is a slow and very complicated exercise that will not so easily yield tangible results. Yet, much more can be obtained if ASEM's gratuitous, ad hoc character – now celebrated by the European Commission as one of its key characteristics, 'informality', but to my mind one of its weaknesses – could be abolished. <

Professor Wim Stokhof is director of the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden/Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

Note >

* The participating countries are Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, Vietnam (seven ASEAN countries), China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, the fifteen members of the European Union plus the European Commission.

More information

For the full text of the chairman's statement at the Fourth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM 4) held in Copenhagen, 23–24 September 2002, refer to: www.iias.nl/iiasn/29/index.html or www.iias.nl/asem/events/summits/asem4
More information on ASEM can be found at: www.iias.nl/asem
Pleasant reading!



Prof. De Casparis teaching epigraphy at the Kern Institute (1979).

In Memoriam: Hans de Casparis

On behalf of the Departments of the Languages and Cultures of South and Southeast Asia, I would like to try and express the respect and gratitude that we all feel as we say goodbye to our teacher and colleague Hans de Casparis. He began his appointment at Leiden University in 1978 and worked here nearly every day since, almost to the very end of his life. In his youth already he worked here: as an assistant before the war, from 1937 to 1939. Later, he came here regularly from London to study the so-called *Abklatschen*, or prints, of the Indonesian inscriptions stored at the Kern Institute. Above all, Hans de Casparis was a researcher. It is said that when he arrived at Schiphol from London he hired a car for the entire duration of his stay in the Netherlands in order not to lose any time that could be spent on research. His classes were of high standard; they were about

research – and indeed *were* research. The field that he covered in his teaching was broad; and in this vast field he saw the greater connections, above all the long-lasting relationship between the worlds of ancient India and of the Archipelago. His inaugural address here in Leiden in 1979 covered the entire South and Southeast Asian terrain. With that broad erudition he was an eminent representative of a predominantly Dutch academic tradition – one of the best things that remain from the colonial period.

Besides the breadth he had depth, the ability to do justice to the details of the epigraphic sources and to always discover something new. He laid the foundations for modern Indonesian epigraphy. The study of Indonesia's ancient history was immeasurably enriched by his erudite interpretations, that it now stands at a richer and more complex level.

As polite and friendly as he was in his personal life, as a scientist he was critical and outspoken. This could even be expressed when his students were defending their doctoral theses, as he would point out weaknesses in their argumentation. He genuinely *formed* and inspired many of his doctoral students by his love of the field. Young people who otherwise would have become discouraged could, if they would just give all their energy to it, count on him and were given a new chance to successfully finish their work. Thirty-three of them expressed their gratitude and their bond with him as their teacher by offering him a collection of studies, under the beautifully chosen title *Fruits of Inspiration*, for his 85th birthday last year. Writing from India this week, one of them referred to him as 'a guru in the true sense of the term'.

There was much power in Hans de

Casparis. He was not one to complain: even last year when it was so clear that he was in pain, he did not deviate from his self-imposed discipline. His will was strong and he was a brave person. He was brave in spirit but also physically brave. For example, already after his retirement, two robbers attempted to mug him in Amsterdam, and though he was small, he was athletic, and he managed to shake them off. Hans de Casparis was consistent in everything, but especially in his loyalty: to his colleagues and students, to his subject, and to Indonesia, the country where he felt at home and where he had friends. Hans will always be remembered by many, who will continue to be inspired by him. <

Leiden, 28 June 2002
D.H.A. Kolff



The IIAS logo

The IIAS logo is a *chandrasa*, or bronze axe-head, found in East Java. It was probably produced during the Early Bronze Age (c. 500 BC) in North Vietnam (Dong Son). The flying bird holds another *chandrasa* in its claws. The function of the object is unclear.

To our subscribers,

In the previous newsletter the IIAS requested all subscribers to return the enclosed mutation form with their personal data to the IIAS in order to keep the database up to date. We would like to thank everybody for their kind cooperation.
< **Kind regards, IIAS**

Subscriptions

The *IIAS Newsletter* is published by the IIAS and is available free of charge. If you wish to subscribe to the newsletter, please return a completed questionnaire to the IIAS secretariat. Questionnaires can be obtained from either the secretariat or the website:
iias@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.iias.nl/iiasn/questionnaire.html

The Asia-Europe Meeting and the ASEM Research Platform

The fourth edition of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) took place in Copenhagen (22–24 September). This is old news you may think but for many Western readers there is a big chance it is not. Whereas the major Asian newspapers covered the ASEM extensively, there was hardly any coverage in the Western press. One can come to the conclusion that Asia views the process with more interest than Europe.

Forum >
General

22–24 September
2002
Copenhagen,
Denmark

By Paul van der Velde & Rima Sondaite-van Soest

What then – a Western journalist may ask – happened that I should know? Answer: a lot. Two important declarations were adopted: the ASEM Copenhagen Political Declaration for Peace on the Korean Peninsula and the ASEM Copenhagen Declaration on Cooperation against International Terrorism. The former directly influenced the attitude of the US administration towards North Korea in the sense that direct lines of communication were reopened with this member of the so-called 'Axis of Evil'. The second declaration stressed the need to weed out the root of international terrorism: poverty. This is a topic that is not so popular in the current anti-terrorism rhetoric prevalent in the Western press. Another issue, which was debated in the corridors during ASEM 4, was the position of the Palestinian people. Yasser Arafat turned to ASEM to plead his cause, and behold the Israeli army withdrew under 'tremendous American pressure', which was ignited by ASEM. To some this may be of little significance but the fact is that the ASEM is beginning to play a vital role in world politics. A study carried out in Germany in relation to the voting behaviour of ASEM member countries will be published in the beginning of next year. This study is likely to show specific tendencies in the voting behaviour of ASEM countries in the United Nations on certain issues.

Closer political cooperation is further boosted by economic cooperation. It was decided in Copenhagen to establish a Task Force on Closer Economic Cooperation as an outcome of the positive experiences gained from the ASEM Trust Fund (1998–2000), which played a crucial role in containing and partly solving the Asian crisis. With the growing optimism resulting from the Sunshine Policy of the South Korean government towards North Korea, the idea of the Iron Silk Road connecting Korea to Europe was launched. This new road will considerably lower the transport costs between that country and Europe.

Underlying the political and economic rapprochement is cultural rapprochement. Although not in the limelight, significant progress has been made during the past six years. The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) plays an important role in this process by stimulating people-to-people exchanges and by encouraging the intellectual debate between Asia and Europe. Aware of the importance of the cultural dialogue, ASEM member countries decided to organize a conference entitled 'Unity in Diversity', which will be held in 2003 in China. So far China, Denmark, France, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore sponsor this conference and more countries are expected to follow suit. During a two-day meeting representatives from think-tank institutes

from ASEM countries will concentrate on delineating common ASEM values. This is the second phase in the process envisioned by the Prime Minister of Singapore Goh Chok Tong in his speech 'The Asia-Europe Dialogue: The Road to Greater Understanding', delivered in Brussels in October 1996. The first phase, being one of networking in which big gaps in knowledge about each other's cultures should be filled, is followed by a consensus-building phase in which shared values ought to be further developed. The conference report resulting from the 'Unity in Diversity' conference will be the key document for discussions about shared values among the ASEM Ministers of Foreign Affairs that will be held at the end of 2003.

A Eurasian research culture

There are two major reasons why academia in Asia and Europe should be linked to the ASEM process. First, the need for a creative and well-informed policy on both the European and Asian sides has in many cases outstripped the capacity of government administrations to deliver it. The Asia-Europe rapprochement has caught officials and policy makers across a wide range of fields unprepared. They are more often than not forced to rely on aphorisms and stereotypes as tools for ordering the complex New World in which they find themselves. As policy making at the ASEM level grows, there needs to be a visible Asian and European Studies presence to ensure that officials and policy makers can quickly lay their hands on the best advice on complex inter-regional issues.

The second major reason is the need for cross-national cooperation. The distinctive national traditions of research and scholarship in various aspects of Asian and European Studies that exist throughout the ASEM community are a precious resource. In the present environment of globalization, however, these traditions need to be brought together in complementary partnerships. No single nation can sustain a research endeavour on the scale needed to address fully the issues arising from globalization. Cooperation and collaboration could raise the awareness of the richness of each other's research cultures. By bringing Asian and European Studies in Asia and Europe into a facilitating framework, it will be possible to evolve further creative synergies without in any way detracting from the current strengths of the national research efforts. The ASEF could play a key role in this.

ASEF and the Asia-Europe Environment and Technology Centre (AETEC) are the only ASEM institutes founded so far and the ASEM as such remains an informal process without a permanent organizational body. In the long run this poses a problem because if programmes that are beneficial to the ulti-

mate aim of the ASEM are to be implemented successfully, they will need to take place within organizational structures such as e.g. ASEF. To enhance facilitation of the ASEM process, in some of the recent documents (Chairman's Statement of the Fourth Foreign Ministers' Meeting, June 2002, and Updated Non-Paper by European ASEM Partners, May 2002) ASEM partners suggested setting up a portal and linking all existing ASEM websites. By establishing the ASEM Research Platform (ARP) in September 2002 and launching a new website embracing diverse aspects of the ASEM process, the IIAS has accomplished the first step in this essential task.

One of the main goals of ARP is to sensitize people at all levels of society in Europe and Asia to the Asia-Europe Meeting process. One of its first activities has been to create an ASEM portal, meant to facilitate the search for information and research on ASEM by structuring all relevant information about this process. Although the portal is far from complete it contains: texts of official documents pertaining to ASEM; all available electronic publications and titles of other relevant publications in its digital library; the ASEM agenda and the civil society activities within ASEM; and other information pertaining to ASEM.

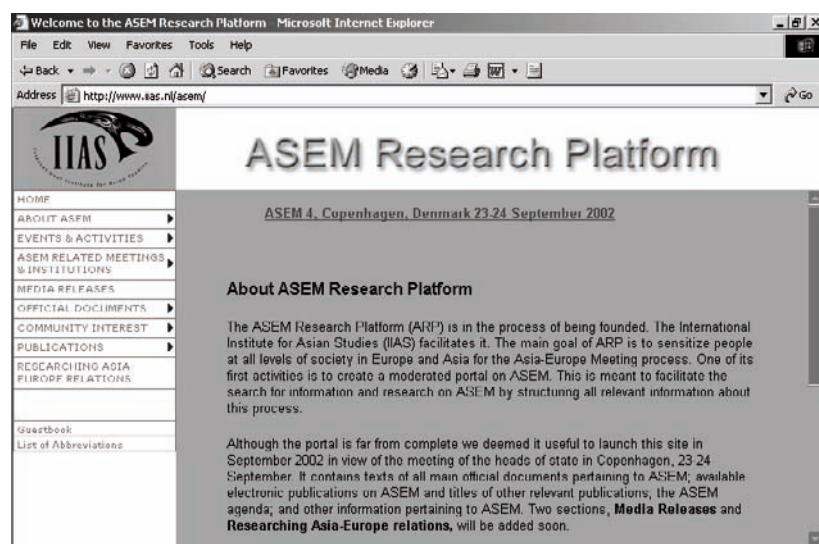
An equally important goal is to inform the scientific community about ASEM research and facilitate the contacts among scholars studying ASEM. Through the establishment of an ASEM Research Platform a division of labour between the ASEF division of intellectual exchange, which could concentrate on short-term projects, and the

ARP, focusing on long-term projects, can be attained. Needless to say, the ARP can build on the expertise in Asia-Europe relations assembled in the past ten years. The Eurasian research culture may directly engage the efforts of a couple of thousand scholars across the ASEM community. The spin off from their endeavours can be enormous. It derives its influence, on the one hand, through the formulation and analysis of the issues that move Asian and European governments and the media, and, on the other hand, through the students trained and educated in this culture who move outside academia to other positions in society. Developing and sustaining such a Eurasian research culture presents a small financial investment in comparison to the fruits that will certainly be derived from it. With the growing unilateralist attitude of the US in practically all matters, it seems more necessary than ever that Europe and Asia rediscover their own rich cultural and intellectual traditions for the benefit of the whole world.

The ultimate success of ASEM will depend on the active participation of the citizens of both continents. Researchers can contribute to this goal by taking a Eurasian stance as a starting point for their research endeavours. We hope that by the time of the next ASEM in Hanoi in 2004 the ASEM Research Platform will prove to be a valuable (re)source for the strengthening of the process as a whole. <

Dr Paul van der Velde is supervisor of the above project.

Rima Sondaite-van Soest, BA is content manager of the ASEM website hosted by the IIAS. iias@let.leidenuniv.nl



ASEM website screen dump.

Asem platform >

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) was officially established in 1996 at the first summit in Bangkok. ASEM is an inter-regional forum that consists of seven members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), China, Japan, South Korea, and the fifteen members of the European Union (EU). The main components of the ASEM process, which has so far been loosely organized, include political dialogue, security and the economy, and education and culture (the so-called three pillars). In general, the process is considered by the parties involved to be a way of deepening the relations between Asia and Europe at all levels, which is deemed necessary to achieve a more balanced political and economic world order. The process is enhanced by the biannual meetings of heads of state, alternately in Europe and Asia, and political, economic, and cultural meetings and events at various other levels. In the past six years ASEM has been the topic of intellectual debate and much has been written about it. Nonetheless, thus far information about this process has been scattered. With the founding of the ASEM Research Platform (ARP) and its ASEM portal, the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) hopes to facilitate this important process. ARP team Supervisors: Prof. Wim Stokhof (director IIAS) and Dr Paul van der Velde, Content manager: Rima Sondaite-van Soest, BA, Webmaster: Afelonne Doek, MA



Gunaratna delivering the IIAS Annual Lecture at DeBalie, Amsterdam, 14 June 2002

continued from page 1 >

Sulawesi, Indonesia. Similar facilities were later established in Algeria and Chechnya. Although the loss of Taliban control in Afghanistan was a massive blow to al-Qaeda, the support it enjoys in the tribal areas as well as its pre-9/11 decentralization is likely to ensure its survival.

Al-Qaeda's post-9/11 pronouncements – including Abu Gaith Sulayman's recorded message – reflect both its intention and will to attack Western and especially US targets. Although it has lost key leaders such as its military commander Mohommad Atef, alias Abu Hafs, al-Qaeda's core leadership is still intact.¹ Furthermore, the Islamist milieu in both the Muslim territorial and migrant communities continues to provide recruits, finances, and other forms of support, allowing it to replenish its human and material losses. As a result, al-Qaeda's global network – with members drawn from 46 countries and activities in 98 countries – is still functional, including its operatives in Europe (according to CIA

Wim Vreeburg

estimates). Although the planning and preparing for attacks by its operational cells have been disrupted in Western Europe, al-Qaeda's support cells are still active in propaganda activities, raising of funds, recruiting, procuring supplies, and mounting surveillance on intended targets. Its collaborators, supporters, and sympathizers are filling the leadership vacuum created by the first wave of arrests of al-Qaeda leaders in Europe immediately after 9/11. The post-9/11 cells are more clandestine, compact, and self-contained, thus hard to detect and disrupt.

Current threat

After 9/11 al-Qaeda attempted but failed to destroy US, UK, Australian, and Israeli diplomatic missions, attack both a US warship off Singapore and US and British warships in the Straits of Gibraltar, and poison the water supply to the US embassy in Rome. In addition to the shoe-bomber, Richard Reid, trying to destroy an aircraft over the Atlantic, al-Qaeda also attempted to bomb the US embassy and American cultural centre in Paris and attack the US base in Sarajevo. A Sudanese member of al-Qaeda fired a surface to air missile at a US warplane taking off from the Prince Sultan airbase in Saudi Arabia in December 2001. Al-Qaeda suicide bombers also attacked a French oil tanker off Yemen and US troops in Kuwait in October 2002. To instigate Islamists to strike worldwide Jewish targets, Nizar Seif Eddin al-Tunisi alias Nizar Nouar, a Tunisian al-Qaeda suicide bomber, rammed into Ghriba Synagogue, Africa's oldest Jewish synagogue, with a Liquid Petroleum Gas vehicle, killing 14 German tourists, including one child, and 5 Tunisians in Djerba, Tunisia on 11 April 2002. Al-Qaeda's front, The Islamic Army for the Liberation of the Holy Sites, claimed the attack, which was subsequently confirmed as being an al-Qaeda operation in an interview with Abdel Azeem al-Muhajir, an al-Qaeda military commander.

Due to the difficulty of operating in the post-9/11 environment, al-Qaeda has delegated and diffused many of its responsibilities to other Islamist movements (parties and groups) under its umbrella. Al-Qaeda is operating through a number of groups with which it shared training, financial, and operational infrastructures in Afghanistan – a phenomenon most visible in Pakistan. Beginning with the massacre of the Christians in Bhawalpur in the Punjab district in October 2001, al-Qaeda has launched a number of terrorist operations, including the kidnapping and murder of the *Wall Street Journal* journalist Daniel Pearl and a church bombing in Islamabad, killing a US diplomat's wife and daughter. A suicide bomber of Harakat-ul Mujahidin-al-Aalami, an al-Qaeda associate group, killed 11 Frenchmen and 12 Pakistanis on 18 May 2002. The well-planned attack was conducted after mounting surveillance on the Sheraton hotel

and the bus route used by French naval engineers and technicians working on the submarine project in Karachi. The suicide vehicle bomb attack by an al-Qaeda associate group against the US Consulate in Karachi on 14 June 2002 injured a US marine and killed 11 Pakistanis. Using the same vehicle, they also targeted President Musharraf on 26 April, but the remote control failed to detonate the explosives.

Taliban and al-Qaeda

While the Taliban is a guerrilla force operating somewhat openly, al-Qaeda remains a clandestine terrorist group. Their combined strategy is to install a regime that is friendly, or at least neutral to the Islamists in Pakistan. As they believe that the future survival of al-Qaeda and the Taliban along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border will depend on their ability to generate sustained support from Pakistan, they are likely to target Musharraf repeatedly. Al-Qaeda also mounted at least two clandestine operations to assassinate President Hamid Karzai and cabinet ministers. On 29 July 2002 an Afghan and a foreigner were arrested when driving through the centre of Kabul in an explosive (Semtex)-laden vehicle. In September 2002, a second al-Qaeda assassination operation was disrupted by Karzai's US bodyguards and, immediately after, an unknown group positioned a claymore mine on a route usually taken by the presidential motorcade.

Primary target

The US remains the principal target of al-Qaeda as reflected when Osama stated: 'The battle has moved to inside America. We will continue this battle, God permitting, until victory or until we meet God.'² Until the US intelligence agencies infiltrate terrorist groups, which cannot be accomplished in the short term, the US will remain as vulnerable as it was before 9/11. Other governments have also earned the wrath of al-Qaeda. After, for example, the Singaporean government disrupted cells of Jamaayah Islamiyah (al-Qaeda's arm in Singapore), the leadership relocated to Indonesia and vowed to crash a plane on to the Changi international airport in Singapore. Similarly, in retaliation for Pakistan's support for the US, several Islamist groups in Pakistan are attacking soft targets nationwide.

With unprecedented security, intelligence, and law enforcement cooperation as well as with heightened public alertness, al-Qaeda is unable to engage in extensive and long-term planning and international preparation, a pre-requisite for conducting coordinated simultaneous attacks. Nonetheless, its super cells are likely to plan, prepare, and execute another mass casualty attack. For the time being due to the limitations of mounting another large-scale operation to attack a population centre, economic infrastructure, and symbolic/prestigious targets inside the US, a range of other

Editors' note >

Dr Rohan Gunaratna presented the 2002 IIAS Annual Lecture entitled 'Al-Qaeda in the Asia-Pacific: Origins, Capability, and Threat'. The above article is a shortened and edited version of Dr Gunaratna's full article, which can be found on: www.iias.nl/iiasn/29/gunaratna.html

Lectures on the Present, Lessons from the Past: al-Qa`ida as the New Pan-Islam

Forum >
General
14 & 25 June 2002
Amsterdam & Leiden,
the Netherlands

Martin van Bruinessen has recently found himself chairing two forums on the al-Qa`ida-S11 nexus. The first was the IIAS annual lecture, given in Amsterdam on 14 June 2002 by a specialist on terrorism, Rohan Gunaratna of St Andrew's University, Edinburgh. The second was given on in Leiden 25 June by the established commentator on Islamist discourse and director of Georgetown University's Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Yvonne Haddad.

By Michael Laffan

Gunaratna presented a well-oiled narrative of the rise, proliferation, and continuing threat of al-Qa`ida, whilst Haddad detailed the position of Muslims in the United States before and after al-Qa`ida's deadliest action. Each lecture was presented in widely divergent circumstances. Gunaratna was placed upon a dais at DeBalie, where he was metamorphosed by ghastly red lighting that gave his presentation a mood of inherent peril. Two weeks later, an understated Haddad stood in an unremarkable classroom of Leiden University's LAK complex and put forward the straight-forward case of a community that was now frightened and vulnerable, leaving little room to anticipate any hope for the future.

Both spoke with ease and conviction.

In the case of Gunaratna, conclusions of clear and present danger left policy-experts and diplomats nodding and some academic specialists of Islam, and particularly those working on Indonesia, shaking their heads and considering the merits of interjection. Certainly, reliable evidence for an al-Qa`ida connection with the spate of bombings in Jakarta in December 2000 is yet to be made publicly available. And even when the recent events on Bali are thrown into the confused mix of information and lies, Gunaratna's simplistic black and white narrative is all the more attractive to those who make the news. Nonetheless, a grey area for some present at his lecture in June was the lack of discussion of the underlying ideology of al-Qa`ida, for it is in this area that Osama bin Laden and his followers differ on many levels with apparently like-minded

Islamists – be they Jihadist Salafis or the Muslim Brothers. On the whole though, Gunaratna seemed to leave little doubt (or at least have none of that worrying feeling) that al-Qa`ida stood behind a large proportion of discontent and direct action in the entire Asian-Pacific region, which is an explanation that will sit easily with some policy-making quarters, and which so easily captivates segments of the media (see for example: www.theage.com.au, 13 October 2002; CNN broadcast, Maria Ressa, 13 October 2002).

By comparison, Haddad – who has had longer experience in researching Islamist ideology – needed no props to convince her smaller audience of the worrying turns taken by the US administration at home as a part of the 'War' on terror. She pointed out that, concomitant with their desire for security,

Americans are increasingly willing to sacrifice some of their freedoms (but not, of course, their right to bear arms). This has meant that whilst Muslims of all persuasions had felt free to speak in the past, or that they even had some influence in political circles, they are now effectively carrying out self-censorship or dissimulation. Meanwhile the administration seeks to foster the right sort of 'moderate' Muslim to assume the leadership of America's least understood religious minority. According to Haddad, this is done by sampling the literature of mosque and madrasa, and by trying to domesticate the imams in the US by recognizing them as a sort of clergy. The whole enterprise, she suggests, is sold to the public as a mission to rescue women from a medieval faith.

Taken together, we can see that the US administration perceives, and is thus prosecuting a physical war on, a network that is omnipresent and, in some respects, equal to its most sophisticated techniques of information-gathering and security. At least that is the view we are not discouraged from hold-

ing. Both at home and abroad this translates into a dual policy of vigorous intervention and sharper surveillance combined with an attempt to steer Muslims towards the privatization of religion – which is ironic coming from what is perhaps the most consciously religious nation-state in the world.

For the observer of colonial history there are remarkable parallels with current US policy and that of the late colonial state in the Netherlands Indies. From the 1870s, when the Netherlands was starting to finalize the borders of what would one day become Indonesia, officials were conscious that their own economic interests were under threat from a seemingly all-pervasive Islamic network. Most palpably Islamic resistance was manifested by the people of Aceh in a struggle that would drag on for thirty years. Seeing tentacles of Islamism everywhere, the Dutch believed that there had to be a head. Their version of al-Qa`ida then was the octopus of pan-Islam, plotted in Istanbul and Mecca, and carried eastward by Arab traders and mystics, Turkish envoys, and returning pilgrims.

options remains open – from ‘going to sleep’ or hibernating, taking opportunity targets, to tasking other groups. Of the dozen medium- and small-scale attacks conducted by al-Qaeda and its associate groups only a few have been successful. They have failed due to tighter international, especially US, security countermeasures and hurried al-Qaeda planning. Nonetheless, al-Qaeda ideology ensures that, like a revengeful and a retaliatory wounded animal, the group is determined to strike back. As a result of a range of countermeasures, the spectrum of threat is expanding to include a wider range of targets as well as a change in the modus operandi. Al-Qaeda is operating through other Islamist groups, providing them trainers and funds, influencing their strategic and tactical direction, and is also likely to operate through associated groups.

Importance of Afghanistan-Pakistan borders

The developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan are central to the survival of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. These two groups are adapting to the security environment and can be seen to have undergone three internal strategic changes. First, Mullah Omar, leader of the Taliban and former head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, has assumed the principal responsibility of fighting the US-led coalition forces in Afghanistan. In the fight, Osama bin Laden himself has pledged loyalty and allegiance to his leadership. Since Osama went into hiding, as the ‘leader of the Faithful’, Mullah Omar spearheaded the regrouping and re-organizing of the Taliban after 9/11. After re-establishing communication with the scattered units of the Taliban, he regrouped them along secure areas of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Their dream is to consolidate, as they did during the Soviet period, the strength of the Taliban and deepen their strategic influence in Afghanistan and Pakistan by preparing for a campaign of protracted guerrilla warfare. To rebuild support, the Taliban indoctrinates the Afghan people both directly by disseminating propaganda and through supporters and sympathizers scattered throughout Afghanistan.

Second, over the past year, the Taliban and al-Qaeda have replaced losses in the rank and file. Except during the first three months of confrontation, there are no signs of mass desertions from the Taliban or al-Qaeda, indicating the state of the morale within the rank and file. To compensate for the total loss of Pakistani state support of the Taliban, Mullah Omar has established Lashkar-e-Omar – a covert network of support organizations in Pakistan – to sustain a low intensity campaign in Afghanistan and in the area. By instigating its associate groups in Kashmir such as Harakat-ul Mujahidin and Jayash-e-Mohammad to intensify the violence in Kashmir, the Taliban forced Pakistan to re-deploy its troops on the Afghan border along the India-Pakistan border. With the

increased porosity of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, the Taliban and al-Qaeda have re-established their lines of communication, supplies, and recruits into Pakistan. The Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other associate groups are all harnessing the Islamist milieu in Pakistan and overseas (both territorial and migrant) to ensure a revival of support (encouragement, funds, and supplies). Conflicts of international neglect where Muslims are suffering – Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, Maluku, Mindanao, and Algeria, among others – ensure continuity of support.

Third, al-Qaeda’s deputy leader Dr Ayman Al-Zawahiri is playing a more substantial role. To topple Karzai in Afghanistan and Musharraf in Pakistan, al-Qaeda has established networks of collaborators, supporters, and sympathizers in both these countries. To coordinate and conduct operations, al-Qaeda is seeking to re-establish communication with its associate groups and command cells respectively. To revive support al-Qaeda is establishing linkages with its affiliate NGOs and other charities overseas. Although suicide terrorism coupled with conventional attacks has proven to be the most effective, with the failure to strike tactical US, Allied, and coalition targets, al-Qaeda and its associated groups are likely to go down the road of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) terrorism. Although it is still the ‘spearhead of Islam’ and the ‘pioneering vanguard of the Islamic movements’, al-Qaeda has inspired and instigated a wider constituency of groups and individuals to take on the fight for Allah. These Islamist groups continue to inspire and instigate violence against ‘the enemies of Islam’, ‘the infidels’, and the ‘unbelievers’ both by word of mouth and in over 1,000 sites on the Web. They are operating across a wide spectrum, from low to high tech, stretching government resources, and weakening security countermeasures. This demonstrates the success of al-Qaeda in educating a much wider constituency to challenge the West and Muslim regimes friendly to the West.

Southeast Asian network

Most academics find it difficult to understand al-Qaeda because the group functions both operationally and ideologically.³ In addition to dispatching its operatives to target countries, it provides the experts, training, and resources to other Islamist political and military organizations to advance a common goal. In the same way it has penetrated existing Islamist networks worldwide, al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia penetrated Jemaah Islamiyyah (JI), a regional organization with overground and underground networks extending from southern Thailand to Australia. Among the groups it has infiltrated and influenced are Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia; Jashkar Jundullah, Indonesia; and Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Philippines. When JI wanted to destroy the US, British, Australian, and Israeli diplo-

matic targets in Singapore, al-Qaeda dispatched four Afghan-trained Arab suicide bombers to Southeast Asia. In an interview, an al-Qaeda detainee stated: ‘We did not want to risk using Asian Muslims for a landmark operation.’⁴

By physical and intellectual contact, al-Qaeda members (ideologues, trainers, operatives) and its literature (www.alneda.com) have physically and ideologically strengthened a dozen Islamist terrorist groups, numerous political parties, charities, and individuals. Towards a Darulah Islamiah Raya, about 400 Islamists have been trained in facilities in Afghanistan (Derunta, Khalden, etc.), Pakistan (Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar), Malaysia (Negri Sembilan), Indonesia (Poso, Sulawesi), and the Philippines (Mindanao) since 1993. In the region, it has created a mission and a vision for the Islamists to create a caliphate comprising Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Mindanao.

The future

In many ways, al-Qaeda decentralized before 9/11. With focused targeting on the Afghan-Pakistan border where both al-Qaeda and the Taliban (Mullah Omar Faction) are concentrated, the group will depend on its regional networks, such as its Southeast Asian network, to continue the fight. Al-Qaeda’s disrupted Singapore operation clearly demonstrates the group’s intentions as well as its capabilities and opportunities for attacking target-rich Southeast Asia.

Largely due to the tireless efforts of the intelligence community, especially of the Singaporean service, the region is aware of the existence of a resilient terrorist network. Only a regional approach involving all ASEAN countries can prompt the region to comprehensive and sustained action.

The first step towards reducing the immediate threat to Southeast Asia is to develop and implement a multi-pronged, multi-dimensional, multi-agency approach by ASEAN countries to target al-Qaeda’s support and operational infrastructure at home and in the immediate neighbourhood. ◀

Dr Rohan Gunaratna is author of the international best seller Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). ISRKGunaratna@ntu.edu.sg

Notes >

- 1 See pages 288–9 of Gunaratna, Rohan, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, New York: Columbia University Press (2002).
- 2 Interview with Tayseer Allouni, al-Jazeera’s Kabul correspondent, 21 October 2001.
- 3 As al-Qaeda, a secret organization, continues to pose a threat, governments do not wish to make information about the group public.
- 4 The author interviewed a number of al-Qaeda and Taliban detainees, including the American-Taliban John Walker Lindh in US custody.

By way of response measures were taken to gain an eye into the process. The Netherlands consulate in Jeddah took greater interest in the souls passing through its courtyard. The future doyen of Islamic studies and colonial policy, C. Snouck Hurgronje, was even dispatched to the Hijaz in 1884–85 to assess the reality of the threat.

Back in Java in 1882, the administration had already sought to subsume the local Islamic courts by creating their own misnamed ‘Priestly Courts’. Overseen by the local Dutch official, its scholars were now the salaried officials of a Christian state. Of course such measure did not go far enough, and they were already misconceived in many cases. Repeated proposals to limit the pilgrimage, for example, were regularly shelved, and some teachers continued to shun the entire system and its puppet courts. Still, in looking for statist pan-Islamism, officials and their agents became to an extent aware of the nature of a more real and effective spiritual current in Islam, which in some cases promoted an increased emphasis on the outward forms of orthodoxy.

A new approach was required, and following for a time the advice of Snouck and his fellow-travellers, the Dutch attempted to enact what he termed the policy of Association in order to create an Islam that was personalized. Through their exposure to what Snouck called the ‘torch of civilization’, an enlightened elite would lead their people in an enduring partnership with the Netherlands. Indies Muslims were to be ‘emancipated’ from the ‘medieval rubbish they had carried in their wake for far too long’ (Snouck Hurgronje 1915: 79). They were, furthermore, to be stripped of their political aspirations, and especially the idea that armed struggle could be a tool to this end. Still, Snouck’s policies were ultimately made redundant by the course of the Indonesian struggle for independence. Many of the emancipees created by modern education often saw the hollowness of what was on offer from the Netherlands, and in some cases turned back to their faith as a source of difference and empowerment.

But to return to the present. The idea that Islam might be personalized through education and an exposure to ‘Western’ modernity resembles the developmentalist approach still employed by the United States. Yet this has already had its failures which have contributed in part to today’s discourse of discontent. By exposing Muslims from the once left-leaning Middle East to the fruits of Western democracy, many different bodies were created. These include those who have, in America, accepted the benefits of openness and democracy denied to them at home – whether by ancestral houses or military regimes – and found, as professor Haddad pointed out, an opportunity to practice doctrinal tolerance. On the other hand, a well-trained and disaffected twin-body was also created. Many of its members have been skilled engineers and doctors who have seen the Western system of prosperity shored up by poverty elsewhere. According to Haddad, this sense was often brought home to them by the encounter with new refugees from Bosnia or Afghanistan. In order to

actively combat this injustice, they too have used the freedoms available to them in the West and have turned their skills to the new proliferation of Islamic propagation on the Internet. But in today’s climate, it is these people – regardless of the intensity of their feeling or their particular ideological commitment – who have the most to fear in the United States; just as they would in Egypt or Kuwait. Nasr Abu Zaid – who was present at Haddad’s lecture and is himself the target of Islamist threats in Egypt – is right to worry a world in which people are not allowed to say what they want, no matter how stupid it may seem.

Of course, in the case of the Netherlands and its former colony, it was a threat ‘over there’ that impacted upon the Dutch economically more than as a daily threat to personal safety and a continued way of life. The United States and its allies must take action to protect their citizens, but not without considering the fundamental causes of 9/11. On the whole though, international and domestic voices for moderation will continue to be implicitly rejected by the

fateful division of the world into for and against. Washington will most likely stay hamstrung by its choice of international protégés, and an inability to tackle the roots of Muslim (and indeed global) discontent: namely social injustice. This is not to say that it is all America’s fault. The rhetoric of the evil of capitalism is as simplistic as that of the evil of Islamism. Nonetheless, until the question of social justice is honestly addressed, no amount of surveillance, military intervention or sympathetic education can ward off the threat of terrorism. ◀

– Snouck Hurgronje, C., *Nederland en de Islâm* (2e vermeerdeerde druk), Leiden: Brill (1915).

Dr Michael Laffan completed his PhD on the history of Islamic nationalism in colonial Indonesia. In January 2002, he joined the IIAS project on ‘Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century’, where he is concentrating on the competing discourses of traditionalism and modernism. M.Laffan@let.leidenuniv.nl

Asians of the Same Intent

Introduction >
Asia

The 1990s, as the articles in the upcoming pages demonstrate, have witnessed a growth of both Western and Asian scholarly interest in same-sex sexuality in contemporary and traditional Asian societies. We have just begun to scrutinize the wealth of historical documents on the subject, and to reconstruct conceptual models buried underneath modern discourses on health and sexuality largely of Western origin (if often appearing in quite different ideological guises).

By Giovanni Vitiello

Homosexuality has not simply been recovered as a legitimate field of academic study. The visibility of homosexuality in the Asian media, as well as in literature and in the arts, has likewise seen a marked increase over the past decade. It may not be just a coincidence that three of the best-known Chinese films of the 1990s, *Farewell My Concubine*, *The Wedding Banquet*, and *Happy Together*, deal with male homoeroticism. Indeed one is reminded of Chi Ta-wei's comments on the recent boom of gay and lesbian literature in Taiwan as a 'return of the repressed'. At the same time, the profile of a political movement fighting for the equal rights of sexual minorities (a movement in many cases triggered and legitimized by the AIDS crisis) has also become a growingly defined presence in the cultural landscape of a number of Asian countries.

As the authors warn us more than once, however, the increased visibility of homosexuality in the media is far from transparent – media representations are rarely devoid of discriminatory biases. Sharon Chalmers, for instance, points at the (perhaps predictable) gender bias that makes Japanese lesbians

much less visible than gay men. As she shows, even in Japan, where transvestite women have played an important role in the entertainment business for a century, and in spite of the growth of supportive spaces, especially in the last three decades, lesbians are still relatively invisible in their society. The fascination of Japanese popular culture with male romances, discussed by Mark McLelland, is not paralleled by an equal fascination with female ones.

While acknowledging the important role of the PRC media and scholars in informing audiences about homosexual culture, Cui Zi'en also laments a systematic objectification of homosexuals in various public discourses, through rhetorical approaches that filter or suppress the voices of homosexuals. Speaking of Taiwan, Fran Martin also remarks on the homophobic tone of much of the media 'buzz' around homosexuality. As she points out, even in Taiwan, where activism for the rights of sexual minorities has been particularly successful, changes in terms of political culture affect only a small, urban, intellectual fraction of the population, while prejudice is hardly countered elsewhere in society. As Rick Smith observes when speaking of Mongolia, although homo-

phobia in Asia does not involve 'organized hate groups', it may often take the form of rejection from one's family and hostility from friends. In Indonesian society, for example, transgendered males (or *warias*) have a traditionally acknowledged place. But as Dédé Oetomo wryly points out *warias* are respected precisely for having made it in spite of all the familial and social obstacles – that is, for being survivors – and people in general don't mind them 'as long as they are not their own kin'. In that *warias* operate beauty salons and tell fortunes, manage the sacred as shamans or mediums, provide silicon injections, and implant propitious fake moles, they can be said to be socially accepted – as long as they operate within the space traditionally assigned to them. Most importantly, although *warias* do have communities, those communities are not connected in a political organization.

The picture of Asian sexual culture has been complicated in the 1990s by the appearance of new models of same-sex sexuality with their attendant political identities and aims – some of them coming from the West (especially the US), such as the 'gay' and 'queer' identities, and some being indigenous developments, like the Chinese *tongzhi*.



Giovanni Vitiello

Maurice Sidermans

Tongzhi (literally, 'people of the same intent') has come to refer to homosexuality in the Chinese language – first in Hong Kong, then in Taiwan, and now even in Mainland China, where it has swiftly displaced its old meaning of '(Communist) comrade'. The phrase, notably transcending gender dichotomies, is inclusive of gays, lesbians, and other sexual minorities.

It is tempting to link this conceptual flexibility with the 'existential ambiguity that refuses to be neatly boxed into identity categories', which Tze-lan Sang retrieves in the fiction of two women writers of the 1990s. The rise of the *dee* lesbian identity in Thailand, an identity based on sexuality rather than gender inversion, as Megan Sinnott observes, is another indicator that Asian (homo)sexual culture is changing. Foreign identities such as 'gay' and 'queer', and their lifestyles, have meanwhile made their way into the cultural scene of many Asian urban centres, inevitably coming to terms with local identities

and being renegotiated in the process, as the debate surrounding Qiu Miaojin's fiction, described by Martin, also shows. These new developments in sexual politics appear to trigger anxiety in some governments. The state-sponsored Thai homophobia that Sinnott considers, for example, cannot be explained in terms of continuity with a supposed traditional hostility towards same-sex sexuality.

Rather, it is more likely that this anxiety is related to the fact that the experience of gay and lesbian political activism in the West has become more available to Asian homosexuals. As He Xiaopei's account makes clear, the legacy of Stonewall is transnational, and its message can resonate powerfully in today's Asia, even if it is just whispered. ◀

Professor Giovanni Vitiello is associate professor of Chinese at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. His research focuses on male homoeroticism and the history of pornography in late imperial China. vitiello@hawaii.edu

Restless Longing: Homoerotic Fiction in China

Research >
China

Since market reform began in China in the early 1980s, the era has brought many tumultuous changes, including dramatic transformations in sex culture.¹ While most Western studies of post-socialist Chinese sexuality have thus far focused on dominant heterosexual practices and narratives, researchers have also been quick to recognize that cosmopolitan gay and lesbian identities have sprung up in many mainland Chinese metropolises.² Indeed, the lives and subcultures of lesbians and gays in post-socialist China are now intently probed, not only by sociologists and anthropologists, but also by local and foreign journalists.³ What has perhaps been neglected by the growing social sciences literature and media reportage on the mainland Chinese lesbian and gay scene is the fact that same-sex sexuality has been at the centre of the oeuvres of some serious fiction writers in the People's Republic since the 1980s.

By Tze-lan D. Sang

Two cases in point are Lin Bai (b. 1958) and Chen Ran (b. 1962). Lin's short stories, novellas, and novels are noted for their sensitive treatment of female sexuality. They have long been acknowledged by Chinese literary critics such as Chen Xiaoming, Dai Jinhua, and Xu Kun as fine examples of Chinese feminist texts. Although Lin's daring exploration of female sexuality is not limited to the desire between women, lesbian desire is one of the recurring themes in her works. Years before cosmopolitan queer activists (such as the Beijing-based female painter and film producer Shi Tou) became vocal about lesbian issues in the media, Lin's fiction had already challenged homophobia as a form of internalized social discrimination.⁴ For

example, Duomi, the protagonist of Lin's autobiographical novel, *One Person's War* (*Yige ren de zhanzheng*, 1993), experiences instinctual urges as a child to explore the sensations of her own private parts and does so by enlisting another girl's assistance. As Duomi grows up, however, she learns to consider intimacy with other women as abnormal and comes to identify her childhood same-sex play as shameful. Even though Lin does not explicitly criticize homophobia as socially constructed, her depiction of a protagonist who constrains her own spontaneous polymorphous desire because of society's prejudices against homosexuals sets the stage for future critiques of heteronormativity and lesbian self-denial.

Chen Ran, like Lin, is one of the most discussed authors in the Chinese literary critics' debate over 'female writing' (*nüxing xiezu*) and 'individualistic writing' (*gerenhua xiezu*) between the mid- and late 1990s. Her representations of female sexuality, including female-female love, have frequently invited comparison with Lin's despite the fact that the two writers actually have rather different styles. Whereas Lin's language is lyrical, metaphorical, and highly evocative of sensory experiences, Chen's tends to be quirky, eccentric, and parodic. Ideologically, the two writers are also different. Contrary to Lin's morbid fascination with internalized homophobia, Chen adamantly defends the rights of minorities, including sexual minorities. Her opposition to heterosexual hegemony has been articulated most directly in her essay 'Gender-Transcendent Consciousness and My Creative Writing' ('Chao xingbie yishi yu wode chuanguo', 1994), and in her short story 'Breaking Through' ('Pokai', 1995). Her only full-length novel to date, *Private Life* (*Siren shenghuo*, 1994) also explores bisexuality in depth. She is, in addition, a candid sympathizer of a group of lesbian-identified young women in Beijing who started the

underground lesbian newsletter *Sky* (*Tiankong*; chief editor Shi Tou) in March 1999. In Chen's case, then, there is only a thin line between literary experimentation and social activism. Her pursuit of artistic freedom constantly gets translated into a passionate concern about individual freedom, and vice versa.

Despite their differences, one might see that Lin and Chen both champion an aesthetics of the liminal, giving seductive shapes to an existential ambiguity that refuses to be neatly boxed into identity categories. The recurring motifs of Lin's work are irreducible personal difference, self-doubts, and self-denial. Paradoxically, as can be seen in *One Person's War*, a salient performative lesbian identity is called into being precisely by her main character's repeated utterances to negate that identity. By contrast, Chen imagines a restless romantic longing that is unrestrained by conventional gender definitions, that subverts dominant post-socialist ideals of femininity and heterosexual courtship. Her desired fluidity disintegrates both gender and sexual identities.⁵ If one is intent on reading national allegory into these narratives, one might argue that Lin's and Chen's examinations of liminal states of being, aptly articulate the general discomfort with identity in a globalizing China, as the nation moves away from the memories of Mao and yearns to become cosmopolitan, yet resists foregone (i.e. globally dominant) conclusions of what it means to be cosmopolitan.

Significantly, as women writers' fictional representations of female homoeroticism proliferate, there is also in general a broadening social realm in which pluralistic interpretations of such works are becoming possible. The growing pluralism unsettles the dominance of traditional moralism, on the one hand, and the voyeuristic fantasies encouraged by the new consumer economy, on the other. Although thus far literary scholars in the mainland academic establishment have turned out far more feminist analyses than specifically queer readings of women's homoerotic fiction, China may be now poised at a point where specifically lesbian or queer critical analyses will enter the academic establishment from the margins. ◀

Professor Tze-lan D. Sang is assistant professor of Chinese literature at the University of Oregon in the United States. Her research interests are modern and late imperial Chinese fiction, urban studies, media studies, and gender theory. sang@oregon.uoregon.edu

Notes >

- 1 For social scientists' perspectives, see James Farrer, *Opening Up: Youth Sex Culture and Market Reform in Shanghai*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2001); Judith Farquhar, *Appetites: Food and Sex in Post-Socialist China*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press (2002).
- 2 See, for instance, Lisa Rofel, 'Qualities of Desire: Imagining Gay Identities in China', *GLQ* 5, No. 4 (1999), pp. 451-74.
- 3 For an example of local media coverage, see the January 2002 issue of *Modern Civilization Pictorial* (*Xiandai wenming huabao*), a special issue on lesbians and gays in China.
- 4 Shi Tou and the gay film critic and novelist Cui Zi'en came out on Hunan Satellite Television in December 2000. For a transcript of the programme, visit www.aizhi.org.hnws.htm
- 5 A more detailed discussion of Lin Bai and Chen Ran can be found in my monograph, *The Emerging Lesbian: Female Same-Sex Desire in Modern China*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2002), chapters 7 and 8.

Kamingu Auto: Homosexuality & Popular Culture in Japan

Research >
Japan

Representations of sexual and gender nonconformity have long been apparent in Japanese popular culture, in modern times dating back at least to the Taisho period (1912–1926). Today, the most visible images of male homosexuality (outside the gay press) occur on television and in women's comics that specialize in the homoerotic adventures of *bishonen* or 'beautiful boys'. Beginning in the early 1970s with classics such as Hagio Moto's *The Heart of Thomas* and Takemiya Keiko's *Song of the Wind and the Trees*, the genre has expanded to include a wide range of titles dealing with the love between boys, and to a lesser extent between girls. Readers claim that the forbidden and often tragic love between boys is somehow more 'pure' and more 'equal' than that which exists between men and women, constrained as they are by the reproductive demands of the family system.

By Mark J. McLelland

Television has long been a site supportive of gender and sexuality play. Transvestite 'talents' (*tarento*) such as Peter and Miwa Akihiro have had uninterrupted entertainment careers since the 1960s. They frequently appear on panel shows, and in 2000 Miwa's career was the subject of an appreciative documentary of the Japanese television station NHK. In the early 1980s, male-to-female transgender singer and model Matsubara Rumiko was a big hit, both as a singer and television personality, and through her a new term was introduced into Japanese: 'new-half' (*nyūhāfu*), now used to refer to male-to-female transgendered individuals who work in Japan's sex and entertainment industries. Gender-bending *enka* singer Mikawa Ken'ichi is one of

Japanese television's biggest stars, appearing almost nightly on a variety of different shows. His exotic 'visual effects' performance on behalf of the men's team of the *Red and White Song Contest* at the New Year is the highlight of the show. Although sexually ambiguous female personalities are more difficult to come by on Japanese television, the aggressive self-presentation of hostess and singer Wada Akiko clearly transgresses acceptable modes of female behaviour, as does that of 'Dump' Matsumoto, a former female wrestler. *Otokoyaku*, that is women actors who specialize in the male roles in the all-woman theatre troupe Takarazuka, can also graduate into television careers when they retire from the theatre, usually in their early thirties, and they maintain many of their masculine mannerisms. Indeed, in the recent film version of the classic Heian-period (794–1185) *Tale of Genji*, the role of Prince Genji was played by a former *otokoyaku*.

'Gei puraido' and lifestyle

In the early 1990s, however, Japanese media experienced a 'gay boom' in which television programmes, magazines, newspapers, and movies began to move away from the stereotypical treatment of gay and transgendered people as providers of entertainment and focused instead upon real people and real lives. The widespread interest in gender and sexual nonconformity created by the boom enabled a number of gay and lesbian activists to publish their own 'coming out' narratives and thus *kamingu auto* became a new English loanword often repeated in the media. The early 1990s also saw the birth of the Men's Movement in Japan and the inclusion of masculinity (there was already a tradition of women's studies) as a topic for analysis in some university courses. This led to an increase in more highbrow treatments of gender and sexuality, with special journal editions being dedicated to specifically Japanese forms of sexual diversity.

Gay media, which had tended to be oriented towards erotica, representing homosexuality as a sexual practice as opposed to an 'identity' or a 'lifestyle choice', also began to diversify during this period, albeit slowly. Japan's first lifestyle-oriented gay magazine, *Fabulous*, first published in 1999, was not a success and folded after only four issues. However, *Queer Japan*, also first published in 1999, is a more highbrow, identity-oriented publication that is still going

strong. The Internet is also an important new development which has provided a forum for the discussion of lifestyle and identity issues previously lacking in the gay media, and gay, lesbian, and transgender websites have been instrumental in further dispersing a range of English loanwords such as *gei puraido*, *homofobia*, and *kamingu auto*.

In recent years there has been an increase in both the number and diversity of representations of sexual minorities, predominantly gay men but also including lesbians, and since the legalisation on sex-change operations in 1998, of transsexuals and transgender individuals too. This comes at a time of great stress in Japanese society when fixed notions of family, education, and work practices are under strain in the face of the longest recession in recent history and when the divorce rate is rising and the birth rate is falling. A voluble discourse of complaint is apparent in the media where increased space is being given to individuals whose gender performance hardly supports established roles and to members of sexual minorities. It is increasingly the case that strict insistence on reproductive heterosexuality within the nuclear family as the paradigmatic life path is beginning to weaken. For instance, Japan's Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō is divorced (and remains unmarried). 'Salaryman Kintarō', the hero of one of Japan's most popular soaps (and comic books) is a single father, and gay activists such as Itō Satoru write columns in daily newspapers and magazines about their vision of a Japan free from discrimination on the basis of gender and sexuality.

Despite the fact that many same-sex desiring and transgendered individuals in Japan feel severely constrained by social expectations, as evidenced by the many online problem pages that exist, there is the feeling that the old certainties that made possible Japan's 'economic miracle' are increasingly being brought into question. Neither male nor female homosexuality is illegal in Japan and activists who in other societies have had to wage battles against restrictive legislation and unequal age of consent laws have been able to pursue other causes. The recent inclusion of mention of lesbian and gay people in a Tokyo Metropolitan white paper on human rights suggests that things are moving in Japan, and in a positive direction. <

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Dr Mark J. McLelland is a postdoctoral fellow in the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland and is the co-editor of *Japanese Cybercultures* (Routledge 2002).
m.mcllelland@mailbox.uq.edu.au



'Schoolboys make out in the girls'. Taken from the comic B-Boy.

Gay vs. 'Kathoey': Homosexual Identities in Thailand

Research >
Thailand

In December 1996, the largest Thai government institute of higher learning, the Ratchaphat Institute, announced that they were banning homosexuals from their nationwide system of teacher's colleges. The ruling was withdrawn after widespread criticism, but only after lengthy public debate in which NGO activists and liberal academics, calling for the protection of human rights, rallied against state officials. Yielding to critics who claimed the college's actions violated the newly ratified 'people's constitution', Ratchaphat modified the ban to the point of nullity in a face-saving retreat.

By Megan Sinnott

Ratchaphat's action was newsworthy not because it was a typical repressive action by the Thai state. On the contrary, men and women engaging in homosexual relationships in Thailand have been relatively free of the kind of official legalistic discrimination and harassment that gays and lesbians in Western countries have historically faced. Unlike its southern Muslim neighbour, Buddhist Thailand is without religious or legal injunctions against homosexuality, apart from a brief and unused law dating from legal reforms in the early part of

the twentieth century. Ratchaphat's official condemnation of homosexuality appears oddly out of place given the historical lack of official concern with homosexuality.

The significance of this brief yet sensational controversy concerning the Ratchaphat ban lies in its articulation of a relatively new discourse of public sexual morality in which homosexuality has become a marked, lived, and challenged identity. In the past thirty years, Thai society has witnessed both an increase in anti-homosexual statements propagated by the state, and the rapid growth of communities of men and women who are

engaged in long-term homosexual relationships. These men and women have formed hybrid identities in which traditional notions of gendered identities have combined with newer concepts of sexual orientation.

The more traditional understanding of what is now called 'homosexuality' in Thailand relies on the primacy of gender (visible markers of masculinity or femininity) rather than sexual behaviour per se. The imagery of a third gender within Thai culture dates back hundreds of years, evident in pre-Buddhist myths and the Thai concept of *kathoey* (Morris 1994). *Kathoey* means an indeterminate gender or a

combination of masculine and feminine gender, and is usually translated into English as either 'hermaphrodite' or 'third sex'. In contemporary usage, *kathoey* is commonly used to refer to a man who appears to embody what are understood to be feminine characteristics. 'Homosexuality' (*rak-ruam-phet*) is a mid-twentieth-century addition to the Thai vocabulary but is largely understood as existing within this model of gender inversion represented by the *kathoey* (Jackson 1997). Therefore, homosexuals are commonly understood to be emotional *kathoey*, such as men who feel they are women, or women who feel they are men.

In the past three decades, some homosexual Thai men have formed a personal identity that distances itself from the transgendered *kathoey*. These men use the English term 'gay' as a positive self-referent in which they position themselves as extensions of a

transnational gay identity. However, even within this gay identity are referents to gendered positions. While these distinctions may not be obvious to the general Thai population, gay men often mark themselves as masculine or feminine in terms of sexual roles, appearance, and mannerisms (Jackson 1995).

Over the past twenty years, Thai women have followed this tradition of gendered distinctions by forming a distinct masculine identity for women. These masculine women refer to themselves as *tom* using the first syllable of the English word 'tomboy'. *Toms* are a new phenomenon in that they are a formalized category of specifically masculine women. However, their feminine partners, marked as *dee*, using the last syllable of the English word 'lady', are the truly novel phenomenon in the Thai social landscape because they rely on sexuality

continued on page 8 >

continued from page 1 >

rather than gender as a significant dimension of their identity. *Dees* are understood to be distinct from heterosexual women only in their sexual attraction to masculine women. Thai female same-sex relationships are thus a hybrid form of older gendered categorizations (they are marked as masculine or feminine) and newer sexualized personal identities.

Alongside this growth of gendered/sexual identities is the production of largely state-sponsored discourses in which 'homosexuality' is marked and vilified as a threat to the national culture. The Ratchaphat controversy is not an isolated instance of state attempts to regulate the discourse of homosexuality. A survey of recent history in Thailand reveals a persistence, if not an actual increase of anti-homosexual positions taken by officials. For example, in October 1998, a leading professor in the film department at one of the most presti-

gious Thai universities, Chulalongkorn, attempted to ban a gay/lesbian film festival organized by a junior faculty member of the same institution, by claiming the films were not appropriate for Thai audiences or Thai culture. The senior professor, using her seat on the national censorship board, mobilized reluctant local police to attempt to prevent the films from being shown. The police, knowing they were being manipulated by the influential professor, awkwardly attempted to follow her instructions without causing undue conflict by performing a perfunctory inspection of the films, amidst jeers from the audience, and then quickly leaving after deeming the films acceptable. After a brief visit by police officers on the opening night, the festival continued uninterrupted. These often-contradictory efforts by agents of the state to repress homosexuals become largely symbolic gestures rather than sustained campaigns of persecution.

The simultaneous growth of the large, visible communities of *kathoey*, gays, *toms*, and *dees*, and that of anti-homosexual discourses makes definitive statements concerning the 'Thai attitude' towards homosexuality difficult. Local gay and lesbian activists argue that these state actions are evidence of an enduring sexual conservatism, and anti-homosexual attitudes in general. This perspective, however, assumes that Thai society has a long-standing anti-homosexual disposition that is gradually changing into a more tolerant and accepting society of gay and lesbian sexuality. In this scenario, these scandals and controversies reveal the remnant prejudice towards homosexuals that must still be overcome.

In a post-Foucauldian world such a position is hard to maintain. The cultural categories and personal identities of gay, *tom*, *dee*, and *kathoey* are products of recent historical transformation. The medical/psychological/soci-

ological discourses that have been produced and appropriated by the state to regulate and define homosexual men and women are products of an urbanizing, industrializing twentieth-century Thailand, not leftovers of some timeless past.

Postmodern deconstructionists have made a living claiming that binary labels are semiotic strategies rather than accurate descriptions of reality. The inability of binary terms to encompass complex reality is obvious in the case of Thailand's homosexuals. Thailand is no more a 'repressive' society than it is a 'liberated' one (see Jackson 1999). In Thailand there is both a growing demand for positive self-identities as gay and lesbian, and state intrusions into defining sexual morality. ◀

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Megan Sinnott, MA is currently an instructor of women's studies at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand. She completed her dissertation on the topic of female same-sex sexuality in Thailand for the University of Wisconsin's Department of Anthropology. She has lived and worked in Thailand for the past eight years. Megansinnott@yahoo.com

The Legacy of the Crocodile:

Critical Debates over Taiwanese Lesbian Fiction

Research >
Taiwan

Since the early 1990s Taiwan has witnessed a remarkable explosion of queer cultural production. A spate of gay, lesbian, and transgender-themed films was released, spanning a range of styles from popular to art-house and independent documentary, by directors including Ang Lee, Tsai Ming-liang, Mickey Chen, and Li Xiangru. Graphic artworks appeared deconstructing normative sexuality and gender, by artists including Tung-lu Hung, Mei-hua Lai, and Chun-ming Hou.

By Fran Martin

Gay and lesbian themes emerged in popular music – in veiled form in mainstream pop, but loud and proud in underground queer music cultures; and the decade saw the rise to fame of a new generation of young queer authors, including Chi Ta-wei, Lucifer Hung, Chen Xue, and Qiu Miaojin (Chiu Miao-chin), while a slightly older generation of writers also garnered prestigious literary prizes for gay- and lesbian-themed fiction (Martin, *Angelwings*). Northern Taiwan's media, from daily newspapers to talk-back radio and local free-to-air and cable television, were abuzz with discussion of the new identity that the young generation of queer intellectuals and activists was busy producing: *tongzhi*, meaning literally 'comrade' but now designating a coalitional 'gay-and-lesbian'.

Despite this apparently momentous proliferation of queer cultural production, it must be noted that the audience for much of the new *tongzhi* culture remains limited. In the case of avant-garde queer fiction, film, and graphic arts, the audience is largely restricted to the educated, urban middle class. The fact that such stories, films, and artworks enjoyed prominence in the intellectual circles of northern Taiwan does not translate into any widespread acceptance of gay and lesbian individuals, and much of the media buzz around *tongzhi* culture remains markedly homophobic. Nonetheless, queer cultural production in Taiwan of the 1990s provides an interesting example of the rapid and complex transformations in Asian sexual cultures in the era of cultural globalization.

An interesting feature of Taiwan's emergent queer cultures is their demonstration of a particular temporality, characterized by disjuncture and by the disconcertingly simultaneous availability of multiple, often incommensurable ways of thinking about sexuality (Martin, *Situating Sexualities*). For example, while 'queer' emerged in 1990s Euro-American contexts as a critique of pre-existing lesbian and gay cultures and identity politics, *ku'er* – a transliteration of 'queer' – first appeared in northern Taiwan's intellectual circles in 1994, just two years after the local appropriation of the term *tongzhi*. We see here the near-simultaneous emergence and interesting cohab-

itation of two apparently contradictory discourses: *tongzhi* sexual identity, on the one hand, and *ku'er's* post-structuralist identity critique, on the other (Chi 1997).

Another striking illustration of this point is found in the local critical reception of writing by the late lesbian author Qiu Miaojin (1969–1995). Qiu is best known for her novels *The Crocodile's Journal* (1994) and *Montmartre Testament* (1996), the former winning the China Times Honorary Prize for Literature for Qiu posthumously, following her suicide. Qiu's fiction catalysed a wide range of responses and remains hotly debated among local feminist and *tongzhi*-identified critics. The array of disparate responses to Qiu's work says something interesting not only about the multivalent interpretative possibilities enabled by Qiu's writing itself, but also about the global and local contexts of queer and feminist cultural criticism in Taiwan today.

Thematically, much of Qiu's fiction deals with lesbian subjects, particularly with relationships structured around the dimorphous lesbian genders of *T/po*, comparable but not reducible to the English terms butch/femme*. It is the thematic concern with *T* identity and desire that has catalysed much of the critical controversy. At least three different and contradictory approaches to Qiu's focus on *T* narrators can be discerned. First, particularly since the publication of *The Crocodile's Journal*, Qiu's writing has functioned as a point of identification for her young lesbian readership: metaphorical references to crocodiles and coded usage of the nickname of *The Crocodile's Journal's* protagonist, Lazi, were ubiquitous in mid-to-late 1990s lesbian magazine and Internet subcultures. Second, however, the response to Qiu's fiction in the early-to-mid 1990s by academics, influenced in part by Euro-American lesbian-feminism, was fairly harsh. Some critics worried that Qiu's *T* narrators reproduced oppressive, patriarchal gender relations. These critics sometimes ascribed the psychic anguish of Qiu's narrators to the fact that their author was unacquainted with feminism and the organized *tongzhi* movement, thus censuring Qiu's fiction for perpetuating 'negative images' of lesbians. But third, just a couple of years after this, there emerged a new tendency to discuss Qiu's writing from the perspective of local efforts to recover the histories of Taiwan's *T/po* lesbian cultures which, it was sometimes argued, had been suppressed by the intellectual feminists' critique of their purportedly sexist structure. This third movement, in turn, effected a dialogue with the Euro-American rise of studies of butch/femme and transgender identities in lesbian and gay studies at about the same time.

Qiu's narrators are honoured as subcultural lesbian icons; censured as retrogressive, anti-feminist masculinists; and recuperated as representatives of a queer and subversive form of lesbian gender – all at almost exactly the same moment. In one sense this suggests the simultaneous co-presence of forms of feminist and queer thought, which, in their Euro-American instances, emerged over a far more protracted time period. Yet this need not imply a kind of 'time lag' model in which the current debates in Taiwan merely reproduce the 'sex wars' in Euro-American feminism and lesbian and gay studies that began in the 1980s. In the distinct cultural and historical context of contemporary Taiwan, the debates over feminism and lesbian gender that Qiu's writing catalyses undeniably take on local and hybrid forms that cannot be predicted in any straightforward way by reference to the globalizing intellectual currents on which they draw. My point here is not to adjudicate between the competing views about the significance of Qiu's fiction – though if nothing else, the complexity of these debates implies that Qiu's writing will certainly be a richly productive object of study. Rather, I take Qiu's critical reception as a particular instance of the general phenomenon of what I have called the temporality of disjunctive simultaneity in Taiwan's queer cultures – and to venture the suggestion that this temporality may also structure how social, cultural, and intellectual movements (including feminist and queer ones, but also others) travel transnationally to take unpredictable local effect in the era of cultural globalization more broadly. ◀

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Dr Fran Martin is lecturer in Cinema Studies at La Trobe University, Australia. She has published articles on queer politics and culture in Taiwan in journals including *Positions*, *GLQ*, *Intersections*, *Critical InQueeries*, *Communal/Plural* and *Chung-wai Literary Monthly*. As well as her forthcoming books cited above, she is co-editor, with Chris Berry and Audrey Yue, of *Mobile Cultures: New Media and Queer Asia*, forthcoming at Duke University Press. F.A.Martin@latrobe.edu.au

Notes >

* 'Butch' and 'femme' refer to masculine and feminine women respectively, in lesbian relationships that emphasize gender role-playing.

Now You See It, Now You Don't:

Homosexual Culture in Indonesia

Research >
Indonesia

It's around seven o'clock on a monsoon evening. We're in the mountain resort town of Prigen, 60 kilometres south of the port city of Surabaya, at a two-storey, multi-purpose assembly hall owned by a foundation that seems to be connected to the Navy. We've been invited to a birthday party thrown by Kiem Thing (a.k.a. Eddy Tjondronegoro) and Hamid, well-known wedding consultants and owners of beauty parlours in the town of Sidoarjo near Surabaya. A flashily decorated stage has been set up in the front of the first-floor hall. The backdrop is printed with the two birthday boys' names as well as the words 'Yuliet Salon', Kiem Thing's establishment. Above it are the ubiquitous Garuda Pancasila coat-of-arms and official portraits of the President and Vice-President.

By Dédé Oetomo

Crews from two television stations, the public TVRI and the private SCTV, are on hand to cover the event, much to the guests' and hosts' delight. A few of the more special guests are asked to offer sound bites. The ethnic Chinese Kiem Thing looks sveltely divine in a matronly pearly-coloured evening gown, a brunette Taiwanese-made wig flowing to just below his shoulders and a tiara. The ethnic Banjar Hamid wears a sort of *kurta* pyjama outfit he designed himself, with the sleeves of the jacket made of decorated chiffon, showing off his strong arms. They stand smiling at the door, welcoming their friends and business acquaintances.

Many of the guests are those who are known in Indonesia as *waria*, a neologism for transgender people coined from the words *wanita*, or woman, and *pria*, or man. The term *waria* refers to biological males who do not conform to social stereotypes of masculinity and who imitate women in their clothing styles or mannerisms while retaining a masculine identity. Other guests are gay men in drag. It is an art in itself to recognize who's who. Old-timer gay guests know the difference: the drag queens boast a tongue-in-cheek attitude – they try to look fabulous at the same time as they mock their own appearance with a touch of self-deprecation. The guest list also includes whole families from among the hosts' neighbours and business relations. Some have come all the way from Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan Province, where Hamid regularly goes to prepare weddings. Several rent-boys from Bandung, West Java, stud the roster of performers.

By 19:45 most of the guests have been seated in rows of folding chairs

and are beginning to grow a tad restless. The emcee, a gay man who is the chair of the Sidoarjo branch of the National Committee for Indonesian Youth (KNPI) and popular transgender entertainer, welcomes the guests. Two *waria* then open the festivities with an East Javanese *remo* welcome dance. Short speeches are given by Kiem Thing and Hamid; soon after, a Muslim prayer in Javanese-accented Arabic is said by their close friend Papa Nador, a former procurer of rent-boys now doing odd jobs. The guests are then invited to partake of a sumptuous buffet dinner in the adjoining room, consisting of exquisite Chinese and Javanese cuisine. The event culminates in a programme of traditional and modern dances and lip-synch singing. There is a sprinkling of Western and Chinese tunes, but most of the music consists of songs of the *dangdut* genre, a popular pastiche of Hindi film music, Malay ditties, and rock.

By 23:00 many of the guests have left, but those who stay until the end enjoy another party with people of their own kind.

Throughout Indonesia there are people like Kiem Thing and Hamid and their friends. Most people, except for the very ignorant, know of *waria* in their communities and more often than not accept them as they are, perhaps because they occupy a known social niche.

Indeed, different locally variable constructions of a third gender identity abound in traditional Indonesian cultures. Some transgender people even have very important positions in their societies, acting as medium priests, shamans, or ritual custodians of royal sacred objects. In contemporary Indonesia, many people go to their modern-day counterparts' salons

to have haircuts or beauty treatments. Local young men hang out there to play table tennis, have their hair bleached, get a tattoo or have a part of their body pierced, learn about sex or drugs, or just find a space away from home where instead of their own nagging mother they have a surrogate mother who lets them do just about whatever they like. Large numbers of working-class men in fact have sexual or emotional relationships with *waria* at one time or another in their lives. Some explain it away by saying that it is not adulterous to have sex with a *waria*; others believe it will prevent or cure them from sexually transmitted diseases. Men and women go to certain *waria* to have their fortunes told based on poker cards, lines on their palms, or moles on their faces. If necessary, these *waria* can implant artificial moles to improve one's luck. Female prostitutes and office workers often have liquid silicone injected by *waria* in order to obtain a more pointed nose, higher cheek bones, a luscious pair of lips, or a prominent chin. Some *waria* can even do these injections at the client's place of work. This practice, which started a few years ago among salon-based *waria* and gay men who wanted to improve their body image, has now spread to other populations, including some men who would like to increase the size of their genitalia.

Those who are in the know are also familiar with another category of people who identify themselves using the modern terms 'gay', 'homo', or other locally coined words. The more androgynous of these men, especially those in the same professions as *waria*, are often mistaken for *waria* by the more ignorant members of the public. While *waria* are almost always identifiable by their appearance and actions, gays are

not, and their numbers are certainly much larger than those of *waria*. Several private television stations – including the same SCTV that sends its crew to Kiem Thing and Hamid's birthday bash – went on a spree of cleaning up *waria* and androgynous gays from their shows in 1997, but in the wave of liberalization that followed the resignation of President Soeharto in May 1998, many of them were asked to return. Now it is almost *de rigueur* for young male presenters on television to have campy mannerisms (which is not difficult because most of them are queens anyway). Most viewers are clueless as to these men's sexual orientation; they just think they're cute. Some young female presenters even effect such attitudes. The presence of gay men and *waria* in show biz has meant that in addition to their camp behaviour, their special argot has spread to young people who want to project an image of being cool and trendy. *Bahasa binan* (queer language) – which originally developed as a way for street-based gays and *waria* to communicate without being understood by their customer or the authorities – has now become known as *bahasa gaul* (funky language) and has spread out from the big cities across the country. Most speakers of *bahasa gaul* are not aware that their lingo began as the argot of a sexual minority.

All this does not mean, however, that Indonesia is paradise for *waria* and gays. Most *waria* can tell stories of violence at the hands of fathers or older brothers. They survive being beaten, having their heads shaved, or being disowned and turned away from home. Many are forced to grow up with bullying in the schoolyard and neighbourhood. On the other hand, Indonesian communities tend to tolerate and even accept those who are tough enough to survive and prove themselves useful (as long as they are not their own kin, it seems). There is no culturally driven queer-bashing like there is in the West, although street-based *waria* must face extortions at the hands of happy-go-lucky thugs, officials of the municipal public order department, or policemen. In some localities, bribery and rape are almost a monthly fare. A disconcerting recent development is the addition of overzealous religious gangs to the list of perpetrators of anti-gay violence. At the same time, in most large Indonesian towns *waria* have their own organizations, supported by the municipal people's welfare department or one of the more secular political parties. They organize social activities such as hair-dressing lessons, music and dance programmes, and in some cases even Qur'an reading sessions or Christian prayer meetings.

Some gays, especially of working-class background, socialize with *waria*, but others shun them for being 'sissy' and 'indiscrete'. While *waria* can survive in their liminality, their 'in-

betweenness', gays can hide in their invisibility. So how do gays find 'people of the same heart'? Some go to known *waria* beats, where they meet other gays or men who like to have sex with *waria* and gays. Others hear about gay-specific venues such as parks, street corners, discotheques that are gay one evening a week, or restaurants and cafés that are queer in the afternoon right after working hours, and meet their future friends there. Since the 1980s the mass media have helped by presenting coverage of transgenderism and homosexualities, and many people find their communities in this way. This media coverage, along with increasingly open talk about HIV/AIDS and a wave of new democratization and human rights discourses, has been fostering vibrant – albeit discreet – gay communities across Indonesia. Some gays are now even organizing openly, although their discourse tends to be assimilationist. Many gays go to the big cities, but others can find a liveable existence in small towns as well. And while many people know about the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras or the bars and saunas of Bangkok, most can be said to live an 'indigenous' Indonesian existence.

For many gays, invisibility can indeed be oppressive. Societal obsessions with religion, marriage, and procreation can feel quite suffocating. There are faint attempts to resist these dominant ideologies by some radical left-wing intellectuals, and some gays have been able to make peace with their families and are able to live happily and openly with their partners. However, for others invisibility is the only option. The gay beats, once-a-week discos, three-hour-evening cafés, and even the gay organizations can be seen as ghettos. They are necessary to remain sane, but they are not enough.

Indonesian society is now beginning to democratize itself. For many it is a very slow and frustrating process, and most *waria* and gays still do not feel that they belong in the social mainstream (although, for that matter, neither do workers, peasants, and the urban poor). The Constitution of 1945 was amended in August 2000, and the following article was added: 'Everyone has the right to be free from discriminatory treatment of any kind, and to receive protection from such discriminatory treatment' (Art. 28-i, Par. 2).

This particular amendment went unnoticed by Indonesia's *waria* and gays (and, one must quickly add, by most Indonesians). Perhaps one day, a stronger group of activists will make use of this paragraph to demand equal rights, but for the time being Indonesia's *waria* and gays merely continue to make the best use of the liminality and invisibility that continues to afford them some degree of ability to survive. <

Dr Dédé Oetomo is founder and board member of GAYa NUSANTARA, lead moderator for Asia-Pacific Rainbow, and adjunct reader of Linguistics and Anthropology at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia. doetomo@indo.net.id

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Editors' note >

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Birthday in Beijing:

Women Tongzhi Organizing in 1990s' China

Research >
China

Up to the early 1990s, the word 'homosexual' (male or female) did not exist in the Chinese laws or media. In the medical literature and in dictionaries, homosexuality was explained as a mental illness or as a sexual perversion. Before the 1990s, many homosexuals, especially lesbians, did not know that there were other people with the same orientation; there was no one to share feelings with, and no place to find same-sex partners. Many homosexuals got married (heterosexually), while hiding their same-sex partners from their families. Because of the almost complete lack of information on the issue, many homosexuals were not even sure themselves about their own sexual orientation. (A woman, who was married and had a child, had never heard of, or even thought about homosexuality until she came across the English word 'lesbian' on the Internet, and discovered that she herself was one.) Conversely, people who had no doubt whatsoever about their homosexual orientation still did not dare to be open about it.

By He Xiaopei

(translated by Susie Jolly)

I began to participate in homosexual activities in the early 1990s. I once took part in a discussion session where psychiatrists, volunteers from the Women's Hotline, and a few individuals discussed homosexual issues; there were no homosexuals who took part as such. One meeting was held in a factory on a Sunday afternoon, under the label of 'mental health research'. In the main, the attitude of the psychiatrists and social workers was characterized by sympathy, albeit mixed with non-recognition and a lack of understanding.

The psychiatrists spoke of the homosexuals who had come to the hospital to be cured, who were unhappy and sometimes suicidal. Encouraged by this atmosphere of debate, one man 'came out' about his homosexuality. Afterwards, he and I started to use a different language, different experiences and feelings, to demonstrate that not all homosexuals live lives of tragedy and suffering. I met a few homosexual people at that meeting. We realized that we needed our own space to discuss and share our experiences, and help each other.

By the mid-1990s, two or three people began to organize the first homosexual (or *tongzhi*, the word most commonly used nowadays) activities in Beijing. During the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the activist Wu Chunsheng organized a lesbian dancing party for both Chinese and foreign women. It was held at the

'Nightman', a disco where many homosexuals still like to go. Two coaches full of women came from the Women's Conference, and over a dozen Beijing women participated as well. However, openly organizing activities in the name of homosexuality attracted the government's attention. That evening the disco was full of plain-clothes and military police, and afterwards Wu was detained. Also, in 1998 and 1999, two activists were searched at customs when entering China, and all materials that they were carrying related to homosexuality were confiscated. Yet, the Chinese homosexual movements have continued to develop, slowly but steadily, over the years.

Tongzhi spaces first appeared in Beijing in the summer of 1995, when a Chinese man, the aforementioned Wu Chunsheng, and Susan Jolly, an Englishwoman, began to organize *tongzhi* get-togethers every Wednesday evening at a non-*tongzhi* bar. To counter the general hostility toward homosexuals, the Wednesday gatherings incessantly changed locations. Initially only men *tongzhi* came to the meetings, since women *tongzhi* faced more barriers to taking part in nightlife. But women-*tongzhi* activities also began, involving small-scale private get-togethers, with a few people eating together and dancing at someone's home. We were very relaxed about who could join us, and did not stipulate sexual orientation as the criterion for participation. In the beginning, the activities were mostly organized by Susan Jolly, and took place at her foreign residents' compound. Later, activities were organized by Chinese women and were held in Chinese people's homes.

In 1996 there were still no homosexual bars in Beijing. An activity was organized by Susan Jolly and Wu Chunsheng to commemorate the anniversary of the Stonewall riots.* To avoid police attention, we told all the people we knew to go to a very quiet bar in a small lane, for a 'birthday party'. We even bought a birthday cake. Sixty people came, among them eight women. This was the first time that this many women *tongzhi* had ever turned up in a public place. Wu whispered to me that there were plain-clothes police in the bar. We thought of a way to get around them. We sang 'Happy Birthday' and cut the cake. I announced: 'Can you guess whose birthday it is today? Come and whisper it in my ear, and if you get it right, you get a present!' (which consisted of

wrapped up condoms and sweets). Everyone started to ask each other whose birthday it was. Those who knew about Stonewall told those who did not, who then came and whispered the answer to me: 'Today is the commemoration day of the American gay movement.' A young man, having just heard the Stonewall story for the first time, ran over to me and whispered, 'I know! I know! Today is the birthday of all of us!' I then whispered what he had said to other people: 'Today is the birthday of all of us.' I thought, that is probably what the *tongzhi* movement ultimately means – we are united; we have a common birthday. From that day on, that bar became the first homosexual bar in Beijing.

Through mail networks, the *tongzhi* pager hotline, the Internet, the *tongzhi* bars and discos, and also through an Asian lesbian email network set up by a Chinese woman in America, an increasing number of women *tongzhi* came to know each other. Our activities also gradually increased and became more regular. From just going out to eat and dancing together, we began to organize sports events and discussion sessions. We elected a 'Discussion Commissioner', an 'Eating-out Commissioner', a 'Sports Commissioner', etc., and assigned the respective organizational responsibilities. We also gave our informal organization the name of 'Women Tongzhi'. 'Women Tongzhi' neither had a fixed leadership nor fixed participants in its activities. It also had no fixed place.

In the summer of 1998, after the First National Women and Men Tongzhi Conference, I invited four women participants to come to my house. We were still very excited and felt there was much more to talk about. When I suggested we organize a national women-*tongzhi* meeting, agreement was nearly unanimous. We established a six-person organizational team. One Beijing woman had a list of about thirty women *tongzhi* living in the rest of the country. These were contacts she had gathered through a letter-writing network over the years. We decided to invite all those women to the meeting. I was in charge of organizing a fundraising party at a club. To avoid police attention, it was officially my farewell party. We meticulously designed and printed the invitations, which we gave out in all *tongzhi* spaces as well as on the street. On the invitation it said 'Collecting donations for the First National Women Tongzhi Conference'.

The first National Women Tongzhi Conference was held in Beijing in October 1998. Altogether about thirty women *tongzhi* participated. After the Conference, a board of five members was established, and an internal magazine, *Sky*, was initiated. Since then, women *tongzhi* have started to use both international and national funds to organize their activities. ◀

He Xiaopei, MA is a PhD student at Centre for Study of Democracy, University of Westminster, UK, whose research interests include gender, sexuality, culture, and HIV/AIDS. happygirliam@hotmail.com

Note >

* The riots exploded when the police raided a bar (the Stonewall) in New York's Greenwich Village in June 1969, and gays fought back. The riots lasted for a week, but their impact was powerful and long lasting – within less than a year gay liberation groups sprouted in over three hundred cities throughout the US, and a political movement began in support of equal rights for sexual minorities.

Editors' note >

This paper is part of a chapter in Hsiung Ping-Chen, Maria Jaschok, and Cecilia Milwertz (eds), *Chinese Women Organizing*, Oxford: Berg (2002).

Homosexuality in India: Past and Present

Research >
India

When I was active in the women's movement in Delhi from 1978 to 1990 as founding co-editor of *Manushi*, India's first feminist journal, homosexuality was rarely if ever discussed in left-wing, civil rights, or women's movements, or at Delhi University, where I taught. Among the earliest newspaper reports I saw on the subject were those about female couples committing suicide, leaving behind notes declaring their undying love. In 1987, the wedding of two female police constables, Leela and Urmila, in central India, made national headlines and led to a debate on lesbianism. The women married each other outside the ambit of any movement and with the support of Urmila's family.

By Ruth Vanita

In 1990 the magazine *Bombay Dost* (Bombay Friend) appeared, and in 1991, AIDS Bhedbhav Virodhi Andolan (Anti-AIDS Discrimination Campaign), known as ABVA, published its pioneering report *Less than Gay*. In the 1990s many Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) organizations emerged in urban areas. Several of them publish newsletters; many now receive foreign funding, especially those that do HIV-prevention work. *Sakhiyani*, Giti Thadani's short

book on lesbian love in India, appeared in 1996, but is flawed by its erasure of medieval, especially Muslim materials.

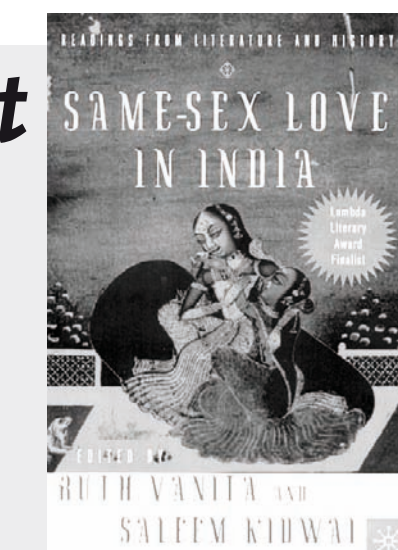
The popular belief persists that homosexuality is an aberration imported from modern Europe or medieval West Asia, and that it was non-existent in ancient India. This is partly because same-sex love in South Asia is seriously under-researched as compared to East Asia and even West Asia. With a few exceptions, South Asian scholars by and large ignore materials on homosexuality or interpret them as heterosexual. As a result, in his introduction

to *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage* (1995), editor Claude Summers claims that the silence of ancient and medieval Indian literature on this subject 'perhaps reflects the generally conservative mores of the people'.

Saleem Kidwai and I had been separately collecting materials for two decades, and in 2000 we published *Same-Sex Love in India: Readings from Literature and History*, a collection of extracts translated from a wide range of texts in fifteen Indian languages and written over a period of more than two millennia. We found that same-sex love

and romantic friendship have flourished in India in various forms, without any extended history of overt persecution. These forms include invisibilized partnerships, highly visible romances, and institutionalized rituals such as exchanging vows to create lifelong fictive kinship that is honoured by both partners' families.

We demonstrate the existence in pre-colonial India of complex discourses around same-sex love and also the use, in more than one language, of names, terms, and codes to distinguish homoerotic love and those inclined to it. This confirms Sweet and Zwilling's work on ancient Indian medical texts, Brooten's recent findings from Western antiquity, and Boswell's earlier argument that same-sex desire as a category was not the invention of nineteenth-century European sexologists, as Foucault claims it was. We also found evidence of male homoerotic subcultures flourish-



ing in some medieval Indian cities. Like the erotic temple sculptures at Khajuraho and Konarak, ancient and medieval texts constitute irrefutable evidence that the whole range of sexual behaviour was known in pre-colonial India.

British nineteenth-century administrators and educationists imported their generally anti-sex and specifically homophobic attitudes into India. Under colonial rule, what used to be a

The Remaking of a Cambodian-American Drag Queen

Research >
Cambodia

They returned to Cambodia to find family members they hoped had survived the Khmer Rouge purges. They went to meet their *khtəy* counterparts, the term used in their first language to describe those men (or women) who adopt the dress and comportment of the opposite sex. And, stuffed between the anti-malarial drugs and the Imodium, they packed their American sequin dresses, make-up, wigs, and lingerie to make their debut as 'drag queens' in Cambodia.



The Cambodian Americans (shown with their faces concealed) pose with their Cambodian 'sisters'. The photo illustrates the various ways in which Cambodian men who adopt the role of the *khtəy* present themselves. However, the young man on the far right is considered an eligible bachelor and occasionally socializes with the *khtəy*.

By Karen Quintiliani

For five Cambodian-American men the journey home in 1995 transformed their gay identities – identities imagined through the collective activities and memories of a Southern California Cambodian gay group they helped to establish. 'Real *khtəy*' in this group – or those who adopt transvestite lives – socialize with men who have sex with men exclusively as well as married men who have clandestine sexual relations with other men. However, the group members (like those taking the journey home) who successfully adopt a male appearance, work in male professions, attract (primarily) Anglo-American partners, and resist family pressures to marry, are the ones that define drag as the cultural equivalent to being *khtəy*, thereby legitimizing their unique gay identities. During drag performances, the members of the group depict Cambodian and American feminine cultural symbols – the traditional Cambodian Apsara dancer and Miss America – to temporarily embody their feminine selves. They also utilize drag performances to initiate 'closet' Cambodians into the group, and to educate non-Cambodians about the cultural role and (tacit) acceptance of being *khtəy* in Cambodian society.

The trip to Cambodia provided an opportunity to show their Cambodian 'drag queen sisters' how in America they can transform themselves while maintaining the 'heart' of a woman. I went on the trip as the 'real woman' of the group,

a designation that describes my role as a confidante and researcher in the gay group since 1992. However, being a real woman travelling with five Cambodians who appear to be men, provided a critical view of the expected separation between men and women's sexual worlds in Cambodia and the power held by Westerners in a country in the grips of poverty. The events that unfolded during our trip changed how these self-described gay Cambodian men saw themselves, and how the group members expressed their being *khtəy*, as they saw videos and heard accounts about the conditions of their *khtəy* counterparts in Cambodia.

In Battambang, the second largest city in Cambodia, the Cambodian Americans discovered how their *khtəy* counterparts carve out social positions and sexual spaces. Shifting between gender representations and sex roles – like drag requires – blurs the boundaries and the discreet way sexual relationships between men occur in Cambodia. Three of the *khtəy* live in a brothel and cook and clean for the women, only occasionally taking customers themselves. Mai Chaa, which means 'the old mother', is divorced and has grown-up children. He abandoned his family to fulfil his desire for male companionship. He is poor, homeless, and ostracized for having left his family, but not necessarily for having sex with other men. The other two *khtəy* live in the temple compound and have taken a vow of celibacy in order to serve the monks and honour the loss of partners during the Khmer Rouge years.

Sexual relationships between single men and *khtəy* in Battambang are either arranged or take place through random meetings; in either case the *khtəy* provides the young men with money or food as well as sexual gratification. The Cambodian Americans played the role of *khtəy* through the sexual exchange system, rather than as Cambodian-American drag queens. Before they left Battambang, they gave up their 'womanhood' by giving their sequined gowns and accessories to their *khtəy* counterparts, realizing that '[the cost of] one dress could feed a family for a year [in Cambodia]'.

The Cambodian Americans also reunited with a long-time Anglo-American gay friend running a social service agency in Cambodian villages in and around Phnom Penh, the largest and most urbanized city in Cambodia. Their friend offered the Cambodian Americans the choice of any 'macho' Cambodian man at the agency. The Cambodian Americans bristled at their friend's offer when they were told by some of the Cambodian men that they feared losing their jobs or access to English language classes if they did not agree to

engage in sexual liaisons. Their friend appeared to exploit the men's poverty and to misinterpret a social system that allows for male intimacy without the homosexual label common in contemporary Western societies.

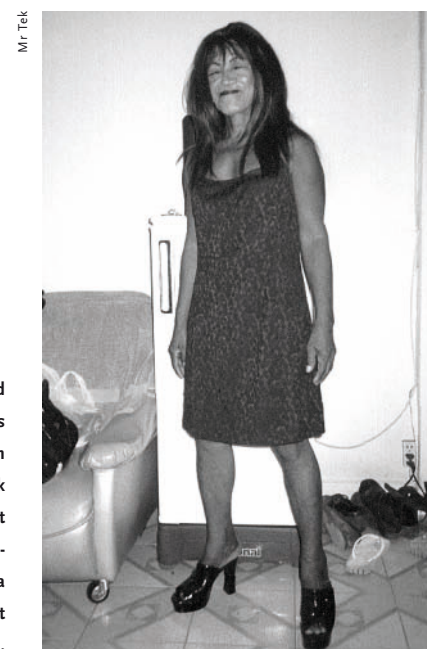
Until these Cambodian gay group members could travel to their homeland, they imagined being *khtəy* through a set of social and cultural symbols available to them. When they returned to the USA they no longer held drag events as a way to portray their identities as Cambodian and gay. Rather, being *khtəy* became a social responsibility to financially support family members they reunited with in Cambodia, to sponsor HIV/AIDS fundraisers for Cambodia, and in some cases to return to their homeland and to nurture relationships with Cambodian men they met on their first trip home.

Stuart Hall (1990) describes identity as a 'production' constantly in flux as individuals and communities reinterpret experiences in diaspora and from the homeland. By understanding identity as Hall suggests, we gain an insight into how sexualities in Cambodia and in diaspora are influenced by transnational relationships and the conditions of poverty. <

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Karen Quintiliani, MA is a PhD candidate in anthropology at UCLA. Her dissertation examines the impact of an eroding welfare state on Cambodian refugee families and the rise in neo-liberal forms of governance to solve social problems. kquint@ucla.edu



Mai Chaa, the 'old mother', feels awkward in high heels and the black sequin dress, but enjoys the opportunity to dress as a woman for the first time in her life.

minority puritanical and homophobic voice in India became mainstream. The new homophobia was made overtly manifest by the British law of 1860, Section 377, Indian Penal Code, still in force in India, whereas homosexuality between consenting adults was decriminalized in England in 1967. Section 377 penalizes 'unnatural' sexual acts with 'imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.'

A campaign currently being waged against it and ABVA's petition to declare it unconstitutional is pending before the Delhi High Court. Though there are few convictions under the law, police use it to terrorize and blackmail gay men, many of whom are married to women and cannot afford public exposure.

More positive pre-colonial narrative traditions persist alongside the new homophobia, and are visible in some

fiction and in popular cinema, which from its beginnings has displayed an intense interest in same-sex bonding. From the late 1980s onward, openly gay and bisexual writers like Suniti Namjoshi, Vikram Seth, Firdaus Kanga, and Bhupen Khakhar drew worldwide attention. The Indian media in English, having developed a pro-human rights stance from its origins in the national independence movement, generally reports positively both on Indian and international LGBT movements. Today, there are many gay celebrities and there is much play with gender and sexuality in the performing and fine arts, and in the worlds of fashion and design.

Scholarly and journalistic interest in the field has accompanied the growth of LGBT movements, as is evident from Kripal's work on homoerotic mysticism and the recent anthology of scholarly essays, *Queering India*, examining

homosexuality from multidisciplinary perspectives. An anthology of writings by contemporary lesbians, *Facing the Mirror* (1999), and one of writings about gay men in the twentieth century, *Yaraana* (1999), have been well received in India.

The silence has been broken in the Indian academy too. In the last couple of years, courses on homosexuality in literature have been taught at Delhi University; the law school at Bangalore held a conference on LGBT issues; and a premier women's college in Delhi held a lesbian and gay film festival.

Oral histories of gay people are being documented by gay and gay-friendly film-makers and on television talk shows. Civil rights and women's movements have become more open to discussing LGBT issues. The huge controversy in 1998, when the right-wing Shiv Sena attacked the film *Fire* for its lesbian theme, enabled a public debate on

homosexuality. For the first time, lesbian and gay organizations, identified as such, demonstrated in the streets along with civil rights groups. Nevertheless in 2001 national women's organizations refused to allow lesbian groups carrying banners with the word 'lesbian' to march in the 8 March International Women's Day rally in Delhi. Ironically, the government-sponsored Women's Day fair allowed the lesbian groups to set up a booth and use the word.

The visible LGBT community has grown exponentially in the cities. Lesbian and gay phone helplines and online chat groups have been set up; regular parties and picnics, and meetings for parents of lesbians and gays are also held. These types of community life fit in well with Indian cultural mores, which historically have fostered the play of different kinds of eroticism, affectional links, life arrangements, and fictive kinship networks. <

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Professor Ruth Vanita taught at Delhi University for twenty years and is now professor of liberal studies and women's studies at the University of Montana. rvanita@selway.umt.edu

New Park: Gay Literature in Taiwan

Research >
Taiwan

The majority of gay-themed literature in Chinese is produced in Taiwan. Especially in the last decade many Taiwanese gay-themed works have been acclaimed, translated into other languages, and/or adapted into films. As homosexuality in fiction can be explicit or implicit, an exhaustive examination of homosexuality in Taiwanese literature is virtually impossible. Thus, this short survey will only centre on the works where explicit representation of homosexuality is identifiable.

By Chi Ta-wei

The most famous Taiwanese gay-themed novel is Pai Hsien-yung's *Crystal Boys* (1985). This novel portrays the 1970s gay hustlers who gathered in Taipei's New Park, which remains the best-known gay cruising venue in Taiwan. Both elaborate and vernacular, *Crystal Boys* (already translated into several languages) visualizes both a gay space (the New Park) and a gay community. *Crystal Boys*, recognized as a tour de force in contemporary Chinese literature, is one of the earliest Taiwanese gay works. It was preceded by *André Gide's Winter* (1966) and *The Cicadas* (1974), two novellas by Lin Huai-min (currently better known as the founder and choreographer of the prestigious Cloud Gate Dance Theatre.) While Lin focuses on the well-educated gays who are under the sway of American culture, Pai illustrates the lives of underprivileged gay boys who perch on a low rung in the social stratification.

The 1990s have witnessed a rapid growth of gay-themed literature. One of the most acclaimed novels has been *Notes from a Desolate Man*, by Chu Tien-wen (1994), who often writes scripts for the well-known director Hou Hsiao-hsien. *Desolate Man*, which has been already translated into English, is an exquisite postmodern text on mourning and melancholia. This masterful novel presents lonesome middle-aged gay men and AIDS victims. Its concern with the transient pleasure and pang, imbued with a Buddhist touch, can also be found in Wu Chi-wen's *Reader of Fin-de-Siècle Boy Love* (1999) and *The Perplexing Galaxy* (1998). The former is a rewrite of *Precious Mirror of Ranking Flowers*, a classic novel on male same-sex love from the nineteenth century, while

Hsu You-shen, an openly gay writer, had a highly publicized same-sex wedding with his Caucasian partner Gray Harriman in Taipei City in 1996.

Poster for Mickey Chen's successful documentary, *Boys for Beauty*, which depicts today's young gay men in Taiwan.



Mickey Chen

the latter features spectacular sexual transgressions (including male-to-female surgery). Lin Juin-yin's *The Burning Genesis* (1997) and Li Yue-hua's *The Rouge Men* (1995) focus on the solitude among gay men. With the stories in *I Love Chang Eileen* (1992) and *The Stars above the Hills* (1998), Lin Yu-yi displays poignant coming-of-age stories of gay men.

Thanks to the Taiwanese lesbian and gay activism that has emerged in the 1990s, lesbian and gay people are less stigmatized in Taiwan today. Among the activists, Hsu You-sheng is celebrated not only because he is a resourceful writer of various genres (including erotica catering to female readership), but also for having flaunted a public gay wedding with his Caucasian lover. Although gay marriages are not yet legally recognized in Taiwan, Hsu has won blessings widely. His novel *Men Married In and Married Out* (1996) portrays a gay marriage.

The writers born after the late 1960s have contributed markedly to the representation of gay lives. *The Crocodile's Notes* (1994), the novel by Chiu Miao-chin (also known as Qiu Miaojin), who committed suicide when she was only twenty-six, is one of the first lesbian-themed works in contemporary Chinese fiction. The novella depicts lesbian characters in a college, whose lives are paralleled by those of similarly impassioned gay characters. 'Queer', a Western term introduced to Taiwan in the 1990s, is often used by these younger writers. With the collections of short stories *Queer Senses* (1995) and *Membranes* (1996), Chi Ta-wei is known for his 'queer' science fiction that parodies heterosexual normality. *Queer Archipelago* (1997) and *Queer Carnival* (1997), also edited by Chi, showcase Taiwan's localized queer discourses and literary practices, and provide annotated bibliographies. It is apparent that Taiwanese queer writing, both theoretical and creative, is

inspired by queer theory as well as by Western literature (writers such as Jean Genet) and 'queer cinema' (directors such as Derek Jarman). Numerous young writers also diligently circulate their queer writings on the Internet, which has been a major catalyst for the blooming of gay culture in Taiwan in the 1990s. These younger writers usually present less pathos and self-pity among gay men. Instead, their gay characters may be rather confident, if not defiant. *Flesh* (1998), by Sun Tze-ping, for its transnational colours, enjoys popularity among youthful readers.

Gay literature is not officially forbidden or purged by the Taiwanese government. It is, however, challenged by some senior writers. The 1990s witnessed a boom of lesbian and gay writings to a degree unexpected both in terms of quality and quantity. This phenomenon may very well be seen as a return of the repressed, but many senior writers complain instead that the emerging gay literature is just an unwanted fashion. The tension between pro-gay literature writers and those who object to it deserves critical attention. Despite the backlash, production and circulation of lesbian and gay writings has not stopped. Many lesbian and gay works keep winning awards, and writing contests for lesbian and gay literature are held.

In addition to fiction, Taiwanese gay-themed films also deserve attention. Among the best known of them are *The Wedding Banquet* (1993) by Ang Lee (the director of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*), which focuses on an interracial gay couple in New York, and Tsai Ming-liang's *The River* (1997), which features a sex scene between father and son. Both stories may sound quite unusual, if not incredible, but they actually accurately represent Taiwanese gay lives. The former scenario is not foreign to the more bourgeois gay men, while the latter scrutinizes the lives of lower-class gay men. What both films share is the fact that they interrogate the father-centred familial system, possibly the greatest obstacle in the lives of Taiwanese gay men. <

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Chi Ta-wei, MA is an award-winning writer of fiction and essays in Taiwan, and is currently a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles, USA. android@ucla.edu



Hsu You-shen

Who's That Girl? Lesbian In/visibility in Japanese Society

Research >
Japan

Two of the most commonly asked questions when I first began my research on contemporary lesbian sexuality in Japan were: 'Are there any?' and 'Where do you find them?' These questions emanated from both Japanese and non-Japanese, from academics and non-academics, from men and women, and surprisingly even from Japanese gay men. The common assumption behind these questions was that, for the overwhelming majority of the population, self-identified lesbians did not exist in Japan, or at the very least they did not identify themselves as such in the public domain. This was the scenario up to the mid-1990s and to a large extent it is still the case today, despite the fact that there is a rich modern history of female same-sex desire to be found in Japanese literature and popular culture dating back to the early 1900s.

By Sharon Chalmers

There has been a consistent discourse around female same-sex attraction in Japan, albeit predominantly in terms of negative or unnatural (*fushizen*) desires. This public discussion began with the establishment of public education for girls in the early 1900s and followed through to condemnation of the independent 'new woman' (*atarashii onna*) in the 1910s. At the same time, with the emergence of sexology discourses there were further outcries as Japanese social critics

denounced the 'masculinization' of Japanese women as represented by the *moga* (modern girl) and the male and female roles (*otokoyaku/musumeyaku*) performed by the all-female Takarazuka theatre troupe throughout the 1920s.

However, during the 1960s and early 1970s, along with massive social, political, and economic changes, a shift occurred that opened up a space for same-sex attracted women to create meeting places outside the privacy of their own homes. These spaces were either in short-lived bars or through meeting circles such as *o-miai*

(arranged meeting) clubs, both of which were primarily based on gendered role-playing. However, there was nothing inevitable or natural about how to behave despite the more commonly held assumptions about what it was to be *tachi* (butch) or *neko* (femme).¹ As one of the women (Fumie) with whom I spoke recounts:

'I was asked for the first time if I was butch or femme. "Dotchi na no?" (Which one?) So I asked: "Do I have to decide?" And the owner of the bar said: "You know, these young people now they don't decide on these things any

more." She complained a bit but didn't force me to say it.'

Gender ambiguity notwithstanding, these spaces did create the beginnings of a new socio-cultural context in which same-sex attracted women could meet each other. And throughout the 1970s more groups began to emerge, such as *Subarashii Onna* (Wonderful Women). At the same time newsletters also began to be produced and distributed through the *mini-komi* network. *Mini-komi* is a system of distributing informal newsletters – by groups that do not have access or choose not to contribute to the mass mainstream media – that have become quite sophisticated and have wide circulation among various subcultures.

Yet despite this increase in groups, images of 'lesbians' (*rezubian*) in mainstream Japanese culture continued to be centred on the pathological female deviant, represented in the guise of the heterosexualized butch/femme (*tachi/neko*) roles. Alternatively, and more

commonly, the word *rezubian*, or *rezu*, was inseparable from portrayals of female-female sex in androcentric pornography. This left most women who were questioning their sexuality few places to gain information.

These understandings have continued through the 1990s, the association of lesbianism with pornography being widely shared in Japan, amongst heterosexuals and lesbians alike.

Family and freedom

Juxtaposed to the above images is the centrality of being a wife and mother across all social relations. The concept of 'Japanese womanhood' is achieved through the representation of women's activities as concerned solely with 'the Japanese family' through the romanticization and glorification of the ideal of 'motherhood' and the Japanese housewife. This is despite the large increase in married women who work part-time and the significant numbers of women who enter tertiary education. Thus,

Filtered Voices: Representing Gay People in Today's China

Research >
China

While 'scientific research' on homosexuality has been legitimized, 'artistic creation' concerning homosexuality still remains illegitimate in today's China. In 2001, the Chinese society of psychiatry published *Categories and Diagnostic Standards of Mental Illness in China* (Third Edition), in which homosexuality was no longer considered an illness. Thus, Chinese homosexuals were 'released' from the asylum. The event attracted much attention in the media and in the scholarly community, but homosexuality had become a topic of discussion in China already in the early 1990s. Below I will provide a chronological overview of discourses and debates about homosexuality in scholarship and the media, fiction, and film that have marked, at different levels, Chinese cultural life during the last decade.

By Cui Zi'en

(translated by Chi Ta-wei)

In 1991, the noted sociologist Li Yinhe and her husband Wang Xiaobo, a famous novelist, published *Their World: A Study of the Male Homosexual Community in China*. The first academic work on male homosexuality in contemporary China, *Their World* chiefly explored its sociological and anthropological dimensions. When later the book was revised into *The Homosexual Subculture* (1998), it became a bestseller. Thanks to this significant work, Chinese readers began to adjust their attitudes towards homosexuality and to understand its culture. In 1994, another scholar, Zhang Beichuan, published *Same-Sex Love*. Focusing on sexology and sex education, this book also illustrated the research on homosexuality conducted by international scientists. In 1995, Fang Gang, known for his sensational journalism,

published *Homosexuality in China*, which also became a best-seller. Roughly written, obviously turning the homosexual issue into a commodity, Fang Gang's book was widely accused of sloppiness and voyeurism. Fang Gang himself admitted that his book was 'journalistic literature' and entirely based on hearsay.

The media approaching homosexuals

In 1998, the magazine *Hope* featured a special issue entitled 'Understanding Homosexuality'. With its twenty pages and the picture of the rainbow flag, the issue provided a positive and comprehensive report on homosexuality, thus making *Hope* a pioneer in the media as far as the representation of homosexuality is concerned. In 2000, *China News Weekly* published the special issue 'Blurred Men and Women', showcasing homosexual culture in literature, the fine arts, fashion, the entertainment business, and in everyday life. In the same year, a television show in Hunan Province, *Let's Talk*, broadcast a one-hour panel discussion called 'Approaching Homosexuals'. Finally, early this year, *Modern Civilization Pictorial*, edited by the prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, published a special issue entitled 'Homosexuals Are among Us'. From then on, up to the present day, this magazine regularly devotes ten pages to the issue of homosexuality.

The AIDS crisis has also triggered increased attention to same-sex sexuality. The *AIDS Bulletin*, edited by Wan Yen-hai, a very well-known AIDS activist, began to be circulated in 1994. In 1998, the aforementioned scholar Zhang Beichuan took charge of the *Friends' Bulletin*. Both publications emphasize the perspective of the 'experts' and centre on two topics: homosexual culture and AIDS prevention.

Fiction and film

The first novel on homosexuality from today's China, *Scarlet Lips*, by the Beijing-based writer Cui Zi'en, was published in Hong Kong in 1997, just before Hong Kong was handed over to China. Owing to its manifest homosexual theme, *Scarlet Lips* is still not allowed to circulate in China. Worldson, the Hong Kong publishing house specialized in lesbian and gay literature that published *Scarlet Lips* (and



Cui Zi'en

later other works of fiction by Cui Zi'en), also printed in 1998 the collection of short stories *Good Man Rogo* ('Rogo' used to be an ice-cream brand name), by the Tianjin-based writer Tong Ge.

One of the first films on homosexuality in today's China, *East Palace, West Palace*, written by the above-mentioned writer Wang Xiaobo and directed by Zhang Yuan, won several awards at international film festivals in 1996. *Man Man Woman Woman*, written by Cui Zi'en and directed by Liu Binjian, was a winner at the 1999 Locarno International Film Festival and has been invited to more than fifty international film festivals since then. The first film made by gay people in China, *Man Man Woman Woman* makes a marked effort to avoid positing any dichotomy between homosexual and heterosexual. Also a winner of international awards, *Summer This Year*, written and directed by Li Yu in 2000, is the first film on lesbian life and love in China. The following year, Yin Weiwei made a documentary on lesbianism called *The Box*. Finally, two films shot early this year, *The Old Testaments* and *Enter the Clown*, both written and directed by Cui Zi'en, have already been invited to international film festivals.

From the 1990s to the present, every representation of homosexuality in China has necessitated legitimization by the 'academic cause'. No lesbian- or gay-themed book or magazine, radio or television show, etc., can ever be allowed unless the 'academic cause' is brought in. The academic empire thus becomes a mirror of the political one. Under such circumstances, homosexuals and homosexual culture continue to be systematically objectified and made into 'others'. If homosexuals want to voice their subjectivity, the process must necessarily be filtered by 'experts'; or alternatively, homosexual people have to disguise themselves as the experts. Still now, any representation of homosexuality (in fiction, film, drama, academic research, magazines, websites, and so forth) carried out by openly homosexual people is regularly pushed underground. The only promising exception is the already mentioned special issue of *Modern Civilization Pictorial* early this year, which contained personal stories that homosexuals themselves wrote, and internationally award-winning fiction by homosexual writers – a most rare chance for homosexuals to exhibit their subjectivities. <

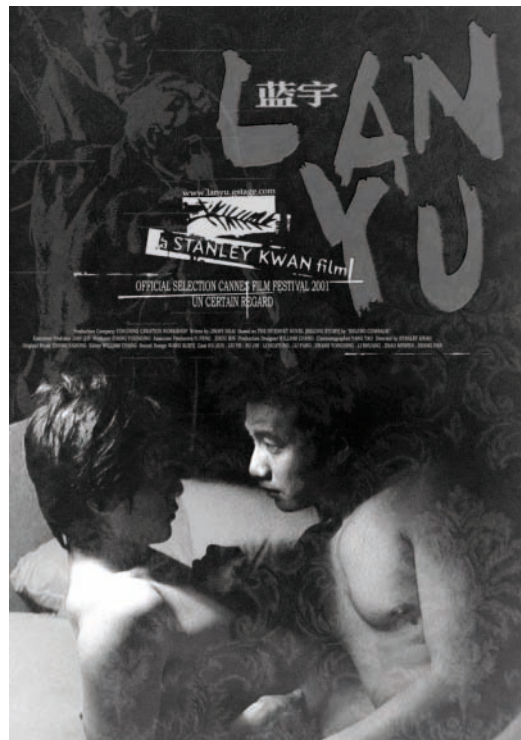
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Cui Zi'en, MA is a novelist, playwright, and director. He is currently an associate professor, teaching at the Beijing Film Academy. Out of the closet, he is one of the few advocates for gay people in China. Most of his works are published and win awards outside of China. cuizi777@2911.net

Official film poster of the Stanley Kwan film *Lan Yu* (Hong Kong, 2001). The film is based on one of the earliest and best-known contemporary Chinese gay novels, 'Story from Beijing', which has been circulating on the Internet since 1996. Using actors from the PRC, the film was shot on location in Beijing, but without previous permission by Chinese officials. After the film had won prestigious international awards, it very soon found its way to the market in the PRC.



This is one of the film posters used in Taiwan (<http://lanyu.gstage.com>).

notions of the familial nature of Japanese society intersect across many areas of the social, economic, and political life, as shown by the fact that over the past 20 years the government, business sector, and bureaucracy have attempted to re-invent so-called traditional 'family values' as the basic unit of Japanese society.

Within this political milieu it is not surprising that lesbian sexuality has remained largely invisible in mainstream Japan. The Japanese 'gay boom' of the early 1990s did increase the visibility of homosexuality, but the ways in which both women and men were represented remained fixed in the category of voyeurism. While there was some increase in the number of lesbian magazines, due to the lack of resources and the lower wages that women earn, the opportunities for lesbians to produce, distribute, and buy lesbian-focused magazines remain extremely limited.

Yet, no story is ever that simple. On the one hand, as discussed above,

throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s there have been growing numbers of lesbian women who have become more visible, albeit generally still within the confines of the various lesbian scenes that exist throughout Japan. As a result, there now exists a variety of communities, tastes, and politics that one can access, including loose networks that offer various forms of support such as meeting spaces, the *mini-komi* newsletters, lesbian week-ends (which have taken place for over 17 years), various bars, lesbian businesses, lesbian mothers' groups, exhibitions, workshops, and the annual Japanese Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. On the other hand, despite the emergence of these events, for the vast majority of Japanese self-identified lesbians the risks involved in 'stepping out' are still too great, and this is not necessarily a desired goal. Indeed, what would the benefits of 'coming out' be in a society where 'form' holds precedence over 'tolerance' and where knowing

one's place is socially sanctioned?² In some ways and for the moment anyway, the ability of Japanese lesbians to move in and across identities may allow them more space and free them up from an identity politics that tends to demand to know 'who that girl really is'. <

Dr Sharon Chalmers is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Western Sydney, Australia. s.chalmers@uws.edu.au

Notes >

- 1 'Butch' and 'femme' refer to masculine and feminine women respectively, in lesbian relationships that emphasize gender role-playing.
- 2 For a detailed discussion of the specific conditions under which, in Japan, 'form' takes precedence over 'tolerance', see Sharon Chalmers, *Emerging Lesbian Voices from Japan*, London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon (2002).

Queer Mongolians: Is Isolation Their Destiny?

Research >
Mongolia



The logo design for Mongolia's first annual Race for Life. In 1999 UNAIDS, the Mongolian Youth Federation, and the Mongolian Scouts Association sponsored a run/walk fundraiser for STI/HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness. After a 5 km race, health promotion materials were available at the finish line. Tavilan participated in the race and Tus Dem had an information table about sexual orientation.

Much of the literature written about Mongolia descends quickly into a nostalgic overview of Buriad Shamans, Tsaatam Reindeer people, or the suppression of Buddhism under socialism. This article explores the development of organized queer spaces during the rapid social change in the 1990s. Increased contact with international media, foreigners, and international organizations provided a catalyst for the formal incorporation of a gay and lesbian human rights organization. Also, the Internet provided more informal ways of communicating privately. Just as this anonymous space brings queers together, it also isolates.

By Richard Smith

In 1997, the United Nations signed a memorandum of understanding with the government of Mongolia on HIV/AIDS. The government of Mongolia pledged to support interventions for men who have sex with men. A social entrepreneur, Dr Urtnasen, opened an NGO that provided HIV/AIDS/STD prevention and education services to men who have sex with men. They also provided informal counselling with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity issues in general.

Some of Dr Urtnasen's clients eventually wanted to organize a group by and for gay men. They were inspired partially by the murder of a gay man and the subsequent police interrogation of known men who have sex with men. The group incorporated in March 1999 as Destiny, or in Mongolian, Tavilan. They struggled as an organization as to whether or not they wanted to be a service provider that would seek contracts with the donor community or be a membership organization. Several members accepted interviews with the local press to tell their coming out stories. Members also participated in a peer education-training course sponsored by the United Nations.

In the summer of 2000, Destiny had its second general meeting, but only had five people in attendance. Perhaps queer Mongolians were afraid to meet in the Children's Palace, a public building in the centre of Ulaanbaatar. At that meeting, a lesbian joined the group as a member of the board of directors. As an employee with a women's NGO, she held workshops at various universities on gender and was able to come out during some of her presentations.

During the meeting, Destiny discussed the issue of including bisexual and foreign members in the group. One attendee

remarked that '[s]ome older gay men have wives and children and have a gay friend in secret. I'm a clean gay person, I've never been with a woman.' And yet, he granted that there were few clean gays, so the group decided to include bisexuals. Although membership waned, the group was able to get a grant from the Mongolian AIDS Foundation to fund a 24-hour hotline for gay, lesbian, and bisexual Mongolians who had questions about HIV/AIDS/STD prevention. Unfortunately, as international donor interest in Mongolia declined, the funding for this grant dried up.

Isolated cybergays?

Email and chat rooms like Mongol.net opened up doors for isolated queers who want to connect with members of Destiny. Students log in from abroad or in Mongolia at one of the many Internet cafés popping up in what used to be first floor apartments and government offices. This climate provides many opportunities for Destiny to achieve its public education and organizing goals in the very first public space where queers can discourse without fear. Yahoo groups presented another forum for communication. The subscribers are a combination of travellers from other countries hoping to visit Mongolia and Mongolians living in the country and abroad. Founding members of Destiny joined a Yahoo group discussion about gay Mongolia and presented their organization with hopes of gaining some interest of others in Ulaanbaatar to join the group and organize activities. Most subscribers, however, use the feature as a classified personal service rather than an organizing tool.

In April 2002, the founder of Destiny posted a call to organize one of the Yahoo groups: 'We just killing [sic] and sad. There is no gay community in Mongolia. And also there

is still no gay life in UB. Why do we have no connections, no trust, and no information? We need do something [sic] for gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, community.' An international virtual community is no replacement for face-to-face organizing and social support.

In a country with a population of only 2.5 million, it is very difficult to get the terminal mass of gay men and lesbians to organize a simple association, let alone a commercial and retail industry to cater to their economic desires. Mongolians who are educated enough to know about varied models of queer communities in other countries often have the skills needed to immigrate to these countries. Mongolia has no sodomy laws per se, but it lacks any specific human rights protections on the basis of sexual orientation and does not recognize same-sex relationships though a domestic partnership or civil union policy. Although Mongolia's queers fear rejection from family and friends and some have reported getting into fistfights with family, there are no organized hate groups.

Mongolian queers who immigrate to Europe or North America are not so much escaping persecution by the state or hate groups as they are seeking a place where they can experience their sexuality, free from the expectation that they will have a heterosexual family and kids. Several gay men and some lesbians have gone to North America on student visas and have stayed. Some gay Mongolians were able to immigrate to Europe using a same-sex partner as an immigration vehicle. These opportunities dilute the leadership potential of any queer organization in Mongolia. Thus, the national brain drain disproportionately affects queer Mongolia. In summary, when the iron curtain came down and let in new ideas and possibilities, it also allowed queer people to leave the country and assimilate into the global queer economy. Isolation could be the destiny of those left behind. ◀

Richard Smith, MA holds a Master's in Fine Arts as Master's in Social Work and has served in Mongolia with the US Peace Corps. He currently works for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. He served in Mongolia with the US Peace Corps. Smithrichardj1@hotmail.com

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A Non-Indian Resident

An Interview with the Poet Sujata Bhatt

Sujata Bhatt's most recent collection of poetry, *A Colour for Solitude*, takes the reader to the village Worpswede in Northern Germany in the early twentieth century, where a group of artists founded a colony. In this book-length sequence of poems, the painter Paula Modersohn-Becker (1876–1907) is the poet's quarry: a young energetic woman who, against all odds, went her own way as an artist. Modersohn-Becker died shortly after giving birth to her one daughter, but left behind a substantial, remarkable body of work. Soon after Hitler came to power, Modersohn-Becker's paintings were branded *entartet*, condemned by the Nazis for being 'degenerate'. Today, she is widely considered as the most significant German woman painter of the twentieth century. Fascinated by the number of self-portraits, Sujata Bhatt imagines the painter's inner and outer worlds. Furthermore, the poems explore Modersohn-Becker's friendship with Rilke (who wrote his famous requiem *Für eine Freundin* for her) and with Rilke's wife, her closest friend, the sculptor Clara Westhoff. Worpswede was therefore chosen for my encounter with the Indian poet Sujata Bhatt on 3 June 2002.

Interview >
India

By Martin Mooij

MM: Reading your work, except for your last collection, I can see that India or rather not 'India' but your Indian background plays an enormous role in it.

SB: For some reason, I'm not sure why, my imagination seems to be continually sparked by those early years in India. I think, for many writers, their childhood is something very magical and special and they keep drawing from that for their work. For me, the fact that I had to leave India certainly made me think about it more. And this departure from India, this 'loss', as I felt it, prevented me from taking India for granted. Ironically, exile brought me closer to India.

MM: You had to leave India twice: first as a young child and then later when you were twelve.

SB: Yes. Both trips were connected with my father's work. He is a scientist, a virologist [see the poem 'The Virologist' in *Augatora*]. We went to New Orleans because he had received a scholarship. Then we went to Connecticut because Yale University invited him out of the blue, so to speak, to establish a programme of virus research within their department of comparative medicine. My father was the first scientist to start tissue culture in India and to investigate certain tropical diseases and viruses. He was a pioneer of sorts and many people admired his work. Actually he never really wanted to settle in America. He had received other invitations earlier from various institutions in the US but this invitation came at a time when the death of one of his brothers, followed by the death of that brother's wife, left him with three more children to support than he had planned to. Being the eldest, he was responsible not only for them but also for his younger brothers and sisters. Financially he was at a loss. So this sudden invitation from Yale felt like fate and seemed like the best way to keep the family together. All these years he has always sent money to many of our relatives.

MM: As you know, many young people from the West want to go to India for religious or for other mystical reasons. However, as far as I can see, religion and such things do not play an important role in your life.

SB: No, not in that way. I have my beliefs and my philosophy, both of which are private. I do not consider myself to be a part of any single religion. And I am especially wary of all '-isms' and dogmas.

MM: We often think of India in a folkloric way. You don't romanticize India. Instead, you portray a country with people who are 'like us'. It is strange because there are, after all, such vast differences between India and the West.

SB: No. I don't mystify India. For me it is 'home' or one of my homes. Of course, it is 'different' and, for me, a very special place. But I refuse to summarize or categorize it – or as you say, romanticize it.

MM: Many remarkable things happened in your family. Your grandfather was very close to Mahatma Gandhi.

SB: Yes. My paternal grandfather, Nanabhai Bhatt, was an intimate friend of Gandhi's. He wasn't as politically involved as Gandhi was, not in a direct political way, but rather in an indirect way through education. He, my grandfather, founded schools in many villages in the rural areas of Saurashtra [a part of Gujarat] for farmers who were mainly illiterate. These schools were Gujarati schools designed to help young people, living in farming communities. And that was a very radical step. He was very much opposed to the caste system, which was also seen as radical by many people he knew. In his own way he supported Gandhi and was involved in the 'Quit India' pro-independence movement. Gandhi used to visit him frequently and discuss private things with him that were not to be discussed with anyone else and it was also his friendship with Gandhi that got him in prison. He was

imprisoned on several occasions [see 'Nanabhai Bhatt in Prison' in *Monkey Shadows*]. I should add that my parents also were very much influenced by Gandhi's philosophy.

MM: And what about you? Does he play a role in your mind?

SB: Yes, I do feel his importance in my own life, in my great admiration for him, of course, and in my attitudes, which I'm always striving to perfect.

MM: Can you tell me more about your childhood?

SB: Yes. In order to further describe my childhood, perhaps I should describe my family background here: I come from a traditional Gujarati Brahmin family of writers, teachers, social workers, musicians, and scientists. We were, and still are, a close-knit extended family. My parents lived in close proximity to their siblings. I thus grew up with my cousins, uncles, and aunts. Growing up with my cousins gave me this wonderful feeling that I had a dozen brothers and sisters, when in fact I have only one brother. I am still very close to a number of my relatives. And nowadays, email is a boon to a family like ours!

We were middle class but poor. My mother grew up in real poverty. Her parents were forced to leave their village, where work was scarce, for the big city of Ahmedabad. My maternal grandfather was an engineer. He worked for a textile mill and died of heart failure at the early age of forty-one. I find it amazing that my grandmother, my mother's mother, managed to put all her children through university. I am moved by the hardships they faced. My paternal grandfather was a writer and a teacher. He was an essayist, a short story writer as well as a translator from Sanskrit into Gujarati. Two of my uncles, both of them my mother's brothers, are highly respected poets who write in Gujarati. As a child I was aware of the fact that my uncles were not only writing poetry but that they could also recite it from memory and even sing it depending on the form of their poems. One of them in particular, 'Bharat Pathak', has always been and continues to be a source of great inspiration to me. Along with my mother he is a brilliant storyteller. In this way I grew up with an oral tradition.

I wrote my first poems when I was eight. Given my background, I felt that it was a natural thing to do. I'm certain that I would have started writing even if I had never left India. Although my sense of being 'exiled' and an outsider has no doubt affected my writing as well as my 'need' to write. Around the same time I became the 'storyteller' for my brother, my cousins, and friends. All my stories I told in Gujarati but my poems I wrote in English.

MM: To return to 2002, you are coming from three different cultures: Indian, American, and European.

SB: Yes, and so increasingly I feel that I am living in the world as opposed to living in any one country. I feel attached to many different places and I am at home in various parts of the world. At the same time, I don't really 'belong' to any one place. I have always continued to write poems dealing with 'non-Indian' themes and locations. In the end, I am 'myself' and at home with 'myself'. I think that academics have more trouble with my identity than I do. My latest book, *A Colour for Solitude*, might be perceived by some as very European or Germanic but I think it is a collection that goes completely beyond 'nationalities'. Also, having been written by the ultimate foreigner that I am, the book offers an outsider's perspective.

MM: Women are also outsiders in many societies. I think that many of the themes you explore in your work are not so in India. The way you write about female sexuality and everything connected with it for example. I suppose that in India they have other attitudes?

SB: Yes, they do. Part of the reason for having poems about women's experiences, such as menstruation and

continued on page 16 >



Frauenjournal

A woman kills
her newborn granddaughter
because she has four already.

A woman kills because
there's not enough money
not enough milk.

A woman kills her newborn daughter
and still eats dinner
and still wears a green sari.

Is this being judgemental?
Or is this how one bears witness
with words?

And another woman in another country
makes sure that her seven-year-old daughter
has her clitoris sliced off
with a razor blade.
This is what they will show us
tonight – prime time –
We're advised not to let our children watch this.
This has never been filmed before.
Sometimes it's necessary
to see the truth. The moderator tells us
words are not enough.

Now the camera focuses on
the razor blade – so there is no doubt
about the instrument. The razor blade
is not a rumour.

Now the camera shifts over
to the seven-year-old face:
she smiles – innocent – she doesn't know.
The girl smiles – she feels important.
And then the blood and then the screams.

Why do I think I have to watch this?
Is this being a voyeur?
Or is this how one begins
to bear witness?

And another woman tells us how years ago
she accidentally killed her own daughter
while trying to cut out her clitoris.
The risks are great, she tells us,
but she's proud of her profession.

How much reality can you bear?

And if you are a true poet
why can't you cure
anything with your words?

The camera focused
long and steady on the razor blade.
At least it wasn't rusty.

How can you bear witness
with words, how can you heal
anything with words?

The camerawoman could not
afford to tremble or flinch.
She had to keep a steady hand.

And the hand holding the razor blade
did not hesitate.

And if you are a true poet
will you also find a voice
for the woman who can smile
after killing her daughter?

What is the point of bearing witness?

Afterwards, the girl can barely walk.

For days the girl will hobble – unable
unable unable

unable to return
to her old self,
her old childish way of life.

Sujata Bhatt

Nanabhai Bhatt in Prison

*At the foot of Takhteshwar hill
there is an L-shaped house
hidden from the road
by five mango trees
planted by Nanabhai Bhatt.*

*Huge crows swoop over
the L-shaped terrace,
red-beaked green parrots fight over
the mango trees. Some years the monsoons
sweep away too much.*

*It is 1930, 1936 ...
It is 1942:
Nanabhai sits writing for a moment
while my grandmother
gives orders to everyone.*

*The next day, he lands in prison again:
thrown in without a trial
for helping Gandhiji,
for Civil Disobience.*

*One semester in college
I spent hours picturing him:
a thin man with large hands,
my grandfather in the middle
of the night, in the middle of writing,
between ideas he pauses to read
from Tennyson, his favourite-*

Sujata Bhatt

continued from page 15 >

childbirth, is that I tend to write starting from my own life – it is my life that I am trying to understand. In many poems I've changed things or put in a lot of fiction: often my female character is not me, but an imagined woman in a different time and a different place. Of course, in some way these imaginary women are connected to me. In my opinion 'women's experiences' are universal subjects. People can forget that half the population is female and that pregnancy and childbirth are experiences that also affect men. Yet, there is so much silence connected with the female story and the female voice – I have grown up with that silence in my family – so on another level I feel that I am trying to break a private historical silence. So yes, being a woman has had a major effect on my writings. For me the mind and the body are very closely connected. I am certain that my poems, even the ones about 'neutral' themes, would be completely different if I were a man.

The erotic poems, then, were not difficult to write. They were written spontaneously, impulsively – with a great need to write them, a need to break certain silences surrounding female sexuality – but without any audience in mind.

MM: Is it possible to have these poems published in India?

SB: Well, I have published several collections with Penguin, India. So the answer is 'yes'.

MM: Do you think the situation will improve for women?

SB: I would like to say 'yes', I would like to be optimistic but often I find it hard to believe that things will improve.

MM: As to that, you also have the task to change those opinions.

SB: I suppose so. Although, as you know, one can only 'change' those who want to be changed. One of the traditional roles of the poet is to be the spokesperson, the most articulate speaker for the nation, or for the tribe. Given my family background, I have always felt intimately connected with Indian politics, history, and social issues. Thus, I've always felt 'responsible' and acutely aware of

the situation in India. On the other hand, as a poet, I feel that I should also just write about anything that moves me: animals or plants, or whatever, and not constantly be making political statements. Furthermore, in any place, and especially in India, history is so complicated, the situation today so complex, that one cannot make general statements.

MM: Besides studying English and philosophy you have studied, and have been deeply influenced by, science. Most scientists are looking for results. You, on the contrary, are looking for questions.

SB: For me, poetry is a place where there are tensions and contradictions in the language, and also in the things being discussed. So, I feel that poetry is a place where things can be questioned and examined. <

MM: Besides studying English and philosophy you have studied, and have been deeply influenced by, science. Most scientists are looking for results. You, on the contrary, are looking for questions.

Sujata Bhatt >

Sujata Bhatt (b. 1956) was born in Ahmedabad, India and currently lives in Germany. Having moved to the US with her parents in 1968, she studied philosophy, English, and biology at various American Universities. A graduate of the Writers Workshop, University of Iowa, she has worked in the United States and Canada, where she was the Lansdowne Visiting Writer at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. Sujata Bhatt has translated Gujarati poetry into English for the *Penguin Anthology of Contemporary Indian Women Poets*. Carcanet published her first five collections, *Brunizem* (Alice Hunt Bartlett Prize, Commonwealth Poetry Prize, 1988), *Monkey Shadows* (Poetry Book Society Recommendation, 1991), *The Stinking Rose* (1995), *Augatora* (Poetry Book Society Recommendation, 2000), and *A Colour for Solitude* (2002), in addition to substantial selected poems, *Point No Point* (1997). Her poems have been widely anthologized, broadcast on radio and television, and have been translated into more than a dozen languages. She received a Cholmondeley Award in 1991 and the Italian Tratti Poetry Prize in 2000. bhatt.augustin@nwn.de

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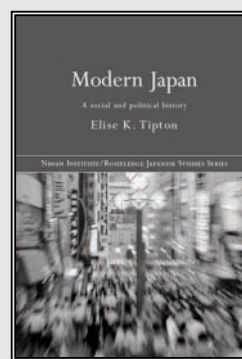
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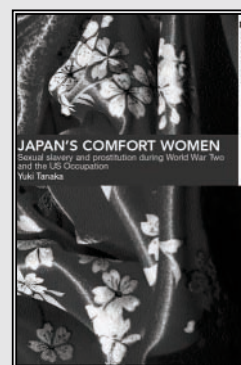
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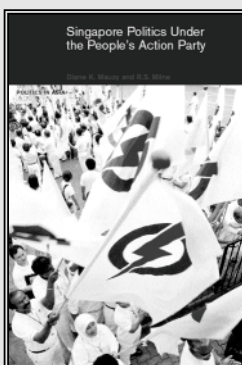
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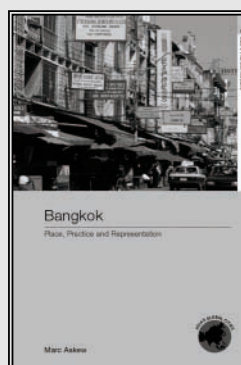
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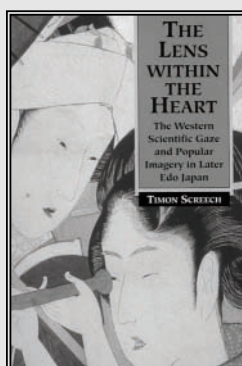
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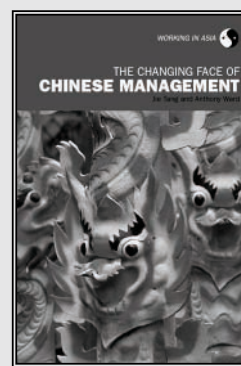
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The Gate of Words:

Language in the Rituals of Korean Shamans

Research >
Korea

In the context of globalization in the twenty-first century it may seem incongruous to speak of shamanism as a significant phenomenon in such a highly developed, industrial nation as (South) Korea. If one tends to associate shamanism with 'primitive culture', it will be a surprise to discover that in and around the metropolis of Seoul the rituals of the shamans (*mudang*) are very much in demand, because many people consider them an effective way to cope with the material and spiritual needs of modern society. Consequently shamans – who incidentally in most cases are women, as are their clients – still play an active role in Korea. Mediating between the world of gods and ancestors and that of humans, they perform rituals that are intended to resolve all kinds of problems and bring people happiness, health, and affluence in their present life.



An emotional encounter between the client and her deceased mother, who has entered the body of the shaman.

Antonetta L. Bruno

By Antonetta L. Bruno

When between 1987 and 1999 I observed the rituals of Korean shamans, I wanted to find out what actually transpires during a ritual, how exactly the shamans manage to turn it into an event that provides satisfaction to their clients, making the ritual efficacious. The answer to such questions ultimately sheds light on the astonishing survival of rituals that, in the eyes of many, seem pre-modern.

It has been my approach to obtain a reading of Korean shamanic rituals and divination practised by shamans, by focusing on the varieties of language (both ritual language and ordinary language) used in these contexts, concentrating on what the participants said, and relating their speech behaviour to their actions. Fundamental to this methodology, which was inspired by sociolinguistics and the so-called 'ethnography of speaking', was extensive fieldwork during which I made audio and video recordings of complete rituals. After preparing transcriptions of the tapes I analysed the speech of the visible and invisible participants (shamans and the supernatural entities speaking through them, clients, and audience) as a means to enter into the intricate network of communication that is established among the participants. In this stage of my research I explored Korean shamanic practices penetrating into the speech behaviour of participants by the application of linguistic tools such as Speech Act Theory, the analysis of speech direction, and the switching of speech levels, while I bestowed particular attention to the strategic usage of speech direction and switching phenomena within both symmetric and asymmetric relationships and to apparent inconsistencies with other grammatical features. My final aim was to furnish an analytical insight into the function and variety of language in the religious context.

Early on I had realized that the domain of investigation should not be confined to settings that may be narrowly defined as 'religious' (the 'formal' parts of the ritual), but should include the occasions on which the participants engaged in chatting, for instance during

pauses in a ritual (the 'informal' parts of the ritual), and therefore I always left the tape recorder running, even when nothing particular seemed to happen. The inclusion of the informal parts as the object of ritual analysis is essential for several reasons. To begin with, these informal parts function as bridges between the different levels of understanding that the various participants have with respect to the ritual. The extension of the concept of the ritual setting to events that are often considered not to be part of it also more clearly brings out the strategy used by shamans in order to make their words and actions meaningful. Only when I considered both the formal and informal parts of a ritual did I obtain a full view of the procedure of recycling (technically referred to as 're-contextualization') by the shaman in divine oracles (*kongsu*) of information that was touched upon earlier during the informal parts, and on the re-elaboration of the content of *kongsu* in informal conversation during subsequent pauses.

Although all forms of language related to the rituals are of importance, I have devoted special attention to *kongsu* because of its crucial function in the actions of the shamans and its particular significance to the participants. Acquiring the ability to deliver *kongsu* – in the words of the shamans themselves, 'opening the Gate of Words' – is in the final analysis what makes a shaman a true shaman, a religious practitioner able to serve and attract clients. My scrutiny of the linguistic features used in *kongsu* also shed light on the frequent switching of identity of the shaman and on the nature of possession in Korea. I found that even though it is generally assumed that in *kongsu* it is simply a divinity or spirit that addresses the believers, within a single *kongsu* the shaman usually constantly changes her (or his) identity. The speech levels the shaman used indicated that at one moment she was talking down to the clients as a numinous being, but the next moment reverted to her own, more humble identity as a shaman, only to speak again as a god in the next sentence. Her 'possession' turned out to be intermittent, a constant coming and going rather than a stable condition. Thus linguistic features proved to be a useful basis to define the altered state of consciousness that occurs among Korean shamans. It also became obvious to me that *kongsu* cannot always be accurately described – as is often done – as a dialogue

between the deity/shaman and the client only. Frequently a third person, another shaman, is involved, who acts as an interpreter in both directions. The result is a much more complex pattern of communication, which offers more opportunities to convey the message effectively to the client, and adapt it to her needs, and therefore contributes to the success of the ritual.

After I had charted the various patterns of communication I finally analysed the way in which strategic manipulation of words and actions by the shaman during *kongsu* and divination makes rituals and fortune telling efficacious in terms of an emotional transformation of the participants. It is in *kongsu* that the problems of the clients are addressed most directly and the performative utterances of the shaman are most effective in comforting and reassuring them. Recurring phrases such as 'I help you', 'I support you', 'Don't worry', 'Bear this in mind', and 'I assist you' are speech acts, which by themselves have the potential to produce a certain effect. The constant repetition of the same phrases affects the receiver, convincing her that her problems will be resolved, making her feel better by the end of the ritual. In *kongsu* the re-contextualization of information received in informal contacts between shamans and clients, which I frequently observed, also contributes to making rituals efficacious. When the gods reveal past and future, the content of their words is not abstract, but uniquely real and personal to the client. This personalization of the content affects the client emotionally, reassuring her even more that she can count on support and assistance.

This drove me to the conclusion that emotion is a determinant factor for the success of a ritual and a yardstick to measure whether it has been efficacious. The contrast between the emotions that the client experiences at the beginning and at the end of the ritual is related to a switching from passive to active participation. In the rituals, I have seen silent and absent-minded clients, who did not respond to the overtures of the shaman, gradually being transformed into active participants who engaged in dialogues with beings from the other world and shared joy, tears, and laughter with those present. It is in this way, and to a large extent through verbal strategies, that the aims of the rituals of Korean shamans are achieved. <

– Bruno, Antonetta L., *The Gate of Words: Language in the Rituals of Korean Shamans*, Leiden: CNWS (2002), pp. X+212, ISBN 90-5789-079-8.

Dr Antonetta Lucia Bruno did her PhD course work at Seoul National University and received her PhD at Leiden University. At present she is teaching Korean Language and Literature at 'La Sapienza' University, Faculty of Oriental Studies, in Rome. antonetta.bruno@uniroma1.it

Triangular communication: from left to right, the client, the assistant-shaman, and the deity speaking through the mouth of a shaman.



Antonetta L. Bruno

They are not Humans Anyway

Report >
South Asia

5 June 2002
Amsterdam,
the Netherlands

'What is the Endlösung going to look like? What are they going to do with 120 million Muslims?' Professor Breman did not shy away from comparisons, 'It made me think of Kristalnacht: I was handed out flyers with texts like "don't buy from Muslims" and "don't employ Muslims". People were seen as "Untermenschen" who need a "final solution". Horrifying.'

By Ward Berenschot

It was a grim mood that hung over the ASiA panel of the Forum on Violence in Gujarat; after the projection of the documentary *In the Name of God* by Anand Patwardhan, the panel engaged in analysis of the violence in Gujarat with one recurrent feeling: a deeply felt uneasiness about the direction that Indian society is taking. 'I'm sorry to end with such a sad note', were the closing words of Yoginder Sikand's contribution, 'but I see really little hope'.

lady from the audience, adding that 'over the last years, they have done better than ever before'. This might be due to the many changes in Indian society, Jan Breman argued. The increased assertiveness of the lower castes has threatened the interests of the Hindu middle class. 'They have the feeling it is not their society anymore. They assert their identity by distancing themselves from "aliens". I believe some parallels with recent developments in Holland can be made here.'

Gitandri Shri remarked on how many people are insensitive to what is happening next door. She believes that the

poor condition. State relief had not reached them, while 98 per cent of the victims of the violence were Muslims. Yoginder Sikand came across the same attitude when he tried to raise money for the victims. He was shocked by the indifference and hostility he met.

A new, distressing feature of the violence in Gujarat was the extent of involvement of the Indian state in the rioting. The police facilitated and supported the violence. They did nothing to stop the violence and in some cases even pointed out where the victims were hiding. According to the panel, the ruling BJP wants to capitalize on the violence. BJP politicians are thinking about holding elections now, because they hope that the riots will help them to regain the Hindu vote. 'This is not a simple Muslim-Hindu riot', Gitandri Shri concluded, 'this is a shrinkage of democratic space: an attack on the space of freedom'.

The violence even had its repercussions in the Netherlands: before the elections the Dutch VHP advised its members to vote for Pim Fortuyn. According to Breman, this was because of the anti-Muslim stance of Fortuyn. After this announcement, VHP members in the Netherlands received letters with death threats, signed by 'al-Qaeda'.

Dalits?

Low-caste people, Breman believes, have done the killing. 'There has been a structural shift in caste relations. Hindu parties have been playing down the differences between high and low caste people, including all groups in the Hindu "family". The low castes have to pay the price for that. The price for their inclusion is to distance themselves from the excluded: Muslims.'

He argued that low-caste Hindus have been employed by the middle class to do their dirty work. Economic changes have made this possible: 'Ahmedabad had a lot of textile mills, employing 160,000 workers. These mills have been closed down, sending people to the street, where they have been living in terrible conditions. In the era of globalization these people have nothing and they can be recruited to do work for

'This is not a simple Muslim-Hindu riot... this is a shrinkage of democratic space: an attack on the space of freedom.'

'The same environment that frightens me a lot, gives a lot of confidence to others. Many middle class people feel the need to assert their identity. They say things like "we are Hindus, why are we not allowed to say that?"' Gitandri Shri had visited the burned train in Godhra, which had sparked off the violence in Gujarat. 'When I entered the train, I heard a middle class Hindu couple remark: "they should show this to the human rights people and secularists. There is really no place for Muslims in this country". The sight produces an entirely different reaction in me.'

'How come this middle class feels so insecure?', asked a

middle class is untouched by the suffering because the affected people are from another class and have a completely different lifestyle. 'They pass by a slum and feel that the inhabitants are not humans anyway.'

This might help explain the complete lack of remorse or shame about the violence. Jan Breman quoted the chairman of the Hindu-nationalist organization VHP as saying '[t]he Muslims had it coming. Our boys had to do it'. Breman had visited the relief camps for the victims of the violence and noted that the Hindu camps had been visited by numerous politicians, and that the camps for Muslim victims were in

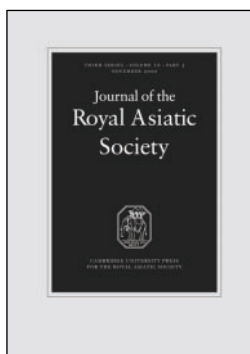
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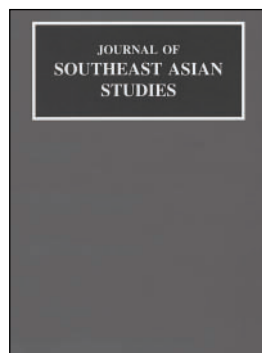
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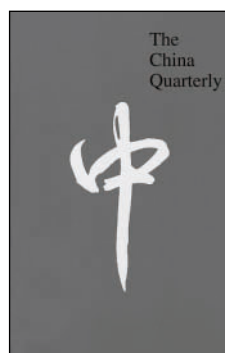
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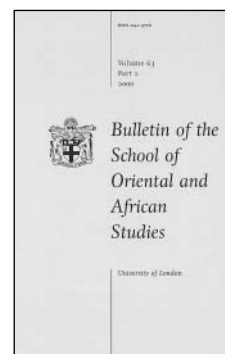
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Between Music, Dance and Ritual: Performing Arts at the Borneo Research Council Conference

the middle classes, the backbone of Hindutva'. Yoginder Sikand added that the weakness of the low-caste (Dalit) movement in Gujarat made the state very fertile for communal violence. An alliance between Muslims and Dalits in states like Bihar had prevented violence, he argued.

An idea of who participates in communal violence is often related to one's explanation for the occurrence of violence. A speaker from the audience argued that the middle class youth was more involved in rioting than Jan Breman admitted, claiming that hooliganism was for them an important motivation to participate. 'You have to be initiated into using violence', Breman answered. He believed that direct and actual participation in violence does not come so easy to the middle class.

Leaving history to tradesmen

'We historians need to break the artificial boundaries. We should not study a Hindu or a Muslim history, but we should simply look at the process of state-building.' Together with Shahid Amin, historian Barbara Metcalf broke a lance for a rethinking of Indian history. They emphasized how critical a historical narrative has become for the continuing of communal violence, and how dangerous it is to leave history to common sense. In colonial times, a narrative of Hindu-Muslim differences has come up to legitimize the English presence in India. This version of Indian history has become national common sense and is repeated over and over again to widen the rift between Hindus and Muslims. 'Just after independence, an Indian politician cautioned rightly that "we should not leave history to tradesmen". An uncanny remark, given the nature of the current regime.'

A history of conquest and consequent suppression by Muslim invaders, Shahid Amin argued, is full of essentialist notions. A Hindu identity has become bound up with ideas of the 'otherness' of Muslims. 'Hindus have inscribed in their collective psyche that the bigoted, fanatical Muslims have come to attack us.'

Instead, Shahid Amin believes, attention should be paid to the forms of Indian syncretism that have come up over the centuries. Non-sectarian histories should be written, which pay attention to the composite culture of India. Historians should write new versions of the encounter between Hindus and Muslims. 'It is time to write professionally about the facts of our medieval past and memories of Muslim suppression. We cannot run away from it and leave it to the nationalists to give us the definitive history of Muslim conquest. Our nation can never be made habitable by ruining the dwelling in which Indians have lived together for centuries.'

What does the Gujarat violence hold for the future? Jan Breman recounted how he met a Muslim woman living in a Hindu neighbourhood. She worried that the nearby Muslim slum was going to attack her (Hindu) neighbourhood. Three days later, she was sent away by her Hindu neighbours 'for her own safety'. 'The violence is segregating Indian society. Many young Hindus do not know a single Muslim, while Muslims make up 20 per cent of the population of cities like Ahmedabad.' 'When segregation goes too far', Breman concluded, 'there is no going back'. Shahid Amin remarked that although the Indian constitution reserves the right to propagate one's fate to all Indians, in practice this right is only given to Hindus. Gitandra Shri stated that '[t]he Hindu-Muslim violence is also a conflict between those who believe in a plural society and those who believe in a multicultural society'. <

Ward Berenschot, MA recently graduated in Political Science at the University of Amsterdam with his thesis 'The Hifi People versus the Cheap People: Fertile Soil of Communal Violence in Bombay, India'. musiu@dds.nl

The Seventh Biennial International Conference of the Borneo Research Council (BRC) focused on issues in development in twenty-first-century Borneo and for the first time featured two major panels on the performing arts, in addition to a separate session of individual papers. Inevitably, the change and continued relevance of the traditional art forms of Borneo were among the issues discussed by a number of specialists in the performing arts who had come from Borneo, Malaysia, Europe, and the USA. It is to be hoped that at future BRC Conferences this forum will also feature local Dayak researchers.



Young students at the Dayak Cultural Foundation practising traditional Iban women's dance (*ngajat indu*) in modern slacks, while manipulating woven *pua kumbu* cloths.

Report >
Southeast Asia

15-18 July 2002
Sabah, Malaysia

By Clara Brakel & Patricia Matusky

The first panel entitled 'Between Music, Dance and Ritual: Some Aspects of Kulintang in Sabah', focused on the *kulintang* gong-chime of Sabah. The four papers presented in this panel were the result of a long-term study of the *kulintang* (from 1998 to 2000) to examine its repertory, music practices, distribution, function, and use in select Sabahan and Filipino societies. Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan of Universiti Malaysia Sabah showed the widespread distribution of the *kulintang* among ethnic groups throughout the state of Sabah, with particular reference to Dusunic cultures, while Sunetra Fernando from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, spoke about the heterogeneity of music practices and repertoires played on the *kulintang* along the east coast of Sabah. The use of the *kulintang* in relation to dance in village and court contexts was discussed by Mohammed Anis of the University of Malaya. Finally, Hanafi Hussin, a doctoral student in theatre at the University of Malaya, reported on his research on a spirit medium ritual (the *moginum* of the Bobohizan) and function of the *kulintang* music in that ceremony among the Tatana ethnic group in the area of Kuala Penyu, Sabah. While the summaries of this panel are published by the BRC, the in-depth individual studies will be published as a collection by the group of researchers concerned.

The second panel on music and dance, entitled 'Preservation-Modernization-Reinvention in the Performing Arts of Borneo', was meant to begin examining current trends in the performing arts of Borneo. Five presenters explored the state of music and dance performances in traditional settings, academic contexts, and public settings such as those arranged by the culture ministries, hotels, and private organizations. With a variety of viewpoints and approaches, the speakers

discussed examples of innovation of the traditional arts in Borneo, addressing modernization versus preservation in the music, songs, and dances of Sarawak and Sabah.

First, Patricia Matusky of Central Michigan University set out some of the basic issues of the panel in a paper entitled 'The Significance of Preservation: To Save or Not to Save?', illustrating why preservation and documentation are imperative when considering research in the traditional arts. The Dayak Cultural Foundation Ethnic Orchestra, a recent example of 'modernization' in the sense of incorporating Western influences into originally Dayak music and dance, was discussed by Clara Brakel of Leiden University. Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan showed various, more or less satisfactory examples of adaptation of traditional dance and music forms in Sabah and Mhd. Anis Md. Nor used a live demonstration to show how traditional Iban dance patterns may change in various contexts. This very lively panel ended with an example of the adaptation of the long-dance-song (*belian dadu*), often considered one of the most



Young music students at the Dayak Cultural Foundation practising with traditional Iban mouth-organs (*engkerurai*). On the table in front of them are two mouth-organs (*engkrurai*) and two one-stringed fiddles (*serunai*).

attractive musical genres of the Kenyah communities in Sarawak, for urban audiences and students in government schools and institutions, by Chong Pek Lin, music lecturer at Maktab Perguruan Batu Lintang, Kuching, Sarawak.

The session of individual papers on performing arts encompassed both music and theatre. Nur Afifah Vanitha Abdullah of the Universiti Malaysia Sarawak spoke about the *bangsawan* theatrical genre in Sarawak. While little information exists on the history of this genre, an elucidation of the roots of *bangsawan* in peninsular Malaysia and its dissemination throughout Southeast Asia might provide more research possibilities. Two papers dealt with tube zithers and gong-chimes in Sabah. Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan explained terminology and performance techniques on the *tongkungan* tube zither and the relationship to the hanging-gong orchestras from the Kadazandusun Culture of Tambunan in Sabah. In contrast, Jedol Dayou, also of the Universiti Malaysia Sabah, offered a technical description of the acoustic properties of the *kulintang* gong-chime of Sabah.

The general feeling was that continued relevance of the traditional art forms in the more urban regions of Borneo was especially pressing in today's world of global communication, modern technology, and easy access to influences from the Western world. Therefore, presenters of performing arts papers at this conference intend to continue and expand the discussion at the next BRC Conference in 2004 and beyond. <

Dr Clara Brakel is working as a consultant for the Dayak Cultural Foundation and the Tun Jugah Foundation in Kuching, Sarawak. She is associated with the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia and Oceania, Leiden University. clara.brakel@wolmail.nl

Dr Patricia Matusky is employed by the Tun Jugah Foundation and the Dayak Cultural Foundation as an ethnomusicologist in their preservation programme. She is an Associate Graduate Faculty member in ethnomusicology for the College of Extended Learning of Central Michigan University. Patmatusky@cs.com

Information >

The Forum on Violence in Gujarat was organized by Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASiA), University of Amsterdam (UvA). The ASiA panel consisted of the sociologist Jan Breman (UvA), the Islamist Yoginder Sikand (Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, ISIM), historian Shahid Amin (Delhi University), historian Barbara Metcalf (University of California at Davis), novelist Gitandri Shri, and was chaired by the anthropologist Peter van der Veer (UvA).

Contact: asianstudies@fmg.uva.nl
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East is East? Where Does the East Begin for Egyptian Liberal Intellectuals?

The year 1938 saw the publication of Taha Husayn's *The Future of Culture in Egypt*. Penned by one of Egypt's most significant 'liberal age' intellectuals, this work was written at a time when the Anglo-Egyptian treaty officially ended the occupation.* It marked a new epoch in national life and many nationalists voiced their hopes for a changing world. The opening chapters start with an intriguing question, namely: Does Egypt belong to the East (*al-sharq*) or West (*al-gharb*)? Indeed, is the Egyptian mind 'Oriental' in its perception and judgement of matters?

Research >
Central Asia

By Mona Abaza

Husayn did not believe that the relationship that ancient Egyptians had with the Oriental lands (*al-bilad al-sharqiyya*) ever surpassed the so-called Near East (*al-sharq al-qarib*), which we call Palestine, Greater Syria (*al-Sham*), and Iraq. Husayn's vision of Asia or the Asian realm commences, like the Greek idea, with the Persians, who are perceived as invaders and conquerors to which Egypt unwillingly submitted and therefore sought aid from the Greeks. It is tedious, according to him, to think of the Far East or to relate to it while ignoring the Mediterranean world.

In raising such questions, Husayn wanted to convey the message that Egypt at that time in fact belonged to the Western rather than the Eastern world, upholding the culture and civilization of the Greco-Roman Mediterranean world. For Husayn, there were two fundamentally different civilizations: one was based on Greek philosophy and art, Roman law, and the morals of Christianity; the other derived from India. Egypt, according to Husayn, belonged to the Greco-Roman civilization (Hourani 1962:330–1).

For Husayn, then, the 'Egyptian mind' could not be Oriental if one understands the 'Orient' as consisting of China, Japan, and India, and that which is related to these regions. For Husayn, the confines of 'near' Asia are Palestine, Greater Syria, and Mesopotamia. On the other hand, (non-Semitic) Persia is described as an Oriental nation located in farther away lands. Husayn laments that he never understood the aims of the Society of the Oriental League in Egypt, which sought solidarity with the Far East instead of the near West.

Fawzi's India

Within a year of the publication of Taha Husayn's book, Husayn Fawzi, a French-trained medical doctor, who would later become one of the most significant historians of Egypt and a pioneer in the genre of the modern travel account, published *A Modern Sindbad: A Tour of the Indian Ocean* (Fawzi 1938) on his voyage to the Indian Ocean. In 1933, Fawzi had sailed on a collaborative mission, consisting of forty British and Egyptian sailors and scientists. Fawzi's nine-month voyage departed from Alexandria, passing Aden, the Hadramaut, and Sri Lanka on route to the subcontinent.

Fawzi describes at length the temples he visits in India and he shares with the reader his thoughts on an ancient and great civilization. Fawzi is indeed fascinated by its aesthetics and

'I was raised to love the West and to admire its civilization I have spent my most significant formative years in Europe which reinforced my love and the pillars of my admiration.

When I went to the East and returned back to my country, my love and admiration of the West was transformed into a certitude' (Fawzi 1938)

statues. However, his narrative of India and Hinduism is paradoxical because it simultaneously reflects fascination and distaste. He conveys images of an oppressive Orient, dwelling on such local horrors as widow burning. To Fawzi, Malabar's temples evoked only nightmares, the fear of death. Having thus been led to ponder where the 'East' begins and where Egyptian civilization should be located *vis-à-vis* the East, he concludes that Egypt, its civilization, and even he himself, all belong to the Western European world.

Like Husayn, Fawzi was a firm believer in Western enlightenment and progress. Both believed that Western civilization represented the highest level of independent thinking and self-critique. Fawzi concludes his account by contrasting Western civilization with Hinduism as representing an Oriental and above all alien despotic culture. His chapter entitled 'The East and the West' (*al-sharq wa al-gharb*) epitomizes the core of this argument. Like Husayn, Fawzi wanted to distance himself from the 'East' by belonging to the Mediterranean basin. Still, Fawzi was certainly fascinated by Ghandi's peaceful resistance to British colonialism. He reminds us that Ghandi's spiritualism was important in pointing to the injustice of the Brahman caste system. However, Fawzi insists that the British were not entirely harmful in advancing their civilizing mission ideology. Their doctors, in fact, introduced vaccination, their engineers the irrigation system,

and their politicians put in order the political life of New Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. Their social reformers opposed the burning of widows. Thus, if Ghandi's spiritualism was to fight the dark forces of this world, one could not condemn overall British politics as being merely evil deeds. If forced to choose between the two worlds Fawzi 'would rather prefer without hesitation, Greek civilization or the neighbouring European civilization once it had dispensed with the oppression of the Middle Ages.... It is a civilization that advocates the freedom of reason' (Fawzi 1938:175).

Four decades later

Fawzi's position changes, however, with his second trip to India (Fawzi 1978). In this account Fawzi re-thinks many of the assumptions and biases that he had expressed against Hinduism in his earlier work. In his introduction, he apologizes for his previous intransigent attitude, which he says stemmed from his youthful ignorance. India for Fawzi was now a dear neighbour to Egypt. India had now been independent for some time, and Fawzi had read many of the works of Indian intellectuals, philosophers, and post-colonial politicians – in addition to the works of many Orientalists on India's heritage. This time, too, Fawzi had been invited to participate in a UNESCO conference and many events in the world had shaped the post-colonial discourse. His return to India 37 years later is again interesting in that he asks the same question: Is Egypt located in the

Orient? His answer this time is different. Egypt is located at the crossroads of East and West, North and South. In the geography and the history, and into its future, Egypt is to remain open to the four directions; it is simultaneously African, Asiatic, and Mediterranean (Fawzi 1978:10).

The respective stances of these two 'liberal intellectuals' tell us a lot about the perceptions of Egyptians towards the vague notion of the 'Orient' and their even more vague self-reflexive positions. Asia was used for identity construction, which naturally kept on changing. They unconsciously reproduced inherited notions of the despotic Orient, as part and parcel of adopting a naive attitude towards enlightenment and rationalism. Again this is not a novel argument.

To conclude, the writings of both Husayn and Fawzi are extremely inspiring when it concerns issues of self-perceptions and the Other on the level of South-South intellectualism. These two intellectuals constructed a vision of an Orient that was much tainted by the spirit of the time. Taha Husayn and Husayn Fawzi were both fervent advocates of Egypt's belonging to the Greco-Roman Mediterranean culture. By doing so, they perpetuated a Western Orientalist perception of an antithetical Orient. Both Husayn and Fawzi adopted an uncritical enlightened position with respect to the West. But, it would be unfair to reproach them for such a stance as some Islamists are doing today when they attack the advocates of 'Mediterraneanism' as 'unauthentic' and westernized intellectuals. That Husayn and Fawzi were naive believers in enlightenment is evident, but perhaps also inevitable, given that many anti-colonial thinkers took this stance as the only path available for generating social criticism within the confines of a reformist framework. ◀

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Dr. Mona Abaza obtained her PhD from the Faculty of Development Sociology, University of Bielefeld, Germany.

She is associate professor at the Department of Sociology, The American University in Cairo. She was recently a research fellow at the IIAS in Leiden, participating in the research programme 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'.
moabaza@uns2.aucegypt.edu

Note >

* The occupation of Egypt was officially ended in 1936, yet the British did not depart until the Free Officers Revolution in 1952.

Troubled Links

Public Health and the Alleviation of Poverty in South Asia

Research >
South Asia

The establishment of the World Health Organization (WHO) after the Second World War was accompanied by concerted calls for creation of better healthcare facilities in the developing world. The WHO was seen as the agent that could funnel the necessary Western aid and technology to the newly independent nations of South Asia most effectively. This view became even more widespread as the negative effects of the Cold War began to visibly affect these regions. Indeed, in a situation where superpower rivalries began to politicize the provision of aid packages, the WHO's relative political neutrality allowed it to be seen as a more reliable source of assistance, which in turn allowed it greater access to the newly established regional governments. At another level, the WHO's messages for social and economic improvement, through sustained healthcare reform, fit in well with the messages transmitted by the new nationalist governments within their countries.

By Sanjoy Bhattacharya

One of the main questions that has been occupying me during my current research project, dealing with preventive and curative health in South Asia, is whether such plans and the initiatives they engendered had the ability to improve the economic situation of the most disadvantaged sections of the subcontinental population in the long term. My quest for an answer to this question caused me to examine official deliberations in this regard more closely. I quickly realized that one of the best ways to achieve this was to look at the debates between bureaucrats based at the different levels of the administration. This allowed me to identify and then examine the distinctions between policy rhetoric and implementation. Not only do these deliberations and disagreements allow insights into the problems faced by Indian administrators, they also allow us a window into administrative attitudes, at all levels of the state, towards international aid agencies and the programmes launched by them. These views, in turn, give us a better idea of achievements of particular public health and developmental schemes as well as their immediate impact and long-term possibilities.

One of the most striking things is that it is very difficult to define what organized international intervention was actually composed of (many historians talk of 'intervention', but very few define what this stood for). During the 1950s and the 1960s, international agencies tended to provide assistance to national governments, and expected them to utilize the aid received according to the agreements that had been reached. This hardly ever happened, and some confidential assessments prepared by observers selected by the aid agencies warned that the money was very often being deployed for schemes other than those for which it was intended. More worryingly, such reports also pointed out that the projects that were drawing money away from schemes targeted at the poorest sections of the population were those that catered to

the politically powerful groups: the urban middle classes, caste groupings that dominated local economies and, not least, the constituencies of politicians who had entered India's lower house of parliament and state assemblies.

Remarkably, a careful analysis of the correspondence exchanged between the different levels of Indian government confirms such views. At one level, provincial governments often complained in confidential memos about the fact that the central government was not giving them all the money set aside for them by aid agencies. At another level, the district administrators raised similar objections, this time about the provincial authorities' propensity to redirect funds to urban health projects, rather than anti-malaria and mass immunization campaigns, which a range of international donors expected would receive attention. At yet another level, official resolutions obviate that general immunization campaigns in India – which were advertised to hold the key for improved health and economic conditions for the poorest sections of the population in official rhetoric – could often only be maintained right up to 1970 as a result of the provincial officials' tendency to finance these schemes with monies drawn from funds originally set aside for the uplift of the members of the so-called 'scheduled castes' (who generally represented the some of the most under-privileged sections of the population).

There can be little doubt that such trends irreparably harmed the malaria eradication programme in India – far too much of the international aid for this project was directed elsewhere, while local funds that were utilized to retain a rather rudimentary structure of malaria control proved insufficient. The smallpox eradication programme suffered from such trends as well, but this situation was rectified between 1970 and 1975, when the WHO successfully demanded a greater role in the supervision of the development of local programmes. This intervention was, of course, not widely welcomed and could sometimes only be retained with the threat of service penalties (imposed by the government of

India) or even in more extreme cases paramilitary intervention. These efforts brought about the desired levels of vaccine coverage, which in turn allowed for the eradication of smallpox and freedom from the high mortality levels the disease engendered. More strikingly, a wide variety of official communications, exchanged within and between the government of India and the World Health Organization, suggests that such concerted intervention in rural immunization services, via the placement of a range of the centrally employed supervisory staff, contributed to the tightening of general healthcare provisions, which allowed more equitable access to the facilities that existed. These trends seem to have comprised a general increase in health levels, which according to certain commentators had positive economic and social influences on rural communities.

Significantly, however, such assessments were questioned in some official circles, even as the final push for the eradication of smallpox was being put in place. Notable in this regard were the arguments by administrators who believed that the control of population through concerted family planning could do much more than the prevention of infectious disease for poverty alleviation. The problem, once again, was that of arranging for concerted and effective intervention. Continuing problems in this regard, most notably in relation to the inability of the central and state governments to increase the use of condoms and chemical birth control measures, led to the excesses imposed on civilians during the period of 'emergency'. This period of extra-constitutional central government rule that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed in the mid-1970s was characterized by the introduction of forced sterilization of males who had fathered a large number of children. This campaign stumbled badly in the hands of inefficient managers, whose selection of targets began to be politically and communally determined. Indeed, as some of the main architects of the programme of forced sterilization began to distribute reports insisting that Muslims tended to have the largest families, this community began to be targeted indiscriminately. Sustained central and state government intervention during this time led to grotesque abuses of power, where young boys, in their teens, were forcibly transported to clinics for this operation. The end of emergency forced through by widespread popular demonstrations, which caused fresh elections that swept Indira Gandhi out of power, brought an end to this shameful episode in which some of the poorest sections of the Indian population were forced to submit to heavy-handed intervention, ostensibly deployed for their own welfare.

To conclude, sustained public health interventions in India could sometimes improve health conditions amongst disadvantaged social groups, but such improvements tended to be ephemeral, even during the most positive of programmes (and I do count the smallpox eradication programme as a positive episode, which allowed the provision of healthcare delivery in remote rural enclaves). And yet, sustained official interventions could also take on a darker hue, as in the case of the scheme of forced sterilizations during the 'emergency'. Therefore, in a country like India historical precedents suggest that government interventions can make a difference, but only when these efforts are organized democratically and with the involvement of members of the target communities. Historical experience also tells us that social and economic improvements, brought about by state-sponsored developmental programmes, tend to be concentrated in urban contexts, with rural areas coming out second best in almost every case. Put another way, public health and medical work, carried out with international assistance, usually tend to have a much more marked effect in urban areas, probably because the system of electoral democracy tends to work much better there. But, the achievement of comprehensive poverty alleviation still remains a distant pipe dream in India due to the social inequalities that continue to dog its society. Public health and educational work can make a difference, as such official activities can have a democratizing effect on the poorest sections of rural society. Indeed, the realization that access to healthcare and education is a right, not a privilege accorded to a select few, is usually accompanied by greater levels of political participation. ◀

Dr Sanjoy Bhattacharya is a lecturer at the Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at University College London (UCL).
sanjoy.bhattacharya@ucl.ac.uk

Lady health visitors in rural India (c. 1960)



Courtesy of Sanjoy Bhattacharya. Part of the family's personal collection.

Modern South Asia Conference in Heidelberg

Report >
South Asia

9-14 September 2002
Heidelberg, Germany

At the end of this summer the South Asia Institute of the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Germany, hosted the European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, the seventeenth in a series of biennial conferences. Through the years this conference has become an important platform in Europe for the exchange of results of research on modern South Asia.

By *Netty Bonouvrié*

In the building of the Neue Universität, situated in the heart of the beautiful old town of Heidelberg, more than 300 participants from Europe, the United States, Australia, Japan, and South Asian countries assembled to attend this extremely well-organized conference. The panel sessions, spread over four days, offered a wide coverage of research on modern South Asia, while a number of recent documentaries on South Asian topics were also featured.

As the number of panels has increased considerably over the last decade – from nineteen at the twelfth conference in Toulouse, France, in 1994 to forty this year – participants, unfortunately, were forced to choose from among ten parallel sessions daily. Of course the organizers of the conference readily admitted to this. As professor S.K. Mitra, present director of the South Asia Institute, already remarked in his introduction, '[i]n spite of the best will in the world, no international conference can make every panel available to everyone'. The panels were organized around leading disciplines ranging from anthropology and religious studies to politics and linguistics; others focused on interdisciplinary themes like identity and diaspora. Current issues such as the relationship between India and Pakistan, the Kashmir conflict, and the nuclear capacities of India and Pakistan were also touched upon. Furthermore there seems to be a tendency to organize panels on specific regions, e.g. on the Himalaya area, on Indian states – as in Rajasthan Studies and Tamil Studies – and

on the various countries of the South Asian subcontinent such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Details of the panels and papers can be found on the Internet site of the conference, mentioned below.

The conference coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the South Asia Institute, which consists of eight departments and has become a major centre for interdisciplinary research and teaching. Results of interdisciplinary research were rendered visible by means of the exhibition *Benares. Views of a Holy City* at the Völkerkundemuseum of Heidelberg, which could be visited by a guided tour (for more information see the article by Martin Gaenzle and Jörg Gengnagel on the next page).

Considering the number of participants and the increase of contributions, this conference was certainly successful. The next European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, to be hosted by SASNET (Swedish South Asian Studies Network) and Lund University, will be held from 6 to 9 July 2004 in Lund, Sweden. ◀

Netty Bonouvrié, MA is affiliated to the Documentation Centre for South Asia of the Kern Institute, Leiden University and is this newsletter's regional editor for South Asia.
n.c.bonouvrie@let.leidenuniv.nl

Internet >

General information, the programme, the panel overview and abstracts of papers of the Seventeenth European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies held in Heidelberg can be found at:
www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/ecmsa/start.html
Information on the forthcoming conference in Lund will soon be available at:
www.sasnet.lu.se/research.html

Tribal Transitions

Cultural Innovation in Arunachal Pradesh

Research >
South Asia

A new research project has been launched to document and analyse cultural change in Arunachal Pradesh, India. Starting from the premise that tribal people are not only guardians of culture but also initiators of change, the 'Tribal Transitions' project will study tribal culture in this state, which is home to about twenty-five separate groups who speak Tibeto-Burman languages. Isolated both by terrain and official policy, Arunachal provides a unique location to study such change; its cultures were recorded in extensive archives made during the colonial period and augmented by fieldwork since independence. By combining contemporary documentation with a study of archives, the project, the first of its kind in Arunachal Pradesh, will analyse innovation in a historical perspective.



Monpa mask dancer.

R. Blurton

By *Stuart Blackburn*

Although Arunachal Pradesh has been isolated by mountainous terrain and by government policy, which have prevented absorption into mainstream culture, trade links with Tibet and the plains have always brought new objects and ideas – today brought by television, education, and better roads. Cultural change is apparent everywhere: textile designs of one tribe are borrowed by others; local festivals are centralized and refashioned as community events; oral traditions are printed and discussed as 'cultural heritage'. Some traditional practices (such as tattooing) have been banned by tribal organizations, while others (e.g. woodcarving) are undergoing expansion. Perhaps the most funda-

mental change is that animistic beliefs and rituals are undergoing formalization into a 'religion' with new visual images, places of worship, and a formal theology. This systematization of the worship of Donyi-Polo (Sun-Moon) places it alongside the other religions known in the area: Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Ritual practitioners have also formed a statewide association of shamans. These changes are fast paced and largely undocumented.

In analysing innovation, the research will challenge deep-rooted perceptions of tribal cultures as antidotes to modernity. The impulse to romanticize 'indigenous peoples' is still a powerful force in scholarship and public debate, not only in the West but also in urban India. In order to shift the focus from preservation to innovation, the research will draw upon a range of writings that historicize tribal culture and theorize tradition as reinvention. Primary among these are anthropological critiques of the 'primitive', a notion which places tribal culture either in a timeless present or a vanished past. Also valuable are studies of historical change in tribal cultures, either through regional networks of trade or from adaptation to economic and environmental conditions. While these processes operate in Arunachal Pradesh, the research will approach change as more than passive adaptation and more as innovation, especially in expressive culture. We will utilize the concept of the 'invention of tradition', first described by historians. Although typically applied to public traditions in large states, we believe the concept is applicable to small-scale societies as well. Folklorists have likewise contributed to this reinterpretation of tradition and to the emphasis on the inventiveness of culture by developing the concept of 'second-hand folklore' to describe conscious manipulations of tradition.

We will also draw on new research that views objects not as static artefacts or bearers of meaning but as sites of cultural practice and history. In a study similar to the proposed research, for example, Gosden and Knowles (2001) have demonstrated that the juxtaposition of museum collections and fieldwork yields original insights into cultural change over time. Finally, we will draw selectively from the growing literature on 'indigenous peoples'. Although this literature often sacrifices accuracy for advocacy, it does contain valuable case studies of change among tribal groups.

The project involves both fieldwork and archival study. Field-

work will concentrate on three domains (ritual practices, oral narratives and histories, and material culture) among four tribes (Apatani, Adi, Monpa, and Idu Mishmi) using a variety of methods. By observation, photography, filmmaking, and audio taping we will document current practices; by interviewing and by showing (copies of) archival photos, we will elicit commentary on change. We will also produce a series of four films, one on each tribe, documenting the ways in which each group defines and displays its identity. Whenever possible, we will study events and objects already documented in the historical record: a festival filmed in 1953, for example, may be filmed again in 2003. Archival study will concentrate on major collections in the United Kingdom and India; photographs and films will help to establish a baseline from which change can be measured; objects will be examined for evidence of changing uses and interpretations. Finally, we will repatriate approximately 500 photographs to Arunachal Pradesh.

The planned outcomes of the research are:

- an exhibition in India, originating in Arunachal Pradesh and travelling to other cities;
- an exhibition at the British Museum;
- four documentary films;
- an extensive collection of photographs;
- monographs on oral traditions, religious life, and material culture in Arunachal Pradesh
- a photographic essay on cultural change in the state;
- a volume of essays from an international conference at Arunachal University.

Through the public dissemination of results, both in India and the United Kingdom, the project hopes to contribute both to our knowledge of tribal cultures and to the debate concerning their place in the modern world. The project will soon have a website (probably 'tribaltransitions') on the main SOAS website. ◀

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Dr Stuart Blackburn is senior lecturer in folklore and Tamil Studies at SOAS, London. His research interests are oral traditions in performance, literary history, oral history, and northeast India in general. Sb12@soas.ac.uk



Apa Tani priest, narrating a legend, April 2002.

Stuart Blackburn

Information >

'Tribal Transitions' is a collaborative project between the School of Oriental and African Studies, the British Museum, Arunachal University, the government of Arunachal Pradesh, the Centre for Cultural Research and Documentation (Arunachal Pradesh), and the British Council in New Delhi. The project director is Dr Stuart Blackburn (SOAS), supported by Mr Richard Blurton (British Museum), Dr Sarit Chaudhuri (Arunachal University), Mr Moji Riba (CCRD), Mr Michael Tarr (USA), Prof. T. Subba (Shillong) and Prof. Mibang (Arunachal University). The project, which is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, United Kingdom, runs from October 2002 to October 2007.

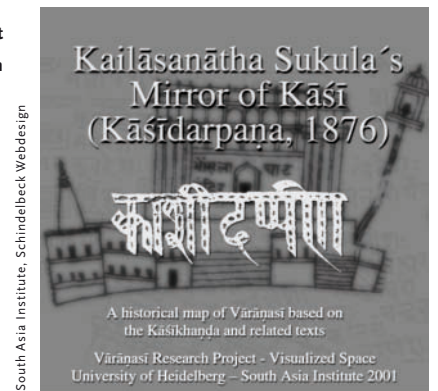
Visualized Space:

Exhibition and Colloquium of the Varanasi Research Project

Report >
South Asia

Pilgrim maps, panoramic scrolls, topographical maps, and picturesque views are among the materials that have been collected and studied by the Varanasi Research Project of the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg. Some of these rare items have been presented for the first time to the public at the exhibition *Banaras – Representations of a Sacred City*. Research findings were exchanged and discussed at an international colloquium with leading experts in the field.

Logo of the Internet
presentation



Map of Kashi, c. 1970

Courtesy: Axel Michaels

By Martin Gaenzle & Jörg Gengnagel

The history of South Asian cartography has long been understood as being based on Western cartographic traditions. Maps of India were regarded as being produced by foreigners – not by Indians in India. The contributions of Susan Gole (1989) and Joseph E. Schwartzberg (1992) have gradually changed this commonly held view during the last two decades. The Varanasi Research Project 'Visualized Space – Constructions of Locality and Cartographic Representation in Varanasi (India)' concerns itself with aspects of Indian cartography, visualizations of space, and forms of locality and spatial orientation.

The extraordinary position of Banaras among the Indian pilgrimage towns is linked to its special geographical location and its sacred topography. The city is situated on the western bank of the Ganges, which at this point flows to the north. The limits of the city's sacred territory are marked by a circumambulatory procession road (Panchakroshiyatra) that starts and ends at the central temple complex of the 'Lord of the Universe' (Vishvanatha, a form of Shiva), moves along the riverfront, and then forms a half-circle leading from the confluence of the river Asi in the south to that of the river Varuna in the north. The bathing places or *ghats* face the rising sun. From this western bank of the river the water is easily accessible even during the dry season. The eastern side is flooded during the monsoon, thus making the construction of buildings impossible. The view to the other side of the river is therefore a view from urban space towards wasteland. Favoured by this position the riverfront of Banaras has become a unique landscape in the course of the city's history. The bathing *ghats* are a place for manifold public activities. This is the place for bathing and washing, for exercises, for visiting temples, and for performing processions and rituals. Ascetics meditate in the sun, vendors sell pilgrimage souvenirs, and boatmen look for customers.

These features of the urban landscape have led to a variety

of questions addressed by the research project: How does this sacred topography of Banaras influence the representation of space in pictures, diagrams, and cartographic representations? How do the inhabitants perceive space, be it profane or sacred? How does the corpus of eulogistic Sanskrit literature on Banaras, with its large quantity of 'spatial texts', relate to the daily practice and the actual performance of pilgrimage and the pilgrim's orientation in space? The first results of the research project have been published by Axel Michaels and Jörg Gengnagel. So far the electronic publications of the Varanasi Research Project comprise an extensive Banaras Bibliography, an electronic Index of the Kashikhanda, and an interactive presentation of the religious map *Mirror of Kashi (Kashidarpana)*. This map was printed in Banaras in 1876 for Kailasanatha Sukula. The map's virtual representation with its extensive legends and inscriptions is the outcome of its first complete reading. It is shaped in the form of a mandala and shows the basic features of the city's sacred topography. This 'word picture' consists of more than 1,250 names of temples, gods, goddesses, and places. All these names and places have been indexed, 725 pop-up windows contain additional textual and visual information. This project is affiliated with the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) of Berkeley.

A panoramic view

One focus of the exhibition *Banaras – Representations of a Sacred City* was the display of various panoramic views of Banaras – a form of spatial representation, documented for the first time by the publication of a Banaras panorama by Joseph Tieffenthaler (Berlin 1786). The displayed panoramic views of Banaras reach from the original panoramic scroll *Shri Kashipata* (22 x 440cm, c. 1900) painted on paper to a photographic panorama of the whole riverfront with a length of almost 20 metres. This photographic panorama taken in 2001 by Stanislaw Klimek and Niels Gutschow was contrasted with picturesque views of the riverfront produced by various artists during the nineteenth century and with the early works of professional photographers collected by Joachim K. Bautze.

There are two rare pictorial maps painted on paper and cloth dating from the second half of the eighteenth century that represent another aspect of Indian cartography. Kailasanatha Sukula's *Kashidarpana* (1876) and Krishnachandra Sharma's *Kashidarpanapurti* (1877), lithographed in Banaras, both illustrate the tradition of pilgrim maps. The works of these Indian cartographers were shown next to the two earliest topographical maps of Banaras: the map drawn by James Prinsep (1799–1840) in 1822 and the first map commissioned by the colonial administration in 1867.

Seeing and describing religious urban space

From 22 to 24 May, the Banaras exhibition in Heidelberg was the site for an international colloquium on visualizations of space in the Hindu pilgrimage city of Banaras. This meeting, organized by the Varanasi Research Project, started with an emphasis on 'seeing' as the participants had a chance to get a first hand impression of the different views and visualizations of the city at the exhibition. The first presentations focused on the history of western views of Banaras (in paintings and photographs) and compared the panoramic view with that of pictorial maps, pointing out mutual influences. Clearly, the last two centuries have seen tremendous shifts in the ways of seeing and the forms of representation. The session on sacred topography focused on both the 'classical' textual description of sacred space in Banaras and the spatial practices of ritual actors. Sacred space emerged as something continuously renegotiated by various social actors. The central question concerning cartographic representations was the relationship between 'traditional' Indian map-making and Western technologies of mapping based on measurement. In certain religious maps different principles of mapping occur in combination, representing different kinds of spaces. That mapping is not an innocent practice but is often ruled by important social and political agendas was highlighted by two papers on Bharat Mata (Mother India) being worshipped in the form of a map.

In a welcome contrast to the depictions of sacredness and purity, the issue of contesting and negotiating the representations of urban spaces was taken up. By various contributions on the creation of a literary 'self-image' as well as the gendered character and ethnic appropriation of space it became clear that complex social processes are involved in the creation of place, in distinction to the ideal models of cosmological space.

It became evident in the course of the conference that there is a great variety of perspectives on space in Banaras and that its visualizations and imaginations take on many different forms. But, different as these may be, they are all dependent on social and historical processes, constantly negotiated, frequently changing, and often strongly contested. <

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Dr Martin Gaenzle is affiliated to the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University. He has conducted fieldwork in eastern Nepal as well as Banaras and published on ethnic identity, oral traditions, and religious practice. martin.gaenzle@urz.uni-heidelberg.de

Dr Jörg Gengnagel is a senior research fellow at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University. He has published on Saivism and on the religious cartography of Banaras. joerg.gengnagel@urz.uni-heidelberg.de



The poster of the exhibition *Banaras – Representations of a Sacred City* shows a detail of the map *Pilgrims in Banaras* (New Delhi, National Museum). Depicted is the southern section with the river Ganges at the bottom, the confluence of the river Asi, the riverfront, and pilgrims moving along procession routes.

Information >

The Varanasi Research Project is funded by the German Research Council and involves interdisciplinary cooperation in various sub-projects. The research is carried out in cooperation with Rana P.B. Singh (Varanasi) and coordinated by Axel Michaels and H.-G. Bohle.

Websites: www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/IND/benavr/bbiblio.htm
(Varanasi Research Project website, including the extensive Banaras Bibliography)
www.banaras.uni-hd.de
(Contains an interactive presentation of the *Mirror of Kashi (Kashidarpana)* religious map)

Rethinking Geopolitics in Post-Soviet Central Eurasia

Research >
Central Asia

'Critical geopolitics' aims at creating a synthesis between orthodox geopolitics and the geo-economic discourse to develop a new understanding of geographic arrangements as social constructions that are changeable over time. This approach challenges how orthodox geopolitics presents the world as 'us' and 'them'. 'National security threats' are no longer defined in terms of military threats from other states and outlaw groups. Critical geopolitics favours a more complex vision of world politics characterized by states which are themselves enmeshed in transnational techno-economic power structures and technological systems that threaten the conditions of habitation and survival on the planet as a whole. The following analyses Central Eurasia (CEA) from this perspective.

By Mehdi Parvizi Amineh

In the early twentieth century Britain's geopolitical theorist Sir Halford J. Mackinder coined Central Eurasia the Eurasian 'Heartland' to underline the region's geopolitical and geo-strategic importance in global politics. He was of the opinion that the one who would control this region could control the whole world. Indeed, with the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the SU, Central Eurasia has developed into an important geo-strategic and geo-economic region in world politics.

Central Eurasia consists of two sub-regions: Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) and South Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia). The region is located at the strategic crossroads between northeastern and Central Europe, the Mediterranean rim, resource-rich countries of the Middle East, and large markets of highly populated states in the Indian Ocean and Asian-Pacific area.

Central Eurasia, however, suffers from localized conflicts, economic distress, and environmental disasters. Ethnic tensions simmer beneath the surface in many of its countries, leaving the region susceptible to instability and threatening its political and economic development. Its location between, Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan make the region a magnet for foreign powers and potential conflict between them.

The US, the EU, Japan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Israel are all interested in the region. It can thus be said that a new 'Great Game' is underway. Unlike the Great Game of the nineteenth century, which was played out between the British Empire and Czarist Russia, the post-Cold War Great Game involves not only states but also non-state actors: international organizations, transnational oil corporations (TNOCs), criminal groups, and NGOs.

Economic vulnerability and (in)security

The states of CEA appear to be rapidly joining the ranks of the poor countries of the globe. In the years 1991-1998, for example, the level of economic activity plunged catastrophically: dropping by 39 per cent in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, 45 per cent in Turkmenistan, and 66 per cent in Tajikistan. In the same period, the amount of people living on less than 2 USD per day in Kazakhstan was 12.1 per cent, in Turkmenistan 25.8 per cent, and in Kyrgyzstan even 55.3 per cent.

More than 200 violent conflicts have erupted in CEA since 1991, a fact that raises serious questions about security in the region. These conflicts include Abkhazian separatism in Georgia, civil war in Tajikistan, and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Radical political Islam has also become a real threat to the region with several operating groups –



Mehdi Amineh

especially in the Ferghana Valley, one of the poorest areas in CEA: the United Tajik Opposition (UTO); the Islamic Party of Turkestan (IPT), previous Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU); and the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan (IMT). The danger exists that these organizations will coordinate their activities.

Active in the region in military security terms are the US and NATO. For example, NATO supports the GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova), a security arrangement outside the CIS. NATO also runs military programmes in CEA in the context of the Partnership for Peace programme. The promotion of the pan-Caucasus Security Organization is based on a proposition of Chechnya and modelled after the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Russia views these developments with suspicion. A possible counterbalance could be the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), set up in August 1996 between Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The agenda of the SCO is based on military and economic cooperation, but also on combating radical Islam.

Furthermore, there is a large-scale underground market of weapons and drugs in the region. Drugs are smuggled from Afghanistan via two different routes: from Pakistan via Iran to Turkey and Europe, and from Badakhshan via Os (Tajikistan) and Kyrgyzstan to Russia and Europe. The combination of the tensions mentioned above could be further aggravated by disparities in military power.

Geopolitics of oil and gas in CEA

The region's oil and gas reserves could be a major contribution to socio-economic development and transition of CEA. The newly Caspian littoral states (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan) together with Russia and Iran have one of the world's largest oil and gas reserves, which makes them very significant to global markets. Estimates of proven and possible oil reserves across the whole Caspian area, except Russia and Iran, run to about 190 billion barrels of oil. Its proven gas reserves are estimated at 196 trillion cubic feet (tcf), comparable to North American reserves (300tcf). At today's market prices, the

potential oil reserves of the Caspian Sea zone alone have an estimated value of between USD 2 to 4 trillion. However, because the former Soviet states lack the capital and technology for exploitation and export of the energy resources, they are trying to attract investment from Western countries and TNOCs. However, as mentioned above, they lack a stable political environment and do not have the necessary infrastructure.

The two main obstacles to development of CEA's energy resources are the legal status of the Caspian Sea – still disputed between the five Caspian littoral states – and the question of export routes. Until now Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan have been relying exclusively on the Soviet/Russian pipeline system to export their oil and gas. They hope to distance themselves from Russia and gain access to different markets and consumers in Europe, the US, and Asia. The problem with pipeline politics is that it must combine often-opposing economic and political interests: Whereas TNOCs want the cheapest route to the best market, Iran hopes for the construction of oil and gas pipelines through its own territory, while Russia fears losing control of the region's oil business and only supports pipelines through Russia. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan strives for a western route to decrease dependence on Russia and Georgia because it is a transit country. China wants to secure its great demand for oil and gas by pushing for the construction of pipelines to the East and Turkey supports a western route to obtain access to oil and gas from CEA. It also has to be taken into account that existing and proposed pipelines go through such confidence-inspiring places as Chechnya, Afghanistan, Abkhazia, and Kurdish-dominated eastern Turkey.

Countries and TNOCs with an interest in the region are adopting various forms of strategic cooperation to reach their goals. For example, the US sees Turkey as a representative of its interests in the region and promotes Turkey as a political model for the countries of CEA. Both pledge for a western route and oppose pipelines through Iranian or Russian territory.

Over the last decade, since national independence, a number of efforts have been made to simultaneously strengthen the national independence of the Eurasian states while facilitating greater

trans-border cooperation. Regional cooperation and integration is the best way to solve the problems of economic development they face. Besides the Russian-initiated Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), there are other major attempts at regional cooperation such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) and the Economic Cooperation Organization. Another ambitious undertaking is the recently established Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) and the Common Market Transcaucasus Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Chechnya, and Turkmenistan). For example, the BSEC aims to encourage multilateral cooperation among its members and also with the EU in the energy sector.

Of course there have been obvious impediments to the process of regional cooperation due to a variety of factors: the legacy from past; contradictions in the transition period between a planned economy and an economy based on market principles; difference in each country's development strategy; and the impact of various exogenous factors. The regions are confronted with great environmental problems especially in regard with the Aral Sea and the Caspian Sea. The water of the Aral Sea has shrunk to a minimum and the Caspian Sea suffers from immense pollution. All countries there wish to rid themselves of the legacy of almost two hundred years of Russian and Soviet rule over the

region, while to a great extent they still depend economically on Russia.


Nonetheless, Central Eurasia's geo-strategic and geo-economic significance is bound to increase substantially in the coming decades. All actors involved would rather benefit from converting Central Eurasia from a zone for geopolitical competition and confrontation to a zone of cooperation. This has especially become obvious since 11 September, the extending engagement of the US in CEA and Afghanistan, and a possible war in Iraq. We believe that there is a causal relationship between ethnic conflict, political unrest, and religious radicalism and/or terrorism, on the one hand, and socio-economic underdevelopment, on the other. The impact of these developments both on the immediate neighbourhood and on the wider world involves a complex and interwoven conglomeration of regional factors that we in the West are only just beginning to understand. <



Dr Mehdi Parvizi Amineh is research fellow at the IIAS and is working on the research programme 'Conflict, Security, and Development in Post-Soviet Era: Towards Regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and Caucasus'.

amineh@pscw.uva.nl

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Preserving Tibetan Heritage

Putting the Leiden Collection on Microfilm

Report >
Central Asia

In May 2002 a project was launched for the preservation of the Tibetan block prints and manuscripts that are kept at the Kern Institute Library of Leiden University. During this project the documents will be transferred to microfilm and registered in the national automated catalogue. The bibliographical data of this catalogue are accessible through the Internet and on the basis of these data it is possible to order copies on microfiche or in print. In continuation of the articles in the *IIAS Newsletter* (issues 19 and 23) on the significance of this Tibetan collection for scholarly research and on the life and work of its collector, Johan van Manen, the present contribution focuses on its preservation.

Manuscript Br.79/
M 59, dbyangs 'char
tradition (astrology)



Courtesy of Kern Institute Library

By Dory Heilijgers

In 1997, a national programme for the preservation of library material named 'Metamorfoze' was launched in the Netherlands. The programme is an initiative of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Cultural Affairs and Science and is coordinated by the National Preservation Office of the Netherlands that operates under the direct supervision of the Dutch Royal Library in The Hague. Through the Metamorfoze programme the Ministry grants subsidies to libraries for the preservation of collections of paper documents from the

period 1840–1950. The preservation work is realized mainly through microfilming and a reliable storage of the original (acid free sleeves or boxes) in combination with registration. For the time being, microfilming as preservation method is preferred to digitizing. Digitizing offers advantages especially in making saved data accessible and easily available, but the disadvantage is that there are a lot of uncertainties as to long-term storage of digital media. A microfilm made within the Metamorfoze framework will last at least 200 years, and meets the quality requirements necessary for optimum digitizing in the future.

At first, the Metamorfoze programme was aimed at the preservation of the Netherlands' national paper heritage only. Of old, however, scholarly work in the Netherlands has been to a considerable degree internationally oriented. As a consequence, many Dutch research libraries with a preservation function house important collections of foreign origin. Therefore, in the Metamorfoze framework additional funds were made available for the preservation of such non-Dutch collections, and twenty-three collections of international value were selected to participate in the preservation programme. One of these is the Leiden collection of Tibetan block prints and manuscripts that meets all the criteria set forth by the Royal Library in order to be admitted to the programme. Metamorfoze accepted the project proposal submitted by the Kern Institute Library and granted a subsidy of 70 per cent of the total costs of microfilming and registration by the end of 2001. The Jan Gonda Foundation, the National Museum of Ethnology (Leiden), and the Faculty of Arts of Leiden University will cover the remaining 30 per cent.

The collection numbers some 1756 volumes: 998 Tibetan block prints, 557 Tibetan manuscripts, 182 Lepcha and 19 Bon manuscripts. As is usual in the Tibetan literary tradition many volumes consist of the collected works (*gsud-bum*) of important writers such as, for instance, the leading scholars of the dGe-lugs-pa sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

These volumes then contain more than one text, which means that the total number of texts actually exceeds 1,756.

The majority of block prints and manuscripts have loose leaves (printed/written on both sides); some 25 per cent has been folded like a 'Western book' whether bound or not. The volumes vary in the number of leaves (from 1 to over 600) and in size. The paper of part of the block prints and manuscripts is brittle, or is affected by the black ink, mildew, or insects. Another part of the block prints suffered from water damage when some boxes fell into the water at the harbour of Calcutta. Their leaves are stuck together and are unfortunately beyond repair, whereas an unknown number of block prints were completely ruined by this accident and were therefore thrown away.

On arrival in the Netherlands in 1935 and 1948, the block prints and manuscripts were labelled with an inventory number at the National Museum for Ethnology. In 1950, the then conservator of the museum, P.H. Pott, announced a detailed study of this collection (in his *Introduction to the Tibetan Collection of the National Museum of Ethnology* (1951), p. 7). In 1953-55, René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz compiled a first *Catalogue of the Collections of Tibetan Block Prints and Manuscripts in the National Museum of Ethnology* (*Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde*) that includes the Bon manuscripts. He made a second catalogue of the Lepcha manuscripts. Both catalogues consist of an alphabetical title list in romanized transcription and arranged according to the Tibetan alphabet. They mention the title (in the case of a collected work followed directly by any 'subtitles'), the margin title and the number of folios. These catalogues are not officially published and can only be consulted on the spot.

From 1961 to 1965, two Tibetan monks, Chongla N. Losang and Rechung J. Phunxhang, examined the collection anew under a programme sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation. They compiled a second catalogue, which is handwritten in the Tibetan script and also alphabetically arranged

according to title. Whereas Nebesky considered different texts in a collected work as subchapters of the first mentioned text and catalogued these under one heading, Chongla and Rechung considered them to be individual texts and alphabetized them each under their own title. In addition to the titles this catalogue mentions other data as well such as a description of the contents and, if available, the author/scribe and the printing office.

The Metamorfoze preservation project has started in May 2002 with the preparatory work of checking and, if required, restoring the order of the loose leaves. Each leaf has to be numbered so that the correct sequence will be maintained during the process of microfilming. Our colleague Tharphen Lingsang is carrying out this painstaking but extremely important work. In the next phase, the texts will be transferred to microfilm by Strata Preservation, a joint enterprise of the OCLC (Online Computer Library Center, USA) and the Dutch Royal Library. They made some test films that are of excellent quality and, on occasion, even more readable than the original. The camera films (35mm, 600 shots per film) will be stored in the Royal Library; the Kern Institute Library receives duplicates that can be used for any further copies, either films or fiches.

In the Metamorfoze scheme, registration refers to the making of a bibliographical description in the Dutch national automated cataloguing system (GGC). Essential entries are the title, the margin title (and, if applicable, the title of the collected work it belongs to), a local code (= inventory number), elementary systematic codes to indicate the contents, and the number of leaves. Other desirable entries that are either put away in the colophon or are not mentioned at all and therefore must be derived from other sources are the author/scribe/compiler, (an estimate of) the date of composition and the date of the making of the present copy, and the name of the printing office. Kalsang Norbu Gurung has been appointed for this cataloguing work. We intend to make in the future an annotated systematic catalogue by generating the bibliographical computer data and adding to them a detailed specification of the subject matter of each text and (part of) the colophon as well.

The catalogue (WebOPAC) is searchable on title, author, subject, etc. and is accessible online all over the world through the Internet. Upon request any text can be supplied on microfiche or in print. For searching and ordering I refer the reader to the instructions in the side frame. By the time this article is published the first entries will be available.

Puntsok Lungtak, a monk from Central Tibet, was one of the most enthusiastic collectors in the service of Johan van Manen. In his autobiography written in the 1920s he informs us that according to some of his countrymen 'it is a great sin to sell our Tibetan religious books to Englishmen...[who] will sit on the book and step by foot [on it]'. He ignored this accusation because he was of the opinion that exactly the spread of these texts guaranteed a thorough knowledge of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions. The possibilities of modern preservation and computer techniques were far beyond his imagination, but he would certainly have been very happy with the present care for 'his' books and their accessibility on an international scale. ◀

Dr Dory Heilijgers is the librarian of the Kern Institute, Leiden University. She specializes in Hindu Tantrism. d.heilijgers@let.leidenuniv.nl

Tibetological Collections & Archives Series

Dory Heilijgers' article on the 'The Leiden Collection of Tibetan Documents' is the ninth contribution to the Tibetological Collections & Archives Series, which is devoted to important projects on cataloguing, 'computerization' (inputting and scanning), editing, and translation of important Tibetan language text-collections and archives. In this series various colleagues briefly present their initiatives to a larger public, or update the scholarly world on the progress of their already well-established projects. Some are high-profile projects, of which at least Tibetologists will generally be aware, yet some may also be less well known. Nevertheless, I trust that it will be useful to be informed on all these initiatives and I also hope that the projects presented will profit from the exposure and the response that this coverage will engender. If you are interested in any of the projects described, feel free to contact the author of the article. In case you would like to introduce your own (planned) work in the field, please contact the editors of the *IIAS Newsletter* or the author of this introduction. We should very much like to encourage our contributors to keep us informed on the progress of their projects by regular updates. - Henk Blezer

Information >

Searching in the WebOPAC:

- go to <http://lbs.leidenuniv.nl> (English version available)
- select General Catalogue Leiden University
- select your search keys in the menus and type your search term.
Any document available in the Kern Institute Library has a shelf-mark (= plaatsingscode) beginning with I.KERN

An interesting option is the possibility to search for a survey of the Tibetan documents in the Kern Institute Library (of course, after registration): Select in the menus: 'new search; and then 'classification dept.libraries' (last option), and give as a search term 'i.kern 2470/H' or 'i.kern Br.79/H' to obtain a survey of the block prints; 'i.kern 2740/M' or 'i.kern Br.79/M' for the manuscripts; 'i.kern 2740/L' or 'i.kern 2740/B' for the Lepcha and Bon manuscripts, respectively.

For further information and requests for copies: d.heilijgers@let.leidenuniv.nl or kernlib@let.leidenuniv.nl

Media Work: Science and the Public

Report >
Japan

In an era of budget-cuts at universities and prolonged discussion about the usefulness of non-career-oriented studies, it has become increasingly important for scholars to inform the public about their work and thus legitimate their own existence. Thus, presenting understandable research results to the general public has become a matter of survival. However, up until the present day, young scholars (at least in the German-speaking world) have commonly run the risk of damaging their reputation by publishing in a simple, understandable way in popular media rather than in highly sophisticated academic journals with merely a handful of readers. At best, presentation and publication in popular media is considered a private matter, which should be done in one's free time. University education reflects that attitude. As a result, students hardly ever learn how to make their knowledge accessible to a broader audience.

By Judith Brandner & Brigitte Steger

In this context, the Institute of East Asian Studies/Japanese Studies, University of Vienna began a summer course on 'Media Work for Students of Japanese Studies' as a pilot project. For practical reasons we only accepted advanced Japanese Studies students. During the course the students learned how to 'sell' their scientific results to the media without making major concessions in the scholarly content. One aspect of this involved learning how the media world functions and how to deal with it in a critical way. Moreover, the participants were expected to do their

own journalist work. This meant that they had to learn the basics of journalist research and acquire the technical know-how and new methods of presentation.

Our approach was a mixture of theoretical and practical work, focusing on the latter. Theory included an introduction to the media world in both Japan and Austria, analysing radio programmes on Japan and participating in a discussion with a historian and a radio programme- and filmmaker. This discussion clearly showed the ambiguous role of the interviewed scholar who later had no influence on the published result.

During exercises, the students had to present themselves either as scholars or as journalists, not only improving their presentation skills and experiencing how to respond to the demands of journalism, but also learning firsthand about the journalist's difficulty in evoking interesting stories from scholars.

For the symposium on daily life and free time in Tokyo and Vienna at the turn of the nineteenth century, the students produced multi-media documentation, which has been published on www.aaj.at. Their work included research on the topics, reading abstracts, choosing persons to be

interviewed, conducting the interviews, editing on the computer, and writing the story. The most challenging task was the creation of a radio programme on the topic of 'Vienna through Japanese Eyes', which were produced at a newly-established campus media centre with the generous technical support of the director and under the direction of the students and broadcast on Austrian public radio on 12 September 2002.

Obstacles and rewards

Though we would have liked to go even deeper into the differences between scholarly and journalistic work, we purposely built up time pressure to simulate a real work situation. Most importantly, the group – eight very competent and motivated young people – seems to have enjoyed the course. They liked the idea of actually producing something to be shown to other people and enjoyed collaborating with each other. Several students 'discovered' radio as a fascinating medium and subsequently listen more carefully to feature stories and documentaries.

Some found special delight in cutting interviews with the editing software. 'Finally we learned something useable and developed new abilities', they remarked. Still others found it interesting and challenging to experience the cultural differences between academia and journalism, particularly in the ways that they approach their topics and their specific methodologies for investigation. <

Judith Brandner is a freelance journalist with a background as a translator of English and Japanese. She has many years of experience as a journalist in various media and also teaches radio journalism at a community college in Vienna.

judith.brandner@orf.at

Dr Brigitte Steger is assistant professor in Japanese Studies at the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna and presently visiting scholar at Meiji University. She has worked at a Japanese daily newspaper and has longstanding experience in presenting her research in the media in both Japan and Austria.

Brigitte.Steger@univie.ac.at

The Vedas:

Texts, Language, and Ritual

Report >
South Asia

30 May – 2 June 2002
Leiden,
the Netherlands

The Vedas form the oldest elaborate corpus of texts (from c. 1500 BC) in an Indo-European language. They are the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism, and are connected with a ritual system that has partly survived to the present day. In the almost one-and-a-half century of its history, the study of the Vedas has stimulated major developments in disciplines such as linguistics, the comparative study of religions, and cultural anthropology. The workshop 'The Vedas: Texts, Language, and Ritual' enabled leading scholars and young researchers to take stock of recent developments and explore new directions of research.

By Jan E.M. Houben

The Internet report mentioned below makes an overview of sections and papers superfluous, whereas space does not allow for an elaborate discussion of all major contributions. Hence I will make only a general observation on Vedic studies as presented at the workshop. The workshop again made manifest that three major developments are currently transforming Vedic studies. In the first place the availability of computers allows scholars to work with large corpuses of texts and to search, combine, and link data in novel ways for the sake of linguistic and cultural studies. Jost Gippert (Frankfurt) demonstrated the latest developments in the Titus-project, which aims at establishing a comprehensive electronic thesaurus of Sanskrit and Indo-European text and language materials. Alexander Lubotsky demonstrated how the classical tool of the etymological dictionary is greatly enhanced when dictionaries are computerized and linked for the sake of Sanskrit and Indo-European linguistic studies.

In the second place, major new findings of manuscripts in India make important ancient texts accessible, which were so far only very imperfectly known. They promise to change the picture of the early developments considerably. Families conserving manuscripts of a now discontinued ritual tradition of the *Yajurveda*, viz. the Vaadhuula, have in recent years been found by Yasuke Ikari (Kyoto) after preparatory work by, among others, W. Caland in the early decades of the twentieth century, and later on Michael Witzel and Max Spar-

reboom. While the *Rigveda* is the oldest Vedic text, the songs of praise in this collection presuppose an elaborate ritual system, which is the main subject of the *Yajurveda*. The Vaadhuula is an ancient school of the important branch of the Taittiriyaikas, one of the few branches that are still relatively widely in practice in modern India. Yasuke Ikari's contribution presented important new texts that have become available with the Vaadhuula manuscripts. The other discovery concerns the second oldest Vedic text, the *Atharvaveda*, especially the Oriyan manuscripts of the Paippalaada tradition (Durgamohan Bhattacharyya in the 1950s, and recently Arlo Griffiths). The papers of Dipak Bhattacharya, Arlo Griffiths, and Mieko Kajihara were directly based on the newly available textual data.

In the third place, modern technology allows direct recording of performances of Vedic rituals that are, with all the transformations they have undergone in the course of centuries, still in practice in often quite remote corners of the Indian subcontinent. Apart from the direct anthropological value of their recording they often greatly contribute to the interpretation of ancient ritual texts. A film by Cezary Galewicz (Krakow) made in Kerala showed parts of the tradition of competitive Veda-recitation by Brahmins of Nambudiri and transmitted some of the aesthetic rapture engendered by the rhythmic and melodious patterns of the ancient texts, which the printed editions will always fail to instil.

The workshop was generally experienced as successful and inspiring, and participating scholars are already looking forward to a sequel, which is to take place at the University of Texas in a few years. The proceedings with the elaborated papers and discussions (to be edited by A. Griffiths and J. Houben) are expected to appear towards the end of 2003 or the beginning of 2004. <

Dr Jan E.M. Houben is research fellow of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences at the Kern Institute, Leiden University. J.E.M.Houben@let.leidenuniv.nl

ESCAS VIII

The Eighth Conference of the European Society for Central Asian Studies (ESCAS VIII) attracted a large regional and international audience. Most notable was the large presence of scholars from Central Asia, above all from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

Report >
Central Asia

25-28 September
2002
Bordeaux, France

By Touraj Atabaki

Referring to the general theme of the conference 'Central Asia in transition: models, disruptions, centrality', five panels running in parallel sessions and covering numerous topics from different disciplines took place throughout the duration of the conference.

Topics such as the role of history and historiography in Central Asia today, the mythologization of the region's history as a whole, and with specific historic periods were treated in 'Questions of periodization: the centrality of Central Asia and the rewriting of history'.

The next session, 'Economic and social models in the history of Central Asia', concerned topics ranging from political movements and ideologies prevailing in the region during the last centuries, to questions of identity formation and (socio)economic problems.

'Cultural and religious models' presented the role of music and literature in today's Central Asian societies, the shaping of multiple identities, reflections on the cultural heritage, and the role of religion in the region.

Various aspects of colonization were addressed in 'Colonial and Soviet disruptions'. The effects that the first 'sedentarization' efforts had on the Kazakhs were tackled among other things such as the impact of the collectivization programme of 1928-1934 upon the nomads and peasants in Kazakhstan, the change of the political power structure due to Tsarist and Soviet rule in Central Asia, and the views of the Central Asians on the Russian conquest in the late nineteenth century.

Details on current political, economic, and ecological problems of the region were presented in the final panel 'Post-Soviet transformations'. Among others, the situation of small- and medium-sized enterprises in Uzbekistan, the question of rebuilding the Afghan state, changes in the priorities of the economic reform process in Kazakhstan, the 'Aral Sea problem', and aspects of international policies in the region were discussed. <

Note >

ESCAS VIII was organized by Prof. Vincent Fourniau, Prof. Cathrine Poujol, M. Pasquet, and Dr Françoise Rollan, and was hosted by the University of Bordeaux.

Prof. Touraj Atabaki is president of ESCAS, professor of Modern History of the Middle East and Central Asia at the University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University, and Central Asia editor for the IIAS Newsletter.

Atabaki@let.uu.nl

Note >

The programme, acknowledgements, a brief report, and a photographic-video report of the International Vedic Workshop in Leiden can be found at: www.jyotistoma.nl/ThirdIVW/default.asp

Sex, Gender, and Priests in South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Research >
Southeast Asia

A specific group acting as priests among the Bugis of South Sulawesi, the *bissu* are imagined to be hermaphroditic beings embodying female and male elements. For anyone interested in the study of sex and gender, the Bugis, the largest ethnic group of South Sulawesi, offers an exceptionally rich canvas for research.



A *bissu* chanting a sacred ritual to the gods.

Sharyn Graham

By Sharyn Graham

For the past few years I have been conducting anthropological research into ideas and forms of gender in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. While initially I was concerned with men and women, upon arrival I realized that gender in South Sulawesi is much more complex than that. Among the Bugis of South Sulawesi, possibly four genders are acknowledged plus a fifth ‘para-gender’ identity. In addition to male-men (*oroane*) and female-women (*makunrai*) (categories that are similar to those in Australia), there are *calalai*,¹ biological females who take on many of the roles and functions expected of men; *calabai*,² biological males who in many respects adhere to the expectations of women; and *bissu*. In this article, I will focus on *bissu*, who act as priests.

The Bugis have an incredibly rich oral history, as well as an extensive history of written material. If you were to ask someone in South Sulawesi how they imagine their world came to be, you would probably be told a narrative in which the *bissu* play a central role.

‘You ask how this world came to be? Well let me tell you. Up there in the heavens, the gods decided they would bring life to this lonely planet. They therefore sent down one of their most aspiring deities, Batara Guru. But Batara Guru was not good at organizing things. To do all of this, two *bissu* were needed. So the gods sent down two *bissu* who flanked Batara Guru as he descended. And when they arrived, the *bissu* set about making everything blossom; they created language, culture, customs [*adat*], and all of the things that a world needs if it is going to blossom. That’s how the world began you see’ (Haj Bacco’).

Notes >

1 An individual example may clarify the concept of *calalai*. Rani works alongside men as a blacksmith, shaping *kris*, small blades, and other knives; wears men’s clothing; and ties *hir* sarong in the fashion of men. Rani also lives with *hir* wife and their adopted child. While Rani works with men, dresses as a man, smokes cigarettes, and walks alone at night, activities women are not encouraged to participate in, Rani is female and therefore not considered a man. Rani does not wish to become a man. Rani is *calalai*. Rani’s female anatomy combined with *hir* occupation, behaviour, and sexuality allows Rani to identify, and be identified, as a *calalai*.

2 *Calabai*, while adhering to expectations of women, do not consider themselves women, are not considered women, and do not wish to become women (either by accepting restrictions placed on women, i.e. not going out alone at night, or recreating their body through surgery). Whereas *calalai* tend to conform more to the norms of men, *calabai* have created specific roles for themselves in Bugis society, most notably in their role as Wedding Mothers (*indo’ boting*). As Wedding Mothers, *calabai* take charge of the total organization of weddings, including the food, decorations, seating arrangements, and the make-up and dress of the bride and groom and their retinue.

In addition to the rich oral tradition of the Bugis, origin narratives have been recorded on *lontar* palm leaves from around the sixteenth century. One such recorded narrative tells of Sarawigading and WeCudai, the marriage of whom resulted in the birth of the first human on earth.

‘Sarawigading desperately wanted to marry with WeCudai but she lived on an island in the middle of the lake. Sarawigading had no way of getting to the middle of the lake but he knew he must. Sarawigading decided he must make a boat and paddle out to WeCudai. But how to make a boat? If only he could cut this massive tree down. But try as he might he was not powerful enough to do so. Sarawigading burst into frustrated tears and cried long into the night. He would never be able to cut down this tree and make a boat and he would never reach WeCudai. But there was a *bissu* in the heavens above who heard Sarawigading cry. The *bissu* descended and said, ‘Please don’t worry, I will cut down the tree and help you make the boat.’ And the *bissu* cut down the tree because s/he had the strength of both man and woman, and mortal and deity.’

These origin narratives serve to demonstrate that the *bissu* have a primary position in the minds of the Bugis in their imaginations of the past. Recourse to such important roles allows the *bissu* to assert and maintain a revered position in contemporary Bugis society.

So who are the *bissu*? The *bissu* are imagined to be hermaphroditic beings who embody female and male elements. While it is enough that one’s body is imagined hermaphroditic, while often being anatomically male, *bissu* consciously dress in ways that highlight male and female characteristics. A *bissu* may carry a man’s *badi*’ (knife) but wear flowers in *hir* (his/her) hair like a woman. Not only do *bissu* have to combine female and male attributes, they must also combine human elements with spirit elements. It is essential that the *bissu* have good connections with the spirit world in order to make contact with the gods. To do this, *bissu* must be part spirit (*dewata*). In order for them to be possessed by spirits – so they can bestow blessings – *bissu* must also be part human (*manusia*). In essence, then, *bissu* are female/male, deity/mortal beings, who can be and often are possessed by spirits in order to confer blessings.

The main role of the *bissu* thus is to bestow blessings. And blessings can be for just about anything. A *bissu* blessing is performed before planting rice and before harvesting; *bissu* consecrate marriages; and – what may seem ironic, but actually is not – *bissu* give blessings to people before they set out on the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. There not being irony in this follows from the way in which the Bugis have managed to syncretize pre-Islamic beliefs with Islam, which forbids transgendered behaviour. For instance, before Islam the Bugis honoured a god called PaTotoe. Many Bugis have come to believe that Allah is actually PaTotoe but by a different name. Moreover, while the *bissu* do still call to deities to possess them, they always begin by seeking the blessing and advice of Allah. Lastly, the *bissu* have altered some of their practices such as walking on fire because it is believed to be contrary to Islam.

How do *bissu* bestow blessings? In order to bestow a blessing, a *bissu* needs to be possessed by an appropriate deity. Only *bissu* can become possessed because only *bissu* carry the required mix of mortal and deity, feminine and masculine. To awaken the deities, the *bissu* first perform an elaborate ritual involving chanting, music, and the offering of ritual foods. Once the deities have been awakened, they select from among themselves the one who is best able to offer the requested blessing. This deity will then descend and possess the *bissu*. When the *bissu* awaken from trance, their entire demeanour is different: they become irritable and aggressive. This change in demeanour, however, is not enough to convince the people gathered around – and more importantly, the person who has requested the blessing – that the *bissu* is now possessed. Proof of possession is sought. In response to this challenge, the *bissu* must then perform the *ma’giri*, or self-stabbing. To perform this, a *bissu* will take a sacred *kris* (knife) that has been passed down through many generations of *bissu*, and attempt to penetrate their skin with the *kris*. *Bissu* will even go to the extent

of lying on the floor with the *kris* pressed into their throat. Other places where the *kris* is aimed are the palm and temple.

If the *kris* does not penetrate the skin, the *bissu* is said to be *kebal* (impenetrable), and thus has proved *hir* invulnerability – a sure sign that the *bissu* has been possessed by a powerful spirit. The *bissu* host, and the deity who has possessed *hir*, are then able to offer blessings. If, however, the *kris* does penetrate, the *bissu* is said to be possessed by a weak, impotent spirit, or no spirit at all, and is therefore not allowed to bestow blessings.

How do you become a *bissu*? It is believed that you are born with the propensity to become a *bissu*. Most auspiciously, this is revealed in a baby whose genitalia are ambiguous. Unsurprisingly, ambiguous genitalia alone cannot ensure that you become a *bissu*. Moreover, these ambiguous genitalia need not be visible; a normative male who becomes a *bissu* is believed to be female on the inside. By the age of about twelve, if a child demonstrates a close connection with the spirit world, he or she is groomed to become a *bissu*. In the past, such a child would be apprenticed to the royal court. Nowadays, a child will become the apprentice of an individual *bissu*. After many years of training, an apprentice *bissu* will undergo a number of tests in order to become a *bissu*. This includes, among many other tests, lying on a bamboo raft in the middle of a lake for three days and three nights without eating, drinking, or moving. If the apprentice survives this and wakes from the trance fluent in the sacred *bissu* language (*Basa Bissu* or *Bahasa Dewata*, language of the gods), he or she is then accepted as a *bissu*.

A study of the *bissu* and their role and position in Bugis society has the potential to make some substantial contributions to our understanding of how different societies organize and interpret gender. Not all societies assert that there are just two genders, woman and man, attached respectively to two biological sexes, female and male. Some societies, such as that of the Bugis, acknowledge possibly four gender categories, in addition to a fifth para-gender group – the *bissu*. It is from the Bugis that we can learn much about acceptance and respect for a panoply of gender identities. <



A *bissu* performing the *ma’giri*.

Sharyn Graham

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Sharyn Graham, MA is a PhD candidate in the Departments of Asian Studies and Anthropology at the University of Western Australia studying with Dr Greg Acciaoli and Dr Lyn Parker. She is currently on a six-month Huygens’ scholarship to study at the KITLV in the Netherlands with Dr Roger Tol and Sirtjo Koolhof. sharyngr@cylle.uwa.edu.au

Indigenizing Colonial Knowledge:

The Formation of Malay Identity in British Malaya

Research >
Southeast Asia

Concepts of race and ethnicity rank among the legacies that British colonialism has left post-colonial states. Not until racial and ethnic classifications were adopted in fields as varied as school education, mass media, public administration, and legislation, could these colonial concepts be popularized. With my research, I aim to lay bare the process of the indigenization of colonial knowledge in the construction of Malay identity in British Malaya. In what way and to what extent did the colonized accept, modify, and appropriate the colonizer's worldview?

By Soda Naoki

Recently, the question of colonial knowledge and identity formation has been attracting interest in the field of Malaysian and Malay Studies. Scholars such as H.M.J. Maier, A. Milner, and A.B. Shamsul show great insights into this question. Nevertheless, much more research still remains to be conducted on the internalization and utilization of imported knowledge in Malay nationalism.

My current study breaks up the process of the indigenization of colonial knowledge in identity formation into two phases, namely transmission and appropriation. The first phase lies in the process in which new apprehensions of a colonial society were transplanted from British colonizers to Malays. The second phase is the stage in which Malays themselves reorganized their acquired knowledge and made use of it for their own sake.

The first phase: transmission

Education plays a vital part in the construction of Malay identity in British Malaya thus revealing the process of colonial knowledge transmission. William Roff and many other historians point out the importance of education in the making of Malay nationalism. However, they do not pay enough attention to knowledge transmission in education, a theme on which I intend to shed light.

My current research focuses on the role of Malay vernacular education in

knowledge transmission. The main sources are four authorized textbooks on Malay history and geography that were used in Malay-medium schools and teacher-training colleges in colonial Malaya. One of these textbooks was written by a Briton (R.J. Wilkinson) in English in 1908; two by another Briton (R.O. Winstedt) in Malay in 1918; and one by a Malay (Abdul Hadi Haji Hasan) in Malay started in 1925. These textbooks reflect a transition from 'their' history to 'our' history: from a history of the Malays by an English writer for British readers, to a history of the Malays by a British writer for Malay readers, and finally to a history of the Malays by a Malay writer for Malay readers.

Taking a 'scientific', positivistic approach, all these authors reconstructed the image of the 'Malay world' in terms of community, territory, and time. Firstly, these writings are based on the concept of Malay as a *bangsa*, or race. The textbooks played an important role in popularizing racial classifications that had been originally introduced in population censuses, and share an image of the Malays as a 'mixed race'.

Secondly, the authors had a similar notion of Malay territoriality. They refer to geographical data that are systematically catalogued for each political unit in a similar way. The standardization of geographical knowledge and 'systematic quantification' serve to objectify the territoriality of the Malay community. By absorbing the concept of territorial boundaries, the authors describe the Malay territories at three levels, namely the Malay states (*negeri-negeri Melayu*), Malaya (*tanah Melayu*), and the Malay world (*alam Melayu*). Furthermore, in these textbooks, the authors represent Malaya as the focal point of the Malay territories. This Malaya-centric view reflected the substantialization of the colonial territorial boundary.

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, established as Sultan Idris Training College at Tanjong Malim, Perak, in 1922. The teacher-training college produced a number of Malay nationalists, including Ibrahim Haji Yaacob.



Soda Naoki

Finally, these three authors had common conceptions of time. They wrote Malay history according to calendrical time and chronology, and their historical views were progressivist. They believed in the gradual progression to higher forms of human life and accordingly divided Malay history into distinctive periods on a scale of progress and civilization, from 'primitive' to Hindu-Buddhist and to Islamic, then to Portuguese, Dutch, and finally to British. At the same time, the authors also understood the stratification of Malay history to be visible, with older layers retained as new layers were added on.

Thus, by the early 1930s, not only British scholars but also the Malay teacher, Abdul Hadi Haji Hasan, had begun to reformulate the Malay world through modern historiography and geography. The concepts of race and territorial state became increasingly important as the basic components of the Malay world. Both history and geography were made Malay and thus moulded to national histories and national geographies in other parts of the world. These changes would pave the way for the identification of 'Malay' as a potential nation.

The second phase: appropriation

We cannot, however, take for granted that the Malays automatically absorbed the new framework of knowledge brought by British colonizers.

Malays also accommodated the modern concept of Malayness in terms of their positive transformation and appropriation. To avoid oversimplification, we should turn our eyes to the second phase: appropriation of colonial knowledge.

In an intensive case study, I focussed on the formation of Malay identity in the mind of a prominent Malay nationalist, Ibrahim Haji Yaacob. As president of the first left-wing Malay organization named Kesatuan Melayu Muda (Young Malay Union), established in 1938, Ibrahim formulated a concept of Melayu Raya (Greater Malaya), a pan-Malay national community. He obtained Malay-medium education both at a primary school and later at a teacher-training college. Furthermore, Abdul Hadi, one of the authors of the textbooks mentioned earlier, was his history teacher at the college. Because of this educational background, Ibrahim's personal intellectual history is one of the best cases of indigenization of colonial knowledge in popular Malay nationalism. The main sources that I consult are his writings such as books, articles in newspapers, and unpublished manuscripts.

It seems to me that the following two points merit our attention, though my findings are preliminary in nature. Firstly, Ibrahim makes use of imported knowledge in order to legitimize his nationalist cause. In his writings, he discusses the Malay population, the making of the Malay race that was represented as a 'mixed race', the geographical proximity of territories in the Malay Archipelago, and a common 'national' history of the Malays. He thus selectively utilizes 'scientific' knowledge on Malay race, territories, and history, which had been originally brought by British scholars, to show the oneness and greatness of the Malay world.

Secondly, Ibrahim also reorganizes existing colonial knowledge for the sake of his argument. The most remarkable example is his reinterpretation of progressivist views of Malay history. Following the other textbook writers in their periodization of Malay history, Ibrahim classifies Malay history into four stages: 'primitive', 'Hindu-Buddhist', 'Islamic', and 'colonial'. Yet, unlike these textbook writers, he presents the colonial era as an age of decline, while describing the pre-colonial period as a golden age. He ultimately anticipates the coming of a new era of independence, an age of rebirth and renewal. Here we can clearly see the transformation of imported knowledge.

While British colonizers brought new forms of knowledge to Malays, there seems to have been room for reinterpretation, transformation, and appropriation in the process of the indigenization of colonial knowledge. This indicates that the formation of Malay identity in colonial Malaya was the result of the interaction between external and internal powers of knowledge. One could find other examples of the internalization of foreign ideas such as the localization of the Islamic reformism in the Middle East. To locate my case study in the broader context of Malay intellectual history, my next steps will involve comparisons not only between Ibrahim and other Malay intellectuals but also between Malay-medium education and others, namely English-medium and Islamic (Arabic-medium) education. Though my current study can paint only a partial picture of the interplay of knowledge transmission and identity formation, I hope it will provide a fresh perspective on the question. ◀

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Soda Naoki, MA is a lecturer at the Faculty of Foreign Studies at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan, and is presently completing his PhD thesis on the formation of Malay identity in colonial Malaya. soda@tufs.ac.jp



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Soda Naoki is the second contributor to a series that aims to present current research of young Japanese scholars on Southeast Asia. Original Japanese research on Southeast Asia has a long tradition, is abundant and sometimes takes different routes from European or American research on the region. Moreover, many Japanese scholars publish in Japanese or in Southeast Asian languages and consequently the interaction between Japanese and non-Japanese scholars remains being somewhat limited. By means of this series we draw attention to the original research of young Japanese scholars with research interests in Southeast Asian affairs. In case you would like to introduce your own research on Southeast Asia, please contact the editors of the IAS Newsletter or the author of this introduction.

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Vietnamese Peasants

The concept of the IAS workshop 'Vietnamese Peasants' Activity: an Interaction Between Culture and Nature' was to present the results of the research on the village of Bach Coc, situated in Nam Dinh province in the Red River Delta south of the Vietnamese capital Hanoi, to an international audience of people interested in rural Vietnam. The village has been studied since 1992 by professor Sakurai and his collaborators, the most comprehensive long-term study of a single location yet conducted in Vietnam. The audience mainly consisted of researchers of rural Vietnamese life, who presented their research in other localities in rural Vietnam, from religious anthropology in the Mekong River delta to mangrove management in Thai Binh province, close to Haiphong in the north of the country.



Young woman peeling corn stalks in a village of Bac Ninh province.

By Markus Vorpahl

In the first session, Sakurai explained the scope and the extension of the research in Bach Coc: since ten years, more than 150 scholars and students had passed through this village, to study almost every aspect of village life. Historians, agronomists, economists, gender specialists, and anthropologists had done their respective research in general during sessions of two or three weeks in the summer. This makes it the most comprehensive and longest study of one settlement undertaken in Vietnam until now. The motive for researching one village so profoundly is, for the Bach Coc researchers, to understand its 'regionality', its specific characteristics as a single village, and its situation in the region. It is therefore not only the one village studied that is important, but also its implantation in the wider Vietnamese context. It is unique as the one Bach Coc, but it is also a Vietnamese village, sharing in the history of the country, taking part in its culture, economy, religion, and Vietnamese society in general. The results thus incite intense discussion, as most of them have a strong relevance for the understanding of the whole of Vietnamese – rural – society. The results range from archaeological evidence from the earliest settlements on these sites to contemporary architecture, from historical analysis of kinship organization to the role of gender in modern-day time allocation, from the role of the local cooperative to the

impact of urban enterprises on the village's economy. Unfortunately, the results of these research projects were, until this workshop, only available in the Japanese language, so the workshop allowed a wider dissemination of these results and their discussion in the presence of a broader audience.


The capacity of the village to continue its existence through all the different times and challenges – wars, colonialism, and collectivization – was attributed to its interior cohesion and its capacity to manage the interior affairs in a way to fulfil the interests of most of its inhabitants. According to Sakurai, a great part of the village's agricultural land, perhaps 40 per cent, were managed as *cong dien*, as land collectively owned by the village and rented out to roughly 300 households. This was part of a broader system of collective organization, which allowed for an equitable partaking of most of the households in economic and agricultural activities in the village. Sakurai coined the term 'domestic socialism' for this system of mutual economic assistance, which included all households except the very rich, who had no interest in sharing any of their resources, and the very poor, who had nothing to share. This resulted in a 'dual economy', according to Sakurai, in which parts of the population took part in the more protected space of the 'domestic socialism', outside of which existed another system, where the others lived in a more classic, 'capitalist' or 'feudal' system of exploitation between rich landholders and poor tenants.

The workshop started on the first day with an overview of Vietnamese village studies in general, and the position of the Bach Coc project. The history and contemporary situation of Vietnamese studies was presented by Vu Minh Giang, after Sakurai's presentation of the Bach Coc project. Sakurai and Giang, the latter of whom coordinates part of the project on the Vietnamese side, also spoke about the place of the Bach Coc project in this context as a large interdisciplinary project, enlarging the earlier more historical and anthropological research approaches. It continued with a description of the situation in Bach Coc, including its geography and history. This was followed by a more detailed view of some of the problems studied, like the role of the cooperative in the management of the agriculture, the situation of women, or the role of the different banks and their models of credit allocation in the village. To this was added a larger view on village affairs in Vietnam, for example by comparing the role of the cooperative in Bach Coc with that in other villages, or by presentation of


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studies done in other regions of the delta, mainly Bac Ninh, on similar problems of everyday management of village affairs. A broader view of villages in Vietnam was provided by several general studies on the role of migration and home, possible new ways of viewing the relation between rural and urban areas, or the situation of minorities.

Almost from the beginning of the workshop, the term 'domestic socialism', describing a key concept of Sakurai's interpretation of village life in Bach Coc, was criticized by several contributors. Terry Rambo remarked that in a standard interpretation of the term 'socialism', a collective – in most cases state ownership – of production means is necessary to qualify for this label, whereas according to Sakurai, there is a system of cooperation in the management of land owned by individual households. During the 'socialist' period of collective state management and ownership in agriculture, Sakurai explained there to have been a strong disengagement of the peasants, who were attached to the system of 'domestic socialism': the over-control and state involvement in that period was in contradiction with the village's own system of management of agricultural and economic affairs.

On the level of terminology, some discrepancy can be found between the nomination of 'socialist' for the period of state ownership and management, and the term 'domestic socialism', seen exactly in direct opposition to the former.

Questioning time was grouped together at the end of each panel, so that the more popular presentations or subjects regrettably encroached on the time of the more exclusive ones, and in general there were only ten minutes left for discussion of the whole panel.

The panel discussions were vivid, although in some cases language problems arose. As almost everyone in the audience was familiar with the Vietnamese language, in some cases it would have made sense to use it as the conference language instead of English. ◀

Markus Vorpahl, MA is a PhD candidate at the Institute for Social Anthropology (Institut für Ethnologie) at the University of Hamburg, Germany, working on Vietnam and the Red River Delta. He is interested in modernization, social structures, changes of society, and rural society – the changes in living conditions and lifestyle in a 'post-modern', mostly rural, post-socialist society. markus.vorpahl@epost.de

Peasants bringing in paddy during the harvest in Bac Ninh province.



Eating GMOs with Chopsticks?

Risks of Biotechnology in China

Research >
China



A plant genetically modified with a fluorescent gene for experimental reasons

Recombinant DNA techniques have dramatically changed life on our planet ranging from genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to human embryo cloning. The public reactions to biotechnology have varied from pragmatic acceptance in the Netherlands – ‘everything is okay as long as it is cheap’ – to outright social resistance in Brazil. In August last year, United States President Bush prohibited the human cell cloning for stem cell research work, whereas early this year the Dutch government organized the ‘Terlouw debate’ to poll public opinion on the desirability of GMOs. This debate was heavily criticized by NGOs for being too government-directed and thus stripped from any ‘real’ content. However, in developing countries like China, such debate might be completely lacking.

By Heng Zhao

During the 1990s, the Chinese government began reforming the country’s scientific organization in order to prepare them for the challenges of increased globalization and international competition. The government cut the budgets of laboratories in research institutes and universities, and encouraged them to hunt for financial gains by establishing their own joint ventures and companies. In 1992 one of the leading scientists in China, professor Chen Zhangliang of Beijing University, set up the PKU Weiming Biotech Group with USD 50,000 and a small office in his laboratory. After two years, the company grew to USD 14.5 million by taking advantage of its unique location and the government’s desire to promote the biotechnology industry. At present, it has developed into one of the major biotech holding groups in China with ten wholly owned subsidiaries and joint ventures, including Kexing, Beijing PKU WBL Biotech, and Xiamen Bioway Biotech. Their scope of activities focuses on human medication such as recombinant DNA drugs, traditional Chinese medicines, chemical medicine, biochemical reagents, vaccines, diagnostics, and recombinant DNA applications for agriculture.

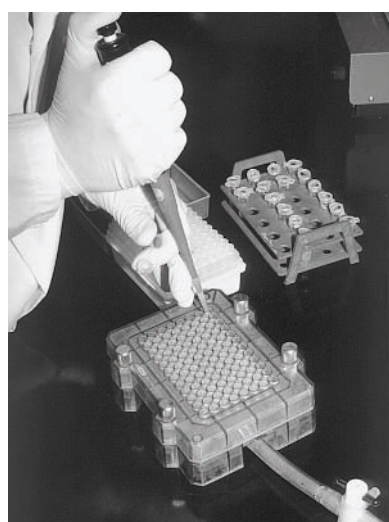
During the past decade, China accelerated its investments in agricultural biotechnology research and developed the largest plant biotechnology capacity outside of North America. With a rapidly growing area of GM plants, China has become the fourth largest grower of GM crops after the United States, Argentina, and Canada. Before 1999, China grew only 300,000 hectares of GM crops. Last year, the amount of land cultivated with GM cotton alone has increased to 3 million hectares according to the data provided by the Monsanto Company.

From 1996 to 2000, China’s Office of Genetic Engineering Safety Administration approved 251 cases of GM plants, animals, and micro-organisms for field trials, environmental release, or commercialization. Among them, there were forty-five GM plant variety applications for field trials, sixty-five for environmental release, and thirty-one for commercialization: cotton, maize, potato, rice, tomato, soybean, peanut, pepper, papaya, and so forth. Meanwhile the research budget for plant biotechnology of the Chinese government is flourishing: it increased fourteen times from USD 8 million in 1986 to USD 112 million in 1999! At present, China accounts for more than half of the developing world’s expenditures on plant biotechnology. Last year, Chinese officials announced plans to raise the research budgets by 400 per cent before 2005. If this goal is achieved, China will take up nearly one-third of the world’s public spending on plant biotechnology.

In developing countries with a high population pressure, GMOs might be a ready way to solve food security and this can be a reason for hasty adoption, though this promise is not being fulfilled by industry. Food shortage is particularly imminent for China, which houses one-fifth of the world popula-

tion. In 1995, the scientist Lester Brown shocked the Chinese government with his prediction that the People’s Republic would face critical food shortages in the future.* In China the average area of farmland per capita is only one-third of the world average. Many experts say that high yield and disease-resistant GM crops may help developing nations like China and India feed their growing populations. GM foods might thus provide an attractive solution to the Chinese government.

This was exactly the point made by the Xinhua News Agency. In an editorial on 6 June 2001, the following was written:



Molecular biological experiments in the laboratory

‘China has enthusiastically pursued genetically modified products in its drive to be self-sufficient in food supplies for its 1.26 billion people. Proponents contend that genetically altering crops to resist pests, drought or other adverse conditions may be the only way to ensure food security in the developing world, particularly in densely populated Asia. But the technique of splicing genes from one organism into another has also provoked fears of unforeseen hazards to health and the environment. The country has not seen the level of heated debate that has raged in Europe and elsewhere over their safety.’

But does the Chinese government realize the possible negative impact of the large-scale release of GMOs into the environment? Will China really benefit from this new and uncertain technology promised by the foreign GMOs producers? While one Chinese saying goes, ‘bringing charcoal in snowy weather’, its opposite adage speaks of ‘adding frost on the snow’. Such is the question for China: GMOs, a welcome solution or just one disaster piled on another?

Whatever the future will bring, the government is stepping up its efforts to control the biotechnological sector. On 23 May 2001, Premier Zhu Rongji approved new regulations on GMO products. These were designed to protect the environment and human health while promoting research. Under the new rules, Chinese-foreign joint ventures and foreign-owned companies need government approval to research or test GMOs. Also the sale of modified seeds, seedlings, or animals is now restricted through official permits.

For those GMO products that are already available on shelves in the shops, the rules require labelling of genetically altered products. Such rules had been indeed established already in 1998 by the State Council, China’s cabinet. The regulations require that GMO products be labelled as such before being made available for sale. Unfortunately, the rules do not seem to have reached the shop shelf yet. No wonder that Monsanto, in reply to a question on the possible impact of the new rules, stated that these seem to be merely a ‘paper’ publication to make people aware that the safety system is in place. On 7 January 2002, top officials of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said that they were reviewing the details of China’s long-awaited rules for GMOs. USDA spokeswoman Alisa Harrison said that Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and other top officials were still translating the new rules into English. Hopefully the cooperation with the USDA will improve the situation for China.

Xinhua News Agency pointed out that only China has not



Biotechnology experiments in greenhouses

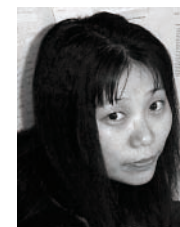
experienced the level of heated debate over GMOs safety that has occurred in Europe or elsewhere. But one of the reasons is that in China, there are no NGOs on GMOs, whereas in the West, NGOs are playing an essential role. Greenpeace, for example, has successfully called on Monsanto to immediately recall the transgenic potatoes circulating in Georgia and neighbouring regions; to compensate farmers for any losses they sustain from these transgenic potatoes; and to set up a compensation fund in Georgia to restore any potential damage to the environment. A positive sign in this respect is that the Chinese government recently allowed the re-opening of the Greenpeace Beijing office in April 2002.

China is already working on GMO regulation. And even more surprisingly, the media have noted the lack of public participation for effective GMO control. However, there is still a long way to go. During my two-month-long fieldwork in China from February to April this year, the latest news was that the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture has issued temporary safety certificates for the import of GM foods. In addition, labels for domestically imported GM foods are required. The Ministry of Agriculture is establishing a new department for GM food safety, and the major authorized centres are under assessment, involving leading research institutes such as the Chinese Health Institute, the Chinese Academy of Science, and the Chinese Agriculture University.

Obviously, there are still many hurdles to be overcome. The situation is that GMOs have already arrived in China, not only those on the shelves of supermarkets, but also many more that are currently under development. It is easy to forget that DNA is and always has been part of our daily diet. Every daily consumer is absorbing millions of copies of genes from thousands of sources and by different ways of intake. We do not know what many of these genes do, and their sources are innumerable: they could be genes from a piece of tomato, cucumber, and lettuce in a salad; the bovine genes in a beef steak; the fragmented DNA in many differently processed foods; and even the genes of the many micro-organisms that we breath and swallow. How many Chinese people stop during one of their meals to consider those unknown genes consumed? And how can they realize this anyway when there is little public access to information about GMOs? The latter question touches on one of the main issues to be tackled in the future. <

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Dr Heng Zhao is a research scientist in molecular biology who has been working on biotechnology at the Institute for Animal Science (ID-Lelystad) since 1992. She is currently researching the social aspects of genomics research in China. hengzhao2001@yahoo.com

Biotechnology experiments in the field



Heng Zhao

Note >

* Brown L., *Who will feed China?: Wake-up Call for a Small Planet*, New York: Norton (1995).

Intellectuals in Social Development in China

Report >
China

25–27 January 2002
Beijing, China

The crucial question of the role of Chinese intellectuals towards the (Party) state, which occupied generations of elite intellectuals throughout the past century, was one of the issues at the conference on 'Intellectuals in Social Development in China'. Social development in this context also means political development. With the development of more professionalism and the anticipated dominance of technocrats among the political elite, the search for overall ideological solutions for the development of society became an outdated question.

By Nora Sausmikat

The opening remarks and keynote speakers were well chosen but four out of six speakers were not present personally and their speeches needed to be read out by somebody else. These keynote speakers included, among others, Li Rui (the former deputy minister of the organizational department of the Central Committee and former secretary of Mao Zedong), Liu Ji (the former deputy chairman of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, consultant of Jiang Zemin and head of the propaganda department, today head of the Sino-Euro international business school), Wu Jiang (a former close

Information >

This conference was organized by the department of international politics under Prof. Zhao Baoxu and Prof. Shen Mingming. The participants were scholars from various disciplines and foreign countries (Australia, Denmark, Singapore, USA), but also former high-level politicians and old cadres, prominent writers, and journalists. The majority of participants came from China or were overseas Chinese.

Notes >

- 1 The May Fourth debate refers to the debates during the May Fourth movement in 1919, the urban intellectuals movement that started as a reaction to the unequal Versailles treaty and saw the solution to China's problems in the institutionalization of 'democracy and science'.
- 2 Hu Yaobang (1915–1989), Chinese Communist political leader, became general secretary of the Communist party in 1980 and party chairman in 1981, effectively replacing Hua Guofeng as leader of the Communist party. In the wake of student demonstrations for greater democracy, to which he was thought to be sympathetic, he was forced to resign as party secretary in 1987. In 1989, upon his death, students renewed their protests.
- 3 Li Dazhao (1888–1927), professor of history and librarian at Beijing University, was co-founder of the Chinese Communist party in 1921. He was a leader in the May Fourth movement and organized several Marxist study groups.
- 4 Sun Yatsen (1844–1925) was the founder of the Guomindang (Chinese Nationalist Party) and the first president of the Republic of China. He has been canonized and worshipped by both the Guomindang and the Communists as a national cult figure and, in particular, by the former as the source of political legitimacy since 1925. His 'three principles of the people' (*san min zhu yi*), have been propagated as the guiding principle for the reconstruction of China as a modern democracy.

associate of Hu Yaobang and dean of the education department at the Party's university), and the former vice president of Beijing University, Ji Xianlin. Li Rui's long speech introduced the central problem of the conference: the (self-)definition and function of Chinese intellectuals in a non-democratic environment. He demanded in an unusually open manner democratic reforms, a free press, and the phasing out of the long enduring, totalitarian dictatorship. Simultaneously he called for the realization of 'real Marxism'. Like the following speakers, he also focused on the reflection of the role of intellectuals since the May Fourth movement of 1919,¹ and addressed both the central question 'Who are we?' and the necessity to protect independence as well as a critical spirit.

Throughout the whole conference, the most heated debates were caused by such themes as the evaluation of Hu Yaobang,² the emancipation of intellectuals as an important modernization force, and the question of whether the implementation of a democratic system could help to free intellectuals from their dependency on the party.

The evaluation of the role of intellectuals in Chinese history was also concerned with their traditional dependence on politicians and their lack of independence. Yu Keping (Beijing, Centre for Comparative Politics), for example, demonstrated by using the destinies of prominent people like Qu Qiubai, an important protagonist of the May Fourth movement and scholar of Li Dazhao,³ that too much critical spirit will only lead to failure. Yu and many other participants used an old metaphor of Mao Zedong, '[i]ntellectuals are the hair on the skin', i.e. they do not possess their own skin. Li Jingpeng (Beijing University), on the other hand, stated that Mao Zedong's description of intellectuals was wrong. So as to prove that intellectuals are the central force for modernization, he referred to the Enlightenment movement (1915–1919) and to the 'Enlightenment movement of scientific socialism' from 1919 to 1921. In his closing remarks he urged the intellectuals – despite their major role in modernization – to work on their weaknesses, i.e. peasant consciousness, grade orientation, and opportunism.

The journalist Yang Jisheng from the Xinhua news agency provocatively stated that there is no such group as intellectuals in China if defined as an independent group. Other more substantial critiques reflected on the Party's history, especially the anti-rightist movement and the Cultural Revolution. Zhao Baoxu and others with him stated that without open reflection and much more detailed research on the

Cultural Revolution there would be no chance for democratization in China. Notwithstanding the positive evaluation by Cai Decheng (editor of *Keji Daobao* (Science Report)), that intellectuals became emancipated during the 1990s and his call for active support entrance into the WTO because this would guarantee stability and human rights in the long run, the discussion returned to the definition of intellectuals. Xu Xianglin (Beijing University) pointed to the necessity of producing 'big democratic thinkers' to promote modernization, while others like the nationalist Pan Wei (Beijing University) questioned whether China needs democracy at all. He argued that democracy is a Western product that nobody understands anyway.

Xu Datong (Tianjin University) deconstructed in a very interesting way the belief of some Western and Chinese scholars, that Sun Yatsen's⁴ theory of the 'three principles of the people' can be identified as a condensed form of ancient, democratic ideas in China. He highlighted the aspect that only the preservation of power and stability pressured the rulers to be concerned with the people, and that the concept of 'the three principles' has nothing to do with democracy. Qin Hui, another protagonist of the search for indigenous elements of democracy, who has slowly advanced to become 'China's Habermas', elaborated the tensions between the three philosophical schools of Confucianism, legalism, and Taoism and compared them with liberalism. In the eyes of Qin Hui China's hope lies in the formation of a 'new Confucianism', which creates a theory of the people and not of the state. Feng Chongyi (Sydney University) analysed the changing role of intellectuals confronting commercialization and globalization and discerns new possibilities of independence for professionals.

There was wide consensus that intellectuals should not be treated as instruments for politicians. Interestingly and partly due to the possibility for debates, the discussions did much more to reveal the concern of the participants than did the papers. Against the background of the recent debates inside China, the hot topic was political reform. All in all the conference was very well organized, the organizers provided the participants with a lot of information besides the copies of the papers. <

Dr Nora Sausmikat is research associate at Duisburg University, Political Sciences, East Asia Institute, and is currently working in a project on the influence of democracy discourses on political reform (chaired by Prof. Heberer). She obtained her PhD with a dissertation on the memory of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Her research interests include democracy and political transition, history of Chinese intellectuals, biography research, national reflection on the past, and women's studies.
sausmikat@uni-duisberg.de
nsausmikat@aol.com

Chinese Communities in the Netherlands

Report >
China

9 March 2002
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

'The Research Network on Chinese Communities in the Netherlands' meeting proved that interest in its activities has greatly increased, not only among researchers but also among representatives from non-governmental organizations, state organs, and the general public. The (morning session) presentations of research on young and single asylum seekers from China and on the Chinese community in Batavia during the nineteenth century were attended by people related to the Chinese communities in the Netherlands (including its former colonies and Belgium) in many different ways: as police and immigration officers, interpreters, workers in social welfare, and of course as researchers. During the afternoon symposium on 'China in the Netherlands', three public lectures and discussions were held in addition to video showings.

By Leo Douw

Mirjam Blaak and Frenny de Frenne (the Pharos Foundation, Utrecht) dwelled on the present life situation of young and single asylum seekers from China, and on how the asylum seekers themselves experience this situation. They made clear that lit-

tle systematic knowledge on these comparatively recent arrivals exists and that research on such a group informs us on the group itself, but also on the treatment that Dutch public organizations give them. Leonard Blussé and Menghong Chen (both of Leiden University) focussed on the so-called Kong Koan archives from Batavia in the Netherlands East Indies, which covers the administration of the Chinese community in Batavia from the mid-eighteenth until the mid-twentieth century. Its materials allow an often-perplexing view on how the Dutch colonial administration ruled its cul-

tural minorities, and how that experience may serve discussions on present-day migrant politics and society.

The public lectures in the afternoon intended to counteract the ingrained manner of thinking, which views globalization processes as a one-sided movement extending Western culture, ideology, and organization to the East. Paul Geense (Erasmus University Rotterdam) pointed to the dangers of this approach by positing that the infamous Dover Incident in the year 2000, in which 58 Chinese were killed, was not sufficiently followed up by the Dutch authorities. These authorities consistently ignore that Chinese entrepreneurs, also those residing in the Netherlands, have an interest in human trafficking. Barend ter Haar (Leiden University) provided a handful of telling examples of how artifices of Chinese culture, such as Chinese traditional medicine, and the practice of geomancy are misinterpreted by Dutch 'adepts', who adapt them to their own uses. Christiaan Jörg (University of Groningen) nicely illustrated the overwhelming Chinese

presence in the Netherlands in the shape of massive porcelain imports and uses from the seventeenth century onwards. The lectures were alternated by the showing of Yan Ting Yuen's impressive documentary *Chin.Ind.*, which deals with the experience of a Cantonese migrant couple who survive successfully but rather unhappily in the Netherlands by working in a Chinese restaurant.

During the past few years, a new stage in the situation of migrant communities has been reached, due to the rise of the leftist anti-globalization movement and more recently the rightist anti-terrorism rhetoric. The increased interest in the research on Chinese communities in the Netherlands is an apparent result of these changes, warranting a follow-up meeting, which is to provide a broadly based forum for discussion. <

Dr Leo Douw is a lecturer of Modern Chinese History and Society at the University of Amsterdam and the Free University Amsterdam.
lm.douw@let.vu.nl

Information >

'The Research Network on Chinese Communities in the Netherlands' meeting was funded and organized by Asian Studies in Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam, and the International Institute for Asian Studies.

Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Development Policy in Macau

Report >
East Asia

Has the Asian Economic Miracle bypassed Macau? Some observers came to this conclusion by the mid-1990s. After its rapid industrialization and equally rapid growth in prosperity in the 1970s and early 1980s, it gradually became clear that Macau was not going to follow the development model of Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore. These had all benefited from foreign technology during their economic take-off. The main carrier of foreign technology is foreign direct investment (FDI), but in Macau's case FDI did not have a lasting effect on industrial or economic development.

By Frans-Paul van der Putten

From the early 1970s, FDI from Hong Kong provided the main stimulus for the growth of Macau's light industry, which was export oriented and labour intensive. However, this was not followed by a second phase of industrialization in heavy industry or high-tech manufacturing, nor did it stimulate the development of an advanced trade and services sector. From the late 1980s, Macau 'de-industrialized' as factories moved across the border to Zhuhai, the Chinese Special Economic Zone where production costs are lower. By the mid-1990s, FDI and industrial development had largely evaporated, and apart from its gambling industry the Macau economy did not have much on which to base further growth. Economists have long been urging the Macau government to broaden its economic base by developing new sectors. This process may gain considerable support from foreign capital and technology, brought into Macau by foreign companies. But so far, the more traditional industry of gambling remains all-important and little FDI is entering Macau.

It is generally known that, as massive foreign investment has been pouring into neighbouring Hong Kong and Guangdong,

Macau has not managed to attract significant FDI. It has also frequently been pointed out that Macau has little to offer to foreign investors: it constitutes a very small market with only some 400,000 inhabitants and lacks natural resources, production costs are higher than in Zhuhai, and its services sector is small and underdeveloped in comparison to Hong Kong's. Still, being located in the economically dynamic Pearl River delta and being administratively and historically separated from surrounding territories, would it not be possible for Macau to attract more than just tourists for its casinos?

This research focuses on Macau's ability to attract effective FDI: foreign investments with a stimulating effect on economic development and diversification. An important question to be answered in this context is what Macau's colonial past – a Portuguese governor administered Macau until late 1999 – implies for its economic future. How did Portuguese rule affect the size and nature of inward FDI and economic development in Macau and what changes may be expected from its recent transition to a China-controlled Special Administrative Region? In order to address these questions, a one-month research visit was made to Portugal. Although no data younger than thirty years is accessible in Portuguese government archives, Lisbon does have a number of institutes specialized in collecting published data on Macau's history and its current economic and political status.

The data collected in Lisbon indicate that the Portuguese colonial system has had a negative effect on Macau's ability to attract and use FDI for economic development. During the final decades of the colonial era, three main parties had direct or indi-

rect access to political power in Macau: the Portuguese government, the Macau Chinese, and the Chinese government. However, because no single group was strong enough to dominate the political scene, a system of compromises came into being, in which long-term economic aims had to be surrendered to short-term ones. Consequently a policy to attract and utilize types of FDI that generate structural economic development did not materialize prior to the withdrawal of Portuguese colonial influence in 1999. The interests of the new administration of Macau and of the PRC government are sufficiently compatible to result in a constructive and coherent policy. Of course, it may take considerable time before the legacy of the pre-1999 era has been left behind. In practice, this means that for the time being Macau and China tend to favour the dominant role of the gambling industry – which brings certain benefits but also a dependency on a single source of economic growth – rather than embark on the more difficult path towards diversification and integration into technology-based economic networks in East Asia. Consequently, it is unlikely that incoming FDI will contribute in a structural way to sectors other than gambling or tourism in the near future.

Studies on contemporary Macau do not have a high profile in the field of Asian Studies and take up only a very minor place in China-related research. But as a result of its colonial past, Portugal has the capacity to continue to play a central role in European Macau Studies, and can thus ensure that researchers working on Macau have a place where they can meet each other and find most relevant publications and pre-1999 documents in a single place. <

Dr Frans-Paul van der Putten is a researcher at Nyenrode University (the Netherlands), where he works on various topics related to corporate social behaviour. He has a particular interest in multinational enterprises in developing economies and foreign investment in China. f.vdputten@nyenrode.nl

Internet >

- www.cccm.pt/sid (Macau Scientific and Cultural Centre)
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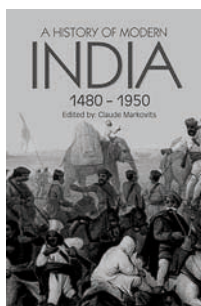
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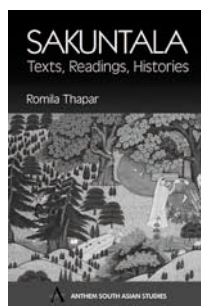
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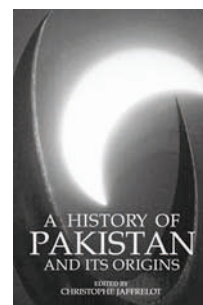
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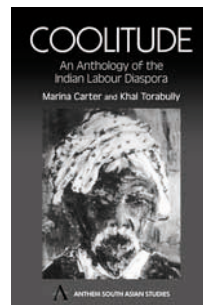
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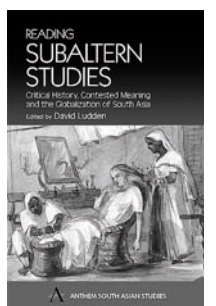
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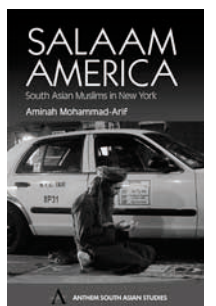
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Voices from Tundra and Taiga

Report >
Northeast Asia

Since the summer of 2002, the IAS hosts an internationally acknowledged and supported field of scientific research in Northern Asia: 'Voices from Tundra and Taiga, A Development Programme for Research on Endangered Languages in Northern Asia', coordinated by Dr Cecilia Odé. The aim is to build up a scientific collection of audiovisual recordings containing daily-life and folkloristic narratives and songs in the endangered languages of the peoples of Yakutia and Sakhalin. The recorded materials will be analysed by specialists in the fields of anthropology, ethnolinguistics, phonetics, and musicology. The collection will eventually be published on the Internet, on CD-ROM, and on DVD.

By Cecilia Odé

G. Vokzybina teaches her native language Nivkh in a school in Chir-Unvd, Sakhalin.

In the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*, (1996) edited by Stephen Wurm, the map of Siberia shows the serious situation in that part

of the world in terms of language extinction. Nivkh and Yukaghir, for example, both under research, are seriously threatened with extinction and might disappear in the next generation. Selecting this part of Northern Asia as the proposed research area for the 'Voices from Tundra and Taiga' programme is highly motivated by the blank spots in the atlas mentioned.

The current 'Voices from Tundra and Taiga' project further develops the IAS programme with the same title that Dr T. de Graaf initiated in 2000 and is related to other projects running in Northern and Arctic Asia. At present coordinator Odé is working out the cooperation with local scholars in Northern Asia and preparing workshops on ethnolinguistic and phonetic fieldwork on location in order to attract young scholars in Sakhalin and Yakutia for the project. They will be educated and trained for fieldwork by specialists in St. Petersburg and elsewhere in the Russian Federation with financial



Nivkh women in traditional dresses made of fish skin with handmade embroidery.



Cecilia Odé

support by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd., a daughter of Shell in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Sakhalin, Russia. Sakhalin Energy guarantees, at least for 2002/2003, part of the financial support of equipment, fieldwork, and local assistants, as well as a training programme for students and assistants in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, including the trainings elsewhere in Russia.

Preserving languages

Odé will also set up her own research: a description of prosodic features in the disappearing Nivkh and Oroch minority languages on Sakhalin and in the Primorskij and Khabarovskij areas, and the Yukaghir and Tungus languages in Northeastern Siberia. Linguists in the Russian Federation and in various other countries are working on descriptions of the languages of Siberia as a geographical unit. A unique chance is offered to complete descriptions of the languages that are currently worked on by field-linguists in that area with a chapter on prosody. Prosody is defined as all supra-segmental phenomena that cannot be derived from the segmental structure of words, that is, from linear sequences of vowels and consonants. Prosody then includes word prosody such as tone and word stress, sentence prosody such as pitch variations in the course of an utterance, accentuation (which word is highlighted?), boundary marking (which words belong together?), and temporal organization (variations in syllable duration, pauses, rhythm, and tempo). All these phenomena, together with lexical, morphological, and syntactic aspects and other non-prosodic phenomena like gestures, facial expressions, and situation are linguistically relevant and contribute to the overall understanding of spoken messages in the interaction between speaker and hearer.

Spontaneous and prepared texts that are valuable for phonetic as well as for (ethno)linguistic analysis will be selected from existing recordings and will also be collected and audiovisually recorded in the field on digital tape. In preliminary linguistic descriptions that are available for the languages mentioned, prosody has not been tackled. The problem is that prosody can only be studied after the main features of phonology, morphology, and syntax of a given language have become available. The study of prosody thus comes

last and is usually neglected. As language material, field-linguists often use examples from the oral tradition. However, prosodic phenomena that are present in this material, and that are characteristic of the art of storytelling, such as speech tempo variations, and the intermediate speech between spoken and sung parts of tales, are not reflected in transcribed texts.

The result of the research, viz. the collection of recorded materials with analyses, will become available on CD-ROM, DVD, and via the Internet for further analysis to specialists in phonetics, linguistics, anthropology, history, ethno-musicology, and folklore. The materials are also important for the development of teaching methods for representatives of the related ethnic groups and the conservation of their language and culture. A good example in this respect is the revitalization of the Nivkh language on Sakhalin. While linguists E. Gruzdeva (Finland/Russia) and Hidetoshi Shiraishi (Japan/the Netherlands) are working on a scientific description of this language, members of the Nivkh community – who were forbidden to speak their language under Stalin – are now developing teaching materials for schoolchildren, publishing a newspaper in their mother tongue, reviving their traditional way of life (e.g. objects of birch bark and fish skin, clothing, and fishing), and organizing festivals in which they perform music, dance, and poetry. <

Dr Cecilia Odé is a research fellow at the IAS, Leiden University, and at the Institute of Phonetic Sciences, University of Amsterdam. Her specializations include Russian, Indonesian, and Papuan phonetics and (ethno)linguistics.

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The 'Voices from Tundra and Taiga' research project, financed by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) Russian-Dutch Research Cooperation, started in March 2002 under the supervision of Dr T. de Graaf (Groningen University, www.let.rug.nl/~degraaf). In a research group, young scientists are working on endangered languages of Northern and Northeastern Asia. While the project has counterparts in Sakhalin and Yakutia, it is also closely related to the NWO programme 'Endangered Languages', which includes the endangered languages of Northern Asia, and to the 'Endangered Languages of the Pacific Rim' (www.elpr.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp) at the Osaka Gakuin University in Japan.

From Austere *Wabi* to Golden *Wabi*

Review >
Japan

The word *wabi* is often defined as an awareness of the beauty of the irregular and imperfect – typical of the Japanese aesthetic consciousness. The term, however, contains more than that and is in fact extremely difficult to grasp. In his article ‘The *Wabi* Aesthetic through the Ages’, Haga Kōshirō places the concept of *wabi* next to the *nō* theatre’s *yugen* (mystery and depth) and *haiku* poetry’s *sabi* (lonely beauty).*



Chshitsu ‘Chisuitei’. Tearoom with distorted pillar. In Tanaka Sen’ō’s book entitled *The Tea Ceremony*. Photograph by Mariko Kanatsugi.

Taken from the book under review.

By Anna Beerens

Although Haga’s article is about *wabi* as an aesthetic term, she points out that *wabi* also is a way of life, which ‘means not being trapped by worldly values but finding a transcendental serenity apart from the world’ (op. cit., p. 196). The aim of Minna Torniaainen’s book, *From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi, Philosophical and Aesthetic Aspects of Wabi in the Way of Tea*, is to explore both aspects of *wabi*, taking a number of tea classics as her point of departure. Ironically, she does not mention Haga Kōshirō’s work.

Any study discussing this elusive concept in a structured and organized way would no doubt be welcomed by all students of Japanese culture. Unfortunately, Torniaainen’s book is not a structured survey. I am afraid it can only be characterized as a largely useless collage of exegetical musings, which is neither a historical, nor a philosophical account of *wabi*. Indeed, there is so much wrong with this book, that if it were a paper produced by a student, I would not know where to start correcting and would be forced to hand it back with the advice to begin all over again. To produce a succinct review is equally difficult, and I have to limit myself to a few points which hopefully will illuminate my objections to this book.

First of all, the book is not a historical study as the phrase ‘*From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi*’ in the title might suggest. Although the question of how *wabi* has developed into its present form or forms is mentioned in the introduction (p. 14) as one of the problems this study is going to tackle, her ‘from ... to ...’ merely means that she is going to discuss all forms of *wabi*, and does not imply a historical framework. Torniaainen is of the opinion that all forms of *wabi* she presents in her study ‘have existed side by side from the beginning’, an argument she also uses to justify her indiscriminate use of source material derived from three hundred years of writing on tea. When she uses nineteenth-century material to elucidate some issue in a sixteenth-century text, this is acceptable only when one concurs with the idea of contemporaneity of all forms of *wabi*. I do not, but even if one would go along with Torniaainen, why then does she say that ‘the concept of *wabi* may be seen to be partially cumulative’ and that ‘nuances assigned to it earlier ... may come to be reinterpreted in a new light’?

Indeed, to study the development of *wabi* without reference to some historical process seems to be untenable. Still, Torniaainen states that she is not going to ‘show how the

notion of *wabi* has changed through these three hundred years’ (pp. 14–15) and thus, when she mentions some tradition or legacy, she usually does so without clearly defining the historical context. The brief introduction to the history of the Way of Tea at the beginning of the book (pp. 1–14) is apparently supposed to be sufficient, and a discussion of the development of *wabi* as a literary term has to wait until page 259. I personally consider the description of Takeno Jō-ō’s and Sen Rikyū’s taste in tea utensils as reflected in diaries of tea gatherings (pp. 202–37), which is a(n) (unacknowledged) discussion of historical development, as the most interesting part of the book.

The lack of a historical framework would not be a serious want, had Torniaainen provided some alternative construction to support her story. Although she has a good knowledge of tea literature, both classic and modern, and her arguments are firmly rooted in this, she leaves so much undefined and implicit that this gives rise to a sense of inarticulateness. For what does the author’s discussion of ‘*wabi* as a philosophical concept’ mean, when it is never explained what philosophy she is using? In fact, the discussion is not so much about the philosophy mentioned in her title as it is about spirituality, more specifically the spirituality of tea and its effect in the ‘*wabi* mind’. This ‘*wabi* mind’ might be distinguished from the sense of *wabi* that can be present in objects, i.e. the *wabi* aesthetic. This distinction is the only underlying structure for the book I have been able to find, although it is not clearly presented in this way by Torniaainen herself, despite the title of the book. Maybe she does not distinguish sharply between the ‘*wabi* mind’ and ‘*wabi* aesthetic’, because, as she suggests herself, it is not even a valid distinction; after all, the spiritual attitude required for and acquired by the practice of the Way of Tea is necessary in order to appreciate the *wabi* spirit in objects. And still, her book seems to be built around this dichotomy.

Not only does Torniaainen fail to tell us about her philosophy, but she also fails to define her central concepts. She sets out with seven characteristics to describe *wabi* as a philosophical concept (p. 42). This characterization (Torniaainen also uses the word ‘classification’ which is not the same thing) provides us with an enumerative definition of the term ‘*wabi* mind’, a concept which is suddenly introduced into her account. In what follows, the terms *wabi* and ‘*wabi* mind’ are not clearly separated and in the course of the book the term ‘*wabi* mind’ will be both identified with and distinguished from ‘the Buddha mind’, ‘the absolute state of mind’, ‘the ultimate state of freedom of the heart’, and ‘enlightenment’.

To make matters worse, in her translations and interpretations of the sources Torniaainen tries to avoid what she calls ‘the dictionary meaning’ of the relevant terms and instead reaches for the ‘philosophical connotations’. It is therefore not surprising that the translations are often biased and that

Torniaainen not always keeps her promise of putting interpretative additions between brackets. Her discussion of a quotation from the classic *Nanpōroku* (pp. 80–1) might serve as an example of her method and style. She translates as follows: ‘And again, in the state of not-a single-thing (*muichimotsu*), all the acts (behaviour) expressing spontaneous (unpretended) feelings, come out naturally here and there’. *Muichimotsu* does not need this abstruse rendering; its dictionary meaning is ‘to have nothing to call one’s own’, ‘to have no property’. Thus the passage could be translated: ‘Acts that excite emotion will spontaneously arise from a state of poverty’, which could be interpreted as ‘poverty stimulates creativity’. Torniaainen, however, interprets this way: ‘I think the core of information that this citation provides is the following: in the state of nothingness (*muichimotsu*) all acts become natural, spontaneous and unartificial. This kind of mind (heart) can only exist in the ultimate state of the heart, i.e., in the state of *satori*. Moreover, for the first time, in this state of nothingness it becomes possible for one to behave naturally’. I have to admit I feel at a loss reading this kind of sentences. Most of her argumentation is in the above vein.

It must be said that Torniaainen is more articulate in the chapters that deal with the aesthetics of *wabi*, but it is obvious everywhere that she has problems with the English language. Her style is rather idiosyncratic and often, even to a non-native speaker like me, does not feel like proper English. Sometimes this can produce hilarious results. How a sentence like ‘approaching seventy and reaching the style of Rikyū’s *chanoyu*, should not be done by any persons other than masters...’ (p. 75) could have escaped the attention of her correctors is a riddle to me.

What this book offers is a highly personal exegesis of a number of tea texts, which might be of interest to a small number of tea devotees. I can hardly see any other uses for the book. The list of tea utensils ‘owned or admired by Takeno Jō-ō’ (pp. 311–19) is useful, but the book cannot otherwise be used as a work of reference. It has no index, and the list of classical sources that Torniaainen has used suffers greatly from the fact that she fails to specify when a work was first composed and published, mentioning the publication dates of modern editions only. I do not mean to say that classic tea texts cannot or should not be approached with questions of a philosophical nature. Exploring the spirituality of tea in that way could be valuable and rewarding. This should, however, be undertaken in a much more disciplined way than Torniaainen has done here. One cannot help wishing that she had used her enthusiasm and skill for a less ambitious project. ◀

- Torniaainen, Minna, *From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi. Philosophical and Aesthetic Aspects of Wabi in the Way of Tea*, Studia Orientalia nr. 90, Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society (2000), 330 pp. ISBN 951-9380-47-7, ill.

Anna Beerens, MA is a PhD candidate at the Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies (CNWS), Leiden. Her research concerns eighteenth-century Japanese literati. a.m.j.j.beerens@let.leidenuniv.nl



Yūin Tsukubai. Washbasin (*tsukubai*) at Yūin tearoom with Buddhist images engraved on the four sides. Konnichian.

Note >

* Kōshirō, Haga, ‘The *Wabi* Aesthetic through the Ages’, Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao (eds), *Tea in Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press (1989), pp. 195–230

Taken from the book under review.

Review >
Japan

Return to Japan

After journeying to a fantasized or praised West, can the Japanese do anything but physically and mentally return to a Japan of nostalgia, and remain there forever? Such is the fascinating hypothesis examined in a series of papers collected under the title *Return to Japan from 'Pilgrimage' to the West*.

By Gérard Siary

Return to Japan from 'Pilgrimage' to the West is based on the argument, described on the back cover, that a number of modern and contemporary Japanese writers, critics, and intellectuals 'travelled to the West in praise of Western civilization only to revert to their conception of 'true' Japanese spiritual, social, cultural and aesthetic values'. It is composed of two main sections. The first is subdivided into two parts called 'Prototypes' and 'Variations' – subtitles that are nowhere justified. The second section consists of seventeen case studies extending from the Meiji era to the Heisei era.

In the keynote, Ian Reader, describes the process of pilgrimage as a looping pattern that could be used to account for the return to a Japan of nostalgia after the journey to a fantasized West. The journey to a sacred place or a fantasized West owes its origins to an escape from a Japan of reality. As pilgrimages are mental and symbolic constructs, they need not be real or physical. The return to the departing point may give the pilgrim the status or position he was dreaming of. It can also be 'a source of conflicting paradigms with the images of

Japan and Japanese identity' (p. 15). It then drives the former pilgrim to imagine or shape his homeland, as he would like it to be or thinks it used to be: hence the opposition between the West and Japan, modern Japan and the Japanese past, or the constructed *urusato*.

Hirakawa Sukehirō begins with Lafcadio Hearn's short story, *A Conservative*, as an illustration for the looping pattern of the return. Shigemi Nakagawa asserts that Yokomitsu Riichi's journey to Europe drove him to recognize the 'uniqueness' of the Japanese race and that *Nihon kaiki*, 'a conceptual product of modernity', crystallized into 'overcoming the modernity' (p. 158). According to Haekyung Sung, Okakura Tenshin never ceased to maintain a relationship with the West, but came to defend Asian values, as embodied by Japan, against the selfishness of the West.

Kinya Tsuruta demonstrates that Tanizaki Junichirō fantasized about a West he never actually visited, adapted it to his quest of the Woman, and shifted to the celebration of Japanese values and uses of the Kansai. He never eliminated the presence of foreigners, however, and managed to create proper and concrete figures of Westerners. Yoichi Nagashima

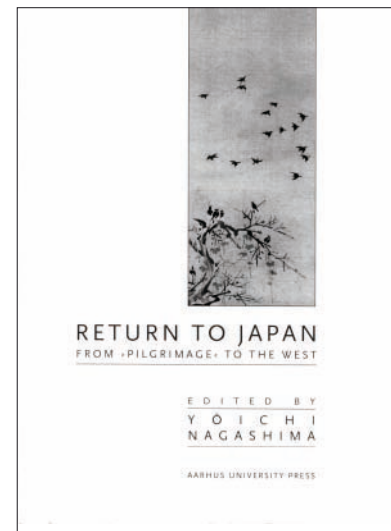
retraces how Mori Ōgai, a translator of Western works who, failing to adapt the Western novel to Japanese literature, shifted to a new type of historical writing, called *shiden*, that was not always devoid of Western devices.

Stephen Dodd, meanwhile, explains that Kunikida Doppo, who never journeyed to the West, nevertheless, rediscovered the Japanese *urusato* through Samuel Johnson's *The History of Rasselas* (1759), and various Chinese works. Katsuya Sugawara examines how Nagai Kafū's unwished-for experience of America and France helped him criticize the modern society of the Meiji era and revert to the artistic values of the decaying *shitamachi*. Inaga Shigemi discusses the *kaiki* pattern: Kinoshita Mokutarō criticized the Japanese craze for fashion; he contributed to the hybridization of Japanese culture, rehabilitated the work of Kobayashi Kiyochika through Impressionism, and rediscovered Tokugawa Japan by returning to the 'Japanism' reintroduced from the West.

In the second section of the book, the following personalities are examined, though with no clear indication of their importance over other Japanese personalities: Kobayashi Hideo, Itō Sei, Mishima Yukio, Endō Shūsaku,

Etō Jun, Ōba Minako, Ōe Kenzaburō, and Murakami Haruki. The case studies reveal, moreover, that the looping pattern does not always apply. Some authors actually went to a fantasized West, or dreamed of it, and then reactively reverted to a Japan of nostalgia of which they could find no tangible trace, except in a remote or reconstructed time, history, or place. A few others struggled against Western values in favour of the Japanese nation (Yokomitsu, Kobayashi) or Japanese protocol (Etō Jun) as a foil to the West. For the majority of them, however, the West provides a place to understand Japan from a distance and its past a posteriori; a means of social integration into the Japanese society (Itō Sei); a mere 'hypotext' to decipher Japan's reality or reshape Japan as a living place (Kunikida Doppo); a step in a quest that may extend far beyond Europe (Okakura, Endō); a cultural body taken for granted and not to be dissociated from a Japanese culture; or an option to be chosen, dropped, and chosen again (Murakami). In fact, some of the case studies clearly show that a fantasized West or a Japan of nostalgia can hardly be mentioned.

In his concluding remarks, Hirakawa Sukehirō insists upon the fact that the multi-layered phenomenon of *Nihon kaiki*, by no means limited to Japan, remains to be written in Japan as 'a truly comprehensive chapter of modern Japanese literary history' (p. 349). Unfortunately, he fails to provide the reader with a proper assessment of this hypothesis, except



for the sad announcement that 'Many of us aged members have already returned to Japan, if not emotionally at least in our food preferences' (p. 350). Whatever the defects of the book, it is full of insights about such problems as the hybridization of cultures or the Japanese psychosomatic reaction to the West, and is worth reading. ◀

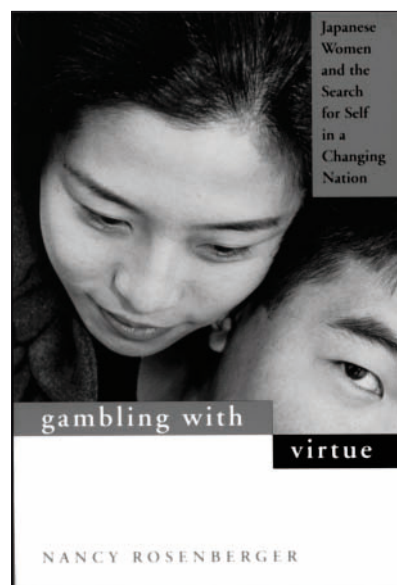
- Nagashima Yoichi, (ed.), *Return to Japan from 'Pilgrimage' to the West*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press (2001), 363 pp., ISBN 87 7288 837 7, ill. and index.

Dr Gérard Siary is a senior lecturer in comparative literature at the University Paul Valéry of Montpellier, France. He completed a PhD thesis on European travellers in Japan from 1853 to 1905, wrote several articles on the relationship of identity and national images in literary texts, and translated Ihara Saikaku's *Koshoku ichidai ōtoko* and *Nanshoku okagami* (2000-2001). gerard.siary@univ-montp3.fr

Gambling with Virtue

Review >
Japan

How has the notion of self changed in Japan over the last three decades of the twentieth century? Apart from this important question, Nancy Rosenberger examines the hybrid versions of personhood that three generations of Japanese women have created since the 1970s.



By Sabine Frühstück

There are many likeable aspects in *Gambling with Virtue* and, as any good book does, it opens up a number of avenues for future research. A particular strength of the book is the great variety among the women who speak from these pages. Rosenberger begins with a description of the lives of housewives and female teachers at a rural high school during the 1970s. In part 2 she visits urban and rural housewives, urban working class women and countrywomen, middle-class working women with a high level of education, women with full-time and part-time jobs, as well as

married and single women during the 1980s. In part 3 she returns primarily to housewives and young single women of the 1990s.

The immediacy of the lively descriptions of conversations about important life choices, self-perceptions, and perceptions of other women, who differ considerably in their geographic location as well as their class and age, make this book enjoyable to read and a welcome addition to a body of anthropological works about women in Japan. This body of literature has grown considerably since the publication of such ground-breaking books as *Women in Changing Japan* by Joyce Lebra, Joy Paulson, and Elizabeth Powers (1976) and *Japanese Women: Constraint and Fulfillment* by Takie Sugiyama Lebra (1984), which set out to show how far Japanese women have come in moving away from a traditional feminine ideal that expected them to be domestic, subservient, and self-sacrificing.

Out of public sight?

Each part of Rosenberger's book begins with an introduction to the main elements of 'public discourses' that serve as a background to the conversations and observations that she describes in the three sections of the book. This structure is rather ineffective, however, as it sets up an artificial gap between a mostly anonymous,

monolithic, and presumably male 'public discourse' and individual women's diverse decisions, achievements, frustrations, and views. Rosenberger argues in her introduction that people's ideas and practices are shaped throughout their lives by ideas and actions that 'come from families, schools, workplaces, media, state policies, national ideologies, and the global marketplace' (p. 4). But the women whose voices the reader gets to hear appear, if not as passive victims of 'public discourse', then at least as merely reacting to and somehow dealing with what has been created by someone else. The processes by which women contribute to these national discourses in important ways, as politicians, journalists, teachers, and other important roles remain out of sight.

If nothing else, the great number of books by women for women published in Japan – from semi-academic publications to advice books by (in some cases prominent) feminists and their opponents within and outside of the academy – testifies to the fact that women have become much more involved in (and ultimately also responsible for) the creation of the discourse on social expectations concerning women. I do not believe that the complexity of these processes should be sacrificed for the sake of simplicity and accessibility.

It is certainly safe to assume that women's lives in Japan have changed quite a bit between the 1970s and the 1990s, and the differences in attitudes among the different women that Rosenberger presents are quite striking. When she sets out to show these changes, however, I sometimes wondered whether individual differences were not mistaken for historical ones. For example, it remains unclear to me why the 1990s would have been any more significant than the 1980s or the 1970s in terms of the difference that women's personal choices were making. At least throughout the modern period anxieties about the danger that independent and individualist women may pose to social order and stability have evolved dramatically. This has been the case from the fight for suffrage since the early twentieth century to the legalization of the Pill in 1999, from the 'modern girl' of the 1920s to the independent career woman (or *tonderu onna*) of the 1980s and thereafter to the so-called 'parasite singles' (*parasaito shinguru*; single working women and men who are criticized for living with their parents instead of founding their own household) of today. Indeed this subject is worth pursuing as a broader research project.

By employing the somewhat worn concept of front stage and backstage spaces that Japanese women move in and switch back and forth between, a concept expressed in a kind of 'double consciousness', Rosenberger seems to suggest that elsewhere and

perhaps at an earlier time, lives were more consistent. The performance skill that Rosenberger claims Japanese women needed for social success, were unnecessary then. In this way, the book highlights the need for an in-depth comparative, intercultural, historically grounded (and hopefully demystifying) study of the self, individuality, and individualism. A study of that kind would have to integrate a critical analysis of the culturally and historically diverse procedures of homogenization, as well as its opposite, diversification.

As it stands, however, the book should appeal to a broad readership interested in post-war and present-day Japanese society as well as women's studies, anthropology, and sociology – in fact, all those who still need to be convinced that 'Japan is not homogeneous despite national efforts to make it so' (p. 3). ◀

- Rosenberger, Nancy, *Gambling with Virtue: Japanese Women and the Search for Self in a Changing Nation*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, (2001), 180 pp., ISBN 0-8248-2336-2

Dr Sabine Frühstück is assistant professor of Modern Japanese Cultural Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research interests include analyses of sexuality and gender, as well as science in modern history. fruhstuc@earthlink.net

The Miracle, a Crisis, and the Future

Review >
General

This clearly is the book of an economist. It is chock-full of quantitative data, but it disappoints somewhat with regard to the social and political interpretation of these data. The book and data not only cover the four so-called 'tigers' (Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore) but also Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. *East Asian Economics: The Miracle, a Crisis and the Future* is divided into three parts: 'The Miracle' (covering economic growth and the distribution of income from about 1950 to the late 1990s), 'The Crisis' (1997–1998), and 'The Future'.

By Benno Galjart

As to economic growth, the author distinguishes between a short spurt, which can occur in every economy, and growth over a long span of time. The figures presented show that the four tigers (and Thailand) were high performers with an average annual growth of over 4.5 per cent for three continuous decades. The chapter continues with an enumeration of the causes of growth in the seven countries covered. The first cause is gross capital formation – high everywhere, but only in Singapore for almost a third part due to foreign direct investment (FDI). In South Korea and Taiwan the contribution of FDI ranged from 2 to 4 per cent. The seven countries are compared with each other and thus not with, for instance, developing countries elsewhere. The explanations for the high domestic savings rates are sometimes given in a single sentence, for instance: fertility limitation, low inflation due to a relatively high level of public sector saving, in other words an absence of deficits, and, in Singapore, interest payments on mortgages provided by the government.

A second explanatory factor is human capital formation. Although the four tigers score relatively high, some of the indicators used may be consequences rather than causes of growth, or may be due to political decisions and thus unrelated to growth. The World Bank has also stated, however, that East Asian governments' investment in education fostered growth. A third, and probably more important, explanatory factor is the export orientation of the economies. In 1980, the region exported USD 245 billion worth; in 1991, almost three times that amount. This orientation helped to provide the scale at which production could take place efficiently.

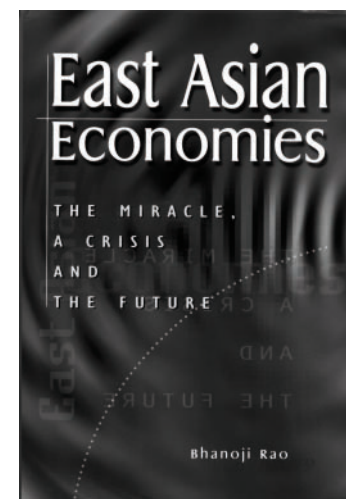
Among economists there is still a debate going on about the relative contribution to growth by the (authoritarian) state versus that by the market. Rao concludes that especially in Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore the state intervened in the economy to a high degree. To be successful economically, however, the interventions had to be combined with the efficiency of market outcomes. One could also say that the export orientation of a large part of the industrial sector made it imperative to keep production costs, and thus labour costs, competitive. As to poverty, the author rightly distinguishes between absolute poverty (income below a certain level) and relative poverty (also: income inequality). Whereas absolute poverty has become insignificant in the four tiger countries and was greatly reduced in the other countries, the figures for income inequality are less conclusive. The author is of the opinion that except in Taiwan the 'Miracle' did not significantly reduce income inequality. Yet it was smaller than in comparable developing countries.

The second part of the book, on the 'Crisis', distinguishes between consequences that did occur in some countries but were averted in others. The 'Asian crisis' began with a crisis of confidence in the real value of the (pegged) national cur-

rency and in the capability of the country – or of some banks or enterprises that had borrowed dollars – to repay short-term debts. If the government allows such banks or enterprises to fail nothing much may happen, as in Hong Kong. A decline in stock market prices, however, may easily lead to the withdrawal of foreign or domestic portfolio investment, which would then lead to a currency crisis and devaluation in most countries. This, in turn, could lead to a financial crisis, as banks with overextended loans either fail or withhold further credit. The latter reaction could then lead to an economic crisis: bankruptcies, rising unemployment, and rising prices. Rao speaks of a social and political crisis if neither the incumbent nor a new government is able to restore confidence in the economy. In South Korea and Taiwan new governments were able to do that; only Indonesia could not avert a social and political crisis. What the description suggests is that the political answers to the crisis of confidence and its possible sequiturs were of great importance, but also that these answers were constrained by political circumstances. The political question is 'who is going to lose money?' Necessary reforms are likely to hurt interests close to an incumbent government, and are therefore unlikely to occur. Whereas most of the affected countries sought assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (whose policy prescriptions, by the way, come in for some criticism), Malaysia alone set up a capital control system. The author states that it is too early to say whether this has been a better way to recovery than going to the IMF, but in a later chapter, when discussing the debt trap, triggered by the propensity to borrow more than is strictly needed and by the well-nigh inevitable outflow of foreign portfolio investment, he does recommend capital controls.

Future prospects

After showing that acceptable figures of economic growth were again achieved in 1999/2000, the author asks what has to be done to extend this growth. Here, Japan, the languishing leader, and China, the emerging leader, are brought in. Japan, of course, has been a major investor in some Asian countries, but its economy is likely to remain in the doldrums. China, on the contrary, continues to grow strongly. The difficulty for most of the seven studied countries is that China can produce practically anything the others are making, only cheaper. The countries are advised to establish stronger export relations with China, each at its 'own' appropriate level of technology, but at a somewhat higher level than China. Excepting Hong Kong and Taiwan – over 10 per cent of their exports going to China – all countries export to Japan rather than China. The final, sociological chapter is an attempt to incorporate two core values, truth and non-violence, into the (economic) development discourse. Development, the author states, comprises freedom, human capability (that is, a long and healthy life), the highest possible education, and enough income to lead a comfortable life; but



development also implies a movement towards human perfection. The discussion refers first to bribery and then to democracy, an institution that promotes accountability. Rao remarks that a democratic system is more concerned about distribution than an authoritarian one, and in careful wording states that in a first phase of development an authoritarian regime may be functional for building up national wealth. In a later phase democracy becomes more or less inevitable. Because Rao believes that 'there is nothing intrinsic in the democratic system to prevent people from being corrupt or violent' (p.130), human beings should perfect themselves. He then lists some principles of Confucianism to see whether they could contribute, or have contributed, to the three aspects of development he had mentioned earlier. Yes, it probably did contribute to material growth or human capability. No, there is hardly anything in Confucianism with regard to democracy or freedom. As to human perfection, the principles are there but the practice is missing. The book ends with a plea for a fundamental change of values, and holds that East Asia should strive for this.

There is, indeed, a sort of contradiction between the effort to be as productive and efficient as possible and the Confucian 'Way', which Rao defines as the detached witnessing of all that happens without the intervention of thought. But to suggest that these different values can be realized at one and the same time is, to my mind, an error. Growth depends on consumption and, therefore, on the desire to consume and earn money. Monks may brew a quality beer and still live a life of contemplation, however, such niches are exceptional, and accessible only to a small group. Mankind has not improved ethically (something the author considers an example of evolutionary failure). Only institutions that have made lies and violence more visible and also more costly, not only for ordinary people but also for holders of power, have brought about a decline of lies and violence. Some institutions do better in this respect than others, and once this is widely known and accepted, democratic systems may set them up. <

– Rao, Bhanoji, *East Asian Economies. The Miracle, A Crisis and The Future* Singapore: Mc Graw-Hill (2001), pp. xv + 175, ISBN 007116779X.

Prof. Benno Galjart is emeritus professor of development sociology at Leiden University. He obtained his PhD in rural sociology at Wageningen University. Most of his early (field) research has focused on Latin American rural development. His most recent book is Dreams and the Downtrodden. Essays in Development Sociology, Leiden: CNWS (2002). b.f.galjart@planet.nl

Review >
Central Asia

Indian Revolutionaries in Central Asia

India has a long history of economic, political, and cultural links with Central Asia. Since the sixteenth century there has been a strong Persian community resident in India. While founding one of India's prosperous and learned communities, they fashioned India as a passageway linking Central Asia with the Middle East and Europe. The well-known corridor of Calcutta, Kabul, and Termez to Bukhara was one of the major routes through which Central Asia became acquainted with the new ideas swaying through the Middle East and the Indian Subcontinent during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

By Touraj Atabaki

During the First World War, the anti-colonial propaganda of the Axis Powers, which was directly aimed at the British and Russian presence in the Indian Subcontinent and Central Asia, persuaded some Indians to join the other revolutionary movements in the region. With the fall of Tsarist Russia and the Bolshevik takeover, some Indians, fascinated by the egalitarian calls of the Bolsheviks, joined the communist organi-

zations in the former Tsarist Empire.

Dmitriev's *Indian Revolutionaries in Central Asia* is about the time and the records of this group of Indians in Tashkent. It consists of four chapters. In chapter one Dmitriev gives an introductory account of Indians who were living in the region before the Bolshevik period. Next, he examines the activities of this group in Central Asia during the early Soviet period of 1918–1919. Here we find a detailed picture of the Bolsheviks' endeavour to sustain their

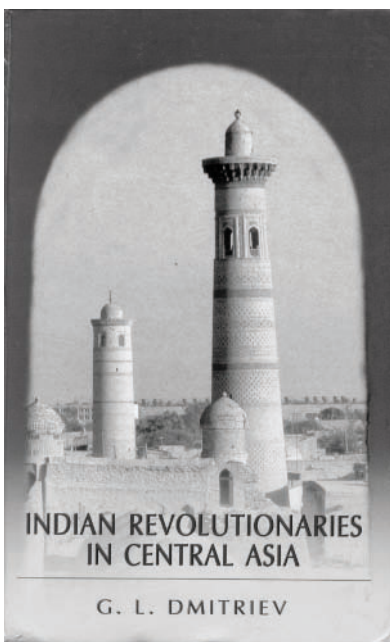
power in the region. Chapter three is on the formation of various Indian revolutionary organizations in Central Asia. In the final pages, Dmitriev compares and contrasts the official policy of the Communist International (Comintern) towards the Orient with the local Tashkent-based revolutionaries' perception of the revolutionary perspective of the region.

Indian Revolutionaries in Central Asia, which is a translation of an original Russian manuscript, can be recom-

mended for those who seek a better understanding of the early Soviet history as well as the revolutionary movement in the Indian subcontinent. <

– Dmitriev, G.L., *Indian Revolutionaries in Central Asia*, Hope India Publications and Greenwich Millennium: Delhi (2002), 134 pp., ISBN 81-7871-006-4.

Prof. Touraj Atabaki is president of ESCAS, professor of Modern History of the Middle East and Central Asia at the University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University, and Central Asia editor for the IIAS Newsletter. Atabaki@let.uu.nl



Korean Multinationals in Europe

Review >
Korea

In this era of increasing internationalization and globalization, whatever these terms mean, foreign direct investment (FDI) is increasing not only quantitatively but also in terms of diversity and the point of origin. *Korean Multinationals in Europe* attempts to analyse this process in light of the experience of Korean consumer electronics firms in Europe.

By Anil Khosla

The major strength of the book lies in its extensive use of the Korean-language materials, giving the reader a taste of Korean thinking on the processes of globalization and internationalization of the Korean economy. The structure of the book is very much guided by the conviction that one needs to look at the existing global economic environment and changes therein to understand the process of multinational enterprise (MNE) growth, especially reverse direct investment (RDI) – investment by less industrialized countries in the industrially advanced countries. Major theories of FDI and the Korean perspectives are taken up in Chapters 1 and 2, followed by a quick tour of the post-war Korean economy (Chapter 3), its consumer electronics industry (Chapter 4), Korean FDI (Chapter 5), and Korea-Europe relations (Chapter 6). The last two chapters, covering about forty pages, are devoted to the main theme: Korean FDI in Europe in general and the Korean consumer electronics MNEs in Europe. Though the wide coverage of the book is very informative, especially for those unfamiliar with the Korean economy, it fails to do justice to the title. An in-depth discussion of the process of establishment and operation of the Korean MNEs in Europe would have been more interesting.

Based on a survey of the 'Western' theories of FDI and the Korean contributions to the debate, the author seems

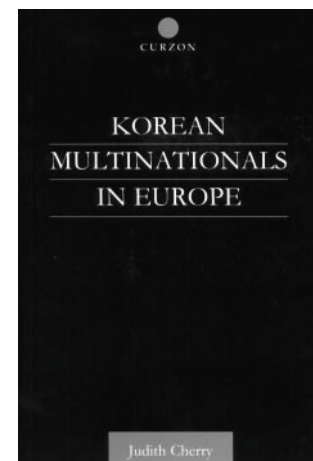
to conclude that the former set of theories was inadequate in explaining the phenomenon of RDI as exemplified in the growth of Korean MNEs in the US and EU. The Korean firms did not have any, or at best weak and transitory, 'compensating', firm-specific advantages to compensate for the 'cost of foreignness'. Latching onto the concepts of 'involuntary internationalization' (Yun) and 'structural irreversibility' (Jun), she calls for a 'theoretical/macroeconomic' perspective to understand Korean FDI and RDI. In a nutshell, the argument is as follows: the export-led growth path chosen by the Korean economy (and the electronics industry), with government help, resulted in heavy export dependence on a limited number of markets (especially the US and the EU) leading to trade frictions. Higher living standards based on this extensive growth eroded the 'work ethic', the costs of production (wages, interest rates, etc.) rose, and emerging competition from new low-cost locations required the Korean firms to seek lower costs abroad. The obsession with quantum growth and exploitation of cheap labour to begin with also resulted in weak incentives for R&D investment and skill formation required for moving production up the value-added chain. At the same time, deteriorating trade frictions and the threat of actual and perceived potential barriers in the major markets 'forced' the Korean firms to set up shop in the advanced country markets. Thus, Korean FDI in Europe and the US was more in the nature of 'market defence' than

voluntary. Some of the Korean FDI in Europe is also explained in terms of Knickerbocker's oligopolistic reaction framework. The oligopolistic rivalries in the domestic market also spilled over into the international activities of the Korean MNEs. Despite this emphasis on a more comprehensive approach, nothing in the book sheds any light on how this 'theoretical/macroeconomic' framework provides an explanation for the ability of the Korean firms to overcome the 'cost of foreignness'.

This inability to provide an explanation arises perhaps from the author's eagerness to combine the theoretical and macroeconomic issues to explain Korean FDI and RDI. While the theoretical question – what factors induce and enable a firm to go global – is definitely linked to the macroeconomic environment, the latter cannot, in itself, become a motive for FDI. Without the existing and perceived threat of protectionism in the advanced countries, Korean firms may not have engaged in RDI without a compensating advantage, whatever the macro environment. The operative constraint and the *raison d'être* for RDI was 'market imperfection' introduced by a rise in protectionist sentiments in the US and the EU and not the macro policies followed by the Korean government. The 'Western' FDI theories are fully equipped to handle such market imperfections as a source of FDI, including RDI. What caused the rise in protectionist tendencies, though important, is distinctly a separate question and the theoretical framework for analysing motivation for

FDI or RDI is not designed to handle this aspect. It is therefore moot to criticize a theory for not explaining something it is not designed to do.

The thin coverage of the process of establishment and operation of Korean MNEs in Europe leaves a number of questions unanswered. How was it that, while lacking firm specific advantages, Korean firms were able to set up and compete with the European companies? Does not the fact that Korea had become the fourth largest producer with more than 5 per cent of global exports of consumer electronics by the mid-1990s reflect some sort of intrinsic advantages and brand following? Could it be that the *chaebŏl* structure provided an opportunity to internalize advantages of low-cost financing within the group? The fact that Korean FDI suffered in the aftermath of the financial crisis indicates that availability of finance was possibly one factor in the rapid increase in Korean FDI. Furthermore, the possibility that the Korean electronic firms may be investing in the advanced countries for strategic capability- or asset-seeking motives is also left unexplored. The rise of competitive pressure from other low-cost producers, coupled with the relatively weak R&D and skill-formation structures, may have induced the Korean firms to look for investments in advanced countries to search for ways to move up the value-added chain. Finally, though the oligopolistic reaction framework finds some support as an explanation of Korean FDI in Europe, the analysis fails to separate out the impact of 'market defence' motive from that of oligopolistic reaction. The original theory is set up to explain voluntary FDI, whereas the Korean FDI in Europe was, by the author's own admission, rather 'invol-



untary' by nature. Just because one firm followed the other in particular economies does not imply oligopolistic reaction without controlling for other factors. Such a conclusion is post-hoc fallacy. Further evidence, perhaps by way of case studies or questionnaire surveys, is required to say anything definitive in this regard.

To sum up, the book is, no doubt, a useful quick reference guide to the development of Korean economy, electronic industry, and FDI. It also provides access to some Korean thinking on the subject of internationalization of the Korean economy. However, a little less emphasis on background information and the generalities of Korean FDI and further in-depth analysis of the behaviour of Korean MNEs in Europe, perhaps in the form of some case studies, would have strengthened the work substantially. ◀

– Cherry, Judith, *Korean Multinationals in Europe*, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press (2001), xiii + 241 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1480-4.

Dr Anil Khosla teaches at the Centre for Japanese and Korean Studies, Leiden University. He specializes in Asian economics and has published widely on the subject. a.khosla@let.leidenuniv.nl <http://tcjko3.let.leidenuniv.nl/~ANIL>

A Free Web Journal

For the Study of the Languages of the Himalayas

Review >
South Asia

In a previous edition of the *IIAS Newsletter*, I suggested that Nepal was a country well positioned to benefit from developments in new digital media delivered over the Internet.* The success of online magazines and newspapers about Nepali, in English and Nepali, is an indication of the fast appropriation of new communication tools by computer-literate Nepalis, whether they live in Kathmandu or California. In the strictly academic domain, however, there have been relatively few such developments. Web teaching and learning are as yet unimplemented, and none of the main scientific journals dealing with the Himalayan region have provided their full and unabridged contents online.

By Mark Turin

The emergence of *Himalayan Linguistics*, a refereed and free web journal devoted to the study of the languages of the Himalayas, is an important new departure for scholars of Himalayan cultures, communities, and languages. The term 'Himalayan' is used in its broad sense to include north-western and north-eastern India, where languages of Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman, and Austro-Asiatic linguistic stocks are spoken; the languages of Nepal, Bhutan, and the Tibetan Plateau; the languages of northern Burma and Sichuan; and the languages of Nuristan, Baltistan, and the Burushaski-speaking area in the west.

The editors of the journal have decid-

ed that access to *Himalayan Linguistics* will be free; in other words, there is no subscription fee. The primary reason for this – and, indeed, for using the Web for dissemination as opposed to the paper format – is to make the journal accessible to scholars in the Himalayan region as well as in other developing countries. Access to Internet facilities, whether at home, at work, or in the form of small commercial 'Communications Kiosks', is dramatically increasing in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, and Pakistan, and is rapidly replacing printed pamphlets as an effective and cheap means of communicating ideas.

The prohibitively high costs of subscription to internationally recognized journals, the expense of registered airmail, and the unreliability of postal

services in many of these countries further advance the WWW as the medium for gaining fast and affordable access to current research. While there have been programmes to collect published materials from developing countries for the university libraries of Western countries, in lieu of debt repayments (such as the PL480 programme in the US), the transfer of printed knowledge has seldom moved in the other direction. In the case of Nepal, apart from the few notable scholars who give their books to Tribhuvan University, much of the published material on the country never reaches Nepali scholars and students. It is the explicit hope of the editors of *Himalayan Linguistics* that scholars and students from the Himalayan region will not only access

Information >

Support for *Himalayan Linguistics* has been provided by the College of Letters and Science, the Graduate School, and the Department of Linguistics of the University of California, Santa Barbara. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Center for International Education has kindly provided the web space for the journal.

More information on *Himalayan Linguistics* can be found at: www.uwm.edu/Dept/CIE/HimalayanLinguistics/index.html

Note >

* *IIAS Newsletter*, issue 23, February 2000, www.iias.nl/iiasn/23/regions/23SA1.html

the journal, but will also be active contributors to it. Submissions to *Himalayan Linguistics* are expected to be electronic, except by special arrangement with the editors.

Rather than organizing articles according to issues, the editors have resolved to upload papers to the *Himalayan Linguistics* site for public access as and when they are accepted for publication. Abstracts of the accepted papers will be both screen-readable and also available for downloading as PDFs (portable document format), which can be read with Adobe Acrobat Reader. Basic search functionality will be added to the site soon, allowing readers to search the published papers by language, topic, author, or citation. An important feature of *Himalayan Lin-*

guistics is the inclusion of a full set of True Type font typefaces for rendering technical phonetic characters and characters in the Nepali and Tibetan scripts. These fonts, available in both PC and Apple Mac formats, can be downloaded for free. Such typographical standardization is essential for a new Web journal to succeed, and may well lead to greater typographical integration and unity in a field fragmented by dozens of competing font packages. ◀

Mark Turin, MA is completing a grammar of the Thangmi language, spoken in central-eastern Nepal. He is affiliated to the Department of Social Anthropology and is manager of the Digital Himalaya project both at the University of Cambridge. markturin@compuserve.com

Detective Report or Academic Book?

Review >
General

Less than one year after the World Trade Center and Pentagon were attacked by terrorists hijacking American jetliners on 11 September, dozens of books examining the issues around Osama bin Laden and his international terrorist network al-Qaeda have been published all over the world. Still only a few seek to offer a comprehensive analysis about how Osama bin Laden expanded his network to various parts of the world and established a kind of 'terrorist empire'. Rohan Gunaratna's *Inside Al Qaeda, Global Network of Terror* is one such book. Written by a scholar with a longstanding interest in the issues of terrorism, particularly Tamil Elam in his native Sri Lanka, this book seeks to provide a comprehensive assessment about the historical developments, organization, ideology, strategy, and network of al-Qaeda.



By Noorhaidi Hasan

During his five-year intensive research, Rohan Gunaratna claims to have succeeded in observing important bases of al-Qaeda scattered in various countries around the world. He also claims to have interviewed over 200 members of this network, as well as people associated with it, in various Muslim diasporas in Europe and the United States; diasporas that have become the targets of al-Qaeda's expansion.

The first part of this book presents a story about the origins of al-Qaeda. Gunaratna points out that al-Qaeda originated from the Maktab al-Khidmat li al-Mujahidin al-Arab (MAK, Afghan Service Bureau Front), set up by Abdullah Azzam as a network of recruiting jihad volunteers from Arab countries to fight side-by-side with Afghan *mujahidin* against the Soviet Union. Joining this organization, Osama bin Laden, the son of millionaire Muhammad bin Laden, began his jihad adventure in the 1980s and soon became one of the most important deputies of Abdullah Azzam. Having later taken over the leadership of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden vowed to expel the US troops from Saudi Ara-

bia and later proclaimed a war against the 'Jews-cum-Crusaders conspiracy'.

The second part of this book analyses the structure, ideology, and strategy of al-Qaeda. According to Gunaratna, al-Qaeda is an organization consisting of secret cells, various Islamist political parties, and independent terrorist groups, with its core base in Afghanistan. It is run via a vertical leadership structure that provides strategic direction and tactical support (p. 54). Its members adhere strictly to their cell structure, maintain strict discipline, promote self-sacrifice, and act under the guidance of an action programme. They are imbued with an ideology of holy war against the West, which is inspired by the militant ideas of Sayyid Qutb and Abu al-A'la al-Mawdudi, two prominent Islamist ideologues. Gunaratna even claims that al-Qaeda is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, or more precisely the most radical, uncompromising tendency in the Muslim Brotherhood (p. 92) and reveals that besides spreading terrorism the main strategy of al-Qaeda is to radicalize Muslims all over the world.

In the next two parts of this book, which constitute the most problem-

atic parts, Gunaratna seeks to expose the worldwide network, defined as 'a network of cells, associate terrorist and guerrilla and other affiliated organizations', in which members share expertise, transfer resources, discuss strategy, and even conduct joint operations (p. 95). According to Gunaratna, the tactic of decentralization, cooperating with local militant groups, is one of al-Qaeda's keys to success in extending its reach of action. Through this kind of cooperation, al-Qaeda exists in well over a hundred states, stretching from North America to Southeast Asia. This part of the book also explains the financial infrastructure of al-Qaeda and the way its members are trained before running their jihad missions, ranging from guerrilla war to terrorist attacks and quasi-conventional campaigns.

The main problem that readers might face is that the author fails to clarify several basic concepts used in this book, including organization and network. The author, for instance, seems to have obscured the definition of organization. Apart from his explanation about al-Qaeda as a real organization, he suggests that al-Qaeda is a virtual organization, a shadowy body that exists more at the level of imagination (p. 3). If this is the case, al-Qaeda is apparently not much different from Benedict Anderson's imagined community, in which members and affiliated groups are bound by a kind of feeling, in this case an uncompromising hostility against the West and its related interests. Due to his ambiguous definition of al-Qaeda organization, the author easily claims a variety of groups to be necessarily connected with al-Qaeda and being part of the network of this organization. He does this, without properly understanding the anatomy of these groups. This major deficiency is aggravated by his ignorance of Islamist ideology. When following his explanation of al-Qaeda ideology, I fear that one might easily come to associate a quarter of the Muslims in the world with al-Qaeda. For a start, the books by Sayyid Qutb and Abu al-A'la al-Mawdudi have become best-sellers in a dozen Muslim countries. In addition to the above, Gunaratna fails to explain clearly the position of Wahhabism and the Deobandi school of thought in the worldview of al-Qaeda followers, which other scholars have generally highlighted.

Several questions in relation to the methodology and the reliability of data used by the author in constructing his analysis also need to be addressed. Much information of this book refers to intelligence sources, or magazines and newspapers that have sensationalized 'news' about al-Qaeda. Obviously, the reliability of such data for a work that claims to be

scientific and that is launched for an academic community cannot be assured. In addition to that, the author claims to have interviewed hundreds of al-Qaeda members and visited a dozen of its secret cells in various countries, throughout which Arabic serves as the lingua franca. As clarified by the author himself, who does not speak Arabic, trust usually constitutes one of the most important aspects of secret cells even amongst the members of the cells themselves. There is no doubt that it is not easy for outsiders to enter secret cells, let alone stay with their members without there being any suspicion.

Compared to other books discussing Islamic militancy in different parts of the Muslim world, this book lacks any understanding of the internal political contexts where militant groups come to the fore. This, incidentally, is one of the most important variables of the rise of militant Islamic groups in the Muslim world, and the proliferation of such groups has often been a form of protest against the existing ruling regimes that marginalize them. Another nuisance is provided by the numerous errors in the spelling for the names of individuals and organizations.

Last and worst of all, this book seems to have been written in order to legitimize the American campaigns against terrorism, purporting that

there is a kind of global network named al-Qaeda that is highly dangerous and prepared to threaten all Western interests due to its organizational, strategic, and financial resources, and which is imbued with militant ideology. Mimicking a White House spokesman, Gunaratna ultimately warns the international community of the graveness of the threat posed by al-Qaeda. In the last part of the book he describes al-Qaeda as 'the only real threat for the world in the twenty-first century' and calls for an anti-terrorist coalition to defeat this monstrous threat. While this book serves to transform the readers' vague conceptions about the threat of the al-Qaeda terrorist network into something more tangible, it undoubtedly adds to many people's fears with respect to security. Nevertheless, there is one important reason to read this book, namely to understand how Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' is legitimized. <

– Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda, Global Network of Terror*, London: Hurst & Company (2002), xiii + 272 pp., ISBN 1-85065-671-1.

Noorhaidi Hasan, MA is conducting research for his PhD on radical Islam in the era of transition in Indonesia, with special reference to the Laskar Jihad. noorhaidi@let.leidenuniv.nl

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A Cutting-Edge Manual for Spoken Tibetan

Review >
Central Asia

In the past few years, spoken Tibetan has become increasingly popular in the Western world. More and more tourists, students, and scholars are travelling across Tibetan cultural areas both in China and in other Tibetan communities living along the Himalayan range and it is not rare to see Western tourists enjoying a walk around the Barkhor market in Lhasa trying to speak or utter some quickly memorized Tibetan words and phrases to smiling shopkeepers and amused pilgrims. A well-written and all-round practical textbook is what we were all waiting for.

By Antonio Terrone

Born from the fortunate collaboration between Nicolas Tournadre (Paris VIII University/CNRS) and Sangda Dorje (Tibet University, Lhasa), the *Manuel de tibétain standard: langue et civilisation* (*Bod kyi spyi skad slob deb*) is an excellent publication, which has both the flavour of a mother-tongue speaker's poetry, and the wit and scientific approach of a Western scholar. This 567-page manual is divided into four main sections: 'Introduction', 'Lessons', 'Grammar', and 'Annexes', including fourteen pages of colour pictures and maps, and two CDs. The *Manuel*, as the title obviously suggests, is addressed to French-speaking readers. For this reason the transcription system chosen, although 'very readable' (p. 8), can on the contrary be quite misleading even for people familiar with French phonetics.

The lengthy introduction (pp. 11–53) provides a comprehensive linguistic description of the Tibetan language focusing on its alphabet, writing system, and pronunciation. Linguist readers will surely find it stimulating and well written. After a brief presentation of the Tibetan language and of other Tibetan dialects, an interesting issue is immediately brought up, namely, the definition of 'Standard Tibetan' (*spyi skad*), which the authors identify as the language spoken in Central Tibet, Lhasa, and in the diaspora (p. 12).

The plurality of Tibetan dialects is well known, and is itself a hindrance to communication not only between Western travellers and Tibetans, but often even among Tibetans from different regions. Religious and historical circumstances have indeed given Lhasa a central position, and its dialect has become a sort of lingua franca for Tibetans transiting through

Central Tibet for business, work, or pilgrimage. However, as far as I know, most Tibetans hardly use this term to refer to any 'common Tibetan language'. *sPyi skad* is one of the many Tibetan neologisms coined from modern Chinese, and it specifically translates the term *pǔtōnghuà*, or common speech (of the Chinese language). While the people of Lhasa, for instance, usually refer to their spoken language as *lhasa'i kha skad*, or Lhasa spoken language (also a neologism borrowed from the Chinese *lāsā kōuyǔ*), most Khampas (northeastern Tibetans) still refer to it as *bod skad*, or Tibetan language.

The second part of the textbook (pp. 55–361) is divided into forty-one lessons reflecting a quadripartite scheme: dialogue, new words, commentary, and exercises. The dialogues have been tailored on a true-to-life situation that I find essential in learning a spoken language. Situational dialogues such as 'coming for dinner', 'on pilgrimage', 'at the football match', 'the Banakshöl', 'bLo bzang's house', and 'in the kitchen', in addition to text readings such as *A khu ston pa'i sgrung* (The Tale of Aku ston pa), lead the reader step-by-step into the world of Tibetan culture and the richness of its language. The authors have included occasional but clever sidebars, called civilization, which give a very concise but practical overview of some features of the Tibetan way of life.

The third section is devoted to the description of the distinctive characteristics of classical Tibetan, and spoken Tibetan. Herein the student will find rubrics dedicated to Tibetan literature (p. 365), the 'song of separation' (pp. 368–9), and grammatical differences between classical and spoken Tibetan (pp. 371–408).

A series of six 'Annexes' (pp. 411–78), giving the work an even more definite linguistic imprint, are consecrated to the

description of Tibetan grammar and phonology. A section is devoted to the use of honorific forms, and the features of formal speech in Tibetan (pp. 439–43). Here Nicolas Tournadre and Sangda Dorje introduce us to the complexities of the language, which may require the use of four different honorific forms, especially in Lhasa and in certain circumstances. The last three annexes provide lists of words borrowed from other languages, *mots composés*, and grammar tables.

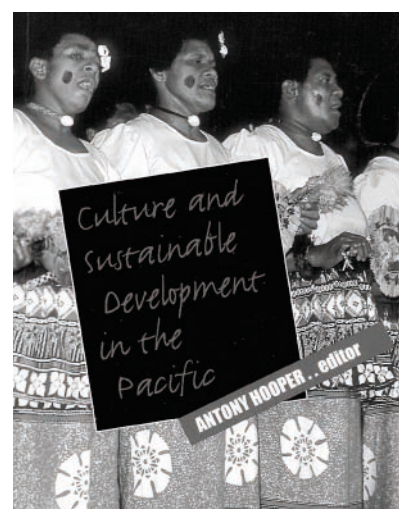
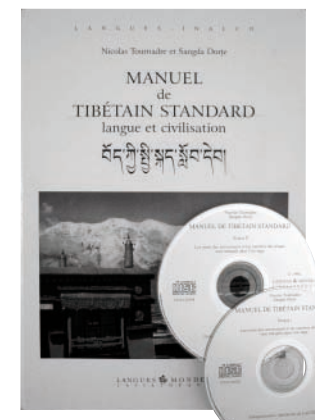
The already thick book contains two glossaries (pp. 479–549), both of which are short and present everyday terms. The French-Tibetan and Tibetan-French glossaries together contain more than 4,600 entries.

The *Manuel* is also worth praising for its accompanying double CD set, containing readings by three Tibetan speakers including a female reader, which makes for pleasant listening with all of the speech variations. While these readings cover a major portion of the phonology sections, dialogues, and texts from each lesson, it is a shame that the important 'new words' list is not included on the CDs. As a result, students need to read and memorize quite a large number of Tibetan words with nothing to rely on other than the given phonetic transcripts.

Its size and weight hardly make this book a good travel companion or pocket manual for quick reference on Tibetan travels and tours. However, overall, the *Manuel* is a well-written and complete cutting-edge grammar and textbook, making immediate communication in Tibetan accessible for everyone. ◀

– Tournadre, Nicolas, and Sangda Dorje, *Manuel de tibétain standard: langue et civilisation*, Paris: L'Asiathèque (1998), 567 pp. + 2 Compact Discs, ISBN 2-911053-25-7.

Antonio Terrone, MA is a PhD candidate at the Research School CNWS at Leiden University and is completing his doctoral thesis on the *gter ma* tradition of Buddhist teaching transmission in present-day Tibet. a.terrone@let.leidenuniv.nl



By Toon van Meijl

Foreign investments in the Pacific, however, have not yielded the returns anticipated and expected. Since many Asians have recently decided to settle permanently in the Pacific, particularly in Australia, New Zealand, and Hawai'i, and since even more Asians are visiting the Pacific as tourists, Asian entrepreneurs have broken all investment records in the Pacific from the mid-1980s onwards. Asian business in the Pacific is based on the assumption that the Asian model of development can be expanded easily into the Pacific. It is believed that the growth of Asian economies can be emulated by Pacific island countries by getting people out of the subsistence economy, by introducing Western technology, and by simply engineering a transition to a dynamic monetary economy. *Culture and Sustainable Development in the Pacific*, however, aims to demonstrate that this assumption is false, since Pacific island countries are different from their larger Asian counterparts, not only in their scale and resources, but also in their cul-

The Indigenization of Modernity On the Relation between Culture and Development

Review >
Southeast Asia

A book not about Asia, not even about the Pacific Rim, *Culture and Sustainable Development in the Pacific* is instead about the Pacific region in the strict sense of the term. The strategic importance of the Pacific for Asia and, of course, for America has been abundantly clear since the Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor during World War II. The central importance of the Pacific in modern world history is also portrayed in the relatively new concept of the Pacific Rim, which, remarkably enough, decentralizes Asia and America by defining them both in relation to the Pacific. At the same time, this importance is reflected in the increasing amount of investment in the Pacific, both by the US and the Asian economic tigers, especially over the past two decades.

tural make-up, since culture in the Pacific region is construed in ways that are quite distinct from that which is prevalent in the debate on Asian values.

Nowadays, it seems to have become a truism that the relationship between culture and development as it is conceived in the West and, recently, in many Asian countries, is not unproblematic. For that reason, culture was placed on the development agenda of the United Nations, which proclaimed the years between 1988 and 1997 as the World Decade for Cultural Development. The responsibility for implementing the Decade was given to UNESCO. The response of Pacific member states to UNESCO was formulated in a project entitled 'Vaka Moana'. 'Moana' is the common word for 'ocean' in the languages of the Pacific, while 'vaka' refers to a 'canoe', not only in the sense of a vessel, but also in the sense of a social group linked by migration, descent, and traditions. Indeed, as expressed by the leading Tongan intellectual Epeli Hau'ofa in his contribution to this volume, the sea is a wonderful metaphor for the common

inheritance of the whole region and a potent symbol of a common 'Oceanic' identity. By the same token, the canoe is a useful concept that shifts the attention from the geographic isolation of the Pacific islands to the many connections between neighbouring islands, and the existence of regional exchange networks that tended to merge into one another, allowing the diffusion of cultural traits through most parts of the Pacific.

The articles in this volume were first presented at a conference held as part of this 'Vaka Moana' project. The aim of the conference was to resolve, at least conceptually, the contradictions between culture and development in order to achieve development goals, such as access to material goods, welfare, and amenities, without sacrificing traditional values that continue to provide material security and sustain diverse cultural and social identities. In this book the false dichotomy between culture and development is addressed by a great number of leading intellectuals and charismatic Pacific spokespersons, including Epeli Hau'ofa, Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka, Langi Kavaliku, Mala-

ma Meleisea, Marshall Sahlins, and Joeli Veitayaki. UNESCO experts include Richard Engelhardt, Russell Marshall, Edna Tait, and Mali Voi. Most eloquently, Marshall Sahlins expresses the view that culture does not necessarily disappear under the impact of development and modernization, as has been predicted and proclaimed by what he labels the 'Despondency Theory'. Instead, so he shows, in the Pacific, global homogeneity and local differentiation are developing together. The process of what Sahlins characterizes as the 'indigenization of modernity' echoes closely the distinction made by Kavaliku in his call for the modernization of local lifestyles as against homogeneity and a disabling westernization. He articulates this vision in terms of a beautiful image of Pacific countries as *lokua*: small fish living in reef ponds cut off from the sea at tidal lows, but periodically replenished by ocean waters.

The common denominator of the contributions to this interesting volume is that culture plays a much more significant role in national economies and national life in Pacific countries than it

does in most other regions of the world. As a result of the small scale of most Pacific countries and their lack of resources, culture impinges much more directly on their political and economic organization than elsewhere. In addition, every Pacific country hosts a large and vigorous traditional sector. In most cases, approximately 80 per cent of land resources are still held under customary tenure, while the traditional subsistence sector accounts for about 50 per cent of the national gross domestic product. Furthermore, culture also impinges on national politics. Pacific countries are democratic, but since the electorate derives a great proportion of its livelihood from the subsistence sector, matters of custom and tradition carry considerable political clout. Most Pacific countries have therefore also constitutions that assert national legitimacy in terms of their distinctive culture and traditions. One of the implications of this is that the national economies of Pacific countries cannot be adequately encompassed by standard macroeconomic analyses. For that reason, too, the region needs to be clearly distinguished from the larger Asia-Pacific conglomerate in which it is so often submerged. ◀

– Hooper, Antony (ed.), *Culture and Sustainable Development in the Pacific*, Canberra: Asia Pacific Press (2000), xv + 227 pp., ISBN 0731536274 (paperback).

Dr Toon van Meijl is a senior lecturer at the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies, University of Nijmegen. He is also affiliated to the Centre for Pacific and Asian Studies in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. T.vanMeijl@mailbox.kun.nl

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Family, Photography, and Icon:

Vivan Sundaram's Re-take of 'Amrita'

Asian Art >
India

Re-take of 'Amrita' is a recent series of digital photomontages by the Indian contemporary artist Vivan Sundaram. Sundaram's montages reinterpret the late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century photography of his grandfather, Umrao Singh Sher-Gil, to explore personal relationships in the Sher-Gil family and the powerful guise of Amrita Sher-Gil.



From *Re-take of 'Amrita': Digital Photomontages, 2001.* Interior of Sher-Gil flat at Rue de Bassano, Paris; self-portrait of Umrao Singh (1930); Amrita Sher-Gil in party dress (early 1930s); painting of Boris Taslitzky by Amrita Sher-Gil entitled *Portrait of a Young Man* (1930).

By Kristy Phillips

Amrita Sher-Gil, one of India's more renowned modern artists, sits in a velvet-covered chair in her family's opulent Paris apartment, dressed in a white semi-transparent cocktail dress. Her father Umrao Singh Sher-Gil stands with his back to her, arms clasped behind his head in a meditative yogic pose, dressed only in a simple loincloth and staring towards a window with the drapes drawn. An image on the wall hangs between them, it is a portrait painted by Amrita of her lover and colleague in Paris, Boris Taslitzky. These three figures brought together in this photographic tableau evoke a sense of personal dialogue and interplay of intimate spaces. On a broader level, we can also read the image as a metaphor for what Amrita and her work would come to represent for art and for India: a nationalist image, European hybridity, and the interchange between desire and sorrow.

The artistic hand that composes these narratives and completes the genealogical framework is that of Vivan Sundaram, nephew of Amrita Sher-Gil and grandson of Umrao Singh. Sundaram is best known for his installation projects that have addressed issues of commemoration, memory, and death, and constructions of Indian modernity and nationalism. His recent series of digital photomontages entitled *Re-take of 'Amrita'* is an exploration of the intriguing persona of Amrita Sher-Gil. It is also his collaboration with the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century photographs taken by Umrao Singh, an innovator of modern Indian photography, aristocrat, and Indian nationalist. Sundaram's montages include photos from Amrita's life in India and as an art student in Paris in the early 1930s. Today, she is a notable figure in modern Indian art for her articulation of a national artistic voice that negotiated

between European neo-realism and Indian aesthetics, and for her sensitive portrayals of rural women in India.

Through the manipulation of Umrao Singh's photos, Sundaram disassembles time. His *Re-take of 'Amrita'* catalogue (2001) describing the tragic death of Amrita at 29, and the subsequent suicide of her mother, adds a further dimension to his sequencing of life, death, youth, and age – all coexist and thus disarm the nature of the photo as a fixed document. Sundaram employs digital technology to juxtapose and layer photos from the Sher-Gil family archive, and so orchestrate the complexities that he sees in the near-iconic image of Amrita Sher-Gil. In the black and white starkness of the photos the intensity of her personality and hunger as socialite, as narcissist, and as sexual being is striking. Yet *Re-take* is also concerned with the story of Sundaram himself, and his images of his mother, Indira, sister to Amrita, seems to question her place – and by extension, his own – within Amrita's world. One particular photo, in which the two women face each other closely, playing perhaps with the notion of a 'mirror image', suggests confrontation and uneasiness between their identities.

Indeed mirrors are a prominent attribute of this series; they are symbols of introspection and exposure for the Sher-Gil family and for Sundaram personally. Three reflections



From *Re-take of 'Amrita': Digital Photomontages, 2001.* Painting by Amrita Sher-Gil entitled *The Bride's Toilet* (1937); photograph of Amrita Sher-Gil taken at Lake Balaton by Victor Egan (1938).

are played out to great effect in a family photo in which Sundaram as a child, sitting on his grandfather's lap, stares directly from the mirror into which Indira gazes; Sundaram's grandmother as a young woman faces a mirror in the next frame, and in the final reflection, Amrita looks into



From *Re-take of 'Amrita': Digital Photomontages, 2001.* Amrita and Indira Sher-Gil: photograph of Amrita by Karl Khandalavala (1936); photograph of Indira by Umrao Singh (early 1940s).

two mirror images of herself dressed to reflect her dual heritage: Indian and Hungarian. Sundaram and Amrita's gazes bracket the scene and the theatrical staging of the photo reinvents its subjects and time, as if these two intuitive artists can together sense foreboding tragedy and the eventual unraveling of this family unity.

If portrait photography is a practice that is shaped by the social personas of its sitters and photographers, then in manipulating the social accoutrements of Amrita and Umrao's lives, Sundaram separates their personal identities from their aristocratic societal roles and arrives at a deeper understanding of the intimate relations of family. In his exploration of this relationship, he also reinterprets the subjective gaze of Umrao's camera and reveals the dissonance between the protected, Indian femininity that Amrita portrayed in her paintings, and her own lived identity as an energetic, sensual bohemian. A photo juxtaposing a relaxed Amrita with her painting *The Bride's Toilet* presents her personal image as 'alter ego' to the women she sought to represent as an artist; it is a disconnection that Amrita herself was possibly conscious of evoking, her class and her exposure to Europe having presented her with alternatives of self-presentation. As Geeta Kapur has written, Amrita Sher-Gil had to 'act out the paradox of the oriental subject in the body of a woman designated as Eurasian – a hybrid body of unusual beauty' (Kapur 2000:7).

There is a vulnerability to be found in these family photos and in their 're-taking' that renders them as dynamic moments of living history. We are allowed to see the string that Umrao pulls to snap the photograph, the blurred or sometimes abrupt edges of Sundaram's digital tools, and the ghost-like outlines of overlapping images; all create narratives of fluctuating memories that live outside of the photographic paper. This exploration not only exposes intimate ambiguities of the Sher-Gil family's lives and deaths, but also broadly expands the symbolic image of Amrita Sher-Gil in the Indian national imagination. <

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Kristy Phillips

phil8632@umn.edu

Note >

Re-take was on view in Mumbai and Paris earlier this year. This fall, part of the series will be shown in *Routes* at the Steirischer Herbst in Graz (26 October – 22 December), and in Paris at Galerie du Jour agnes b. from 16 November 2002 to 4 January 2003.



From *Re-take of 'Amrita': Digital Photomontages, 2001.* From left to right: Umrao Singh and Vivan Sundaram as a child (1946), Indira Sher-Gil (1933), Marie Antoinette Sher-Gil (1912), Amrita Sher-Gil as Indian and Hungarian (1938/39).

Kenro Izu: *Photographs along the Silk Road*

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in Washington D.C. is currently presenting twenty-five large-format platinum prints by Kenro Izu, the contemporary photographer renowned for his images of sacred sites around the world. The Sackler exhibition focuses upon Buddhist monasteries, pilgrim shrines, and ancient cities along the Silk Road. The photographs record the architecture and landscapes that Izu encountered upon his travels, yet transcend the merely documentary through a remarkable clarity of conceptual focus and exquisite technique. Whether focusing upon the caves at Kizil or the peak of Mount Kailash, Izu seeks to emphasize the spiritual resonance he finds at sites that have been worshiped over millennia.

Asian Art >
General

Exhibition through
5 January 2003
Arthur M. Sackler
Gallery
Smithsonian
Institution
Washington D.C., USA

By Debra Diamond

Kenro Izu has been drawn to ancient stone monuments since his trip to Egypt in 1979 to see and photograph the pyramids. He perceives in such monuments a charged atmosphere. In order to record that palpable aura within his photographs, Izu has developed a photographic practice that emphasizes deliberation and allows an extraordinary range of grey tones. In contrast to most modern photographers who take scores of shots on a single outing, Izu chooses each view and shoots each image only after very careful consideration. Because of the size of the large format negatives (these measure 35,6 x 50,8 cm; the same size as the final prints), he takes only eighty plates on trips that on the average last a month. And since Izu typically makes two exposures of each view, he has only forty opportunities to capture the spiritual essence of the sites he encounters. Izu finds that the process is not a limitation, but rather a means for the expression of an intensely focused aesthetic project.

Izu's experience photographing Lamayuru Monastery illustrates his working method and artistic goals. One morning in 1999, Izu and his guide reached a mountain road above Lamayuru Monastery in Tibet (image below). After unloading his equipment and setting up a large-format camera, a process that takes a full half hour, Izu began his wait for light conditions that would bring out the monastery's spiritual essence. Ten minutes before sunset, a golden light fell upon its stone buildings and the surrounding valley was cast into a deep shadow. It was only at this moment that Izu photographed the monastery. In his composition, light and shadow create wedge-shaped masses of greys and blacks that emphasize the rugged and inhospitable immensity of the mountainous landscape. At its centre, the gentle sprawl of the monastery radiates with an almost ethereal luminescence.

Izu finds his inspiration not only within the spiritual aura of sites, but also in the work of photographers like Samuel Bourne and Francis Frith. In the nineteenth century, these pioneers of early photography travelled from Europe to Asia to document its topography and monuments with large-format view cameras, which can produce images of startling detail and clarity. In his preference for the platinum print, Izu reveals another affinity with nineteenth-century photographers. Platinum prints are photographs made with a process that uses ferrous salts instead of silver salts. For the process, a negative – which must be the same size as the desired image – is exposed to light and contact-printed onto paper coated with a light-sensitive solution of platinum chloride and ferrous salts. The ferric oxalate in the solution reacts with ultra-violet light to take the platinum particles out of the solution and bring them into the fibres of the paper. This creates a pho-

tograph with a subtle depth and a matte surface that unifies tones and surface in a manner quite unlike that of the silver print, in which the image remains within an emulsion layer atop the paper's surface. Platinum prints are particularly valued for their almost unlimited range of grey tones.

On his most recent trip to Tibet, Izu had a profound experience that has committed him even further to the exploration of nature's spiritual power. In order to photograph Mount Kailash, the eternally snow-clad peak sacred to Buddhists, Hindus, and Jains, Izu travelled for six days in a jeep along a rough road. Upon reaching the pilgrimage route that circles the mountain's base and transferring his equipment onto a yak, Izu began his search for the ideal vantage point from which to photograph the peak. On the frigid morning of the third day, Izu woke before dawn and set up his camera. Snow had fallen the night before and a fierce wind had arisen. When dawn came, a shaft of sunlight fell upon the mountain and illuminated the snow gusting about its peak, while the *mani* (jewel) stones piled up by devotees to commemorate

their pilgrimages around the sacred mountain remained shrouded in darkness. By exploiting a tonal range that extends from jet black to brilliant white, Izu creates a remarkable effect of luminosity and captures the dazzling radiance of Kailash. Izu considers the image of Kailash to convey the essence of his project, the evocation of a sacred resonance.

Kenro Izu was born in Osaka, Japan in 1940. Izu started photographing as a tool for documenting specimens of a medical nature in high school, as it was his dream to become a doctor. In 1968 he entered Nihon University, College of Art, Tokyo, where he formally studied photography. After a brief visit to New York City in 1970, Izu decided to reside permanently there. In 1983, he began to use the platinum technique of print making with a custom-made 36 x 51 cm camera. Kenro Izu says: 'Over my 22-year enchantment with stone monuments, I have made photographs in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Mexico, Chile (Easter Island), England, Scotland, France, Burma, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Cambodia. To capture the spirituality I feel in stone remains the density of atmosphere that embraces them, I can think of no other medium than platinum prints made by contact printing with large format negatives.'

Debra Diamond is assistant curator of South and Southeast Asian Art at the Freer and Sackler Galleries (Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.), which together constitute the National Museum of Asian Art. debra.diamond@asia.si.edu

Lamayuru
Monastery, Ladakh,
1999, Platinum Print



Courtesy of the artist

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Asia and the White Cube:

A Project for Revitalizing Asian Art in Museums

Asian Art >
General

In January 2003, the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, California, will reopen at a new location, with new acquisitions. After five years of intensive reorganization of the collections, the new museum promises to provide an alternative to modernist models of viewing Asian art in a museum context.

By Kristy Phillips

To many Asianists in the West, the modern museum stands as an institution that is historically lacking in its ability to present Asian cultures by (re)presenting Asian objects within the guise of master narratives and essentialisms that tend to deny Asia's vast diversity. Too often it seems as though Asian cultures become artefacts in museums – dead or dying victims of dated scholarship and substantialized visions of an Asia that only exists 'over there'. In the last few decades, however, marked changes in museology have taken place in attempts to recast Asia and its objects, and to make it more accessible to communities that increasingly reflect the reality that Asia, in fact, exists globally. The new Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, California, plans to revisit the presentation of Asian art and foster a new model for Asian art museums in its innovative techniques of display, pedagogy, and integration of contemporary art.

The Asian Art Museum has, since the 1960s, been one of North America's largest museums dedicated exclusively to the collection and presentation of Asian art. Thanks to an original core collection donated by industrialist and arts enthusiast Avery Brundage, the Asian Art Museum now owns more than thirteen thousand objects from throughout Asia. In January 2003, its prestige will undoubtedly grow, as the institution will move to an expanded facility in San Francisco's Civic Center. The museum will literally be remaking itself when it moves into a 1917 Beaux-Art style former library in the heart of the city, as part of a USD 160.5 million renovation project. The 'New Asian' will reflect five years of research and detailed collaboration between curators and scholars in their attempts to make Asia more accessible to the public, and to present Asian art as part of contemporary living traditions.

Designed by Italian architect Gae Aulenti, the creative force behind the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, the new museum will enable approximately 15 to 20 per cent of the museum's collection to be on display. Selections from the museum's extensive Chinese collections will include an entire room devoted to Chinese jades, as well as the earliest dated bronze image of the Buddha, dated AD 338, a renowned pilgrimage piece for art historians of Asia.

The galleries will also include never-before-seen objects from the collection, such as a Qing lacquered throne, a nineteenth-century silver-sheathed *howdah* from South Asia, *wayang golek* puppets from Southeast Asia, and a jewelled bronze sculpture of the Buddha from Cambodia (twelfth or thirteenth century). Gallery by gallery, the new institution will feature either new Brundage objects on view or some of the almost one thousand recent acquisitions from the Lloyd Cotsen Japanese Bamboo Basket Collection, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Southeast Asian Art Collection, and other donors.



Basket entitled The Shimmering of Heated Air (Kagerō), Japan, circa 1958, Shōno Shōunsai (1904-1974). Bamboo. The Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Lloyd Cotsen Japanese Basket Collection.

Organization of the galleries

The opportunity to organize a new museum from scratch meant that curators at the Asian Art Museum were able to consolidate the strengths they saw in international museum collections of Asian art, and to innovate new methods of presenting the collections. These conditions also meant that curators could think of the museum as a whole and work together to integrate common themes into the overall organization of the museum.



Throne for a Buddha image, Burma, 1850-1900. Wood, gilt, glass inlay, lacquer, and raised lacquer. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. Gift from Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Southeast Asian Art Collection, R2002.27.1.

Collaboration among curators also occurred in the development of didactic materials, which will employ a standardized nomenclature to provide continuity and clarity for visitors. Thus, the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara will be identified as such in both the South Asian and Chinese galleries, but the name Guanyin will be bracketed in the latter to reflect the transmission of ideas across geographical distances, yet also acknowledge their distinctive meanings and visual forms.

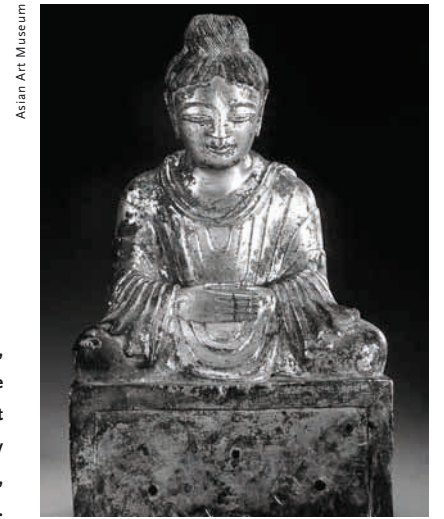
Buddhism and its transmission throughout Asia will act as an introduction to the museum collections, bringing together issues of patronage and trade. Although individual galleries will be organized traditionally by geography, region, and chronology, one primary thread linking all of the galleries will be intercultural trade and exchange, including the movement of religions, artisans, and materials with an emphasis on cross-cultural connections rather than on individual artistic styles. Other sections of the museum will be devoted to specific artistic interactions between cultures, such as the cross-cultural development of ceramics between Persia and China.

Given the community's increasing interest in Islam and its visual culture, curators have also chosen to introduce the museum's collection of pre-Islamic and Islamic art within the overarching themes of trade and transmission. Consisting mainly of bronze-age ceramics, Luristan bronzes, and ceramics, metalwork, and decorative work from the Islamic period, the museum will also articulate the spread of Islam through Asia and explore its related practices and aesthetics in China, Indonesia, and India.

Academic contributions

Asian scholars across the United States were involved in developing labels and organizing the presentation of objects throughout the new Asian Art Museum galleries. A large grant from the National Endowment for Humanities enabled the museum to hold a series of meetings and individual consultations with academic researchers in order to discuss current debates in scholarship and methods of interpretation, and how best to present the advances of academic research for public consumption.

As a result of this collaboration, the educational outlets of the museum, including wall texts, detailed informational cards, video and audio aids, and a resource centre, will aim to provide



Seated Buddha, China, dated 338, late Zhao dynasty, gilt bronze. The Avery Brundage Collection, B60 B1034.

information about exhibits at several different levels of difficulty and depth, depending on the background knowledge and interests of visitors. The objective of this approach is to enable visitors to learn more about objects with each visit to the museum, rather than be confined to wall text information.

Expanding the parameters of Asian art

In the past five years, the Asian Art Museum has been inundated with requests from the community to include more contemporary content in the museum's exhibitions. Meeting this demand has meant that curators have had to educate themselves about contemporary visual cultures, and integrate the work of twentieth- and twenty-first-century artists into programmes that traditionally have barely extended their artistic perspectives into the modern age.

The museum has made efforts in the past to attract travelling contemporary shows such as *At Home and Abroad*, a 1997 exhibition that featured the work of contemporary Filipino artists, or more recently in 2000, *Alienation and Assimilation*, featuring art from South Korea. The new Asian Art Museum plans to step up their mandate of presenting the museum as an institution of living art with programmes like 'Asia Alive', featuring daily interactive performances, artists' demonstrations, and informal concerts. This is a clear deviation from modernist museum models that position visitors as passive viewers and receivers of fixed art historical taxonomies.

As a further statement about the New Asian's innovative approach to display, the museum's first exhibition in October 2003, featuring Korean art, will further enforce this agenda of integrating past narratives of Asian art with contemporary visual culture of the present and future. Two exhibitions of Korean art will run concurrently: one will feature Buddhist and court arts between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, while the second will present contemporary art from South Korean artists with the cooperation of the National Museum of Modern Art in Seoul. The juxtaposition of these two exhibitions will challenge prevailing formulae for the presentation of Asian art, and hopefully raise questions about its conceptual 'location' in time and space. Contemporary art shows will continue to be a regular aspect of the new museum's programming, with future shows presenting the work of the late Thai artist Montien Boonma and San Francisco Chinese artist Li Huayi.

Given the opportunity to refashion itself in the age of the 'post-museum' (Hooper-Greenhill 2000), the new Asian Art Museum's approach to Asian visual culture and pedagogy clearly intends to challenge archetypal narratives that have defined Asia as part of a linear continuum, rooted in an ephemeral, spiritual past. The incorporation of trade and themes of artistic transmission in permanent displays, and the reflection of current scholarship and its mandated integration of contemporary artistic expression perhaps set the stage for a new museum model and for new ways of making Asian art accessible and interpretive to a diverse public, without diluting its many complexities. ◀

– Hooper-Greenhill, Eileen, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, London and New York: Routledge (2000).



Kristy Phillips, MA is a doctoral student studying the art history of South Asia at the University of Minnesota. Her dissertation research focuses on the National Museum of India and constructions of nationalism and Indian identity in the post-Independence era. phil8632@umn.edu

Note >

The author conducted interviews with Emily Sano, Director of the Asian Art Museum, and Forrest McGill, Chief Curator of the Asian Art Museum.

When was Modernism?

When was Modernism? is a compilation of thirteen essays, many of which have been reworked for this volume and which themselves are the result of over two decades of research. Never mind that many essays were published previously (between 1987 and 1997), as there is no denying that the compilation is more than a sum of its parts. *When was Modernism?* constitutes a body of scholarship that reflects Geeta Kapur's deep and sustained examination of and thinking on twentieth-century, South Asian, cultural practices.

Asian Art >
South Asia

By Deepali Dewan

The first set of essays on 'Artists and Artwork' concentrates on the lives and work of Amrita Sher-Gil, Nalini Malani, Arpita Singh, Nasreen Mohamadi, K. G. Subramanyan, and Raja Ravi Varma. In the second, 'Film/Narratives', the cinematic production of Ritwik Ghatak (*Jukti Takko ar Gappo*), Satyajit Ray (*Apu and Devi*), and V. Damle and S. Fattal (*Sant Tukaram*) are examined. Lastly a broad range of artists' works are scrutinized in order to arrive at a complex understanding of Indian cultural practice during the course of the twentieth century. More specifically, Kapur examines the engagement in Indian art with the 'traditional', the 'modern', nationalism, internationalism, and globalization. Kapur's intellectual range is impressive and is exactly what a proper examination of modern Indian art requires. She gracefully and skilfully manoeuvres between Indian artists and non-Indian ones such as Frida Kahlo, Matisse, and Angles Martin. Further, she draws from a broad theoretical background, such as the work of Frederick Jameson, Homi Bhabha, and Raymond Williams – from whose work the title *When was Modernism?* derives. The essays do not follow a chronological or geographical sequence, nor do they limit the discussion of a particular artist or concept in neatly bound chapters. Rather, the essays 'spill into one another', cross-referencing to data from each other, thus reflecting how Kapur's thinking in one essay is informed by her research in another. Together the essays add up to a profound articulation about twentieth-century cultural practice in India by one of the most exceptional thinkers in the field today.

Kapur's title is a provocative question that sets the stage for the book. It alludes to the multiple meanings that the term 'modernism' can signify. On the one hand, Kapur acknowledges, modernism is a term that claims universality yet comes out of the particular context of Western art history. As a specific period in the development of Western art, it nurtured an avant-garde that went against the academic establishment supported by the state. In these terms,

Kapur points out, India has no avant-garde since the rebellious and progressive features of artistic development were channeled into the nationalist cause. So, Kapur asks, 'when, if the avant-garde has been thus blocked or deferred or deviated by what one may call the national cause, was modernism in India art?' (Kapur, p. 300). This question does two things. First, it inherently demands questioning the definition of the term 'modernism,' revealing its eurocentric terms of reference. Second, having thus cleared the space for other possible definitions, it allows one to look for other types of modernisms in the Indian context.

In the Indian context, Kapur argues, 'modernism' forms a double discourse with nationalism (see: p. 288) and the national and the modern are in constant dialogue. Nationalist art, for example, promoted the use of traditional or indigenous motifs. Modernism had constructed a paradoxical view of such motifs – sometimes rendering them as progressive signs, at other times subverting them as conservative and traditional (see: p. 293). Yet, this paradoxical position is a marker of India's particular form of modernism: 'Given India's sustained struggle for independence and the precise mode of its decolonization, its cultural life is alternately conservative and progressive' (p. 341). The relationship between the notion of tradition and nationalism and modernism is a particular feature of cultural development in post-colonial societies. Kapur demonstrates that the nature of this relationship changes with time and in each artist's work. The collection of essays carefully maps out the different articulations in a wide range of artists' works. In the last essays, Kapur begins to trace various disjunctures in contemporary artistic practice in order to name the possible avant-gardes-in-formation in the South Asian context.

The book is dense and partly deliberately so. In several essays, Kapur's rhetorical form follows her subject matter, communicating ideas about an artist's work not only through what she says, but also in the way the words are strung together. Yet this density is also a disadvantage: complex sentences that include references without explanation make it seem Kapur is talking to herself rather than to the larger audience for whom the book is intended. In several instances, extensive footnotes explaining the background of an artist in plain language would better have been included in the main body of text. Nonetheless, battling through the tough parts is a worthwhile enterprise – the product in the end is a rich and complex discussion of twentieth-century cultural practice in South Asia.

When was Modernism? is the most advanced and mature examination of contemporary culture practice in India that I have yet read. Geeta Kapur truly stands out in her field and finds herself virtually alone in terms of the breadth and depth of her scholarship. Outstanding enough that is, to compel Tap-

ati Guha-Thakurta to write that '[Kapur] has been the singular dominant presence in the field - to a point that her writings alone seem to have constituted the whole field of modern Indian art theory and criticism...' (quoted on back cover, from *Biblio*, May-June 2001). *When was Modernism?* is required reading for art historians of South Asia wanting to expand the survey course to the modern period and for art historians who want to expand the modern art survey beyond the 'West'. Furthermore, it should be read by all the humanities and social science disciplines to consider how South Asian cultural practice in the twentieth century can contribute

new insight into the complexities of modernity, nationalism, post-colonialism, and globalization.

- Kapur, Geeta, *When Was Modernism? Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India*, New Delhi: Tulika Press, (2000 & 2001), pp. 454, ISBN: 81-85229-48-1

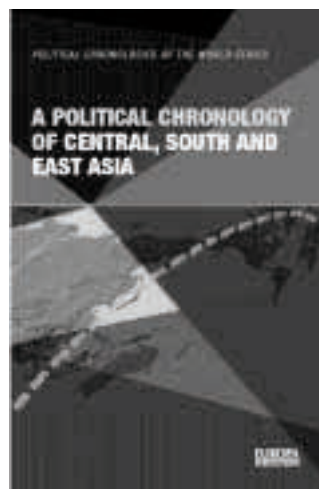
Deepali Dewan, MA received her PhD in South Asian art history from the University of Minnesota. She is Associate Curator of South Asian Art at the Royal Ontario Museum and teaches at University of Toronto. Her research focuses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century visual culture in South Asia. deepalid@rom.on.ca

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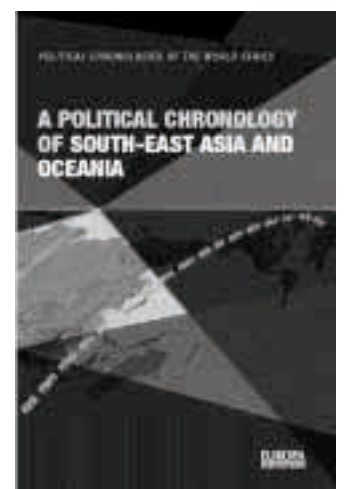
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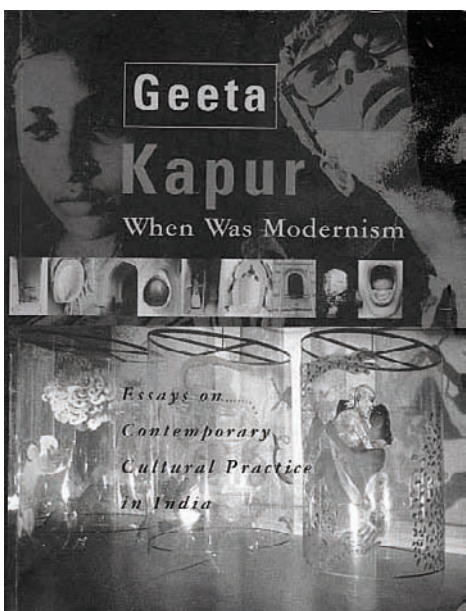
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xs-XL, Expanding Art

Asian Art >
Singapore

26 July - 26 August
2002
Singapore

By John Gee

Sculpture Square is located in two buildings that used to belong to a church - one being the former place of worship itself, now preserved as a historic building. Its entire inner space forms Sculpture Square's main exhibition area, while the adjacent building contains three smaller exhibition spaces.

xs-XL provoked viewers to look at the world in different ways. Liwayway Recapping Co., an anonymous group of artists, suspended thirty open black umbrellas from the ceiling of the former church, seeking, through *After Magritte*, to show how familiar the Belgian painter's images have become, and yet how, when placed in a different context, they can still seem surreal and surprising.

The transportation of artworks from country to country can be a very expensive operation, so that usually only wealthy, well-funded galleries and institutions can afford to organize exhibitions of works from overseas. This can restrict artists in having their works featured internationally and even within their home region. Five artists in the Philippines met the challenge by producing works that could be packed into a single box and when unpacked, could be expanded into a full exhibition. Hence the inspiration for xs-XL (extra-small - EXTRA LARGE), a group show initiated, organized, and co-curated by Sculpture Square in Singapore, which displayed the exhibition from 26 July to 26 August.

Gerardo Tan, whose works have won awards in Australia, the USA, and several Asian countries, mounted gilded picture frames on two gold-painted panels, facing each other, lit and captioned in traditional fashion, but with a small picture at the centre of each frame consisting of formless dust. Tan's friend, the art restorer Helmuth Zotter, collected the dust whilst he was cleaning it from paintings by Canaletto and the Filipino artist Juan Luna. Tan says that he would like to have covered the walls with golden leaf, but it would have been too expensive, 'I wanted to counter-pose something that's worthless with something that's precious.'

Compressed/Decompressed is a series of photographs that can be stored as digital images. Tan took them over two years,

during his travels in the Philippines and abroad. Each photo shows a different number, between 1 and 100, printed or displayed on an object in a way that interested Tan. Some occurred in fairly obvious places, such as on a highway sign, but others were found in more unexpected locations: one is on a washing bowl in a market. For Tan, this variety of contexts shows the pervasive presence of numbers in the human world.

Katya Guerrero, the assistant director of a gallery café in Quezon City, sent over a cheque for 90,000 pesos as a small item that could easily be expanded in the XL transformation. Converted into a pyramidal heap of shiny golden Singapore five-cent coins, it constituted *Interest*, one of Guerrero's two offerings. Beforehand, she wondered whether the

amount of money would change as viewers came by and displayed/added interest.

Sid Hidawa, director of the Cultural Centre of the Philippines Museums and Galleries Division, photographed people wearing fashionable choker necklaces. His work featured these close-ups configured in a great circle, which broadened the sense and expanded the form of chokers as constrictive, confining objects.

Cecilia Avancena works between Europe and Asia, conducting art-related research and lecturing. Her *Gypsy Mood Thermometer* in the XL show recalled a tradition of Roma communities in southern France and Spain in which elders gave empty jars to engaged couples. In them they placed different coloured beans or grains according to their moods and feelings, allowing the overall state of their emotional relations to be revealed and thus improving their chances of a happy marriage. Avancena's work began as a collection of empty jars in which visitors could place coloured glass stones in any way that suited their personal feelings.

There is certainly interest in Singapore



An overview of xs-XL, Expanding Art

Sculpture Square Limited, 2002

in seeing what artists from other countries in the region are producing, and the Philippines has a lively arts scene which is underexposed to the outside world due to economic restrictions. The possibility of taking xs-XL elsewhere is still being explored. While artworks in the show teased, entertained, and provoked Singaporean visitors, they also drew attention to the much-trumpeted era of globalization, and successfully raised the question of future contact between artists who are not from rich countries with audiences in other lands. <

John Gee is a freelance writer who currently lives and works in Singapore. Much of his writing since his arrival there from the UK in 1999 has been for the arts section 'Executive Lifestyle' of The Business Times magazine. kobrom@cyberway.com.sg



It 'May Be' Fantastic Again The Biennale of Sydney

Asian Art >
General

14 May - 14 July
2002
Sydney, Australia,

By Thomas Berghuis

In the early 1970s the Italian-born founding chairman of the Transfield Holding Corporation, Franco Belgiorno-Nettis, personally took part in setting up and financing the Biennale of Sydney. By that time, international recurring exhibitions were scarce and the decision was made to model the Sydney Biennale on the Venice Biennale, the most renowned biennial art show at the time. From the start, Belgiorno-Nettis wanted to have people in Australia share his fascination for modern and contemporary art. His personal statements about visual art often inspire creativity and encourage people to take inspiration from the artworks shown at the Biennale. This year, under the title (*The World May Be*) *Fantastic*, the Biennale seems to continue to share Belgiorno-Nettis' fascination for the arts, although perhaps with a bit more caution.

This year, the Sydney Biennale chose to challenge its assertion of a 'fantastic' world by selectively casting a group of artists whose work could be easily placed in a unique and above all amaz-

(*The World May Be*) *Fantastic* is the title given to the thirteenth Biennale of Sydney that took place at different venues around the city and aimed to capture the imagination of the public who had come to Sydney in large numbers to see this international showcase of artworks and performances by a range of artists, including a small but significant group of artists from Asia. In 1973, the Sydney Biennale was born out of the Transfield Art Prize for contemporary Australian art. It has since grown into an important recurring event for the city of Sydney and its local artist community, which includes a growing number of artists who have come from Asia.

Both photo's:
Cang Xin,
Communication
Series



Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 2002

ing spectacle. Spread over key locations in the central business district, and particularly around the Circular Quay and the harbour, the organization chose for the participating venues not to be too far apart for this year's event. Two years ago, the 2000 Sydney Biennale was turned into a citywide event and included not just the six recurring venues, but also a wide range of supporting exhibitions and satellite events. One wonders why the organization decided to change this concept suddenly by not expanding this year's event into the greater city. It seems that this time, and as a result of opening up only a limited space, one of the main official venues - the Museum of Contemporary Art - was literally packed with artworks, including many poorly projected and installed video

installations, scattered over different floors. After a few hours in the exhibition, having walked past all of the artworks, many visitors seem somewhat relieved when they make it to the exit. As if they reach the conclusion that the world outside may indeed be more fantastic.

Overall, the set-up of the 2002 Biennale bears proof of a lack of inspiration and any type of 'fantastic' curatorial vision. Too much emphasis seems to have been placed on hosting a travelling exhibition, rather than creating an international event that has an impact on the entire city, as one would expect from a Biennale. Perhaps the use of alternative spaces is important when creating an international art event in a large city such as Sydney. It may even offer the

opportunity to expand the representation of artists, and in particular, the representation of artists and their works from outside Europe and North America. The 2002 Sydney Biennale again seems to confirm that a small and powerful group of art mediators work together to circulate an increasingly 'exclusive' set of Asian artists and their works. These mediators give the impression that they want to set up a new quasi-market for these works, which operates entirely on the basis of transnational reappearance. With the New York-based artist Do-Ho Suh representing Korea, the Tokyo-born artist Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba representing Vietnam, and the L.A.-based artists Yutake Sone and Miwa Yanagi together representing Japan, the Asian participation at the Sydney Biennale seems to have been focused on artists who were already well represented elsewhere. Therefore, it seems the Biennale attempts to further boost this year's popular charts, following the charts of the 2001 Venice Biennale, the 2001 Yokohama Triennial, and the Neo-Tokyo exhibition that was held in late 2001 at the MCA in Sydney.

One surprising newcomer to the scene of international recurring art exhibitions was the Beijing-based performance artist Cang Xin. In particular his live performance at the Casula Powerhouse Museum, about an hour's drive from the city centre, had great visual

impact. In this performance, which is part of his ongoing *Communications Series*, Cang Xin was dug into a hole in the ground and had the audience give him objects for him to lick. Later that same week, Cang Xin staged two similar types of performances at the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, but in both cases his proposal to be buried into a hole in the ground was disapproved by the inner city council. Only at Casula was the performance allowed as it was intended. Therefore, despite the suburban museum not being part of the official list of venues for the 2002 Sydney Biennale, these satellite events should at least be mentioned as they show the real importance that a recurring art exhibition has in creating a wide range of platforms for artists to develop their work and interact with local communities throughout the city. Inviting the greater city to participate also means attracting additional financial support from the different local councils. Therefore, by allowing for new spaces to be part of the event, the next Biennale 'may be' fantastic again. <

Thomas J. Berghuis, MA is a graduate of the Department of Sinology, Leiden University. Presently he is a PhD candidate conducting research on experimental art in China at the Department of Art History and Theory, University of Sydney, Australia. info@gatefoundation.nl

Asian Art >
General

Imagined Workshop

21 March 2002
Fukuoka, Japan

Fukuoka has been a pioneer in exhibiting contemporary Asian art. The Second Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, held in the city's Asian Art Museum in March this year, encapsulates a mission to overcome Japan's traditional isolationism from Asia (and contested history when it did engage with Asia) in a radical and culturally inclusive art programme that is helping to redefine ideas about Asian art in the twenty-first century.

By Caroline Turner

Fukuoka, situated on the island of Kyushu and one of the closest Japanese port cities to China and Korea, was historically the target of Kublai Khan's unsuccessful invasion fleets in the thirteenth century. A cosmopolitan, prosperous city today, Fukuoka is still a major entry point from the mainland to Japan. It is the only city in Japan and one of the few in the world with a museum devoted solely to contemporary Asian art.

The Fukuoka Asian Art Museum that officially opened in 1999 is a symbol of the city's historical and continuing links with Asia. The museum is situated on the seventh and eighth floors of the spectacular Hakata Riverain complex of upmarket restaurants and designer label shops. It was built to house the largest collection of contemporary Asian art in the world, developed over twenty-two years by its parent, the Fukuoka Museum, which began a series of contemporary Asian art survey shows in 1979/80. These were renamed the Fukuoka Triennale in 1999. The project was so successful that the new museum was constructed to run the contemporary art shows and to house this collection. The Fukuoka Asian art shows, of which the Triennale is a continuation, were the first such exhibitions in the world and are still exceptional in terms of the number of Asian countries included. This concentration on Asian art was itself unusual in Japan, especially in 1979, as until recent times many Japanese did not consider their country to be part of Asia.

Japanese modern art was dominated by Tokyo and, from the 1950s, made a deliberate link with internationalism and with European and American art, which reinforced Japan's status as a first-world power. While many Japanese museums now display contemporary Asian art, emphasis still lies with international art, especially from Europe and North America. This is true even of the important new contemporary Asian art exhibitions that have emerged in the last decade, such as the Gwangju Biennale in Korea and now the Shanghai Biennale in China and the Yokohama Triennale in Japan, all of them presenting Asian art within an international context. The Fukuoka Museum and its Asian Art Museum, by contrast, have always looked to the Asian region to open up the debate on what contemporary Asian art is within a local context. Fukuoka's inclusion of the work of unknown artists from poorer countries suggests affinities with the outstanding Havana Biennale, which has shown third-world art, including artwork from Asia. The Japan Foundation, which is a sponsor of the Triennale, is now undertaking many exchange programmes with Asia, and the Singapore Art Museum is playing an important role in exhibitions documenting contemporary Asian art from an ASEAN platform. These exhibitions, while emphasizing a process of cross-cultural dialogue, have also sought to provide an alternative to the international Biennale model and to



Kham Tanh
Saliankham,
Miss Lao Contest,
acrylic on canvas,
2001

the dominance of Western perspectives in international art.

From the late seventies onwards, Fukuoka has also extended invitations to artists and curators from all over Asia who have come to Fukuoka through the Art Exchange programme to engage with local citizenry, especially young people and school children. For over twenty years, this programme has provided many opportunities for artists from Asia and has positively affected the development of art practice in poorer countries where artists have few opportunities to exhibit internationally. Fukuoka has also emphasized research into modern Asian art and initiated several groundbreaking research projects, especially on Southeast Asian art. The Fukuoka experiment was thus unique and radical. The radical nature of the project has not received adequate recognition in Japan where the exhibition is sometimes criticized as being less about art than about artists and communities, and at times including work that could be described as folk art. Yet this inclusive approach has been a strength, as has the intensive research within each country to seek out new artists. While the Fukuoka shows have not included minorities within Japan, such as the Ainu indigenous people of Hokkaido or the many Koreans living in Japan, they have introduced the contentious issue of multiculturalism and opened up a new dialogue with Asian neighbours. The Fukuoka exhibitions, for all these reasons, can be viewed as an alternative to the mainstream where often the same artists are included again and again in international exhibitions.

The First Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale in 1999 inaugurated the new Museum and concentrated on high-tech art. This second exhibition of 2002 occurred in times of greater economic stringency and focused instead on what the curators called 'traditional Asian methods' that is the making of objects by hand, indigenous and natural materials, communal and collaborative works and craftwork. Twenty-one coun-

tries were represented by thirty-seven artists/groups. Some were senior artists such as Panya Vijnthanasarn from Thailand, a master of Buddhist temple mural paintings, but many were very young artists who had never exhibited outside their home countries. Some artists were from countries whose artists are almost never seen in international exhibitions, such as Myanmar, Laos, Nepal, Cambodia, and Mongolia.

In the exhibition catalogue, chief curator of the Museum, Masahiro Ushiroshoji, noted what he saw as a shift in Asian art in the late 1990s away from art reflecting problems in society to art about communication and collaboration. Hence the 2002 Triennale's theme 'Kataru Musubu Te', translated as 'narrating hands, connecting hands' or 'Imagined Workshop'. Ushiroshoji wrote that '[i]n an age flooded with digital images, when terrorist acts and wars are broadcast live via satellite around the world, we need to take another hard look at the appeal and potential possessed by art'. He observed that the world is still permeated with hatred, violence, and misunderstanding, and that 'we must work to heal those rifts through an ongoing effort to understand each other's culture, worldview, and values (even though it is no longer possible to naively and simplistically believe that art is able to do so)'. It is not clear whether Ushiroshoji was right, however, when he wrote that the artists were less concerned with social issues. Given that the exhibition opened a few months after 11 September, it is hardly surprising that these events were reflected in the art and to an extent subverted the less political theme of collaboration.

There were artists whose work in the exhibition superbly reflected collaboration and craftsmanship. Nindityo Adipurnomo's refined installation featured traditional Javanese hairpieces handcrafted in collaboration with craftsmen in Java; Alak Roy from Bangladesh exhibited impressive abstract ceramic sculptures; John Frank Sabado used

indigenous tribal materials and symbols from the Cordillera in his paintings, a fascinating reflection on ancient forms of shamanism and spirituality in the Philippines; Pinaree Sanpitak's silk woven textiles were made by ethnic groups in Thailand with threads pulled by the artist to create forms like breasts or stupas.

Political issues, however, were very obvious in the art. Japanese Yanagi Yukinori used banknotes representing an imaginary united Asian currency that were folded into origami cranes by his audience, who had their own faces photographed and transferred by computer to the banknotes. The idea of 'united Asia' connects with his previous works on the Second World War (a theme that is unusual in Japanese art) by evoking the 'Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere'. This also references the way money transforms relationships between nations, and the domination of rich countries over poor countries. Cranes evoke memories of the folded paper cranes that form a symbol for Hiroshima and the effects of the American nuclear attack. Indian artist Satish Sharma's work was, in part, a postmodern take on 11 September, inviting viewers to have themselves photographed dressed in Indian costumes such as turbans, while posing against images of the Taj Mahal or the face of Osama bin Laden. Japanese Ushijima Hitoshi's *Noetic Research Project*, a tank-cum-jungle gym toy, grew out of his sculptures replicating playground equipment, but was inspired by the war in Afghanistan.

Sutee Kunavichayanont's *History Class*, invited visitors to do rubbings from carvings in the lids of old-fashioned wooden desks. These carvings depicted episodes from Thai history such as the 1976 police shooting of students at Thammasat University and the students' pleas to stop further bloodshed. Another compelling work against violence was Vietnamese Tran Luong's installation *Generationnext*, which depicted the contrast between the simple toys

he himself made as a child and the manufactured 'cute' technological robotic and violent mutants, mostly imported from the United States, which serve as toys for his four-year-old son. His video *Flowing* refers to the artist's Buddhist beliefs depicting images of change in Vietnam over forty years, and encompassing personal childhood memories in which the family left Hanoi to avoid American bombing. With the new economic policies, the artist noted, came different challenges – such as increasing pollution and commercialization.

Aisha Khalid from Pakistan questioned aspects of modernization at the Triennale, with ancient miniatures, classical paintings from Persia and the Mughal courts, together with folk art patterns, inspiring her exquisite small works. Dominant in her imagery is a veiled woman. As Salima Hashmi notes in the catalogue, 'the recent events in the region, and her travels to the West, have had a profound effect on Aisha Khalid's work. She chafes against the artificiality of "modernization", the distancing from nature, and its rampant commercialization [as well as] the inability of the dominant culture to see beyond its own perspective'.

A talented young artist and teacher from Vientiane, Laos, Kham Tanh Saliankham (b. 1973) participated in the Fukuoka residential programme at Kyushu University for three months in 2001. It is clear how important this opportunity – the realization of a long-held dream – was to his new understanding of contemporary art. The artist's paintings document customs from his home country, such as a charming wedding scene with villagers. His work also included social commentary as in *Miss Lao Contest* (2001), a painting in which the contestants in traditional costume are depicted against sponsors' logos, such as Shell, Honda, and Suzuki. If the Fukuoka Triennale has a subtext that Japan is part of Asia, or at least must engage with other Asian countries in a spirit of harmony and cooperation, another subtext of the exhibition is undoubtedly the belief that contemporary Asian art discourse should be about building new frameworks for art in the region. This is not about building a 'wall' around the region of Asia, as Paris-based Chinese art critic Hou Hanru observed in arguing against such a concept, or a rejection of international art. Rather, it is a rejection of the domination by Western art ideas (and Western curators) of the international art world. Masahiro Ushiroshoji urges a different model for art today. He wrote in 1999 in the document of the Art Exchange Programme that 'the significance of an Asian art museum lies in the attitude of re-questioning the European centralized value system that dominates the space and system for art'. This is also the potent message of the Fukuoka Triennale. ◀

Dr Caroline Turner was deputy director of the Queensland Art Gallery and project director for the Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in 1993, 1996, and 1999. She is now deputy director of the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National University and is currently directing art projects on Art and Human Rights and Asia-Pacific Museums. caroline.turner@anu.edu.au

The Art Agenda and cultural pages are produced by The Gate Foundation in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Please send all information about activities and events relating to Asian art and cultures to:

The Gate Foundation
Lijnbaansgracht 322-323, 1017 XA
Amsterdam, the Netherlands
T +31-20-620 8057
F +31-20-639 0762
info@gatefoundation.nl
www.gatefoundation.nl

Australia

Queensland Art Gallery
Melbourne Street, South Brisbane
Queensland, 4101
gallery@qag.qld.gov.au
www.qag.qld.gov.au

Until 23 January 2003

Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art
The fourth Asia-Pacific Triennial, or APT 2002 must be seen as one of the important shows in the world, featuring modern and contemporary art from the Asia-Pacific region. Featuring work by a wide range of established and emerging artists from the region, including Nam-June Paik (Korea/Japan), Yayoi Kusama (Japan/USA), Lee U-fan (Korea/Japan), Heri Dono (Indonesia), Nalini Malani (India), Song Dong (China), Suh Do-Ho (Korea/USA), Michael Ming Hong Lin (Japan/Taiwan), Jose Legapasi (Philippines), and Lisa Reihana (New Zealand). Throughout the first three months between September and November, the APT will feature several workshops at the Queensland Art Gallery, as well as panel discussions with artists, and lectures on Asian Art.

Canada

Vancouver Art Gallery
750 Hornby Street
Vancouver, BC
T +1-604-662 4700
F +1-604-682 1086
www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

5 October 2002 – 12 January 2003

Won Ju Lim
Solo exhibition of the Korean-born artist Won Ju Lim, currently living and working in Los Angeles. Since the mid-1990's Won Ju Lim has been creating mixed media works, often featuring sculptures, which are based upon three-dimensional modular architectural plans and made

out of plexiglass, and foam core board, placed together in a maze of urban structures.

China

Shanghai BizArt Center
758 Julu Road
Building 5, 3rd Floor
T +86-21-6247 0484
www.biz-art.com

BizArt, based in Shanghai, focuses on organizing and promoting art events in China and abroad, including exhibitions, workshops, and artist in residency programmes. This organization also publishes a wide range of articles on modern and contemporary art.

October – November 2002

N+N Corsino

Having recently featured works by young British artists from the Decima gallery in London, BizArt will continue its support of artistic exchange in this show which features a video installation by N&N. These two choreographers and video makers from France created it from impressions of their numerous travels to Shanghai.

Courtyard Gallery

95 Donghuanmen Dajie
Dongcheng
Beijing, 100001
info@courtyard-gallery.com
www.courtyard-gallery.com

27 October 2002 – December 2002

Guo Jin and Guo Wei New Works Exhibition
The second duo exhibition at the Courtyard Gallery of the Sichuan-based brothers Guo Jin (b. 1964) and Guo Wei (b. 1960). Both artists graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts in Chongqing.



Cemeti Art House

Anusapati preparing his work entitled 'Tied' for his solo exhibition 'Conversation' in Cemeti Art House, October 2002

December 2002 – January 2003

Group Exhibition - New Paintings
Group exhibition featuring new works by Anwar (b. 1962), Fang He (b. 1971), and He Yunchang (b. 1967).

March 2003

Wang Shugang Solo Exhibition
First solo exhibition of the Chinese-born German sculptor Wang Shugang (b. 1960), who graduated in 1980 from the Sculpture Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, and is currently living and working in Beijing as an independent artist.

Guangdong Museum of Art

Er-Sha Island
Guangzhou
gztrienial@hotmail.com
www.gd-art.com

18 November 2002 – 19 January 2003

The First Guangzhou Triennial
Reinterpretation - A Decade of Experimental Chinese Art (1990-2000)
The Guangdong Museum of Art will host the First Guangzhou Triennial, entitled Reinterpretation - A Decade of Experimental Chinese Art (1990-2000). The Triennial aims to offer the visitor a comprehensive survey of Chinese experimental art in the last decade of the twentieth century. The chief curator of the Triennial is Wu Hung, who has been working over the past two years in setting up this important event, with the help of a curatorial committee, consisting of Wang Huangsheng, Huang Zhuan, Feng Boyi, and Zang Zhen.

12 October 2002 – 2 February 2003

China - Tradition and Modern

Featuring a large collection of artefacts and artworks from the collection of Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation and from the permanent collection of the Chinese National Museum in Beijing, China, the exhibition presents an overview of the history of Chinese art, including metal works, ceramics, porcelain, painting, graphic works, and photographs. In addition to pre-modern and modern works, the exhibition also features works by contemporary Chinese artists, borrowed from the private collection of the Swiss art collector Dr Uli-Sigg, and including works by Xu Bing, Qiu Shihua, Song Dong and Yin Xiuzhen, among others.

Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst (Museum of East Asian Art)

Lansstraße 8
Berlin, Dahlem, D-14195
dgok@dgok.de
www.dgok.de
www.smpk.de

Until 2 February 2003

Landscapes in Modern Chinese Painting
Opening in September the exhibition features a large collection of modern Chinese landscape paintings.

France

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain
261 Blvd Raspail
Paris
T +33-1-4218 5651
F +33-1-4218 5652
www.fondation.cartier.fr

20 November 2002 – January 2003

Contemporary Shanghai
Overview exhibition focussing on contemporary visual culture in Shanghai and featuring works by several contemporary artists, living and working in Shanghai.

India

Institute of Informatics & Communication
South Campus, Delhi University
New Delhi, 110021
euidia.iic.ac.in/index.php

13 – 14 December 2002

Art, Nationalism, and Eastern Civilisation

The University of Delhi, Institute of Informatics and Communication, will conduct a two-day conference on art in Asia. The conference was first initiated by the European Union and is co-sponsored by the Japan Foundation. It marks the 100th anniversary of Okakura Tenshin's visit to India and the fiftieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Japan. The stated objective of the seminar is to use this occasion to re-examine the ideas of Okakura and his contemporaries, focusing specifically on art, modernity, the nation-state, 'eastern civilization' and Pan-Asianism, and to use this opportunity to reconsider broader issues in the formation of an Asian identity as well as in the relations between the countries of Asia, in particular focusing on India, Japan, and China.

Indonesia

Cemeti Art House
Jalan DI. Panjaitan 41
Yogyakarta, 55143
cemeti@indosat.net.id
www.cemetiarthouse.com

3 – 31 October 2002

Anusapati
Solo exhibition by the Indonesian installation artist Anusapati. Born 1957 in Solo Anusapati finished his Master's Degree at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. He is currently one of the senior teachers at the Post Graduate Department of the Arts Institute of Indonesia in Yogyakarta. The exhibition at the



Collection: Shell Companies in Singapore

Nanyang 1950-65: Passage to Singaporean Art.
Cheong Soo Pieng, 'Iban Girls', 1953.

Cemeti Art House features several site-specific and previously made installations, featuring an artistic dialogue with the materials that surround the artist's daily life.

Japan

Fukuoka Asian Art Museum

Hakata Riverain 7-8F
3-1 Shimokawabata-machi
Hakata-ku
Fukuoka City, 81 0027

Until 24 December 2002

Chinese Stories

Exhibition featuring the work of artists who share a common Chinese identity background and live in different parts of China, Japan, Southeast Asia, Australia, Europe, and the United States. The artists featured in the exhibition include Amanda Heng, Xu Bing, Tan Chin Kuan, Tang Da Wu, Cai Guoqiang, Wong Hoy-cheong, Eng Hwee Chu, and Lim Poh Teck.

7 November 2002 – 14 January 2003

Nanyang 1950 – 1965: Passage to Singaporean Art

Exhibition featuring modern art from Singapore produced during the time that Singapore was struggling for their independence from the United Kingdom and from Malaysia. The exhibition features a series of woodblock prints alongside of other media.

21 November 2002 – 2 February 2003

Korean Visual Culture Today

Exhibition featuring a wide range of works by artists from Korea and other examples of present-day visual culture in Korea. The work shows the impact of rapid economic development and major social changes, while at the same time, revealing a strong cultural identity based upon Confucian norms and values.

30 November – 24 December 2002

Winds of Artist in Residence

Exhibition featuring works by artists who have been invited by the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum for the museum's residency programme, including artists featured at the 2nd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale earlier this year. (Also see: the review by Caroline Turner)

Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery

3-20-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 163-1403
T +81-3-5353 0756
F +81-3-5353 0776
www.operacity.jp

7 December 2002 – 2 March 2003

Under Construction

Between late 2001 and late 2002, the Japan Foundation has sponsored the 'Under Construction Project', a series of collaborative curatorial projects which involves a group of eight young curators from seven different countries in Asia working together to set up seven local exhibitions in Japan, Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Thailand, and China. On 7 December 2002, the project will culminate in a final exhibition held at the Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery that aims to reconstruct the previous local exhibitions and highlight the various viewpoints on contemporary art in Asia. (Also see: the feature on the Japan Foundation in the 'Asian Art Online' section)

Korea

Busan Metropolitan Art Museum

1413 Woo-dong, Haeundae-gu
Busan, 612-020
T +81-51-7404212
F +81-51-7404280-1

Until 17 November 2002

Busan Biennale 2002

Culture meets Culture

From 15 September 2002, and coinciding with the Asian Games until mid-November, the Busan Biennale was held at the Busan Metropolitan Art Museum and other venues in and around the city of Busan, Korea. Under the artistic directors, Kim Airyung, Kim Kwang-woo and Song Kuen-bae, a team of three international commissioners, Kim Levin (USA), Catherine Franclin (France), and Akira Tatehata (Japan) have set up three large events. The Contemporary Art Exhibition, featuring works by a large group of international artists from

Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, and South America, was held at the Busan Metropolitan Museum. From 30 September to 27 October the Sea Art Festival featured site-specific installation works and performances by several international artists, including Joep van Lieshout from the Netherlands. Finally the Busan Sculpture Project will feature public sculptures by national and international artists at the Busan Stadium and at the Olympic Park. Works by a wide range of artists from Asia will be featured in the events, including Navin Rawanchaikul (Thailand), Subodh Gupta (India), and the late Chen Zhen (China/France), among others.

National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea
San 58-1, Makgye-dong
Gwacheon-si
Seoul, Gwacheon-do, 427-701
T +82-2-2188 6000
F +82-2-2188 6123
www.moca.go.kr

14 November 2002 – 19 January 2003
Origin of Shape
The last in a series of exhibitions organized by the National Museum of Contemporary Art that examines the historical discourse of contemporary Korean art, this exhibition focuses on the Monochrome movement in Korea.

Seoul Museum of Art
37 Seodaemun-dong
Jongno-gu, Seoul, 110-062
T +82-2-2124 8933
http://seoulmoa.org

Previously called the Seoul Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Seoul Museum of Art opened on 17 May 2002 at a new location on the former site of the old Supreme Court in Jeong Dong, centre of Seoul.

Until 24 November 2002
Seoul International Media Art Biennale Luna's Flow
Sponsored by the Seoul Metropolitan Government, the Seoul International Media Art Biennale will be held at the Seoul Metropolitan Art Museum and on the streets along the Toksu Palace and City Hall Palace. Curated by Maire de Bugerolle, Michal Chen, Huang Du, Gregor Jansen, Kim Machan, Gunalan, and Azumaya Takashi, the biennale features 200 media artworks by 35 Korean

and 42 foreign artists, as well as 50 Web artists who are also participating in the exhibition.

5 – 24 December 2002
Seoul Art Exhibition
In addition to showing its large permanent collection, the Seoul Museum of Art will be hosting a variety of special, project-based, local and international exhibitions, including the Seoul Art Exhibition, which will feature works by local artists. Further details are to be announced. For more information, also visit: <http://english.metro.seoul.kr>

Philippines
Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP)
CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard
Passay City, Metro Manila
ccp@culturalcenter.gov.ph

Founded in 1969 the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) encompasses two concert halls, a theatre, library, museum, and several art galleries. The art collection of the CCP arts collection features contemporary artworks from the 1960s to the 1980s, as well as a collection of indigenous and colonial cultures in the Philippines. The main gallery holds about four exhibitions each year, with the smaller galleries featuring an annual total of around forty exhibitions.

24 October – 25 November 2002
Curators Choice: Bulwagang Fernando Amarsolo
Exhibition featuring site-specific works by the Philippino artist Eduardo Enriquez in collaboration with a group of artists, which explores the relationship between the artist practitioner and the curatorial practice.

Singapore
Sculpture Square
155 Middle Road
Singapore, 188977
arts@sculpturesq.com.sg
www.sculpturesq.com.sg

9 October – 1 December 2002
Blindsight: Infringe the Obvious
Exhibition organized to celebrate the third anniversary of the Sculpture Square gallery, featuring works by four young and emerging artists from Singapore. For the exhibition, the artists Jeremy Hiah, Claire Lim, Benjamin Pua, and Tan Wee Literacy have taken Sculpture Square as

the site for creating a series of site-specific installations, and focussing around the theme 'Blindsight' in social life and in the changing relationship between mankind and the physical environment.

28 February – 30 March 2003
Artists Residency Exhibition
Exhibition open to individual artists or collectives who usually live and work in Singapore and other parts of Asia. The residency programme enables artists to develop their skills and practice working directly with gallery space in creating their works. Proposals for projects may include work that pertains to cultural, social and conceptual issues that the artist can address in a site-specific work made during the course of the residency.



Collection: See Yee Wah

Nanyang 1950-1965: Passage to Singaporean Art. See Cheen Tee, 'Next Generation', 1955.

Singapore Art Museum
71 Bras Basah Road
Singapore, 189555
T +65-332 3222
F +65-334 7919
www.nhb.gov.sg/SAM/sam.shtml

Until 1 December 2002
A Picture Paints A Thousand Words
Featuring a special selection from the Singapore Art Museum Permanent Collection, the exhibition aims to create awareness about the context within which art is created. The permanent collection encompasses a wide range of modern and contemporary artworks by artists from Singapore and other regions in Asia. The exhibition A Picture Paints A Thousand Words focuses on the public by including a wide range of public education programmes that allows the visitor to interact with the works on display and come up with ways of interpreting the works within a wide range of contexts.

Taiwan
Taipei Fine Arts Museum
181 Chung Shan North Road, Section 3
Taipei, 104
tfam-1@ms2.hinet.net
www.tfam.gov.tw

29 November 2002 – 2 March 2003
2002 Taipei Biennial
Great Theatre of the World
The theme of the 2002 Taipei Biennial, 'Great Theatre of the World' is inspired by the title of a famous play by Pedro Calderon de la Barca (1600-1681) which features the fate of mankind through its role in a play within a play. Taken as a metaphor for this important international recurring exhibition of contemporary art, the notion of 'play' in the museum is related to its role as a 'stage' for the art exhibition as a living experience. The final list of participating artists will have been announced in October this year and the exhibition promises to bring a range of artists from different regions in the world, including Asia.

Thailand

Thavibu Gallery
Silom Galleria Building, 3rd Floor
Suite 308, 919/1 Silom Rd.
Bangkok 10500
T +66-2-266 5454
F +66-2-266 5455

16 November – 18 December 2002
Burmese Days
Exhibition featuring works by the Burmese artists Aung Kyaw Htet and Myint Swe. Born in 1965 in Myaungmya, Aung Kyaw Htet studied at the Fine Art School in Rangoon. His detailed paintings feature portraits of Buddhist monks. Myint Swe was born in 1956 in the Rakhine State in the western part of Burma. From 1975 to 1977 he studied at the State School of Fine Arts in Rangoon continuing his studies at the Rangoon University, where he graduated in 1981. His paintings depict daily life in the city in an expressionist style.

United Kingdom

Liverpool Biennial
PO Box 1200
Liverpool, L69 1XB
info@biennial.org.uk
www.biennial.org.uk

Until 24 November 2002
Liverpool Biennale 2002
Liverpool is currently the only city in the UK to host a Biennial of international contemporary art. Commenced in 1999, this second Biennial was delayed one year to coincide with the opening of the FACT arts centre and the reopening of the Walker Art Gallery, two of the main venues for this year's event, together with the Tate Liverpool, the Foundation for Art and Creative Technology, and a wide range of smaller galleries in the centre of the city. Led by Lewis Biggs, the Director of the Liverpool Biennial, a team of curators from Tate Liverpool, FACT and Bluecoat art centre have put together an International 2002 platform which features the work of many international artists, including several from Asia, such as Chiho Aoshima, Tatsuro Bashi, and Michael Ming Hong Lin.

United States

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
Jefferson Drive at 12th Street, SW
1050 Independence Avenue, SW.
P.O. Box 37012, MRC 707
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012
web@asia.si.edu
www.asia.si.edu

Until 5 January 2003
Sacred Sites: Silk Road Photographs by Kenro Izu
Coinciding with the 'Smithsonian Folklife Festival's celebration of the ancient Silk Road trading route', the exhibition Sacred Sites at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery will feature twenty-five large format platinum prints by the renowned New York photographer Kenro Izu (b. 1949). The photographs can also be viewed at an online exhibition: www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/kenro/default.htm

Until 19 January 2003
Masterful Illusions: Japanese Prints from the Anne van Biema Collection
Held at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery the exhibition features a total of 138 prints from the Anne van Biema Collection, including colourful woodblock prints that had previously circulated in the urban Japanese marketplaces of the Edo period (1615 – 1868), and was later discovered by collectors from Europe and the United States.



Schoeni Gallery

Lin-Hai 'Radiant Sunshine Series No. 9 – Red Sun', 2002. Oil on Canvas, 140 x 180 cm.

Until 30 March 2003
Palaces and Pavilions: Grand Architecture in Chinese Painting
Exhibition featuring twenty-six paintings from the second to the nineteenth century, which evolve around three broad themes: historical palaces and the daily lives of women at the court, imaginary dwellings of deities and immortals, and private pavilions commissioned by public official and the wealthy Chinese elite.

10 November 2002 – 9 March 2003
The Sensuous and the Sacred: Chola Bronzes from South India
Exhibition featuring numerous portable bronze sculptures produced between the ninth and thirteenth centuries in South India during the rule of the Chola dynasty. This exhibition, which includes the Freer's famous Sembayan Mahadevi as goddess Parvati, brings together 60 bronzes that have been drawn from important public and private collections in the United States and Europe.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York, 10028-0198
T +1-212-535 7710
www.metmuseum.org

Until 9 February 2003
Cultivated Landscapes: Reflections of Nature in Chinese Painting
With Selections from the Collection of Marie-Hélène and Guy Weil
A major exhibition that traces 1000 years of landscape painting in China, featuring over seventy works drawn from the Metropolitan Museum's permanent collection, including important paintings by Chinese master painters from the Five Dynasties period (907 – 960) to the Ming (1368 – 1644) and Qing (1644 – 1911) dynasties.

Seattle Art Museum
100 University Street
Seattle, WA 98101-2902
&
Seattle Asian Art Museum
Volunteer Park, 1400 East Prospect St.
Seattle, WA 98112-3303
T +1-204-654 3255
www.seattleartmuseum.org

Until 1 December 2002
Suh Do-Ho
Part of the celebration events surrounding the Anne Gerber Biennial series at the Seattle Art Museum, the 2002 Biennial features the first large survey exhibition of work by the young emerging artists Suh Do-Hoh. Born 1962 in Seoul, Korea, Suh now lives and works in New York. Over the past two years, he has become an internationally renowned artist whose work has been featured at the 2001 Venice Biennale, the Biennale of Sydney 2002, and the Asia Pacific Triennial 2002 in Brisbane.

21 December 2002 – 16 March 2003
Rabbit, Cat, and Horse: Endearing Creatures in Japanese Art
Exhibition featuring a range of traditional, modern, and contemporary Japanese artworks that explore images of animals. Approximately seventy objects including paintings, textiles, ceramics, lacquerware, and metal-works will feature animals that have inspired Japanese folklore and popular culture from the fourth century to the present. For the exhibition, the Seattle-based Japanese artist Maki Tamura will create a large site-specific installation of 'Hello Kitty', a popular icon of Japanese pop culture.

10 April – 15 June 2003
An Enduring Vision: seventeenth- to twentieth-Century Japanese Painting from the Gitter-Yelen Collection
More than 100 paintings, folded screens and albums from the Edo period (1615 – 1868) and the Meiji period (1868 – 1912) will feature at this exhibition. The Gitter Yelen collection is considered to be one of the four major private collections in the United States of Japanese painting from the Edo and Meiji periods, and provides an exclusive and comprehensive view of paintings from major schools in Japan, including Zenga, Manga, Maruyama-Shijo, Ukiyo-e, and the Eccentrics.

Stem Cell Research in China:

An Intertwinement of International Finances, Ambition, and Bioethics

Report >
China

Stem cell research promises remedies to widespread diseases ranging from diabetes to paralysis. 'Stem cell' is a term used to refer to a range of cells that have the ability to divide into specialized body cells, such as blood cells or new tissue. By studying the processes in which stem cells grow and differentiate, biologists study the causes of many diseases, and hope to use them for therapeutic uses in the repair of damaged tissue and organs for a wide range of currently incurable disorders.

By Margaret Sleeboom

At present, stem cells from embryos (or 'totipotent' stem cells) appear to have the greatest potential to be developed into the widest range of tissues. These embryonic stem cells have been the focus of bioethical discussion in Asia and Western countries, mainly because the use of their embryonic source is controversial. In the future, however, adult stem cells ('pluripotent' stem cells) taken from bone marrow, the umbilical cord, and placentas may be equally useful. Pei Xuetao, director of Stem Cell Research at Beijing's Military Medical College, at the Conference on Stem Cell Research in Beijing (23–27 May 2002, Xiaotangshan) claimed that 128.4 million persons can be helped by stem cell research annually, thereby referring to sufferers from Alzheimer's, cancer, and Parkinson's. He argued that pluripotent stem cells (i.e. specialized, adult stem cells) can be made to function as totipotent embryonic stem cells by using a 'cocktail stem cell strategy'.¹ Nevertheless, for now, scientists insist on the need to create embryos for research.

The idea of creating embryos for scientific experiments has appalled people of various walks of life, and governments have taken measures against the practice.

Thus, President Bush in 2001 decided to supply public money for stem cell research, but limited it to research on materials from 60 stem lines already in use by laboratories. According to conservatives, drawing cells from embryos equates to murder. Bush justified his decision by arguing that the decision of life and death had already been made in case of the existing embryo stem cell lines. On the one hand, strong supporters of stem cell research, such as Nancy Reagan, tried to get Bush to use public money to finance it, reportedly because her sympathies lie with Alzheimer patients such as her husband. On the other hand, Pope John Paul II urged President Bush to put a ban on embryo use altogether, comparing it to a 'cannibalization of embryos'. Generally, Christian parties regard embryos not as just a lump of cells but as an emerging individual and scientific or economic interests cannot legitimize embryo use.

'[w]ho ever destroys life in order to save life, faces life at a greater distance'

In China the situation is not very different. But what arguments are used for and against it in Chinese debates on embryonic stem cell research (ESR)? At the Conference on Stem Cell Research in May 2002, a German scholar of Asian Studies, Ole Doering (Hamburg University), caused commotion when he spoke about the bioethical and legal dimensions of stem cell research in Germany. He had probably aimed to sensitize his mostly Chinese audience to bioethical issues linked to ESR in general. Quoting a famous Tang physician, Sun Simiao, by the phrase '[w]ho ever destroys life in order to save life, faces life at a greater distance', he related that heated debates on ESR in Germany include discussions on the abuse of human values and Nazi experiments on human subjects. In April 2002 it was decided that German law would allow the importation of stem cells from

Israel (which derive from surplus embryos, after IVF), to be implemented on 1 June 2002. Many opponents have expressed discomfort with the idea that descendants of the Nazi Germany now are using stem cells that belong to descendants of Jewish victims in Israel. Several motions were submitted against it, but fears that Germany would fall behind in the technology competition prompted the acceptance of the new law in parliament.

During question time, a German American, Michael Andreeff (University of Texas, Anderson Cancer Centre) questioned the relevance of German law for the Chinese situation. He wondered what the Chinese have to do with German scruples about their Nazi past and accused Doering of preaching to the Chinese. The audience stood up and applauded Andreeff, making it the first time a question was applauded during the conference. The scientists in the audience were not interested in the ethical dimension of their research, especially when suspecting imperialist condescension. Naturally, researchers that have invested much energy and family fortune into their careers are not likely to jeopardize their future by including bioethical considerations into their research practice. Competition is fierce, and wages are low compared to that of scientists abroad, which is why another speaker, Helmut Kaiser (Research and Developments on the Stem Cells Industries), who was enthused about China's cheap intellectual labour, excellent equipment, and positive government support.

Discussing the human value of the embryo at Zhongli (Taiwan)

According to *China Daily*, 28 February 2001 stem cell research has become a hot item among scientists in China. Li Lingsong, director of the Stem Cell Research Centre established in January 2001, is one of a handful of Chinese pioneers of ESR. Shortly after a US breakthrough, a Chinese team led by Xu Ling claimed in a paper published in the *Zhongshan Medical School Journal* that they too had succeeded in isolating and growing human embryonic stem cells. A few other medical institutes across the country also initiated research in this field, either independently or in collaboration with foreign counterparts. In October 2000, Li's centre established a library of human adult stem cells with which to research the developing processes both from embryonic to adult stem cells and from adult stem cells to specialized cells. He hopes to attract big money, but fears that the priority of companies will be that of making quick money and not science.

At present, embryonic stem cell lines have been developed from two sources: from the inner cell mass of human embryos at the blastocyst stage at which a hollow sphere of cells forms when a fertilized egg begins to divide and specialize; and from foetal tissue obtained from terminated pregnancies. But how and for what 'good' reasons do we experiment on life? At the Conference on Bioethical Issues in Stem Cell Research at Zhongli University (24–28 June 2002, Taiwan), one physician remarked that technology forces us to define the time of brain-death so we can perform organ transplantation; now, he maintained, technology forces us to determine the time of becoming a person, 'ensoulment', in order to conduct ESR. Daniel Fu-Chang Tsai, a physician at the National Taiwan University and an advocate of Confucian humaneness, takes a pragmatic approach. He believes that the use of the embryo in ESR depends on the moral status of the embryo. Approximately two-thirds of the fertilized ovals are lost, he argues, and we do not save or mourn their miscarriage. Furthermore, there is not much objection against IVF, the morning-after pill, or abortion before the fourteenth week of pregnancy.

Regulation versus the freedom of ESR

It seems that before we become persons, we do not have human rights. But Derrick Kit-sing Au, chief of service of the Department of Rehabilitation at Kowloon Hospital (Hong Kong) believes that this form of 'personal' incapacity actually requires extra protection, not less, especially as no one can speak for embryos. He asks why the human potential of the embryo is valued less compared to the potential of ESR. Fur-

thermore, Chen Yingling from the National Zhongzheng University (Taiwan) wants to protect the blastocyst's (120 cells) potential human rights against arbitrary abortion, arguing that 'there are various kinds of freedom: freedom of research, freedom of reproduction, freedom from illness, and freedom of medical practice and application'. Chen believes that one could argue that the embryo has legal interests: it is a member of *homo sapiens*; its DNA is identical; it has human rights after its division has become advanced; and, it is a potential human (as genetic unity) as it is a fluent process of development.

...before we become persons, we do not have human rights.

Chen Yingling also emphasized that the bioethical debate is heavily influenced by the difference in national regulations for ESR. For instance, Britain takes a liberal attitude, as Tony Blair turned it into a free haven for stem cell research. Similarly, Alex Capron (University of Southern California) fears that if the withdrawal of federal funding for stem cell research continues, private companies will acquire a monopoly on the research. Therefore, most research gets patented or is kept secret. Furthermore, basic research loses out, as it is usually funded by federal money. Finally, the Chinese research environment allows ESR in China to thrive. Li's group has found a way to introduce genetic material into a stem cell, which could cause it to grow into a full organ that would then be transplanted into a human body. So far Li has successfully caused human stem cells to produce a glandular structure that secretes chemicals useful in treating diabetes and Parkinson's disease. Chinese scientists have successfully transplanted healthy (embryonic) nerve stem cells into a patient's brain to replace the deteriorated ones (Xinhua-net, Zhengzhou, 31 August). They have cloned pulsating heart cells from human embryo stem cells (Reuters, 3 September 2001), and succeeded in curing a mouse of lower paralysis four months after implanting nerve stem cells from a human embryo (Xinhua-net, Harbin, 5 December 2001).²

Bioethical debate in the PRC

It is clear that a better understanding of our bioethical priorities is needed. In Mainland China a beginning has been made by the National Bioethical Committees and by research centres at various institutions of higher education such as the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences (CAMS) and the Centre for Applied Ethics located in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Ethical issues in stem cell research seem to involve arguments both for and against its continuation. Obvious arguments for continuation include its promise of relief from a large range of diseases, and an extension of the human lifespan. Furthermore, it will be able to facilitate transplantation or even replace transplantation of organs by stem cell replacement. Another argument 'for' is the fact that it makes the use of animal stem cell research largely unnecessary. Others, however, such as Yang Huanming, director of the Beijing Genomics Institute, recommend the use of animals to grow human body parts as bioethical to humans. Arguments that oppose ESR object to the creation of embryos especially for stem cell research. In case of the use of aborted embryos and spare embryos (left over after IVF treatment), there are worries about the observation of informed consent proceedings. Apart from medical safety issues, there are also objections to the use of financial resources for expensive medical technologies, while many diseases could be prevented and cured with simple investment in water, vaccines, and condoms. More abstract issues, but certainly not less important, concern the question of the value of embryonic life: what it means to people and how it is experienced in different cultural and economic environments. ◀

Dr Margaret Sleeboom is a research fellow at the IIAS and is currently setting up the research programme 'Genomics in Asia'. m.sleeboom.let.leidenuniv.nl

notes >

- 1 However, in the long run the use of adult stem cells will probably coexist with that of embryonic stem cells for several reasons. The occurrence of teratomas (tumours of heterogeneous tissues) in case of the use of embryonic stem cells is high; and the occurrence of immune problems in case of the manipulation of bone marrow cells of the person in question is lower.
- 2 For more information on the scientific work and achievements of Chinese researchers in the life sciences, see www.Eastday.com.cn.

> IAS Research Programmes

Islam in Indonesia: the Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century

This 4-year cooperative research programme aims at studying and documenting important changes, which occurred in religious - especially Muslim - authority in Indonesia during the past century and which have contributed significantly to the shaping of the present nationhood. Its main donor is the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW); co-sponsors are: ISIM, CNWS, and the IIAS. The programme furthermore cooperates with several research institutions in Indonesia, such as the Islamic State Universities (IAIN), Jakarta.

Programme coordinators:

Dr Nico Kaptein, Josine Stremmelhaar
(ias@let.leidenuniv.nl)

Research fellows:

Dr Michael Laffan, Dr Johan Meuleman, Dr Andi Faisal Bakti

PhD students:

Jajat Burhanudin, Noorhaidi, Ahmad Syafi'i Mufid, Moch Nur Ichwan, Arief Subhan, Muhammad Dahlan
www.ias.nl/ias/research/dissemination/

The Syntax of the Languages of Southern China

This research programme aims at describing and analyzing a number of syntactic phenomena in six languages spoken in Southern China comparing them in order to contribute to further development of the theory of language and the human language capacity. The research focus is on classifiers, modifiers and possessors in the nominal domain; and on aspectual particles, resultatives and sentence-final particles in the sentential/verbal domain. The languages involved in the project are Yue, Wu and Mandarin (all Sinitic) as well as the non-Sinitic Zhuang (Zhuang-Tai), Miao (Hmong-Mien) and Wa (Mon-Khmer). The project is co-funded by the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and Leiden University (main sponsors), and the IIAS.

Programme coordinator:

Dr Rint Sybesma

Fellows/visitors/postdocs:

Prof. K. Mei (1 April - 1 July 2002)

PhD Students:

Boya Li; Joanna Sio

www.leidenuniv.nl/hil/china

www.ias.nl/ias/research/syntax/index.html

Indonesianisasi and Nationalization

This research programme focuses on the shift in the management of the Indonesian economy from control by Western, especially Dutch private enterprises to Indonesian business, including Chinese Indonesian entrepreneurs. The project embraces macroeconomic policy, public discourse and case studies of major Dutch business firms and new Indonesian enterprises. Locations include Jakarta, Central Java, Bandung, Medan and Makasar where local scholars will participate. The project is sponsored by the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD).

Principal researcher:

Dr J. Thomas Lindblad

Junior researcher:

Jasper van de Kerkhof, MA
www.niod.nl

ABIA South and Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology Index

The ABIA online database covers publications on prehistory, archaeology and art history, material culture, inscriptions, coins and seals of South and Southeast Asia. The IIAS is the centre for regions outside Asia, with support from the Gonda Foundation. Between 2002 and 2006 the project is coordinated by PGIAR, Colombo, with support from the

Central Cultural Fund. Offices have also been opened at the IGCA, New Delhi, and the Research Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences, Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta. ABIA Index volume 1 is available at the IIAS. Volume 2 (new) is available at www.brill.nl.

ABIA General Editor for Asian publications:

Dr Sita Pieris

(abiappiar@pgiar.lanka.net)

General Editor for Western publications:

Dr Ellen Raven

(e.m.raven@let.leidenuniv.nl)

www.abia.net

CLARA: Changing Labour Relations in Asia

This research programme aims to build a comparative and historical understanding of labour relations in different parts of Asia which are undergoing diverse historical processes and experiences in terms of their national economies, their links with international markets and the nature of state intervention. Several types of activities, namely: coordination of workshops; research projects; short-term research fellowships; networking; publications; and the setting up of a databank are promoted. CLARA is supported by the IIAS and the International Institute of Social History (IISH).

Programme coordinator:

Dr Ratna Saptari (rsa@iisg.nl)

Research fellow:

Dr Prabu Mohapatra

www.iisg.nl/~clara/clara.htm

Genomics in Asia: Socio-Genetic Marginalization

This new research programme studies the socio-political implications and practices of the development and application of the new biomedical and genetic technologies in Asian religious and secular cultures. It aims to generate insight into the ways in which the use and monopoly over genetic information shape and influence population policies, environmental ethics, and biomedical and agricultural practices in various cultures and across national boundaries. The programme was initiated by IIAS and the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM, Leiden), but will be executed in cooperation with other Dutch research institutes such as the Centre for Bioethics and Health Law (CBC, University of Utrecht), the Institute for Innovation and Trans-disciplinary Research (Free University, VU), and various Asian research institutes.

Programme director:

Dr Margaret Sleebloom

(m.sleebloom@let.leidenuniv.nl)

www.ias.nl/ias/agenda/asiangenomics.html

Transnational Society, Media and Citizenship

This programme studies the complex nature of contemporary cultural identities and the role which the globalization of information and communication technologies (ICT's) plays in the (re)construction of identities. The research will broaden our understanding of implications of new media and communicating technologies in transforming political and religious forms, which transcend the nation-state and the relationship between consumption practices and identity formation. The programme was initiated by the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR) together with the IIAS and is executed with financial support from the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO).

Programme director:

Prof. Peter van der Veer

(vanderveer@psc.w.uva.nl)

Research fellows:

Dr Shoma Munshi,

Dr Mahmoud Alinejad

PhD students:

Miriyam Aouragh, Myrna Eindhoven

www.ias.nl/ias/research/transnational/projectdescr.html

The International Institute for Asian Studies is a postdoctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam. The main objective of the IIAS is to encourage Asian Studies in the humanities and the social sciences (ranging from linguistics and anthropology to political science, law, environment and development studies) and to promote national and international cooperation in these fields. The IIAS was established in 1993 on the initiative of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Leiden University, University of Amsterdam, and the Free University Amsterdam. It is financed mainly by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sciences.

Based in the Netherlands, the Institute acts as an (inter)national mediator, bringing various parties together for the enhancement of Asian Studies. In keeping with the Dutch tradition of transferring goods and ideas, the IIAS works as a clearing-house of knowledge and information. This entails activities such as providing information services, constructing an international network, and setting up international cooperative projects and research programmes. In this way, the IIAS functions as a window on Europe for non-Europeans and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Asia and Europe.

Research fellows at a post-PhD level are temporarily employed by or affiliated to the Institute, either within the framework of a collaborative research programme, or on an individual basis. The IIAS organizes seminars, workshops, and conferences, publishes a newsletter (circulation approximately 22,000 copies), and has established a database which contains information about researchers and current research in the field of Asian Studies within Europe and worldwide. A Guide to Asian Studies in Europe, a printed version of parts of this database, was published in 1998. The Institute also has its own server and Internet site to which a growing number of Institutes related to Asian Studies is linked.

Since 1994 the IIAS has been appointed to run the secretariat of the European Science Foundation Asia Committee (Strasbourg). Together with the Committee, the IIAS shares the objective of improving the international cooperation in the field of Asian Studies (additional information can be acquired at the IIAS).

In 1997 the Strategic Alliance for Asian Studies was established: an international cooperation between the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), Copenhagen, and the IIAS. The Institute of Asian Affairs (IfA), Hamburg; the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS), Brussels; and the Asia-Europe Centre (AEC), Paris have since joined the Alliance. The Asia Alliance was set up to enhance research on (contemporary) Asia and to create networks in Asia and Europe with academic and non-academic institutions and actors.

Upon the initiative of the IIAS, and in close cooperation with NIAS, the Programme for Europe-Asia Research Links (PEARL) was established in Seoul in October 1998. It is a network of researchers from Asia and Europe, i.e. from the ASEM (Asia-Europe Meetings) member countries, representing leading Asian and European Studies institutes. PEARL believes that promotion of Asia-Europe research cooperation ought to be an integral part of the ASEM dynamics. The IIAS provides the secretariat for PEARL.

New IIAS Publications

Dahles, Heidi (ed.)

Tourism, Heritage and National Culture in Java:

Dilemmas of a local community

Richmond, Surrey: IIAS and Curzon Press (2001), 257 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1520-7 (hb), illustrated.

Douw, Leo, Cen Huang and David Ip (eds.)

Rethinking Chinese Transnational Enterprises: Cultural affinity and business strategies

Richmond, Surrey: IIAS and Curzon Press (2001), 281 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1524-x (hb), illustrated

Hüsken, Frans and Dick van der Meij (eds.)

Reading Asia, New Research in Asian Studies

Richmond, Surrey: Curzon/IIAS Asian Series publications (2001), 338 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1371-9 (hb)

Kazanov, Anatoli M. and André Wink (eds.)

Nomads in the Sedentary World

Richmond, Surrey: Curzon/IIAS Asian Series publications (2001), 290 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1369-7 (hb) 0-7007-1370-0 (pb)

Munshi, Shoma (ed.)

Images of the 'Modern Woman' in Asia: Global media, local meanings

Richmond, Surrey: IIAS and Curzon Press (2001), 211 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1343-3 (hb), 0-7007-1353-0 (pb), illustrated.

Stokhof, Wim and Paul van der Velde (eds.)

Asian-European Perspectives, Developing the ASEM Process

Richmond, Surrey: Curzon/IIAS Asian Series publications (2001), 168 pp., ISBN 0-7007-1435-9 (hb)



15 November 2002 – 15 March 2003

One of the most important goals of the IAS is to share scholarly expertise by offering universities and other research institutes the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge of resident fellows. IAS fellows can be invited to lecture, participate in seminars, cooperate on research projects etc. The IAS is most willing to mediate in establishing contacts and considers both national and international integration of Asian Studies to be very important objectives.

The IAS wants to stress the cooperation between foreign researchers and the Dutch field. With regard to the affiliated fellowships, the IAS therefore offers to mediate in finding external Dutch funding, should the scholar have not yet found ways of financing his/her visit to the Netherlands. For more information please see the IAS fellowship application form, which can be obtained from the IAS secretariat or can be found at: www.ias.nl/ias/appform.html

The IAS distinguishes the following five categories of fellows:

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- a) individual
- b) attached to a thematic research programme, i.e.: (1) 'Changing Labour Relations in Asia' (CLARA); (2) 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'; (3) 'Transnational Society, Media and Citizenship' (The Making of a Collective Palestinian Identity)

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Visiting exchange fellow (NSC) International Product Penetration

6 January 2003 – 6 July 2003

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Affiliated fellow

Hybrid Word Prosodic Systems

1 July 2002 – 1 July 2005

Dr Margaret Sleebom (the Netherlands)

Research fellow

Human Genetics and Its Political, Social, Cultural, and Ethical Implications

17 September 2001 – 15 December 2002

Dr David N. Soo (UK)

Affiliated fellow

Globalisation: An Investigation into the Emerging Asian Space Industry. A New Force in Space?

4 October 2002 – 4 October 2003

Central Asia

The Poem of Bhatti: A Study
3 February 2003 – 4 April 2003

Southeast Asia

Dr Mehdi Parvizi Amineh (the Netherlands)
Research fellow, stationed at Leiden and the Amsterdam Branch Office

Conflict, Security and Development in the Post-Soviet Era: Toward Regional Economic Cooperation in the Central Asian Region

1 July 2002 – 1 July 2003

Dr Alex McKay (Australia)

Affiliated fellow

The History of Tibet and the Indian Himalayas

1 October 2000 – 1 October 2005

Dr Cecilia Odé (the Netherlands)

Research fellow

Voices from the Tundra and Taiga

1 July 2002 – 1 July 2003

South Asia

Prof. Gananath Obeyesekere (Sri Lanka)

Senior visiting fellow, stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office

Restudying the Vedādh: Buddhism, Aboriginality and Primitivism in Pre-colonial and Post-colonial Discourses

1 July 2002 – 30 November 2002

Prof. Ranjini Obeyesekere (Sri Lanka)

Affiliated fellow, stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office

The Making of a Collective Palestinian Identity

1 May 2001 – 1 May 2005

Dr Hsiu-Li Chen (Taiwan)

Visiting exchange fellow (NSC)

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Dr Bert Remijnen (Belgium)

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Globalisation: An Investigation into the Emerging Asian Space Industry. A New Force in Space?

4 October 2002 – 4 October 2003

Indonesianisasi and Nationalism. The Emancipation and Reorientation of the Economy and the World of Industry and Commerce
15 October 2002 – 1 October 2006

Dr Michael Laffan (Australia)

Research fellow within the research project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

Majlis Taklim, Pengajian and Civil Society: How do Indonesian Majlis Taklim and Pengajian contribute to civil society in Indonesia?

1 January 2002 – 31 December 2004

Dr Thomas Lindblad (the Netherlands)

Research fellow (sponsored by NIOD)

Indonesianisasi and Nationalism. The Emancipation and Reorientation of the Economy and the World of Industry and Commerce

1 October 2002 – 1 October 2006

Dr Hotze Lont (the Netherlands)

Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office

Affiliated fellow within the KNAW Programme: 'Indonesian Society in Transition' Coping with Crises in Indonesia

5 November 2001 – December 2004

Dr Johan Meuleman (the Netherlands)

Research fellow within the programme 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

Dakwah in Urban Society in Twentieth-Century Indonesia

1 January 2001 – 31 December 2004

Prof. Pamela Moro (USA)

Affiliated fellow

Music and Nationalism in Comparative Pan-Asian Perspective

15 August 2002 – 16 December 2002

Ahmad Syaifi' Mufid, MA (Indonesia)

PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

The Place of Sufi Orders in the Religious Life of Contemporary Jakartans

18 September 2001 – 18 September 2005

Noorhaidi, MA (Indonesia)

PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

The Making and Unmaking of Statism Islam: State Production of Islamic Discourse in New Order Indonesia and Afterwards

6 April 2001 – 6 April 2005

Jasper van de Kerkhof, MA (the Netherlands)

Junior research fellow (sponsored by NIOD)

The Making of Islamic Modernism. The Transmission of Islamic Reformism from the Middle East to the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century

18 September 2001 – 18 September 2005

Muhammad Dahlan, MA (Indonesia)

PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

The Role of the Indonesian State Institute for Islamic Studies in the Redistribution of Muslim Authority

15 June 2001 – 15 June 2005

Myrna Eindhoven, MA (the Netherlands)

Stationed at the ASSR

PhD student within the ASSR, IAS and WOTRO programme 'Transnational Society, Media and Citizenship'

Rays of New Images: ICT's, State Ethnopolitics and Identity Formation among the Mentawaians (West Sumatra)

1 November 2000 – 1 November 2004

Moch Nur Ichwan, MA (Indonesia)

PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

The Making and Unmaking of Statism Islam: State Production of Islamic Discourse in New Order Indonesia and Afterwards

6 April 2001 – 6 April 2005

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Moch Nur Ichwan, MA (Indonesia)

PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

The Jihad Paramilitary Force: Islam and Identity in the Era of Transition in Indonesia
1 April 2001 – 1 April 2005

Dr Keat Gin Ooi (Malaysia)

Affiliated fellow, stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office

The Japanese Occupation of Dutch Borneo 1942-1945

25 March – 26 May 2002 & 25 March – 26 May 2003

Dr Jemma Elizabeth Purdey (Australia)

Affiliated fellow

Representations of Violence and Possibilities for Reconciliation in Indonesia: Ethnic Chinese Indonesians After May 1998

1 November 2002 – 31 January 2003

Dr Rachel Silvey (USA)

Affiliated fellow, stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office

Migration under Crisis: Household Safety Nets in Two Regions of Indonesia

13 August 2002 – 31 December 2002

Arief Subhan, MA (Indonesia)

PhD student within the framework of the project 'Islam in Indonesia: The Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century'

The Changing Role of the Indonesian Madrasah and the Dissemination of Muslim Authority

15 June 2001 – 15 June 2005

Prof. Md Salleh Bin Yaapar (Malaysia)

Professorial fellow, holder of the European Chair for Malay Studies

Pantun and Pantomim: A Study in Malay-European Literary Relations

15 January 2003 – 15 January 2005

Prof. Ben White (the Netherlands, UK)

Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office

Affiliated fellow, KNAW Programme: 'Indonesian Society in Transition' Coping with Crises in Indonesia

25 September 2001 – December 2004

East Asia

Prof. Kenneth J. Hammond (USA)

Affiliated fellow

The Life, Death, and Posthumous Career of Yang Jisheng, 1516 – 1555

1 July 2002 – 1 July 2003

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Visiting exchange fellow (NSC) Law, Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Development in Taiwan 1992-2002
1 December 2002 – 1 June 2003

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Affiliated fellow
Chongqing in the Context of the Great Western Development Program
19 September 2002 – 16 November 2002

Dr Yu Hou (China)
Affiliated fellow (sponsored by NUFFIC) China's Industrial Structure and Sustainable Development after entering WTO
1 September 2002 – 30 June 2003

Boya Li, BA (PR China)
PhD student within the joint NWO/Leiden University / IAS Research Programme 'The Syntax of the Languages of Southern China'
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1 January 2001 – 31 December 2005

Dr Mei-Chiun Tseng (Taiwan)
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1 December 2002 – 1 March 2003

Dr Guo Wu (People's Republic of China)
Affiliated fellow
A Conversational Analysis of Chinese Discourse Markers
1 September 2002 – 30 November 2002

Spaces of Protest: Workers' Narratives from Sulawesi and Java, Indonesia

Research >
Indonesia

In the context of a project on gender and labour migration that began in 1995 in West Java and South Sulawesi, in-depth interviews with migrant factory workers have increasingly raised the issues of women's labour rights, their interest in labour activism, and the inseparability of their spatial mobility experiences from the challenges they confront as workers. Two women workers' narratives in particular capture the struggles central to understanding the regional distinctions in gender and labour issues. Both narratives reveal the gender- and place-specific challenges facing labour activists and factory workers as these play out across the scales of the body, the household, the region, the nation-state, and the international political economy.¹ While space constraints preclude a full reading of the rich narratives themselves, the following brief discussion reveals some ways in which these two women's individual experiences give voice to commonly neglected dimensions of regionally differentiated gendered migration and labour dynamics.

By Rachel Silvey

Mina's narrative raises themes common to many migrant workers in West Java. She was born and raised outside of Yogyakarta and is the youngest daughter in a family of six children; she now works in a footwear factory in Cicalong, approximately one hour southeast of Bandung.² It is the third factory in which she has worked since she first arrived three years ago. After finishing junior high school, she wanted to leave her village, where there were few employment options other than local trade activities and rice farming, neither of which appealed to her. She did not have plans to marry soon after school, as her older brothers and sisters had done, and at 16 years old, neither she nor her parents felt that she should continue to depend on the family's income for her basic needs. Many of her peers, both male and female, had moved away to work in factories, and this seemed to Mina to be a way, among the very limited options, to improve her lot in life and gain some new experience. So, when her aunt and uncle came home to visit Central Java from Bandung, she decided to return with

them to West Java and stay until she found a job and a place to live.

Mina's strong social networks linking her family members from Central Java to those in West Java distinguish her experience from that of most migrant women workers in South Sulawesi, where women's labour migration and participation in factory work is more limited.

Risa, who was born in Jeneponto, approximately four hours from Ujung Pandang in South Sulawesi, had run away from an arranged marriage. She had in common with many of the migrant women workers in Sulawesi, a sense that her mobility was stigmatized, whereas in West Java, most women felt that their migration was a normal, indeed often-undertaken activity with the support and consent of family members. This difference came through in many of the narratives, showing its importance in shaping women's subjective, place-based experiences of gendered mobility. Census data have determined that young women's mobility is more widespread in Java than in Sulawesi. Mina and Risa's narratives extend the census findings by illustrating the ways in which

the normalization of single women's mobility in West Java and the continued widespread stigmatization of it in Sulawesi distinguishes women's experiences of migration and work at the scales of the region and the household.

The basic differences in women's migration between the two regions have implications for labour organizing as well. Both Mina and Risa's employers have underpaid and overworked them, as is commonplace among factory management throughout Indonesia. But Mina, with greater support from local NGO activists and in a context within which women's labour itself is not stigmatized, has responded by becoming a labour activist herself. By contrast, Risa, despite facing similar abuses, has kept her struggles largely to herself. In addition, the village heads of their communities have monitored their activities in different ways. In West Java, the village head collaborates in the surveillance activities of the factory management, letting Mina know that she will be punished if she is found to be active in labour organizing work in the village. By contrast, in South Sulawesi, Risa's village head is more concerned about

monitoring young women's sexual behaviour. While these two forms of surveillance can be understood to support similar, national- and international-scale forms of gendered social control, they help explain why Risa's narrative refers more to questions of sexual morality, while Mina's refers more to moral concerns about labour policy. Interviews with the two women flesh out their particular experiences of the broader distinctions between the two workers' local communities.

Mina and Risa's place-based experiences of migration are not representative for the experiences of all women workers in the two regions. Rather, their experiences provide insight into the ways that women's subordination in the workplace is intimately interwoven with women's marginalization across spaces and spatial scales. There is rich literature that examines the ways in which the global economy relies on and contributes to gendered inequalities in the labour market, and research on Indonesia has provided insight into the complexities of the New Order state in determining gendered structures of inequality and perpetuating violence

against women. There are also in-depth studies of the gendered division of labour and resources within households, and this research develops analytical linkages between domestic negotiations and the gendered dynamics of factory employment. But further ethnographic work can extend these foundational findings to develop deeper understanding of the relationships between the local gendered struggles of women such as Mina and Risa and the broader-scale processes that shape the possibilities open to them. Situating women's stories in the context of an inter-scalar political-economic analysis can contribute to the goal of understanding gender in multiple spaces and across scales as a crucial pivot around which geographic distinctions in workers' agency is organized. ◀

Dr Rachel Silvey is Assistant Professor at the Department of Geography, University of Colorado, Boulder. She is presently an IIAS Affiliated fellow (13 August 2002 – 31 December 2002) whose research is entitled 'Migration under Crisis: Household Safety Nets in Two Regions of Indonesia'. silveyrachel@yahoo.com

Notes >

- 1 I would like to thank the International Institute for Asian Studies for providing institutional support crucial to the analysis and write-up of the workers' life narratives. This project benefited from the contributions and insights of Popon Anarita of AKATIGA and Ratna Saptari of CLARA. Funding was provided by the National Science Foundation Grant. Finally, and most importantly, I thank the women themselves for sharing their stories and generously allowing me into their lives.
- 2 In order to protect respondent confidentiality, all names and place-names have been changed, except the large cities mentioned to provide a sense of the geographic context.

South(east) Asian Art & Archaeology at Kediri

Fifth ABIA Workshop

Report >
General

25-26 July 2002
Kediri, Indonesia

The annual conference of the Association of Indonesian Archaeologists at Kediri, in the heartland of the former East Javanese kingdom of Majapahit, proved to be a perfect setting for the fifth workshop of the ABIA Project. At this occasion the progress of the work on the online ABIA database on South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology (www.abia.net) and the publication of the bibliography in print were discussed. The delegates found that the project is progressing well. In recognition of the ABIA's contribution to the advancement of mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples and to the free flow of ideas through word and image, the project has reached an Agreement on Cultural Cooperation with UNESCO.

By Ellen Raven

Meanwhile, the bibliographic network shows a gradual expansion and consolidation, e.g. through a new office in India represented by Dr Sudha Gopalakrishnan of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in New Delhi. Establishing an office for ABIA in Jakarta under the guidance of professor Sedyawati was also discussed. With a firm foothold in Indonesia, the presence of Indonesian archaeology and arts in the ABIA database, already strong from the early days of the project onwards, will thus be guaranteed.

The ABIA project is eager to extend its bibliographic coverage to countries of South and Southeast Asia other than those already represented through an office and hopes to find support from scholars, from centres of expertise and funding institutions in that endeavour. Especially in Southeast Asia, with its many ongoing archaeological programmes, excavations, and publications on cultural heritage, the presence of ABIA is still underdeveloped. Ellen Raven reported on the final work on the second printed volume of *ABIA Index* con-

taining 2,050 records selected from the ABIA databases. By mid-September volume 2 has indeed been released. Its 1,145 pages (in two parts) present bibliographic data, keywords, and annotations disclosing recent publications (1997–2001) on arts and archaeology, material culture, inscriptions, coins and seals from the region. Alongside the actual business meeting, the ABIA delegates participated in an ABIA seminar focusing on the 'limits of interpretation'. ◀

Dr Ellen M. Raven is a specialist in Gupta coins and is general editor of ABIA, the Netherlands. e.m.raven@let.leidenuniv.nl

Information >

The Fifth workshop of the ABIA Project on 25 and 26 July 2002 was hosted by professor Edi Sedyawati of the Research Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences, Jakarta. Delegates from Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, participate in the conference and the Netherlands. See www.abia.net

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A Balancing Act

Research >
Indonesia

The research programme 'Indonesia across Orders' aims at bridging the usual chronological caesurae in historical research of Indonesia. While most historians simply stop at 1942, or concentrate on the Japanese period or on revolutionary Indonesia, the programme explicitly strives to explore themes that can bring the different episodes together and tell the story not as a jerky ride over political thresholds, but as one of continuous change.

By the 'Indonesia across Orders' Project Bureau

Simple as this may sound, the heuristic and epistemological problems are huge; or in normal words, there is a problem of scarcity and a problem of perspective. The latter needs some explanation. Writing histories of a society in the flux of decolonization and self-definition lacks the usual and soothingly neat perspective of the nation. While histories of Japan or the Netherlands can be safely written from a national, centralist perspective, this is much more difficult to do in the case of Indonesia, or any other multi-ethnic colonized society, even if the usual procedure is exactly to take one such perspective. This often ignores the social realities of a decolonizing society, where an entire spectrum of fragmented loyalties, uncertainties, and expectations prevail. To get beyond the ethnocentrism and nationalized histories that dominate the field, it is essential to reconsider existing sources and to look hard for alternatives.

Every episode of history creates its own problems. One obvious dilemma of any historian dealing with the colonial period is the unbalanced sources. This is an almost insurmountable problem, as the creators and keepers of the records were also the principal actors in the colonial effort. Local newspapers, including those in Chinese, will be an essential source, but even then the individual voices will only sound occasionally through the printed pages. Oral histories can provide an essential counterbalance to generalized accounts, but the pre-independence generation is dying out. Local lore might prove to be an indispensable source for reassembling and re-presenting the experiences of 'common people' at the local level.

The same is true for the short period of the Japanese occupation regime. Japanese source materials on the period 1941-1945 in Indonesia are scarce and difficult to locate. This is partly due to the diffuse character of the Japanese military and civil bureaucracy in which tasks and responsibilities were far from clear and record keeping was based upon strategic and military interests. Moreover, in the aftermath of Japan's surrender in August 1945, many original Japanese data were destroyed, or found their way to the archives of the then active allied military forces and intelligence services. The materials that are available mainly detail the organization of the Japanese military administration and its official socio-political and economic policies. Periodicals and newspapers published during the war period give a wealth of information, but they are generally biased because of propaganda purposes. There are apparently very few Japanese wartime statistics on socio-economic developments and, apart from a few village studies,

one will look in vain for sources describing local changes within Indonesian society itself. Tracing relevant Japanese source materials will form an integral part of the research programme. This requires a great deal of ingenuity and initiative. Private company and *zaibatsu* records as well as personal memoirs are available in Japan. Interviews and oral history testimonies can still be another source of information. Thorough research in British, North American, Australian, Indonesian, and Dutch archives might bring unexpected results.

The recently established Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR) will also be an important source. Its main objective is to digitalize and put on the Internet original Japanese historical documents related to Asia, starting from the early Meiji era to the end of the Pacific War. It has created an impressive database based upon Asia-related materials from three institutions: the National Archives of Japan, the Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the National Institute for Defence Studies of the National Defence Agency. As JACAR is still in progress; so far only 10 per cent of the original data have been digitalized (totalling about 2.3 million images), but it is expected that every year an additional 2 million images will be put on the Internet.

The post-1945 period creates its own difficulties as far as source material is concerned. A country at war and in civil strife leaves few paper traces and although there is a large amount of sources from the ministry archives in Jakarta and The Hague, much has been lost or has never been transferred to public archives, and is untraceable. Again the problem is how to get to the locality. Most archives of the municipalities and regencies, or *kabupaten*, have been lost, although there are indications that bits and pieces are still stored in the local authorities' closets and attics.

Any research into the turbulent and changeable history of Indonesia during the period of early independence must be also a quest for relevant sources that allow a perspective beyond the official façades of the Dutch and Indonesian governments. This asks for a great creativity in the use of sources. Self-evidently, eyewitness accounts will be sought, but it might be difficult to find useful informants. Existing interview collections are valuable but have their obvious limitations. The Koleksi Sejarah Lisan (Oral History Collection) at the Arsip Nasional in Jakarta brings together several hundreds of interviews, but most of the informants have been successful figures in post-revolution Indonesia, and their memories are often tinged by their social position. The recently collected interviews of the Stichting Mondelinge Geschiedenis Indonesië of the Royal Institute of Anthro-

pology and Linguistics (KITLV) have the obvious drawback that the interviewees are almost exclusively (Indo-)Europeans. The same goes for many private writings, such as letters and diaries: they abound for the colonial strata of the Europeans and Japanese, but are scarce for the Indonesian communities. Apart from the fact that there was an imbalance in recording activity from the outset, traditions and politics of record keeping have certainly favoured the colonial documentations.

The quest does not stop at interviewing and reading the papers or scouring the provinces in search for administrative leftovers. Much of the research within the programme will concentrate on urban areas. These places can still convey lots of information on the events and changes of the 1930s to the 1960s. Maps and other pictorial information will give depth and perspective to these city-reading activities. Again, a thorough search for private collections might have surprising yields. Recent efforts to trace private film material from Indonesia have brought up fascinating home movie material from some prominent Chinese families. Similar films from Dutch inhabitants of the East Indies are available in greater numbers, but have not yet received the scholarly attention they deserve. Photography is yet another source that has been used too sparingly and can provide essential information on the changes in the day-to-day lives of the peoples inhabiting the archipelago from the 1930s to 1960s.

After its kick-off in September, the 'Indonesia across Orders' programme has planned a first, slightly experimental series of presentations on home movies and their usefulness for historical research. Although having been neglected in the past by scholars and critics alike, home movies offer a unique glimpse of life in the former Dutch East Indies. Images of sugar plantations and refineries, mines, and the urban environment show the backdrop of the various political, economic, and social changes that took place during the turbulent period 1930-1960. The two workshops dedicated to home movies and propaganda and publicity films from the Dutch East Indies and Indonesia, organized in close cooperation with the Filmmuseum Amsterdam, feature movie showings, eyewitness accounts, lectures by specialists, and discussions (for more information, see 'The Dutch East Indies on Celluloid' on this page). It lies in the line of expectation that the hunt for (alternative) sources will yield new findings. How many and to what extent their disclosure will attribute to new insights remains to be seen. <

Project Bureau: Els Bogaerts, MA (Coordinator), Marije Plomp, MA (Assistant Coordinator), Dr Peter Post and Dr Remco Raben (Advisers). **Researchers:** Dr Freek Colombijn, Prof. Robert Cribb, Dr Erwiza Erman, Dr Peter Keppy, Dr Thomas Lindblad, Dr Hans Meijer, and Dr Ratna Saptari. *Indonesia across Orders* is a NIOD affiliated research programme carried out in Amsterdam. indie-indonesie@niod.knaw.nl

'Indonesia across Orders: The reorganization of Indonesian society' has been developed at the request of the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Sport. The research is aimed at providing new insights into the consequences of war, revolution and decolonization for the different population groups in the Indonesian archipelago from the 1930s to the 1960s.

The programme covers four research areas that embrace a wide range of social developments: the Indonesianisation of the economy and of the world of industry and commerce; the financial settlement and the question of war damage, rehabilitation and back-pay; the mechanisms of and views on order and security; and the changes in urban society. <

Contact:

Netherlands Institute for War Documentation

'Indonesia across Orders: The reorganization of Indonesian society'

Els Bogaerts MA, Programme Coordinator

Marije Plomp MA, Assistant Coordinator

Herengracht 380, 1016 CJ Amsterdam, the Netherlands
T +31 - 20-523 3800, F +31 - 20-523 3888, indie-indonesie@niod.knaw.nl

The Dutch East Indies on Celluloid

Agenda >
Indonesia

7 December 2002
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

More info >

Location

Filmmuseum Amsterdam, Vondelpark 3, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 7 December 2002, from 10.30 to 16.30

Information

Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD)

'Indonesia across Orders'

Els Bogaerts, Programme Coordinator

Marije Plomp, Assistant Coordinator

T +31-20-523 3800, indie-indonesie@niod.knaw.nl

Filmmuseum Amsterdam

Marieke Huizinga, T +31-20-589 1421

mhuizinga@filmmuseum.nl

In cooperation with the Filmmuseum Amsterdam, the NIOD (Netherlands Institute for War Documentation) research programme 'Indonesia across Orders: The Reorganization of Indonesian Society' has organized two public workshops. On Saturday, 9 November, the first of the two workshops covered various aspects of the use of 'home

movies' as an innovative research tool. The second workshop is forthcoming (Saturday, 7 December) and aims to elaborate on two central themes: 'Propaganda' and 'Cities and industry: developments and changes'. The programme of the latter workshop will start with a showing of propaganda films and movies of an informative character, such as publicity films produced for governments and companies. Besides images from the Dutch East Indies, Japanese and Indonesian propaganda films also form part of the programme.

In the afternoon, home movies and documentary films from the period 1930-1960 will show the ever-changing life in the city and on the work floor. Images of sugar plantations and refineries, mines, and the urban environment show the backdrop of the various political, economic, and social changes that took place from 1930 to 1960. Lectures and discussions on topics connected to the two central themes will complete this second workshop. <

Alliance Partners

IIAS (secretariat Asia Alliance)

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a post-doctoral institute established in 1993 by Dutch universities and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, to encourage Asian Studies in the humanities and social sciences and to promote national and international scientific cooperation in these fields. The IIAS is mainly financed by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences.

Director: Prof. Wim Stokhof.



NIAS

The Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) is an independent research institute funded by the governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden through the Nordic Council of Ministers. The NIAS, founded in 1967, serves as a focal point for research on contemporary Asia and for promoting Asian Studies in the Nordic academic community.

Director: Dr Jørgen Delman

Leifsgade 33 DK 2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark

T +45-32-54 8844

F +45-32-96 2530

sec@nias.ku.dk

www.nias.ku.dk



IFA

The Institute of Asian Affairs (Institut für Asienkunde, IFA) was founded in 1956 on the initiative of the German Parliament and the German Foreign Ministry. The Institute has been assigned the task to study the political, economic, and social developments in Asian countries. Its field of activity concentrates on contemporary affairs, while aiming to procure and broaden scientifically based knowledge of the region and its countries.

Director: Dr Werner Draguhn

Rothenbaumchaussee 32, D-20148 Hamburg, Germany

T +49-40-428 8740

F +49-40-410 79 45

ifahh@uni-hamburg.de

www.duei.de/ifa



EIAS

The European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) is a Brussels-based policy and research think-tank supported by the European Union (EU) institutions, which aims to promote understanding and cooperation between the EU and Asia. EIAS seeks to provide information and expertise to the European Union institutions, the academic world and business by disseminating concise, thoroughly researched and up-to-date material on EU-Asia relations and important developments in Asia.

Director: Dr Willem van der Geest

35 Rue des Deux Eglises, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

T +32-2-230 8122

F +32-2-230 5402

eias@eias.org

www.eias.org



AEC

In Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques (Sciences-Po), the Asia-Europe Centre is the third pillar with the American Centre and the European Centre in a resource framework at the service of the whole institution. The Asia-Europe Centre acts as the interface between Sciences-Po components and our Asian counterparts. It provides information and expertise to public and European institutions, to Sciences-Po's academic network and to the business community.

Director: Dr David Camroux

Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques

56 rue Jacob, 75006 Paris, France

T +33-58-71 7124

F +33-58-71 7125

asia-europe@sciences-po.fr

www.sciences-po.fr



For more information also see: www.asia-alliance.org

Asia Alliance

Short News > General

The Strategic Alliance for Asian Studies is a cooperative framework of European institutes specializing in Asian Studies. The Alliance, established in 1997, aims to bring together fragmented forces in Asian Studies in Europe to facilitate scholarly excellence to the benefit of the respective national research environments and those of the European scholarly environment at large, by:

- building up high-quality, border-transcending research with a stronger focus on contemporary issues;
- creating sustainable networks with Asian and other overseas research institutions and scholars;
- and strengthening the links and communication between academic research on Asia and non-academic institutions and actors.

More info >

More information on Asia Alliance activities:

www.asia-alliance.org

More on the 11-09 Asia Update: www.eias.org

Activities

The most recent Alliance activities are the Asia Update and the meeting of the steering committee. The Asia Update on 'Europe-Asia: One year

after the 11th of September' took place in Brussels on 11 September 2002. More than 130 participants such as ambassadors and counsellors from almost all Asian countries, members of the European Parliament and scholars from research institutes and universities in the field of Asian Studies enjoyed the lively, sometimes controversial discussions. The Alliance steering committee met in Brussels on 12 September 2002. The Alliance members informed on latest and planned activities and discussed the draft of a new Memorandum of Understanding. <

The Annual ASIA-EUROPE Workshop Series 2003/2004



The Strategic Alliance for Asian Studies and The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) welcome proposals for workshops to take place in 2003/2004 on themes of common interest to both Asia and Europe.

PROCEDURE

Workshop proposals should be sent to the secretariat of the Asia-Europe Workshop Series before 1 March 2003. Six up to nine workshop proposals will be selected for realization between September 2003 and September 2004. The received proposals will be refereed by a joint Europe-Asia Selection Committee and, when necessary, by external reviewers. Workshop initiators will be informed of the Committee's decision in June 2003. Financial support consists of a contribution to travel costs and accommodation costs up to a maximum of US \$ 15,000 per workshop.

WORKSHOP FORMAT

- A two to three day meeting bringing together a group of about 20 participants (with male/female parity), balancing senior experts and promising junior researchers;
- The workshop should be jointly organized by a European and an Asian institute from ASEM member countries, and be held in one of the ASEM countries*;
- The workshop should not be part of a larger conference;
- Participation should be from both Asian and European countries (altogether from at least 8 different ASEM countries; 4 from Europe and 4 from Asia);
- Participants are invited predominantly from the scientific domain but not exclusively. Contributions from other domains (politicians, journalists, corporate staff) are encouraged;
- Workshops that take place in one of the Asian ASEM countries are favoured.

SCIENTIFIC CONTENT

- The proposal must demonstrate that the multinational participation in the workshop will generate added value;
 - The workshop should focus on a contemporary topic:
 - concerning both Asia and Europe in a comparative perspective
 - concerning shared interests between Asia and Europe
 - of interregional / multilateral importance
 - that will stimulate a dialogue between the two regions
- (Examples might be: 1. Welfare systems and models of social security; 2. Demographic change; 3. Nationalization, regionalization, and localization; 4. Value systems and cultural heritage; 5. Changing labour relations in Asia; 6. Knowledge systems, environment, international business operations, and transmission of technology; 7. Institutional frameworks for company/industrial development and for internationalization of business in Asia; 8. Politics, democracy, and human rights; 9. Security issues (soft and hard); 10. Gender issues)

THE PROPOSAL

The workshop proposal (of no more than five pages) should be written in the English language. A proposal should contain the following information, and be presented in the order given hereunder:

- Title of the workshop
- Proposed date and venue
- Names of initiators and organizing institutions (both European and Asian), and one contact address
- Main topic (see above under h)
- Introduction to the topic to be addressed
- Scientific objectives
- Publication(s) envisaged, if applicable
- A list of expected participants, indicating for each participant his/her affiliation and disciplinary competence in relation to the workshop's topic. These participants may be contacted by the Selection Committee.
- An itemized, detailed budget indicating expenses as well as all expected incomes (including other sponsors).

Please note that the text of your proposal, if selected, may be published on the web pages of ASEF (www.asef.org) and the Asia Alliance (www.asia-alliance.org); and in the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) Newsletter.

ADDRESS AND DEADLINE

The workshop proposals should be received by the Asia Europe Workshop Series Secretariat no later than 1 March 2003. Proposals may be sent through regular mail only. Applications by fax or e-mail will not be considered. Please be aware that the secretariat makes use of university postal services; therefore please allow an extra three days for delivery.

Secretariat Asia Europe Workshop Series

c/o International Institute for Asian Studies
P.O. Box 9515
2300 RA Leiden
The Netherlands
T +31-71-527 22 27
E iias@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.asia-alliance.org



Address for hand delivery or private courier service
IIAS, Nonnensteeg 1-3,
Leiden, The Netherlands

Strategic Alliance for Asian Studies



The ASIA-EUROPE FOUNDATION (ASEF), Singapore was established by members of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) on 15 February 1997 with the aim of promoting engagement between the civil societies of Asia and Europe and forging mutual understanding between the two regions. For more information: www.asef.org

The STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR ASIAN STUDIES is a cooperative framework of European institutes specializing in Asian Studies consisting of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden / Amsterdam; the Institute for Asian Affairs (Institut für Asienkunde / IFA), Hamburg; the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), Copenhagen; the European Institute for Asian Studies, Brussels (EIAS); and the Asia Europe Centre (AEC) of the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, Paris. The Asia Alliance, established in 1997, aims to bring together existing forces on Asian Studies in Europe to facilitate scholarly excellence to the benefit of national research environments and those of the European Union at large. The Asia Alliance has an open structure and welcomes partners from Asian and other European countries to join in the future. For more information: www.asia-alliance.org

* ASEM COUNTRIES: Austria, Belgium, Brunei, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam.

China as Number One – In Mobiles

Report >
China

22–23 May 2002
Stockholm, Sweden

Mobile telecommunications will play an increasingly important role in communication and information exchange in every part of the world. Europe took the world by surprise when developing and offering the GSM standard, which still maintains a dominant position. The next momentous development took place in Japan where mobile Internet (i-mode) became a very successful paradigm for using mobile handsets. Today China is on the verge of becoming the biggest single player in all aspects of mobile telecommunications – in number of subscribers, in manufacture of handsets, as operators, and as contents providers. This note highlights some of the topics and issues that were discussed at the workshop ‘Mobility and Mobiles in China’ held in Stockholm, Sweden.

By Jon Sigurdson

In 2001 China became the number-one country in the world in terms of its mobile subscriber base with 145 million mobile phone users by the end of the year. An extraordinary interest in mobile phones in an environment with limited Internet access has resulted in an unusual willingness to accept mobile terminals and an appreciation for mobile services. Nokia and Ericsson are now estimating that there will be approximately 350 million mobile phone users in China by the end of 2004. Analysts suggest that by 2005 China will make up as much as 34 per cent of the projected global market for mobile phones in the world – some 233 million mobile phones annually.¹ China is now expanding the second-generation mobile telephone system (digital 2G), and the speed of growth is almost beyond imagination. The number of users has turned China into the number one market of the world, although the proportion of mobile users is still little more than 10 per cent at a population of 1.3 billion.

The telecommunication industry has already become one of the important components of the national economy, playing a great and active pulling role in China’s economic growth. The Ministry of Information Industry (MII) in early January 2002 announced that the main carrier, China Telecom, would split up with the objective of having four nation-

al integrated telecom operators that provide fixed-line, mobile data and other basic telecom services in a move to make the telecom market more competitive. In the light of promises by the Chinese government, after entering the WTO, foreign mobile voice and data service providers are allowed to set up joint-ventures in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou, and provide services in these cities.

Monternet – mobile Internet in China

China Mobile, by far the largest operator in the country, provides General Packet Radio Services (GPRS) commercial Internet services since July 2001 in 16 provinces and 25 cities. This emergence of 2.5G may substantially increase the lifecycle of 2G in China. One of the most important breakthroughs for Monternet has been the introduction of a standardized billing system. The system was also one of the biggest challenges in the initial implementation because of China Mobile’s distribution and operational structure. Since each province and major metropolitan area operates independently of one another, each local operation had to be upgraded separately to support Monternet’s new billing requirements. This obstacle caused early setbacks in the months after Monternet was launched.

Technology and setting standards

China has become a global leader in terms of subscribers and will soon become the ‘Handset Production Capital of the World’.² However, China is far from being a technological leader and may move into an early start of R&D for the next generation of mobile telecommunications – 4G – with the ambition of catching up in the process of technology and market development. We could possibly see China using the

coming ten years to research and develop 4G products, then raising its national industry to assume a strong position in the market of mobile communications, and joining in the competition race with the now-dominant global players.

A follow-up workshop to be organized in China in 2003 will use mobile telecommunications as a vehicle for understanding the revolution in the production and dissemination of knowledge, and analyse the use of policy instruments to achieve different objectives in various countries. Thus, participants invited from Europe and Asia will be encouraged to view mobile telecommunications – with all of the ramifications thereof – as a Knowledge System in order to highlight various important characteristics such as technology transfer, industrial development, social welfare, or economic development. <

Professor Jon Sigurdson is coordinator at the Swedish School of Advanced Asia Pacific Studies (www.ssaaps.stint.se). He is director of the East Asia Science and Technology Programme (www.hhs.se/eijs/eastp) at Stockholm School of Economics (The European Institute of Japanese Studies). As a researcher in science policy he has developed special expertise in technology management at national and company levels. jon.sigurdson@hhs.se

The ‘Mobility and Mobiles in China’ Asia Alliance workshop was organized by the East Asia Science & Technology and Culture Programme at the Stockholm School of Economics; the International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden, the Netherlands; and the Institute of Quantitative and Technological Economics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The workshop was made possible from generous financial support from The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education under its STINT Fellowship-China (Economy) Programme (www.stint.se/eng/index.html) and The Strategic Alliance for Asian Studies (www.asia-alliance.org).

Notes >

- 1 *Made for China (MFC) Newsletter*
- 2 ‘China: Future Handset Production Capital of the World’, *Made for China (MFC) Report*, Beijing, January 2002.

Mobility and Mobiles in China

Report >
China

22–23 May 2002
Stockholm, Sweden

Nearly ten years after Deng Xiaoping’s appeal for accelerating economic reforms, the telecommunication industry in China has gone through many changes. The promising prospects that mobile Internet services carry are coming to attention in China’s telecommunication market. By 2002, China has become the biggest market for mobile phone services with an estimated 170 million subscribers, which can be compared with 35 million Internet users. The Chinese government is supporting liberalization in the telecom sector, which is considered one of the main engines for continued economic growth in the socialist market economy. China Mobile has constructed the so-called Monternet, and its counterpart China Unicom has recently launched the world’s largest CDMA network. The capacity and bandwidth of these two networks makes services other than voice possible for cellular phones.

By Anders Ravn Nielsen

The activities of Chinese Internet Service Providers (ISP) illustrate the conditions and prospects for mobile Internet services. China’s ISP industry has never been successful in terms of services for private Internet users mainly because of China Telecom’s high rental fees for connection to backbone networks. Those ISPs determined on developing a strategy away from traditional services started to offer services that matched the technological progress and prospects of commercial Internet use. These are simple services such as domain registration, web hosting, and web design; while other ISPs have engaged in providing IT courses, software applications, e-commerce solutions, and consultancy services related to online marketing.

The ISP services have in common that they, by nature, are related to e-commerce, and most potential clients are companies and organizations. However, the conditions for e-commerce services in China have always been complicated. China does not have a nationwide transaction system for all bankcards and due to unclear regulations, companies are hesitant to get involved with commercial online services. An inefficient regulatory system does not encourage potential clients to take advantage of ISP services related to e-commerce.

Another significant concern for e-commerce and ISP services are Internet users. Online marketing and sales services become less attractive considering the profile. According to the biannual surveys on Internet use released by the China Network Information Centre

(CNNIC), less than 3 per cent of the total population uses the Internet. The majority of users are found in East China and the typical Internet user is young with a relatively small income. Furthermore, the preferences of Internet users for email, information search, news, downloads, and chat facilities show that they mainly use online services as a communication and entertainment medium, rather than as a marketplace. It is significant that income does not seem to be a determining factor in obtaining access to information and entertainment on the Internet.

Because of the underprivileged conditions for e-commerce services, mobile Internet services should be a potential strategy for Chinese ISPs. There are obvious reasons for this. Since the launch of the Internet, the Chinese ISPs have been cut off from

services to private users, but the development of mobile Internet technologies makes it possible for ISPs to offer services directly to private users with a mobile phone or to clients who want to engage in mobile Internet services.

Comparing the number of mobile phone users with Internet users, the market for mobile Internet services is bigger than the market for more traditional Internet services. Furthermore, the government’s green light for competition between the telecommunication companies, which construct the backbone networks for telecommunication, will reduce costs and benefit all users.

At the moment the hottest mobile Internet service in China is no doubt SMS. Some companies have already been successful in offering services for mobile phone users. Linktone of Shanghai was set up in 1999 and began distributing melodies for incoming calls and quizzes earlier than any of its competitors. Tencent Technology, a provider of Instant Messaging Service in Shenzhen, has been experiencing amazing growth after entering into the SMS business. Tencent has acquired about one million subscribers and it recorded monthly sales of more than 5 million yuan in a single year. The larger content providers have started to

focus on distribution of pay contents to portable phones, as sales of Internet advertising have been relatively slow.

Attractive mobile Internet services will not only benefit the ISP industry but also the whole Chinese telecommunication industry, including sales of mobile phones and related equipment. The dark horse is still the government and the regulatory framework of the country. In terms of the use of Internet and e-commerce, the implementation of a regulatory framework has been ineffective due to the fact that different ministries are all trying to draft regulations within their own jurisdiction. The resulting highly bureaucratic process hardly encourages companies to engage in e-commerce services. Importantly, mobile Internet services, other than SMS and downloads, may require certain regulations, which will involve the growth of a bureaucratic process that can damage the expansion of mobile Internet services. <

Anders Ravn Nielsen, MA has a Chinese and Information Science BA and a Chinese MA (both at the University of Aarhus). He is currently a researcher at Fiducia Management Consultance, Shanghai, whose main research interests are Internet/Telecom development trends and investment vehicles in China. ravni@sohu.com

ICAS 3 Singapore



Short News >
General

19 - 22 August 2003
Singapore

The Third International Convention of Asia Scholars will be held at the Raffles City Convention Centre, Swissotel The Stamford. ICAS 3 will be organized by the National University of Singapore (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences & Asia Research Institute) and is endorsed by the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA); the Association for Asian Studies (AAS); and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS).

More info >

ICAS 3 secretariat:

T +65-6874 3805, F +65-6777 0751, icas3sec@nus.edu.sg
Official proposal forms, funding and registration details may be found at: www.fas.nus.edu.sg/icas3

Some 1,000 participants are expected at the conference and the concurrent exhibition for delegates to attend, which will feature the latest publications, films, software and services.

Call for papers

Proposals on all aspects of Asia research are invited for:

- Organized panels consist of three or four papers, with a chairperson and/or discussant.
- Individual papers will be organized into panels with each paper not running more than 20 minutes, excluding questioning time.
- Poster presentations: any language can be displayed, but proposals must be submitted in English.
- Special meetings any meeting type which falls outside the above panel format (organizational meetings, video presentations, roundtables etc.).

Please provide a title, a 250-word abstract/description, names, institutional affiliations of participants (and individual titles and abstracts for panel presenters). Submission deadline: 31 January 2003 <

TANAP Extends into Iran

In the past year the history research programme 'Towards A New Age of Partnership' (TANAP) has received several applications from young Iranian history scholars, eager to gain access to European sources concerning Iran's Safavid period (AD 1501-1722). Though there are several Safavid specialists at various history departments in Iran, from the time of the Islamic Revolution they have not been encouraged to use Western sources. Ever since Khatami came to power, some universities have taken up the challenge of internationalization and one cannot but wonder if this is a wind of change.

Short News >
Iran

By Henk Niemeijer

With Willem Floor and Rudolph Mathee's publications, Iranian historians have become increasingly aware of the importance of European sources for the writing and understanding of Iranian history. The universities of Tabriz, Esfahan, Shiraz, and Tehran all have well-known history departments and although Shiraz does not have a PhD programme in History, it is an attractive place in which to study the subject. Not only is Shiraz located close to important Persian archaeological sites such as Persepolis and Pasargadae, but the city also oozes an artistic and open intellectual atmosphere. One visit to the mausoleum of the great Persian poet, Khaje Shams ad-Din Mohammad Shirzai, also known as Hafez, says it all.

Before the Islamic Revolution, the University of Shiraz had an outstanding international reputation, partly due to its famous Asia Institute and partly because English was the language of instruction. In order to start rebuilding a new international reputation, the university established the Shiraz University International Relations Office (SUIRO), under Dr Khademi two years ago. According to the vice chancellor, Dr Shariff, the university wants to create

opportunities in study programmes abroad for some of its more than 14,000 students. In exchange they would welcome students from the Netherlands, in particular from Leiden, for instance on the PhD programme of the Department of Farsi Language and Literature. TANAP has succeeded in establishing cooperation, which aims at attracting postgraduate students from the Department of History (around 280 undergraduates) who are presently trained by Dr Gholamreza Vatandoust.

Tehran University is another institution that has a good number of Safavid specialists. Dr Zargarinezhad, the head of the department, explained that the examinations for the PhD programme in history are of an exceptionally high standard. The special library of the department reflects a strong interest in Iranian history, but shelves only a few books on Asian history in general – this lack of expertise is strongly felt.

One of the students of the Safavid specialist, Mansur Sefatgol, has been selected for the TANAP Advanced Master's Programme 2003. Rajabali Kavani Gerkhloo has written an excellent thesis on the Noctavi sect under the Safavids and aims to study Iran's connections with the Indian Ocean World at large during the seventeenth century, next year. We are glad to involve a student with expertise in handling Persian sources, and expects fruitful cooperation with the other students. <

Dr Hendrik E. Niemeijer is coordinator of the TANAP Program and affiliated to the Research School for African, Asian, and Amerindian Studies (CNWS), Leiden University, the Netherlands. H.E.Niemeijer@let.leidenuniv.nl

Dr Gholamreza Vatandoust, Dr Henk Niemeijer, and some of the MA students of the University of Shiraz, Iran



ICAS Secretariat

Short News >
General

In June 1998 the first International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) materialized. The convention, which was organized by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, the Netherlands) and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS, USA), was brought into existence because European and American scholars felt a need for closer interaction. Although many individual contacts between researchers from both sides of the Atlantic had already been established, an open, loosely organized forum for discussion

was still missing. This forum would allow specialists from all disciplines, regions, and paradigms to informally meet, exchange ideas, and engage in new plans for joint research activities.

At ICAS 2 in Berlin it was decided to establish a permanent ICAS Secretariat, promoting and stimulating ICAS conventions, serving as its archival and information centre, safeguarding the expertise that has been gathered through ICAS, and instrumental in drawing up a regulatory framework for the ICAS activities. The secretariat actively pursues making ICAS visible through its presence at major meetings of Asia scholars and through regular reports both in the *IIAS Newsletter* and on the ICAS Secretariat website. The secretariat will be stationed at the IIAS in the Netherlands. For more information please feel free to contact us. <

Contact >

Permanent ICAS Secretariat:

Prof. W.A.L. Stokhof (Secretary)
International Institute for Asian Studies
P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands
T +31-71-527 2227, F +31-71-527 4162, iias@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.icassecretariat.org

European Associations for Asian Studies

Association for Korean Studies in Europe, AKSE

www.akse.uni-kiel.de
Prof. Werner Sasse (president)
or5a007@rrz.uni-hamburg.de
Secretariat,
c/o Dr Antonetta L. Bruno
antonetta.bruno@uniroma1.it

European Association for Japanese Studies, EAJS

www.eajs.org
Dr Josef A. Kyburz (president)
kyburz@ext.jussieu.fr
Secretariat, c/o Vikoria Heindorf
eajs@lrz.uni-muenchen.de
Secretary, Dr G.G. Rowley
ggrowley@hotmail.com

European Association for South-east Asian Studies, EUROSEAS

iias.leidenuniv.nl/institutes/kitlv/euroseas
Prof. Anne Booth (president)
ab10@soas.ac.uk
Secretariat,
c/o Prof. Peter Boomgaard
boomgaard@kitlv.nl
euroseas@kitlv.nl

European Association of Chinese Studies, EACS

www.soas.ac.uk/eacs
Prof. Glen Dudbridge (president)
glen.dudbridge@orinst.ox.ac.uk
Secretariat,
c/o Prof. Christian Henriot
chenriot@ish-lyon.cnrs.fr

European Society for Central Asia Studies, ESCAS

www.let.uu.nl/~escas/
Prof. Turaj Atabaki (president)
Turaj.Atabaki@Let.uu.nl
Secretariat, c/o Dr Cathrine Paul
cpoujol33@wanadoo.fr

European Association for South Asian Studies, EASAS

Prof. Dieter Rothermund (president)
Secretariat, c/o Prof. Dirk Kolff
d.h.a.kolff@let.leidenuniv.nl

TANAP Diary: Unequaled Success

Due to the exceptional standard of applications and the encouraging performance in course work, eight students in the TANAP AMP (Towards A New Age of Partnership Advanced Master's Programme) have been awarded scholarships and admittance to its PhD programme. Two students from South Africa, two from Indonesia and one from India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Taiwan each, will be able to continue their research at Leiden University.

Short News >
General

By Nirmal Dewasiri & Anjana Singh

The submission of the PhD proposals on a hardly auspicious 'Friday the thirteenth' of September 2002 symbolically marked the end of the Advanced Master's Programme. Shortly after, the students received diplomas for the successful completion of the rigorous ten-month TANAP training programme, which was concluded with seminars in Bangkok on 24-26 October.

Struck by a tsunami of research material in the Nationaal Archief, The Hague, the students were perplexed by the magnitude of possibilities that this project offered them. Apart from the general academic atmosphere of Leiden, regular classroom sessions, and one-on-one interaction with their supervisors, the students have benefited greatly from educational trips to Amsterdam, Dordrecht, Breda, Gouda, Delft, and Antwerp. The authors to this article further had the unique chance of establishing contacts with other scholars, working on India and Sri Lanka. The semi-formal monthly meetings organized by the Research School for African, Asian, and Amerindian

Studies (CNWS) gave them an opportunity to exchange ideas with Dutch scholars and debate perceptions and the usefulness of the VOC archives in reconstructing history.

Eight of the eleven students who started the AMP 2002 will continue their research next year as TANAP PhD students, proving the success of the programme. With the selection of these eight students, new research in the Dutch records in Chennai, Colombo, Jakarta, and Cape Town will soon commence. <

Anjana Singh, MPhil has studied at Mumbai University, India and researched the social world of Dutch colonial Cochin 1750-1810, as a member of the TANAP AMP group in 2002. A.Singh@let.leidenuniv.nl

Nirmal Dewasiri, MPhil has studied at the Colombo University, Sri Lanka and researched Dutch Colonialism and Social and Economic Transformations in south-western Ceylon 1736-1796 as a member of the TANAP AMP group in 2002. Both Singh and Dewasiri have been admitted to the TANAP PhD programme for 2003. N.Dewasiri@let.leidenuniv.nl

Directors of Urban Change: Mega-Urbanization in Asia

Agenda >
General

12-14 December
2002
Leiden,
the Netherlands

By Freek Colombijn & Peter Nas

Asian cities have grown throughout the twentieth century during periods of turmoil (for example, the Chinese Revolution and the Partition of India and Pakistan), economic boom (Asian tigers), and economic decline (the Asian crisis). The share of the Asian population living in cities has gone up from 9 per cent in 1920 to 35 per cent in 2000, and it is envisaged that in 2025 more than 50 per cent of the Asian population will reside in cities.

Currently, the Asian cities face new challenges, which stem from a considerable part from their position in an increasingly volatile, globalized economy and culture. The flows of people, goods, capital, information, technology, and images have swelled enormously. In this new context, which Manuel Castells has called the 'network society', cities are important as sites for services, social status, and individual self-gratification of the elite. As far as urbanization is concerned, the rise of the network society translates into the management of the exponential increase of people, information, resources, waste, and traffic in the major cities; brain-drain in small and medium-sized towns; the expansion of hub functions; and the perplexing question of how to create an imaginative cityscape that is

Urbanization has been one of the most persistent developments in Asia during the twentieth century. Asia figures prominently on the list of the world's fifteen largest cities with Shanghai, Tokyo, Beijing, Bombay, Calcutta, Jakarta, Seoul, and Madras. Numerous policy- and decision-makers, i.e. the directors of urban change, have visionary ideas about urban form. The rise of the network society in conjunction with the globalization of modern and postmodern architecture and urban planning has forced policy-makers in Asia to develop new ideas about the future of the city. Freek Colombijn and Peter Nas are working out a research programme that aims to deal with the 'directors of urban change' and their ideas and visions.

capable of attracting and retaining investors and casual visitors.

The city is 'an act of will' and the numerous policy- and decision-makers, i.e. the directors of urban change, create representations of the urban space. The 'directors of urban change' are defined as actors who have explicit ideas about urban development and who are in a position to formulate and influence future developments. The directors of urban change consist of various actors such as urban planners, architects, road-builders, city administrators, real estate developers, financiers, non-governmental organizations, scholars, and visual, performing and literary artists. These professional urbanites can be found at the local, national, and international levels, and the directors of change are considered part of the network society, the most important among them functioning as nodes. These professional urbanites have visionary ideas about urban form, they negotiate how urban space should be shaped, and, if possible, try to appropriate this space.

Questions

The two main questions are (1) how do the directors of new urban developments in Asia envision the future and (2) how do the directors succeed in realizing their ideas? The first question can be specified by questions

such as: Who are the directors of future urban developments? What are their ideas on or concepts of urban change? From what sources do their ideas derive? And to what extent are the ideas of the directors compatible with each other's ideas, with traditional, local concepts of urbanization, and with the present built environment? The ideas and visions of the directors are only important if they are realized in a particular city or are considered influential in a more general way. The next step will be to elaborate on the balance of power between the various directors and the political games they played in their attempts to appropriate and mould urban space. This leads to the following questions: How are these directors linked through networks? To what extent do they manage to realize their visionary ideas? To what extent do they succeed in introducing institutional change, such as legal frameworks or training programmes, in order to increase the influence of their own faction on urban forms in the long run? Why are some directors more successful in realizing their ideas than others?

We may conclude that the cities in Asia, and more specifically in Indonesia, are very important, all the more so because of the tremendous growth, which is turning them into mega-urban regions. The processes of

mega-urbanization are partially spontaneous and partially planned. Scientific knowledge on the interplay of spontaneous growth and planned development in the context of current mega-urbanization is very limited; this is why further study of mega-city formation processes is of the utmost importance.

We are developing a research programme that will investigate the directors of change, and their visions and ideas, in Asian mega-cities. As a

first step a workshop on this theme will take place in Leiden, 12-14 December 2002. It will adopt a comparative approach, not only contrasting Asian cities with each other, but also assessing the development of European and, perhaps, American cities. In the nineteenth century, London, Paris, Vienna, Milan, and Berlin were among the first modern cities with populations of over one million inhabitants and their examples can be instructive. But in the 'network society' the crucial distinction is no longer between the West and the developing world, but between places which are more or less connected or disconnected to global networks. <

Dr Freek Colombijn lectures at the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia and Oceania, Leiden University. He is an anthropologist and historian specializing in Indonesia and has published on urban development, environmental change, football, state formation, and violence in Indonesia.
f.colombijn@let.leidenuniv.nl

Dr Peter J.M. Nas is affiliated with the Department of Social and Cultural Studies, Leiden University. He is Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology, Leiden University. His main topics of interest are urban and applied sociology and anthropology with a regional focus on Indonesia, where he has conducted fieldwork.
nas@fsw.leidenuniv.nl



The Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur

Local Land Use Strategies in a Globalizing World

Agenda >
General

21-23 August 2003
Copenhagen,
Denmark

During the last decade, a number of developing countries have seen both rapid economic growth and even more rapid economic decline, particularly in Southeast Asia, stemming from the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Each country and region has experienced these changes differently, but all have become firmly involved in a wider process of globalization. Accompanying these recent changes have been apparently increasing climatic variability, population growth and movement, land use change, deforestation, and what some have termed 'globalization of poverty'. Other changes include increasing commercialization, trans-border trade, and the creation of new economic, social, and political alignments. These changing conditions come along with strengthened state power in some places leading to increasing constraints on local peoples' livelihoods. Elsewhere weakened state power has resulted in more local autonomy but also more threats from outside in the form of uncontrolled resource exploitation. All of these changes have led to heightened concern over the sustainability of nat-

ural resource use, a central issue of the proposed conference organized by the Institute of Geography at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Local, rural peoples (whether indigenous or migrant) have had to deal with these changes as the globalization process and its accompanying effects reach into their social and economic lives. Local land use strategies have undergone changes as a result, as people adapt earlier practices to the new circumstances. This might be in terms of shortened fallows in swidden systems, expanded agro-forestry, short-term cash and long-term cash cropping, or expanded irrigation of rice fields. Local peoples are continually constrained in what they can do economically by both their natural and social environments, and the globalization process may affect these constraints through, for example, increasing commercialization of agriculture, land degradation from logging and mining, expanded and shifting opportunities for labour migration, and changing notions of household necessity and luxury. Of particular importance here is the well-documented

'occupational multiplicity', the diverse sources of income in farming households that affect decisions and practices with respect to land and other natural resource use.

In this conference, we aim to examine the interconnectedness of global and national processes of change, and local, rural land use strategies and practices that are affected by these wider processes and that directly shape social and natural environments at the local level. We will provide comparative insights into the ways local peoples have responded to economic growth and decline, and to economic development and crisis in their uses of the land. We will also, through interdisciplinary analysis, seek to establish direct linkages between these responses and environmental change. This then concerns such practices as swidden (or shifting) cultivation, its associated fallow and agro-forestry aspects, use of forest products, intensive farming systems such as irrigated rice, cash cropping of everything from vegetables and cereals to plantation crops and paper pulp, and the relationship between resource use and

off-farm diversification. Critically important to these practices are the social arrangements and institutions that people have devised to manage their relations to the land and its resources as well as their strategies for managing lands under increasing pressure. We are particularly interested in examining how locals have adapted to the shift from the era of rapid development in the 1980s and early 1990s to the economic crisis in 1997, with its continuing ramifications on the environment today. One central goal of this conference is to consider the extent to which locals' management of their natural resources in the face of the changes over the past decade is sustainable. <

Contact >

For further information and proposal submission:
Ole Mertz
Institute of Geography, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
om@geogr.ku.dk
Reed Wadley
Department of Anthropology, University of Missouri,
Columbia, USA
wadleyr@missouri.edu

November 2002

19–22 November 2002

Shanghai, China

'Re-negotiating the Politics of the Public and the Private – Gender and Politics in China and the Nordic Countries'

Contact: Dr Cecilia Milwertz, (NIAS)

Milwertz@nias.ku.dk

Dr Pauline Stoltz, (Malmö University)

Pauline.Stoltz@ts.mah.se

Dr Qi Wang, (Aarhus University)

QW@ps.au.dk

22 November 2002

Leiden, the Netherlands

'SoY (South of Yangtze) Linguistics Colloquium'

Convenor: Dr Rint Sybesma

r.p.e.sybesma@let.leidenuniv.nl

22–24 November 2002

New Delhi, India

'Globalization, Development and Human Rights, IPSA/Human Rights Research Committee Conference'

Organizer: Institute for World Congress on Human Rights (IWCOHR)

Contact: Prof. K.P. Saksena

iwcohr@ndf.vsnl.net.in or

iwcohr@vsnl.com

25 November 2002

London, United Kingdom

'Impulsive Shakespeare: Prosody in Japanese Translations of A Midsummer Night's Dream', seminar

Information: AHRB Centre for Asian and African Literatures at UCL and SOAS

ahrblit@soas.ac.uk

www.soas.ac.uk/literatures

26 November 2002

Canberra, ACT, Australia

'National Integration and Regionalism in Indonesia and Malaysia (NIRIM): Past and Present'

Convenors: Mimako Sakai, John Walker and Glenn Banks (University of New South Wales at ADFA)

Contact: Susan Cowan

s.cowan@adfa.edu.au

http://idun.itsc.adfa.edu.au/SOE/nirim.html

27 November 2002

Amsterdam, the Netherlands

'Contemporary Identity: Indian Writers and their View on the Challenges of Contemporary Identity'

Invited writers: Shauna Singh Baldwin,

9 January 2003

Delhi, India

'City One', South Asia's First conference on the Urban Experience

Sarai Programme, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies

Contact: Ravi Sundaram

ravis@sarai.net

17–19 January 2003

Leiden, the Netherlands

'Historical Consciousness and the Future of Modern China and Japan: Conservatism, Revisionism, and National Identity?'

IAS sponsored workshop

Convenors: Prof. Rikki Kersten and Prof. Axel Schneider

r.kersten@let.leidenuniv.nl

a.schneider@let.leidenuniv.nl or

February 2003

8 February 2003

New Haven, Connecticut, USA

'Solidarity: Addressing Socio-Economic Disparities in South Asian America'

Contact: Ruchika Budhraj (Yale University)

www.yale.edu

10 February 2003

Jerusalem, Israel

'The Russo-Japanese War & the 20th Century: An Assessment from a Centennial Perspective'

Contact: Dr Rotem Kowner (University of Haifa)

kowner@research.haifa.ac.il

14–15 February 2003

Berkeley, CA, USA

18th Annual South Asia Conference

Information: University of California, Berkeley

csasast@uclink.berkeley.edu

http://ias.berkeley.edu/southasia

17–21 February 2003

Calcutta, India

'Contemporary perspectives on identity and territory in India', 6th AJEI Workshop

Contact: Remy Delage and Zoé E. Headley

ateliers@ajei.org

Information and online registration: www.ajei.org

20–22 February 2003

London, United Kingdom

'Culture, Colonisation, and Decolonisation'

13–17 May 2003

Leiden, the Netherlands

'Empirical Universals in Semantics: Lexicon and Grammar'

IAS semantics master-class

Convenors: Dr Cliff Goddard and Prof. Anna Wierzbicka

Information: ias@let.leidenuniv.nl

23–25 May 2003

Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom

'20th Annual Sanskrit Tradition in the Modern World (STIMW) Seminar'

Contact: Dr Will Sweetman (University of Newcastle)

will.sweetman@ncl.ac.uk

April 2003

3–5 April 2003

New York, NY, USA

'History, National Identity, and Political Order in the New Eastern Europe and Eurasia', 8th Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN), Columbia University

Contact: Troy McGrath, ASN Convention Program Chair

asn@hartwick.edu

4 April 2003

Baltimore, Maryland, USA

'Music of Japan Today 2003'

Organizers: Dr Kazuko Tanosaki and Prof. E. Michael Richards

kazukotanosaki@netscape.net

emrichards@umbc.edu

June 2003

June 2003

Stockholm, Sweden

'New Perspectives in Eurasian Archaeology', ASEF-Asia Alliance workshop

Convenors: Dr Magnus Fiskesjö (Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Sweden) and Chen Xingcan (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China).

Information: magnus.fiskesjo@ostasiatiska.se

www.asia-alliance.org/workshopseries

June 2003

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

'International Security and the Asian Heartland'

An international symposium organized by the School of Foreign Service of the National University of Mongolia, in cooperation with the IIAS and The Netherlands Institute of International Relations

'Clingendae'

Convenors: Prof. Kh. Bayasakh (the School of Foreign Service of the

July 2003

2 July 2003

Brisbane, Australia

'Japanese Studies Association of Australia 2003 Biennial Conference: Innovation and Resistance in Japan'

Queensland University of Technology

Panel proposals: Dr Christopher Pokarie

c.pokarier@qut.edu.au

Conference organization: Mr Jason Thomas

jw.thomas@qut.edu.au

5–9 July 2003

Moscow, Russian Federation

International Conference on South Asia Literatures and Languages (ICOSAL)

Organizer: Institute of Asian and African Studies, Moscow State University

Contact: Dr Ludmila V. Khokhlova (languages)

khokhl@iaas.msu.ru

Dr Alexander M. Dubynskiy (literatures)

dubian@iaas.msu.ru

October 2003

October 2003

Leiden, the Netherlands

'Country Trade and European Empire in the Arabian Seas: 17th and 18th Century'

IIAS workshop

Convenor: Dr R.J. Barendse

r.barendse@worldonline.nl

Information: iias@let.leidenuniv.nl

November 2003

22–25 November 2003

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

'AAR - Annual American Academy of Religion Conference'

Information: www.aarweb.org/annualmeet

March 2004

5–7 March 2004

San Diego, CA, USA

'Town & Country Resort', AAS (Association for Asian Studies) Annual Meeting 2004

Information: www.aasianst.org/annmtg.htm

May 2004

May 2004

Copenhagen, Denmark

'New Chinese Migrants: Globalisation of Chinese Overseas Migration', The 5th Conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Over-

birgit@staemmlier.de

www.eajs.org/whatsnew/warsaw.html

Deadline for Abstracts: 27 June 2003

September 2003

6–12 September 2003

Oxford, United Kingdom

International Association for Tibetan Studies, Tenth Seminar

Contact: Charles Ramble, convenor of the Tenth IATS

ias@wolfson.ox.ac.uk

www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/iats/

Deadline for Abstracts: 1 January 2003

11–13 September 2003

Cambridge, United Kingdom

'Interweaving Medical Traditions: Europe and Asia, 1600–2000', ASEF-Asia Alliance workshop

Convenors: Dr Sanjoy Bhattacharya (Welcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine, UK) and Dr R.K. Chem

(National University of Singapore).

Information: sanjoy.bhattacharya@ucl.ac.uk

- Shashi Tharoor, and Nirmal Verma
 Convenor: Dr Thomas de Bruijn and Anil Ramdas
 Information: ias@let.leidenuniv.nl
- 28-29 November 2002**
Canberra, Australia
 'Vietnam Update 2002: Local Government and Authority in Vietnam'
 Jointly organized by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore and the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia
 For further information:
 Bev Fraser
bevley@coombs.anu.edu.au
 Further details are also posted at:
 The ANU's Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies website
<http://rspas.anu.edu.au>
- 29 November 2002**
Tokyo, Japan
 'Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders'; German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) International Conference
 Contact: Sven Saaler
saaler@dijtokyo.org
[www.dijtokyo.org](http://dijtokyo.org)
- December 2002**
2 December 2002
London, United Kingdom
 'Tokyo As a Metaphor for Modernity', seminar
 AHRB Centre for Asian and African Literatures, SOAS
 Information: ahrblit@soas.ac.uk
www.soas.ac.uk/literatures/
- 3-9 December 2002**
Yunan Province, China
 'Hani/Akha Culture', Fourth International Conference
 Contact: Li Qibo (The Honghe Research Institute of Nationalities)
hnhxh@yahoo.com.cn
www.nomabei.yeah.net
- 4-6 December 2002**
London, United Kingdom
 '1453 to 1699: Cultural Encounters between East and West'
 University of London, Institute of English Studies
www.sas.ac.uk/ies/Conferences/EastWest.Programme.htm
- 4-7 December 2002**
New Delhi, India
 'The Environmental History of Asia'
 Contact: Professor Deepak Kumar (JNU) and Dr Richard Grove (ANU)
envhstasia@hotmail.com
- 13-15 December 2002**
Oxford, United Kingdom
 'Space, Psyche and Psychiatry: Mental Health/ Illness and the Construction and Experience of Space, ca. 1600-2000'
 Organizer: Research Centre, Oxford Brookes University
 Information:
www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/artsandhumanities/conferences
- 14 December 2002**
Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
 'Focus on South Asia: Youth Initiative for Peace'
 Contact: Ragni Kidvai
ragni.kidvai@initiativeforpeace.org
 Information:
peacecamp@initiativeforpeace.org
www.youth.initiativeforpeace.org
- 18-22 December 2002**
Dhaka, Bangladesh
 17th International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA) Conference
 Contact: K.M. Mohsin, Secretary-General
 University of Dhaka
duregstr@bangla.net or
history@du.bangla.net
- 19-21 December 2002**
Paris, France
 Fifth Biannual Conference of SFEJ
 Contact: SFEJ secretariat
secretariat@sfej.asso.fr
<http://sfej.asso.fr>
- 20 December 2002**
Delhi, India
 'Cultures of Masculinity in South Asia: Exploring the Contexts'
 Contact: Dr Radhika Chopra (Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University)
chosen@bol.net.in
 Dr Sanjay Srivastava (Deakin University)
sanjays@deakin.edu.au
- 28-30 December 2002**
Visakhapatnam, India
 'Changing Role of Political Institutions in Contemporary Society'
 Contact: Prof. P. Krishna Prasad, Organizing Secretary (Andhra University)
pothiinp19@rediffmail.com
www.ausde.com/pol_pad.asp
- January 2003**
2-5 January 2003
Chicago, Illinois, USA
 'Frontiers', 117th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association
 Information:
 Anand.Yang@m.cc.utah.edu
www.theaha.org/annual/2003/cfp2003.htm
- 13-15 December 2002**
Oxford, United Kingdom
 'Space, Psyche and Psychiatry: Mental Health/ Illness and the Construction and Experience of Space, ca. 1600-2000'
 Organizer: Research Centre, Oxford Brookes University
 Information:
www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/artsandhumanities/conferences
- 14 December 2002**
Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
 'Focus on South Asia: Youth Initiative for Peace'
 Contact: Ragni Kidvai
ragni.kidvai@initiativeforpeace.org
 Information:
peacecamp@initiativeforpeace.org
www.youth.initiativeforpeace.org
- 18-22 December 2002**
Dhaka, Bangladesh
 17th International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA) Conference
 Contact: K.M. Mohsin, Secretary-General
 University of Dhaka
duregstr@bangla.net or
history@du.bangla.net
- 19-21 December 2002**
Paris, France
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 Contact: SFEJ secretariat
secretariat@sfej.asso.fr
<http://sfej.asso.fr>
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Delhi, India
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 Contact: Dr Radhika Chopra (Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University)
chosen@bol.net.in
 Dr Sanjay Srivastava (Deakin University)
sanjays@deakin.edu.au
- 28-30 December 2002**
Visakhapatnam, India
 'Changing Role of Political Institutions in Contemporary Society'
 Contact: Prof. P. Krishna Prasad, Organizing Secretary (Andhra University)
pothiinp19@rediffmail.com
www.ausde.com/pol_pad.asp
- January 2003**
2-5 January 2003
Chicago, Illinois, USA
 'Frontiers', 117th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association
 Information:
 Anand.Yang@m.cc.utah.edu
www.theaha.org/annual/2003/cfp2003.htm
- 23-26 July 2003**
Heidelberg, Germany
 'Bhakti in Current Research 2001-2003', Ninth International Conference on Early Devotional Literatures in New Indo-Aryan Languages
 Contact: Prof. Monika Boehm-Tettelbach (University Of Heidelberg)
an9@ix.urz.uni-heidelberg.de
- 24-27 July 2003**
Penang, Malaysia
 'Southeast Asia since 1945: Reflections and Visions'
 Organizer: Asia Pacific Research Unit (APRU), School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia
 Contact: Dr Ooi Keat Gin
kgooi@hotmail.com
 General Enquiries: Mrs Thilagavathi Vasudevan, Secretary, Organizing Committee
vthila@usm.my
- August 2003**
19-22 August 2003
Singapore
 'Third International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS3)'
 Organizer: National University of Singapore
 Information: icas3sec@nus.edu.sg
www.fas.nus.edu.sg/icas3 and
www.icassecretariat.org
- 25-29 August 2003**
Dunhuang, Gansu Province, China
 'Conservation of Ancient Sites on the Silk Road', and International Conference on the Conservation of Grotto Sites
 Contact (outside China): Kathleen Louw (The Getty Conservation Institute)
klouw@getty.edu
 Contact (within China): Su Boming (The Dunhuang Academy)
cidha@public.iiz.gs.cn
www.getty.edu/conservation
- 27-30 August 2003**
Warsaw, Poland
 'The 10th International Conference of European Association for Japanese Studies (EASJ)'
 Contact: Bernhard Scheid
bernhard.scheid@oeaw.ac.at
 Birgit Staemmler
- 29 June - 2 July 2003**
Nijmegen, the Netherlands
 'Indonesian Linguistics'
 IAS workshop
 Convenor: Prof. Hein Steinhauer
 Information: ias@let.leidenuniv.nl
- 29 June - 2 July 2003**
Baku, Azerbaijan
 'Caucasus and Central Asia in the Globalization'
 Contact: Osman Nuri Aras (Qafqaz University)
aras@qafqaz.edu.az or
on_aras@yahoo.com
 Vefa Abbasova,
vefanur@hotmail.com
- 27-30 March 2003**
New York, NY, USA
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an9@ix.urz.uni-heidelberg.de
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kgooi@hotmail.com
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vthila@usm.my
- August 2003**
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klouw@getty.edu
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cidha@public.iiz.gs.cn
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bernhard.scheid@oeaw.ac.at
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voinov@kimep.kz
www.kimep.kz/research
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pgwing@midway.uchicago.edu
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aras@qafqaz.edu.az or
on_aras@yahoo.com
 Vefa Abbasova,
vefanur@hotmail.com
- 16-23 March 2003**
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 Information: office@waterforum3.com
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r.l.weeks@sussex.ac.uk
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ragni.kidvai@initiativeforpeace.org
 Information:
peacecamp@initiativeforpeace.org
www.youth.initiativeforpeace.org
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 Contact: K.M. Mohsin, Secretary-General
 University of Dhaka
duregstr@bangla.net or
history@du.bangla.net
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 Contact: SFEJ secretariat
secretariat@sfej.asso.fr
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sanjays@deakin.edu.au
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 Contact: Prof. P. Krishna Prasad, Organizing Secretary (Andhra University)
pothiinp19@rediffmail.com
www.ausde.com/pol_pad.asp
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 Information:
 Anand.Yang@m.cc.utah.edu
www.theaha.org/annual/2003/cfp2003.htm
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Editorial Office

Visiting address: Nonnensteeg 1-3, Leiden
Mailing address: IIAS, P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands
T +31-71-527 2227
F +31-71-527 4162
iiasnews@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.iias.nl

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