



Cutting near Voi Station, 1890. Courtesy: Railway Archives, Nairobi (see p.18-19)

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Comparative Intellectual Histories of Early Modern Asia



NEWSLETTER

We need to find what we are not looking for

The Master Class on “Comparative Intellectual Histories of the Early Modern World” was held at the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden in May-June, 2006. The idea of a master class – assembling a team of scholars to discuss recent advances in a field with doctoral and postdoctoral students – is the brain child of IIAS’s former director, Wim Stokhof, and I express my thanks to him for his vision and energy in making this intellectual experiment possible.

I say experiment because none of the participants, the instructors included, had ever engaged in this kind of comparative intellectual-historical conversation. As Michael Cook confessed, although he works with Benjamin Elman in the very same building at Princeton University, the two had never previously exchanged ideas on problems shared across their regions. It was just this sort of non-communication – fallout from the division of the world of knowledge into studies of areas – that the class was designed in part to address.

Sheldon Pollock

To be sure, knowledge always begins in specific places, and one of our aims was to share new knowledge about ideas and intellectual practices in the places we study. But more crucial and challenging was it to address the three critical problems embedded in the title to the class, problems that are either only now coming under study, or are understudied, or even unstudied:

- What sense does it make to speak of *early modernity* in the sphere of mental life outside the early modern West—that is, in Asia in the several centuries preceding European expansion? What problems do we face in defining such modernity? Is ‘early modernity’ a useful concept in writing the history of Asian thought?
- What are the special tasks, methods, or theoretical commitments that constitute *intellectual* history as a separate and valid form of knowledge? Does the intellectual history of early-modern Asia have tasks, methods or theoretical commitments that differentiate it from the study of intellectual history as developed from European materials? Is there an unacknowl-

edged link between the events of European intellectual history and what are seen as ‘general’ methods of intellectual history?

- What are the aims and methods of a *comparative* intellectual history of the early modern world? How do we do it, and what precisely are we trying to discover when we do do it?

I can’t address all these questions – the assembled essays here collectively do so in their different ways – but will offer only a summary of my introductory remarks. I can be relatively brief about ‘early modernity’ and ‘intellectual history’ since our specific challenge was coming to terms with the problem of comparativism.

The uses and abuses of ‘early modernity’

Early modernity has been a much disputed topic of conversation among scholars of Asia for the past decade, both regionalists and generalists. Many object to the apparent teleology of the idea, committing us as it is supposed to do to some inevitable developmental goal (so Randolph Starn). Of course,

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Have a taste of an IIAS Masterclass with Sheldon Pollock’s theme on Intellectual Histories. pp. 1-13

How modern are the exact sciences? Kim Plofker explains about the early days. p. 14

Don’t go don’t go, stay back my friend... but they did go. Punjabi diaspora in East Africa. Photo Essay pp. 18-19

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Director's note

The first part of this newsletter consists of papers that were presented last year during an IIAS Masterclass organised round the theme of 'Comparative Intellectual Histories of Early Modern Asia'.

With some of you, the term 'master class' may evoke images of forms of education that belong to the past, and are no longer in vogue: the students lined up to absorb the wisdom conveyed to them by the master; the master speaking, the students listening. This certainly is a caricature of what is really happening, or what can be made to happen. As a matter of fact, at IIAS we see our Masterclasses as a valuable and intensive form of interaction between junior and senior scholars. The juniors, usually PhD students or young post-docs, are asked to prepare a presentation about their work. The master has read these presentations beforehand and reacts on them during the class. What follows is a debate between student and master and, of course, among the other participants. For the students this can be a pleasant excursion away from the paradigm of one's supervisor. Young researchers are forced to consider other ways of approaching their subject matter, and become acquainted with other disciplines, or with similar problems in other regions. Of course, many variations are possible within this format: fewer or more students, one or several masters, with or without an audience, etc. But as the example of the IIAS Masterclass by Sheldon Pollock shows, disciplinary and regional widening of one's research horizon is the prime effect, something that is often difficult to achieve within the regular MA or PhD training curricula. With the articles in this newsletter we hope to convey something of the excitement of a successful IIAS Masterclass. IIAS will continue organising Masterclasses. Do consult IIAS Newsletter and our website for announcements!

Max Sparreboom
Director



The International Institute for Asian Studies is a postdoctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Our main objective is to encourage the interdisciplinary and comparative study of Asia and to promote national and international cooperation in the field. The institute focuses on the humanities and social sciences and their interaction with other sciences.

IIAS values dynamism and versatility in its research programmes. Post-doctoral research fellows are temporarily employed by or affiliated to IIAS, either within a collaborative research programme or individually. In its aim to disseminate broad, in-depth knowledge of Asia, the institute organizes seminars, workshops and conferences, and publishes the *IIAS Newsletter* with a circulation of 26,000.

IIAS runs a database for Asian Studies with information on researchers and research-related institutes worldwide. As an international mediator and a clearing-house for knowledge and information, IIAS is active in creating international networks and launching international cooperative projects and research programmes. In this way, the institute functions as a window on Europe for non-European scholars and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Asia and Europe.

IIAS also administers the secretariat of the European Alliance for Asian Studies (Asia Alliance: www.asia-alliance.org) and the Secretariat General of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS: www.icassecretariat.org). Updates on the activities of the Asia Alliance and ICAS are published in this newsletter. <

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Cultural fellowship programme at the IIAS branch office in Amsterdam

Call for Applicants

As the cultural capital of the Netherlands, Amsterdam is the vibrant home to a wide range of cultural activities and facilities. The city features, among many other museums, the Rijksmuseum, the Photography Museum (FOAM), the Stedelijk Museum for contemporary art, the Van Gogh Museum and the Appel Foundation. The city hosts academies for music, visual arts, design, fashion, film and theatre. Amsterdam also counts several musical venues which feature Asia-related exhibitions and performances, including the renowned pop and jazz venues Paradiso, De Melkweg and Het Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ.

The IIAS branch office in Amsterdam, hosted by the University of Amsterdam (UvA), invites scholars working on Asian culture and arts and those working on the intersection of the academic and the cultural field to apply for a fellowship. The branch is particularly interested to attract scholars and artists with an interest in cultural studies, media studies and critical (postcolonial) theory, preferably with a comparative angle. The University hosts departments in both social sciences and humanities. Asia-related institutes in Amsterdam include the Amsterdam School for Social Research (ASSR), Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASiA), the International Institute for Social History (IISG), the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD), The Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT).

Please surf to our website at www.iias.nl for further details and application forms, or email the coordinator of the branch, Dr. Jeroen de Kloet: b.j.dekloet@uva.nl.

Wertheim Lecture 2007

The Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR) and Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASiA) are proud to announce the Wertheim Lecture 2007 entitled: 'Making Poverty History? Unequal Development Today' by Jomo Kwame Sundaram, 21 May, 15-17, Amsterdam.

Jomo is Assistant Secretary General for Economic Development at the United Nations and was Professor in Applied Economics at Universiti Malaya. He has published extensively on economic development, global inequality, the Asian financial crisis and ethnicity and entrepreneurship.

For more details please refer to our website <http://www.iias.nl/asia/wertheim> where you will also find all previous Wertheim lectures in pdf format for public reference and class use.

5th EuroSEAS



Call for papers

The 5th EuroSEAS Conference will be held from 12 to 15 September 2007 at the University of Naples 'L'Orientale' in Italy. The conference will be held from Wednesday, 12 September in the morning to Friday, 14 September in the late afternoon. The official start will take place in the morning of Wednesday 12 September. The main conference venue: Palazzo Mediterraneo, Via Marina 59. The building is a brand-new institution equipped with state of the art technology for multi-media presentations. The organizers hope that new media will be presented at the Conference. A movie programme is scheduled showing a number of movies from or about Southeast Asia.

At the moment, more than 40 panels have been organized ranging from topics like identity, religion and sexual cultures to the classic themes of the colonial state and imagined communities in Southeast Asia. New themes like genetics and the impact of new media on the public domain are proposed as well. Panel conveners are in close relationship with prospective panelists to submit abstracts and papers for the conference. An overview of all the panels can be found at the Euroseas website <http://www.euroseas.org/2007/>

Euroseas as an organization is not able to finance individual presenters at the conference, but inquiries can be made in case financial support is required from local sponsors and an official statement is needed.

The European Association for South-East Asian Studies (EuroSEAS) is an international initiative to foster scholarly cooperation within Europe in the field of South-east Asian studies. The Association was founded in 1992 during a meeting of 19 leading Southeast Asia specialists.

Currently chaired by Pierre-Yves Manguin (Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris), with a permanent secretariat in Napoli (Italy), EuroSEAS aims to promote Southeast Asian studies in Europe. It intends to facilitate exchanges and cooperation among European based Southeast Asianists working in the fields of human and social sciences, as well as between European and Southeast Asian scholars.

EuroSEAS conferences are organized once every three years. Previous conferences were held in Leiden, Hamburg, London and Paris and numerous publications have originated from these meetings. Because of the present size of the conference, initiatives for publication are left to the panel organizers. One of the explicit aims of the organization is to provide a platform for discussions which move beyond attention to a single country. Comparative themes in particular connecting insular with mainland Southeast Asia are of special interest.

The Board

EuroSEAS is led by an international Board whose members are elected every three years. EuroSEAS is responsible for the present website (<http://www.euroseas.org>), which provides a guide to Southeast Asian studies in European universities, updates on research and educational programmes underway, as well as on the publications of specialists in the different member countries. The names and affiliations of the members of the international board, divided along different member countries, can be found on the website. Euroseas also encourages any initiative to discuss the future of Asian Studies and its implications for local research in the Southeast Asian region.

ASiA
Asian Studies
in Amsterdam



The Amsterdam School for Social science Research (ASSR) and Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASiA) are proud to announce the launch of the Wertheim lecture website at <http://www.iias.nl/asia/wertheim/>. All previous Wertheim lectures will be available in pdf format for public reference and class use.

The Wertheim lecture was initiated by the ASSR in 1990 in recognition of W.F. Wertheim's major contributions to the European tradition of historical-sociological research on mod-

ern Asia. Starting 2006, the annual Wertheim-lecture is jointly organised by the ASSR and ASiA. The ASSR (www2.fmg.uva.nl/assr/) is a national research school and a research institute of the University of Amsterdam where social scientists cooperate in multi-disciplinary research. ASiA is an initiative of the Board of the University of Amsterdam and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden. ASiA's goal is to stimulate, facilitate and broaden research activities on Asia in Amsterdam, and to make the outcomes and insights of research accessible to a wider audience.

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our inquiry is perforce ‘teleological’ in the sense of aiming to understand what occurred in the past that enabled us to get us to the telos – if that is still the right word here – we have gotten to. There is no way to forget the end of this story just because we concentrate on the beginning – indeed, we wouldn’t even know where to begin the story if we didn’t know how it has ended because we wouldn’t know what the story was. Others object that many so-called early modernities never became full modernities except when mediated through western modernisation. But what if western modernisation short-circuited other processes of transformation? No given present was *bound* to come out of any given past; but our present has come out, and we want to know how and why it has.

Few deny that over the three centuries up to 1800 Eurasia as a whole witnessed unprecedented developments: the opening of sea passages that were global for the first time in history, and of networks of trade and commodity-production for newly global markets; spectacular demographic growth (the world’s population doubled); the rise of large stable states; the diffusion of new technologies (gunpowder, printing) and crops from the Americas. If this is a list (borrowed from John Richards) of what is supposed to make life ‘modern’ rather than just new or different, what part of the world failed to experience early modernity? On the other hand, if we descend from that broad definition of the early modern to the narrow – the presence of fossil-fuel technology, constitutional governance, and religious freedom and secularisation (Jack Goldstone’s view) – there will be no case of early modernity aside from Britain. We may instead argue that modernity is additionally, or exclusively, a condition of consciousness. But what kind of consciousness? If we stipulate this a priori in light of European experience – a new sense of the individual, a new scepticism, a new historical sensibility, to name three Master Categories – and go forth to find them, we are likely to succeed, since you usually find what you are looking for. Or conversely, if we set out to find them – an Indian Montaigne, a Chinese Descartes, an Arab Vico – and somehow do not, well, too bad then, there will be no pre-European Asian modernity at all.

A good deal of current discussions of early modernity is irrelevant, I suggest, for the purposes of our master class, or even an obstruction; as Frederick Cooper argues, the notion of modernity has had an important historical role in making claims, but is virtually useless as an analytic concept. We are therefore perfectly justified in seeking to understand how various the world was *at the moment before* what would become the dominant form of modernity – colonial, capitalist, western – achieved global ascendancy (even if that question can only be posed in the moment after). We can call it ‘early modern’ simply in the sense of a threshold, where potentially different futures may have been arrested (or retained only as *masala* for that dominant form). But we can go further. Since the material world changed dramatically during the few centuries before this threshold, and changed universally, there is good reason to ask how

the systems devised for knowing the world responded – or why they failed to respond – to the world that was changing objectively between these dates. At the same time there is good reason to resist the teleology – here indeed an infelicity – in the term ‘early modern’ and so refuse to assign this period any shared structure or content a priori, let alone to insist on finding in it western modernity in embryonic form (the Chinese Descartes). The trap of definitional consistency is precisely what we need to avoid, as my remarks on comparison will make clear.

In short, the period constitutes an entirely reasonable framework for a comparative intellectual history, without leading us to posit any necessary uniformity in the history of intellection that transpired. Everyone began to participate in a new world economy, to live in new, larger, and more stable states, to confront a demographic explosion, a diffusion of new technology, vaster movements of people in a newly unified world. How did people experience these transformations in the realm of thought? That is what we need to discover. I think there may be remarkable parallels awaiting discovery, aside from the shocking parallel that the period – empty vestibule, it has been thought, between high tradition and westernization – is all but unstudied everywhere. But we should not worry if they are not found. A ‘negative’ outcome, say, of stability in the face of dynamic change elsewhere – producing a global version of what Ernst Bloch saw as modernity’s constitutive ‘Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen’ (a multiplex simultaneity of things that are non-simultaneous) – would be as important as a ‘positive’ one, since we are interested in knowing why people may wish to preserve forms of knowledge in the face of changing objects of knowledge no less than in knowing why they may be prepared to change them.

The life and death of intellectual history

Probably no subfield of the discipline of history has experienced a more precipitous decline in the past generation than intellectual history. In Chinese studies, the retreat from intellectual into social history seems widely symptomatic of a broader trend. (In Indian studies intellectual history never really existed as a theorised scholarly practice, so there was nothing to retreat from.) *Comparative* intellectual history has fared even worse – in fact, it is hard to claim the practice even exists in any acceptable, *historical form* (comparisons of Shankara and Heidegger, for example, in this sense fall entirely outside intellectual history). Notwithstanding the relative indifference toward it, intellectual history and what I will suggest is its necessary complement, comparative intellectual history, constitute an important new horizon on the terrain of early modern Eurasian history and, I would even claim, the foundation for any future study of modernity or colonial transformations. We cannot possibly understand what changes colonialism and capitalist modernity wrought in Asia – in the social, political, scientific, aesthetic or other sphere – without understanding what was there, in the domain of concepts, to be changed. One measure of the relative health of a

field is the state of its self-reflection. In intellectual history so little work of this sort is being done these days that the case might seem beyond hope. Certainly scholars continue to write about Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. But no serious new conceptualisation of what it means to do intellectual history has appeared (so far as I know) in several decades, only modest expressions of concern (by Donald Kelley, for example, or Anthony Padgen), or restatements of older positions.

One such restatement has recently been published by the master of the history of early modern British political thought, Quentin Skinner. Intellectual history remains, according to Skinner, a poorly articulated field of research. In part this is because of its dispersal across the disciplinary landscape. In terms of objects, Skinner reasserts the centrality of the great texts – it is mere philistinism to demand that Delft tiles be studied equally with (let alone instead of) Vermeer’s paintings. In terms of method, he reasserts contextualism against reception history – the meaning that counts in the author’s intentional meaning – and the history of ideas against social history – the impact of a text or the breadth of its dissemination is entirely irrelevant to its intellectual history; in other words, the measure of the importance of an idea is independent of the power it historically exerted. Lastly, the understanding of ideas is not about capturing some transhistorical essence of meaning; it must be resolutely historicist and centered on their discursive deployment in their original context. This alone enables us to see the web of what Skinner describes as the contingencies that produced the understandings with which we ourselves now operate, and to enable us to frame new ones.

Now of course these are the ideas that Quentin Skinner has defended so brilliantly for the past 40 years. And they are good ideas, to be sure – who doesn’t accept contextualism these days, if they are at all serious about historical knowledge? But they are old ideas that have become static, old answers to old questions. Furthermore, they are not the only ones on offer, and the dismissal of these others may have something to do with the gradual erosion of intellectual history itself for the perception is widespread that intellectual history is arrogantly elitist, brutally historicist, narrowly textualist, unreflexively great-man-ist (and great-man-ist), and of course, preternaturally idealist. Some of this critique is clearly unfair – intellectual history is by definition concerned with texts and ideas, after all – but others hit closer to home. Gadamer, for example, makes the reception-history of a text an essential – if not *the* essential – dimension of meaning, and integral to this process is what he calls the ‘application’ of the text, its truth for us. Foucault almost completely erases agents and their intentions from intellectual history, to say nothing of demonstrating the value of supplementing the great texts with the most pedestrian kinds of data. And measuring the importance of an idea independently of its historical power (though in fact we only read Hobbes because he in fact exerted historical power) is, as Padgen has observed, precisely the position that would be contested by social history, which has sought to substitute the history of mentalities (the real thought worlds of ordinary people)

for the textualised thoughts of the elite.

If Padgen is right in saying that intellectual history is at a kind of crossroads and needs to establish a secure identity in order to advance, it will be useful for us to remain as conceptually alert as possible about what we are doing in our master class. Overcoming western national traditions of scholarship by globalizing the conversation and overcoming Europe by including the non-West (so Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann) are obvious moves, though whether there are specific methods for achieving such overcoming is open to serious discussion (one that has so far yet to be opened). In addition – though this is hardly a very revolutionary suggestion – intellectual history has to mean exploring (textualised) thought in relation to historical change not just in relation to change in other thought, which seems to me only part of the story, but in relation to change in the society and polity within which that thought occurs. Intellectual history is concerned with more than speech acts and authorial intentions; it is also concerned with social practices. And its context is more than linguistic and intellectual; it is also institutional and political.

This linkage brings intellectual history closer to Reinhart Koselleck’s *Begriffsgeschichte*. This proximity is a good thing. For starters, intellectual history can derive support from Koselleck’s arguments for the central place of conceptualisation in social practices: ‘Nothing can occur historically that is not apprehended conceptually.’ In other words, you cannot do history and not do intellectual history. But more than this, there is a mutually constitutive relationship between the history of thought and the history of social action; social history itself is in part the story of the redefinition of the concepts that make present social life intelligible. The way forward in both intellectual and social history may lie in recognising that we must not choose – and indeed, typically do not anyway choose – between them. This seems to be a lesson the best intellectual historians today have learned without perhaps having the faintest idea what the term *Begriffsgeschichte* means.

To compare or not is also not a choice

Like intellectual history but perhaps even more so, comparison in the human sciences experienced a stunning decline in popularity in the past generation. The reasons for this, too, are not far to seek. They are related to a general antipathy toward master narratives, hard laws, reified categories, which are statically unhistorical, falsely evolutionist, and regressively universalist. Such resistance to comparison, however, is based on an overly narrow view of what comparison is for – and perhaps even on an illusion, namely, about whether we even have a choice whether or not to compare. In fact, I am becoming persuaded not only that we cannot not do intellectual history, but when we do do it, it must be comparative.

That comparison is a cognitive necessity is becoming increasingly obvious to scholars, though a full-scale exposition remains a real desideratum. It is not only intrinsic to social analysis but to lived social experience (so Rogers Brubaker). Inequality, for example, is

a social category that rests entirely on comparative grounds. True, one danger in comparative work is the naturalisation of the unit of analysis (eg, the nation-state), but this is neither inherent in nor specific to comparison. However, another danger that is specific to comparison is the often unreflective generalisation based on a single case. In the very act of generalising that case as the unit of analysis, you are already suppressing, or potentially suppressing, elements of difference. But this may be nothing more than a variant of the hermeneutic circle, and not a necessarily vicious one, which we can correct as we tack between the first and second order case.

If comparison is everywhere, we need to make our inevitable but implicit comparisons explicit and to try to explain what role they are playing in the interpretation of our primary object. In the case of ‘early modern knowledge’, the comparative instances we typically foreground, or at least those that Ben Elman and I do (see ‘Further Reading’), are western European, for two, unequal reasons: first, those instances are in the heads of those two particular observers, and inexpugnably so, when approaching China and India; they are the embedded comparative other. Second, through the force of colonialism and modernisation, western knowledge in many domains has been victorious, and we want to try to figure out what secured this victory. Yet that is not the only comparative move we want to make. Comparison of non-western forms of knowledge in the early modern world has additional goals, to which we can proceed only by way of intentionally bracketing the western model. The cases that constitute the objects of our *intellectual history* are forms of systematic thought that are found everywhere literate culture itself is found. Our comparative intellectual *history* posits the importance of synchronicity among these cases but makes no a priori claims that synchronicity entails symmetry; in fact, asymmetries are as important and revealing as anything. How comparable forms of thought change in time, change differently, or do not change at all, and why they do or do not change, is what this kind of historical inquiry seeks to understand. Not only is chronology central to our comparative practice, but no models should be held to be universal, as instances of *necessary regularities*. On the contrary, what we want is comparison without hegemony.

It is vitally important that the synchronicity grounding comparative intellectual history contain no necessary content of this or any other sort. We make no assumption of unidirectional change and do not look for it; we make no assumption of a world system of intellectual modernity in which everyone participated, as some believe was the case with the world system of capitalism. Indeed, economic and intellectual history are not necessarily isomorphic. We might set out to write a history of early modern capitalism but it would be wrong-headed to set out to write a global history of ‘early modern thought’ as if we knew in advance what that singular entity was, and as if the descriptor ‘early modern’ was not just a temporal marker, but also a conceptual marker. This is precisely the defi-

nitional trap that we saw lies in wait. Avoiding it and its hegemony means avoiding the one model of modernity that chanced to succeed; it means re-defining modernity so that it is not about fossil fuels, parliamentary government, and secularisation, but a completely open category waiting to be filled with local content generated by empirical work.

When we compare the intellectual histories of the early modern world, what is it precisely that we want to know or do? Validate a hypothesis over N cases? Develop causal accounts of big structures and processes? Differentiate cases? The first is the goal of comparative history; the second, the goal of comparative sociology. For us the most effective comparative intellectual histories are going to be of the last type, which (as Peter Baldwin explains) ignores generalisation and seeks to capture similarities and differences across a limited number of instances in order

to understand the cases under discussion, to isolate from the incidental what is 'crucial' and possibly, though less likely, what is 'causal'.

The world that intellectuals across the globe inhabited and sought to know changed indubitably and radically in the period standardly called early modern. The master class participants want to know how those intellectuals responded, how their responses might compare with each other in different places, how similarly or dissimilarly their responses transformed the great intellectual traditions to which they were heir. The question to ask is not 'How modern is it?' – that's the hegemonic comparison we need to consciously bring to the table and examine critically. The question to ask instead is whether intellectual modernity may have had different characteristics and histories in different parts of the world, including the history of *kaozheng xue*, 'evidential scholarship', in China, of *tajdid*, 'renewal', and *tahqiq*,

'verification', in the Middle East, and of 'newness', *navyata*, in India; and more, whether in those histories possibilities for a modernity different from the capitalist variety may once have been contained. <

Suggestions for Further Reading

- Peter Baldwin, 'Comparing and generalizing: why all history is comparative, yet no history is sociology', in *Comparison and history: Europe in cross-national perspective*, ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Rogers Brubaker, 'Beyond Comparativism', *Theory and Research in Comparative Social Analysis*, Department of Sociology, UCLA Year 2003 Paper 1, pp. 1-8.
- Frederick Cooper, 'Modernity', in *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Benjamin Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China*. Los

- Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2001.
- André Gingrich, ed. *Anthropology, by Comparison*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Jack Goldstone, 'The Problem of the "Early Modern" World'. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 41, 3 (1998): 249-83.
- Sudipta Kaviraj, 'Outline of a revisionist theory of modernity'. *European Journal of Sociology*, 46, 3 (2005): 497-526.
- Donald Kelley, 'Prolegomena to the Study of Intellectual History'. *Intellectual News* 1 (1996): 13-14.
- Anthony Pagden, 'The Rise and Decline of Intellectual History'. *Intellectual News* 1 (1996): 14-15.

- Sheldon Pollock, *The Ends of Man at the End of Premodernity*. Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2005.
- John Richards, 'Early Modern India and World History', *Journal of World History*, 8, 2 (1997): 197-209.
- Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, 'Was ist "Intellectual History"?', *Intellectual News* 1 (1996): 15-17.
- Quentin Skinner, 'On Intellectual History and the History of Books', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 1, 1 (2005): 29-36.
- Randolph Starn, 'The Early Modern Middle', *Journal of Early Modern History* 6, 3 (2002): 296-307.

A number of ideas in the foregoing essay are developed in greater detail in 'Introduction', in *Forms of Knowledge in Early Modern South Asia*, ed. Sheldon Pollock (Durham: Duke U. Press, forthcoming) and in 'Comparison without Hegemony: The Logic and Politics of a Comparative Intellectual History of Early Modern India', in *History and Indian Studies*, ed. Claude Markovits et al. (forthcoming).

Early Modern Classicism and Late Imperial China

Most historians treat late imperial China, 1400-1900, as a time of fading and decay. Indeed, viewed backwards from the Opium War (1839-1842) and Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), events before 1800 appear to have left China unprepared for modernity. But the 17th and 18th centuries can be considered not only as a 'late imperial' prelude to the end of traditional China, but as an 'early modern' harbinger of things to come.

Benjamin A. Elman

By 1650 leading Chinese literati had decisively broken with the orthodoxy entrenched in official life and tipped the balance in favour of a 'search for evidence' as the key to understanding China's past. Like Renaissance Latin philologists, Chinese philologists exposed inconsistencies in contemporary beliefs. They were also prototypes of the modern philologist as moral reformer – radical conservatives who attacked the present in the name of the past. As scholarly iconoclasts they hoped to locate a timeless order in and prior to the classical antiquity of Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.).

Until 1600, the ideal that motivated Chinese literati was sagehood. If every literatus was a virtuous exemplar, then society would prosper. Knowledge was equated to action, and political and cultural stability depended on each individual's moral rigour. To buttress such claims, Chinese had by 1200 developed an interactive account of the heavens, earth, and human concerns. Ideally each person was a pivotal factor in a morally just and perfectly rational universe.

By 1750, however, the heirs of this entrenched moral orthodoxy formed a relatively secular academic community, which encouraged (and rewarded with livelihoods) original and rigorous criti-

cal scholarship. In contrast to their predecessors, late imperial literati stressed exacting research, rigorous analysis, and the collection of impartial evidence drawn from ancient artefacts and historical documents. Personal achievement of sagehood was by now an unrealistic aim for the serious classicist.

This philological turn represented a new, early modern way to verify all knowledge. The creation and evolution of this new scholarly community led to fresh intellectual impulses that recast the place of the literati scholar from sagely Mandarin to learned researcher. The major figures called what they did 'evidential research' (*kaozheng* 考證, lit., 'the search for evidence'), and for the most part they resided in the wealthy and sophisticated provinces in the Yangzi River delta. There they received, rediscovered and transformed the classical tradition.

Their precise scholarship depended on a vibrant commercial and educational environment that rewarded cutting edge classical studies with honour and prestige. Academic work as collators, editors, researchers, or compilers depended on occupationally defined skills that required thorough mastery of the classical language and a professional expertise in textual research. Practitioners were bound together by common elements in education and

shared goals, which included the training of their successors in scholarly academies.

Classicism and commercial expansion after 1550

Besides academies and patronage, evidential scholars also contributed to a growing network of bibliophiles, printers, and booksellers who served their expanding fields of research. Libraries and printing were pivotal to the emergence of evidential scholarship in the Yangzi delta. Scholars shared a common experience in acquiring philological means to achieve classical ends. This experience touched off differences of opinion and led to reassessments of inherited views. Supported by regional commerce and local trade, early modern communications grew out of the publishing industry in late imperial China. As China's population grew, the reach of the late imperial bureaucracy declined. Many literati wondered whether the classical orthodoxy still represented universal principles at a time when goods and art were financially converted into objects of wealth paid for with imported silver. Late imperial literati were living through a decisive shift away from their traditional ideals of sagehood, morality and frugality. Landed gentry and merchant elites transmuted the classical ideal of the impartial investigation of



Setting movable type in the Qianlong Imperial Printing Office. Qinding Wuying dian juzhen ban chengshi (Beijing, 1776). Elman, Benjamin A. 2005. On their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900. p. 18

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things from moral cultivation into the consumption of objects for emotional health and satisfaction.

Antiquarianism drew its strength from the economic prosperity that pervaded the Yangzi delta. On their travels, merchants and literati searched for ancient works of art, early manuscripts, rare editions and magnificent ceramics. They paid extravagant sums when they found what they wanted. The rise in value of ancient arts and crafts also stimulated imitations, fakes and forgeries of ancient bronzes, jades and ceramics.

The civil service and classical literacy

Classical learning first reached counties and villages in the 15th century, in the form of the empire-wide examination curriculum. Thereafter, the new curriculum, which required writing classical essays on the Four Books and Five Classics, attracted the interest of millions of examination hopefuls. Civil service examinations were regularly held in 140 prefectures, about 1,350 counties, the 17 provincial capitals and the imperial city. Manchu emperors promulgated civil examinations to cope with ruling an empire of extraordinary economic strength undergoing resurgent demographic change.

The civil service recruitment system thus achieved a degree of empire-wide standardisation unprecedented in the

early modern world. These precocious examinations engendered imperial schools down to the county level, several centuries before Europe. Because the classical curriculum was routinised, however, little actual teaching took place in these dynastic schools. Ironically, they became 'testing centres' to prepare for official examinations. Training in both vernacular and classical literacy was left to the private domain.

Late imperial civil service examinations provided the opportunity for elites and the court to adjust the classical curriculum used to select officials. Education was premised on social distinctions between literati, peasants, artisans and merchants in descending order of rank and prestige. Although a test of educational merit, peasants, petty traders and artisans, who made up 90% of the population, were not among those 100 annual or 25,000 total Qing dynasty (1644-1911) palace graduates. Nor were they a significant part of the 2.5 million who failed at lower levels every two years. Nevertheless, a social by-product was the increasing circulation of lower elites into the government from gentry, military and wealthier merchant backgrounds. After 1400, sons of such merchants were legally permitted to take the civil examinations. In addition, the examination failures created a vast pool of literary talent that flowed easily into ancillary roles as novelists, playwrights, pettifoggers, ritual specialists, lineage agents and philologists.

Occupational prohibitions, which extended from so-called 'mean peoples' in unclean occupations to all Daoist and Buddhist clergy, kept many out of the examination competition, including all women. Unlike contemporary Europe and Japan, where social barriers between nobility and commoners prevented the translation of commercial wealth into elite status, landed

examination failures created a vast pool of literary talent that flowed easily into ancillary roles as novelists, playwrights, pettifoggers, ritual specialists, lineage agents and philologists

affluence and commercial wealth in China were intertwined with high educational status. The educational requirement to master non-vernacular classical texts created an educational barrier between those licensed to take examinations and those who were classically illiterate.

Well-organised lineages were able to translate their local social and economic strength into educational success. Lineages formed charitable tax shelters, which enhanced their access to family schools for a classical education. Success on civil examinations in turn led to political and economic power outside the lineage. In this manner, merchants also became known as cultured patrons of scholarship and publishing. The

result was a merging of literati and merchant social strategies and interests. Although the classically educated exhibited a characteristic set of moralistic predispositions favoured in the civil examinations, alternative and dissenting learning proliferated. Natural studies, particularly medical learning, became a legitimate field of private study when literati sought alternatives to official careers

Editions circulated from China to Japan and Korea to Vietnam. A book-oriented atmosphere conducive to the development of scholarship emerged from an environment of reference books, practical manuals and popular compendia of knowledge, which aimed at a different though overlapping audiences of scholars, students, householders, literate artisans and merchants.

For 18th century philologists, descriptive catalogues and annotated bibliographies were essential. Closely linked were the lists of bronze and stone inscriptions that enabled scholars to compare their texts with epigraphic relics. Qian Daxin (1728-1804), the leading evidential scholar of his age, acquired over 300 ancient rubbings of stone inscriptions, spending decades buying, borrowing, and making rubbings himself. His work on the variances in the Dynastic Histories, a project that he completed after 15 years of work, grew out of his epigraphical research. Qian later produced four collections of interpretive notes for his holdings, which by around 1800 totalled more than 2,000 items and also benefited his academy students.

The book trade in China attracted the interest of scholars from Choson Korea, who accompanied tribute missions to Beijing. Korean scholars had visited bookstalls in Beijing since the Kangxi era (1662-1722), looking for books to send back. A process of cultural exchange ensued that linked the 18th century Korean 'Northern School' wave of learning to the Chinese evidential research movement. Several Qing scholars developed a warm relationship with the scholars who accompanied the Korean missions to Beijing.

Korea's bibliographic riches did not match books later recovered from Japan. A Japanese commentary to the Classics was presented to China between 1731 and 1736 by the Tokugawa shogun Yoshimune (r.1716-45). It became very popular among evidential scholars because it was based on lost Chinese sources that had survived in the Ashikaga shogunate's (1392-1573) archives. After 1750, Koreans and Japanese adapted the philological techniques pioneered in China.

By 1800, publishing and book collecting, made possible by the spread of printing in China, helped produce a dramatic change in the conditions of scholarly research and teaching. Cutting edge literati scholars championed empirical criteria for ascertaining knowledge, but their cumulative intellectual rebellion was limited to the exposition via classical philology of a new, early modern theory of reliable knowledge. The unintended consequences of their rebellion added weight to the Chinese intellectual revolution after 1900, when all the Classics were decanonised. ◀

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under the Mongols, who curtailed the examinations after 1280. Critical scholarship thrived outside the examination system, most notably in private academies and lineage schools of classical learning. Classical literacy, the ability to write elegant essays and poetry, was the crowning achievement for educated men and increasingly for elite women in the 17th and 18th centuries. They became members of a 'writing elite' whose essays and poetry marked them as classically trained. Even if unable to become an official, the educated man could still publish essays, poetry, novels, medical handbooks, and other works. In addition, he could engage in classical research.

By producing too many candidates, the civil examination market also yielded a broader pool of 'failures', who as literate writers redirected their talents into other areas. Philologists emerged from this mix, but at higher levels of classical literacy. Often the classical scholar was a degree-holder waiting for an appointment in a time of excess higher degree-holders.

Print culture and the rise of philology

After 1600, scholarship, book production, and libraries were at the heart of China's cultural fabric. A wider variety of information and knowledge was available than ever before. Classical controversies emboldened revisionist literati-scholars such as Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472-1529) to take their predecessors to task for prioritising knowledge over morality. His opponents, however, shifted to a more rigorous methodology for extending all knowledge, whether moral, textual or worldly, under the banner of precise scholarship.

Literati revived the classical tradition through exacting research, which depended on access to classical sources that were increasingly printed in urban centres for aspiring scholars, examination failures and lower-brow elites anxious to emulate their superiors. In the Yangzi delta outstanding xylographers staffed the printing shops. These elite tiers of print culture extended to the provincial hinterlands, where local families involved in paper production, wood-block carving and ink manufacture helped printers to produce more paper and books than anywhere else in the world between 1600 and 1800.

Chinese printers early on experimented with movable type, but xylography was generally more economical. Wood-blocks were easily stored and, with reasonable care, easily preserved for re-use.

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On Islam and comparative intellectual history

Every culture has to balance innovation and conservation. Most innovations are bad because they are maladaptive, but since a few of them turn out well, absence of innovation in a culture is also maladaptive. The question is where the balance is to be struck, and in the Islamic case the answer was well toward the conservative end of the spectrum.

Michael Cook

Last June I participated in a very unusual assignment at the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden. Our task was to compare the intellectual histories of the three major non-western literate traditions in the 'early modern' period (alias the 16th to 18th centuries). Sheldon Pollock, a Sanskritist at Columbia, was the primary representative of the Hindu tradition. Benjamin Elman, a historian of East Asia at Princeton, performed the same role for the Chinese tradition. My corner of the field was the Islamic world. In addition, Peter Burke was there to provide the perspective of a Europeanist, and several younger scholars helped us out in a number of ways.

Here is the general issue we addressed, even if we never came very close to resolving it. All three intellectual traditions were profoundly conservative, in the sense that they were strongly inclined to locate authority and virtue in the past. Yet during the 16th to 18th centuries all three were exposed to the initial stages of a development very different from any they had experienced before: the emergence of the modern world, which was eventually to end the intellectual autonomy of each of these traditions. In the meantime, did these new circumstances generate any significant convergences among the three traditions?

Against this background, the theme of attitudes to intellectual innovation naturally caught our comparative interest. In this brief space, I will attempt a quick sketch of these attitudes as they appeared in the Islamic world, followed by some bold – not to say crude – comparative observations.

The Islamic world of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries had a strongly conservative orientation toward intellectual innovation. One illustration of this conservative attitude involves a peculiar feature of early mosques in the western Islamic world: their tendency to face south rather than toward Mecca. Nobody knows why this is. But would you really want to demolish these ancient mosques and rebuild them with a Meccan orientation? This may sound like a rhetorical question, but at one point in the middle of the 16th century it threatened to become more. An irritating Libyan scholar, Tajuri, wrote to

the ruler of the Moroccan city of Fez, denouncing the orientation of the local mosques and calling on him to reconstruct them.

The scholars of Fez did not appreciate Tajuri's meddling in their city's affairs, and one of them wrote to refute his Libyan colleague. Of his various arguments, one of the most crushing was that the orientation of the mosques had been fixed in the 2nd Islamic century, a time of excellence and virtue. How then could the judgment of that epoch be challenged by that of the 10th Islamic century, so full of evil and ignorance? Who was this presumptuous Libyan to say that everyone before him – those who had fixed the orientation of the mosques and those who had accepted it without protest – had been in error?

The sense of easy victory that went with this mid-16th century letter's resoundingly conservative sentiment is telling. Equally indicative is an example from the mid-18th century. The Islamic world of the 1740s was riled by the startling pronouncements of a certain Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, a denizen of the eastern Arabian desert and the eponymous founder of Wahhabism. He claimed to know something none of his teachers had known: the meaning of the confession, 'There is no god but God'.

He's an 'innovator'

Denunciations of the man and his views came thick and fast. A scholar living in the same region of Arabia wrote to warn his colleagues that 'there has appeared in our land an innovator'. Once he had labeled Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab an 'innovator', the way was open to denounce him as 'ignorant, misleading, misguided, devoid of learning or piety', the purveyor of 'scandalous and disgraceful things'. Likewise, an Egyptian opponent of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, writing in 1743, asked rhetorically how it could be permissible for someone in this age of ignorance to discard the views of earlier scholars and draw his own inferences from the revealed texts. 'It is clear', he wrote, 'that good – all of it – lies in following those who went before, and evil – all of it – lies in the innovations of those who come later.'

In short, innovators faced an uphill struggle against an easy and powerful conservative rhetoric. Not that Tajuri and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab would have described themselves as innovators; in their own view they were merely reas-

serting norms that divine revelation had established long ago.

But not all innovative thinkers were so self-effacing. For example, the 17th century Moroccan scholar Yusi, in the conclusion to one of his works, explains that the reader should not be put off by the unfamiliarity of some of the terms and distinctions he uses. The reader should understand that Yusi is not the kind of scholar who merely stitches together what his predecessors have said. In the good old days such copycat scholars were not taken seriously, but the corruption of our age has changed that. Yusi goes on to tell us that the scholars he competes with – those he regards as his peers – are the great names of earlier epochs, men like the 11th century Ghazali and the 14th century Taftazani. Even then, he emphasises, he only quotes what they say when he thinks they have it right. Yusi, then, is quite prepared to struggle uphill, though at the same time well aware of the punishing gradient.

Another example is the 18th century Yemeni scholar Ibn al-Amir. His goal was to show that even in his own time a qualified scholar could judge for himself the reliability of a tradition from the Prophet based on the standing of those who had transmitted it in the early Islamic period. He argues his position nicely: the increasingly sophisticated presentation of the relevant data in the biographical literature compiled over the centuries has made it easier, not harder, for us to make such judgements than it was for our predecessors. Yet he too recognises the gradient he faces: most scholars of the four recognised Sunni schools of legal doctrine, he tells us, have been very harsh in condemning any claim to independent judgement on the part of their colleagues.

A strong conservative default thus characterised the Islamic world's view of intellectual innovation. Nonetheless, individual scholars who were sufficiently determined could override it. Moreover, these scholars were not necessarily mavericks: both Yusi and Ibn al-Amir received ample respect from posterity. What then of whole new movements? Here, comparison becomes intriguing and perhaps even rewarding. Let me start by noting two things that we do not find in the Islamic world.

In India, the emergence of a school of 'New Logic' (Navyanyaya) is a striking, but by no means isolated, phenomenon

in the early modern period. What interests us here is not the school's logic but its proud affirmation of its own novelty. Within the mainstream scholarly culture of Islam at this time, such a self-designation would have been tantamount to a badge of dishonour. Not surprisingly, we have no parallel to the New Logic on the Islamic side of the fence.

Turning to China in this period, we find a new and probing brand of philological research transforming the face of scholarship. The Muslim world does indeed possess a long tradition of exact scholarship – the kind that accurately identifies textual minutiae and preserves them through the centuries. But the remarkable feature of Chinese philology in this period was its use of such minutiae to reach innovative and persuasive historical conclusions, in very much the same way that modern western scholarship sometimes does. This is why even present-day students of ancient Chinese texts frequently acknowledge the research and conclusions of Chinese scholars writing well before European philological methods had begun to influence the indigenous culture. In contrast, no one cites the Muslim scholars of the early modern period in this way. The closest parallel on the Islamic side would be Wilferd Madelung's acknowledgement of the part played by the 14th century Damascene scholar Ibn Taymiyya in recovering the original sense of the doctrine of the 'uncreatedness' of the Koran. But most of what Ibn Taymiyya wrote, whatever its intellectual brilliance, was not philology of this kind. So here, too, we draw a blank.

Wahhabism

Now for what we do find. The single most arresting movement in the Islamic world of the day was undoubtedly Wahhabism. Whether or not we concede its humble pretension to be nothing but a reaffirmation of the Prophet Muhammad's monotheistic message, it represented a clear break with the immediate past: Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab claimed, after all, to know what none of his teachers had known. Moreover, the significance of Wahhabism was not just intellectual; it was also political and military, for it provided the banner under which a new state and a new order arose in eastern Arabia. But the movement was still a geographically marginal one at the end of the period that concerns us: the scattered oases of Najd were hardly the Middle Eastern equivalent of the Gangetic plain or the Yangtze delta. And beyond

the frontiers of the Saudi state, the views of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab found little favour with the scholars of the day.

Nonetheless, the rise of Wahhabism was arguably an example of a wider trend, a 'return to the sources' that was perceptible in other regions of the 18th century Islamic world. The sources were the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet, in contradistinction to the doctrines of the four schools to which the Yemeni Ibn al-Amir had referred. Ibn al-Amir is in fact a good example of this trend. Another is his contemporary Shah Wali Allah of Delhi, who saw himself as laying a new foundation for Islamic jurisprudence, characterised by knowledge that no one before him had demonstrated so well (he mentions a distinguished 13th century scholar as having 'failed to realise even a hundredth part of this learning'). His idea was to unite the two legal schools with which he was familiar in the eastern Islamic world, and then to test their doctrines against the traditions of the Prophet, discarding anything that went against them. This was not an entirely new ambition, but it was a grand one – and unsurprisingly it went nowhere in his time.

So the period ends with a commotion in the backlands and a sprinkling of individual thinkers elsewhere. Now add the wisdom of hindsight. Over the last two centuries, as the Islamic world has come under the relentless pressure of a global culture of western origin, the ideas of such thinkers have come to constitute the backbone of its intellectual resistance. Ultimately, the New Logic of the Hindus contributed nothing to the Hindu revivalism of our times, and Chinese philology did more to subvert the classics than to reinstate them. Nobody in Washington has the slightest interest in either of these movements, but the return to the foundations that was stirring in 18th century Islam is central to its contentious role in the world today. ◀

For further reading

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The problem of early modernity in the Sanskrit intellectual tradition

Anyone who aims to discuss the Sanskrit intellectual tradition of the early modern period is required to preface his exposition with two remarks. The first is the typical caution offered by those in a new field of research, though in this case the caution truly has bite. Sanskrit science and scholarship from the 16th through the 18th centuries has only just begun to attract the attention of scholars. In addition, the vast majority of texts have never been published, and some of these are housed in libraries and archives where access is either difficult or impossible. The second remark concerns a rather atypical language restriction on our problematic. In striking contrast to China or the Middle East, while somewhat comparable to Western Europe, India in the early modern period shows a multiplicity of written languages for the cultivation of science and scholarship. But two of these, Sanskrit and Persian, monopolised the field, and did so in ways that were both parallel and nonintersecting. Each constituted the principal language of science for its associated social-religious sphere, while very few scholars were proficient in both (at least aside from mathematicians and astronomers, and even these were very much in the minority). Sanskrit continued its pervasive, age-old dominance in the Hindu scholarly community, and merits consideration as a completely self-contained intellectual formation. With those two clarifications in mind we can proceed to ask what actually occurred in the world of Sanskrit knowledge during the early modern period, and how a comparative analysis may illuminate the general problem of modernity.

Sheldon Pollock

What happened in Sanskrit intellectual history in the early modern period?

Two trends have begun to manifest themselves to scholars working in the period, which are gradually hardening into facts. The first is that an extraordinary upsurge in writing across intellectual disciplines can be observed beginning in the 16th century. Second, a gradual but unmistakable decline set in beginning in the early 18th, which by the century's end had accelerated to the point where one might be justified in speaking of an evaporation of creative energy in many Sanskrit disciplines.

The explosion of writing occurred in a wide domain of scholarship. Consider hermeneutics (*mimamsa*) and political theory (*raja-dharma-sastra*). In the former, a burst of writing begins around 1550. For example, the premier compendium on the subject, composed around 1000 (the *Sastra-dipika*, 'Lamp for the Science'), which seems not to have been touched for five centuries, became the object of sustained reexamination, with a half-dozen major reassessments between 1550 and 1650. In fact, that hundred-year period is probably the most productive era in the history of hermeneutics since the seventh century. In political theory, from the time of the *Kritya-kalpataru* ('Wishing Stone of Moral Duty') at the end of the 12th century to late 16th only a single, minor work in the field was produced (the *Raja-niti-ratnakara* of Candessvara c. 1400). Beginning in 1575 or so, however, a range of often vast treatises were composed from within the heart of polities from Almor in the northern hills to Tanjavur in the peninsula.

The same kind of uptick, though following a slightly different timeline, can be found in many other domains. Significant new work in logic was sparked by the searching genius of Raghunatha Siromani (c. 1550); in astronomy, too, unprecedented contributions were made starting with Jnanaraja in 1503. In these and the other cases I've cited, we begin to find not just large amounts of new writing but writing that is substantively new.

The trend we see is no mere artifact of preservation. There is no evidence that anything substantial in hermeneutics, political theory, logic, or astronomy was lost in the preceding period. Candessvara's work in political theory, for

example, refers to only one text from the entire preceding two centuries. The upsurge we see is real.

Nor was this trend a matter of mere proliferation of texts. To an important degree we find intellectual innovation was as well. There is, for one thing, a new multidisciplinary on the part of scholars. Earlier hermeneutists never wrote juridical treatises (or scholars of jurisprudence hermeneutics), let alone aesthetics; it now became common. In addition, scholars adopted an entirely new discursive idiom, the more abstract language of the New Logic. Entirely new scholarly genres began to appear: in grammar, the *Prakriya-kaumudi* ('Moonlight of Transformations'), and its later imitation, the *Siddhanta-kaumudi*, 'Moonlight of Doctrine') radically redesigned the most hallowed of Indian intellectual monuments, the two-millennium-old grammar of Panini. At the same time (and this is no contradiction), a new concern with the textuality of the foundational texts (in logic, for example) is manifest – though this nowhere reaches the pitch of philological innovation we find in late imperial China or Humanist Italy. And with it came a return to the sources; hermeneutists, for example, begin to comment again directly on the *sutras* of Jaimini. Most dramatically, we find a new historical, perhaps even historicist, conceptual framework for understanding the development of the knowledge systems. The late-17th-century *Nyaya-kaustubha* ('Divine Jewel of Logic') organizes its exposition by referring to the 'ancients', the 'followers of the ancients', the 'moderns', the 'most up-to-date scholars', and the 'contemporaries'. Knowledge is thought to be better not just because it may be better (because of its greater coherence, economy, or explanatory power), but also in part because it is new. Consider, finally, such claims to conceptual novelty that begin to make their appearance. Raghunatha defends what he calls 'a philosophical viewpoint that emerges precisely in opposition to the tenets of all other viewpoints', while Dinakara Bhatta (Varanasi, fl. 1620) announces at the beginning of his treatise on hermeneutics that he intends to 'prove by other means, clarify, or even uproot the thought of the outmoded authorities'. A century earlier the astronomer Nilakantha Somayaji of Kerala dared to argue that 'the astronomical parameters and models inherited from the texts of the past were not in themselves permanently correct, but needed constantly to be improved and corrected based on a

systematic practice of observation and reason'. Few declarations of this sort had been heard earlier in India.

All this changed fundamentally in the course of the eighteenth century, when – or such is my present assessment – the capacity of Sanskrit thought to make history dramatically diminished in most fields. The production of texts on political theory ceased entirely; a few minor works from Maratha Tanjavur are all we can find. In hermeneutics the last contribution of significance – significant in the eyes of the tradition itself – is that of Vancesvara Diksita (Tanjavur, fl. 1800); in literary theory, that of Visvesvara (Almora, fl. 1725). What we seem to be witnessing – in very marked contrast to China or Western Europe – is the exhaustion of a once-great intellectual tradition.

We are far from satisfactorily explaining either the upsurge and the decline, though we can make a much better guess about the former than about the latter. It seems to me rather obvious that the conditions for unleashing the new intellectual energies across the whole range of social formations (from courtly Tanjavur to free-market Varanasi) were made possible by the Mughal peace, with the consolidation of the empire by Akbar (r. 1556-1605). As for the decline, it is far more difficult to explain in either intellectual-historical or social-historical terms. Internally, we can perceive how a moment of incipient modernity was neutralized by a kind of neo-traditionalism, as I'll detail momentarily. Externally, the acceleration of a European colonisation of the Indian imagination, although still superficial in the 18th century, may have played a role, though this has yet to be clearly demonstrated. Consider the stunning fact – almost too stunning to be a fact – that before 1800 we know of not a single thinker writing in Sanskrit who refers to any European form of knowledge.

Comparison: navyas, les modernes, and the problem of early modernity in India

The history of Sanskrit knowledge systems in the early modern period shows some astonishing parallels with contemporary Europe. Let me just examine one of these in some detail that in both its structure and its consequences is representative of the whole conceptual complex.

In Sanskrit literary theory a consensus about what made it possible to create poetry had long reigned undisputed,

and was given canonical authority by the 11th-century thinker Mammata: poetry can be produced only given the presence of three co-operating causes: talent, learning, and training. For the first time in a thousand years this consensus was challenged by a scholar named Srivatsalanchana (Orissa, fl. 1550). He claimed that talent alone was necessary, while launching a frontal assault on the whole conceptual edifice of Mammata, whose views he dismisses, with rare contempt, as 'completely fatuous'. In the 17th and early 18th centuries, however, the position of Srivatsalanchana and his followers was itself the target of a withering critique by a number of scholars such as Bhimasena Diksita (Kanyakubja, c. 1720), who vigorously sought to reestablish the old consensus against those they called the *navyas*, the 'new' scholars – the term signified something quite different from the merely contemporary or present-day (*adhunika*, *adyatana*) – and this was a sobriquet that Srivatsalanchana almost certainly had claimed for himself.

If this dispute over the three causes of poetic creativity seems minor, the issues it raises for cultural theory are not, something that comparison with contemporary Europe allows us to see with special clarity. The comparison also shows how differently India and Europe responded to similar conceptual challenges – and how radically, after centuries of homomorphism, their intellectual histories diverged.

In India, the stakes in the dispute were by no means as slight as they may appear to be from our present vantage point (where most literary stakes seem slight). Everyone participating in the Sanskrit conversation clearly understood that the rejection of learning and training and the complete reliance on inspiration was precisely the rejection that many *vernacular* poets had been making since at least the 12th century. And much of this vernacularity represented, not just an alternative to the Sanskrit language, but to the Sanskrit cultural and political order – indeed, the 12th-century Kannada poet Basava is a salient example.

Remarkably similar was the discourse on the three sources of poetry in Europe that began in the early 17th century. In England this discourse was a basic component of neoclassicism – a neoclassicism that became increasingly reactionary especially after 1688 – which was epitomised by Ben Jonson. For him

'naturall wit', or talent, required the discipline given by 'exercise', imitation of classical models, and 'art', knowledge of rules for effective expression. A similar and earlier cultural complex can be found in France, starting with the Pléiade in the mid-16th century. And in both cases was the neoclassical view attacked. In France this occurred famously in the *Querelle des anciens et des modernes*, with Charles Perrault in 1688 celebrating inspiration (*le génie*) and one's 'own lights' (*propres lumières*) over the doxa of tradition, and, above all, talent over training based on mechanical imitation of the classics.

If the terms of the debate were nearly identical, the outcomes and consequences were fundamentally different. In Europe, the historical development is well known, leading to a transformation of the sense of tradition and the past – indeed, if Frederic Jameson is correct, it led to the very invention of the idea of historicism, with the past being neither better nor worse, just different. In India, a potentially powerful idea of inspiration outside tradition's discipline, and with it, a potentially transformative idea of freedom, died on the vine. With one exception, Srivatsalanchana had no defenders in the 17th century, and was virtually forgotten thereafter – indeed, along with the debate itself. More generally, the *navya* impulse itself was largely repudiated. An even more passionate defense of the status of Mammata, unlike anything seen in the past, was offered by Bhimasena, who asserted that the moderns' view on talent is 'mere vaporizing that fails to understand the hidden intention of the author, who was an incarnation of the Goddess of Speech'. This is more than recentering the authority of the medieval scholastics; tradition had now become the voice of God pronouncing on matters of culture. And, it suggests the presence of something internal, not external, to the Sanskrit intellectual formation, however far this something may still elude our historical reconstruction, that arrested the capacity for development by cordoning off the kind of critique that had once supplied that formation's very life force.

What we may be seeing here is the intellectual dimension of a larger political transformation. As the early modern period began and the vast changes in wealth arrived, along with the new Mughal peace, a 'new intellectual' movement was emboldened to rethink the whole past. When the Mughal order

Cairo Citadel. K.A.C. Creswell Photograph Collection of Islamic Architecture, Album 16/plate 7, Rare Books and Special Collections Library, The American University in Cairo.



The historiography of protest in late Mamluk and early Ottoman Egypt and Syria

History in its various forms – chronicles, biographies and biographical dictionaries – was a favourite genre in late medieval Egypt and Syria. One of the salient features of these histories is their breadth of perspective. Matters related to community and urban life including market prices, fires, murders, epidemics, floods and social relations were considered worthy of record. The writers were profoundly interested in the events of their times rather than in classical Islamic history. In the absence of archives, these histories remain our widest windows on medieval Egypt and Syria.

Amina Elbendary

Modern scholars have referred to Egyptian and Syrian schools of medieval historiography. The Egypt (Cairene) school during the Mamluk period tended to focus on politics of the state and the sultanate. Syrian historians allowed more room for the activities of the urban notables, including the *'ulama* (religious scholars) and merchants. An interest in popular politics is evident in both schools, but is more pronounced in the writings of Syrian historians and predates the Ottoman period. Thus Egyptian historians such as Taqiyy al-Din al-Maqrizi (d. 1442) and Muhammad Ibn Iyas (d. ca. 1524) and Syrian historians such as Shams al-Din Ibn Tulun (d. 1546) included in their writings news of a wide sector of the urban population.

The period witnessed a popularisation of history in various ways. Not only did the subject matter of history include topics of a more popular nature, but increasingly, and especially in Syria, less learned men of the urban community also took to writing history. The diary-like chronicle of the simple

Damascene *'alim*, Ahmad Ibn Tawq, covers many of the same events as the chronicle of the learned scholar Shams al-Din Ibn Tulun but differs in style and perspective. Later in the 18th century, Ahmad al-Budayri al-Hallq, a Damascene barber, would also write a historical chronicle. In Egypt, military officers who did not enjoy the traditional education of an *'alim*, such as Ahmad al-Damurdashi, also documented the events of their times. Popular histories are noted for their use of the vernacular and their more sharply defined local perspective that focused on a particular urban network rather than high politics.

The inclusion of more popular elements in the subject matter and production of history allow the modern historian to trace elements of the political participation of common people. It is more often through reports of urban protest that common people entered historical narratives. Historians used the common people differently. Sometimes the participation of commoners in urban politics provided opportunities for rhetorical devices to confirm and stress a historian's implicit argument, granting

it legitimacy through an implicit reference to their numbers.

Naturally, the narrative contexts in which various historians placed these events differed. Historians of the Cairene school, like Maqrizi and later Ibn Iyas, tended to narrate events within a larger historical drama with a particular sultan and his reign at centre-stage. Protest by the common people was more often than not narrated as a reflection on and reaction to particular state policies. They viewed provincial history through this same imperial lens so that protest in Damascus was reported as a reflection on state authority. While Egyptian historians focused firmly on Cairo, Syrian historians aimed squarely at their own cities – provincial cities rather than imperial capitals.

The attitudes of historians towards urban protest differed. Most did not disapprove of violent outbursts by the common people in defence of religion and justice under the rubric of forbidding wrong, an Islamic duty. Syrian historians were more likely to offer detailed accounts of such acts of protest, identify the participants and

explain the political negotiation that led to its resolution. However, when such protests lacked a clear sense of resisting injustice, the rebelling common people were portrayed as 'mobs'. Such outbursts were dismissed, their participants often not dignified by a proper mention. Despite the disapproval of the writers, such incidents made their way into the chronicles as expressions of 'bad times' and faulty governing.

The contextualisation of the politics of common people is connected to the didactic rationale behind medieval Arabic historiography. History was written to teach contemporary and future generations lessons about morality and justice. Historians were making political statements on their present and future by narrating their own times and the recent past. History as a didactic discourse, when applied to contemporary events, often becomes an expression of protest and hence potentially subversive. ◀

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began to crack – or perhaps when the new social facts of capitalist-colonial modernity became too much for the earlier conceptual repertoire to capture let alone evaluate – a turn to a new traditionalism was found to be salutary. And traditionalist knowledge has a certain stasis built into it, which may account for the falloff in production we see across the Sanskrit world.

Let me repeat what I alluded to in my opening remarks, that it is only a certain kind of modernity that makes us bemoan what might otherwise be taken as a steady state of civilisational equipoise: the industrialisation and commodification of knowledge in western modernity, one could argue, in contrast to the reproduction of artisanal intellectual practices, are merely a result of the 'everlasting uncertainty and agitation' that capitalism brought in its wake, not a sine qua non of an intellectual tradition. Moreover – although I cannot go into the argument here – the modernization of intellectual life in Europe was a consequence of a widespread dissolution of the previous social, political, and spiritual orders.

A highly cultivated, and consequential research question for Indian colonial history has been well put by David Washbrook: 'If its long-term relationship with India was, at least in part, a condition for the rise of Britain's Modernity, how far conversely were relations with Britain a condition for India's Traditionality?' I am beginning to wonder whether the traditionalisation that Washbrook and others have found to be a hallmark of early colonialism may have been a practice earlier developed by and later adapted from Indian elites themselves. ◀

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A number of ideas in the foregoing article are discussed in greater detail in Sheldon Pollock, *The Ends of Man at the End of Premodernity* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2005). The website of the international collaborative research project 'Sanskrit Knowledge Systems on the Eve of Colonialism' contains a great deal of information on the issues discussed in this article. See www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pollock/sks/

Can we speak of an 'early modern' world?

To speak of an 'early modern' world raises three awkward problems: the problem of early modernity, the problem of comparison and the problem of globalisation. In what follows, a discussion of these problems will be combined with a case study of the rise of humanism.

Peter Burke

The Concept

The concept 'early modern' was originally coined in the 1940s to refer to a period in European history from about 1500 to 1750 or 1789. It became widely accepted by the 1970s in English and other Germanic languages (including Dutch). The term is contradictory because historians first identified the years around 1500 as the rise of 'modernity', and only later applied the term to the world following the French and Industrial Revolutions.

The problem became still more acute when the term was extended beyond Europe to Japan, China, India and so on, a move to combat Eurocentrism which has come to appear Eurocentric. What dates can possibly mark the beginning and end of an early modern period in world history?

In the case of America, as in Europe, it is difficult to deny the significance of 1492. The rise of the three 'gunpowder empires' of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals also support an opening date around 1500 (though 1350 is sometimes suggested, the Black Death having been a Eurasian rather than a purely European disaster). On the other hand, a number of historians of Africa prefer 1600 to 1500 as a turning-point. In East Asia, too, the great divide runs down the middle of the 'early modern' period. In China, the time of troubles leading to the replacement of the Ming dynasty by the Qing, in 1644, is a much more obvious turning-point than the years around 1500. In the case of Japan, the term 'early modern' has been used not to replace indigenous dating but as a synonym for the Tokugawa period, 1600-1868.

Varieties of Comparative History

When historians of Europe speak about comparison, they often begin by invoking the French medievalist Marc Bloch, who distinguished two kinds, the neighbourly and the distant. His comparisons and contrasts between medieval France and England illustrate the neighbourly approach. Bloch was more sceptical about distant comparisons, but he did say something about feudalism in Western Europe and Japan.

Distant comparisons in particular raise problems, as the case of Max Weber illustrates. In his day, Weber seemed to escape Eurocentrism by placing his investigation of the rise of capitalism in an Asian context. Today, by contrast, he is criticised for Eurocentrism because he assessed other cultures in terms of their lack of what the West possessed

(rationality, individualism, capitalism, and so on).

A major problem is the western origin of the conceptual apparatus with which we are working. As attempts to study 'feudalism' on a world scale have shown, it is very difficult to avoid circularity in this kind of enterprise, defining the phenomenon to be studied in European terms and then 'discovering' that it is essentially European. Even apparently unspecific terms such as 'university', 'novel', 'portrait', or 'grammar' were originally coined with the European experience in mind, with the consequent danger of forcing Islamic institutions, Indian artefacts or Chinese texts to fit a western model.

If comparison is risky, lack of comparison is even more dangerous. Take the case of another famous sociologist, Norbert Elias, and his study of what he called the 'Civilising Process', more exactly the rise in early modern Europe of social pressures towards increasing self-control (linked to the centralisation of government). Elias virtually ignored the rest of the world – yet similar pressures can be found in China, Japan, Java and other parts of Asia.

There seems no third way, at least at present, between using this western apparatus of comparison and refusing to compare at all. At the moment, to undertake comparison while remaining aware of the danger of Eurocentrism appears to be the lesser evil. One precaution that we can take is to follow what might be called the principle of rotation. That is, we can take different regions in turn as the norm. Bloch discussed to the extent to which Japan followed or failed to follow a model of feudalism derived from France, but it is equally legitimate to discuss whether or not 17th-century Spain was a 'closed country' on the model of Japan in the age of *sakoku*, or to look at the pleasure quarters of early modern Venice or Rome, Paris or London as western examples of the 'floating world' (*ukiyo*) to be found in Japanese cities such as Edō, Kyōtō or Ōsaka.

Globalisation

The third general problem is that of globalisation. Is it useful to speak of such a trend in the early modern period? Globalisation is often defined in terms of time-space compression, and in the early modern period, as the French historian Fernand Braudel reminds us in his famous book about the Mediterranean, distance was public enemy no. 1 and messages from Philip II to the Viceroy of Peru might take from six to nine months to arrive at their destination, and up to two years from Spain to the Philippines. Given this 'tyranny of

distance', it is probably best to describe the early modern period as at best a time of 'proto-globalisation', despite the increasing importance of connections between the continents, of economic, political and intellectual encounters, not only between the 'West' and the 'rest', but between Asia and the Americas as well.

There remains the question of standardisation, of the extent to which different parts of the world participated in common trends. There was indeed a rise of a 'world economy' in this period, an increasing dependence of the four continents on one another. There were similar trends towards political centralisation in Europe and Asia, and a similar 'general crisis' in the middle of the 17th century. Whether there were common cultural or intellectual trends in the early modern world, or at least in Eurasia, is a more difficult question, since ideas are so closely tied to the languages in which they are expressed. The following case study is intended as an illustration of the problems.

The Three Humanisms

This case study concerns what might be called the three humanisms: Italian (which became European), Islamic and Chinese. It is an attempt to deparochialise the Renaissance, often viewed as part of a triumphal story of the rise of 'Western Civilisation', as well as to consider the links between different elements in what is known as 'the humanist movement'.

Italian 'humanism' was so named because the humanists were concerned with the *studia humanitatis*, claiming that the study of certain academic subjects (notably rhetoric, ethics, poetry and history) could make students more fully human. The humanists themselves were generally employed either as university teachers or as secretaries to important people. Their scholarship was in the service of the revival of antiquity, whether classical or Christian. The age of the so-called 'Fathers of the Church', such as Augustine and Jerome), though for some scholars antiquarianism, including the collection of ancient statues and coins, was pursued for its own sake. The humanists both preached and practised a return 'to the sources' (*ad fontes*), stripping away layers of medieval commentary on Aristotle, Roman law and the Bible.

In practice, the humanist movement was divided. On one side there was the philosophical or ethical wing, concerned with what was sometimes called 'the human condition' or the 'dignity of man' (the topic of a famous oration by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, deliv-

ered at the end of the 15th century). Following the shock of the French invasion of Italy in 1494, some leading humanists, notably Machiavelli, shifted from a concern with ethics to a concern with politics.

On the other side, we find the philologists. The interest in the revival of antiquity extended to the revival of classical Latin. Humanists were well aware of the differences between the Latin of Cicero and what they considered the 'corrupt' or 'polluted' Latin of the Middle Ages. Their sense of linguistic anachronism enabled the detection of a number of forgeries, as in the famous case of Lorenzo Valla's exposure of the text in which the emperor Constantine allegedly donated the region around Rome to the pope and his successors.

One of the most famous representatives of the ethical wing was Montaigne, whose remarks about the philological wing reveal the distance between the two. He once made fun of a humanist sitting up at night to study: 'do you think he is searching in his books for a way to become better, happier or wiser? Nothing of the kind. He will teach posterity the metre of Plautus's verses, and the correct spelling of a Latin word, or he will die in the attempt'.

It seems illuminating to speak of Islamic humanism because the Arabic keyword *adab* (variously translated as 'custom', 'manners', 'civilisation' or 'literature') corresponds at least roughly to *humanitas*. In any case, the Islamic world, like Europe, drew on the classical tradition, not only in science, but in the humanities as well. For example, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* were well known in the 12th and 13th centuries CE.

The kinship between Italian and Islamic humanism was recognised by at least one of the Italians. In his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, Pico, who knew a little Arabic, quotes a man he calls 'Abdala the Saracen' to the effect that nothing is more wonderful than man. 'Abdala' is 'Abd Allah Ibn Qutayba (828-99 CE). His treatise *Adab-al-Katib* ('the book of Adab') is concerned with rhetoric, with what might be called 'the culture of secretaries'. It resembles the rhetorical treatises of the humanists, though a few hundred years earlier, and carries similar implications about the humanising function of the art of speaking and writing well.

The case of Chinese humanism, unlike that of the Islamic world, presents similarities rather than connections to Italian humanism. The central aim was similar, a return to antiquity (*fuguo*). Once again, the movement had two wings.

The ethical wing has been discussed by Theodore de Bary and others who note the concern of Confucius (Kongzi) and his followers and of 'neo-confucians' like Zhu Xi with the ideal man, 'princely man' or 'noble person' (*chunzi*) and also with the cultivation of the self (*xiushen*). Like the Italians after 1494, some of the Chinese humanists became more concerned with politics after the shock of the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644.

The philological wing, previously neglected, has been studied by Benjamin Elman. It was associated with the 'search for evidence' (*kaozheng*, a slogan equivalent to *ad fontes*) and led to an increasing sense of anachronism. The argument that part of the 'Documents Classic' was forged was made with increasing philological precision. Again, in Tokugawa Japan there was a movement called 'the way of ancient learning' (*kogaku*), attempting to return to the ideas of Confucius by stripping away neo-confucian commentaries.

This brief sketch of an attempt to write the history of three humanisms inevitably omits a number of important problems. Why was there more of a scholarly preoccupation with humanity and philology in these three cultures than elsewhere? How different was the role of religion in these three cases? What would it be like to try to apply the principle of rotation? How illuminating would it be to speak of *kaozheng* in Italy or of the *ulema* in early modern Europe? <

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Opening the gate of verification: intellectual trends in the 17th century Arab-Islamic world

For much of the 20th century, it was widely assumed that early modern Arabic-Islamic civilisation had been in an advanced state of 'decadence' or 'sclerosis'. The 'golden' or 'classical' age of Arabic-Islamic civilisation had, it was believed, come to an end in the 13th or 14th century, giving way to a 'dark age' of intellectual stagnation – an age of 'imitation and compilation' – that lasted until the 19th century 'renaissance' (nahda). This sad intellectual state of affairs was also thought to mirror an imagined economic and demographic decline attributed to Ottoman (mis)rule and/or shifts in international trade routes.

Khaled El-Rouayheb

This grand narrative reflects the self-presentation of 19th century Western colonialists and 20th century Arab nationalists and Islamic modernists and revivalists, and has little to do with a dispassionate and careful study of the early modern period itself. The idea that the period between 1500 and 1800 was one of general economic and urban decay can no longer be accepted, thanks to the pioneering research of Andre Raymond and Antoine Abdel Nour. A closer look at intellectual developments in the Arabic provinces of the 17th century Ottoman Empire will also belie any notions of a stagnant and decadent culture just waiting to be 'revived' or 'reformed'.

The way of the Persian and Kurdish verifying scholars

In the first decade of the 17th century, the Persian Safavids managed to wrest Azerbaijan and Shirwan from the Ottomans, thus sparking off a westward exodus of Sunni Azeri and Kurdish scholars. They brought with them scholarly handbooks on 'rational sciences' such as logic, dialectic, grammar, semantics-rhetoric, and theology by 15th and 16th century Persianate scholars such as Jami (d.1492), Dawani (d.1501) and 'Isam al-Din al-Isfara'ini (d.1537). The impact of the introduction of these new works is reflected in the following passage by the Damascene scholar al-Muhibbi (d.1699), writing about a Kurdish scholar who settled in Damascus in the first decade of the 17th century:

'He mostly taught the books of the Persians, and he was the first to acquaint the students of Damascus with these books, and he imparted to them the ability to read and teach them. It is from him that the gate of *tahqiq* in Damascus was opened. This is what we have heard our teachers say'.

The term *tahqiq* lexically means 'verification' and was often juxtaposed with 'imitation' (*taqlid*), ie, accepting scholarly propositions without knowing their evidential basis. In the present context the term meant something somewhat more specific: verifying scholarly propositions in a particular way. Muhibbi elsewhere

noted that the Kurdish and Persian scholars of his age had a distinct manner of conducting scholarly discussions that heeded the principles of Aristotelian dialectic (*adab al-bahth*). A 17th century Moroccan pilgrim vividly described a Kurdish scholar's teaching style:

'His lecture on a topic reminded one of discussion and parley, for he would say, "Perhaps this and that", and, "It seems that it is this", and, "Do you see that this can be understood like that?" And if he was questioned on even the slightest point he would stop until the matter was established'.

'Due to them logic became popular in Egypt'

At around the same time as the Safavids were conquering Azerbaijan and Shirwan, Morocco fell into political turmoil as the Sa'dian dynasty came to an end. Several scholars from the region went eastward, also bringing with them local scholarly handbooks. These included the theological and logical works of Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Sanusi (d.1490), with the glosses of later north-west African scholars such as 'Isa al-Sugtani (d.1651), Yahya al-Shawi (d.1685) and al-Hasan al-Yusi (d.1691). Sanusi and his later commentators shared with their Persian and Kurdish colleagues a disparagement of 'imitation' and an emphasis on 'verification'. Again, 'verification' to these scholars meant something more specific than simply 'providing evidence'. In Sanusi's theological works, for example, the emphasis on 'verification' went hand in hand with the adoption of Aristotelian modal concepts and syllogistic argument forms when expounding and defending the principles of Ash'ari theology that tried to strike a middle ground between what it saw as the unbridled rationalism of the Islamic Neo-Platonists and the obscurantist fideism of the traditionalists.

The impact of this eastward movement of north-west African logician-theologians can be gauged from a statement made by the Cairo-based scholar Muhammad Murtada al-Zabidi (d.1791). Zabidi complained about his Egyptian contemporaries' enthusiasm for logic and traced this enthusiasm to scholars

of north-west African origin who settled in Cairo in the second half of the 17th century:

'Thus you see that those of them who came to Egypt in the times of the teachers of our teachers had few *hadith* to relate, and due to them it [logic] became popular in Egypt and they [i.e., locals] devoted themselves to studying it, whereas before that time they had only occupied themselves with it occasionally to sharpen their wits'.

The imams of pantheism

The 17th century also witnessed the spread of originally non-Arabic mystical orders in the Arabic-speaking lands. The Indian Shattari mystic Sibghatallah al-Barwaji (d.1606), for example, settled in Medina towards the end of his life. He and his disciples brought with them a number of Shattari mystical works, such as Ghawth Gwaliori's *al-Jawahir al-khams*, which introduced Indian astral-yogic ideas, and Burhanpuri's *al-Tuhfa al-mursala*, which defended the controversial pantheist idea of the 'unity of existence'. In Medina Barwaji started a line of Shattari mystics, the most illustrious of whom were Ahmad al-Qushashi (d.1661) – referred to by the previously mentioned Damascene scholar Muhibbi as 'the leader (Imam) of those who expound the unity of existence' – and his disciple Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1690).

Another Indian mystic who settled in the Holy Cities in the early 17th century was the Naqshbandi mystic Taj al-Din al-'Uthmani (d.1640). Taj al-Din also introduced works peculiar to his order, such as the hagiographical collections *Nafahat al-uns* of Jami and *Rashahat 'ayn al-hayat* of Kashifi, both of which he translated from Persian into Arabic for the benefit of his Arabic disciples.

The Khalwati order was also spilling over from Anatolia to Syria in this period. It spread amongst Damascene scholars owing to the efforts of a Kurdish immigrant from Gaziantep, Ahmad al-'Usali (d. 1639). Perhaps through this channel, the works of Turkish Khalwati mystics such as 'Aziz Mahmud al-Uskudari (d.1628) and 'Abd al-Ahad

al-Nuri (d.1651) were introduced to Syrian mystics.

The spread of these mystical orders strengthened support for the 'pantheist' ideas of the Andalusian mystic Ibn 'Arabi (d.1240), which had hitherto been regarded with caution or outright hostility by most Arabic-speaking religious scholars. This trend may be seen as culminating in the brilliant and influential works of the Medinan Shattari mystic Ibrahim al-Kurani and the Damascene Naqshbandi mystic 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d.1731), both of whom wrote several influential apologias for the unity of existence and other controversial mystical ideas and practices.

These three intellectual currents were independent of each other. They could at times be mutually reinforcing: the works of the 15th century Persian scholars Jami and Dawani, for example, were often cited by later mystical supporters of the idea of the unity of existence such as Kurani and Nabulusi. However, the trends could also conflict, with mystics criticising excessive preoccupation with the rational sciences, and staunchly Ash'arite north-west African theologians condemning the ideas of the Medinan Shattari mystics like Kurani. Together, however, the trends belie the idea that the intellectual climate of the 17th century Arab-Islamic world was moribund and stagnant, passively awaiting a 'revival' or 'reawakening' in the 18th or 19th century.

The dismal view of pre-19th century intellectual and cultural life was part of the political and religious outlook of modern self-styled 'revivers' of the Islamic world. For such thinkers, the emphasis was not on 'verification' but *ijtihad* – a concept that has been much misunderstood through its appropriation as a battle-cry by various reformist and revivalist currents in the modern Islamic world. The word lexically means 'exertion of effort', but it was used in a much more specific and controversial sense by modern reformers and revivalists: as a license to disregard legal precedent and return to the scriptural sources of Islamic law. In many, perhaps most cases, the rationale was 'fundamentalist' rather than 'modernist', and the 'reo-

pening of the gate' of *ijtihad* has often meant a much more severe assessment of the rational sciences, mysticism and popular religion than was usual before the 19th century. The modern proponents of *ijtihad*, as one would expect from religious revolutionaries, dismissed their opponents as unthinking imitators. Less understandable, a host of modern historians have uncritically adopted this partisan view, and hence the very alternative to either unthinking imitation or scripturalist *ijtihad* was lost. The concept of 'verification' is important in that it shows that there were such alternatives, and that *ijtihad* was by no means the sole 'principle of movement' in Islamic intellectual history.

There is obviously much more to say about these intellectual currents, but their very existence suggests that further research into Arabic-Islamic intellectual life in the early modern period will show that these centuries are 'dark' only because modern historians have for so long insisted on looking elsewhere. ◀

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Early modern Sanskrit thought and the quest for a perfect understanding of property

In Sanskrit discourse, discussions about property and ownership traditionally belonged to two disciplines: hermeneutics (mimamsa) and moral-legal science (dharma-sastra). Scholars of hermeneutics tended to ponder the question of what motivated people to acquire and alienate property, and scholars of moral-legal science contemplated exactly how people did acquire, use and alienate property. Beginning in the 16th century, however, a remarkable disciplinary shift occurred.

Ethan Kroll

A group of scholars of what was termed ‘new logic’ (*navya-nyaya*) established a movement devoted to the analysis of property, ownership, inheritance and a wide range of other aspects of civil law. They reasoned that both hermeneutics and moral-legal science had been addressing legal matters by using terms and concepts that were essentially undefined. It was very nice to explain how or why people became owners of property, but what did ‘being an owner’ actually mean? If we were to see two men, each holding a ball, and knew that only one man owned his ball, what, precisely, would allow us to discern one man as the owner of his ball and the other man as not owning his ball? The new logicians determined that they could use the discursive method peculiar to their philosophical system to resolve such questions. Their efforts created what I call the Sanskrit philosophy of law, a new branch of Sanskrit thought devoted exclusively to the understanding of those concepts intrinsic to legal doctrine.¹

‘Property’: a universal concept

The emergence of this Sanskrit philosophy of law depended first on a late-11th century ascetic named Vijnanesvara. In a groundbreaking work of moral-legal science entitled *Mitaksara* (The Breviloquent), Vijnanesvara concluded that property was a universal concept. He noted that ‘people who live beyond [our] borders, who are unaware of the practices [discussed] by works of moral-legal science, nevertheless make use of the concept of property, because we see that they buy and sell [things]’. Specific laws could, and, in fact, did, differ from place to place, but the basic conceptions behind these differing laws remained constant. The notions of property and ownership could not, therefore, be traced to some specific, authoritative text or oral work, but had to exist in the world of shared human experience.

For Vijnanesvara, property and ownership achieved their full expression within the total ambit of a property law that was temporally and regionally circumscribed. As a result, established legal practices and dictates would pro-

vide sufficient answers to questions such as how we knew property to be property and an owner to be an owner. In the eyes of a group of philosophers specialising in the emerging discipline of new logic, however, the characterisation of universal concepts through legal particulars proved unsatisfactory.

New logic and the development of a philosophy of law

The landmark *Tattva-cinta-mani* (The Philosopher’s Stone for the Real Nature of the Material World) of Gangesa Upadhyaya (fl. late 13th c.) had encouraged scholars of new logic to develop a vocabulary of Sanskrit terms infused with highly technical meanings with which they could construct precise and accurate characterisations of what people actually knew and how they knew it.² These new logicians distanced themselves from the ‘old’ logic, which had focused on a broad range of issues unrelated to epistemological concerns, and they tended to privilege views that belonged to proponents of ‘new’ (*navya*), or ‘very new’ (*atinavina*), ideas. While the new logicians developed original approaches to old problems, they were equally determined to explore new philosophical territory. In particular, they were captivated by the question of how human beings actually recognised owners and property as such. Gangesa’s own son, the 14th century philosopher Vardhamana Upadhyaya, may have been the first writer on new logic to think about such issues, and he was soon accompanied by such luminaries as Sankara Misra (15th c.) and Raghunatha Siromani (16th c.).

Raghunatha must be credited with establishing property and ownership as canonical concerns for new logic. In a work he called the *Pada-artha-tattva-nirupana* (An Investigation into the True Nature of Conceptual Categories), Raghunatha noted that previous scholars had made the grievous error of trying to understand property and ownership in terms of an object’s capacity for legitimate employment. Such reasoning allowed us to discern a man who ate someone else’s food as the owner of that food, which meant there was no reason for us not to attribute ownership to thieves who made appropriate use of their stolen goods.

Raghunatha wanted to impress upon his audience that an object’s status as property could not depend upon its potential for use, much as a person’s status as an owner could not depend on his capacity to use. Instead, our knowledge of an owner and his property had to be independent of any activity on the part of either the person owning or the object owned. Raghunatha argued that the easiest solution was to root our entire knowledge of property and ownership in the objective authority of the corpus of works on moral-legal science. In this way, we would recognise as ‘property’ and ‘owner’ what moral-legal science called property and whom it called an owner. Yet Raghunatha also recognised that property and ownership existed outside the confines of moral-legal science. To this end, he suggested that property and ownership were characterised the world over by the cause and effect relationship. Certain events, such as purchase, resulted in the production of ownership, just as certain other events, such as sale, resulted in the destruction of that ownership. Property and ownership could then be viewed as the results of this causal framework, and knowledge of the causes themselves would be derived from the local laws in force.

Raghunatha cleverly avoided defining property and ownership per se. But his successor, the 16th c. scholar Ramabhadra Sarvabhauma, was willing to argue that linguistic expressions such as ‘John’s horse’ caused us to recognise the presence of a relationship through which John and the horse assumed the new and mutually dependent identities of ‘owner’ and ‘property’. What remained in question was how, precisely, this relationship functioned.

The maturation of the philosophy of law

The 17th and early 18th centuries witnessed an explosion of activity, as the work of both Raghunatha and Ramabhadra provoked new logicians and, to a lesser extent, hermeneutists and scholars of moral-legal science to construct definitions of property and ownership. Those involved in this endeavour included the era’s brightest minds in Sanskrit thought, such as the new logicians Gadadhara Bhattacharya, Jayarama Nyayapananana and Gokulanatha Upadhyaya; the specialists in

moral-legal science Nilakantha Bhatta and Mitra Misra; the hermeneutist Kamalakara Bhatta; and the Jain logician Yasovijaya. These philosophers were pre-eminent in their fields, and it is telling that they all deemed work on a theory of property and ownership to be professionally and intellectually worthwhile.

Increasing interest in property and ownership did not, however, lead to a conclusive definition of the two concepts. Instead, 17th and 18th century scholars of new logic, moral-legal science and hermeneutics demonstrated their ingenuity by constructing unique approaches to the matter. Their pursuit of originality led them to reject or modify the views of both prior and contemporary thinkers in order to distinguish themselves as singularly capable of solving what appeared to be an intractable problem. In addition, the Sanskrit philosophy of law had become an increasingly interdisciplinary enterprise, and doctrinal differences often rendered competing characterisations of property and ownership incompatible.

Of perhaps greater interest is that scholarship of the 17th and 18th centuries expanded the examination of property and ownership to include a wide range of legal phenomena. Jayarama, writing in his *Karakavyakhya* (An Explanation of Grammatical Case-Relationships), asked whether ‘sale’ and ‘barter’ were really conceptually identical, and Gokulanatha, writing in his *Nyayasiddhantatattvaviveka* (A Meditation on the Truth about the Established Conclusions of the System of Logic), explored how gambling contests resulted in the destruction of the loser’s ownership and the creation of the winner’s.

The 17th century also witnessed the emergence of a genre of juridico-philosophical treatises that used the methodology of new logic to address legal concerns. The most significant of these was the curiously anonymous *Svatvarahasya* (The Mystery of the Proprietary Relationship). Gifts, inheritance and religious offerings had been the subject of innumerable disagreements among scholars of moral-legal science, and either a new logician or a group of new logicians determined to resolve them. He, or they, thus composed the *Svatvarahasya*, a

series of essays devoted to demonstrating the logically sound – and, in the view of the new logicians, correct – understanding of contentious legal topics.

It appears that the composition of such treatises continued into and beyond the 18th century, and there are numerous essay-style works from the 18th and 19th centuries on individual legal topics that remain in manuscript form. Judging from the *Svatvarahasya*, it would seem that the Sanskrit philosophy of law was well beyond its infancy, and it is reasonable to conjecture that subsequent work would have continued the *Svatvarahasya*’s methodological trend.

The Sanskrit philosophy of law was a remarkable development that mirrored a period of renewed creativity in Sanskrit thought. Its evolution, from a subject of limited interest to a small number of new logicians into an intellectual movement that elicited the contributions of leading scholars from multiple disciplines, has been a focus of my dissertation. To this end, I have been engaged in preparing translations and analyses of those texts that constitute the Sanskrit philosophy of law. It is my hope that their eventual publication will lead to further inquiry into a neglected area of intellectual history. ◀

Notes

1. The first, and only, western scholar to have discussed this matter at length is J. Duncan M. Derrett. My overview is indebted to his ‘Svatva Rahasyam: A 17th-Century Contribution to Logic and Law’ and ‘The Development of the Concept of Property in India c. A.D. 800-1800’, in Derrett, J. Duncan M. *Essays in Classical and Modern Hindu Law*, v. I & II, 1976-1977. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
2. For a good overview of *nyaya*, see: Matilal, Bimal Krishna. 1998. *The Character of Logic in India*. Albany: State University of New York Press. For a survey of early *navya-nyaya*, see: Potter, Karl and Sibajiban Bhattacharyya, eds. 1993. *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, v. 6. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. Still an excellent guide to the history of both *nyaya* and *navya-nyaya* is: Mishra, Umesh. 1966. *History of Indian Philosophy*. Allahabad: Tirabhukti Publications.

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A stone relief in the wall of Bijapur city of the year 1658/9, when a large campaign was mounted against Shivaji. The elephant symbolises darkness and the enemy, the lion the royal house of Bijapur and the monkey perhaps political cunning or stratagem, as it does in several stories of the time.

Photo taken by author, December 2003

Saying one thing, doing another?

Political consciousness and conscious politics in 17th-century India

By investigating the place where mentality, or *doxa* (or whatever one likes to call the universe of unconscious or semi-conscious practice) meets the universe of consciousness and reflexive action, my paper aimed to address one of the challenges Sheldon Pollock posed for the masterclass: to integrate social and intellectual history.

Gijs Kruijtzter

As Anthony Pagden (1996) notes, a view established itself in (intellectual) history from the 1960s onwards that the things past agents held in their heads were 'generally unexamined, unreflected-upon, and frequently imposed'. Though in the field of western history this trend may be in decline, in Indian history, as practiced in western academia, it still rules supreme, with the pre-colonial period represented as a state of semi-consciousness and the colonial period as a 'rude awakening' – an idea that has trickled down to works of fiction like the recent film *Mangal Pandey* and Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Glass Palace*.

Take the contentious case of Shivaji, the warrior turned great king of the third quarter of the 17th century. As a thought experiment, we can try and disentangle his ideology from his practice to see if they match. This can be no more than a thought experiment as, it must be noted here, there is no way to disentangle his ideologies and practices given that we have access to his actions only through

textual representations. But let's for a moment go with all those historians who, implicitly or explicitly, contrast practice with ideology.

Shivaji co-opted a centuries-old discourse of Deccani patriotism and gave a new lease of life to both its unifying and divisive strands. This discourse had originated among Muslims of the Deccan, who could not or would not lay claim to a foreign origin and instead exalted the Deccan, roughly central India, as their homeland. (There was some discussion after the paper over whether the term patriotism is appropriate to the 17th century, but the author agrees with Bayly (1998) who argues that it is.)

Evidence, too long to cite here but discussed at length in Kruijtzter (forthcoming), shows that Shivaji appealed to this idea of the Deccan as a patria and excluded from it the Afghans who were partly in control of the state of Bijapur, but included Marathas, Deccani Muslims, Muslims of African origin and the Sultan of Golkonda. What matters here is that Shivaji deemed an appeal to Deccani patriotism a useful instrument of

policy, which can only have been premised on the idea that people might be willing to act on that appeal. The case of Nasir Muhammad, an African Muslim who handed a fortress to Shivaji so that it would not fall to the Afghans, brings this point home vividly.

The question remains whether Shivaji's Deccani patriotism was heartfelt or a ruse. On this question of deception, also highly relevant to the investigation of consciousness, the various compendia of letters of Shivaji's arch-enemy, the Emperor Aurangzeb, may shed some light. In the 1670s Aurangzeb is supposed to have written 'one cannot rule without practicing deception', with two quotations from the Quran to support that view. But at times he also expressed dismay over deceit and is supposed to have written towards the end of his life, 'God willing up to the day of my removal to the eternal home, there will be no difference between my words and acts'.

Finally, my paper turned to the issue of collective self-deception through the case of gift-giving. Contemporary Europeans are supposed by some modern

scholars (eg, Cohn 1992:169) to have misconstrued the acts of gift-giving that were so prominent in court life as mere exchanges of goods for favours. But perhaps those Europeans not so much saw things differently as wrote things differently. As Bourdieu remarks, 'in order for the system to work, the agents must not be entirely unaware of the truth of their exchanges...while at the same time they must refuse to know and above all to recognise it' (1977:5-6). Beside all the connotations of honour there was a plain-for-all-to-see economic aspect to gift-giving at the Mughal court. At the time of Aurangzeb all gifts were valued as they were brought into the court and a receipt was given the donor, and a century earlier one finds a miniature to the authorised history of the rule of Emperor Akbar in which a scribe is carefully recording the gifts brought upon the birth of an imperial heir. (I thank S.R. Sarma for drawing attention to this miniature at the session.)

In conclusion it may be said that 17th century Indian statesmen consciously employed and responded to ideologies, consciously deceived each other

or refrained from deception, and were conscious of the exchange mechanism of gift giving. In short, consciousness was the salt in the pie of politics. ◀

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Empires and exact sciences in pre-modern Eurasia

Pre-modern Asia's diverse intellectual traditions shared a scientific enterprise in the development of mathematical astronomy and astrology. Inspired by the prospect of foretelling the future, and by the mathematical beauty of heavenly motions, scholars in the dominant cultures of Asia and Europe constructed a remarkably complex system of calculation, observation and prediction that became the springboard for modern physical science.

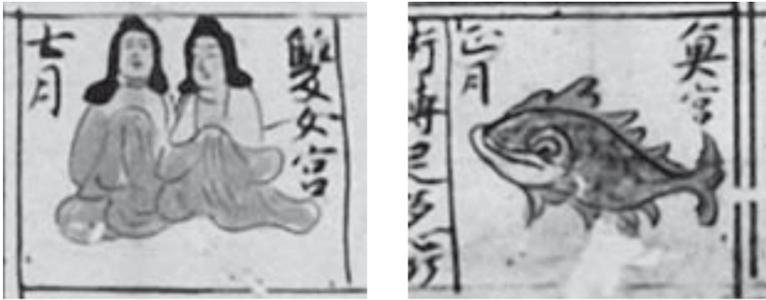


Figure 1: The zodiacal signs Virgo and Pisces in Japanese Buddhist astrology. Photographs from Yano 2004, used with permission.

Kim Plofker

The global diffusion of scientific ideas is sometimes regarded as an exclusively modern phenomenon; but the ancient and medieval history of science in Europe and Asia, where imperial power often served as the transmission vector for scientific theories, contradicts this notion.

Reading the future in the skies

It may startle the modern reader to see astrology lumped with mathematics and

astronomy under the name 'science'. Astrology has been excluded from that status by the modern definition of scientific method and is nowadays decisively classed as a pseudoscience. However, in earlier times it was considered one of the standard quantitative systems for understanding the physical world – the so-called 'exact sciences' – and most mathematicians and astronomers were astrologers as well.

The Babylonians of the early second millennium BCE believed that certain celestial phenomena such as eclipses

and conjunctions of planets were messages from the gods to the rulers of humanity, warning them of crises and trials to come. This belief persisted even as Babylonian scribes grew more skilled at describing the periodic recurrences of such phenomena mathematically. Even when sophisticated late Babylonian mathematical astronomy had made the apparent cycles of the heavens almost completely predictable, astronomers still took their ominous significance very seriously.

But by then Mesopotamia was under the control of the Persian and Macedonian empires, who took little interest in celestial warnings from Babylonian deities. So the astronomers turned to forecasting the future for individual patrons rather than for the state. They appear to have invented the concept of the horoscope, a prediction of the fate of an individual based on the positions of the stars and planets at the moment of his or her birth. The allure of such glimpses into the future launched the disciplines of mathematical astronomy and astrology on their far-flung wanderings through the subsequent millennia.

Dissemination of exact sciences

Greek scholars encountered Babylonian astronomy and celestial omens in Ptolemaic Egypt in the second half of the first millennium BCE. They superimposed the spherical cosmology of their own philosophical systems onto some of the Babylonian algorithmic schemes for mathematically predicting astronomical phenomena. This combination developed over the next few centuries into the famous system of nested celestial spheres, all revolving around a stationary spherical earth, that we know as 'Ptolemaic' astronomy.

The geometrised Ptolemaic universe served as the model for probably the most important scientific instrument of pre-modern times, the plane astrolabe (see sidebar). Greek science also adopted Babylonian 'proto-horoscopes' and expanded them into a full-blown system of horoscopic astrology.

In the flourishing trade of the Roman empire in the early first millennium CE, the Hellenistic exact sciences spread eastward to India, where they developed into the astrology and spherical astronomy of the classical Sanskrit tradition. These Indian sciences then rippled outward to enrich the astral knowledge of cultures in pre-Islamic Iran, China and Southeast Asia.

The complex multi-cultural layering of such knowledge is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows the iconography of the zodiacal signs Virgo and Pisces as represented in a mandala in the Toji temple in Kyoto. Here we see Japanese versions of the signs of the celestial zodiac adapted by Greeks from its original Babylonian form. (Note that in the process the



Figure 2: A diagram of the celestial spheres in an Indo-Arabic manuscript. Photograph by the author.

single maiden representing the sign Virgo has become two, and the two fish representing Pisces have become one.)

The rise and expansion of Islam in the 7th century continued the development and transmission of the exact sciences. In addition to many influences from India and Sassanian Iran (such as the decimal place-value numerals and various mathematical, astronomical and astrological methods), science in the Islamic world incorporated the Hellenistic Greek theories of ancient authors such as Euclid, Archimedes and Ptolemy. Embodied mostly in Arabic and Persian texts, these new syntheses of mathematical astronomy and astrology were carried to India, Central Asia, China, Byzantium and the Latin West. There they came into contact with different versions of the exact-sciences tradition, sometimes stimulating efforts by scientists to compare, assess and reconcile their variants.

Figure 2 shows an example of one of these second millennium cross-cultural transmissions: an Arabic manuscript, written in India, explains the cosmol-

ogy of nested heavenly spheres derived ultimately from Greek philosophy. In the western world, such interactions between variant traditions helped form the Renaissance science that eventually replaced the Ptolemaic systems of astronomy and astrology with the heliocentric cosmos of early modern astronomers like Copernicus, Kepler and Newton. <

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The seminar 'Empires and Exact Sciences in Pre-modern Eurasia' was held in Leiden, 29-30 May 2006, in memory of one of the 20th century's leading scholars of the cross-cultural development of pre-modern science, David Pingree. It was sponsored by CNWS, Brill Academic Publishers and IAS. For the program and participants see: www.ias.nl/ias/show/id=53893. The proceedings will be published in a forthcoming issue of the journal East and West of the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente in Rome.

The astrolabe

The plane astrolabe was invented in Hellenistic Greece (or its sphere of influence), but the details of its origin are lost. It is an ingenious form of analogue computer for predicting the appearance of the heavens at any given time, or conversely for telling time from the observed positions of the heavenly bodies. In an astrolabe, the zenith, horizon and other reference points for a particular terrestrial latitude are mathematically mapped onto a flat circular plate, in much the same way as the spherical globe of the earth can be mapped onto a flat surface. Then an openwork lattice showing the positions of the fixed stars is laid on top of the plate so that it can turn freely. As the lattice turns, it mimics in two-dimensional form the rising and setting of stars and their changing positions in the sky as the earth rotates. The time corresponding to any particular configuration of the heavens can be read on the graduated scale on the astrolabe's circular rim.

Astrolabes were greatly admired and prized in Islamic, Indian and European astronomy, often as objects of artistic beauty and as useful scientific tools. Figure 3 shows a (somewhat dilapidated) astrolabe with charming bird-shaped star-pointers, constructed in India where the astrolabe was known in Sanskrit as yantra-raja, 'king of instruments'.



Figure 3: A second millennium Sanskrit astrolabe from India. Photograph by Alexander Walland.

Fiction is philosophy: interview with Lulu Wang

Lulu Wang (Beijing, 1960) studied English language and literature at Beijing University, became a teacher at the same university after graduation, and moved to the Netherlands in 1986, where she taught Chinese at the Hogeschool van Maastricht. She spoke Dutch within a year and began to write it soon after, first short stories and then a novel, which took seven years to complete. *The Lily Theater* (*Het lelietheater*, 1997) – based on her experience growing up during the Cultural Revolution – was translated and published in over 20 countries. Then came *Letter to My Readers* (*Brief aan mijn lezers*, 1998), *The Tender Child* (*Het tedere kind*, 1999), *The White Feast* (*Het witte feest*, 2000), *The Lilac Dream* (*Seringendroom*, 2001), *The Red Feast* (*Het rode feest*, 2002), and *Intoxicated* (*Bedwelmd*, 2004), which explores culture clash through a love story about a Dutch economist and a young Chinese woman. Lulu Wang lives and works in Den Haag (<http://www.luluwang.nl/>). Her work has sold over a million copies worldwide.

Tao Yue

TY: When did you first discover that you had to be a writer?

LW: Interesting question. I was an only child, very lonely, and spent a lot of time talking to dolls and pets. The loneliness got worse as I got older. I developed vitiligo and couldn't be exposed to sunlight, so I was home alone all the time, immersing myself in books. As a teenager during the Cultural Revolution, I was separated from my parents. The loneliness stayed with me. Looking back, I realise how much I hoped to communicate with others. That period of my life shaped my personality – I still don't like sociability and prefer to keep to myself – and gave me the drive to write. After coming to the Netherlands, I was again consumed with loneliness, and writing was my outlet. I always wrote out of the need to express myself. Only recently, at a rough spot in my career, did I start to write out of pure literary passion – to discuss life, beauty, and philosophy in my novels. The rough spot was useful to me like sand in the shell of an oyster. I work even harder at writing now than before. My passion for literature keeps growing.

TY: Did you first work in Chinese? What did you write?

LW: When I was a child, I often told myself jokes for entertainment. Loneliness forced me to acquire a sense of humour – it's essential to survival. My first piece was a stand-up comedy written when I was 12. My teacher couldn't believe I wrote it, but when I showed her the books I had read, she not only believed me but also arranged to have it performed at the Children's Day (1 June) school party. My parents didn't support my writing. They both studied literature; my mother also taught it. But they thought it was hard to make a living from writing, let alone a successful career. They encouraged me to be a translator because it was safer. That didn't stop me, however. I wrote a love story when I was 14, but didn't show it to anyone. When I was a graduate student at Beijing University, my passion for creative writing stole time from my M.A. thesis. Then 'Eyes', a piece of prose I wrote, won a prize. I can't tell you how happy I was. I gave up writing Chinese when my third essay got censored, and I didn't write again until I came to the Netherlands.

TY: Why did you decide to write in Dutch instead of Chinese?

LW: I write in Dutch because I live in the Netherlands. My readers are mostly Dutch.

TY: How difficult is it for you to find your voice in an alien language? How much does it hurt? How much does it help?

LW: Writing in a foreign language is like scratching an itch on your leg from outside a boot. You can't express yourself fully; it's like dancing with chains on. To write in your mother tongue is convenient, but convenience doesn't guarantee excellence. There are advantages to working in Dutch. One, many Chinese idioms and clichés become new and unique when I translate them into Dutch. I like playing games with language. Writing in Dutch gives me more room to play than writing in Chinese does, and that excites me. Two, I acquired a special literary status in the Netherlands. I'm a new foreign writer, but my writing is included in a Dutch high school reading list for literature and history, which wouldn't happen if I wrote in Chinese. Three, because Chinese and Dutch people react differently to similar situations, the behavior of my characters has a shock effect on Dutch readers. For example, my character will smile when helpless whereas a Dutch person may cry. Writing in Dutch makes me feel even more Chinese, and I'm proud of the long, rich history of Chinese civilisation.

TY: How do you write when you sit down to write? Do you make sketches first or do you write directly? When you write, do you draft all the way to the end? Or are you a one-paragraph-at-a-time writer? Do you plan ahead or make it up as you go along?

LW: I always have an outline when I sit down to write. I usually write 2 to

4 pages, stop, and rewrite. I stop again after 20 to 30 pages to rewrite, and then again after 70 to 80 pages. The point of stopping to rewrite is to keep on track. I don't like leaving trash behind. I put myself in the situation of my characters, see what they see, feel what they feel, and let them decide what will happen next. The end is sometimes different from what I planned. I can't write anything I don't feel.

TY: Do you let anyone read your work before you submit it to the publisher?

LW: Yes, I let many people read my work. I hope to hear different opinions, especially from those who don't know me or my writing. People close to me often have preconceptions, positive or negative.

TY: Do you care what critics think?

LW: I'm willing to listen to all criticism, but I'm stubborn. I listen, but often accept only what I want to hear or what I can understand. It's difficult to be open to everything. Perhaps I need time to improve on this.

TY: Who are your favorite writers? Do you read them as warm-up exercises when you are writing yourself?

LW: I have no favourite writers, only favourite writing, which includes Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, Maugham's

Of Human Bondage, Lu Xun's short story 'Sad Loss', Zhu Ziqing's essay 'Moonlight on the Lotus Pond', and Xu Zhimo's poem 'Sayonara'. I read them as warm-ups in the past, but not so much now. I have only limited time and energy and I want so much to write, though I still read classical Chinese poetry every day. I'm a novelist who doesn't always like reading novels. What I like is beautiful poetic writing. I aim at being poetic all through my novels. It's not easy.

TY: Has the writing you cite influenced your style?

LW: Not so much in the past, but more and more now. In the past, I was into 'art for art's sake' and tried to make every word a jewel. My style was baroque – lavishly descriptive. As I grow older, however, I feel 'less is more'. Also respecting the taste of my western readers (who sometimes complain that I'm redundant) I try to be more succinct. Hemingway is my model. His beauty is concision. His seemingly effortless style actually requires meticulous rewriting. He presents the end result; we miss the process.

Perhaps the difference of style is rooted in culture. Chinese culture emphasises *yin* and *yang* and is full of antitheses. Everything comes in pairs. When describing a beautiful woman, for example, the idiom is that her beauty makes fish sink and geese fall from the sky out of envy. For a westerner, either fish or goose would be sufficient. To describe something just once is often not enough for me. I have to rephrase and describe it again. I don't say China has no succinct writers – Lu Xun is one, but he learned a lot from the West.

TY: Coming from one of the world's great civilisations with a rich literary tradition, do you think western readers appreciate its cultural capital?

LW: Most western readers except sinologists are ignorant of it.

TY: Are you ever annoyed by their ignorance?

LW: I blame the Chinese. It's their fault that they don't communicate their culture to the West. It's like a beautiful woman who stays home all day. Who's to blame if nobody pays her any attention? China should be open to the outside world culturally as well as economically.

TY: How acute is culture clash in your experience?

LW: I feel it strongly.

TY: What is the main area of culture clash between China and the West in general and the Netherlands in particular?

LW: Religion. Christianity is dogmatic – it stipulates good and evil, heaven and hell, what thou shalt and shalt not do. Look at the Ten Commandments. Western culture is keen to judge others. What *thou* shalt not do is not the same as what *I* will not do. *You* can't kill, but *I* can; *you* can't have nuclear weapons, but *I* can. It's not fraud – it's the sincere conviction of the world's police.

Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism (which merged long ago and are almost indistinguishable now) are mild and philosophical. Reality unites complementary opposites – *yin* and *yang*, good and evil, and so on. Everything is useful, also evil because without evil there wouldn't be good. There are no good or bad things. Is the sun good or bad? It's good where it rains a lot and bad where it's dry. Is a lamp good or bad? It's good for people who need it but bad for thieves. Ditto people – everyone has good and bad sides. Chinese philosophy emphasises self-discipline and caution. 'Think three times before you do anything', the proverb goes. Buddhism has many prohibitions, but Buddhists apply them to themselves, not to others. Very different from Christianity.

TY: Is culture clash a creative influence on your work?

LW: Of course. My latest novel explores it in order to introduce Chinese philosophy to westerners.

TY: Are you purely a novelist or do you consider writing nonfiction as well?

LW: I don't write nonfiction. Maybe I'll try to write poems as beautiful as Chinese classic poems, but in Dutch.

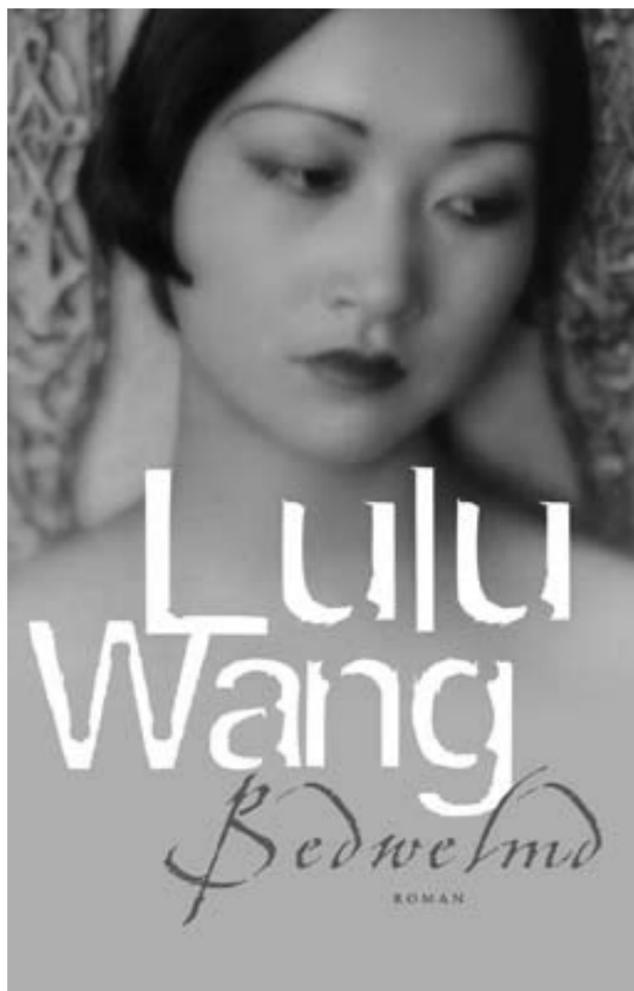
TY: How would you react to the statement, 'In a world like this no wonder fiction is dying.'

LW: I disagree. Fiction is not dying and never will. Fiction is philosophy – a picture or poetic version of life, not life itself. As long as people think about life, they will need art. As long as they want art, fiction will survive.

TY: Do you consider writing and publishing in Chinese eventually?

LW: I don't have any plans at the moment and don't know about the future. Life is unpredictable. Right now I only want to write good Dutch novels. ◀

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Reinoud Klazes

A new research culture for the marginalised in Bangladesh

Minorities have never had an easy time in Bangladesh. Since October 2001, when a four-party coalition with strong Islamist influence came to power, minority conditions have worsened. But some small disadvantaged groups, such as cobblers, pig farmers and river gypsies, have begun to organise themselves thanks to a new research approach to development.

Jos van Beurden

Bangladesh's population of 140 million is 88% Muslim. Hindus, at 10%, are the largest minority, while Buddhists and Christians each account for less than 0.5%. Most of the country's 1.8 million tribal people, divided among 40 tribes, adhere to religions other than Islam. Since the 2001 elections, as the independent human rights organisation *Ain o Salish Kendra* reports, Hindu families have been chased off their land and liberal Ahmadiya Muslims have been evicted and their mosques attacked. The perpetrators are close to fundamentalists and enjoy the support, explicit or implicit, of the major political parties. In several cases everyone is aware of their identities but the authorities make no attempt to apprehend them.

In 2001, a group of Bangladeshi academics and development practitioners responded to the country's overall deteriorating climate and to the lack of interest among well-known NGOs in poor and marginalised peoples. They established a research support organisation called Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB), to promote a people-centred qualitative approach to development. Staffed by both volunteers and professionals and partially funded by Dutch Foreign Affairs, RIB focuses on the poor and the marginalised, in the words of RIB Chairman Shamsul Bari, to 'humanise the poverty discourse'.

The gonogobeshok: a new kind of researcher

RIB uses a method it calls Participatory Action Research. PAR is based on two principles. The first is that development and poverty alleviation efforts must be founded on knowledge – no new development activity is undertaken without preliminary research. The second is that this research must tap the knowledge of the poor and marginalised for interventions aimed at their advancement. This is a relatively new approach for Bangladesh, where researchers need a wider range of skills than their predecessors. They have to be able to create a conducive environment for dialogue with a community and to patiently encourage the poor to recognise the knowledge they possess and to use it to find their own solutions.

So far RIB has helped sensitize some 500 researchers to the requirements of conducting research based on people's participation, and many projects have been completed using PAR's research principles. Its primary method requires the researcher and his assistants to assign a group of local volunteers the task of involving the community in identifying obstacles to development and possible solutions. As a result, ordinary people become 'people researchers' or *gonogobeshoks*. According to RIB's 2004-2005 Annual Report, 'a

large number of people, counting into the thousands, have become people researchers'. *Gonogobeshoks*, by discussing subjects for community action, have already initiated financial savings groups and diminished gambling and fighting. Some have been making collective presentations to authorities, such as in the city of Jessore, where a group of marginalised cobblers requested, and received, authorisation to set up roadside sales outlets.

RIB often supports the research activities of local NGOs to ensure that research leads to development activities. In November 2005, I visited ten RIB-supported research projects. One was the Grambangla Unnayan Committee (GUC), a small local NGO that since 1999 has taken up the cause of the Bede, or river gypsies. Its director, A. K. Maksud, is by training an anthropologist, while many of his GUC researcher-colleagues are development practitioners. RIB offers them training, supervision and holds regular seminars on PAR issues. GUC's research on the Bede turned out to be a good example of the RIB approach.

River gypsies: refugees in their own country

The Bede themselves estimate their total population to be 1.2 million. Official estimates put their number at around half a million, as the government does not recognise those without fixed addresses and many Bede live on boats that ply the country's rivers. Bede livelihoods vary: small business enterprise, selling talismans for preventing snake bites, snakebite treatment, snake charming and trading, and offering spiritual healing services and traditional medicines. Bede female and male healers serve millions of people for whom mainstream health care is too far away or too expensive.

I visited three locations to evaluate the RIB-supported GUC Bede research project: the town of Savar, a one-hour drive north of Dhaka, is home to about 4,000 Bede, most of whom reside in boats or boat-like houses built on stilts; closer to Dhaka, Bede in the hamlet of Salipur live on a narrow plot between the highway and the river; and in the village of Laohojong, south of the capital, most Bede have given up their nomadic way of life and live in government-built houses. These communities are visibly poor.

To conduct any research at all, the Grambangla Unnayan Committee first had to gain the trust of these communities. In Savar, a Bede engineer gained that trust, acting as intermediary between the people and GUC researchers. In other communities, community headmen became PAR animators who facilitated meetings with nomadic groups of 'boat Bedes' to discuss issues

such as education, livelihood security, gender disparity, water and sanitation, voting, citizenship and land rights. The findings of GUC and those local Bede who became *gonogobeshoks*, revealed that the Bede are severely deprived of basic necessities such as food, shelter, medical care and education. More than 80% live below the poverty line on less than a dollar a day.

The increasing availability of modern medicines and the expansion of the state healthcare network have increased the Bede's poverty and isolation. Sixty-year-old Mrs Sor Banu of Salipur explained, 'When I was 15, we had plenty of work. Nowadays people are not interested in our medicines. If they see me walking with my sack of medicines, they often shout after me. Last week someone from whom I had tapped blood refused to pay me and forced me to run away. Sometimes they harass our girls'. Male customers sometimes ask Bede women to enter their houses to perform medical services, then lock the door and rape them. 'My only son will become a petty trader. But selling our medical tools against evil eyes, indigestion, cold, fever, breast pain or rheum will not be sufficient'.

Between 2002 and 2005 GUC's Maksud collected data from 16 different sample areas, including those I visited, in order to account for the Bede's geographical distribution. GUC researchers then tested strategies, mainly through group discussions with *gonogobeshoks*, to include this river-nomadic community in their own development process.

Participatory action = results

The research conducted by GUC and the *gonogobeshoks* helped most Bede become aware of their own potential. The community in Salipur placed improved sanitation at the top of their list of priorities. A pump for drinking water was installed and two latrines could have been placed near it had a local brick factory owner not prevented it, as he did not want the Bede to settle there. A mobile boat for pre-school education was created, the first of its kind in the country, and RIB trained one community volunteer to become a teacher. Such mobile pre-schools have also been created in other Bede communities. Meanwhile, near Savar, 35 young women have been trained to make batiks; twice a week they work two to three hours and undertake non-formal primary education.

Meanwhile, the formerly nomadic Laohojong villagers have begun to organise themselves and speak out. When they received considerably less relief than mainstream Bengali communities during the 2004 floods, GUC researchers took photographs, wrote a report and made it public, and as a result the Bede community received private donations.



A mobile school for Bede children

A.K.M. Maksud

Laohojong women have started small businesses, such as selling chicken and geese or sewing cloth, and having learned the importance of education, they now send their children to school. Group savings have also been established to help pay for new houses, funerals and marriages. One Laohojong Bede, Mohamed Shabeb Ali, has even been elected to the municipal council: 'At first my colleagues did not want me to use a chair, but to sit in the second row on the floor, but I learnt to understand my rights as a citizen'.

At the national level the Bede have formed the National Manta Samiti, a nationwide coalition of Bede interest groups, and joined in human rights demonstrations. For the first time, the Bede and other disadvantaged groups are cited in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The Bangladesh Planning Commission publicly admits that the Bede and other groups have been living a segregated life and that social services do not reach them. 'The children from these communities must have access to health and education', the Commission asserts.

Buzzword

Development agencies today all claim to include local communities in their activities, but too often their researchers and organisers simply collect and assess data and announce their proposals. RIB has chosen a different path; for starters, it has chosen different target groups, including those passed over by donors. For example, RIB agreed to work with a local NGO that wanted to conduct research among pig farmers but was unable to secure funds from either national or international NGOs.

RIB reminds us of what Paolo Freire wrote more than three decades ago in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972): that participation is an empowering and educative process. From my own Bangladesh research experience in 1974-75, I remember the risk of favouring exploited peasants and oppressed women to their detriment. Through my conversations with GUC Director Maksud

and other researchers, I learned that because many local NGOs have to deal with local authorities and power holders and maintain good working relations with them in order to make any progress, they do not easily fall into the trap of a one-sided and uncritical pro-poor analysis. Their research reports are often businesslike.

PAR is in vogue. Many who enter the RIB premises use the word, though I'm not convinced everyone uses it with the same notions in mind. One researcher working among the Santal minority in the Chittagong Hill Tracts told me the people researchers he worked with – both men and women – had not brought up gender issues, while I got the impression gender issues were something he was uncomfortable addressing.

But, overall, I am optimistic about the possibility of a new research culture in Bangladesh. A danger of any approach is that researchers will adhere to it to the detriment of those cases to which it might not apply. I met some researchers who had become too rigidly pro-PAR. While it is a sound methodology, PAR has limitations. For research in technological development of, say, a low cost test method for elephantiasis, cross-breeding of pigs or the production of natural vinegar, PAR is not of much help in the marketing realm of the end product (pig meat, vinegar, date palm syrup). PAR is efficient when investigating the supply side, but the demand side requires additional research techniques. <

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Jos van Beurden is co-author of *Jhagrapur: Poor Peasants and Women in a Village in Bangladesh* (1977-1998), and *From Output to Outcome: 25 Years of IOB Evaluation* (2004). *Jhagrapur Revisited* is forthcoming and will be published both in English and Bengali (2007).

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Beyond economics: transnational labour migration in Asia and the Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region accounts for 35-40% of the four to five million workers who take to their heels in search of employment each year. In scale, diversity and socio-economic consequences for the countries involved, contemporary movements of labour fundamentally differ from those of the past. Transnational labour migration can no longer be controlled by political measures or economic arrangements and is in need of a new approach beyond the limitations of neoclassical economic analysis.

Toon van Meijl

Migration in Asia and the Pacific involves three major networks: first, the movement of contract workers from South and Southeast Asia to the oil-producing countries of the Middle East; second, the movement of people from the developing countries of Southeast and East Asia to newly industrializing countries such as Thailand and Malaysia; and, third, the movement of Pacific Islanders to countries of permanent settlement, such as Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

The first stream will probably stop when the Persian Gulf region runs out of oil, but the second may increase over the next few years. Although labour migration within East and Southeast Asia has increased dramatically over the past 15 years, the region's newly industrializing economies still exhibit relatively low levels of foreign labour, principally for ethnic and political reasons. Countries such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore have highly restrictive immigration policies, even though they are increasingly dependent on foreign migrants in low-wage sectors of the economy.

Parallel to these developments, the rapidly expanding economies of Southeast Asia have begun to promote the export of labour, mainly since they have also pursued automation and the relocation of labour-intensive manufacturing industries overseas. The first country that promoted overseas contract migration was the Philippines, which entered into a series of bilateral agreements with various labour importers. Currently more than 10% of the Philippine population works overseas in 130 countries, and in the year 2000 their remittances contributed about 21% of the country's gross national product.

The unique Pacific

Filipino workers also moved to the Pacific, beginning in 1950 when a military base was established in Guam, where they now account for more than 25% of the total population of 145,000. At the same time, Pacific peoples themselves began migrating. Despite the massive number of migrants and the depopulation it causes in some areas, debates about international migration rarely reflect on the Pacific Islands. Here it is useful to distinguish three different cultural areas in the Pacific: Polynesia, characterized by international migration to metropolitan countries of the Pacific Rim, notably Australia, New Zealand and the USA; Melanesia, characterised by internal migration, mainly from rural to urban areas; and Micronesia, characterised by both.

Polynesia is the most interesting case, as it includes American Samoa and

Hawaii, where the US presence stimulated new streams of migration to the American mainland. Other destinations followed. In Niue and the Cook Islands, both freely associated with New Zealand, three-fourths or more of the total population now resides in New Zealand or has moved on to Australia. Altogether, at least half a million Polynesians are living abroad today, about 25% of the total population; 250,000 are living in New Zealand, where they make up 6% of the total population. Indeed, Auckland is often described as the Polynesian capital. Massive migration is not unique to the Pacific, yet the impact of transnational movements is magnified by the region's small populations.

Several interpretations have been offered to assess the impact of this diaspora. An optimistic explanation has been advanced by a Tongan intellectual,

in central Oceania, such as Samoa and Tonga, these remittances provide about half the national income. The second component is aid agreements negotiated by local governments, which in Tonga, for example, provide most of the salaries of public servants.

The notion of MIRAB economies has been received by economists and development experts with scorn. Many regard remittance-driven economies as rentier economies and argue that remittances can never be a healthy foundation for a prospering economy. The French scholar Bernard Poirine, however, has cogently argued that remittances are not 'free lunches'. In his view they represent three kinds of transactions: repayments of loans made earlier to the remitter to help finance human capital investment; money lent to relatives to help them finance their education; and money sent to prepare for

of US\$10 per capita in development aid than other developing countries. This has been so for a long time, and there are no good reasons to assume that it will change in the foreseeable future. The conclusion of this discussion on the MIRAB complex is that a narrow economic perspective on international labour migration is up for review.

A critique of neoclassical economics

For a long time, labour migration has been analysed mainly from a neoclassical economic perspective grounded in the push and pull dynamics of labour's market supply and demand. In this view, labour is a function of capital: as capital flows into a country, labour begins to flow out; as capital flows out, immigrant labour begins to flow in. Tension between the supply and demand for labour is of course normal, and is sometimes serious, as when the increasing supply of unskilled foreign workers is met by growing resistance from receiving societies despite continuing demand for unskilled labour. The traditional solution to the abundance and scarcity of labour is to address either supply or demand. Developed countries, it is argued, should be restructuring their economies to alter demand, whereas developing countries should invest in new industries to absorb unskilled workers.

This perspective, however, is no longer adequate for a number of reasons. First, the massive movement of labourers in the contemporary global economy can no longer be controlled by political and economic measures, which have generally resulted in an increase in migration law violations: a vast black market has emerged, and, worse, all kinds of human rights abuses. Worldwide, organised gangs are believed to traffic 4,000,000 people per year, generating up to US\$7 billion. The trafficking of migrants across borders, particularly women and children, is thus a burning issue for the International Labour Organisation. Many developed countries have become dependent on the labour of illegal migrants, whose numbers suggest it is illusory to believe their situation will be legalised, or that economic arrangements will control their movement.

Second, contemporary labour migration is structurally different from past labour migration. The globalisation of the world economy causes tension between the need to encourage the international movement of people and the nationalist agenda of most Asian and Pacific countries. In addition, individual mobility has dramatically increased as a result of technological advances in transportation and communication. It has simply

become easier to move around, and this allows people to migrate not only for economic reasons, but also for cultural ones. Thus many university-educated Philippine women are willing to accept jobs overseas as domestic servants: for them, migration means sacrificing social status for an income that enables them to support their families. Such non-economic factors are increasingly significant; labour is not only a commodity but can be crucial to a person's status and identity.

A third reason why neoclassical economics is outdated is intertwined with the increasingly transnational character of migration. The distinctive feature of transnational migration today is that connections between place of origin and place of destination are more easily maintained. As a consequence, migration has become inherently dynamic, which – paradoxically perhaps – implies that it will continue. Still, many governments, instead of normalising migration, cling to the myth of its transience and try to control it to serve their economic needs.

Towards a new approach

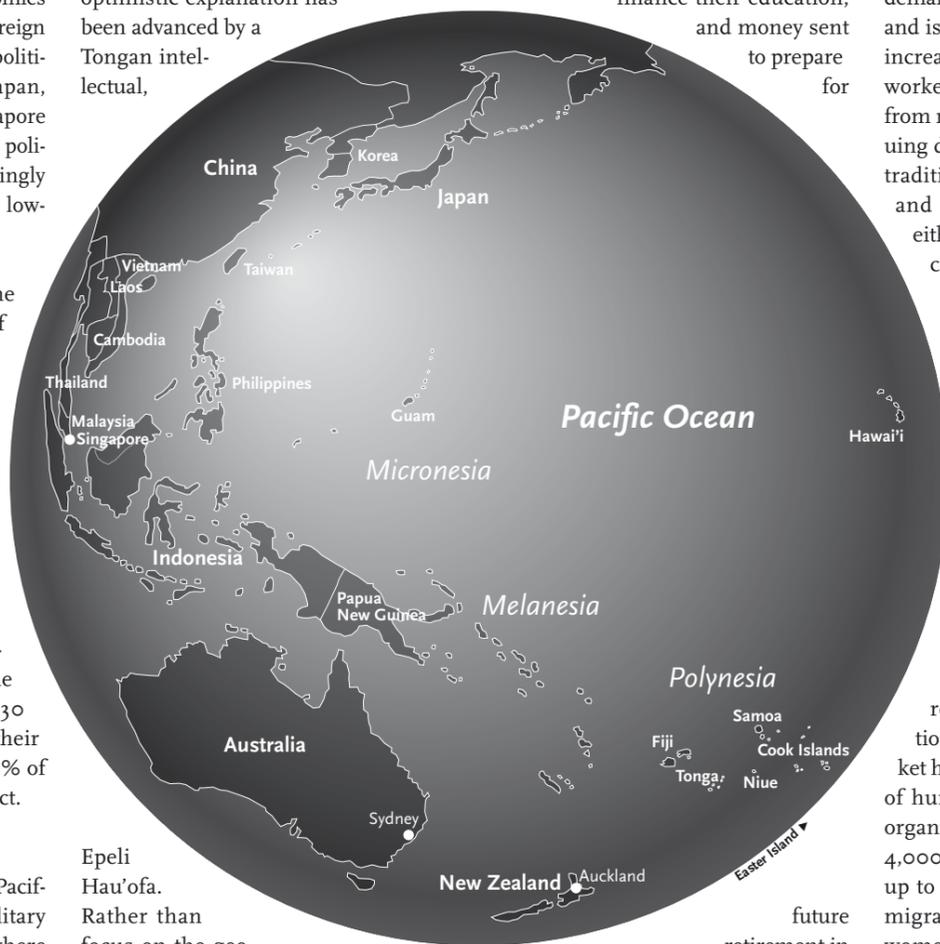
If migration can no longer be explained by the ancient laws of supply and demand; if it can no longer be understood within a framework of costs and benefits; if it can no longer be controlled by governments because of its transnational character, then how can we make sense of transnational labour migration? Contemporary migration dynamics prompt us to critically review not only neoclassical economics, but also the rigid use of formal categories within the social sciences. If we are to adequately understand the underpinnings and implications of transnational labour migration, we need to come to terms with its fluidity and multiplicity. For this reason, too, a new paradigm for its study should confront economism, query the centrality of the nation state and challenge the notion of homogeneity in processes of development. ◀

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* This paper is a summary of a presentation at the 'Development Policy Review Network Expert Meeting' on Southeast Asia and Oceania, Amsterdam, 16 December 2005.

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Epeli Hau'ofa. Rather than focus on the geographical isolation of the islands, he invokes the metaphor of the sea as connecting them: Oceania is a 'sea of islands'. By highlighting long-term migration patterns, Hau'ofa regards current diasporas as the culmination of an ancient dynamic. Although this view of migration is innovative, it does not account for increased mobility over the past few decades.

The most frequently invoked interpretation of contemporary migration in the Pacific is MIRAB, an acronym which stands for Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy. A MIRAB economy is organised along two lines. Transnational corporations of kin send out migrants who in turn send back money, goods and new ideas; in some countries

the combination of these three types of remittances during the lifetime of an emigrant makes the circulation of remittances into a kind of informal family credit market that enables 'transnational corporations of kin' to get the highest returns on human capital investment.

International aid – the other component of the MIRAB theory – is usually also dismissed as a potential basis for an economy. But in a less economic interpretation, it is also difficult to reject. Islands simply have more geostrategic importance than continental countries of equivalent land area. For that reason, too, the Pacific Islands receive 37 times more than the average

PUNJABIS IN EAST AFRICA

*Don't go don't go
Stay back my friend.*

*Crazy people are packing up,
Flowers are withering and friendships are breaking.
Stay back my friend.*

*Allah gives bread and work
You wouldn't find soothing shades anywhere else.
Don't go my friend don't go.*

- Punjabi folk song of the early 20th century

Amarjit Chandan

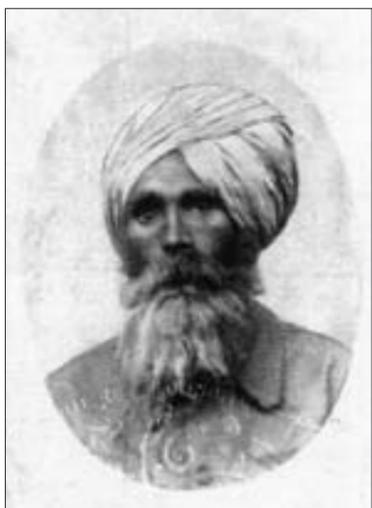
In 1849 the East India Company's army occupied the sovereign state of Punjab – the land of five rivers – in north-west India. The British Crown took control in 1858.

The first Punjabis to ever travel abroad were Sikh troops serving in the British Army. From the 1880s onwards, they were posted in Southeast Asia and the Far East. Many worked as security guards and in the police force. In the early 1900s they migrated to British Columbia and worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway and settled as farmers, farm labourers and lumberjacks. From there they moved south into Washington, Oregon and California. Ghadar (literally, 'Revolt'), the militant movement against British imperialism during 1910-15, emerged from this experience abroad.

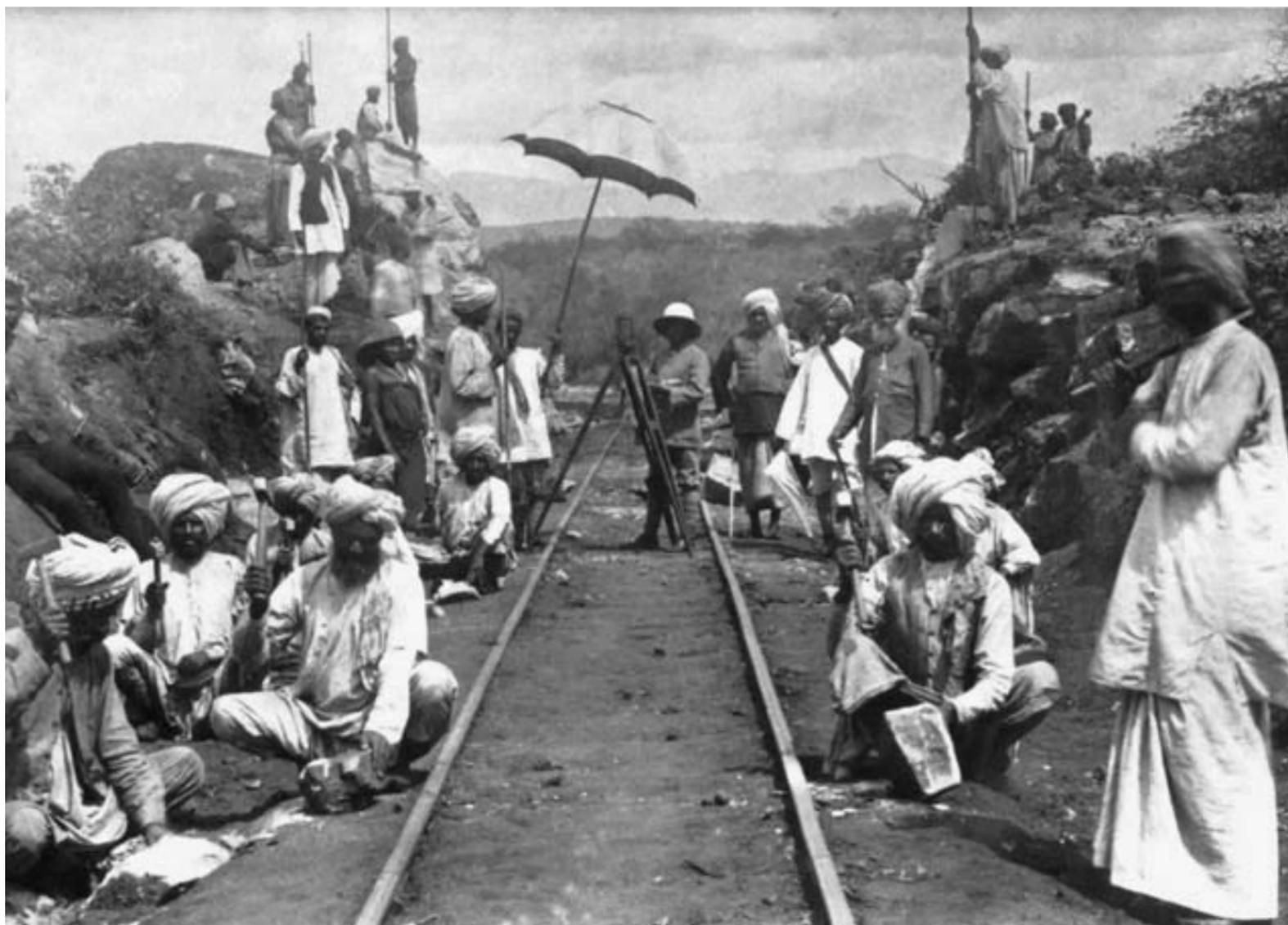
During the first world war, the British recruited 120,000 Muslims and Sikhs from the Rawalpindi division in western

Punjab. Thousands gave their lives in Basra, Gallipoli and at the French front, losses that inspired a corpus of Punjabi folk songs. Forty-seven thousand Punjabi soldiers were posted in East Africa.

The British East African Company was established in 1888. In 1895, protectorate administrative and commercial rule was enforced from Bombay. That same year, A. M. Jeevanjee of Karachi was awarded the contract to build the Kenya-Uganda railway and recruited his workforce from the Punjab. The first batch of 350 men sailed to Mombasa; over the next six years their number increased to 31,895. Most of them – Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims – worked as skilled labourers, artisans, bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, tailors, motor mechanics and electrical fitters, mainly in Kenya and Uganda. After the railway's completion in 1905, fewer than 7,000 chose to stay in East Africa. By 1911, 12,000 Punjabis, Gujaratis and Parsee moneylenders, as compared to 3,000 Europeans, were living mainly in Kenya. In 1920 Kenya was declared a British colony.



Nihal Singh Mankoo (d.1925) from Lahore. One of the first batch of Punjabis to go to Kenya in 1895. His sons ran Nipper's Garage in Stuart Street, Nairobi.



Cutting near Voi Station. 1890. Courtesy: Railway Archives, Nairobi



By Gopal Singh Chandan, Nairobi. © 1932.



Makhhan Singh addressing a rally, 9 Sept 1962. Photographer unknown

Gopal Singh Chandan. Photo by UN Patel. Nairobi, 1929



During the first half of the 20th century, communities developed around *gurdwaras* and *mandirs* (Sikh and Hindu temples, respectively) and mosques. Indians became conscious of workers' rights, and in 1922 Sudh Singh united Asian and African workers in the Railways Artisan Union. Sudh Singh's son Makhan Singh (1913-1973) emerged as an architect of Kenyan trade unionism and created the Labour Trade Union of Kenya (LTUK) in April 1935. In 1937, the LTUK was renamed the Labour Trade Union of East Africa (LTUEA). As a political aspirant in 1950, Singh was jailed along with Fred Kubai, the LTUEA president, by the British colonial authorities on the charge of 'operating an unregistered trade union and failure to dissolve it'. He was finally released in 1961, but was shunned by the Kenyatta government of newly independent Kenya and died of heart failure as a political recluse in 1973, aged 60.

Punjabis served widely in Kenyan public life, as members of the legislative council and all municipalities, and made a dis-

tinctive mark in sport, especially hockey, cricket, motor racing and golf. Sikhs, meanwhile, have dominated the Olympic hockey team since long before independence.

In 1962 the total population of Asians in Kenya was 177,000. Currently, it is less than 60,000. <

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photos: Amarjit Chandan Collection



Eastleigh Airport. Nairobi. 1957.
Photographer unknown



By Gopal Singh Chandan.
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By Mohammad Amin. Nairobi. 1965.



Joginder Singh on his last journey on retirement. Nairobi. 1963.

Courtesy: Railway Archives. Nairobi

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Britain, Southeast Asia and the Korean War

Tarling, Nicholas. 2005. *Britain, Southeast Asia and the Impact of the Korean War*. Singapore: Singapore University Press. 538 pages, ISBN 9971 69 315 1

Thomas Crump

Nicholas Tarling, given the long list of books bearing his name, has demonstrated an unequalled knowledge of Southeast Asia during the period framed by the build-up and denouement of the Pacific War. His latest book of a trilogy opens with a review of Southeast Asia just before the Korean War in 1950 – only a few months after Mao Zedong had established the People's Republic of China – and continues through the two major conferences of the mid-1950s, in Geneva and Bandung.

By this time, the defeat of French forces at Dienbienphu had signalled that European colonialism, in whatever form, had no future in Southeast Asia. As Tarling makes clear, this had long been accepted by the British as a matter of post-war *realpolitik*, and, though only by 1949, by the Dutch as the result of *force majeure*. The French, however, faced a more difficult problem, for two reasons: first – after Mao's 1949 victory – its colonies in Indochina were much closer to the West's front-line confrontation with

communism; and second, any concessions in Southeast Asia would not go unnoticed by the indigenous populations of French North Africa, who were also claiming the right to independence. Nonetheless, following the 1954 defeat at Dienbienphu, the French, having nothing to gain by remaining in Indochina, simply ceased to be a factor in the equation. The implications of this provide the key to the diplomacy described in the second half of the book.

Playing dominoes

Tarling's basic message is that everyone was playing for time, waiting to see whether the critical states (as they were seen in the early 1950s) of Laos, Cambodia, Burma and Thailand (Vietnam was still governed by France) would swing toward the communist East or the capitalist West. The West was haunted by domino-thinking long before the term gained world-wide currency as a result of its use by President Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. The threat – as perceived by the West – was of Chinese military intervention, which, after the Korean War (1950-53),

never came. The Chinese did well to hold back, since at the end of the day only Thailand, under its opportunist leader General Pibun, joined the western alliance – a decision that would later prove extremely advantageous to that country. Indonesia, meanwhile, was a constant western pre-occupation, especially because its sights were set on western New Guinea, which was still retained – with strong Australian support – by the Netherlands.

The United Kingdom, although constantly temporising, had accepted that all European colonies in Southeast Asia would sooner or later become independent, so that diplomacy in the whole region would have to be based on dealing with autonomous sovereign nations: on one side were India, Pakistan and Ceylon; on the other Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. All these countries, with their own self-interest at heart, were wary of new commitments in Southeast Asia, though Eisenhower and Dulles, while refusing to contemplate military intervention in Vietnam, had little choice but to commit consider-

able U.S. military and other aid following the French defeat at Dienbienphu.

Cardboard characters

This is diplomatic history written by an undoubted expert. Its intensive use of primary sources, consisting mainly of telegrams, assumes not only that its readers have detailed regional knowledge, but that they are also acquainted with a Tolstoyan cast of British ambassadors and Foreign Office officials, ministers in the governments of France, the Netherlands and the U.S., all of whom are liable to replacement with changes of government – or simply in the normal course of duty – and whose opinions and advice are repeatedly cited. To give but one example, a certain J. G. Tahourdain is mentioned in the index 36 times, yet a Google search is needed to discover that he was the principal private secretary to the minister of state at the British Foreign Office – a man behind the scenes, *par excellence*. His advice (page 259) that 'the moral of all this is never say die' is also appropriate for Tarling's readers: they have much to learn from his book about an extremely

interesting period in modern world history, but far too many individuals are cited and far too little disclosed about who they were and why they counted. Particularly in a period so critical for the history of Southeast Asia after the end of the Pacific War, there must have been more to the world of diplomacy than the cardboard characters presented in *Britain, Southeast Asia and the Impact of the Korean War*. Although this is confirmed by a careful reading of Tarling's book, its immediate impact is still too diffuse: one point, however, that does come through, is the underlying wisdom of Britain's diplomacy at a very difficult time in its history. Here there is no doubting Tarling's patriotic stance – which, in the opinion of this reviewer, is largely justified. ◀

Thomas Crump was previously a lecturer in anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. He is currently an independent scholar. His book, *Asia Pacific: A History of Empire and Conflict* was published by Continuum (London and New York) in May 2007. sthumascrump@yahoo.com

China's Tibet: marginalisation through development?

Fischer, Andrew Martin. 2005. *State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet: Challenges of Recent Economic Growth*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, xxvi + 187 pages. ISBN 87 91114 75 6

Alpo Ratia

China's Western Development Strategy (WDS) has pumped billions of yuan into developing Tibet. In July 2006, for example, an impressive feat of engineering, the world's highest railway (Qinghai-Tibet), was inaugurated in celebration of the Chinese Communist Party's 85th anniversary. Using official statistics and his own field observations, Andrew Martin Fischer explores the different ways government subsidies and large construction projects are affecting the lives of ordinary Tibetans.

The Tibetan Plateau stretches across the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), Qinghai and parts of adjacent provinces. A large part of the ethnic Tibetan population lives in the TAR, but over half live in lower level administrative divisions (autonomous prefectures, counties and townships) in the four predominantly Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan. Extensive macro data on China's economic and social indicators has been available for some time, but before Fischer's study was neglected by western scholarship on Tibet. Relevant data outside the TAR is mostly aggregated at the provincial level and is difficult to extrapolate for Tibetans. Hence the author wisely focused on socio-economic conditions in the TAR and neighbouring Qinghai.

State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet is based on the author's doctoral dissertation for the London School of Economics. Graphic materials (one map, 26 tables, 19 figures, and 12 photos from the TAR, Qinghai and Sichuan) accompany his engaging analysis and qualitative field observations. The first two of the book's six chapters place Tibet within the context of China's political economy and its development over time. A methodological excursus (pages 6-12) provides useful pointers on the analysis and interpretation of Chinese statistics.

Western Development Strategy: serving the people?

By 1996 the TAR's economy had begun to expand, and Tibetans with a secondary education have so far been relative beneficiaries. Chapter III (pages 32-87) is a masterful three-part study of the TAR and Qinghai economies under the WDS. The first part examines the growth and composition of the gross domestic product between 1998 and 2001, during which China's GDP expanded at an impressive annual average rate of 7.5%, that of Qinghai at 12.2% and that of the TAR at a walloping 17.5%. While the economy's primary sector (agriculture) remained generally sluggish, its secondary sector (construction, mining and industry) grew much faster than GDP in both the TAR and Qinghai. Meanwhile, expenditures for

the TAR's tertiary sector (government, party and social organisations) surged 24.8% per year. The author concludes that the increase 'probably indicates that an expansion of the control apparatus of the state was seen as an essential precondition to the subsequent steps of spending and investment under the WDS' (page 45). He also notes the very large military presence in the TAR and that military expenditures are secret and not included in the tertiary sector.

Chapter III's second part examines the sources fuelling GDP growth, namely state subsidies. By 2003 subsidies from the central government and provinces had ballooned to 74% of the TAR's entire GDP. Locally owned and managed farms, commercial ventures and services have been wholly dwarfed, engendering extreme outside dependence, imbalances in the local economy and an abdication of local power in decision-making. With the completion of the enormously expensive Qinghai-Tibet railway (stretching 1,142 km from Golmud to Lhasa), the TAR's economy is now at serious risk of going from boom to bust.

In chapter III's third part Fischer notes the extreme inefficiency of the TAR growth model: GDP growth through expansion of government and administration is not self-sustaining and requires increasing subsidies in order to be maintained. Beijing and min-

ion provinces use public development funds to pay Chinese companies to undertake construction work in Tibet, with minimal consideration of the local population's needs and without its participation. Many construction projects are ill-conceived and shoddily carried out. Nevertheless, the author acknowledges the cost-effectiveness of certain irrigation works in increasing agricultural yields.

... or putting their interests on hold?

Chapters IV and V analyse the impact of growth upon household incomes and different population strata. Some 85% of the Tibetan population of TAR and Qinghai is rural. Sharply declining terms of trade for staple products (wool and barley) combined with population growth, rising healthcare costs and environmental degradation have thrust over one-third of rural households into poverty or near-poverty. Tibetans realise that secondary sector employment is likely to be better paid, thus many move to urban centres only to become an ethnic underclass. After five decades of Chinese public education, Tibetans have the lowest educational level of any major national minority. According to the 2000 census, illiteracy averaged 9.1% nationally but was an atrocious 47.3% among Tibetans. Because only 15% of Tibetans have any secondary education, and because skilled Tibetan

labour is in extremely short supply, hardly any Tibetans occupy managerial or technical posts. Moreover, Han Chinese and Chinese Muslims from other provinces are crowding them out of administrative and commercial jobs. Development policy is apparently depriving Tibetans of control over their own future, at least in the short term.

As this is a socio-economic study largely based on an analysis of official government statistics, Fischer does not address cultural issues such as literacy and fluency in Chinese or Tibetan, the destruction of Tibet's traditional education system (monastic seminaries and universities) or the rights of occupied peoples. Nonetheless, *State Growth and Social Exclusion in Tibet* is a pioneering work that should greatly interest social policy and rural development students and scholars, development agencies, friends of Tibet and China and human rights activists. The final chapter's conclusions and recommendations on an array of practical measures (including the upgrading of primary and vocational education) to effectively improve the lot of Tibetans in 'autonomous' areas should engage the attention of decision-makers in China. ◀

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A slow road to regionalism

Bertrand Fort and Douglas Webber. 2006. *Regional Integration in East Asia and Europe: Convergence or Divergence*. London: Routledge, 334 pages, ISBN 0 415 36747 6

Mark Beeson

One of the most striking and paradoxical qualities of 'globalisation' – however we define it – is its regional accent. While the intensification of trans-border economic interactions have become familiar and commonplace, it is clear that such flows have a strong regional bias. In other words, far from being universal, contemporary processes of international integration are realised in very different ways on an increasingly regionalised basis.

In some ways, of course, this is not surprising: intuitively we would expect that sheer proximity would make neighbours more likely to establish high levels of economic interaction. Yet while this has clearly been the case in western Europe, economic links within East Asia have been less intense. Indeed, the entire East Asian developmental experience would arguably not have occurred with anything like the rapidity it did without critical extra-regional ties – especially to the all-important consumer markets of North America.

However, not only is the nature of East Asia's intra- and inter-regional economic integration different from western Europe, but so, too, are its political connections. The European Union has

famously pushed the process of intra-regional political integration much further than anywhere else. The recent failure of the Netherlands and France to ratify the EU constitution notwithstanding,¹ the EU remains, rightly or wrongly, the benchmark against which other regional initiatives are measured.

EU mould for East Asia?

Given the growing importance of regionalism, and the noteworthy differences in style and extent that distinguish such processes in regions like western Europe and East Asia, we might expect a great deal of interest in comparing their distinct historical experiences. With a few noteworthy exceptions this has generally not been the case, which makes the volume by Fort and Webber all the more welcome and important.

One explanation for the relative dearth of such volumes is the sheer difficulty of mounting comparative exercises; few individuals have the requisite expertise to attempt them.² The alternative is the one adopted here: assemble a team of scholars with expertise in a region and organise their analyses around broadly similar themes. These sorts of volumes have some fairly well-known advantages and disadvantages – all of which are on display here.

On the positive side, the individual analyses by area specialists contain informed and judicious discussion. The disadvantage of this approach is that discussions occur in isolation, often leaving the reader to connect the dots. Of the 16 chapters, only about a quarter could be considered genuinely comparative. The rest are divided into groups of thematic analyses, with broadly similar topics being considered separately in Europe and Asia. Consequently, there are sections on regional leadership and power, economic and monetary co-operation, institutional reform and post-cold war enlargement as well as security and regional crisis management.

This sort of approach works quite well, although there is the difficulty of comparing like with like. For example, while there is a useful chapter on the relationship between France and Germany, there is no similar, chapter-length discussion of Sino-Japanese relations – a notable omission given their importance in both the region and the wider international system. Nevertheless, the comparative pairings generally work well and provide a useful and much needed starting point for students of regional integration.

A number of the chapters explicitly adopt a comparative approach and are

thus, arguably, the most important. Richard Higgott is one of a handful of scholars to have undertaken comparative analyses of Europe and Asia, and he provides an introduction to the theory and practice of regionalism that emphasises its relationship to globalisation. He also makes the point that East Asia is a 'region of economic experimentation' and that we should not expect it to replicate the European experience.

The other major comparative chapter is provided by one of the editors – Douglas Webber – and attempts to place regional integration in Europe and Asia in historical context. This sort of comparative historical analysis of regional development is less common than we might like and thus all the more valuable. Webber's principal conclusion is that the conditions that underpinned Europe's uniquely high levels of integration were so specific that it is 'very unlikely' that they will be replicated elsewhere. Indeed, Webber argues that the particular balance of intra-regional forces that permits effective integration to occur are 'quite restrictive', and it is not even clear whether the EU will be able to maintain the degree of integration it has already achieved.

Mould? What mould?

The trajectory of regional development will depend in large part on the position of regional hegemony, Webber argues – a contention with implications for East Asia and the apparently inexorable rise of China. My own feeling is that the course of regional development may have as much to do with the actions of the world's only global hegemon as with any exclusively regional conditions.³ This is something that is touched on but not considered as extensively as it might have been, given the central importance of the United States in the formation (and lack of integration, in East Asia's case) and contemporary evolution of both regions.

Amitav Acharya's brief concluding chapter is upbeat about the capacity of East Asia's 'practical and productive' regionalism to meet some of the formidable challenges it currently faces. If East Asia is to rise to such challenges, it may need to replicate at least one aspect of the European experience: the dominant position the EU has enjoyed as the institutionalised expression of the regional impulse. East Asia, by contrast, still suffers from something of an identity crisis and a bewildering array of often overlapping initiatives in which

the very definition of regional identity is uncertain and contentious. Until there is a consolidation of institutional fora in East Asia, the co-ordination of collective actions at the regional level will remain problematic.

One of the great virtues of this valuable collection is its highlighting of the different institutional capacities that exist in Asia and Europe and the very different historical circumstances that have shaped them. Given such different starting points it is unsurprising that the two regions have developed differently; this volume helps us to understand the forces that will shape their future trajectories. A major point confirmed in this collection is that there is no reason to suppose that the EU represents the ultimate end-point of all regionally based cooperative endeavours. Indeed, the setbacks that have recently afflicted the European project suggest that it is not even certain whether the EU will fulfil what had at one time seemed to be its inevitable destiny. But while there may be some debate about the depth and extent of regional processes, one thing that this book makes clear is that regional processes are set to remain defining parts of the contemporary era, and that we need more analyses of this sort if we are going to understand them. <

Notes

1. The papers in this volume resulted from a conference in mid-2003, and a number of key events, like the rejection of the EU constitution and the East Asia Summit of 2005, are not considered.
2. For an important exception – albeit one that rather underplays the importance of China – see Katzenstein, Peter J. 2005. *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
3. See, Beeson, Mark. 2005. 'Re-thinking Regionalism: Europe and East Asia in Comparative Historical Perspective'. *Journal of European Public Policy* 12 (6): 969-985.

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Chinese experience of the Korean War

Ha Jin. 2004. *War Trash*. New York: Pantheon Books, 352 pages, ISBN 0 375 42276 5



Ball-Point Pen Drawing Confiscated from a North Korean Prisoner of War, Koje Island, 15 July 1953

Courtesy New York Public Library Propaganda Collection (Box 11).

Adam Cathcart

The Chinese experience of the Korean War (1950-1953) remains little noted and barely understood. No one, other than the Koreans themselves, sustained heavier casualties in the war than the Chinese, who buried more than 100,000 men in Korean soil, including the napalm-saturated body of Mao's eldest son. Beyond domestic propaganda denouncing the American-led UN forces, China's intervention in the Korean War sharpened her hostility to the capitalist West, prevented the integration of Taiwan with the mainland, and cut deeply into the masses of young men who had joined the war as 'volunteers'.

Ha Jin confronts this consequential subject in his novel *War Trash*, the unadorned first-person narrative of a Chinese POW in Korea. True to the actual experiences of Chinese communist POWs, the novel is long and quite frequently depressing. Beginning with its dark wrapping and sheer girth, the reader apprehends a sense of the work's unrelenting sobriety. Unlike *Waiting*, his celebrated story of romance amid the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the political currents that seethe underneath the surface of *War Trash* are not calmed by any semblance of a love story. Developed female characters do not exist in this book, and counter-narratives, subplots, and flashbacks are similarly absent. Basking in depression, *War Trash* is a brutally slow exploration of the prisoner's world, and as such, represents

Ha Jin's most challenging and edifying work to date.

Readers familiar with such classic Korean War films as *Pork Chop Hill* will recognize the muted strain of fatalism that winds like a dirge through *War Trash*. The men in the prison camps are nothing more than insignificant flotsam, war trash, pawns in a grinding chess match centering on the truce village of Panmunjom. For momentary victories at the negotiating table, leaders on both sides would unscrupulously sacrifice the lives of hundreds in battlefield offensives or prison camp uprisings. The text thus mirrors the inner desolation that the inconclusive truce talks created. Those interested in military history and the Korean War will be pleased with the layers of detail in Ha Jin's work, whose kinship with the list of reference works unobtrusively located as back matter is clear. As such, *War Trash* straddles the boundary between history and fiction, and bids to join the company of Solzhenitsyn's gulag literature.

The writing is often aimless, as the recollections of the old can be, but the reader frequently wanders into inlets of beauty. In one episode showing the transfer of prisoners from Koje Island to Cheju-do, the narrator relates the following tableaux: 'Once we were clear of the hill slope, the muddy beach appeared, spreading like a long strip of unplanted paddy fields. At its northern end, at the beginning of the wharf, were anchored two large black ships, the sides of their prows painted with white

Korean words that none of us could understand' (p.200). Born in China but resident in Atlanta since 1985, Ha Jin has become well-known largely on the strength of such sentences.

Less poetic but more useful are the novel's descriptions of the everyday activities that governed life in the POW camps. Unrestrained by American regulations, prisoners communicated across distinct compounds via hand signals, or by slinging rocks with messages that fluttered over fences. *War Trash* contains a few meditations on the role of singing and the arts as cathartic necessities for camp culture. One pris-

oner learns to read, which in the muted tones of the novel, brings satisfaction to the narrator. Rarely, however, are emotions overplayed. While homesickness among the troops receives sympathetic treatment, this text seldom wallows in sentimentality.

Like the 2,000,000 mainland Chinese who were thrust into Korea as 'volunteers', the narrator encounters an array of nationalities, testifying to Korea's inundation by foreign soldiers. Americans appear as solicitous doctors, embattled black soldiers sympathetic to communist doctrine, and angry sergeants capable of torture. No one communicates particularly well, and language barriers appear frequently, reminding the reader that, for the Chinese troops who trudged across the Yalu River and into the pockmarked netherworld of the DPRK, Korea was a strange and foreign land. In this predicament, the Chinese troops shared a root concern with their western rivals who were steadily pouring into the confusion of Pusan.

Amid the polyglot forces inundating the peninsula, *War Trash* paints North Koreans as perhaps the most interesting. North Korean POWs flare throughout the text as haughty firebrands whose nationalistic furor and personal pride can never be squelched. In discussing the need for 'patient negotiation' with the Americans, notes the Chinese narrator, 'our Korean comrades tended to be too hot-blooded', noting that Kim Il Sung's men 'wouldn't share the same earth and sky with the American imperialists. In the camps, this pride manifested itself in fierce North Korean resistance to American control. Indeed, one of *War Trash's* most harrowing episodes chronicles a prison rebellion instigated by a core group of North Korean POWs.

Faced with the abduction of an American general by a shock brigade of communist POWs, American soldiers quell the Cheju compounds with the full force of tanks. Facing hundreds of American troops bristling with weaponry, the Koreans run futilely forward,

armed only with bamboo spears and shouts of 'Mansei!' (p.187). This episode, like other repudiations of proletarian Korean nationalism, demonstrated a deep need among the prisoners for images of a dominant North Korea, as seen in the accompanying drawing. In the midst of prison camp struggles, Ha Jin credits the Americans their share of brutality, but does not spare the prisoners for their own folly. Preparing for an all-out rumble with the guards, Chinese prisoners create signs reading 'Respect the Geneva Convention!' even as they sharpen their shanks.

The Chinese-North Korean camaraderie that pervades *War Trash* exists today only in propaganda artefacts and wartime kitsch hawked by vendors along the northern bank of the Yalu River. Nevertheless, Ha Jin faithfully chronicles Chinese soldiers singing North Korean songs and participating in smaller, yet more beautiful gestures. During one particularly intense denunciation of their American captors, a Chinese soldier breaks into sobs, and is silently handed a towel by his Korean comrade. In another episode describing the preparations for a camp uprising, the narrator finds himself in the depths of an underground compound, hosted by a princely and solicitous North Korean who somehow has a radio through which he allows his Chinese friend to hear, at last, news from home. This book is like that – dreary, almost impassable, until an unexpected flare from underground infuses life with emotion and rare companionship.

In a way we are all prisoners of the Korean War, and live in the world it created. Divisions and loyalties remain lashed into place, frozen across an artificial barrier that time has hardened into a nigh-unbridgeable chasm. In 1953, Ha Jin's narrator crossed north of the 38th parallel towards home, but the rest of us are still waiting for the war to end. ◀

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On archives

Toshie Awaya, ed. 2005. *Creating an Archive Today*. Tokyo: Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. 158 pages, ISBN 4 925243 09 8

Mark Turin

In this new and important work, leading librarians and archivists address some of the challenges they face in creating and maintaining historical collections. How do scholars use archives? How can we ensure that collections endure over time? What are the benefits and dangers of digitisation? These questions and many more are discussed in this very readable compilation.

Based on a conference of the same name, the volume is in three parts, all with a strong focus on Asian themes and collections. The first contribution in part I, 'Creating the Archive' by Graham Shaw of the British Library, addresses preservation and access issues relating to the India Office Records. An archive, he argues, 'only becomes an "archive" once the primary purpose for which its contents were created no longer applies', and he shows how the 'life-cycle of such a large historical archive is rarely if ever one of simple linear development and accumulation' (p.7). To scholars reliant on coherent archives which endure through time, it may come as a surprise to learn that the India Office Records have been frequently 'weeded', including over 300 tons of documents, lists, accounts and warrants which were sold as waste paper in 1860. While focussed

on the British Library collection, much of Shaw's article applies more widely. He makes an important distinction between an archive's 'internal and administrative approach' and that of the external 'research perspective' (p.13). After all, the aims of an archivist (preservation and longevity) may not be the same as that of a librarian (cataloguing and access) or that of a scholar (usability and context).

Masahito Ando, author of the second chapter, is at Japan's National Institute of Japanese Literature. Drawing in particular on examples from Hong Kong and Malaya during the Asia-Pacific War, Ando shows how archives can be entirely destroyed or irrevocably damaged during periods of aggression: 'Because of their usefulness and importance as an information source, archival materials have often been targeted for confiscation or other types of destruction by hostile forces and the ruling authorities, especially in times of political or armed conflict, or through colonial or foreign occupation' (p.26). Ando's paper is a chilling reminder of the impermanence of archives, particularly in periods of armed conflict.

G. Uma Devi's paper is the last contribution in part I and focuses on how oral history can be 'used strategically for

maximum effect' (p.29). Devi, based at the National Heritage Board in Singapore, has extensive experience in the methodology of oral history projects. One of the most interesting sections of Devi's paper relates to the establishment of oral history galleries in schools which in turn enrich the curriculum. Devi's conclusion, namely that the success of such 'heritage galleries' will depend on the 'will, conviction and commitment of various agents and agencies in seeing it to its fruition and beyond' is a point well taken, but the paper itself is regrettably thin on recommendations on how to ensure long-term sustainability.

Sharing

The University of Chicago's James Nye will be known to many readers. His enthusiasm for disseminating textual collections through innovative technologies has reached a large community of scholars around the world. His contribution to the present volume, entitled 'Shared Patrimony', is one of the most compelling in a generally readable collection. Among other topics, Nye's paper raises the issue of sharing, which he rightly points out is 'not a natural reflex in many parts of the academe' (p.43). Nye's paper is also a healthy corrective to the 'digitisation fixes all' belief still held by many scholars, which assumes that once a collection has been

scanned it is somehow durable and everlasting. 'Suffice it for now to say', Nye continues, 'that after seven years in the trenches working on those digital projects I have gained a renewed appreciation for microforms' (p.45). His scepticism about the long-term viability of digital media echoes a paper by Susan Whitfield, Director of the International Dunhuang Project at the British Library, about what she fittingly called 'the perils of digitisation'. As Nye points out, 'even if the [computer] disks were physically intact after twenty years, most people would be hard pressed to find a device capable of reading the data stored on the disk' (p.45).

Nye's paper also assesses the challenges and outcomes of the projects in which he has been involved through the University of Chicago over the last decade. One of his conclusions, with which I agree without reservation, is that 'our colleagues in South Asia deserve better access to scholarly resources'. Personally, I would even suggest that scholars and librarians in well-endowed universities and institutes in the West should prioritise access to historical archives for communities whose documentary histories they are the custodians of. In the small project which I run, Digital Himalaya, we have found that an unexpected number of users of our online resources come from the areas of South Asia in which the original materials were collected. This is a heartening development, in part explained by the poor state of many library collections in South Asia, with the result that online resources become the first port of call.

David Magier's chapter is a helpful overview to library collection development over the last 30 years. Magier, Director of Area Studies and a senior librarian at Columbia University, suggests that those who would create an archive today 'must do so not by starting from a given set of content, but by understanding the information needs of the scholarly community, and by seeking to co-ordinate with the existing collections, resources and endeavours that are already serving portions of those needs' (p.81). His point is well taken, and important to remember since some archives remain unused through lack of careful

planning. However, I am left wondering whether some archives should be created even if the information needs of a contemporary, let alone future, scholarly community are unknown or untested, simply because the content is important or threatened. One can never predict the interests or questions that will motivate research and scholarship 20 years hence.

The remaining four contributions to the volume focus on specific collections and scholarly production. Asvi Warman Adam looks at 'silenced voices' in the oral history of Indonesia, while Yumi Sugahara examines the structures and content of 19th century manuscripts of Javanese Islamic leaders. Lorraine Gesick's article on the adoption of modern archiving in Thailand and the 'intellectual shift among the Thai élite that it signified' (p.118) raises some interesting questions of wider applicability. As her paper carefully illustrates, the creation of an archive does not guarantee long-term sustainability, as the collection of documents can actually result in their disappearance. 'Is archiving always an act of destruction as well as preservation?' she asks, and from the perspective of the Thai collections which Gesick describes, the answer is certainly yes.

The final contribution by Crispin Bates is an excellent illustration of how archives are actually used. Using ship rolls and letters as previously untapped archival resources, Bates looks at the movement and control of Indian migrants in the colonial labour movement.

In all, then, this diverse volume offers a snapshot of the current debates and concerns of scholars, librarians and archivists brought together in a very readable format. Given the difficulty of purchasing this book in Europe, online or through speciality book sellers, perhaps the publisher could be persuaded to host the individual contributions online, as a kind of archivists' archive? <

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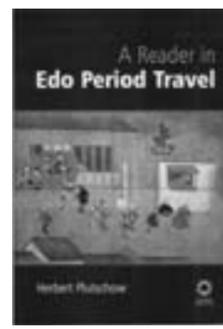
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Living heritage: vernacular architecture in China

Knapp, Ronald G. and Kai-Yin Lo, eds. 2005. *House, Home, Family: Living and Being Chinese*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. xxi + 453pp. ISBN 0 8248 2953 0

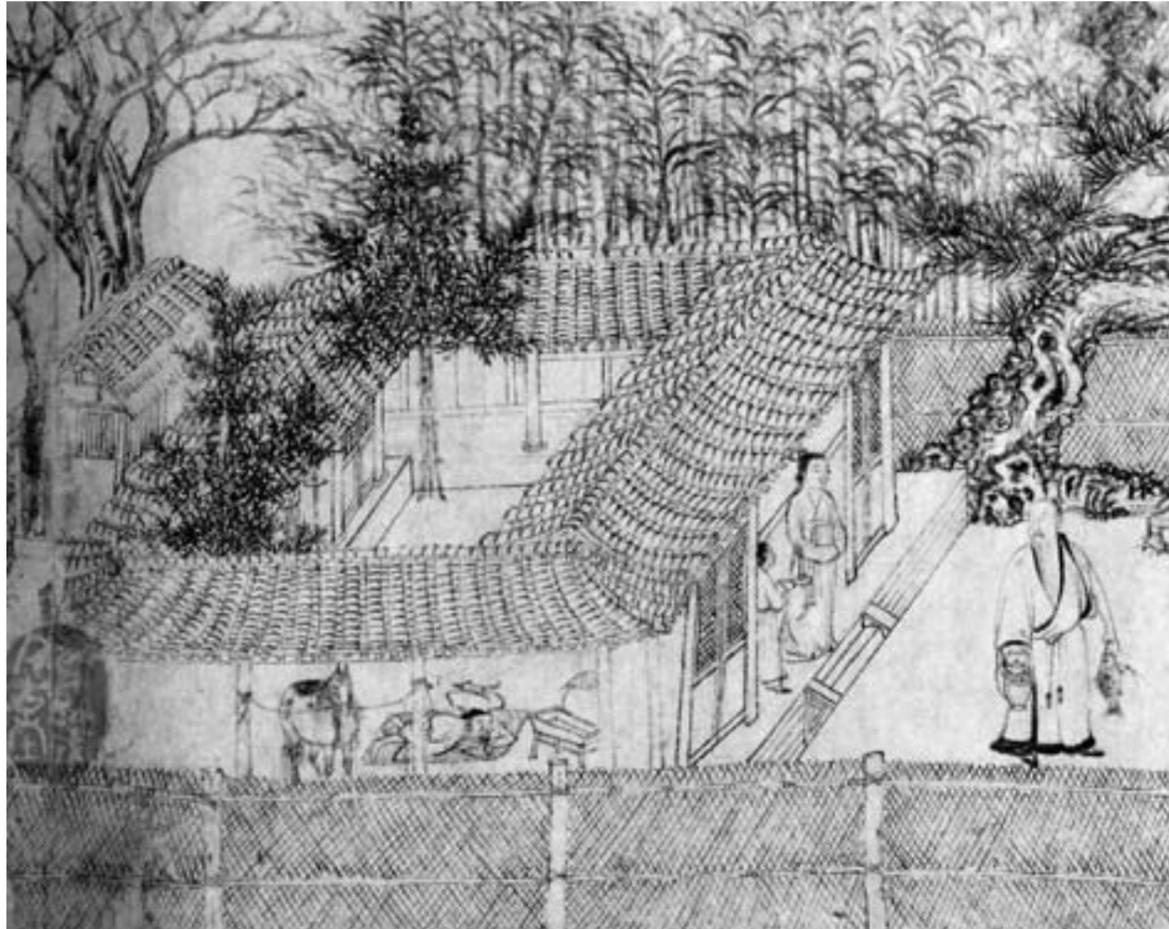
Marcel Vellinga

The vernacular architecture of China is characterised by a striking consonance among built forms. Although significant geographical variations reflect the country's rich ethnic diversity, a number of architectural, spatial and cultural elements are shared by many, if not most, traditional Chinese houses, royal palaces, town dwellings and farmhouses alike. These include, for example, the use of modular units (*jian*); the complementary creation of closed and open spaces (courtyards); and the ritual importance of the location and orientation of buildings. Evidence from archaeological excavations and classical texts suggests that these elements are not just geographically widespread but deeply rooted in history and relate closely to Chinese notions of 'family' and 'home'. Sadly, just when interest in and understanding of the intimate relationship between Chinese architecture, social organization and cultural values is growing, the built heritage concerned is in serious decline owing to the rapid economic and cultural development of recent decades.

The close relationship between the Chinese house and notions of family and home is the focus of *House, Home, Family: Living and Being Chinese*. The book is the outcome of a symposium organised by the China Institute in New York in 2001, which complemented the exhibition *Living Heritage: Vernacular Environment in China*. In the preface, the editors state their main aim is to enhance the understanding and appreciation of China's vernacular built heritage. Such understanding and appreciation, they hope, will contribute to a greater awareness of the need to study and conserve the buildings and environments concerned. Focusing on the close inter-relationship between aspects that so far have been dealt with mainly in isolation (eg, houses, gardens, furniture, family relations), the book definitely meets its first aim. One can only hope that a greater awareness of China's rich vernacular heritage will follow.

A neglected heritage

Given its rich diversity (comprising traditions as varied as hierarchically organised courtyard houses, massive



Painting of compact rural dwelling, Northern Song Dynasty, 1123

Taken from the book under review. Used with the permission of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. (Purchase F80-5) Photo credit: Robert Newcombe"

multi-storied fortresses, cave dwellings and transportable tents), it is remarkable that this heritage didn't attract serious academic interest until the 1980s. Before that, only a small number of Chinese scholars expressed interest in the vernacular; most, such as Liu Dunzhen and Liang Sicheng, had to work in difficult political circumstances, but it was their work during the 1950s that provided the first glimpse of building types previously unknown or believed to have been lost. Over the past two decades, this glimpse has expanded into an ever more comprehensive and detailed picture, as an avalanche of work published by a growing number of American, Chinese and European scholars has significantly increased our knowledge of vernacular architecture in China.

Many of these studies, both Chinese and foreign, have focused on houses only as objects – physical structures that may be of academic interest simply for

their distinctive forms, use of resources or spatial organisation. However, as noted by several of the book's contributors, houses are more than just physical structures and in all societies relate closely to social groups and cultural identities. Gender relations, age rankings, economic status, cultural beliefs and values are all embodied in such aspects as construction materials, spatial layout, internal and external orientation, furnishings and building forms. In order to understand this intimate and dynamic relationship between architecture and people (exemplified in China by the character *jia* [家], which refers simultaneously to notions of 'house', 'family' and 'home'), it is necessary to look beyond the physical building at the many ways in which the house is dialectically linked to the family. By combining chapters on aspects of Chinese houses and families such as spatial patterns, gardens, construction rituals, furniture, lineage structures, gender

relations, ancestral halls and domestic rituals, and studying each from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (including architecture, art history, anthropology and cultural geography), this is exactly what *House, Home, Family* does.

Long on architecture but short on what it reflects

The book is divided into two parts. Part one focuses on the house as a building and devotes chapters to different architectural aspects of Chinese houses, such as spatial division, architectural aesthetics and the function of building rituals. Themes not commonly included in studies of vernacular architecture, such as the relationship between a house and its garden or the positioning of furniture within it, provide an insightful overview of the nature of Chinese vernacular traditions and some of the cultural values underlying it. Part two focuses on the concepts of home and family and indicates how social and cultural aspects

such as gender, economy, family type, residence patterns and ancestor worship closely and dynamically relate to the house as a building. In combination with part one, it presents a fascinating overview of the way in which vernacular buildings, through their layout, furniture and decoration, embody aspects of Chinese culture.

Because of its integrated coverage of elements such as spatial layout, gardens, decoration, furniture and construction rituals, *House, Home, Family* is a must for all those interested in either the study of vernacular architecture or Chinese cultural history. However, it does not sufficiently address China's vast ethnic diversity and its reflection in architecture and spatial patterns. As Ronald Knapp notes (page 4), the 'Chinese' referred to in the title and throughout the book should be read as 'Han', the majority ethnic group that represents 92% of the country's total population but is in itself extremely differentiated. To what extent the architectural and spatial patterns and features identified in the book also hold for other minority ethnic groups like the Mongol, Hui or Uyghur, Knapp adds, remains to be researched.

Nonetheless, more than any other book on the subject, *House, Home, Family* goes a long way to providing an initial understanding of the intimate, complex and dynamic ways in which people and vernacular architecture in much of China relate to one another. Such an understanding is especially valuable today, when rapid modernisation threatens to erase China's vernacular heritage in favour of new forms of architecture inspired by western or global precedents. In view of the many social, economic and ecological problems that this rapid development entails, it would seem that China's varied vernacular traditions, as a 'living heritage', still have a lot to contribute to the development of architecture that is both culturally and environmentally appropriate and sustainable. <

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Courtyard house (siheyuan) in Chuandixia. Photograph by Ronald G. Knapp 2001.



Fortress house in Xinyou village, Longman county, Jiangxi province. Photograph by Ronald G. Knapp 1993.

Female and single: negotiating personal and social boundaries in Indonesian society

Bennett, Linda. 2005. *Women, Islam and Modernity: Single Women, Sexuality and Reproductive Health in Contemporary Indonesia*. Singapore: Curzon Press. 183 pages, ISBN 0 415 32929 9

Muhammed Hassanal

Most people cherish individual rights. They also believe that certain rights should be granted to all regardless of gender or any other classification that denies human dignity and equality. But some societies withhold these very rights through a variety of tools (such as uneven distribution of state funds and law enforcement). Cultural norms, together with political and economic conditions sometimes convert rights into privileges for select persons.

It is often assumed that pious forms of Islam lead to political conditions that marginalise women's rights (as in Taliban Afghanistan). The Islamic revival in Indonesia has coincided with the rise of a middle class, an expansion of minority movements, and the growth and diversification of a women's movement. This revival has also witnessed a small fundamentalist movement that advocates a more domestic role for women. The relationship between pious Islam and women's rights is more complex than popularly portrayed.

Contemporary Indonesian society draws upon Islamic ideals, pre-Islamic customs and western models to form a complex web of social norms that are manifested to varying degrees by families and individuals. Linda Bennett artfully narrates how the young – especially young women – negotiate the boundaries of acceptable social behaviour in order to achieve greater personal autonomy, especially over their bodies.

Maidenhood

Most studies on Indonesian women concentrate on married women and family life. Some studies focus on sex workers, women at work, child labour, early marriage and women living in poverty. There are also demographic studies that are useful for drawing some conclusions, but that may not reliably discriminate attitudes arising from dif-

ferences in social standing. Bennett correctly states that women are at the pinnacle of their social standing when they attain motherhood. All life-stages prior to that are seen as journeys to motherhood. Bennett focuses on maidenhood, which she defines as the time between puberty and marriage. Since marriage defines the end of maidenhood, Bennett's work emphasises the attitudes of single women more fully than age-based demographic studies would.

Gender issues are social constructs, and one requires an understanding of societal norms to fully appreciate them. Bennett starts by providing a general background on Indonesian cultural ideals, then focuses on ideals of sexuality and gender. She discusses sexual double standards, the role of a woman's sexual reputation and its reflection on family honour, and the grave consequences for sexual transgression (real or perceived). As sexual purity is desirable and even erotic, young women dress modestly to enhance their sexual desirability and protect their sexual purity. Individuality is expressed through accessories (shoes, sunglasses, handbags and hair accessories), but make-up is rarely worn.

Bennett describes notions of love, desire and attraction in spiritual and profane realms as they are understood by young women. This lays the foundation for discussing premarital relationships and, in particular, courting practices. Indigenous gender ideals assume that women are passive actors in intimate relationships. Bennett shows that this is far from the lived reality and discusses the various ways women negotiate social boundaries to fulfil their desire for intimacy while maintaining their sexual reputation. She then presents examples of how youths use elopement and love magic – a sort of 'black magic' used to arouse another's amorous feelings – for manipulation and resistance. Both constructs are embedded in indigenous sexual scripts and sustained in contemporary ideology.

Intimacy and female sexual desire outside marriage are considered un-Indonesian or un-Muslim and those women who publicly express these feelings are labelled as promiscuous. Bennett narrates in detail a young woman's experience of undergoing an abortion, and the experience of another single woman seeking reproductive health treatment. Both experiences illustrate how being single and female at a reproductive health clinic immediately lead to assumptions of premarital sex (which is potentially devastating for women, as it diminishes their chances of finding a husband). The attitudes of others – especially health care workers – the potential for rumours and the fear of being seen by one who recognises the woman weigh heavily on the decision to seek these services. The lack of privacy when asked for personal data before examination, long wait times before seeing a doctor and the high cost of these services also influence women's decisions in seeking professional care. Indonesian law addresses women as wives or mothers – implicitly stripping them of their individual identities. Hence, while the government provides family planning services, it denies them to single women.

Sex education: one lesson for life

Bennett provides enough background details and narrates women's experiences without letting discussions on broader issues detract from their stories. This approach lets the reader understand the broader issues and empathise with the women as they bear the emotional consequences of their actions and decisions. The reader also gets a taste of the limited range of choices and the sense of helplessness and perhaps despair that these women feel.

While most Indonesian women want to protect their virginity (in keeping with cultural norms), their ideas of what constitutes virginity vary widely. For some, the entire female body is a site

of sexual purity, and hence all physical contact with men is avoided. For others, only the public persona of virginity needs to be maintained. Most women fall somewhere in between. Bennett points out that the level of knowledge of virginity, reproductive health concerns and 'sexual' diseases (such as AIDS and HIV) is very low. This observation is in line with notions of Indonesian society, where reproduction is not typically discussed with those outside one's (same-sex) peer group.

Government schools limit discussions about reproduction and sexuality to a single biology lesson that leaves virtually no room for discussion or for students to ask questions. The government claims that the conservative Indonesian society would not tolerate a more thorough discussion on sexuality. Bennett observes that youths attending religious schools tend to receive better education on reproduction and sexuality. NGOs, reproductive health professionals and religious organisations have organised seminars to educate youths on reproduction, sexuality and sexual diseases.

Bennett outlines a framework that uses Islamic principles to enshrine gender equality, and thus promotes reproductive rights of women – particularly those of single women. Her framework does not start with western ideals of human rights, but draws upon Islamic religious texts and outlines a gender-based equality of the sexes. She recommends discussing roles and responsibilities specifically in terms of gender rather than in the context of human rights. This approach would be sensitive to Indonesian culture and would draw inspiration from indigenous cultural ideals.

A new tolerance

Indonesian advocacy groups are already using variations of Bennett's framework to promote their vision of an ideal society. Fatayat (the women's division of Nahdlatul Ulama), for example, draws inspiration from religious texts to pro-

mote its ideals of political society and Islam – one of which includes gender equality. Other, more secular groups espouse notions of separation of religion and politics. These organisations draw inspiration for human rights from religious and western sources, fusing notions from both to create innovative notions of human rights and gender equality.

Indonesian activists, with their adherence to an interpretation of Islam that inspires political activism, embody a new tolerant Indonesia. For them, Islam is a crucial resource for political mobilisation and underpins their beliefs about democracy and gender equality. At the grassroots level, their views are beginning to be woven into the fabric of Indonesian society – but much work remains.

Bennett's work is unique in that it focuses specifically on single women. As Bennett resists demographic classifications, she fully explores maidenhood – its challenges and opportunities. We are prone to taking a simplistic view on culture, religion and other social constructs when studying a society that is different from our own. Bennett discusses the competing ideals, their complex interactions and their sway on Indonesian women. She presents her findings clearly and cogently discusses their implications within the broader framework of young women's lives. The examples peppered throughout the text serve not only to underpin generalisations, but also to personalise the issues. The individual choices, actions and consequences of her characters endear the reader, provoking both an intellectual and emotional response. ◀

Muhammed Hassanal is an independent scholar of Islamic studies in Cleveland, Ohio, USA.

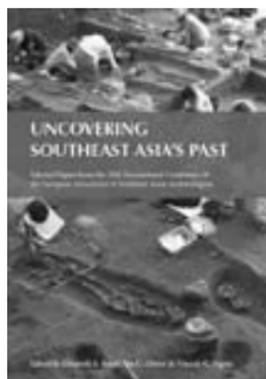
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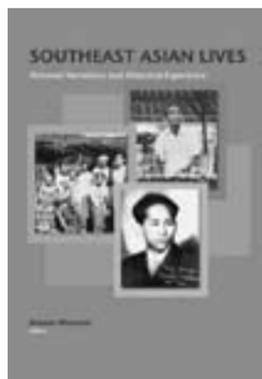
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State and society in the Philippines

Abinales, Patricio N. and Donna J. Amoroso. 2005. *State and Society in the Philippines*. Lanham, New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., xxxiv-353 pages. ISBN 0 7425 1024 7

Niels Mulder

Promising to situate the Philippines in global and regional contexts, the authors aim to 'reconsider the narrative of Philippine political development', to attempt a 'sustained analysis of state formation over the course of a millennium' and to develop a 'framework for understanding Philippine state-society relations over time' (page xv). Whereas the standard narrative follows conventional historical periodisation – "pre-Hispanic"; Spanish; revolutionary; American; Commonwealth; Japanese; and, in the Republican era, by presidential administration' – the authors have written a book that 'acknowledges the Southeast Asian connections of the Philippines and the changing rhythm of state and social formation across times and regimes' (page 4).

The introductory chapter fails to mention to whom the book is addressed, though on the back cover an American professor states that the book is 'very accessible to undergraduate audiences'. Perhaps the professor thinks so because of the ingenious conceptual tools the authors propose, ie, 'the state' and 'social forces'. This is followed by a touristy seven-page guide, where we read that the country is an archipelago of 7,107 islands (though we're left in the dark about where the population lives); about its tribal affiliations and languages; a lengthy list of regions and provinces without being told where they are and why they exist (there is not a single map in the book); the false claim that the Philippine Independent Church was a product of the revolution against Spain; and that the Iglesia ni Kristo has 1.9 million members (on page 11), which grows to three million on the next page and shrinks down to one million by page 267.

The pre-Hispanic and the early Spanish chapters do a fairly good job of situating the islands in Southeast Asia and in relation to China, after which the encompassing region seems to be forgotten. The narrative, up to its very end, is conventional: whether addressing Spanish good intentions, the plans of the propagandists or the revolutionaries, American administrators, or any single president, it is, like school texts, always the same: after an initial spurt of enthusiasm, their projects come to naught. This discouraging narrative sequence is also said to hold for the 'social forces', primarily, voluntary, issue-oriented non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) and people's organisations (POs), such as farmer organisations and trade unions, though the Communist Party of the Philippines is excluded. The demonstration of these ups and downs amidst a vast mass of random, mostly economic data – percentage of GNP, harvests of coconuts or rice – make for tedious reading until one no longer sees the forest for the trees. Had there only been graphs to show trends and changes in political, economic and social configurations!

An isolated narrative

The isolation in which the narrative unfolds is illustrated by far-fetched comparisons. The authors describe Commonwealth President Quezon as a child of his time by citing centralising and fascist tendencies in Finland and Poland (Japan is also mentioned) rather than contemporary, closer-to-home and far more comparable leaders such as Kemal Ataturk, Reza Shah and Phibun Songkram. The self-congratulatory observations on People Power – the Philippines as a guiding light – overlook the protracted demonstrations that brought down Sukarno. In 1973, people power succeeded in sending the Tyrannical Trio in Thailand packing and signalled, in 1978, the demise of the Shah of Iran.

Had the history of ideas – socialism, religion, constitutional thought, the public debate on nationalism or public opinion and its agents – played a significant role in this narrative of presumed state-society relations, many interesting developments would emerge, from early trade-unionism (1902) to Lope K. Santos's 1906 novel *Banaag at Sikat* (From Early Dawn to Full Light). Instead we have to settle for a communist party that descends out of the blue. The Commonwealth constitution is avoided; Quezon's megalomania and 'constitutional dictatorship' appear as the ideas of Filipino leaders, whereas Quezon, who saw himself as the embodiment of the Philippines, should rather be called the father of *trapo*-ism, the plague of 'traditional politicians'.

Whether addressing labour or the development of political culture, the study unfortunately passes up on intra-regional comparison (Mulder 2000: ch. 16). Even though the authors 'see indications of Philippine-style political dilemmas emerging in neighbouring countries', they should have been less self-satisfied and at least acknowledge simultaneous developments in the region. In state-led developmentalism, President Garcia is

a contemporary of Thailand's Marshal Sarit, while President Marcos's godfatherism finds a compelling parallel in President Suharto. Student protests against their leaders and in the name of constitutional democracy – not nationalism – occur almost at the same time. As for the use of political violence, the parallel with Thailand has been well-drawn elsewhere (Sidel 1999).

For undergrads?

Probably the most serious omission is the non-elaboration of religion in contemporary politics. Whether in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand or the Philippines, religion is not only a companion of modernity, but alive and well in public life. Whereas the authors pay lip service to its importance, they neither theorise its position within state-society relations nor elaborate on it descriptively. Suharto's aversion to politicised Islam strengthened it first as a moral stance and then as a social force that may well be on its way to overwhelming the public sphere; in Thailand Chamlong's Force of Righteousness moved the middle classes to centre stage, while in the Philippines the aversion to the institutional church forced millions into the embrace of the Iglesia ni Kristo. If the authors had been better informed, they would have known that the Iglesia only counts adults as its members, so

that, if we want to compare its one, two, or three million members with Catholics or others, we had better double those figures; then the membership of the Roman Church wouldn't stand at 'almost 83%' but rather 75% at most, as sectarianism of all sorts is simultaneously eating into that flock. Current religious developments are an important indicator of state-society relations, often prompted by disaffection with the state and the irrelevance of electoral politics to personal well-being.

When I finished the book, I noted that David Wurfel's *Filipino Politics: Development and Decay* (1988) had not even been acknowledged, which prompted me to take it off the shelf. The book is unpopular, probably because it appeared at the height of the *Pilipinohiya* craze at the University of the Philippines when foreign contributions to Philippine Studies were denigrated as 'for European consumption'. But when I consulted it, I was struck, again, by the conceptual lucidity that enabled the author to predict, after President Corazon Aquino had been in power for less than a year and a half, her largely negative legacy. In comparison, *State and Society in the Philippines* doesn't come anywhere close to a theoretically sustained narrative. Unlike the back cover blurb, I do not recommend it to my undergraduate students. ◀

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Merchant in Asia. The Trade of the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century
(Vol. 8, 2006) € 45,00

Merchant in Asia is the first study to pay attention to the full breadth and width of the commercial activities in Asia of the VOC, the Dutch East India Company. It looks at the company from the peak of its fame until its final decline at the end of the eighteenth century. The study focuses on the main trade goods - spices, Indian textiles, Chinese tea and Javanese coffee - and their specific by-products. Els Jacobs has analyzed in detail the VOC trade in fifteen of the most important commodities that together made up 85% of the total turnover.

Ernst van Veen & Leonard Blussé (eds.), *Rivalry and Conflict. European Traders and Asian Trading Networks in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (2005) € 35,00

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Kerala's cashew workers

Lindberg, Anna. 2005. *Modernization and Effeminization in India: Kerala Cashew Workers since 1930*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press. 200 pages, ISBN 87 91114 21 7

Manja Bomhoff

In this richly documented study, Anna Lindberg uses history and anthropology to analyse the lives of female factory workers in Kerala: their working conditions and the changing power and gender relations within the industry and society. In the introduction Lindberg explains how she aspires to bridge the gap between the historian's focus on colonial times and sociologists' and development workers' interest in contemporary society. Bridging this gap is not this study's only contribution. By covering a span of 60 years while maintaining a keen eye for details and subtleties, it dissects processes of transformation such as 'effeminisation' and indicates precisely how gender identities have been influenced over time by changing power relations. This helps us understand the origin of social phenomena that may hitherto have been accepted as simply 'traditional' or 'western'.

The Indian state of Kerala is known for its demographic and social achievements and vibrant civil society. It is therefore particularly interesting that Lindberg has situated her study here, among the largest group of factory hands in the state: the cashew workers, over 90% of whom are female. Her purposes are twofold: to shed light on

forms of domination based on gender, caste and class; and to show that people, however suppressed or marginalised, have the ability to think, describe and analyse their own situations.

For these purposes the combination of techniques such as observation, in-depth interviews, questionnaires and the investigation of historical sources is very beneficial. For instance, when comparing the written records of political discussions on labour laws with current observations in the factories, one can understand policy makers' motives and the implications of their decisions. For example, Lindberg describes how the 'male breadwinner model' that originated from a 'western' context was strategically applied to lower minimum wages for women, even though many female employees were the main providers for their families.

'Women's jobs': revisionist history

Comparing historical documents and oral history provides insight into the influence of a hegemonic discourse on the 'different versions' of history. For example, while employers, civil servants and trade union leaders now claim that the male participation rate in cashew factories was never over 5%, written records from the 1930s show that almost

30% of the total workforce was male. Later years, however, have seen a transformation in the status of factory jobs and their 'gender coding'. Some of the most detrimental and strenuous tasks became 'women's jobs', Lindberg finds, to the extent that current employers and trade union leaders find it difficult to believe that men had performed these tasks in the past. Industry power-holders have jointly developed a hegemonic gendered language defining women as housewives who are helpless, weak, unskilled and dependent – and therefore legitimately underpaid and otherwise ignored. In this respect Lindberg uses the term 'effeminisation' to indicate the 'way a woman's dressing, behaving, and acting in different spaces (ie, at the factory, in union participation, in the household, and in society at large) are perceived as differing from a man's'.

To elicit the perspectives of female workers, the author's in-depth interviews are extremely helpful. For those who are aware of the Malayalee's political consciousness and participation rate, the detailed explanations women provide about factory history, unions and their overall work situation do not come as a surprise. Sadly enough, this book demonstrates how comprehension alone does not always lead to the amelioration of working conditions. The profit

motive, structures of domination, lack of female worker representation and recourse (for instance, through a union) and the process of 'effeminisation' mean that female factory workers are losing some of the authority and independence they enjoyed in earlier decades. Lindberg's last chapter on 'Marriage, Money, and Identity' illustrates how the increasing practice of dowry-giving in Kerala is not only characteristic but also exacerbates this process. Dowry is one of the most important and difficult issues that Malayalees will face in the near future; Lindberg shows courage and finesse in the way she has included this delicate topic in her study.

For lay reader and academic alike

While the author's use of the term 'effeminisation' helps to describe a significant process, 'modernisation' is a more problematic term. While Lindberg avoids major problems by not offering a prior definition, almost everything that has happened since the 1930s becomes part of a holistic process of 'modernisation'. The question remains whether using the term in this way provides any additional insight. Even though I would have appreciated more elaboration on the theoretical issues involved in this concept choice – such as on the relationship between ideology and discourse



Shelling cashew nuts takes place in dirty and unhealthy places. The majority of women working here belong to the lowest castes. Anna Lindberg

mentioned in the introduction but not pursued anywhere in the study – this is probably (and understandably) the first material sacrificed when an academic study is published for a larger public.

Indeed, the wealth of information analysed makes the book exceptionally interesting for a varied public: from a broad readership interested in Kerala, the cashew industry, gender or class dynamics to academics from the fields of anthropology, economics and history. The time and compassion the author has invested should convince those in power to look at the many ways in which the lives of Kerala's female cashew workers could be improved. Lindberg's book could serve as their guide. <

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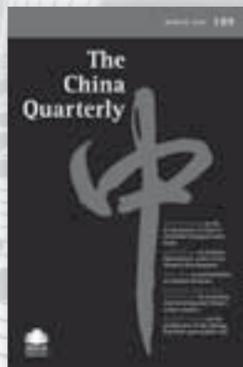
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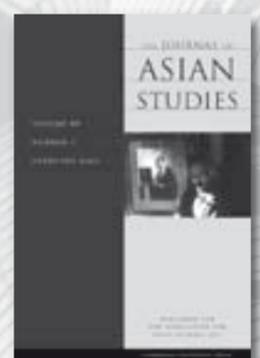
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Habermas in India

Rajeev Bhargava and Helmut Reifeld, eds. 2005. *Civil Society, Public Sphere and Citizenship: Dialogues and Perceptions*. New Delhi, Thousand Oakes, London: Sage. 420 pages, ISBN 0 7619 9832 2

Hans Schenk

Does the concept of the public sphere, born of 18th and early 19th century Western Europe, apply to (colonial) India? In addressing the concept of the public sphere, the volume's co-editor, political scientist Rajeev Bhargava, refers extensively to the German sociologist Jürgen Habermas, whose *Structural Change of the Public Sphere* appeared in English only in 1991. Its original publication, in German in 1962, spawned a European debate which the book's English translation helped turn into a global one. Embedded in Western European history, Habermas's concept of the public sphere developed with the emergence of bourgeois society, conceiving the 'market' as a meeting place of 'equal' members of an informed bourgeoisie who engaged in critical, rational and enlightened discussions ultimately aimed at formulating the 'common good'. Habermas states that the public sphere reached its zenith in the mid-1800s and subsequently degenerated to an arena of competing private interests. The logic of reason similarly became subjected to manipulation and negotiations that created inequality and degraded citizens to a mass of consumers.

Public sphere?

In his lengthy introduction to 16 essays based on a workshop held in Bikaner, India, in 2001, Rajeev Bhargava discusses this collection's main concepts: civil society, public sphere and citizenship. Civil society is defined by more or less voluntary organisations outside the purview of the state. Public sphere refers to a common and publicly accessible space, such as a market place, pub, newspaper or the internet, which serves the purpose of framing public opinion, while citizenship is membership in a political community. Two essays focus on western issues and the rest (14) on India and its colonial predecessor.

Bhargava answers his key question of the concept of the public sphere applying to (colonial) India in the negative. The story of individuation and freedom in the West, he argues, cannot be replicated in India (pp.21, 44-45); Indian relations between the family and the individual are not conducive to the emergence of autonomous individuals. However, Bhargava concludes, the western concept may help explain the nature of Indian public life and its historical trajectories (p.33). This nuance puts some authors in a challenging position.

They make comparisons by drawing the western concept of public sphere into their discourses and often conclude that its pre-conditions and characteristics do not correspond to Indian societal conditions.

Farhat Hasan explores the public sphere in Moghul India and finds it present throughout, where commoners and the intelligentsia participated in discussions in mosques and markets. However, Hasan provides a wealth of detail that shows these were not meeting places for equal citizens; nor were they egalitarian (Forms of Civility and Publicness in Pre-British India, pp.84-106). Elites dominated the public sphere and the presence of women was limited.

Inequality

Neera Chandhoke demonstrates one reason for this lack of egalitarianism. She reminds the reader that Habermas's concept of the public sphere requires a shared language and the same normative, objective and subjective worlds of its participants (p.334). What happens when two languages expressing different understandings encounter each other in the public sphere? Chandhoke turns to the example of the large-scale displacements of tribal communities for the construction of the Narmada dam and reservoir. The government used land ownership (demonstrated by official documents) to determine the amount of compensation owed to tribal households. However, because this concept of land ownership was unknown to tribal communities, the government simply gave no compensation at all. Chandhoke does not elaborate on bureaucratic indifference but instead concentrates on language, seeing the example '... as a story about the collision of two languages and the victory of one at the expense of the other' (p.338).

Neeladri Bhattacharya is more cautious. Instead of making comparisons with the West European public sphere and analysing the differences, he investigates its conceptual power in the context of India's colonial modernity. He concludes that there was no homogenous, consensual unitary sphere; rather, it was deeply fragmented. Dialogues in the public sphere did not end in consensus; to the contrary, they often reaffirmed differences and continued to be structured by power relations controlled by colonial rulers. Thus the public sphere became an arena of struggle: 'The public language of reason was used by the colonial power to critique Indian

society and legitimate British rule as the bearer of rationality, but the same language was turned around by Indians to critique colonialism as the embodiment of unreason' (p.156).

Some essays emphasise (in)equality in the public sphere. Gopal Guru argues that the inclusion of the former untouchables (now called Dalits) into constitutional arrangements has not brought about equal citizenship for this section of Indian society. It instead faces internal exile, because the Indian public sphere is based on mutually exclusive social groups, and, for the Dalits, characterised by the Hindu purity-pollution logic (pp.275-276). Addressing another form of inequality, Anuradha Chenoy discusses the impact on women of the political sphere's collapse during conditions of civil war (for example, in Punjab, Kashmir, etc), when women were forced to take part in armed conflicts and yet were not accepted as equal combatant partners (Women and the Breakdown of the Public Sphere, pp.365-384).

Civil society and citizenship take a less dominant position in the book, despite one chapter devoted to the constitutional arrangements of citizenship in India and another on refugees and illegal migrants. Only in the exciting contribution by Aditya Nigam does civil

society take centre stage. Starting with a few tragicomedies in Delhi, Nigam contrasts the rational behaviour of civil society's established institutions, such as the press, with the irrational mind of the common people, the 'population'. The author shows the contradiction inherent to a liberal and bourgeois civil society trained in Nehruvian secular and rational discourse and paternalistically opposing an Indian population still largely dominated by 'underground' Hindu and Muslim orthodoxy and particularistic communalism (Civil Society and its 'Underground', Explorations in the Notion of 'Political Society', pp.236-260).

Most essay authors are political scientists and historians, which may explain why the concept of civil society is dealt with in a rather abstract manner, focusing on institutions rather than on their members. A conceptual extension of public sphere and civil society is civil consciousness: the awareness among members (or categories of members) of a society of being related, interdependent and of sharing common responsibilities. Unfortunately, the authors do not incorporate it. Civil consciousness is a sociological or even social-psychological analytical tool and its application could have enriched some of the essays. Manor, for example, applied it

convincingly to help explain the lack of civic action following a dramatic case of alcohol poisoning among the poor in Bangalore, in 1981, which shed light on the nature of the city's civil society and public sphere.¹

However, the book remains very rich and every contribution illuminates aspects of Indian society, past and present, and irrespective of whether Habermas's concept of the public sphere applies. While the book clarifies pluriform (British) India's historical and present societal conditions for those who have at least a good working knowledge of these fields, it is certainly not an introduction to 'India: past and present'. Newcomers may get lost in the sophistication, subtleties and details of essays that sometimes lose touch with Indian realities. Fortunately, essays by Guru, Chenoy, Nigam and others bring the reader back down to earth. ◀

Note

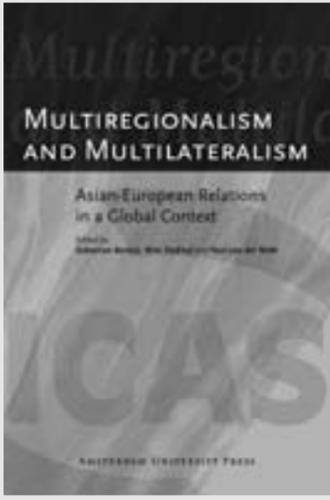
1. Manor, James. 1993. *Power, Poverty and Poison, Disaster and Response in an Indian City*. New Delhi: Sage.

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Paul van der Velde & Josine Stremmelaar

The Selection Committee of ICAS 5 met in Kuala Lumpur in November 2006 to evaluate the individual abstracts and almost all of them have been placed in panels. This was done in line with the border and disciplinary transcending spirit of ICAS. The Committee is most pleased to report that more than 1200 submissions have been received. The wide variety of themes, disciplines and regions covered promises an intellectu-

ally challenging Convention. In addition many organized and institutional panels have been submitted and were evaluated when this Newsletter went to print. In all these panels a cross-disciplinary border transcending approach is stressed which enhances a fruitful dialogue among the participants who originate from more than 55 countries in Asia, Europe and America. They represent more than 600 institutions. A provisional list of panels and its participants is now online at www.icas5kl.com.

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1 May 2007 – 31 July 2007

Dr Karuna Sharma (India)
Affiliated fellow
The experiences of love and sexuality in the

Mughal haram (16th – 18th centuries)
2 January 2006 – 2 January 2008

Dr Suhnu Ram Sharma (India)
Deemed University, Pune
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation
A grammar of Manichaeid language
1 May 2007 – 30 September 2007

Dr Markus Schleier (Germany)
University of Heidelberg, University of Frankfurt am Main
Three months fellow
Governmental development work and its impacts on everyday biomedical treatment of disease at the Birhor 'tribe' in Orissa, India
5 March 2007 – 5 June 2007

Dr Anna Slaczka (the Netherlands / Poland)
Three months fellow
Indian Shaivism and the religion among the Khmers: the study of mutual relations during the Angkor Period
1 November 2006 – 30 April 2007

Vincenzo Verdiani (Italy)
University of Rome "La Sapienza"
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation
An annotated translation of the Sādhanaśūtradśā of Bhārṭṛhari, with the commentary Prakṛtīmaprakāśa of Helārāja
1 March 2007 – 30 June 2007

Southeast Asia

Dr Jet Bakels (the Netherlands)
Affiliated fellow
Researching tribal traditions in a changing society
1 March 2006 – 1 March 2007

Prof. Robert H. Barnes (USA)
University of Oxford
Affiliated fellow
Documentation pertaining to the political history of Nusa Tenggara Timur in the Nationaal Archief and the KITLV
15 March 2007 – 15 April 2007

Dr Ruth Barnes (Germany)
University of Oxford
Affiliated fellow
Early textile collections from Eastern Indonesia in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden and photographic collections from Eastern Indonesia in the KITLV
15 March 2007 – 15 April 2007

Dr CHIN Yee Whah (Malaysia)
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Affiliated fellow, Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam
Chinese entrepreneurship in Malaysia
1 May 2007 – 31 July 2007

Véronique Degroot (Belgium)
Universiteit Leiden
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation
Candi, space and landscape. A study of distribution, orientation and spatial organization of central Javanese temple remains
1 January 2007 – 30 June 2007

Dr Omar Farouk (Japan)
Hiroshima City University
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by IAS and ISIM
Islam in Cambodia
1 December 2006 – 1 March 2007

Prof. Gerald Fry (USA)
University of Minnesota
Senior fellow
The Thais: The bamboo and the lotus
16 April 2007 – 20 August 2007

Dr Hans Hägerdal (Sweden)
University of Växjö
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by the Swedish Vetenskapsrådet
Early modern Timor: The meeting between indigenous groups and colonial interests
20 April 2007 – 14 May 2007 and 1 September 2007 – 31 October 2007

Prof. Mashudi Bin Kader (Malaysia)
Universiti Sains Malaysia
IAS Professor, holder of the European Chair of Malay Studies
The morphology and the movements of constituents in the syntax of classical Malay
1 September 2006 – 1 September 2008

Dr Ritsuko Kikusawa (Japan)
National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by NWO
An examination of the genetic affiliation of the Malagasy languages: their internal and external relationship in the Austronesian language family
1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007

Prof. Lawrence Andrew Reid (USA)
University of Hawai'i
Affiliated fellow
Reconstruction of southern Cordilleran "phrase markers"
1 December 2006- 30 November 2007

Dr Bounleuth Sengsoulin (Lao PDR)
Affiliated fellow sponsored by NUOL
The Champassak Chronicle, Vat Chitsavang version: A contribution to Lao historiography
1 January 2007 – 1 April 2007

Dr Pornsiri Singhapreecha (Thailand)
Thammasat University, Bangkok
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by NWO
The role and function of classifiers in Chinese, Zhuang and Thai
15 January 2007 – 15 July 2007

Aranya Siriphon (Thailand)
Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by SEASREP-IAS
Cultural border, contested landscape and hierarchies of power: Sinicized Tai migrant workers along the Burma-Yunnan frontier in the labor trade context
1 April 2007 – 30 April 2007

Prof. Barend Jan Terwiel (the Netherlands)
Hamburg University
Affiliated fellow
The floodplains of mainland Southeast Asia and environmental history
1 January 2005 – 31 May 2007

East Asia

Prof. Arif Dirlik (USA)
University of Oregon
Senior fellow, stationed at Branch Office Amsterdam
Historical revisionism in 20th century China
1 May 2007 – 30 June 2007

Dr Katalin Ferber (Japan/Hungary)
Waseda University, School of International Liberal Studies
Affiliated Fellow
The legacy of camerallist sciences in Japan, 1870-1905
1 February 2007 – 15 April 2007

Dr GUO Xuetang (China)
Tongji University
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by NWO, stationed at Branch office Amsterdam
The back of geopolitics and China-EU cooperation in Asian Security Affairs
1 February 2007 – 30 April 2007

Dr HE Jin (China)
Peking University
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by Beijing- and Leiden University
Confucian classics: Shangshu studies in the 17th and 18th century
1 September 2006 – 1 September 2007

Prof Mei-Yen LEE (Taiwan)
National Ping-Tung University of Education
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by NSC
Exploring the Aesthetic Significance and Value of Ancient Chinese Literati Art in the Collections and Writings of Robert van Gulik
15 September 2006 – 31 January 2007

Dr Myungshin Kim (Korea)
Yonsei University, Seoul
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by Academy of Korean Studies (AKS)
The correlation of aesthetics and politics; North Korean literature
25 January 2007 – 24 January 2008

Dr MINOHARA Toshio (Japan)
Kobe University, Graduate School of Law
Affiliated fellow
Path to war: European-Japanese relations from the Manchurian Incident and SIGINT, 1931-1941
1 October 2006 – 30 September 2007

Dr SHEN Yang (China)
Peking University
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by KNAW
Marking unaccusatives in Sinitic and its consequences
15 January 2007 – 15 June 2007

Dr Warren Sun (Australia)
Monash University
Affiliated Fellow
The politics of transition in China, 1972-1982
1 February 2007 – 1 March 2007

Prof. TSAI Yen-zen (Taiwan)
National Chengchi University
IAS Professor, holder of the European Chair in Chinese Studies
Chinese religion
28 August 2006 – 1 September 2007

Dr WANG Yi (China)
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Affiliated Fellow, sponsored by Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)
Female roles in Chinese Novels, 15th-18th Century
15 April 2007 – 15 October 2007

Dr WU Yongping (China)
Tsinghua University, School of Public Policy and Management
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by KNAW
The political economy of rent seeking and economic privilege in China
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IDPAD: Indo-Dutch Programme on Alternatives in Development
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AKS: Academy of Korean Studies
LUMC: Leiden University Medical Centre
NIOD: Netherlands Institute for War Documentation
NSC: National Science Council, Taiwan
NWO: Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research
RoGB: Royal Government of Bhutan
SSAAPS: Swedish School of Advanced Asia-Pacific Studies
SASS: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
WOTRO: Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research

IIAS research programmes, networks & initiatives

Programmes

Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts

In 1929, two crates of 17th and 18th century Sanskrit manuscripts arrived at the Kern Institute, University of Leiden. This Gonda/IIAS project is preparing a scientific catalogue of the roughly 500 South Indian Sanskrit manuscripts written on palm leaves in ancient Indian scripts such as Grantha, Telugu, Malayalam, Nagari and Nandinagari.

Coordinator: Saraju Rath
s.rath@let.leidenuniv.nl

Energy programme Central Asia

This programme on the geopolitics of energy focuses on Chinese, Indian, Japanese and South Korean strategies to secure oil and natural gas from the Caspian region (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, and Russia) and the Persian Gulf. The programme is institutionally supported by IIAS and the Clingendael International Energy Programme (CIEP), Den Haag.

Coordinator: Mehdi Parvizi Amineh
m.p.amineh@uva.nl

Illegal but licit: transnational flows and permissive polities in Asia

This research programme analyses forms of globalisation-from-below, transnational practices considered acceptable (licit) by participants but which are often illegal in a formal sense. It explores limitations of 'seeing like a state', and instead privileges the perspectives of participants in these illegal but licit transnational flows.

Coordinator: Willem van Schendel
h.w.vanschendel@uva.nl

Socio-genetic marginalization in Asia

The development and application of new biomedical and genetic technologies have important socio-political implications. This NWO/ASSR/IIAS research programme aims to gain insight into the ways in which the use of and monopoly over genetic information shape and influence population policies, environmental ethics and biomedical and agricultural practices in various Asian religious and secular cultures and across national boundaries.

Coordinator: Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner
m.sleeboom-faulkner@sussex.ac.uk

Syntax of the languages of southern China

This project aims to achieve a detailed description and in-depth analysis of a limited number of syntactic phenomena in six languages, both Sinitic and non-Sinitic, spoken in the area south of the Yangtze River. The project will systematically compare these descriptions and analyses to contribute to the development of the theory of language and human language capacity.

Coordinator: Rint Sybesma
r.p.e.sybesma@let.leidenuniv.nl

Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the subcontinent

The project's main goal is to combine the database of cognate words in Tibeto-Burman languages, maintained by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) with language data of the George van Driem Himalayan Languages Project (Leiden University) to create a joint, online database of Tibeto-Burman languages with a mirror-site in Leiden. The project's second objective is to continue documentation of endangered Tibeto-Burman languages in China in cooperation with the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology.

Coordinator: Katia Chirkova
k.chirkova@let.leidenuniv.nl

Networks

ABIA South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology index

The Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology is an annotated bibliographic database for publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. The project was launched by IIAS in 1997 and is currently coordinated by the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology of the University of Kelaniya, Colombo, Sri Lanka. The database is freely accessible at www.abia.net. Extracts from the database are also available as bibliographies, published in a series by Brill. The project receives scientific support from UNESCO.

Coordinator: Ellen Raven and Gerda Theuns-de Boer
e.m.raven@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.abia.net

Islam in Indonesia: the dissemination of religious authority in the 20th and early 21st centuries

Forms and transformations of religious authority among the Indonesian Muslim community are the focus of this research programme. The term authority relates to persons and books as well as various other forms of written and non-written references. Special attention is paid to the production, reproduction and dissemination of religious authority in the fields of four sub-programmes: *ulama* (religious scholars) and *fatwas*; *tarekat* (mystical orders); *dakwah* (propagation of the faith); and education.

Coordinator: Nico Kaptein
n.j.g.kaptein@let.leidenuniv.nl

Initiatives

Earth monitoring and the social sciences

The space age has dramatically impacted all nations. In Asia, the 'space-faring nations' of India, China and Japan have successfully developed space technologies and applications. Other Asian nations have readily adopted these applications, including satellites for telecommunications, for gathering data on the weather, and environmental and earth resources. IIAS has initiated a series of workshops on the topic.

Coordinator: David Soo
d.n.soo@let.leidenuniv.nl

Cross-border marriages in East and Southeast Asia

The past decade has seen a rapid increase in the intra-Asia flow of brides, particularly between Southeast and East Asia. While in Europe intermediated marriages continue to be seen as a form of the commodification of women, recent scholarship in intra-Asia cross-border marriages challenges this dominant view.

Coordinator: Melody Lu
m.lu@let.leidenuniv.nl

Piracy and robbery on the Asian seas

Acts of piracy loom large in Asian waters, with the bulk of all officially reported incidents of maritime piracy occurring in Southeast Asia during the 1990s. This is of serious concern to international shipping, as the sea-lanes between East Asia, the Middle East, and Europe pass through Southeast Asia. IIAS and the Centre for Maritime Research at the University of Amsterdam are currently identifying issues and concerns, and are delineating core elements of an interdisciplinary research programme on piracy and robbery at sea in Asia.

Coordinator: John Kleinen
kleinen@uva.nl

For more information on IIAS research: www.iias.nl



Caring for the environment: the role of religion and identity in Southeast Asia

Concern for the environment and potential solutions to environmental problems are expressed in a variety of ways, with local communities increasingly invoking cultural and religious traditions to express environmental concerns and means to overcome them. Nor can leaders of world religions continue to ignore environmental problems or avoid responsibility for the 'greening of their religion'. This workshop will discuss the state of the environment, including the caring for it, in relation to expressions and manifestations of cultural and religious identity in the Southeast Asian region.

Call for papers

Deadline to send in abstracts: **15 March 2007**

Abstracts should be no longer than 200 words and be accompanied by a short resume/CV (max. 2 pages).

Joint workshop organised by

Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies (CAPAS), Academia Sinica, Taipei
International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden

Convenors

Prof. Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao (CAPAS)
Dr Gerard Persoon (CML, Institute of Environmental Sciences, Leiden University)

Date and venue

22-23 June 2007, Leiden, the Netherlands

For further information

Manon Osseweijer, IIAS, m.osseweijer@let.leidenuniv.nl



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www.ceri-sciencespo.com

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SSAAPS The Swedish School of Advanced Asia Pacific Studies

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IIAS (secretariat Asia Alliance)

www.asia-alliance.org

Clingendael Asia Studies

New research project
www.clingendael.nl/asia

The Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael' launched its new research project – Clingendael Asia Studies (CAS) – on 1 September 2006. CAS aims to promote academic and public discussion on a wide range of topics relating to Asia's international relations, and will do so through publications by in-house researchers as well as through (public) lectures and seminars with researchers and guest speakers. Clingendael does not intend to cover Asia's international relations in a theoretical and all-encompassing sense, but rather aims at focussed and policy-relevant research, including the geo-strategic implications of China's emergence as an economic power for the region, for Europe and for the Netherlands, and Asia's growing importance in the international economy and issues of (resource) security.

Senior and junior fellows within CAS, including Maaikje Heijmans, Susann Handke and Frans-Paul van der Putten, are engaged in long-term research on (East) Asian political economy, security and energy issues. The project on political economy begins with research on Japan's economic diplomacy towards China and the importance of collective memory within inter-state relations. In the field of security, research themes include cross-strait relations (China-Taiwan), challenges posed by North Korea and transport routes. Research on energy issues focuses on the consequences of growing Chinese energy demand for other countries and for the environment, and the implications of increasing Chinese and Indian interest in African resources. Willem van Kemenade's project on the EU-US-China alliance will result in a book publication in 2008. Over the course of 2007-08, Simone Eysink, Ingrid d'Hooghe and Maurits Berger will, respectively, organise seminars on democratisation in Muslim countries, a stakeholders confer-

ence on human rights and trade, and an international conference on the EU-China strategic partnership.

CAS launch on 17 October featured supervisor Jan Melissen and individual researchers outlining the programme's objectives and research to be undertaken, followed by a lively Q&A-session. Several Asia-related events have been organised at the Clingendael Institute and since then, their breadth in topics illustrates the broad, open approach of the project. The seminars and lectures were attended by representatives from academic agencies, government, non-governmental organizations, the corporate sector and other interested parties, reflecting intensifying Asian-European relations in both public and private domains.

Clingendael Asia Studies is a unique cooperation of the Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme and Security and Energy Programmes, and is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Publications, upcoming events and other details are available at the CAS-website: www.clingendael.nl/asia. For further information, please contact asia@clingendael.nl.

Independence and After in Southeast Asia: Old and New interpretations

APRU School of Humanities conference
7-8 August 2007, Penang, Malaysia
Call for Papers / Panels

Deadline 1 June 2007
2007 marks the 50th anniversary of *Merdeka* (independence) for Malaysia. Malaysia attained political independence from British colonial rule in August 1957 through constitutional means. This led to a smooth handing over of power to Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj - the prime minister and architect of *Merdeka*. Other countries in the region endured years of conflict and bloodshed before independence from colonial rule was achieved, the most recent being Timor Leste in 2002. The notable exception is Thailand which

escaped the shackles of colonial domination by remaining the only independent, sovereign nation-state in Southeast Asia.

The discourse of nations achieving political independence and the characterisation of the years that followed as the 'postcolonial' period has long been a mainstay of the academic agenda in studies of Southeast Asia, particularly in the disciplines of history, political science, economics, literature and language, anthropology, and sociology. The road to independence was often long and arduous. The years following the attainment of national sovereignty were equally troublesome with seemingly insurmountable challenges. Whilst Malaysia faced the sensitive issue of managing race relations, the Philippines struggled with a leftist insurgency, Thailand 'see-sawed' with weak civilian governments and military juntas. Meanwhile Myanmar was secluded under a military dictatorship, and Cambodia experienced a nightmare following the establishment of a genocidal regime. The ups and downs of nation-building, the maintenance of political stability and economic sustainability are just some of the major issues that faced post-independent nation-states of Southeast Asia.

We invite articles addressing the above issues. Deadline for Working Papers: 1 June 2007. Individuals are invited to present a 20-minute working paper relevant to any aspect of the conference's theme. They are requested to submit an abstract (150-200 words) to the Secretariat.

Specialized Panels: Scholars who wish to organize a panel (4-5 presenters; 1-hour per panel) based on a particular topic relevant to the conference's overall theme should contact the conference Secretariat: The Second International Conference (2APRU) Asia-Pacific Research Unit (APRU) shakila@usm.my www.usm.my/APRU/index.html

Living the information society

Philippine ICT Researchers Network International Conference
23-24 April 2007, Makati City, Philippines

The Philippine ICT Researchers Network through the National College of Public Administration and Governance of the University of the Philippines is hosting an international conference on 'Living the Information Society: The Impact of Information and Communication Technologies on People, Work and Communities in Asia'.

The goal of the conference is to support the growth of an Asian community of researchers and practitioners doing work on the effects (social, cultural, psychological, economic, etc.) of information and communications technologies (ICT) in the region. The event encourages multidisciplinary participation and discussion, in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the effects of ICT on culture and society. In particular, the conference objectives are the following:

- To bring together a multidisciplinary group of researchers in the Asia-Pacific to present their research and perspectives regarding the effects of ICT in society
- To map the current state of social science research on the impact of ICT on Asian societies

Until now, most conferences on ICT have discussed the potential impact of new information and communication technologies on commerce, governance and education. The focus of such discussions is on future possibilities of ICT rather than their current, often unintended, usages. Alongside these discussions are trade shows that highlight achievements and developments in the technologies themselves. Important as these topics are, they often overlook a crucial aspect: the actual usage of ICT in everyday life. Much less common are conferences discussing what life in the information society is really like. Despite the rhetoric of governments and the promises of technical planners, we know very little about the effects and consequences of ICT in the Asia-Pacific region. Instead, the evidence presented often comes from developed regions, whose experience may have little relevance locally. Many ICT4D researchers in Asian universities lack the skills and the network needed to develop appropriate multidisciplinary research methodologies. Consequently, it is important to bring together people doing work on the impact of ICT in the South, where the context presents new challenges and implications (i.e. socio-cultural, language, economic). The conference is significant because it will bring together academics and researchers in the region who are investigating societal transformations in the information age. The conference will investigate how ICT affects our identities and relationships, the nature of work, the promises of governance, and the significance of culture.

For more information please contact Dr. Erwin A. Alampay, erwin_alampay@yahoo.com; or erwin_gaspar.alampay@up.edu.ph or the conference secretariat at: research.ict@gmail.com

Sharing Experiences and Prospects in Central Asia

European Society for Central Asian Studies (ESCAS) conference
12-15 September 2007, Ankara, Turkey
Call for Papers
Deadline 15 August 2007

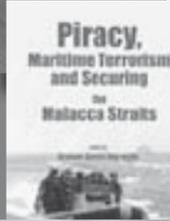
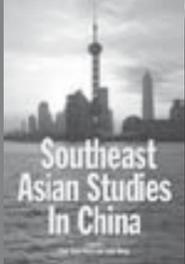
The creation of the newly independent Central Asian Republics after 1991 accompanied by the opening of this region to the world, marked a new era for Central Asian studies. The tenth ESCAS Conference provides Central Asian and European researchers with a golden opportunity to study and to exchange views on the region. Current developments in Central Asia are reflected in all academic disciplines, dealing with geopolitics, energy and economics, urbanism, society and communities and religious beliefs, ethnography, history, archaeology and linguistics. Conflicts can be triggered off between neighbours and great powers over the issues of water or oil, since Central Asia, rich in natural resources, is closely connected with the neighbouring great powers in competition for hydrocarbon, water and other resources. Nowadays Central Asia attracts lots of attention from the states of other regions and continents and serves as a new field for numerous NGOs, Muslim, Christian and other missionaries.

The geographic domain of Central Asia, (according to the ESCAS definition), cov-

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ers contemporary Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Northern Iran, Northern Afghanistan, North-Western China, Trans-Caspian and South Siberia.

What are the different concepts used by scholars today when dealing with such a wide range of topics? Due to its unique history, societies and religions, Central Asia cannot be studied solely through the prism of such concepts as "developed and developing countries" or "modern and traditional societies".

For the first time the conference will be held in Turkey at the Middle East Technical University, which has been a pioneer in Eurasian Studies, establishing a research centre on the region for the first time in Turkey.

For further information, see www.escas.pz.nl

Spheres of Justice

**Calcutta Research Group Conference
20-22 September 2007, Kolkata, India**

The Calcutta Research Group's second critical studies conference will be held on the theme of justice. Justice is a meeting ground of many ideas, situations, expectations, mechanisms and practices and there are several routes to approach the issue of justice.

The philosophical path may tell us to go back to ancient philosophers whose theories of justice tells us of the correctness of social order and the virtue of maintaining it; or to the middle age theorists who combined religion, virtue and justice in a comprehensive theory of ethics where justice had no special place. To the modern day social theorists in whose works justice becomes a complex arithmetic and a strenuous human effort to maintain it in a world marked by hierarchies and illiberalism. There is also a sociological route which sees justice, its demands and procedures, as a social phenomenon. There is also an historical route which offers what can be called 'regimes of justice' which include several notions, institutions, discourses and agencies of justice existing simultaneously but in a relation of power and subsidiarity.

The conference will be ready to discuss whatever critical thought and approach generate on the broad theme of justice in our minds. The list below suggests issues that may be addressed in the conference. The list is only indicative and doesn't exhaust the possible themes and sub-themes:

- A matter of methods: philosophies and ethnographies of justice
- Forms of justice
- Vision of justice: correcting historical injustices
- Justice and law
- Cultural representations of justice
- Administration of justice
- Rights and justice
- Social justice
- Is feminism a matter of looking at justice in a different way
- The blindness in perceiving injustices.

After the conference (24-25 September 2007) there will be a 2 day workshop with philosopher Etienne Balibar.

For more information on the conference contact mcrgr@mcrgr.ac.in or see www.mcrgr.ac.in

**Media and Imperialism:
Press, Photography, Film, Radio and Television in the Era of Modern Imperialism**

IAMHIST XXII conference

Amsterdam, 18-21 July 2007

Organised by the University of Amsterdam, dept. Media Studies in close cooperation with the International Association for Media and History and Utrecht University

We are entering a whole new era where the circulation of images is concerned. Large-scale digitisation of archives and collections has revolutionised existing practices of preservation, retrieval and distribution. We therefore signal an urgent need to rethink the relationship between media and modern imperialism, particularly in light of the complex process of globalisation. These developments invoke critical discussions between various disciplines, such as media studies, ethnology and history.

The conference will focus on the politics of representation and media practices, from the emergence of mass media and

modern imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century, to the successive episodes of decolonisation, as well as on more current issues surrounding heritage and ownership of media collections.

Visit the conference website:

www.media-and-imperialism.com
info@media-and-imperialism.com
IAMHIST XXII: Media and Imperialism
University of Amsterdam
Department of Media Studies

Participants from third world countries are especially encouraged. Those in need of funding, contact the conference office at info@media-and-imperialism.com

Culture and the Configuring of Security

**Nordic NIAS Council conference
6-9 November 2007, H  r, Sweden
Call for papers.
Deadline abstracts 2 July 2007
Deadline papers 22 October 2007**

Security is currently one of the most resonant concepts on the global political agenda. The mission of this conference is to bridge gaps between macro- and micro-perspectives and bring culture to the fore in debates concerning security. The objective is to break new theoretical ground by exploring a plurality of discourses and practices of security, and discussing ways of theorizing their embeddedness in social and cultural matrices.

A primary concern of the conference is the issue of power, which in the Asian context has to do with far more than political

authority alone. The way in which power is harnessed to the maintenance of social and moral order in different Asian environments may reveal much about how security is conceived of and practiced according to cultural schemes. These schemes may make the transposition of ideas about national boundaries, human rights agendas, peace-building initiatives, and development programmes that arise from other cultural settings problematic. Understanding how the power is constituted through socio-cultural process requires also paying attention to issues such as gender, trust and social networks. Indigenous conceptualisations of power and order may shape 'security' in particular, dynamic ways and they should, we propose, be brought to bear on the security debate.

This two and a half day conference will present keynote addresses focusing on the macro- and micro-level and invites speakers to engage contemporary theory from several fields in an investigation of empirical data from Asia and, conversely, to bring insights from Asian contexts to bear upon theories of security.

We welcome papers from senior researchers as well as doctoral students and others with an interest in the conference topic. Deadline for abstract 2 July 2007. For information of academic content contact Alexandra Kent, NIAS alix.kent@swipnet.se. For practical matters contact Nina Brand, Centre for East and South Asian Studies, Lund University. Nina.brand@ace.lu.se. For further information www.asiansecurity.niasconferences.dk

Treating diseases and epidemics in Southeast Asia through the ages

**HOMSEA/APRU conference: 9-10 January 2008, Penang, Malaysia
Call for papers.
Deadline for abstracts 1 May 2007
Deadline for papers 15 November 2007**

The Second International Conference in the History of Medicine in Southeast Asia with the theme 'Treating diseases and epidemics in Southeast Asia over the centuries' intends to explore how the inhabitants of Southeast Asia faced the ravages of diseases and epidemics through the ages. Adopting a liberal time frame (pre-historic to modern times), participants are encouraged to trace the development of medical and religious responses to diseases and the devastation of epidemics.

Deadline for Abstracts: 1 May 2007.

Deadline for Working Papers: 15 November 2007

For further Information, contact the Conference Secretariat.

The Second International Conference HOMSEA, Asia-Pacific Research Unit (APRU), School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, shakila@usm.my. www.usm.my/APRU/index.html

[advertisement]

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

DIRECTOR

INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR JAPANESE LANGUAGE STUDIES YOKOHAMA, JAPAN

The Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Study seeks a Director, with term of service beginning autumn 2008. The IUC's program trains students who are embarking on careers in Japanese studies or professions in which fluent Japanese is necessary. Training focuses on development of the ability to converse in Japanese on specialized subjects, to comprehend and deliver public presentations, and to read and write materials in Japanese in order to function professionally in academia, business, government, and other fields. The Director is responsible for development and support of a summer intensive program and a 10 month program, supervision of staff and faculty in Yokohama, and fund-raising.

The IUC is managed by Stanford University on behalf of a consortium of 16 American universities. The Director works closely with the Executive Director at Stanford, the Executive Board (made up of four professors from consortium institutions), and a Board consisting of representatives from each of the consortium members.

QUALIFICATIONS: Experience with American students in an academic setting; Ph.D. in a Japan-related field; fluency in English and Japanese; cultural experience in Japan. Experience with overseas study programs preferred but not required.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Further program information is available at www.stanford.edu/dept/IUC.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS: The Director is paid a salary in Japanese currency, along with a housing allowance. Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

APPLICATION DIRECTED TO:

Dr. Steven D. Carter, Executive Director
Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies
Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies
Encina Hall, Room E009
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-6055 USA

Or may be sent electronically to: stacey.campbell@stanford.edu

The IUC is an equal opportunity employer.

[advertisement]

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



The Department of History of the National University of Singapore is seeking to appoint an Assistant Professor in East Asian History (China and/or Korea) on tenure track for appointment in 2007.

The successful candidate will be expected to have a strong research and teaching agenda in Chinese and/or Korean history and a commitment to undergraduate teaching and advising graduate research. A competitive remuneration package, based on the qualifications and experience of the candidate, can be expected.

History is a large and growing department within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and a dynamic place to work. We include over 30 faculty members with a variety of national backgrounds; specializing in Asian, European, American, and global history; and possessing a range of thematic teaching and research interests.

All application dossiers, including a curriculum vitae, details about publications, research interests and teaching areas, and the confidential recommendations of three academic referees, should be submitted either by mail or electronically by 28 February 2007 to:

Chair, East Asia Search Committee, Department of History, National University of Singapore, 11 Arts Link, Singapore 117570

OR email: histsh@nus.edu.sg

Visit our websites at <http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/> for information on the Faculty, and <http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/hist/> for information on the Department of History.

Australia

Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art
Stanley Place, South Bank
Brisbane, Queensland 4101
T +61 (0) 7 3840 7303 or +61 (0) 7 3840 7350
www.asiapacifictriennial.com/

Until 27 May 2007

The 5th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT5)
This is the only major series of exhibitions to focus exclusively on the contemporary art of Asia and the Pacific, including Australia. APT5 will include around 270 works by 37 individual artists, filmmakers and performers, as well as two multi-artist projects. Highlights will include works by artists such as Ai Weiwei (China) and Dinh Q Le (Vietnam).

Melbourne Museum

11 Nicholson St
Carlton, Victoria
T + 61 3 8341 7777
melbourne.museum.vic.gov.au/

23 March - 22 July 2007

Great Wall of China: Dynasties, Dragons & Warriors
National treasures tell the 2,000-year-old story of the building of the walls across China as part of successive defensive and offensive strategies. Themes include the origins, construction, and function of the walls, the cultures of the peoples living nearby, the introduction of Buddhism that followed the Silk Road trade routes along the course of the walls, and the significance of 'The Great Walls of China' as a national symbol, precious cultural heritage, and tourism icon.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales

Art Gallery Road, The Domain
Sydney NSW 2000
T +02 9225 1700
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/

23 February - 29 April 2007

Tezuka: The Marvel of Manga
This exhibition presents Tezuka Osamu as the artistic master through a selection of pen and ink drawings and original colour cover designs for 22 individual manga, or 'comic picture' stories. These represent the expansive scope of Tezuka's oeuvre including children's manga such as *Princess Knight*, his first work directed at girls and the *Song of Apollo*, the artist's last work about life after a global nuclear holocaust.

Austria

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
Himmelfortgasse 13/9
1010 Vienna
T +43 1 513 98 56
www.tbaz1.org

Until 30 March 2007

This Is Not For You: Sculptural Discourses
Sculptural practices today encompass a diversity of approaches, materials, and formats. This exhibition includes works by Asian artists Ai Weiwei, Chen Qiulin, and Suh Doho.

Belgium

National Card Museum

Druivenstraat 18
B-2300 Turnhout
www.turnhout.be/speelkaartmuseum/

Until 6 May 2007

Ganjifa - The World of Indian Playing Cards
This exhibition covers a wide variety of cards, showing how they flourished in Mughal courts and were adapted in many different ways to suit Hindu tastes. Also displayed are further transformations influenced by western tastes and by the inventive Krishnaraja Wodeyar III of Mysore. The images on the cards were part of the mainstream of Indian culture and may be seen on anything from Mughal miniatures to religious hangings. There is a section on how cards are made and on some of the artists that still paint them, along with other examples of their work.

Canada

Royal Ontario Museum

100 Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M5S 2C6
T +416 586 8000
www.rom.on.ca/index.php

Until May 2007

Heaven or Hell: Images of Chinese Buddhist and Daoist Deities and Immortals
Heaven or Hell presents paintings and prints dating from the 10th to 20th centuries. These works express the prevailing Chinese religious and philosophical thinking of the time. The exhibition offers vivid depictions of divine figures worshipped by Buddhists and Daoists, and the journey souls take once their earthly existence ends.

China

Galerie Urs Meile

104 Caochangdi Cun, Cui Gezhuang Xiang
Chaoyang District, Beijing
T +0086 10 643 333 93
www.galerieursmeile.com

Until 31 March 2007

Wang Xingwei
This exhibition is comprised of works by contemporary Chinese painter, Wang Xingwei.

Hong Kong Heritage Museum

1 Man Lam Road
Sha Tin, Hong Kong
T +852 2180 8188
www.heritagemuseum.gov.hk/english/

Until 30 July 2007

Cameras Inside Out
The first part of this exhibition showcases a number of cameras collected by David Chan that date back as far as 100 years. It also probes the development of photographic art through works by senior local photographers including Kan Hing-fook, Tchan Fou-li, Leo K.K. Wong, and Ngan Chun-tung. The second part of the exhibition presents the diversity of modern photography through the works of five contemporary artists: Almond Chu Tak-wah, So Hing-keung, Bobby Sham Ka-ho, Lam Wai-kit, and Chow Chun-fai.

The Macau Museum of Art

Macao Cultural Centre, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
Macau
T +853-791 9814; 853-791 9800
www.artmuseum.gov.mo

Until 10 June 2007

19th Century Chinese Scenic Etchings
The 50 etchings in this exhibition reflect the scenery and livelihood of the people of the Pearl River Delta and the northern part of China in the 19th century. The works depict the scenery and traditional activities in China during the 19th century.

France

National Museum of Asian Art - Guimet

6 Place d'Iéna
75016 Paris
T +01-56 52 53 0
www.musee guimet.fr

Until 30 April 2007

Afghanistan: Recovered Treasures from the Collections of the National Museum, Kabul
This exhibition pays homage to the history of Afghanistan, once centre of kingdoms and empires that extended to Central Asia and North India. Over 200 Bronze Age pieces from Afghanistan will be on display, illustrating the cultural influences of India, Scythia, China, Greece, Iran, and the Near East including

vases, necklaces, mirrors, belts, and glassware. The exhibition is made up by finds from four archaeological sites: Ai-Khanoum, the necropolis of Tilia-Tepe, Begram, and Fulol.

Germany

Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland GmbH

Museumsmühle Bonn
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 4
53113 Bonn
T +49 (0)228/ 9171-0
www.kah-bonn.de

Until 9 April 2007

Angkor - Sacred Heritage of Cambodia
The show offers a survey of Cambodia's culture, beginning in the 6th century with stone sculptures from the Pre-Angkor kingdoms of Funan and Zhenla. The main focus is the art and architecture of the Angkor-Period (9th - 13th centuries). Water management, rice cultivation, and trade relations will also be addressed as factors contributing to the wealth of this culture.

21 February - 28 May 2007

Tibet - Monasteries Open Their Treasure Chambers
This exhibition displays art from Tibet's most important monasteries. Dating from the 5th to the early 20th centuries, the masterpieces reflect the diversity of Tibetan art which has been greatly influenced by Buddhism. Works from China, India, Nepal, and Kashmir illustrate the close religious and artistic exchange between Tibet and its neighbours.

Museum of East Asian Art

Universitätsstraße 100
D-50674 Cologne
T +49 221 940518-0
www.museumkoeln.de/english/museum-fuer-ostasiatische-kunst/

Until 22 April 2007

Gilded Splendor: Treasures of China's Liao Empire (907-1125)

This exhibition highlights more than 200 recently excavated objects from Inner Mongolia that reveal the complex cultural and religious legacy, as well as the geopolitical impact of the Khitan and their reign over China during the Liao dynasty. Using stunning works of art and didactic materials, the exhibition will be structured around four topical themes that illuminate the complex nature of Liao culture - The Steppe Tradition; The Chinese Tomb Tradition; Religious Life; and Luxuries and Necessities.

Linden-Museum Stuttgart

State Museum of Ethnology

Hegelplatz 1
D-70174 Stuttgart
T +49-(0)711/2022-3
www.lindenmuseum.de

21 April - 21 October 2007

In the Sign of the Dragon - On the Beauty of Chinese Lacquer Art: Homage to Fritz Low-Beer
This exhibition presents the extensive collection formerly belonging to Fritz Low-Beer (1906-76), who is regarded as the pioneer of Chinese lacquer art in the West. The exhibition is intended to offer an insight into the techniques and decoration of Chinese lacquer art. The collection focuses on carved lacquers and archaeological finds from the Western Han period (202 BC-9 AD).

Japan

Fukuoka Asian Art Museum

7 & 8th Floors, Riverain Center Bld.
3-1 Shimokawabata-machi
Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi
T +092 7718600
http://faam.city.fukuoka.jp

Until 3 April 2007

Asia in Love
Love in a wide variety of forms is the focus of Asia in Love. For example, an affectionate person in a Chinese painting welcomes you at the entrance of the exhibition; a mother and a daughter examine their relationship and love for each other in Singapore; and lovers in India whisper the story of love.

Mori Art Museum

53F Roppongi Hills Mori Tower
6-10-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku
Tokyo 106-6150
T +81 3 5777 8600
www.mori.art.museum

Until 6 May 2007

The Smile in Japanese Art
This exhibition looks at 'smiles' in Japan's classical art, presenting works that range from archeological finds to early 20th century painting.

Korea

Clayarch Gimhae Museum

358 Songjeong-ri Jillye-myeon
Gimhae-si, Gyeongsangnam-do 621-883
T +82 55 340 7016
www.clayarch.org

Until 22 April 2007

Dreaming Toilet
This exhibition extends Marcel's Duchamp's Fountain. It displays various works that are given a new life by artists through painting, installation, mixed-media, sculpture, photography, and ceramics. The curator, artists, and the related sanitary ware industry are all involved in the process from the very beginning.

The Netherlands

Stedelijk Museum

Oosterdokskaade 5
1011 AD Amsterdam
T +020 5732 911
www.stedelijk.nl

9 March - 17 June 2001

Paul Chan: Lights and Drawings
Solo exhibition of video and digital artist Paul Chan.

Groninger Museum

Museumeland 1
9700 ME Groningen
T +31-50 3666555
www.groninger-museum.nl/

Until 30 December 2007

Asian Decorative Arts - Studio Job
This exhibition juxtaposes work by Studio Job (Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel) with a selection from the Groninger Museum's Chinese and Japanese porcelain, lacquerware, and objects carved from wood and ivory.

Pakistan

Mohatta Palace Museum

7 Hatim Alvi Road
Clifton, Karachi 75600
T + (92-21) 583 7669
www.mohattapalacemuseum.com/

Until 30 September 2007

Tale of the Tile: the Ceramic Traditions of Pakistan
The Mohatta Palace Museum presents a panoramic view of the ceramic traditions of Pakistan from c. 3800 BCE to the present day. The more than 400 historical objects consist of architectural elements, tiles, and vessels from Mehrgarh, Multan, Uch, Sitpur, Lahore, Sehwan, Kamarro Sharif, Thatta, Hala, and Hyderabad. Highlights include stunning calligraphic panels of Persian verses by Bahauddin Zakaria.

Singapore

Singapore Art Museum

71 Bras Basah Road
Singapore 189555
T +65 3323215
www.museum.org.sg/SAM/

Until 8 April 2007

Convergences: Chen Wen Hsi Centennial Exhibition
Chen Wen Hsi was proficient in both traditional Chinese ink and western oil painting and experimented with a variety of styles including Fauvism and Cubism. This exhibition examines the artist's artistic life, creative development, and profound influence on the Singapore art community.

Asian Civilisations Museum

1 Empress Place
Singapore 179555
T + (65) 6332 7798
www.nhb.gov.sg/ACM/about_overview.shtml

Until 15 April 2007

Mystery Men: Finds from China's Lost Age
In 1986, workers in Sichuan Province, China, discovered a sacrificial pit which was filled with elephant tusks, bronze human heads, ceremonial jades, gold, and fantastic-looking masks. The site, known as Sanxingdui, challenged all previous understanding of early Chinese civilizations. This exhibition brings 103 of these artefacts to Southeast Asia for the first time.

Switzerland

Kunstmuseum Bern

Hodlerstrasse 12
3000 Bern 7
T +41 31 328 09 44
www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/

Until 1 April 2007

Chinese Window: Ji Dachun and Liu Ye
Chinese Window consists of two solo exhibitions from painters of the middle generation: Ji Dachun and Liu Ye. Ji Dachun's paintings and drawings mix Chinese tradition and western modernism to create an ironic, sometimes humorous, cocktail. Liu Ye brings forth an artistic world that on the surface appears to be childlike, but in no way proves to be naïve.

Abegg-Stiftung Museum

Werner Abegg-Strasse 67
CH-3132 Riggisberg
T +0041 (0)31 808 12 01
www.abegg-stiftung.ch

29 April - 11 November 2007

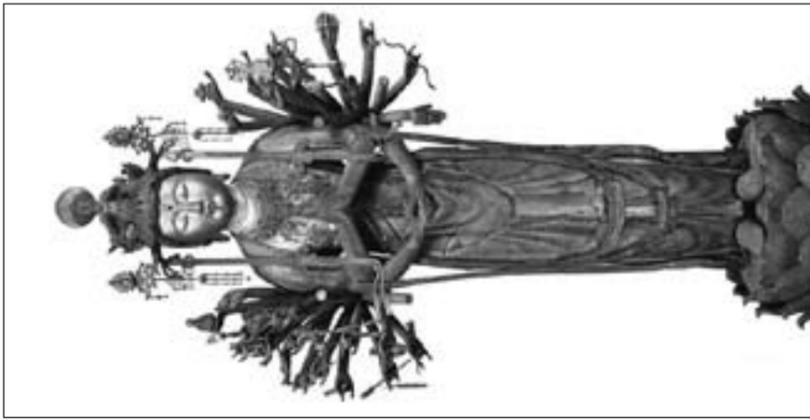
Dragons of Silk, Flowers of Gold: Textile Treasures of the Chinese Liao Dynasty (907-1125)
This display reveals the refinement and rich colours of medieval Chinese dress. Highlights include embroidered boots, trousers, skirts, jackets, coats and the headdress of a lady. Together with exquisite gold-mounted porcelain vessels, they introduce the world of luxury and beauty that accompanied the nobility of the Liao-Dynasty even into their graves.

Museum Rietberg Zürich

Gablerstrasse 15
Zürich, Switzerland
T + 41 (0)44 206 31 31
www.rietberg.ch/

Until 9 April 2007

Kannon: Divine Compassion
When Buddhism spread across Japan in the 7th century, Kannon quickly became very popular. This exhibition presents an exceptional selection of the most beautiful sculptures and paintings of Kannon from the 7th to the 14th centuries. Photographs by Hiroshi Sugimoto of sculptures of Kannon Bosatsu complement the exhibition.



Senju Kannon

Kamakura period, 13th century

Wood with gold leaf over lacquer, H. 168.8 cm

Chōkōji, Hyōgo

Important Art Object

© Kyoto National Museum

Taiwan

The National Palace Museum

221 Chih-shan Rd. Sec 2, Taipei
T +886 2 2881 2021
www.npm.gov.tw/index.htm

Until 25 March 2007

Grand View: Painting, Calligraphy and Ju Ware from the Northern Sung Dynasty, and Sung Dynasty Rare Books

This exhibition takes place in celebration of the opening of the newly-renovated National Palace Museum. It displays the entirety of the museum's collection of Northern Song items, as well as important pieces on loan from museums in the United States, Great Britain, Japan and an archaeological institute in China. This exhibition is centered around three themes: Northern Song painting and calligraphy, Northern Ru ware, and Song books.

Taipei Fine Arts Museum

181 Zhongshan N. Road, Sec. 3
Taipei 10461
T +02 2595 7656
www.tfam.gov.tw

Until 7 May 2007

Commemorating Exhibition Marking the 100th Anniversary of Li Shin-Chiao
This exhibition marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Li Shin-Chiao. His painting not only establishes his personal style but also reflects the trend and features of art development in Taiwan.

United Kingdom

The Museum of East Asian Art

12 Bennett Street
Bath BA1 2QJ
T +44-1225 464 640
www.bath.co.uk/museumeastasianart

Until 15 April 2007

Chasing the Unseen: Chinese Calligraphy
With a selection of new and recent works in a variety of media including ink, oil, and water-colour, this exhibition explores Zhao Yizhou's lively interpretation of literal meaning and aesthetic beauty inherent in Chinese calligraphy (*shufa*). Deeply concerned with the psychological and philosophical potential of *shufa*, many of Zhao's pieces challenge the viewer's perception of what they are seeing.

Until 15 April 2007

Welcome to China
This show aims to introduce and uncover some of the defining historical, cultural and contemporary characteristics of the country hosting the 2008 Olympics. Illustrating traditional and contemporary aspects of Chinese culture with historical and modern artefacts, this exhibition gives a snapshot of China's ever-changing society.

Chinese Arts Centre

Market Buildings, Thomas Street
Manchester, M4 1EU
T +44 (0)161 832 7271
www.chinese-arts-centre.org

Until 1 April 2007

Collective Identity
The appearance of Mao on the Gate of Heavenly Peace (*Tiananmen*) during the founding of the People's Republic of China added a new political dimension to the imperial building, symbolising the beginning of a new era. However, this project does not focus on Mao exclusively; it turns the lens back on the masses themselves, in other words, the *Collective Identity* of Mao's people. *Collective Identity* features the work of Hu Jieming, Liu Dahong, Miao Xiaochun, Qui Zhijie, Shao Yinong and Muchen, Wang Chuan, Wang Jinsong, and Wu Yiming.

13 April - 17 June 2007

Chain
'Chain' implies a notion of confinement and restraint. However, it can also be understood simply as a connection of a series of things which are linked together by something in common. *Chain* exhibits works by three lens-based artists: He Chengya, Annie Hsiao-Ching Wang, and Amy Cham. Using their personal stories with their mothers, and the experience of being mothers themselves, they aim to illustrate an aspect of the reality of family intimacy.

The Harley Gallery

Welbeck Worksop
Nottinghamshire S80 3LW
T + 01909 501700
www.harleygallery.co.uk/home.htm

19 May - 15 July 2007

Beyond the Page: Contemporary Art from Pakistan
Six contemporary Pakistani artists transform miniature paintings beyond the limitations of medium, technique, and tradition. This exhibition of new work taken from the simultaneous 2006 shows in London's Asia House and the Manchester Art Gallery includes works by Hamra Abbas, Aisha Khalid, Mohammed Imran Qureshi, Nusra Latif Qureshi, Hasnat Mahmood, and Usman Saeed.

United States

Museum of Fine Arts

Avenue of the Arts, 465 Huntington Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts
T +1-617 267 9300
khygysician@mfa.org
www.mfa.org

Until 1 August 2007

Through Six Generations: The Weng Collection of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy
This exhibition presents 30 rarely seen masterworks of Chinese painting and calligraphy from the Weng Collection. Among them is a handscroll by Southern Song artist Liang Kai (13th century), the only known example of his courtly style. Also on view is the handscroll painting *Ten Thousand Li up the Yangtze River* by Wang Hui (1632-1717) and a personal scroll of letters from Wen Zhengming (1470-1559) to his sons. In tandem with these works, the history of the Weng family itself is told through historical photographs, manuscripts, and artworks created by generations of family members.

Until 8 October 2007

Women of Renown: Female Heroes and Villains in the Prints of Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)
Artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi combined the popular theme of beautiful women with his personal specialty, warrior prints showing legendary heroic figures from Japanese and Chinese

history. From the historical woman warrior Tomoe to the fictional sorceress Takiyasha, from ancient empresses to present-day criminals, Kuniyoshi's dynamic portrayals show women who were not just passive beauties but strong, courageous, talented, and sometimes even wicked.

Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University

485 Broadway
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
T +617 495-9400
www.artmuseum.harvard.edu/sackler/

Until 8 April 2007

Cultivating Virtue: Botanical Motifs and Symbols in East Asian Art
Inspired by the beauty and resilience of nature's flora, East Asian poets and artists have imbued a variety of plants and flowers with auspicious, literary resonances, and moral overtones. This exhibition presents a selection of works that feature popular botanical themes and symbols as their principal subjects.

Peabody Essex Museum

East India Square
Salem, MA 01970-3783
T +978 745 9500, 866 745 1876
www.pem.org/

Until 25 March 2007

The Emperor Looks West
A court painting from the 18th century shows a ceremony in the Forbidden City marking the Qianlong emperor's military victory in a region of western China. Other objects including a European-style clock, a Mughal jade bowl, ceramics, enamels, and cloisonné reflect the range of international influences that help to shape imperial art during the Qianlong era.

Until 3 June 2007

Epic India: Paintings by M. F. Husain
This exhibition features a contemporary artist's visions of one of India's oldest stories. Husain first painted a series of seven major canvases about the Mahabharata epic for the 1971 Sao Paolo Biennale. For Husain, the central paradox of the epic, and of human nature, is the competition and jealousies that divide members of a family, forcing them to choose sides and moving them all inexorably towards an Armageddon.

Asia Society and Museum

725 Park Avenue (at 70th Street)
New York, NY 10021
T +212 288 6400
www.asiasociety.org

Until 29 April 2007

Contain Yourself: Yuken Teruya
Yuken Teruya is best known for his intricate cut-paper art. Teruya salvages discarded fast food bags and carves out silhouettes of trees. These cut-outs are then folded back into the space inside of the bags, the whole forming miniature dioramas. For this exhibition Teruya will create a new work inspired by a work from the Asia Society's permanent collection.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028-0198
T + 212 535 7710
www.metmuseum.org/home.asp

Until 26 August 2007

Journeys: Mapping the Earth and Mind in Chinese Art
This exhibition, featuring 70 works dating from the 11th to the 21st centuries, explores the theme of journeys both real and imagined. Depictions of real journeys range from intimate scenes to grand imperially commissioned panoramas. But Chinese artists have more often been inspired by journeys of the mind: roaming through the mountains or escaping to wilderness retreats or utopian paradises that can provide refuge, if only vicariously, from challenging realities.

The Rubin Museum of Art

150 West 17th Street
New York, NY 10011
T +212 620 5000
www.rmany.org/

Until 16 April 2007

Mongolia: Beyond Chinggis Khan
This exhibition celebrates the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Mongol empire by Chinggis Khan in 1206. A selection of Mongolian sculptures, paintings, manuscripts, and other ritual objects will be complemented by images of Mongolia made by the contemporary photographers Builder Levy and Elaine Ling. Highlights include the RMA's collection of Mongolian dance masks.

Freer Gallery of Art

Until 10 June 2007
Daoism in the Arts of China
Since its inception more than 2,000 years ago, Daoism has permeated every aspect of Chinese life and culture, from politics, philosophy, literature, and music to chemistry, medicine, and the martial arts. This exhibition looks at four aspects of Daoism: its foundations as a school of thought based on Daojia; images of Daoist immortals and paradises; ways to achieve immortality; and Daoist gods and the influence of folklore, Confucianism, and Buddhism on Daoism.

March

6 March 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

An Interpretation of the Confucian Classics as Scripture
IIAS Fellow Lecture by Prof. Yen-Zen Tsai, European Chair for Chinese Studies
contact: Marise van Amersfoort
m.van.amersfoort@let.leidenuniv.nl

12-16 March 2007

Guangdong and Macao, China

Canton and Nagasaki compared: 1730-1830
Conference
Organised by Zhongshan University, Guangdong

Contact: Evert Groenendijk
evert.groenendijk@minbuza.nl

14-17 March, 2007

Oslo, Norway

The Japan Anthropology Workshop (JAWS) 18th Conference
JAWS 2007, Dept. of Ethnography / Museum of Cultural History, Univ. of Oslo
Contact: jaws-2007@khn.uio.no
www.khn.uio.no/jaws-2007

19-20 March 2007

Durham, UK

Made in China vs. Made by Chinese: Global Identities of Chinese Business
conference
organized by the ChinaWorld Research Network
http://chinaworld.cbs.dk/menu/
nextworkshop.asp

19-23 March 2007

Bangkok, Thailand

Technology and Culture: Genetics and its social and ethical implications in Asia and Europe
ASEF-Alliance Workshop

Organised by: Center for Ethics of Science and Technology

Contact: Soraj Hongladorom

soraj@mac.com or hsoraj@chula.ac.th

21-23 March 2007

Singapore

3rd Asian Space Conference
Organized by IIAS / Nanyang Technological University / Lee Foundation
contact: Timo Rolf Bretschneider, Nanyang Technological University
astimo@ntu.edu.sg

David Soo, International Institute for Asian Studies
d.n.soo@let.leidenuniv.nl

11-12 April 2007

Bogor, Indonesia

Translation & Cultural Dialogue
FIT 5th Asian Translators Forum
Organized by: HPI (Association of Indonesian Translators)
http://wartahpi.org/asia_forum.php

12 April 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

Language Planning and Implementation in Malaysia: A Reassessment, current impact and the future challenges
IIAS lecture
by Prof. Abdullah Hassan (University of Education, Sultan Idris)

Contact: Marloes Rozing
M.Rozing@let.leidenuniv.nl

24-25 March 2007

Jeonju, Korea (South)

Human Security in Asia: Emerging Issues and Challenges
Conference
Organised by: Asia Association for Global Studies (AAGS)
http://asia-globalstudies.org/

26 March 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

"Administrative Consultants" in Meiji Japan
IIAS Fellow Lecture by Dr. Katalin Ferber, affiliated fellow
contact: Marise van Amersfoort
m.van.amersfoort@let.leidenuniv.nl

26-27 March 2007

Beijing, China

Asia-China Alternative Energy Conference 2006
Organized by INC Global Conferences
Contact: Kelly Tan
www.inc-global.com

April

1-9 April 2007

Galle, Sri Lanka

Cultural Impact Assessment Camp: Maritime Archaeology
3rd AAHM Field School
Organized by UNESCO-ICCROM Asian Academy for Heritage Management
Contact: asian-academy@unescoibkk.org

2-3 April 2007

Manila, the Philippines

One Hundred Years of Representative Politics
Philippine Political Science Association Conference
Information: Ronald D. Holmes
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27-29 April, 2007.

Los Angeles, USA

South Asia Engaged
SASA's foundation South Asia Conference
www.sasia.org

30 April 2007

Beijing, China

China Water, Water Markets and Developments in China to 2015
Conference
Organized by: ACON AG, Zurich, Switzerland
www.hkcz2.com/chinawater.html

May

3-5 May 2007

Aix-en-Provence, France

Vietnam, the modernist conjuncture (1905-1908). The reactivity of a society confronted to the irruption of a foreign modernity/ Vietnam, le moment moderniste (1905-1908): La réactivité d'une société face à l'intrusion d'une modernité exogène
Conference
Organised by Dr. Gilles de Gantes and Dr. Nguyen Phuong Ngoc
Contact: Gilles de Gantes
vietnamhistoire@yahoo.fr or
nguyenpngoc@yahoo.fr

3-6 May 2007

Tempe, USA

The Second International Conference on Lao Studies
Organized by the Faculty of Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University / Center for Lao Studies, San Francisco, CA
www.laostudies.org
www.asu.edu/asian

11 May 2007

Nijmegen, the Netherlands

Dynamics of Islamic Culture
Seminar
Organised by Dept. of Middle Eastern Language and Culture, Radboud University, Nijmegen
Contact: Nicolet van der Voort
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Miriam Gazzah
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Joas Wagemakers
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8-11 May 2007

Izmir, Turkey

1st International Congress of Eurasian Archaeology
Convenors: Dept. of Archaeology, Dokuz Eylul Univ. / Inst. of Anatolia and Eurasia / Inst. for Mongolian Altai Studies / Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
www.ficea2007.org

10-12 May 2007

Berlin, Germany

Megacities in Asia
Conference
Convenor: German Ass. for Asian Studies
post@asienkunde.de
www.asienkunde.de

15-17 May 2007

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Looking At Asia: Changes, Continuities and Consequences - 41st Annual Conference of Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast
Convenors: East-West Center / Univ. of Hawaii's School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies
Contact: ASPAC07@social.rr.com
www.mcel.pacificu.edu/aspac/aspac2007/index.html

22-27 May 2007

Beijing, China

EcoSummit 2007: Ecological Complexity and Sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities for 21st-Century's Ecology
Organized by: Elsevier in association with the Ecological Society of China
Contact: Sophie Peters
www.ecosummit2007.elsevier.com

23-25 May 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

Confucianism among World Religions: A Dialogue with Tu Weiming
IIAS workshop
Convenor: Prof. Yen-Zen Tsai, European Chair for Chinese Studies
Contact: Marloes Rozing
M.Rozing@let.leidenuniv.nl

23-25 May 2007

Ningbo, China

Crossing Cultural Boundaries
Organized by: The Institute of Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Nottingham, Ningbo
www.cultural-boundaries.com

24-27 May 2007

Bangkok, Thailand

2nd SSEASR Conference: Syncretism in South and Southeast Asia - Adoption and Adaptation
Organised by South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR)
Information: Dr Sophana Srichampa
Conf2007@sseasr.org or sseasr@gmail.com
Dr Amarjiva Lochan
secretariat@sseasr.org
www.sseasr.org

29 May 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

Sentences Expressing Three Arguments in Betsimisaraka Malagasy
IIAS Fellow Lecture by Dr Ritsuko KIKUSAWA,
contact: Marise van Amersfoort
m.van.amersfoort@let.leidenuniv.nl

29 May 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

How to say 'No' in Manchad: A Study of Negative Constructions
IIAS Lecture
by Prof. Suhnu Ram Sharma
contact: Marise van Amersfoort
m.van.amersfoort@let.leidenuniv.nl

May 31 - 2 June 2007

Warsaw, Poland

The EU-India: The problems of strategic partnership and its significance for transformations in the world system.
Workshop
Convenors: EADI/ Warsaw School of Economics
Contact: Victor Krasilshchikov Institute of World Economy and International Relations (Russian Academy of Sciences)
fvictor@mtu-net.ru or victor_ias2004@yahoo.co.in
Imre Levai Institute for Political Science (Hungarian Academy of Sciences)
levai@mtapti.hu or h13695lev@ella.hu

JUNE

1-3 June 2007

Akureyri, Iceland

Gendered Modernity and Vulnerabilities in Asia
Conference
Organized by IIAS
Contact: geirs@unak.is

12 June 2007

Leiden, the Netherlands

The Intelligence Factor in Diplomacy: The Failure of the 1941 US-Japan Negotiations and Advent of the Asia-Pacific War
IIAS Fellow Lecture by Dr Tosh Minohara
contact: Marise van Amersfoort
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1 September 1998 - 1 September 2000

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 **IIAS NEWSLETTER**
International Institute for Asian Studies

> Colophon

IIAS Newsletter #43
Spring 2007
ISSN 0929-8738

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*Comparative Intellectual Histories of
Early Modern Asia*
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Design

JB&A raster grafisch ontwerp, Delft

Printing

Wegener grafische groep, Apeldoorn

Circulation

26,000

Advertisements

Submit by: 1 May 2007

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