Photography’s Asian Circuits

Accounts of colonial photography in the Dutch East Indies focus on European photographers and exceptional figures like Kassian Cephas, the first (known) native Javanese photographer. Yet photography was not simply a ‘European’ technology transplanted from the European metropole to the Asian colony. Decentring European photographers from the history of photography in the Indies reveals the more circuitous - and Asian - routes by which photography travelled to and within the archipelago.

Karen Strassler

Chinese studio photographers represent an underappreciated thread of Indonesian photographic history. Europeans owned the earliest and most illustrious studios in the Indies (the first opened in 1857), and there were also large numbers of Japanese photographers in the Indies in the last decades of colonial rule. But by the early 20th century immigrant photographers from Canton had established a strong presence throughout Java and in other parts of the Dutch colony. These Chinese photographers often settled in smaller provincial towns as well as large cities, and served a less elite clientele than the better-known European studios. My oral history research with contemporary photographers in Java suggests that by the late 1920s, there were more studios under Chinese than European, Japanese, or other ethnic ownership.

In the Indies, portrait studios mirrored social hierarchies, with European-owned studios typically reserved for the highest levels of colonial society. The rest of the population who could afford photographs went to the more modestly-appointed and affordable Chinese ‘toekang potret’. ‘Toekang’ means craftsman, signalling that photography was a skilled kind of labour, but labour nonetheless. Indeed, most studio portraitists were recent immigrants of humble origins, a more skilled subset of the massive influx of immigrants from Southern China that occurred in the last decades of the 19th and first decades of the 20th century. Most photographers emigrated from Canton at a young age, sometimes apprenticing in Singapore before arriving in the Indies. Cantonese immigrants to the Indies were known more generally as craftsmen, often apprenticing in Singapore before arriving in the Indies. Cantonese immigrants to the Indies were known more generally as craftspeople, recognised especially for their expertise in making furniture. Since it was expensive to buy cameras, Cantonese photographers often deployed these...
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Building bridges to, from and with Asia

It goes without saying, networking is crucial for communication. Of course there is a business overtone and some direct motive, but there are strategic considerations too: it is good for your career, or it adds to your power and influence if you know many people in important positions - if you know the ‘right’ people. In the business world such motivations are understood by everybody and more or less accepted as necessary PR and a regular component of your work.

In academia we are catching on fast. Every year academics the world over travel to conferences in far flung places, attend receptions, participate in workshops, sit on learned committees, returning home with our pockets full with new business cards and contacts. For those of us trying to cut down on our global emissions, the internet and email is making building bridges and crossing borders easier than ever.

In this issue of IIAS Newsletter, we look at the consequences of people crossing borders and making connections with our theme on Transnational Marriage in Asia. The collection of articles hopes to offer new insights into marriage and migration, the impact on communities and the difficulties of building trust and genuine relationships in a cross-cultural environment.

Building trust and genuine relationships brings us back to networking, of course. Follow- ing the recent convention in Kuala Lumpur, ICAS has proved itself to be a prime example of an Asian Studies network that is successfully building bridges across regions, disciplines and subject areas. I am also pleased to report that IIAS has become an observer to an agreement founding the European Consortium for Asian Field Studies (ECAF). You can read more about this exciting initiative from the École française d’Extreme-Orient (EFEO) in the Institutional News pages of this issue. I also suggest you read the article ‘Forging Links Between Distant Lands’ (p 41) on the new addition to the Asian Studies fold – ASIS, The Icelandic Centre for Asian Studies. This surprising setting for the Asian Studies curriculum results from an explosion in trade, tourism and cultural exchanges between Iceland and Asian countries in recent years.

These are just a few examples of the bridges that are being built, from and with Asia and by carrying on this trend and investing time in each other, I am convinced Asian studies will reap the rewards.

Max Sparreboom
director

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 6,000.

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 promotes national and international cooperation in the field. The institute focuses on the humanities and social sciences and their interaction with other sciences.

IIAS Newsletter is published in Autumn and Spring and aims to inform IIAS and ICAS members about IIAS activities, the work of fellows, the Asian Studies fields, and to build bridges to, from and with Asia.

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.

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I
n today’s rapidly globalising world, marriage as a contract between two individuals based on love and commitment to each other is increasingly considered a norm. The degree of women’s control over their marital decisions and choice of mate, based on individual traits rather than the family’s socio-economic status, is seen as a measure of whether a society has embraced modernity. In reality, marriage involves many actors with complex decision-making processes and multiple considerations. In many Asian societies, being and staying married, for both men and women, is a social and family obligation and a criterion of social standing. Kin members, the state, marriage intermediaries (institutional or individual) and commercial sectors are all involved in decision-making. This is particularly the case of cross-border marriages, with the state deciding and controlling who is allowed to marry, whether spouses are allowed to enter or reside in the receiving societies, as well as their naturalisation and assimilation process.

As well as a rapidly increasing intra-Asian flow of marriage migration, there is a continued growth of Asian women marrying and migrating to the West and ‘in between’ diaspora communities. For the most part, it is women marrying (and ‘manning up’) and migrating to wealthier countries. The dominant view is that women enter cross-border marriages for economic gains, and generally in order to extricate themselves (and their families) from poverty.

Scholarship on cross-border marriages in Asia has been vigorous in recent years. Two terms indicating rather different conceptual emphases are used: cross-border and transnational marriage. These two terms are used interchangeably but often not defined clearly. To make it more confusing, both terms can be used to refer to cross-ethnic/cultural or same-cultural marriages. The term cross-border marriage emphasises geographical, national, racial, class and gender and cultural borders constructed in the hosting societies. These borders are mainly mediated by the states as well as other social actors in order to differentiate the ‘we’ and ‘the others’. This stream of scholarship concerns the impact of marriage migration on the host societies in terms of population pressure and social security, the political and social citizenship of marriage migrants and their integration and assimilation. Particular attention is paid to studying how to empower migrant wives in exploitative situations, such as domestic violence and commodified marriage brokerage. There is also a growing scholarship on the actors’ strategies of crossing these borders.

The term transnational marriage emphasises a transnational network and space created by the actors themselves, as well as the transactions of economic resources, symbols and political and cultural practices between the sending and receiving communities (see Panitee Suksomboon’s article on ‘remittances and social remittances: their impact on cross-cultural marriage and social transformation, p 63), and how these transactions influence local development, social practices and cultural norms in both sending and receiving societies. The term ‘transnationalism’ by no means suggests the end of the nation-state, instead, it focuses on how actors’ opportunities and choices are mediated by the state and other transnational actors. (Willis et al, 2004, see list of further reading). The articles in this theme issue follow this framework on transnationalism. They address diverse aspects of transnational marriages and challenge assumptions made earlier by scholarship, particularly the social actors other than the state.

Lenore Lyons and Michele Ford’s article tells of couples comprised of Singaporean men and Indonesian wives in the Riau Islands. The men choose to live in Singapore, however they do establish a base in the Riau Islands and make regular visits to their wives. On the one hand, their choice of residency is shaped by the restriction of immigration policies imposed by both the Singaporean and Indonesian governments. The immigration policies of both governments are tied up with labour policy and class status. The husbands of cross-border marriages have to prove to the state that they are of sufficient means to support their wives and thus will not become a welfare burden. On the other hand, the state’s intervention does not seem to matter much for the couples in their daily experiences. For them, the choice of residency is clearly a lifestyle choice. As well as benefiting from an immediate improvement in their economic situation, Indonesian wives also experience class mobility. Their marriage to Singaporean men allows them to move into the lower-middle class. Equally, the working-class Singaporean husbands who are marginalised in Singaporean society can enjoy a comfortable middle-class lifestyle in the Riau Islands. Lyons and Ford make the point that the wives do not wish to live in Singapore, a place they consider to be stressful and isolated.

Like Lyons and Ford’s article, Shuko Takeishi’s essay on transnational families of Pakistani men and Japanese women shows that aside from the economic motivation (job opportunities or wealth) and cultural practice (patrilocality), there are other factors affecting the transnational families’ decisions and choices of residency. In this case children’s education and the transmission of cultural and religious values. Takeishi studies the importance of religion in children’s education and socialisation. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) are chosen as the migration destination of Japanese wives and their children instead of the couple’s countries of origin. Pakistani men establish a transnational, kin-based network through trading vehicles between Japan, UAE and Pakistan. Japanese women favour a home in the UAE over Pakistan because of the modern lifestyle and less control from their husband’s family, yet they can still enjoy the social support of some kin members. The transnational kinship network therefore provides business opportunities, social support and helps maintain religious and cultural identities. Japanese women are active agents in this multiple migration process by choosing the destination, forming a support network among themselves, and developing educational strategies for their children who learn English and Japanese while being socialised in an Islamic environment.

Panitee Suksomboon’s article gives a nuanced picture of Thai women who marry Dutch men and live in the Netherlands. These women actively maintain social ties with their home communities, and by doing so, they create a transnational space. This transnational space is important for Thai women not only in terms of social support, but also because their class mobility only exists in their home community and not in the host society (as Riau Islands wives in Lyons and Ford’s study). To maintain their new-found social status Thai women transfer economic resources to their natal families either by economic remittance or via cultural practices such as gift-giving or paying for holidays for the whole family. They also disguise their economic and emotional hardships, creating an image of a happy life in Europe. This image, together with the socio-economic disparity between families with and without women marrying foreign men, fuels the desire of more women to marry abroad, thus triggering a chained migration. Suksomboon shows the linkage between the movement of people, transaction of economic resources as well as the cultural ideas and practices flowing in between this transnational space.

All three articles give pictures of marriage migrants as active agents in the migration process. Their choices challenge the assumption that marriage migrants marry either for economic gains, citizenship and welfare or lifestyle in an affluent society. However, as Lyons and Ford warn us, their choices are limited by the existing gender ideologies and their dependency on their husbands, which is strengthened by the economic disparity between the host and sending countries. While marriage migrants actively create a transnational space, not all of them can engage their husbands in it. While Singaporean and Pakistani men enjoy the advantages of the transnational space, Dutch men appear to have greater difficulty in appreciating the cultural practices of the wives’ community and do not enjoy the social status and respect that their wives ‘win’ for them.

Parents in many Asian societies are heavily involved in the marital decision and mate choice of their children. This is also the case in cross-border marriages. Hsing Miao Chi’s article addresses an understood aspect of transnational marriages in the current literature - the inter-generational relations. This generation of mothers-in-law in Taiwan is ‘caught in between’, in the sense that when they were young they were expected to full the role of obedient daughters-in-law, now that they are old they are expected to domestic work and care for young grandchildren when their Taiwanese daughters-in-law enter the job market. Previous research shows that one of the motivations for Taiwanese parents to choose a foreign wife (mainly from Southeast Asia) for their son is that Southeast Asian women are considered to have ‘traditional virtue’ of gender roles and to be more obedient. Despite such expectations, Chi’s study shows that the Taiwanese mothers-in-law of local marriages and those of cross-border marriages may have the same experiences. Having a foreign daughter-in-law does not necessarily increase the power of the mother-in-law. On the contrary, the unfamiliarity of the language and cultural practices of their foreign daughters-in-law makes them suspicious of daughters-in-law’s intentions and creates what Chi calls ‘emotional burden’.

A large number of intra-Asia cross-border marriages are mediated either by institutions or individual matchmakers within the actors’ kin and social network. These marriages are termed ‘commodified marriages’ and at times equated to trafficking. Michel Baas’s article problematises the dichotomy between ‘love’ and ‘arranged’ marriage in the context of India’s IT industry. IT professionals in Bangalore tend to choose their marriage partners within the industry, regardless of their caste. On the one hand this is due to the fact that the transnational business practice of the industry is based on meritocracy - the IT companies deliberately discourage employees from following the cultural practices of the caste system. On the other hand, migration experiences, both internal and international, uproot IT professionals from their social and kin networks and place them in an isolated working environment that demands long working hours and flexibility. The IT professionals are able to break away from the practices of arranged marriage within the same caste and choose their marriage partners with the families’ permission (what Baas calls ‘arranged love marriage’) due to the economic benefits and social prestige associated with the industry. However, rather than based on romantic love, their mate choice is a result of practical considerations such as maintaining the lifestyle the transnational business practice requires.

Further reading

Theme Introduction

Transnational marriage in Asia

Minkyu Lu
Guest Editor

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THEME
woodworking skills to construct their own cameras, using imported German lenses.

**Family Ties**

Networks of ethnic Chinese photography studios, linked by familial and regional ties, extended throughout the Indies. Cantonese immigrant photographers typically learned the trade from already established Chinese photographers (usually their own relatives). After a period of apprenticeship, a photographer would open his own studio, often with borrowed money and handed-down equipment. Once a photographer was well established, it was his turn to invite a sibling, a cousin, or someone from the same village in China to join him as an apprentice. This pattern appears to have been a broader Southeast Asia-wide phenomenon. Liu, for example, details the history of the Lee Brothers Studio in Singapore (1910-23), owned by a family that originated in Canton. Members of the Lee family ultimately operated more than a dozen studios in Southeast Asia, including eight in Singapore, one each in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh, and three in the Indies, in the cities of Batavia, Magelang, and Bandung (Liu 1995). Chinese studios were run as family businesses. Wives, children, and other relatives helped run the shop, and children usually took over the studios of their parents. As one elderly photographer told me, “Photography in those days was still a secret. You didn’t tell outsiders how you did it. Now everything’s out in the open, but in the past it was kept strictly within the family.”

Chung Hwa (China) Studio of Semarang, founded in 1922 by Lie Yie King, exemplifies the general pattern I found in my research in Java. Lie Yie King (b. 1900) was one of seven children (five males, two females) born to a poor farmer in Canton province, all of whom, with the exception of the eldest daughter, would eventually come to the Indies. In 1913, Lie Yie King left home for Singapore, where he found work in a studio owned by a Singaporean Chinese. In 1920, he set out on his own to Semarang, a bustling commercial port in Central Java, which he believed would offer greater opportunities for himself and his siblings at home. He worked for a short time in a studio there (possibly owned by a relative who had preceded him) before opening up his own Chung Hwa Studio.

Chung Hwa’s rapid success prompted Lie Yie King to invite other siblings to the Indies as well. Eventually, there would be at least eleven studios directly connected through family ties to Chung Hwa (five in Semarang and the rest in other parts of Java). For one of Lie Yie King’s siblings, though, arrival in the Indies proved a rude awakening. Lie Yap King, Lie Yie King’s older brother, had left Canton for Singapore in 1910, at the age of 14. In 1928, he heard his brother’s call to come to the Indies and left behind his comfortable job at a large Chinese-owned studio in Singapore. His son recalled, “My father was deeply disappointed when he came to Indonesia. He didn’t know it was so far behind Singapore. In Singapore everything was more advanced… all of father’s dreams were lost when he came to Indonesia.” Nevertheless, Lie Yap King’s Djawa Studio, which catered to a cross-section of the colonial elite - Dutch, Eurasians, Javanese, and Chinese - would also prove highly successful. Elegant portraits of Chinese opera stars and wealthy Singaporeans hang on the walls of his studio as testaments to his skill and cosmopolitanism.

By the late twenties, Chung Hwa had expanded into the business of distributing and importing photographic equipment and supplies; it would become one of the major purveyors of photographic equipment in Java in the late colonial and early postcolonial period. Lie Yie King’s knowledge of English (learned in Singapore) gained him access to British and American publications and allowed him to make direct contact with foreign companies. This enabled him to compete with the five Dutch importers of photographic goods that were based in Semarang at that time. But Lie Yie King also maintained business ties to the Chinese mainland, importing backdrops from Shanghai as well. While the majority of backdrops of the late colonial period placed people in vaguely ‘European’ scenes, some of these Chinese backdrops instead visualised Chinese locations. One, painted in the 1930s and still hanging in Chung Hwa’s former studio, shows a large pavilion with carved pillars looking out onto another Chinese-style pagoda. Another from the same era at Djawa Studio shows a garden and a lake with distinctive rock formations, referencing classical Chinese painting motifs. Such backdrops were probably popular among the large ethnic Chinese populations of the Indies, many of whom were experiencing a renewed sense of their ties to the mainland in response to the rise of Chinese nationalism.
From Colony to Nation

When the Japanese Occupation (1942-5) and the war of Independence (1945-6) forced an exodus of Japanese and European studio photographers from the Indies, it was left to ethnic Chinese photographers to bring studio photography into the Indonesian era. In the 1950s and 1960s, the numbers of Chinese-Indonesian owned studios, most tied by direct descent or apprentice-ship to those that had operated before Independence, increased dramatically. Translating colonial era conventions into new national idioms, ethnic Chinese photographers worked with Indonesian painters to develop a distinctively Indonesian style of portrait backdrop. These backdrops featured such iconic tropical images as volcanoes, beaches, rice fields and palm trees, often conjoined with modern architecture. Others evoked a more fantastical modernity rendered many of the specific skills passed down through generations of ethnic Chinese photographers obsolete.

In the late 1970s, the era of the teukang potret - photography as a craft - gave way to that of cuci cekak ("wash and print"). Cheap snapshot cameras and automatic developing and printing of colour film rendered many of the specific skills passed down through generations of ethnic Chinese photographers obsolete. Foreign companies began aggressively pursuing the Indonesian market by establishing their own exclusive distribution of supplies and equipment. Today Chung Hwa has all but shut down, and Djawa Studio (now called Java Studio) faces increasing competition from cheaper, faster, and more "modern" studios. Yet many owners of Indonesia's modern studios are the children and grandchildren, nephews and cousins, of colonial-era teukang potret.

To this day, studio photography in Indonesia has an ethnic Chinese face. But a great part of this debt continues to this day.

Notes:
3. The Malaysia branch also operated a photography supplies store called Lee and Sons. Another part of the family enterprise was Wah Heng & Co. in Singapore, which in the 1920s was an important supplier of photography equipment throughout Singapore, Malaysia and the Indies. Liu, Gretchen. 1995. From the Family Album: Portraits from the Lee Brothers Studio, Singapore 1910-1929: Singapore: Landmark Books. Berticevich also notes that "many of the photographers of the Southeast Asia region were ethnic Chinese" and many purchased their backdrops from Hong Kong (in particular from the Leung Studio) in the 1950s and 60s. Berticevich, George C. 1998. Photo Backdrops: The George C. Berticevich Collection. (Exhibition Catalogue). San Francisco: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, p. 17.
4. The following account is based on interviews with Lie Yie King’s son Lukito Darsono (who ran Chung Hwa after his father’s death in 1967), Sept. 1 and 2 1993, Semarang, and Lie Triung Dung, current owner of Java Studio (formerly Djawa Studio) and son of Lie Yap King, Sept. 2 1993.
5. Other studios opened by relatives of Lie Yie King were, in Semarang, Oy Lan, King Son (now a department store), King (now an electric goods store), Mi Fong (now a travel agency) and Foto Varia. In Parembay, Foto Pemuda, in Tjarenggung Foto Tjiu Sing. In Bandung: Foto Sinar (now closed). In Surabaya: Foto Varia, and Foto Tek Sin (closed). Apparently there was also another studio in Cirebon, but the name has since been forgotten.

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Photography in China: a global medium locally appropriated

When photography is discussed as a colonialist imaging practice, two obvious notions of seeing and being seen come into play. Seeing implies empowerment; being seen does not.

Oliver Moore

In China, one long-standing perception of unequal empowerment was fed by diplomacy. During the hostilities of the second Opium War (1856-1860) and the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) government voiced its strong resentment of foreign photographers' engagement on the battlefield. Following the Crimean war, China became the latest theatre for war, China became the latest theatre for photography, including "painting the visible image" (siezhen), which is still current in Japanese (shashin), but obsolete in China. The word has deep roots in Chinese painting theory, and this etymology shows how predominantly the lexicon of painting techniques featured in photography discourse. The new medium of photography was addressed with highly traditional concepts borrowed from the monographic (hand-drawn) skills of painting. Indeed, the popularisation of photography was in part due to a highly durable conception that photographers did only what painters had done and continued to do, both naming their art sizechen (fig. 4). Significantly too, material evidence shows that the photographic idiom was borrowed for older visual media, such as painting and woodblock printing. Figure 5 shows a lithographic portrait of Zou Boqi that merges a photographic image of the sitter's head with a few sketchy brush strokes for his body. Even the current Chinese term paizhao (to photograph) is usually overlooked as yet more evidence of a completely non-Western conception of photographic method. Pai, literally "to beat time" is an etymological fossil of the Westerntechnique.

"Our business’s photography was instructed by a Westerner. Our technique is highly skilled. As for using chemicals — when adding gold and silver solutions — we do not stint on production costs. As you will want to keep the image for ever, we add colours that are bright and that will not fade in the future. Our prices are fair. If you are interested, please visit: top of 3rd Street [Hankou Road]. Posted by Su Sanxing." (Shenbao 1873, 1.1)

What is striking in this advertisement is that it assumes a high degree of familiarity with photographic processes. Clearly, readers of the new newspaper already had acquired - or easily could acquire - a sound knowledge of photography’s technicalities. The studio’s commercial success and aesthetic expertise is authorised by Western instruction, but that authority relies equally on a high degree of technical knowledge on the part of the readers.
Within portraits, painted landscape also enthralled as the presence of a senior art tradition within the photographic image. An advertisement of 1889 is a first-class witness to both the cultural and visual importance of landscape within the category of portrait-making. A painter Qian Shouzhi, who hailed from Nanjing, "paints" portraits and "landscape portraits" (shanshui xiaozhao). The portraits cost one dollar, but a fee for the landscape background is charged separately. Qian also did landscape fans in various dimensions at respectively differing prices. Thus, all production in this studio is priced, except for the large landscapes which demand the most time and effort. These are clearly available in a range from which the client can choose, provided that he accepts that a scale of prices corresponds with several standards of craftsmanship.

In its simplest material terms, this is not using a new image technology to entirely supplant an old one. Instead, it exemplifies how one particular operator deployed photography as the means of reproducing manographic visual productions in photographic form, at the same time as asserting various levels of reproduction fees. The conservative brand of visual nostalgia that Mr. Qian presupposes on behalf of his clients may have been a basis for profit only so long as he supplied a crucial cultural justification: his origins in a Nanjing school of image practice. Qian Shouzhi’s advertisements were a phenomenon of the highest interest for studying the tensions between modernity and tradition. When modern imaging practices and their increasing industrialization was taking hold in Shanghai already threatened the future viability of traditional forms of visuality, a practitioner of those forms adopted the new technology to regain his economic advantage. Moreover he secured the social relevance of this strategy by exploiting the appeal of familiar recent and regional cultural standards - the location and notion of Nanjing, a byword for elegance and skill in all manner of lyrical and visual creativity. On the one hand, Qian Shouzhi seems to be a classic illustration of Weber’s maxim that the market declassifies culture, since through his own self-presentation in the field of image production he deliberately mixed genres and made crossing boundaries the commercial attraction of his art. On the other hand, he appears as a subtly attuned market operator who understood how socially valued genres confer prestige upon those who have mastered them, adopting a modern visual technology to reclassify his art in a new prevailing culture.

Studio advertisements reveal how strongly photographic discourse of this period maintained photography and painting as ontologically indistinct. This offered opportunities to prioritise photography with painting aesthetics, more often than not visible in contemporary photographs and in the images with which they might be reconfigured, for example, figure 3. One of the commonest Chinese prejudices against photographic portraiture was that excessive contrasts of light and shadow disfigured the sitter. In an advertisement that Yanghua Studio ran twice in 1896 the text defends the studio’s work against criticalism of photographs that were too dark or too light. The advertiser attempts to clinch the argument that these images are acceptably in tune with Chinese preferences because Yanghua had commissioned a redesign of its studio by a German expert in lighting. What was at stake, then, was not dispelling the cruel deceptions of light and dark - since photography is not an art adapted to that purpose - but the acceptance of a European technology in illumination on behalf of Chinese aesthetics.

Conclusions
Recent work on photography now challenges the primacy of photography’s European vision. Its contributors show how to understand the medium of photography as both globally disseminated and locally appropriated. Chinese practitioners and consumers acknowledged that they had borrowed a new technology of vision from the West. However, they added cultural value to visual productions by reference to traditional art forms and by indicating clearly the social conditions by which the maker and receiver of an image entered into contract. Photography was a cultural project that could not function without its proper discourse, of which advertising was simply one of several expressions. Such texts are an essential tool for the historical and critical contextualisation of visual images, especially since they orient the modern reader towards the cultural priorities of Shanghai society in the late-nineteenth century. Photography in Shanghai - and in China - was a social production that combined new aesthetic expressions of content and form, and stimulated new social habits. Advertisements were not just tell-tale symptoms of social change that had happened they were equally reports that set change in motion and visualised it. 

Further reading:
- Bajec, Quentin. 2001 L’image réelle: L’invention de la photographie. Paris
- Moore, Oliver "Zou Boqi (1819-1869), Map-maker and Photographer", in Kenneth Hammond ed., The Human Tradition in Modern China. Lanham, Maryland (forthcoming)
- Peterson, Nicholas and Christopher Pinney, eds. 2005. Photography’s Other Histories. Durham, NC.
Moving Pictures: postcards of colonial Korea

They seem like shards of flash-frozen reality compacted into two dimensions, putative proof of having been there and seen that. They move over various forms of distance and time, while carrying with them ephemeral yet precious moments or sights to be appreciated, and then possibly forgotten. Viewing postcards of colonial Korea as visual records, art objects, or propaganda has generated useful insights; at the same time, Hyung Gu Lynn suggests that postcards of colonial Korea encapsulate and embody the multiple notions of mobility that emerged in the early 20th century.

Hyung Gu Lynn

Picture postcards have been popular since the late 19th century, and many collectors’ associations have existed for decades; however, the academic study of postcards has only really begun to grow in earnest since the late 20th century. Moreover, when postcards have been treated as the primary subject of study, there have been several notable tendencies. The first is to treat postcards as straightforward forms of communication, stationery with visual decoration, in effect. Although limited by their exposure to pungent or accidental looks, postcards do in fact deliver information. The second is to approach postcards as simply a visual record of modern history. Indeed, postcards can be seen as a medium that captured everyday life, whether posed or natural, or as a visual record of images that appealed to consumers. The third is to focus on the aesthetic elements of the image at the expense of the larger political, social, and economic contexts surrounding the production, dissemination, and reception of postcards. Recent work in English on the art of the modern Japanese postcard, for example, emphasises the aesthetic of the postcard, a recovery of the medium for the field of art history. Postcards of colonial Korea might also be seen as examples of photographic art; some of the cards also used paintings by recognised Korean painters, or photographs from professional photography studios (fig. 5). The fourth tendency is the invocation of context, particularly in colonial or imperial settings, as the overriding explanatory lens that generated the images on the postcards. Notions of colonial hierarchy and Orientalist representations certainly infused the photographic postcards.

While these approaches greatly aid our understanding of the meanings and significance of picture postcards, postcards also occupied the intersection of new forms of printing, photography, tourism, postal distribution, and consumption. Therefore, instead of seeing postcards as strictly art, archive, or propaganda, I propose that they might also be treated as concentrated nodes for various myths or fantasies of mobility. The fantasy of travel was inherent in the picture postcard, which invited the reader to share the visual record of new forms of physical mobility. Development and diffusion of photography propagated the myth that realities and past pasts could be captured instantly, and transported home via the postal system. Also implicit was the sense of mobility through time, both past and present. The sender of the postcard was no longer present at the site portrayed on the postcard, or wherever they had purchased the card, by the time it reached the receiver. In this sense, the postcard allowed for a journey into the afterlife of the recent past. At the same time, postcards could also provide the basis for expectations of the future. When or if the recipient of the postcard travelled to the same destination, the expectation would be that the destination should look like the image on the postcard. In fuelling anticipation, expectation, and imagination, postcards were – in a figurative sense – conduits for mobility into the future.

The material postcard

In material terms, postcards began to gain widespread popularity in Japan, as in most of the world, between 1900 and 1905. The government was the sole issuer of postcards in Japan from 1870 to 1900, after which the post office allowed private production and use of postcards. The medium skyrocketed in popularity during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Demand for updates and images from the war, coupled with developments in photography, printing, and the postal system, resulted in a postcard frenzy, with people lining up and cards justify for the latest prints.

The Korean Agriculture and Commerce Department produced the first known postcard in Korea in 1900, while the first Korean picture postcard followed in 1901. Most of the early postcards had an address side and a blank side without any images. Although Japanese, French, and other European companies produced photographic postcards depicting Korea in the 1900s, based on the numbers of extant cards in various collections, Japanese firms appear to have dominated the market especially after 1905, when the Japanese Protectorate of Korea was established.

During the colonial period (1910-1945), postcards of Korea were printed by various Japanese organisations that were grouped into four categories: government agencies, such as the Japanese Ministry of Communication, the Government General of Korea (in particular, the Railway Bureau), and the Pusan Municipal Government; private printing firms, such as Keijö Hinode Shōkō (the largest producer of postcards), and Taishō Shoshin Kōgo (headquartered in Wakayama); individual photography studios, such as Susan Kobayashi Photographic Studios; and smaller bookstore and firms.

Despite the array of different producers, the vast bulk of the postcards came in one standard size, which was 14.2 cm x 9.1 cm. There were some variations on the size, which were limited for the most part to specific periods. For example, panoramic cards that had two or more folds were produced up to the early-1920s, and stereoscopic postcards, ideally viewed with three-dimensional glasses, were made until around 1910.

Periodic postcards of colonial Korea in more detail is possible since all the producers followed the regulations for postcards issued by the Japanese Ministry of Communication. From 1900 to 1907, text had to be written on the image itself, since no writing was allowed on the back. Thus, postcards with writing on the photographic image are from this early period. Postcards from the second period, from 1907 to 1918, had one-third of the back reserved for writing, with the remainder left for the address (fig. 6). On the space was enlarged to around half. After 1933, the “ga” in “Yūhin hagaki” (Post cards) that was printed on the right edge changed from “ka” to “ga”, providing another method for dating postcards.

In addition to dates from postal regulation and specific historical events, changes in the urban landscape also help to date postcards. For example, the new Government General of Korea’s headquarters were completed in 1936 (fig. 4), sparking a spate of new postcards that captured it from an array of angles. Some cards were issued to commemorate specific anniversaries. For example, the tenth anniversary of Japanese colonisation of Korea in 1920, seen here (fig. 5), features portraits of Governor Saibō Makoto on the left and Vice Governor Mizuno Rentarō on the right. Furthermore, changes in specific buildings and squares, types of streetlights and tramcars, and other noticeable changes in landscapes provide specific hints about when the original photograph was taken.

The process of dating is complicated somewhat by the practice of using the same photograph in a multitude of variations. One of the more common changes was to take a black and white image, and hand-colour the plate. Another method postcard makers used to create variety was to take the photographic image and set it against a different background, or juxtapose it with another image on the same card. Printing a reversed image, or printing the same image with a different monochromatic tint, were other methods employed by postcard producers.

Although no detailed statistics record the total production and sales of postcards in colonial Korea, there are fragmentary accounts that indicate that postcards were very popular. For example, by the mid-1920s, demand was sufficient enough for Keijō Hinode Shōkō to operate four printing facilities in Keijō, colonial-era Seoul. According to one 1929 account, an estimated 10,000 cards a day were sold.

The majority of the extant postcards of colonial Korea that I have seen are housed in university libraries and research centres, museums, used bookstores, and private collections. The vast majority of these are unposted, which may reflect a bias in collecting. Many used postcards presumably remain in the possession of the recipient, rather than in collections sold to collectors, museums, and academic institutions. However, the preponderance of unused cards suggests that picture postcards were not purchased solely as stationery.
Asia’s Colonial Photographies

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to be used for communication, but also purchased as visual tokens, souvenirs that could be collected.

The antinomous postcard

In addition to the material outlines and the visions of mobility briefly discussed above, picture postcards also helped reinforce a discourse of backwardness and progress, often juxtaposing ‘quaint’ or ‘traditional’ Korean customs with the more modern forms of space and production that were introduced, according to the images, through colonial rule. Through this narrative frame, the implicit movement of Japan into modernity was often contrasted with depictions of the relative stasis of Korean society.

This trope was reflected in the various types of images mounted on the postcards – modern urban spaces introduced by the Japanese colonial state, contrasted with rural ‘Korean’ villages; the ubiquitous images of ancient historical sites, natural landmarks, and most commonly, people in ‘traditional’ settings, usually depicting subjects in ‘traditional’ dress, ceremonies, markets, and play. For example, figure 2 shows an envelope for a set of postcards that is based on this theme.

At the same time, by collapsing the sense of space and reinforcing a myth of mobility, colonial postcards contributed both to the amplification of distance and the reinforcement of the boundaries of the Japanese colonial empire. On the one hand, colonial Korea was closer (to the Japanese metropole) than before, as implied by the postcards, by ship, rail, and post, and other material markers of modernity; yet on the other, the colony was liberally populated with people who were constructed as distant and different. Along with various other media, postcards thus helped portray the colony as a place that was desirable because of its distance, its picture postcard exoticism.

Images of Korean women doing laundry (fig. 6) and kisaeng (female entertainers) seemed to have held a mesmerising allure for postcard producers and consumers alike. Paralleling the Japanese “bijin-ga” or “beauties” postcards, the postcards of the kisaeng in particular catered to the ocular obsessions of Japanese male (and to some extent Korean male) viewers. This of course is not to suggest that all travellers to Korea expected the country to be populated with pliant and obliging kisaeng. Nevertheless, the power of the postcard images to guide future expectations and transport the viewer into a future of one’s own imagining should not be underestimated.

Digital photographs sent as attachments and web-based photograph albums may eventually render the postcard obsolete. However, in looking at the postcards of colonial Korea, we are reminded that whether they were wending their way through the labyrinths of the international postal system, eliciting aesthetic responses in viewers, triggering a cascade of memories in recipients, or forming a template for future expectations for travellers-to-be, picture postcards were and remain, in many senses of the word, moving.

For Further Reading:

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Fig 3: paintings by leading artist of the colonial period, Yi In-Sŏng

Fig 4: Completion of the Government General of Korea’s headquarters in 1926 sparked a spate of new postcards.

Fig 5: postcard commemorating 10th anniversary of Japanese colonization of Korea.

Fig 6: Postcard depicting Korean women doing laundry.

Fig 7: Kisaeng with Kayagum (a koto-like musical instrument). Korean female entertainers were popular subjects for postcards.
Photography was first introduced to India in 1840, only a year after the announcements of the daguerreotype and calotype processes in France and England. The fragility of this early material, the uniqueness of the daguerreotype and the harshness of the Indian climate mean that photographs from this time are scarce, leaving us with a fragmented picture of the development of the medium.

Photography in India

Sophie Gordon

Initially, commercial studios were established in cities such as Calcutta, where an ever-increasing clientele could be relied upon to keep up a demand for portraits. Some amateurs also brought cameras to India; some of the earliest surviving photographs from India are in a family album, now in the Getty Museum, containing views taken in Nainital, Bareilly and Kanpur during the mid-1840s (Fig.1). Around the same time, the French daguerreotypist Jules Itier (1802-77) passed through India, whilst engaged in a treaty negotiation with China. A handful of his views of South India still survive today in a number of collections. The extremely small amount of material that has survived from the 1840s must represent only a fraction of the photographic activity that took place.

The Colonial Contribution

This lack of material from the 1840s makes the story relatively straightforward to tell in its early years. After 1850, with the use of the camera spreading across the subcontinent, things get a little more complicated. The number and type of photographers at work increases dramatically within the space of a few years. Their output ranges from studio portraits to ethnographic documentation, from picturesque landscapes to documentary records of architecture, works of art and the natural history of India. The history of photography in India has, over the last quarter of a century, been told largely from the perspective of a handful of colonial collections, in particular the India Office Collection, now housed at the British Library in London. Publications by British Library curators, including Ray Desmond’s Victorian India in Focus (London, 1982) and John Falconer’s A Shifting Nucleus: Photography in India 1850-1900 (London, 1993), have been influential in establishing significant photographers and events, while emphasising the importance of British documentary work. This colonial dominance is inevitable, for although the photographs in the India Office Collection combine to create an extraordinary collection of around 350,000 items containing the work of hundreds of photographers, it represents what successive colonial administrators believed to be worth collecting and preserving, rather than being truly representative of photography in India. In particular the collection contains the photographs amassed by the Archaeological Survey of India, the official body set up by the British administration in 1870 to identify and preserve India’s architectural and archaeological heritage. This collection alone consists of 57,781 prints, according to the online catalogue (Fig.3).

The development of ‘photography in India’ as a field of research has taken place within the wider context of the growth of the history of photography as a subject of serious investigation. This is evident through the creation of separate photography departments in museums, libraries and archives (the Museum of Modern Art in New York established a photography department relatively early in 1940, but many departments in European institutions were not created until the late 1960s and early 1970s) and, hand-in-hand with this, the development of a commercial market for buying and selling photographs. With museums focusing on the aesthetic qualities of photography at the expense of its social history and meaning, the work of a handful of photographers was identified and promoted at the expense of a greater understanding of the medium. From India, both Linnanmus Troup (1822-1902) and Dr John Murray (1809-1858) are frequently cited as the most accomplished masters of the art, and to a lesser extent, Samuel Bourne (1834-1912). The work of these British photographers fits the European paradigm for successful, aesthetically-pleasing compositions and the landscapes of Bourne in particular are composed according to the demands of the Picturesque ideal. (Figs 3 & 4)

There is some tension within the field between scholars from South Asian departments who concentrate exclusively on Indian photography within an Indian context but who know little about the broader history of photography, and those who work regularly with a wider range of photographic images, such as curators and photography dealers, but who generally know little about India. This debate can be boiled down to ‘context versus aesthetics’ and at present it shows no signs of abating. Some, however, have successfully engaged with different approaches and aspects of the work. Maria Antonella Pelizzari’s publication 'Traces of India: Photography, Architecture and the Politics of Representation, 1850-1920' (Montreal, 2004) contains contributions from a variety of scholars of different backgrounds, discussing a range of meanings and interpretations for architectural photography.

The Private Collector

The growth of the market and the role of the private collector have done much to stimulate the field into broadening and embracing new avenues for research. Each individual collector inevitably brings a unique set of criteria for making acquisitions. Indian collectors in particular come with ideas that differ greatly, in the most positive way, from those of Western museums. This usually ranges between a desire to preserve India’s photographs because of the richness and beauty of the medium, to ensuring that the information contained within the images such as records of events and fast-disappearing buildings is not only saved but made available and used in the many conservation projects now being established in India. The Alkazi Collection, for example, has embraced many of these approaches. The collection acquires the acknowledg-
edged masters of photography as well as attempting to expand this category through promoting the work of other accomplished artists such as John Edward Sach (1834-1883). It is also creating an archive of work that represents local traditions and practices, for example, painted photographs, collage and montage work, and material from studios working for the independent princely states as well as for middle-
class Indian families. Scholars such as Christopher Pinney and Malavika Karlekar have recently worked on this type of material, presenting new lines of thought and opening up new and unexplored collections, in a field that has, since the 1990s, been in danger of stagnating under Foucauldian approaches to (colonial) discourse and power. (Fig. 3)

Karlekar’s work has also broken the artificial chronological boundaries that have arisen in the field, wherein early photography up to c. 1901 is considered the domain of the historian, early 20th century photography that of the anthropologist, and photography after 1947 belongs to the modern art world. These categories, coming from equally artificial timeframes imposed in Western art history and other humanities subjects, do not take into account local practices. This has resulted in large quantities of material, particularly from the early to mid-20th century, being ignored. For example, although photographic journals from the 19th century have been fully examined, the journals of the Photographic Society of India that were published in the 1920s are rarely referenced. Work that is typically reproduced and discussed in the journals was stylistically heavily influenced by Pictorialism - consciously drawing on European backdrop", European art photographs by leading British photographers and were exhibited in exhibitions and were circulated at photographic society meetings. Extracts from several European photographic journals were published in India, where everything to everything from reviews of the latest exhibitions to how to compose the best landscape views was discussed. The photographic societies - the first being established in 1854 in Bombay, followed by societies - in 1856 in Calcutta and Madras - were central in the early decades to establishing information networks through their meetings and journals and encouraging an exchange of queries and responses from the members.

Today in India, contemporary photographic practice faces the same dilemmas as it does anywhere else in the world. With the recent re-branding of photography at this level is Vivan Sundaram (b. 1955), who employs photographic essays by Umrao Singh (1850-1954) and manipulates them digitally to incorporate further images of Umrao’s daughter, Amrita Shergil - one of India’s foremost twentieth century painters. Sundaram is Amrita’s nephew. (main image)

What is remarkable about Sundaram’s series of photographs titled Re-take of Amrita (2001-4) is that, while sometimes beautiful and visual photography as well as with critics and the public, over issues concerning truth, identity and the nature of the medium. These concerns were central to debates over photography in the 1850s and remain so today. 

Suggested further reading
- Gordon, Sophie. 2004 Uncovering India: Studies of Nineteenth-Century Indian Photography. History of Photography 28:2, 180-190

www.bl.uk
www.sepia.org

Notes
1 Exhibition held at Sepia International Inc., New York, 22 November 2011 - 11 January 2012
2 Exhibition held at Sepia International Inc., New York, 10 May 12 July 2005.

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A Dutchman’s stereoscopic views of colonial Vietnam

Jan George Mulder, a salesman from Haarlem, left a legacy of over 2000 stereo photographs, more than half originating from his time in French colonial Indochina. Yet not one of them contains a caption or even a hint about the contents. What’s more, Mulder’s life in Vietnam remains something of a mystery. John Kleinen immersed himself in this unique collection, determined to learn more about the images and the man behind them.

Mulder’s photographs - stereoscopic views - were produced using a technology that had lost its once exalted position. These views were made by mounting two photographs side-by-side. They appear three-dimensional when viewed through a stereoscope. They enjoyed tremendous popularity but around the time Mulder was photographing, the picture postcard was taking over as the preferred format of photographic representation. Nevertheless, Mulder chose to make stereoscopic views and his camera, a robust Gaumont Stéréoscopio, and a stereoscope have survived together with the glass plates. Mulder’s choice of equipment is surprising given that he was from a family of photographers and would have had extensive knowledge about the latest developments in photography. A visit to the World Exhibition in Paris in 1900 probably induced him to buy the expensive Stéréospido, which was aggressively promoted by Gaumont.

Haiphong

The gate to the Red River delta was the port of Hai Phong, which means ‘the Guardian of the Sea’. Traditionally, a lucrative trade in silk, tea and textiles extended as far as Yunnan in southern China. Haiphong soon became home to a small French enclave and gradually grew to include a number of villages along the main river, the Cua Cam. This Quartier Indigène was preceded by a harbour area where small storage facilities and a customs house were built. In 1884, the former French réduit and mayor of Hanoi, Raoul Bonnal, built a European quarter. In 1904, the year that J.G. Mulder arrived, the city of Haiphong resembled a building site, with a newly erected hospital for the French Navy and local government staff, and other major projects underway. The municipality was represented by a tribunal, a Chamber of Commerce and a local branch of the Banque de l’Indochine. The population numbered about 18,000 Vietnamese and 6000 Chinese. A minority of about 1000 Europeans, mainly French men and a few women, occupied the European quarter. Mulder’s compatriot, Hendrik Muller, described the town in his Azul geopictüel (Asia Mirrorred, 1906) as having no quayside yet, and “seen from the river it looks unimportant, but as soon as one enters, it is very hospitable. Along the excellent, paved roads, lined with small trees and pavements, are tall, beautiful houses built of brick and plastered in French style”. Jan George Mulder had his office along the busy Rue Paul Bert, in a building Speidel & Co shared with a branch of the British Chartered Bank. He soon moved to a private house at the corner of the Canal Bannal and the Rue de Cherbourg. Using his Stéréospido, Mulder created a visual memory for his relations in the Netherlands. His record of Haiphong includes the Chinese quarter, the streets near his house, the port area and the surrounding countryside, including the embryonic beach resort of Do Son. He also photographed the storage area located at the entrance to the harbour, which contained lamp oil tins and large oil tanks inscribed with the company names APC and Speidel & Co.

Mulder’s pictures of himself seated or travelling with Chinese traders are fascinating. These comedores distributed the lamp oil throughout the Delta. One of them, a Vietnamese entrepreneur who had entered the maritime trade, was reputedly one of the four wealthiest people in Vietnam. An almost visible ‘colour line’ existed in Haiphong. This was institutionalised in the colonial grid of the town planning, with separate quarters for Vietnamese, Chinese and Europeans. The Chinese were treated as foreign nationals or ‘Eastern foreigners’. Part of an international link between the port of Hong Kong and Haiphong, their presence was tolerated as long as it benefited French business.

The colonial city, which still had a number of empty spaces at the time Mulder lived there, resembled a quiet, slumbering French provincial town. The best-known locations were the Hôtel du Commerce, a meeting place for bachelors and European prostitutes, and the Hôtel de Marseille, near Speidel’s office. Though tourism was not yet developed, the hotels served those travellers who used Haiphong as a stop-over before boarding ships to destinations in Asia or Europe. Mulder’s own travels remained confined to an occasional visit to Hanoi and once to An Khor Wat. Boats were the primary method of transport, and Mulder used the river during his few trips to Hanoi, where he photographed the Pont Doumer, the busy waterfront and the Hoan Kiem Lake.

Judging from his images, Mulder was most interested in the Vietnamese countryside where he visited communal houses, temples and pagodas, and where he went duck hunting. He favoured outings to the Bay of Ha Long and the beach at Do Son (24 kilometres from Haiphong). This fishing village was originally a centre for blue water fishing. Soon it would serve as the ‘Deauville of Haiphong’. About 3000 workers readied the dirt road to Do Son for cars. A local transport entrepreneur, A. Bertrand, promoted his private taxi service, while the city council designed a tramway, which was completed after Mulder had left the country. Mulder used Bertrand’s taxi service extensively, but more colourful was a local service of human porters who carried European tourists and rich Vietnamese around in bamboo sedans.

The so-called Les Porteurs de Do Son attracted the attention of Mulder’s lens.
as well as those of local postcard producers, who also distributed prints ofiously clad fishermen. The Porteuses looked like singers of popular chansons (quân ho or ca tréo) and were dressed in brightly coloured gauze tunics in rich purples and deep reds with multi-coloured ribbons and flattened round hats. The atmosphere of the photographs evokes a Vietnamese version of Manet’s Le Déjeuner sur l’Herbe.

Life in the Tropics
Haiphong’s community of non-French Europeans was small. At the turn of the century, the city counted just 100 ‘aliens’. Mulder’s colleagues were mainly Germans working for Speidel & Co. Mulder was a bachelor but a Vietnamese housekeeper ran his household, and posed proudly for the camera on the house’s doorstep. His long-tailed silk robe and silver hanger indicate her important household position. The stereoscopic views give only a superficial glimpse of colonial life. The names of the many men and women that figure in these photographs are unknown. But there is indeed a sense that ‘tropical time’ - slower than European time - ticked languidly away in the images. The degree of slowness is embodied in the relaxed way these people posed for the camera in white suits and their festive outfits, while they are drinking, eating or enjoying an activity, the precise nature of which is unclear to the viewer. The extended act of remembrance is taken over by nostalgia.

Mulder showed a clear interest in his native personnel, represented by the asam, seated next to a European baby, his housekeeper and a number of Vietnamese domestic staff. Their Tonkinese clothes signify that they were part of a rich European household. Outside, there is the gardener, and in front of the gate the cyclo driver. They belonged to the underclass, pejoratively called uh-aue (humpkin or peasant).

When Mulder returned home from Haiphong in 1908, he left a place where the modern history of Vietnam had started to take shape. In that year, the first of a series of nationalistic activities started a string of anti-colonialist revolts. The backdrop was provided by the emerging modernisation of Vietnamese culture and influenced by the stunning Japanese victory over Russia in May 1905. Patriotistic scholars organised schools free of colonial supervision, such as the Free School of Tonkin (Đồng Kinh Nghia Thuc), and organised cooperatives and places of work where a new generation of Vietnamese could be prepared for a peaceful independence. The colonial administration’s tolerance for the modernisation movement was short lived and promptly vanished after uprisings in central Vietnam and attempts to poison the garrison of Hanoi in June 1908. Mulder, who must have witnessed or at least known about these events, returned to Europe and married. He had earned a fortune at Speidel’s firm, which enabled him to emigrate to the US in 1910. He founded a farming community in Virginia inspired by the Dutch socialist, writer and psychiatrist Frederik van Eeden, who, inspired by Henry David Thoreau’s Walden, established a communal cooperative in Bussum, North Holland. This idea, similar to one adopted by reformist scholars in Vietnam, was that residents would be self-sufficient, sharing everything in common. Like Van Eeden’s experiments and the ill-fated cooperatives of the Vietnamese, Mulder’s plans failed. After his return to the Netherlands, he invested in Imperial Russian Railways bonds and was eventually left bankrupt. He died in 1942. His memories embodied in his photographs are presumed here, but we cannot know with certainty what he perceived or projected.

As Roland Barthes has said, “whether or not it is triggered, it is an addition: it is what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there”. Not being remembered at all: that is the fate of most of the people in Mulder’s images: the memorialisation of Mulder’s Haiphong years is not a way of revisiting the past, but facing a future in which that very past is forgotten.

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Photographic Encounters in the Philippines, 1898 - 1910

At the end of the Spanish-American War, Spain ceded the Philippine Islands to the United States. The U.S. engaged in a three-year war against the Filipinos, who fought fiercely for their independence, and in 1902 it took possession of a country half a world away.

From photographs published in U.S. government surveys, anti-imperialist literature, newspapers, travel memoirs, and textbooks, a picture of the Philippines at the end of the 19th century began to emerge. Not a single view but a multiplicity of narratives. These images, assembled from varied contexts, reveal diverse perspectives of the Filipino-American encounter that took place over 100 years ago.

The early period of American-Filipino relations remains a relatively lost chapter in world history. "The undercurrents of imperialism and its consequences - identity and alienation, redemption and guilt, loyalty and betrayal," notes professor Terry Oggel, "[are] conflicts exacerbated by suppression, not only in the United States but in the Philippines, too." Recent scholarship, including Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899-1999, edited by Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia, and White Love and Other Events in Filipino History by Vicente Rafael, represent notable efforts to retrace and repossess this history.

The insightful Displaying Filipinos by Benito M. Vergara, Jr. explores, in particular, photography and its use in support of an imperial ideology. The objectifying, de-humanising quality of thousands upon thousands of mug-shot portraits of Filipinos taken in the early 1900s under the auspices of the U.S. Bureau of Science, for example, survive as jarring reminders of the colonial enterprise in which they were created. From these highly publicised pictures, Americans began to form an impression of the Philippines and develop a consciousness of the role of the U.S. as an occupying power.

At that time, despite the strident imperial message, a raging public debate and wide-ranging views concerning the war and subsequent American occupation were also being expressed in words and pictures. The Philippine-American War, which began in 1898, was a brutal guerilla conflict that lasted over three years and resulted in over 6,000 U.S. casualties and the deaths of over 220,000 Filipino soldiers and civilians. At the time, opponents of U.S. military action included not only Filipinos, but also members of the American Anti-Imperialist League, African-Americans sympathetic to the cause of Filipino independence, and European observers. Photographs and political cartoons depicting the conflict figured in pro- and anti-war literature, newspapers, textbooks, and even fictional accounts that portrayed the campaign variously as a heroic military duty or a needless carnage.

Benevolent assimilation
President McKinley's doctrine of 'benevolent assimilation' - 'to educate the Filipinos, and uplift them and civilize and Christianize them' - provided the moral justification for the U.S.'s eventual annexation of the country. The first task, explained Howard Taft, then director of the Philippine Commission, would entail gathering data of the 'social and industrial conditions of the people, as the basis for intelligent legislative action.' Dean Worcester, Secretary of the Interior for the Philippines from 1901 to 1903, took nearly 5,000 photographs (with the assistance of photographers and other anthropologists) on surveys sponsored by the U.S. Bureau
of Science. A professor of zoology at the University of Michigan, Worcester was well versed in the process of scientific data gathering. In makeshift field studios, he photographed and classified hundreds of unnamed Filipinos according to evolutionary ideas of the day, ranking them on a hierarchical scale from savage to civilized.

Series of before-and-after shots of Filipinos transformed ‘from their nakedness and headhunting into constabulary uniforms and baseball’ served as documentary proof of ‘successful’ American reforms. Worcester’s photographs and anthropological findings, which appeared in the extensive publications of the Philippine Commission and in histories written by Worcester, played a persuasive role in supporting U.S. policies ranging from economic development to the question of Filipino independence.

Personal accounts and political views
In addition to government-sponsored venues, an extensive body of literature about the islands was being produced. Among these accounts, which were often illustrated with photographs, were political pieces, travel memoirs, as well as novels written by Western travellers, teachers, missionaries, and diplomats and their wives. Often illustrated with photographs, each publication expressed its own nuanced view of American imperialism.

Images in personal albums of U.S. administrators also fill out the picture of early American occupation by revealing a rare and intimate view into colonial life experienced by government officials and their families living on the islands.

Highly stylised images, taken in elaborate studios in Manila, reveal the manner in which the Filipino elite chose to represent themselves.

In recent years, a number of contemporary Filipino artists have returned to images created during the American occupation. Through a variety of inventive approaches, they have appropriated historic photographs into their work as a means of understanding the past and exploring their national identity. Historic photographs continue to illuminate the broader complexities of the American-Filipino relationship, and examination of the varied uses of the medium over time reveal the dynamic and shifting intersection of anthropology, politics and public perception.

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Invaders and Resisters, acrylic on paper, 1980, by Ben Cabrera. Excavating white ash

Snapshots of polo games, country club galas, Filipino servants, and children with Filipino nannies offer a striking contrast to the stark government photographic records. Another view of the Filipinos emerges in photographs of the intellectual and professional class, many of whom were prominent Philippine civic and business leaders. These

personal accounts and political views
In addition to government-sponsored
Postcards from the Edge of Empire: Images and Messages from French Indochina

Postcards from French colonies are sold today as nostalgic evocations of a vanished world. The erotic, opium-infused images of Indochina have been particularly popular since the elegant fiction of exotic utopia they depict was carefully constructed to justify the colonial enterprise.

Janet Meskies

Colonial postcards are often published and critiqued for their racist and propagandistic content, but the ethno-cultural value of the postcard has been neglected, as has the content of the messages printed on the other side. Including messages in the analysis amplifies the critique of the image, and offers an official guide to interpreting the image, but the scribbled message is more personal, telling the reader “this is what you should think when you look at this card”. It simulates, across a great separation of time and place, the experience of gazing together at the same image, and offers us data to historicise the reception of these cards in a colonial context. The signatures on many cards are illegible but the addresses are not, so the best analytic angle open to us is a “reception study” – looking at the cards from the perspective of the readers, consumers of the colonial spectacle and listeners to distant confessions. This focus offers us a more nuanced and complex perspective on how postcards are gendered, as they move from predominantly male senders in Indochina (7% of those in the Getty collection) to predominantly female addresses (39% of those whose addressee could be gendered).

Commentators of the period referred to postcard collecting as a ‘feminine vice’ (Naomi Schor 1994: 262), and women were major donors of museum collections and published announcements in exchange journals (Mathur 1959: 112). The postcard was “the very example of the feminine collectible” (Schor 1994: 262), but the activity of sending cards encompassed both genders and many different subject positions in colonial society, from simple soldiers and housewives to elite commanders and ladies of leisure. Opening family albums which display the images but conceal the messages provides the scholar with the transgressive thrill of lifting them out of their plastic slots and indulging in the guilty pleasure of reading someone else’s mail.

The colonial postcard, which had its heyday in the first two decades of the 20th century, came to represent both the technological triumphs of western photography (printing and mass production) and the political triumphs of European conquest and expansion. Postcards were the public emblems of colonial travel, and the preferred form of correspondence for overseas residents of all classes. Printed both as part of imperial propaganda efforts (MacKenzie 1984) and church-based missionary societies (Mathur 1966), their primary use was in personal communication. Their messages provide us with a diaristic form of note-jotting, reflecting on the daily grind, the experiences of feeling lost or disoriented, and most interestingly – the projection of inner feelings onto exotic others, the use of visual images as foil for comments both sardonic and occasionally sincere.

The First French postcards were printed in 1873, and in French Indochina the first series of cards was published in 1901 by François-Henri Schneider and Raphael Moreau of Hanoi (Franchini and Ghesquire 2001: 220). Within a year, they had published 1000 cards, and soon a competition developed with Pierre Dieulafé, a retired military officer in Tonkin, who issued more than 5000 postcards from 1903 to 1935 (Vincent 1997). The photographer is not always known or acknowledged on the cards, but the Saigon firms of August Nicalier and later Salin-Vidal published many early photographs by Emile Gsell (Franchini and Ghesquire 2001: 224). Several Chinese photographers (Tong Sing, Pun-Lun, Yu Cong) and one Vietnamese (Phan Chau Trinh, an exiled nationalist) were well known, although their photographs were sometimes rejected from official colonial publications (Franchini and Ghesquire 2001: 241).

The French community in Indochina was tiny, estimated at between 25,000 and 43,000 at its peak in 1940, which was roughly 0.2 percent of the total population. At the turn of the century, almost all French citizens in Indochina were born in France, and the vast majority expected to return there, so they tended to see themselves as exiles rather than settlers. While Indochina was far from France both spatially and conceptually, its elaborate temples and exotic culture made it “the pearl of the Extreme Orient” (a rival to British India’s “jewel in the crown”), and it was promoted as the most civilised, as well as the most profitable, of the colonies.
The postcard writers had a variety of concerns that might appeal to their friends and family back home. They often commented on the beauty of the countryside, local festivities, and the weather. While they commented on their own reflections, they also expressed a desire to spend the rest of their lives in what seemed a remote out-of-the-way place. Few of the writers of the belle époque expressed a desire to spend the rest of their lives in what seemed a remote out-of-the-way place. Few of the writers of the belle époque expressed a desire to spend the rest of their lives in what seemed a remote out-of-the-way place.}

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Chinese performing arts: from communist to globalised kitsch

While Chinese authorities closely monitor artists, artistic venues and performances, they give free rein to commercial culture as long as stability, prosperity and consumerism are sustained. The result, given China’s blistering urban economic growth, is that commercial pressure, more than government restriction, determines the conditions of cultural production and export. This has led to a kind of mass production of the art and culture the state approves of and a snuffing out of what it does not. This is how Chinese communist kitsch has transformed into a kitsch of globalised capitalism.

The Chinese economic boom is what interests most foreign observers, politicians and investors. They know much less about shifts in cultural production and distribution, though state control over freedom of expression is the most frequently discussed topic. Google, for example, has been criticised by its users for bowing to China’s restrictions on links to ‘sensitive’ websites, while last year’s ban on the performance of the Chinese-language version of The Vagina Monologues in Shanghai struck some as an intervention of old-fashioned prudishness. Such incidents attract international attention, but they also trivialise the complex circumstances and changes in cultural policy that remain hidden from public scrutiny.

A tsunami of commercialism

Government control over culture remains oblique, unsystematic and unpredictable, yet censorship is not the main impediment to artistic development. Commercial pressure is more detrimental and threatens to curf artis- tic innovation, harm cultural heritage and favour the production and export of a limited range of uniform cultural goods in place of multifaceted forms of international cultural cooperation. The capitalist frenzy, with its thousands of construction sites, ugly office buildings and shopping centres, rules the Beijing urban landscape. Ostentatious advertising is a ubiquitous eyesore, as though communist kitsch has been smoothly transformed into an equally ghastly capitalist sort. Popular commercial culture imagery, chiefly Japanese and American, dominates the public space.

Less visible are all the government bodies that have established their own companies for cultural production, distribution and mediation. Many government-subsidised cultural organisations behave like commercial enterprises or have created for-profit business units. Artists, managers, teachers and researchers, as well as present or former government and party functionaries, have also established their own commercial companies, with an unabashed hard-sell rhetoric of hyperbole, they offer services in event management, program development, art export, the presentation of foreign works and even ways to circumvent the bureaucratic stranglehold on licensing.

Licenced to death

The entrepreneurial climate has affected the arts, but those effects and the arts themselves remain under an oppressive cloud of restrictions and controls. For example, all performing arts venues must be licenced, and productions coming from abroad, from the provinces or authorised by unofficial companies operating in Beijing require additional licensing as well. While government authorisations to perform might not be immediately denied, they are not always issued or are repeatedly postponed. For international work, local presenters must submit Chinese translations of the script, videotape, photographs and reviews three months before a scheduled performance, then arrange all logistics not only at great expense but without any guarantee that a licence will be issued in time. Informal ways to speed up, circumvent, or otherwise expedite the approval process seem to exist, but for productions not based on a play, such as dance or movement pieces or for international co-productions with Chinese artists, these obscure, heavily-handed government review procedures can be insurmountable.

In principle, one cannot sell tickets for an unlicensed show or for a show at an unlicensed venue. Informal companies that temporarily claim or ‘squat’ a performance space and produce low-key performances for small audiences risk being banned but are sometimes allowed to carry on if a few favours to foreign embassies, whose cultural departments occasionally bring artists from abroad to work with Chinese audiences. The authorities often multi-complain of the bureaucratic labyrinth but are reluctant to trespass the ambiguous limits of an expanding grey area of creativity that is neither explicitly banned nor permitted. Yet it is precisely in that realm where radical and innovative Chinese artists dwell, testing the boundaries of the possible and expanding the zone of experimentation.

Besides ‘unlicensed’ events in abandoned factories and construction sites, rare site-specific performances, even on crowded pedestrian overpasses and normally busy roads, are occasionally licensed. Audiences gather mainly thanks to information communicated only by popular websites, text messages or word of mouth. Otherwise scarce media attention might signal more interest for prestigious and commercial programmes, but occasionally it’s the result of a government effort to marginalise a ‘sensitive’ production into anonymity. Meanwhile, some unlicensed performances, that manage to see the light of day, (in fact they tend to happen at night), and reach the public are clearly the work of small cohorts of colleagues and friends. Thus ten years after the founding of the Beijing Modern Dance Company, contemporary dance is still in a pioneering phase and, even in this enormous city, attracts a miniscule audience as it takes place in a shabby cultural centre on the periphery.

Cultural prostitution

While the authorities seem eager to keep tabs on artists, spaces and audiences, much of their controlling impulse is probably topical. Capitalism ushered in the freedom of entrepreneurship. Along with it came the a new tolerance for traditional religious expression after decades of officially imposed atheism. Today some worshippers insist on praying in public while prostrate or kneeling and offer sacrifices in Confucian temples, such as big plastic bottles of cooking oil and thousands of red notebooks that attest to parental wishes for their children’s academic success. Whole districts around shrines thrive on the sale of religious paraphernalia. This business is tolerated, but government is worried. It sees a surge in religion as a challenge to the Communist party ideological monopoly; thus the topic of religion is not allowed on the stage and neither are references to recent events in China’s history that could cast the Communist party in a negative light. Pornography, however, is allowed to run rampant, spawning a growing number of adult stores that no long- er need to disguise themselves as foot and body massage parlours. Again,
this is tolerated as small business, but it would never be allowed to become subject matter for a theatre production. Commercial impulses are allowed and even encouraged, but works of art must not challenge official ideological tenets. Art is expected to refrain from any social critique and cannot be allowed to expose the gap between the official communist line and the thriving capitalist reality that includes some problematic features, such as prostitution, pornography and a rapid stratification of the society.

Shanghai observers tell of sudden cancellations and postponements of various cultural initiatives since early 2006. This is probably as a result of a silent political purge, culminating in the autumn of 2006 with the arrest of the Party boss of Shanghai and many of his cronies for siphoning municipal social security funds. That this political upheaval blocked cultural production is another indication of how much the arts remain under government control and how much international cultural cooperation remains dependent on tacit official support. Now, the Shanghai power infrastructure needs to be reconsolidated before the flow of cultural production and ambitious international programming can start again.

The Chinese-European Performing Arts Meeting in Beijing, organised in October 2006 by the Informal European Theatre Meetings (IETM) network (www.ietm.org), allowed European theatre and dance professionals to look behind the ornate but clichéd décor of the Chinese stage and explore its systemic features, grasp its socio-economic and political environment, examine the diversity of its creative work, and understand artists’ motivations, aspirations, limitations and frustrations. European and Chinese professionals talked about their work and questioned each other’s position and priorities.

The Chinese participants kept asking their European colleagues: which cultural products interest Europeans? What kind of artistic export would be a success? This frequent question implies the readiness of hosts to deliver it all: Chinese acrobatics, circus, Kung Fu musicals, traditional Beijing opera (in a compressed, more easily digested form), folk dances, traditional orchestra, even Western classical music. The same driven, lightning-quick acumen that produces millions of shoes of Italian-like quality at a fraction of the cost is being unleashed in cultural production. Because the government subsidises mainly prestigious, traditional cultural institutions (such as the National Theatre and the National Symphonic Orchestra), and invests little in artistic development, the current generation of young artists is left at the mercy of market forces and standards set by the globalised culture industry. They are pushed into serial production – originality, innovation, artistic integrity and vision carry much less leverage and are trampled in the rush toward profit.

Museums are jazzed up to resemble theme parks, to peddle ‘antiquity’ to tourists and fleece them with souvenirs, while cultural heritage renovation is carried out carelessly, because time is money and money needs to be made fast. One year before the 2008 Olympics a ban on new construction will come into force to spare the city from more dust and rubbish and help make it look clean and tidy. Meanwhile, the provincial authorities and some richer cities want to follow Beijing and Shanghai’s cultural lead: they dream of their own theme parks and prestigious spectacular mass events, willing to invest in the acquisition of top stars from abroad, like Madonna.

**Mass cultural production**

In a city as big as Beijing there is not much official interest in small-scale cultural infrastructure that will serve artistic development. For example, Factory 798 on the north-east periphery was originally an artistic squat but now boasts over 200 galleries, some exquisite cafés and restaurants and a small, well-equipped contemporary dance space. The complex thrives on the growing demand from rich Chinese for Chinese art and on the foreign market hyped by international dealers and curators. Worse, a corporation, with government complicity, could take over the complex, make it even trendier and more commercial. In music, performing arts, photography, video, film and literature the same commercial impulses and corporate approaches loom.

Thus the public interest and artists’ interests are subject to corporate powers that often collide with government bodies and functionaries. The Central Academy of Drama Theatre, recently renovated and well equipped with classrooms and studios, several venues, a dorm and a canteen, caters to 2,000 students who enjoy excellent facilities. But these students must pay 1,000-2,000 euros, (and as much as 20.000 euros for a masters degree). to cover yearly tuition fees and their cost of living. The state subsidy has been increased several times in recent years but the tuition is being charged nevertheless – a common phenomenon everywhere in China, making the concept of free education obsolete, even in elementary and secondary education. Siemens and other European companies donated expensive sound and light equipment to the Academy, obviously banking on students becoming loyal customers in their professional career but some teachers have set up factories at the outskirts of Beijing and are churning out unlicensed copies of the same stage gadgetry. In two years the Academy will move to a huge new campus with even better facilities, some 70 kilometres outside of Beijing, where a new generation of artists might be protected from commercial pressures, but they will also be detached from the inspirations and challenges of the metropolis with its huge contrasts of old and new, rich and poor, traditional and fashionable.

Not that this concerns the state. In fact, at this point, true artistic development isn’t even on the state’s agenda. With the Olympics approaching, the government is interested primarily in continued prosperity and consumerism, unperturbed stability and culture as a representation of ideology, national glory and successful modernisation. In the meantime, the for-profit culture industry can be as imitative as it chooses, while true creativity struggles between market pressures and state cultural policy.

**Research**

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What is immediate perception?

The Buddhist answer

Is the immediacy of our knowledge an epistemological ideal or merely a psychological reassurance that our senses don’t misguide us? If we disregard immediacy in favour of other means to determine all of our knowledge including sensation, how can we discern sensation from knowledge? Conversely, if we regard immediacy as a physiological event (sense stimulation), how can we prove that it’s part of the cognitive process? Immediate-related problems arise in any epistemological discourse – Western or Eastern, ancient or modern. What is immediacy according to Buddhist epistemological tradition (pramanavada) represented by Dignaga (480-540) and Dharmakirti (600-660)?

In their disputes with Brahmanical thinkers the Buddhists tried to exclude any kind of mental construction (kalpana) from the realm of the immediately given. But, deprived as it is of mental construction, immediate perception becomes automatically incapable of providing any cognitive information about its object. That is why Buddhist thinkers had to prove that immediate perception (pratyaksha), in spite of its non-conceptual character, is still a genuine instrument of knowledge (pramana). How did they manage to reconcile the ‘blindness’ of pure sensation with its being part of the cognitive activity?

Units of becoming

The main goal of knowledge from the Buddhist point of view is to know things the way they are (paramahakatman) or to know reality as such. The object of the other kind of meditation is to know reality as the way they are (paramahakatman) or to know reality as such (tathata). What then constitutes reality? For the Buddhist the essence of reality is impermanence (anitya); to exist means to change, because nothing has any endurable essence (anatman). Existence is being reduced to a stream of discrete momentary dharmas.

The term dharmas (in plural form) has no equivalent in Western thought; it has been interpreted in many ways: ‘phenomena’, ‘point-instances’, ‘units of becoming’, ‘properties’, ‘tropes’ etc. To know reality as it is means to know it as a series of dharmas. For the Buddhist this kind of knowledge is obtained in meditation and has a totally immediate character. In this way immediacy is obviously related to the religious soteriological perspective of the Buddhist tradition, but it is the immediacy of the common cognitive experience that was a subject of epistemological discourse and controversy among philosophers of different Indian schools and traditions – Buddhist as well as Brahmanical.

Particulars and universals as subject-matters of pratyaksha and anumana

According to Dignaga’s major epistemological work Pramanasamacarya (‘A Collection of Instruments of Knowledge’, henceforth, PS), only two instruments of valid knowledge (pramana) exist: pratyaksha, or perception, and anumana, or inference, and each of them has its own subject matter. Pratyaksha deals with what Dignaga calls svalakshanas, literally, that which characterises itself, a particular characteristic or pure particular – something absolutely unique, singular and, most important, momentary (kshanika). As svalakshanas are ultimately real (paramarthana) and inexorable, to experience them means to experience reality as it is. The object of the other pramana, inference (anumana), is constituted by conceptualisations, verbalisations, reflections and other products of mental construction (kalpana or vikalpa) that Dignaga calls samanyalakshana – a general characteristic applicable to many objects or distributed over many instances. Samanyalakshanas, generally translated as ‘universal’, are endurable and not subject to change – for this reason they are regarded by Buddhists as only relatively real (samvrtti). The term svalakshana does not easily lend itself to interpretation. Its understanding is still a highly controversial matter among scholars. The problem is that its ontological status is quite ambiguous in our authors’ writings. The reason for this ambiguity was formulated by George Dreyfus: ‘Dignaga and Dharmakirti... are ontologists only inasmuch as their epistemology requires them to be. They even seem to feel free to alternate between several conflicting metaphysical standpoints. For example, in most of their works, Dignaga and Dharmakirti adopt a so-called Sauntanika standpoint, presupposing the existence of external objects. In other parts of their work, however, they shift their ontological frameworks and move to a Yogacara rejection of external objects. Common-sensical levels are introduced for the sake of convenience and withdrawn to be replaced by higher but more counterintuitive schemes’ (Dreyfus 1997: 49). A choice of ontological positions is equally applicable to svalakshana: it may be either mind-independent or mind-dependent. As far as immediacy is a kind of inner experience of mental actuality, it will be natural to accept that svalakshana, at least in some of our authors’ texts, is regarded as a sort of sense data.

Is pratyaksha a cognitive event?

To Dignaga, a pratyaksha (etymologically, ‘before eyes’) is above all an immediate experience, and its immediacy proves its veracity and certainty. This immediacy is so important that he defines pratyaksha through the exclusion of mediacy in the form of mental constructions. Thus he calls it kalpana-apodham (‘free from mental constructions’ (PS: 35). In this...
way the first criteria of immediacy from the SEP is strictly observed.

If pratyaksha is construed by Buddhists as a direct experience (anabhava), does it mean that its immediacy consists in the activity of the sense faculties (indriya) or in the contact of the senses with their object (indriya-arthasa-sannikarshana)? Buddhists accept neither of these alternatives. That a sense faculty cannot by itself possess cognitive activity was acknowledged by all Indian epistemologists (pramanavadins). And the majority of Indian philosophers, except Buddhists, saw in the sense-object contact the main condition of sense perception. Why didn’t Buddhism? First, for them not all senses could enter in direct contact with their objects (they insist on non-contactualness of certain senses – the visual and auditory). Second, pratyaksha is not necessarily a sense perception. Among its manifestations Dig-naga lists mental perception (manasa pratyaksha), yogic perception (during meditation) and self-awareness, which have nothing to do with senses. Thus we could safely say that immediacy of pratyaksha is not reduced to any sort of direct sense stimulation.

Then how is it produced? Dignaga is not clear about this question. According to Dharmakirti, a nulakshana, or particular, possessing its causal function (arthakriya), can produce its own image or aspect (akara) in our mind. Does it mean that we really apprehend nulakshana at the moment of perception? Taking into account that all of our own cognitive devices – images, conceptions, words, etc. – are products of mental construction, how could we say that immediate perception of particulars or of their aspects is a cognitive event? For Dignaga and Dharmakirti the answer to this question is not simple. Being Buddhists, both of them reject the existence of Atman or Self in a role of a permanent cogniser. For them there is no subject of knowledge apart from the knowledge itself, which is a flow of momentary point-instances (dharmas). So what makes an instance of pratyaksha a piece of knowledge if sense-object contact is not cognitive and conceptualisation is cognitive but not immediate?

They might propose an answer connected to their concept of svasamvedana as a variety of pratyaksha. Literally, svasamvedana is a self-awareness, not the awareness of the Self as Atman, but the awareness of the cognitive event itself, or self-reflexive awareness. Dignaga distinguishes between mental perception of the object, such as colour and other sense qualities, and self-awareness of desire, anger, pleasure, pain, etc., which for him constitute mental events not dependent on any sense organ. Svasamvedana is a sort of intuitive experience (anabhava) which accompanies all kinds of mental activity, being itself free of any conceptualisation. It is sometimes rendered by the term ‘apperception’, introduced by Leibniz in the sense of the reflexive awareness of our personal cognitive experience as desirable or not. But that does not mean either that cognition is cognised by a separate cognitive act (otherwise, there would follow an infinite regression) or that svasamvedana, being a sort of introspection, has other mental states as its objects.

Is pratyaksha a true or an instrumental cognition?

When Dignaga defines pratyaksha as exempt from mental construction, does he mean that the pramana of pratyaksha is a true cognition? The confirmation that pramana is not tightly associated with truth lies in the veridical status of anumaana (inference). Being a mental operation dealing with mentally constructed objects, it could not grasp the true nature of the object and for this reason is regarded as bhanta – erring or subject to errors. Nevertheless, it is still a pramana. Why? Because, according to Dharmakirti, it may reveal something previously unknown and may lead to a successful action. It is pramaana because of its instrumentality with regard to practical tasks, including final emancipation (nirvana). Thus we may safely add instrumentality to what we suppose may be the Buddhist definition of immediacy.

Sketching a new definition of perceptual immediacy

Dharmakirti argues that when we think of an object, we have only a blurred cognition of it, whereas when we see it we have a vivid apprehension. But for him simple seeing and ‘seeing as’, (perceiving an object as something), for example, a jug, constitutes two different cognitive events that have different contexts. One is perception without mental constructions, the other is perceptual judgment somehow caused by this perception and assisted by memory. For Dharmakirti the perceptual judgment ‘this is a jug’, unlike inference (anumaana), is not a pramaana because it deals with something already apprehended by perception. But how does he explain our experiencing immediacy with regard to seeing something definite, like a jug? For him it is because of the kalpana (mental construction) that a cognitive image appears for us as a totally external thing (pramanavartika III: 159-165). One more distinguishing feature of kalpama owing to its mediumate character is its lack of vividness (Savaritri to Pramanavartika II: 31). Accordingly, pratyaksha is distinguished by its vividness (ppakita), which may be construed as our fourth criterion of pratyaksha’s immediacy. To this set of criteria one may add saruya, the congruency of internal image with external object, or the fact that the knowledge takes the form of its object. To exclude the possibility of interpreting saruya in the sense that knowledge may have only the form of the object, but not its own form (nirakarana), we should add to our criteria the self-reflexive character (svasamvedana) as a confirmation of the fact that cognitive event has its own form as well.

Thus, we can single out six criteria of immediacy from the works of our authors: 1) non-inferential character (kalpama-apaphama), corresponding to the first point of the SEP definition; 2) non-errning character (ahkanta), corresponding to the second point of SEP definition; 3) instrumentality (pramanata) with regard to practical tasks; 4) vividness (ppakita); 5) congruence (saruya) with its object; and 6) self-reflexive character (svasamvedana). In this way, an acquaintance with Buddhist epistemology may suggest new perspectives for our understanding and interpretation of perceptual immediacy.

For further reading

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The future of the East Asian political economy: China, Japan and regional integration

As international newspaper headlines increasingly focus on energy and security issues, one could almost forget that the main ties that bind states and regions of the world together are trade and economic relations.

Małgorzata Hejzmin

From the 1970s onward, international economic relations have been broadened to include the political sphere – marking the start of much discussion on ‘the political economy of...’. Politics in this respect encompasses not only international political relations but especially domestic politics, cumulating in the so-called ‘two-level game’. This dual approach to policy making where economic means have been used, arguably more than anywhere else, for international as well as domestic political purposes: the East Asian region.

The current status of East Asia, i.e. Northeast and Southeast Asia), should be attributed first and foremost to the economic success and attractiveness of the region. Notwithstanding the much debated loose political integration, economic connections in the region are profound, although for a long time at the inter-firm and inter-regional rather than the inter-state level. Causes, explanations and possible solutions for issues in international relations of the region in the broadest sense of the word – the political economic, but also energy and security issues – should be sought therefore first and foremost in the field of political economy. The three developments in the field of political economy that I believe will shape the future of international relations of East Asia are addressed here. These are the development of China, the relationship between China and Japan, and the economic integration between countries in the region. The changing role of the United States in the region is of great importance with regard to the second and, to a lesser extent, the third development. In conclusion, the importance of these developments in general and for the EU in particular are sketched briefly.

Development of China

Whether spoken of in terms of the ill-phrased ‘peaceful rise’ or the more recent ‘peaceful development’ slogan, the development of China is a crucial factor in the shaping of East Asia’s international relations. Not only does China’s growth depend on domestic policies, reform and stability – China’s success or failure affects the region as a whole. China has become economically interconnected with the region to the extent that real and even perceived (in)stability will significantly affect other East Asian countries, as did the aftermath of the collapse of the Japanese ‘bubble’ in the early 1990s.

China is revitalising its relations with countries in the region, particularly the countries grouped in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The ASEAN countries are engaged in a balancing act of taking the opportunities their large neighbour has to offer while not being overshadowed by it. China is conscious not to be seen as an economic threat, as its proposal for a free trade area with ASEAN back in November 2000 illustrates. This move by China was largely geopolitically motivated. It should be seen as an attempt to engage neighbouring states and shed the threat perception stirred by China’s success in attracting industrial jobs and foreign investment. The success of China’s policy of engagement, as well as the positive but wary attitude of ASEAN-countries, was apparent when another step toward the creation of the full completion of the free trade agreement was taken last January. Following the signing of the trade-in-services agreement, Philippines President Arroyo said: ‘We are very happy to have China as our big brother in this region’.

The domestic challenges faced by China (analysed in detail in the latest of a series of World Bank regional studies in East Asia) are diverse and profound. Cities and livability, cohesion and inequality, and corruption are of crucial importance in managing the domestic distribution of economic rents. The Chinese government itself also recognised these challenges and placed internal challenges high up the agenda. Indeed, President Hu’s recent proposal for a ‘harmonious socialist society’ has been interpreted as one of the most profound shifts since Deng geared the country towards high growth rates by opening the country to foreign investment. The success or failure in making China’s development sustainable will for these reasons – and as suggested by the two-level game – have a profound influence on the region.

The relationship between Japan and China

Notwithstanding signs of improvement since the inauguration of Japanese Prime Minister Abe last September, relations between Japan and China are extremely fragile. Bilateral relations fell to an historical low in recent years, and while this deterioration long resulted in ‘cold politics, hot economies’, they came to a point where even economic relations were increasingly politicised. The Japanese business lobby, grouped in Nippon Keidanren, openly expressed concern to its government and urged it to repair relations with China – and, for that matter, South Korea. The sudden decision in 2005 of the Japanese government to end ODA loan aid to China should also be seen in this (political) economic perspective, while taking into account the legacy of war and colonial past in bilateral relations. The sudden shift in ODA policy can be attributed to certain Chinese policies, the deterioration of relations, the fast economic development of China and its implications for Japan, and a general aid fatigue of public opinion. Opinion polls found that public perceptions of the other country in Japan as well as China have deteriorated. The percentage of Japanese who indicate they ‘like’ China had been decreasing already from the mid-1990s, and fell below five percent in recent years. One only has to remember the Chinese boozing of the Japanese team during the final of the Asian Cup in 2004 and the fierce anti-Japanese demonstrations in 2005 to understand why. The Chinese on their side, have been much antagonised by the continuing visits of former Prime Minister Koizumi to the infamous Yasukuni Shrine. The government has taken the change in Japanese leadership as an opportunity to mend ties, however. The Chinese government was remarkably quiet following Abe’s comments on so-called ‘comfort women’ in March - a clear indication of the strong desire to improve relations and avoid dismay prior to Premier Wen’s visit to Japan. The unprecedented shift in media coverage from a focus on historical issues to coverage of contemporary Japan in connection with Wen’s trip is confirmatory. The Chinese government is obviously raising pressure and playing for high stakes, at the risk of extensive domestic criticism should Abe betray Wen’s faith. The new engagement between China and Japan is a positive sign, but tensions remain despite the warm rhetoric on both sides. Important questions are yet to be answered: notably whether or not Abe will visit the Yasukuni Shrine and whether he will gain support for his policy in the Upper House elections in July. Abe’s position was weakened by the quick fall in his popularity domestically soon after his inauguration, but more recently the Prime Minister regained credit for engaging China while not seeming soft, and for his long overdue visit to the United States in April. A complex
mix of international and regional status, bilateral rivalry and domestic politics defines the bilateral relationship.

Rivalry between the Japanese and the Chinese cannot be understood apart from both countries’ aspirations for leadership in the region – or, better, wariness of the other country taking the lead. While the United States remains a great power in the region, its supremacy is waning as Chi- na’s influence grows. Preoccupied with the Middle East and Central Asia, the Americans furthermore give leeway for and even encourage Asean’s increasing active role in the region. Neither Japan nor China however, seems in a position to claim a leadership role now or in the near future. Through an active policy of economic diplomacy, Japan has throughout the past decade increased its active role in the region. While ASEAN countries are, for economic reasons, inclined to lean increasingly towards China, for political reasons they welcome a more active Japan. The China-Japan relationship thereby will shape East Asia’s political economy.

**Economic integration in East Asia**

A third factor that is to profoundly influence the future of the political economy is the region’s path of economic integration. Integration was throughout the 1970s and 1980s based on expansion of (private) Japanese production networks, spurred by the state. After the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-98, intra-regional economic integration largely failed due to lack of political will on the side of numerous East Asian countries. Since the beginning of the new century however, economic integration has taken a more regional (Asean-only) turn and advanced through gov- ernment level talks and negotiation. China’s entry in the WTO in 2001 provided an essential stimulus to this effect and the United States’ more pragmatic stance – as opposed to its earlier strong disapproval of Japan’s proposal for an Asian Monetary Fund – increased possibilities. Here also, domestic as well as international developments merit attention.

As traditional regionalism is increasingly complemented by efforts toward regionalism, an increasingly complex “noodle bowl” is connecting countries and sectors of economies.

Although the term is not usually used in this sense, the second ‘noodle bowl’ of institutionalised relations through inter- and intra-regional institutions is forming. Throughout the past decade East Asia has seen a surge in government-led initiatives for regional co-operation, such as ASEAN+3, ASEAN+6 and the East Asia Summit. Generally these gatherings have been talking shops more than they have been able to produce real results, however. What East Asia needs now, is management, not vision.

Much is still uncertain about where East Asian integration is heading. While some suggest that bilateral and regional agreements are undertaken with the final goal of integrating the region’s political economies, the US government’s fragmented Frame-up will come to a point of no return. The question is whether countries are in for short-term gain or for real economic integration in the long term. It is high time to create oversight at the regional level and to transform the two ‘noodle bowls’ before they become too knotted to unravel. The ASEAN+3 grouping encompasses the major production networks span- ning East and Southeast Asia and is experienced in political engagement, while the East Asia Summit through the Asia- Europe Meeting. A more institutionalised process spurred by these countries therefore provides the most likely route to suc- cess. Cautiously structured or not, the regional framework for political economic relations of the future will be outlined throughout the next decade.

The future of East Asia’s political economy is important for observers in and outside the region. Increasing regional trade integration notwithstanding, in the region East Asia is still one of – if not the – most open regions of the world. It is of major importance for its largest trade partners – the European Union (EU) and the United States – to ensure that East Asia remains open to these two partners. This requires a better understanding and co-operation between the regions is required. With regard to the EU-China strategic partnership however, one analyst remarks that three years after its announcement, it has become clear that political rhetoric on the scope and nature of EU-China relations has yet to catch up with political reality.4 Regrettably, critique of inter-regional co-operation resembles that of East Asia intra-regional co-operation. The EU as well as a stronger ASEAN+3 should make an effort to turn the tide.

In his presentation of the Communication that is part of the renewed China strategy of the EU, Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson commented that ‘trade policy stands at the crossroads of the EU’s internal and external policies’. For the EU, just as for the East Asian region, the political economy is a two-level game involving domestic as well as international interests. But EU policy making of tariffs on textiles from China as recent as late 2006, is not setting the right example.

**Notes**


2 For a valuable analysis of the debate on and impact of these concepts, see: Joshua Cooper Ramo 2006. Brand China. London: The Foreign Policy Centre.


13 Speaking points by Commissioner Mandelson, Press Room, EU, just as for the East Asian region, the political economy is a two-level game involving domestic as well as international interests. But EU policy making of tariffs on textiles from China as recent as late 2006, is not setting the right example.

**References**

John Lagerweij

A recent conference in Paris aimed to do precisely that: create a new paradigm for the understanding of Chinese religion from the ancient period to the end of the 6th century, by which time the basic contours of Chinese religion had stabilised in the familiar configuration of the Three Teachings and what most students now call shamanism.

If this had not hitherto been attempted, it is at least in part because of the explosion of knowledge and the increasing specialisation that accompanies it. But it is also because of the lack of a unifying theory or, at the very least, methodology. The answer to the first difficulty is to invite leading specialists to work together and, to the second, to propose a common approach. This is an approach which will be the key to success or failure and which, therefore, requires explanation.

This approach is, in the first place, multi-disciplinary, relying on philology, archaeology, and epigraphy as the foundations of any well-rounded account of an ancient society in which texts remain a primary source. In a certain sense, the key role is played here by archaeology, in part because of the vast range of new textual and iconographic materials it has provided, but also and perhaps above all because material remains, deposited in tombs whose shape and con- tent, often subject to hitherto unimagined, nearly direct access to daily life, actual practice (as opposed to ideological prescription), and regional cultural variety.

The second critical feature of the approach is that it is at once sociological and anthropological. The determined focus of the work on rituals, pantheons, and techniques reflects the weaning away of religious studies from philosophy, thanks in large part to the impact of the anthropological study of societies with- out written texts. Religion is now seen to consist in techniques of communica- tion with the invisible; it is about what people do, whom they address, and how. Mythology and other modes of discourse are implicit in ritual gestures, spatial dispositions, and iconographic traditions.

The search for meaning in Chinese religion must give pride of place to this implicit as opposed to the explicit discourse because it is through ritual and around specific gods that social groups are constituted and the empire defines itself. The discovery of the centrality of ritual in Chinese social and political life and elite discourse concerning them is relatively recent, but it has come increas- ingly to dominate the Sinological agenda. In organizing the chapters of each succes- sive volume around the two basic issues of religion and society and religion, and the state, the project aims at keeping the focus on the sociological dimen- sions of religion. Inclusion of chapters on hagiography, sacred geography, and festival calendars confirms the overarching emphasis on religion as practiced.

But perhaps the most important innovation of all is the inclusion of shamanism, because if the emergence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism as China’s three major religious traditions is the central subject of Chinese religious history from the founding of the empire in 221 BCE down to the end of the sixth century, this emergence goes together with a joint attack on traditional, shamanistic modes of interaction with the invisible world. But shamanism does not just go softly into the deep, dark night. It remains central to popular forms of religion, such as Buddhist and Taoist rituals for ritual monoply is also integrated important aspects of shamanism into their own practices. Any history of Chinese religion which considers Chinese society to be its real subject ignores this dynamic interaction at its peril.

**John Lagerweij**

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The international conference Rituals, Pantheons, and Techniques: A History of Chinese Religion before the Tang was held in Paris, 14-21 December 2006, and was organised by the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Department of Religious Studies (Paris), and the UMR 7133 Centre de recherche sur les civilisations chinoises, japonaises et tibétaines. IAS was among its many sponsors.

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The future of East Asia’s political economy is important for observers in and outside the region. Increasing regional trade integration notwithstanding, in the region East Asia is still one of – if not the – most open regions of the world. It is of major importance for its largest trade partners – the European Union (EU) and the United States – to ensure that East Asia remains open to these two partners. This requires a better understanding and co-operation between the regions is required.
Zhang Taiyan's attitude to this principle changes depending on the period. From 1906-1903, he endorses the universal principle and some type of evolutionary vision of the world in the context of his anti-Qing Dynasty writings. However, in 1903 Zhang was convicted of writing seditious essays defaming the emperor and he was sentenced to three years in jail. In jail, Zhang avidly read the sutras of Yogācāra Buddhism and later claimed that it was only through rectifying and meditating on these sutras that he was able to get through his difficult jail experience. When he was released from jail in 1906, Zhang went to Tokyo to edit the famous revolutionary journal, The People's Journal (Minbao), and in this journal, he developed a new philosophical framework largely critical of dominant intellectual trends.

During the years 1906-1910, often referred to as Zhang's Minbao period, he addressed both the reformers and the anarchist's idealism, claiming that they were insufficiently self-reflective. Following Kant, Zhang attempts to return concepts and the world of experience to their conditions of possibility; however, he understands conditions of possibility in Buddhist terms, namely as the karmic fluctuations of the seeds in dhyāna consciousness (the storehouse consciousness). By drawing on Yogācāra Buddhism, Zhang develops a vision of history as an unconscious process of drives. According to Yogācāra Buddhism, the storehouse consciousness, which is the highest level of consciousness, contains a number of seeds which initiate a type of historical process. Dan Lusthaus interprets the effects of karmic progression of history.

The above passage may seem opaque, but given that Zhang explicitly opposes his philosophy of equalization to both the theological vision of history, it is possible to interpret him as searching for a concept of difference free from conceptualization, a gesture we may find in Gilles Deleuze's philosophy. In particular, in Deleuze's interpretation of his compatriot Henri Bergson, he distinguishes difference from determination. According to Deleuze, Hegel's dialectic represents a linear movement because his idea of difference is exterior to the thing itself and hence inevitably involves both determination and contradiction. We see this in a number of the antinomies that pervade his thought such as the opposition between being and nothing, or between particularity and universality. Deleuze clearly attempts to draw on Bergson to think in ways to move away from such oppositions and binds in Bergson's viewpoint "not only will vital difference not be a determinate, but it will rather be the opposite — given a choice (au choix) it would select the most indeterminate, Hegel could retort that in essence Bergson is simply unable to think difference and thus the phrase "given a choice" is crucial. Indeed, we should not choose between determinism and indetermination as a triumphant march of spirit is really a degenerative disaster created by karmic seeds. He then combines Buddhism and Daoism to describe a world outside of this karmic progression of history.

Pushing language to its limits
Zhang develops this philosophical alternative in a number of essays during 1906-1910, but he expressed this philosophy most completely in what many take to be Zhang's masterpiece, "An Interpretation of a Discussion on the Equalization of Things," published in 1910. In this text, Zhang uses Yogācāra Buddhist concepts to understand the ancient Daoist philosopher, Zhuangzi. Zhang pushes language to its limits to express an ideal that escapes the conceptual categories associated with karmic history and points to a world of difference and a new affirmation of singularity. In so doing, he brings Buddhist, Daoist and Western ideas of equality together in a unique manner. More specifically, Zhang constantly grapples with the issue of expressing beyond mundane concepts. Thus he contends that Zhuangzi's concept of "equality" involves making distinctions without concepts.

"Equalizing things" (piwai) refers to absolute equality (pingjing). If we look at its meaning carefully, it does not simply refer to seeming sentient beings as equal... One must figure form (xiang, lakjana) without words, write of form without concepts (ming) and think form without mind. It is ultimate equality. This accords with the "equalization of things." 2

From imperial power to global player
To understand the above philosophical debate in the context of early 20th century China, we must note how intellectuals were shaped by, and responded to, their rapidly changing environment. Social and intellectual life in the late Qing was influenced by widely circulating discourses of modern philosophy and the concrete forces of the global capitalist system of nation-states. After a series of defeats in wars during the late 19th century, the Qing Empire and late Qing intellectuals began to think of ways to transform China into a nation-state that could compete in the global capitalist system. The modern state and economy entail a host of categories from citizenship to equality and intellectuals began to re-orient their learning and writing towards these new concepts.

Until the late 19th century, Chinese intellectuals were largely trained in traditional classics and they aimed primarily at becoming bureaucrats or functionaries in the imperial government. However, in the midst of national crisis, they began to use their knowledge creatively to envision a passage from imperial to modern institutions. In this context, not only would intellectuals search outside of the canonical Confucian tradition and mine Buddhists and Daoist texts for resources, they would also invoke the philosophies of Kant and Hegel to create hybrid theories of modernization. Late Qing scholars from a number of different political perspectives often drew on Western philosophy along with traditional ideas to create new concepts adequate to the task of modern nation building.

One such new concept, which reformers, revolutionaries and anarchists generally endorsed, was the universal principle (gongheng). The universal principle refers to a concept or movement, such as the ethical principle of citizenship or a process of social evolution, which subsumes particular things or actions. Intellectuals applied this principle to both the realms of science and ethics. Thus, references to the "universal principle of science," "the universal principle of morality" and "the universal principle of evolution" are found in late Qing texts. The principle of evolution is particularly important, since, despite political differences, reformers, revolutionaries and anarchists often presupposed some vision of history as progress.

Zhang Taiyan’s thought in terms of indigenous contexts, but I contend that Zhang's philosophy, and the late Qing ideology to which he responded, follow a larger global pattern. Specifically, that Zhang's thought has similarities with that of critics of German idealism, such as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and that we can explain such conceptual affinity with reference to the common context of global capitalism. Georg Lukács links the principles of German idealism to the social forms of capital, and provocatively contends that modern philosophers often mistake historically specific aspects of the structure of capitalism for universal forms of consciousness. German idealists posit a transhistorical movement of consciousness that realizes itself in modern institutions such as the state. Nietzsche and Schopenhauer attack this structure of consciousness from an abstract perspective. To counter Hegel's idea of the telescological movement of Spirit, they argue that consciousness and history is a wild interplay of drives or the will. They eventually aim to overcome this blind progression of history and put forward some type of alternative. There is a similar antinomy between optimistic and pessimistic visions of history in late Qing China. Specifically, the majority of intellectuals during the early 20th century endorsed some version of history as a progressive movement and Zhang Taiyan developed a critique of this view from Buddhist and Daoist perspectives.

Following Lukács, one can conclude that both sides of this debate respond a-historically to transformations of capitalist modernity, since each group presupposes some type of transhistorical ontological movement, which becomes their foundational standpoint.

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During the years 1906-1910, often referred to as Zhang’s Minbao period, he addressed both the reformers and the anarchist’s idealism, claiming that they were insufficiently self-reflective. Following Kant, Zhang attempts to return concepts and the world of experience to their conditions of possibility; however, he understands conditions of possibility in Buddhist terms, namely as the karmic fluctuations of the seeds in dhyāna consciousness (the storehouse consciousness). By drawing on Yogācāra Buddhism, Zhang develops a vision of history as an unconscious process of drives. According to Yogācāra Buddhism, the storehouse consciousness, which is the highest level of consciousness, contains a number of seeds which initiate a type of historical process. Dan Lusthaus interprets the effects of karmic seeds and so a cycle of the interplay between past, present and future continues. In his 1966 essay, On Separating the Universal and Particular in Evolution, Zhang uses this framework to explain Hegel's philosophy of history. In short, he claims that what Hegel describes as

Zhang Taiyan

Since the late 1890s, scholars have viewed China’s progress towards market capitalism with great optimism, but in the last ten years intellectuals, both in China and abroad, have begun to voice reservations. Critics have pointed out China’s growing problems of income inequality, unemployment and environmental degradation. In this context of critical reflection, Viren Murthy argues that the work of the late Qing intellectual Zhang Taiyan is especially meaningful.

Zhang continuously drew on Buddhism and Daoism to express criticisms.
tuals presuppose some version of evo-
and even today, most Chinese intellec-
tuals attempt to think of an equality that avoids the contradiction between the universal and the particular, or the antinomies between sameness and difference, which he sees in German idealism. In Zhang’s view, it is not mere thought that produces conceptual antinomies; rather, through our karmic actions, we generate a conceptual framework, which confronts us as a type of inescapable logic. Zhang com-
prises the conceptual framework that people create through karmic action to Kant’s categories and when he attacks this framework, he reproduces a basic structure we see in the pessimistic cri-
tiques of German idealism. Rather than grounding concepts such as the universal principle in a historically specific social formation, Zhang links contem-
porary ideological trends to the tran-
shistorical dynamic of karmic action.

However, Zhang’s philosophical signifi-
cance shines through when placed in the intellectual history of 20th century China. Throughout the 20th century, the intellectual history of 20th century China is represented China’s failure to modern-
ise. From the mid-1990s, however, a growing number of intellectuals such as Wang Hui and Sun Ge, have developed the critical dimension of Zhang Taiyan’s thought, such as his student Lu Xun, to question the legitimacy of contemporary capitalist society. These intellectuals, however, face a problem that Zhang could never adequately con-
ceptualise, namely how to translate the-
ory into a historical practice that trans-
forms the global capitalist world.

**Suggestions for Further Reading**

The literature on Zhang Taiyan is immense, especially in Chinese and Japanese, I include here only a short sample.

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2. Dan Lusthaus, Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogacara Buddhism and the Ch’eng Wei-shih ian (Lon-
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Colonial or indigenous rule?

The black Portuguese of Timor in the 17th and 18th centuries

From the late 16th century, the Portuguese created a far-flung political, religious and economic network in maritime Asia, where Portuguese men often married Asian or mixed-blood women who were Catholic by birth or conversion. The resulting mestizo groups constituted a ubiquitous and important presence in Portuguese Asia for hundreds of years, as they became instrumental in maintaining relations with indigenous Asians. One interesting case is the Topasses or black Portuguese population on Timor, which enjoyed a pivotal role on the island in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Portuguese society contained an element of racial thinking, but it was not enough to look at indigenous Asians using European perceptions of human categorisation. Rather, we must put the Portuguese groups in Asia in a localised context, exploring how they adapted to indigenous conceptions. For while Portuguese newcomers to Asian waters prided themselves on their whiteness and discriminated against mestizos, whites and mitos both were seen as Portuguese, not least in the eyes of their Asian neighbours. In what is conventionally called the early modern period, roughly 1500-1800, religious affiliation was constantly changing, and this relates to the ethnic perceptions prevailing in Southeast Asia until fairly recent times. At this time there was no propagation of a single idea based on alleged intellectual or other properties. Thus the Catholic creed was the fundamental denominator of Portugueseess in Asia, and since most people of Portuguese descent retained a marked Portuguese identity, one would have to mean to establish a loyal Catholic community in Portuguese posts.

Timor was economically attractive to external powers owing to the trade in sandalwood and beaver. It was also known for its unique political conditions, which made the means of subsistence and even access by sea cumbersome. The island's multi-ethnic society possessed primitive technology and was divided into innumerable principalities. Still, it was on Timor and some surrounding islands that the name of Portugal was preserved, while its other South-East Asia possessions were knocked off by the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) between 1625 and 1641. This is the more remarkable since the Estado da India had few resources to spare for the marginal Timor. The number of whites on the island was never large. Moreover, the early 17th century Portuguese had to contend with Dutch interests in the Timor area, though the Dutch, too, allocated few resources to this far corner of Southeast Asia.

Part of the external question of how the Portuguese managed to hang on to Timor was the pattern of human migrations, particularly in the dynamics of the Topasses - a term probably connected to the Indian term ‘house’, meaning ‘bilingual’ or ‘interpreter’. Their migration is best understood as a process evolving in nearby Solor in the late 16th century and later moved to Larantuka on East Flores. There they made stepping stones to appropriate sandalwood and other commodities on Timor. In the mid-17th century they began to move to the Lifau area on the north Timor coast. This modestly sized group, which was moreover hostile to the Estado da India for long periods, was able to prevail and retain a Portuguese identity owing to four factors: ethnicity, religion, political structures and the group’s place in the early colonial system.

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One, oddly enough, was the great rival of the Portuguese, the VOC, because numerous defections from VOC outposts and ships took place in East Indonesia, and by adopting certain markers, such as language, profession (soldier, administrator, trader) and clothing (the Dutch knew the Topasses as ‘hangbroeken’, meaning ‘hanging trousers’). This all, again, accorded well with the flexible Southeast Asian way of alternating between ethnic identities.

Padres, generals, wife-giving and taking: consolidating power through religion and politics

More than blood, religion was the more profound identity marker, one is reminded that the very word ‘ethnic’ in early modern European dictionaries referred to something pagan or non-Christian, rather than something related to racial origin or material culture. Dominican priests, who enjoyed a role in Timor society that was not restricted to religious service, demonstrated religion’s role in the reification of Topass identity. Documents contain many hints of the great devotion Topasses exercised towards Dominicans, who sometimes even headed military expeditions. Dutch reports and VOC private letters on Timor, for example to ‘Roome paapen’, or Catholic padres, who easily influenced local populations to the detriment of Dutch aims.

The few priests operating in the Solor-East Flores-Timor area were able to strengthen the Topass sphere of influence through their missionary activities. In the 1625s, 1630s and 1640s, an intense flurry of conversions swept West Timorese islands into Catholicism. Much of this was obviously superficial, but at the same time conversion implied a political appeal to solidifying the Portuguese colonial sphere, where the institution of the Portuguese kingdom in Lisbon was symbolically important in spite of its obvious distance.

This leads to the third factor in Topass retention of Portuguese identity, the political development of the Topass community. From the late 16th century onwards, the kind of dynastic dynamics evolved after 1670, when the Horany and Da Costa families ascended to the leadership. These two families ruled in turns up to modern times in the Oecussa area in north-western Timor. Their genealogies are insufficiently known, but it’s clear that they regularly intermarried although not often. From the second half of the 18th century, moreover, they intermarried with the Da Cruz royal dynasty of Ambeno on whose traditional domain they themselves depended. One note that the Horany and Da Costa apart, from a few brief periods, were not violent rivals, but rather peacefully coexisted. By the early 19th century, they even signed contracts jointly.

The Topasses were able to dominate the most important West Timorese prin- cipalities from around the mid-17th century. In 1675, they undertook expeditions to the eastern coastlands and brought them into a superficial state of submission. By the late 17th century they thus had a very strong position on Timor, while the Dutch were confined to the eastern part of the island. This important aspect of this was their mar- tial culture, which was even able to include members of Timorese aristoc- racy, who were taught how to fight. It is noted that to act as wife-givers and wife-takers. The Topass leader Matheus da Costa (d. 1673) married a princess from the princely authority of Ambeno, which was strictly one of the main Timorese traditions recorded over the last two centuries. In spite of being over-whelmingly Timorese in terms of ethnic origins, the Topasses were and remained in the eyes of Timorese aristocrats “Roomse paapen” or “Black Foreigners”.

For the Topasses, the 18th century was filled with conflicts with the Estado da India, which imposed Goa-appointed governors who settled in Lifau beginning in 1749. Although the Hornays and Da Costas managed to expel the white governor from Lifau in 1759, their power had been on the wane since 1749, when they suffered a major defeat against the VOC in western Timor. The conflicts deterred traders from Macau and emboldened Southeast Asian Chinese to increase their economic networks on Timor to the detriment of the old Topass-dominated system. Towards the end of the 18th century, their influence was mainly confined to the Oecussa-Ambeno enclave and Larantuka, and the Hornays and Da Costas emerged as local petty kings of Oecussa rather than just colonial officials.

The fall from officers to petty kings to Black Foreigners

Was, then, Topass rule on Timor colonial in any meaningful sense, or is it more ridiculous to regard it as a basically indig- enous power? Arguments support either position. Documents from the heyday of Timor rule, from the 1610s to 1749, reveal a rather loosely structured tribute system, the _sahlas_, that was adopted from the local Timorese principalities. This may seem more like a pre-colonial, rent-seeking practice than colonial rule (in the sense of a systematic subordina- tion in order to produce economic and other benefits to an external nation or power). In general, the Topasses may not have been terribly different from the local colonial system built on a superficial but often heavy-handed domination over the innumerable Timorese principalities. That the Topasses were something of a pariah is also reinforced by a study of local Timorese traditions recorded over the last two centuries. In spite of being over-whelmingly Timorese in terms of ethnic origins, the Topasses were and remained in the eyes of Timorese aristocrats “Roomse paapen” or “Black Foreigners”.

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Research

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Remarkable liaisons among the well-to-do

We Cuncun

Fragments, marginal texts, and even ‘bad literature’ can sometimes take us further than better-known, canonical works. I was reminded of this after an unexpected find in Leiden University’s van Gulik Collection.

My ‘find’, a pornographic novel bearing the title Fugui qiyuan (‘Remarkable liaisons among the well-to-do’), does not appear in any of the major catalogues of traditional Chinese fiction. It is clear from the poor quality of the lithographic printing, the cheap grade of paper, the many errors and oddities, re-typed illustrations in the front pages that this small book belongs among the many similar works printed for popular consumption in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

The first thing to note about this work, beyond its physical signs, is that it is not original: reading through it we find that it is actually a much corrupted, unrecorded, re-titled edition of the early Qing dynasty erotic novel Taohuaying (‘Peach blossom som shadows’). The author of Taohuaying, identified here by the pseudonym Yanshen Sanren (‘Unascertained Man of Mist and Water’), is generally agreed to be Xu Zhen, a novel-ist whose lifetime straddled the end of the Ming dynasty and beginning of the Qing dynasty. While the characters and storylines are more or less unchanged in Fugui qiyuan, the latter is a much-abridged ‘edition’ and contains numerous graph character and grammatical errors.

Comparing it to the edition of Taohuaying in the modern Siuxian hers collection (published in the mid-1990s in Tai- wan), we find this renamed edition is of such poor quality that it appears to have been printed without having been proofread. There are glaring errors, such as the incorrect rendering of the name of the famed early Ming artist Shen Shizhan (Shen Zhou 1427–1485). And in chapter six we find that Xu Zhen’s original opening – a tightly composed passage of approximately 100 words that considers the place of homoerotic attraction in Chinese tradition (‘When even ancient emperors were fond of it, should we not be surprised that it is so thick on the ground today’) – has been so radically abridged in Fugui qiyuan that the 38 graphs that remain convey little more than nonsense.

It is clear that the later ‘editor’ was interested only in preserving licentious detail. Everyday episodes, literary passages and auto-commentary have been pared down to brief, dull and insipid passages, while erotic description always remains vivid. It is as if a lock of this kind may be evidence that there was a readership interested primarily in titillation, a market serviced by cheaply available forms of pornography.

An erotic tale of its time

While it suffers from all the above defects, Fugui qiyuan (and its antecedent) is perhaps not all that untypical for a certain style of erotic fiction published from the late Ming through the early Qing. The outline of the narrative and plot are quite predictable and conventional. Along the same lines as, for example, The Casual Prayer Mat, the novel unfolds around a young gifted scholar who pursues liaisons with a great number of beautiful women. Wei Rong is young and handsome, from a wealthy family and effortlessly attracts any ‘beauty’ he casts his eyes upon. He also excels as a talented sexual partner, and with the aid of Daoist aphrodisiacal lore he manages to establish a large household of many concubines. At the end of the tale he ascends, with his entire entourage, to a life among the immortals in the celestial spheres.

There is little here that makes this novel stand out from among the many other ‘conventional’ popular erotic tales of its period and all that may be it was largely forgotten as time went by. Nevertheless, there are a number of things worth noting about chapter six, entitled, ‘A drunken fish is robbed of its rear courtyard flower’, which revolves around male homoerotic intercourse. While it is often the case that something common and conventional in one era may seem unusual in another, we need not be surprised when a homoerotic episode is included in a Chinese novel of this type: the description lists the licentious carriages of on men and women.

There is no doubt that Wei Rong has a soft spot for female beauty and takes every opportunity to engage in lovemaking, neither social background, age nor even marriage are ever cause for hesitation. At the same time, an abundance of love stories or erotic tales produced in the 17th century in China included at least one or two homoerotic episodes interwoven with the main narrative thread. Fugui qiyuan is one of the few following an already established convention when it includes such two strands. In the first the merchant Qiu Munan, a wealthy landlord from Nanjng, becomes irresistibly attract- ing to the scholar. Reflecting social attitudes of the time, as well as the application of the law, Ming and Qing novels usually treat same-sex relations as a social offence; instead, they were taken as a sign of a literary or extra-literary skill. While in Taohuaying it is complemented (or even compensated) by his own erotic tastes and preferences, in Fugui qiyuan it is presented as a vehicle for reiterating and accepting the accepted status rules surrounding male love.

The sasacronc ‘rear courtyard’

This is made clear if we examine the episode in more detail. It is love at first sight when the merchant meets the young schol- ar, who has come looking for a room to rent while attending the provincial examinations in Nanjng. Qiu has a very pretty young wife (Huashi), but he is only attracted to young men (his name is a homophone for ‘adoles male’). The following day he becomes increasingly fascinated because he knows that while he has a regular relationship with a young male adolescent, status rules do not permit him to approach his young tenant. Recognising Wei’s soft spot for the opposite sex, he guesses that even if he rapes him, the merchant is somewhat outside the law in the way in which the episode is set up, and also the way in which it is complemented (or even compensated) by his own dalliances with the page (where the direction of penetration is ‘conventional’), it actually functions as a vehicle for reiterating and accepting the accepted status rules surrounding male love.

Qiu Munan has done so far is, in effect, to propose a new paradigm for deciding the propriety of same-sex rela- tions between men. And it makes both structural and his- torical sense that he is a merchant. Structurally, it is clear that his model is one that makes sexual relations a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ one that can be exchanged in a deal like any other. We might even call it a barter-based model, if not a ledger-based model. Historically, we know that from the Song dynasty scholarly-official values and mercantile values were in a relationship of constant tension.

Qiu Muan is able to use a merchant’s guise to make an assault on the supposedly sacrosanct ‘rear courtyard’ of a scholar. Reflecting social attitudes of the time, as well as the application of the law, Ming and Qing novels usually portray homoerotic behaviour between elite men and their (sometimes shared) servants, entertainers or catamites. The inequality of these relationships was not questioned, nor did same-sex relationships within these boundaries cause any social offence; instead, they were taken as a sign of a litera- ture’s romantic lifestyle. Examples of same-sex relationships between upper-class men are harder to find, in either life or literature, but allusions and references to the scandal such a union would cause are numerous; and, in particular, penetra- tion caused intense shame for the penetrated.

Merecentile morals?

Given the accepted balances pertaining between social status and sexuality at the time, Wei’s freedoms of Qiu, and their subsequent friendship, is quite extraordinary. There is no question that Wei feels wronged, but Qiu manages to make a deal that overrides morality. Perhaps we are meant to believe that what Qiu’s wife has to offer is so priceless it erases all debt or crime: ‘I will take you as payment for his crime and never feel regret at losing life and wealth, and he ascends into the realm of immortals with his wife and five concubines (including Huashi).

While the tendency in 17th century erotic novels to dismiss chastity, social status or sexual taboos may have been in part fed by a fashion for high-minded libertine ideals of individual freedom and expression, this strand in Fugui qiyuan and its 17th century predecessor suggest that models of mercantile exchange may also have contributed to thinking about moral alternatives. How much should we read into this?

Perhaps in Taohuaying chapter six was originally meant to be little more than the imaginative development of a homoerotic interlude in which is in the end a rather formulaic exploration of erotic possibilities. Like many erotic writing from the 16th and 17th centuries, while there is an abundance of rollicking action, Taohuaying places as much (if not more) emphasis on exploring social permutations as it does on describing physi- cal contortions. While all the permutations have been exploited there is nowhere left for the narrative to go, except upward into the celestial spheres (the authors were not interested in heading downward). In contrast, Fugui qiyuan, a later and much corrupted edition of the same tale, attempts to divest itself of everything extraneous to the bedroom scenes. Its read- ership may have become bored with the ‘social titillation’ that so fascinated 17th century readers.

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‘Danzanravjaa is my hero’: the transformation of

G. A. AYURZANA (1970)

Standing in the silence of night, my mind stupefied,
Who was it flashed across my dulled sight?
This vision was as intense through the darkness,
A path of sadness hanging in the air.

I stumbled along a lighted path,
Seeking what remained in my memory.
A rose garden nearby, and
I fell into the past.

And suddenly I returned.

That perfume!
I’d fallen for it utterly, had picked it, breathed it in.
O, what flower was it?

Was this truly someone’s love
Floating around me? Or a shooting star?
Or else, in the silence of night,
Was it a shining image floating past?

There, a thousand suns burning in my heart,
The words of the Buddhas in the infinite sky
Flew like a crane, leading the flock into spring.

Some suns fade from existence.
Some words vanish from the world.
And some tumble into my eyes as snow,
And strike the earth.

Anemones, shocked into life by the melting earth,
Have gripped my mind.
I sensed their new buds, autumn’s evening
Perfume, from a thousand years away.

the sound of rain falling on the soft roof
the sound of rain striking the soft roof
the sound of snow striking the soft roof
...repeating without repeating...

the sound of rain falling on the soft roof
the sound of rain striking the soft roof
the sound of snow striking the soft roof
...repeating without repeating...

(translated by Simon Wickham-Smith)

TS BAVUUDORJ (1971)

A VERY BIG, WHITE ELEPHANT

A very big, white elephant
Has passed through the world.
He’s left with the calmness
Of the mighty ocean.
He’s left, uprooting
The serenity of the earth.
He’s left, shaking
Dew from the topmost leaves.
He’s returned, disturbing the sun gods.
He’s left, commandeering
Golden temples, shining with blood.
He’s left, waking
Grey peaks under snow.
He’s left, shutting the eyes of the mighty.
He’s returned, shaking East and West.
A very big, white elephant
Has passed through the world.
A very big, white elephant...

This is quite possibly the first literary critical paper to be written in English on contemporary Mongolian poetry. As such, it would seem fitting that the title used here repeats the words of the poet Ayurzana. That he, a member of Ulaanbaatar’s young, cool intelligentsia, should see the 19th century poet-monk Danzanravjaa as his hero provides us with a powerful socio-cultural platform from which to observe how these young poets work in a modern idiom while remaining aware of their Mongolian heritage.

I have written here previously on the life and work of the 19th century poet-monk Danzanravjaa. Danzanravjaa’s education provided him with a vast corpus of religious and literary material from which he could draw, and it is the use he made of this tradition which characterises his poetic output. Structurally, his technique makes frequent use of the head-and-tail form, in which each line of a stanza begins with the same letter and ends with the same word. What is contextually most interesting here is that this is clearly a technique based upon orality: repetition through the stanzas serves as an aide memoire. Over time, however, the metalinguistic aspects of orthographic and aural structure have been subsumed into the form of the genre and the genre itself has become integral to the literature.

In terms of subject matter, too, Danzanravjaa begins from the traditional topoi of Mongolian poetry—nature, the seasons, the nomadic life—and interweaves them with practical advice based on Buddhist wisdom to produce what in many ways is a radical and unusual corpus. In fact, it was precisely the accessibility of his lyric to the nomadic stock from which he came that set him apart from the religious establishment.

Perhaps, then, it is a striking conceit to frame Danzanravjaa as the precursor to the work of today’s young Mongolian poets. But he is just a frame. The new voices of Mongolian poetry live in a society where national pride and tradition are being deliberately focussed on the future and out into the wider world. Young poets are discovering a way to combine the nomadic poetic tradition with a Western sensibility and are thus creating what might tentatively be designated a new strand of world literature.

The nomadic life: dreams and visions

A cursory glance through the pages of Mongolian poetry will reveal that, as is the case with Mongolian culture as a whole, the experience of dreams and visions is central to the poetic aesthetic. Indeed, the repetition found in orality is a kind of enchantment, the creation of a dream state through alliteration and echo.

In fact, it is more a memory than a dream, but a memory caught in the clasp of melancholy, which characterises much of this poetry. Take, for instance, Ölziiög’s poem ‘The sound of sound striking the felt roof’.

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through which he frequently chooses to express his understanding of Buddhist teachings. But the turning of the seasons is so commonplace a focus for both contemporary and premodern literature that it would be extraordinary not to find it in the works of even the youngest and most urban(e) of writers.

So whereas Ayurzana chooses to express nature through a dream of concrete (or at least explicit) images (the silence of night, a lighted track, a rose garden) and evokes scent, that most fragile of senses, to express his sudden emotion, Ölziitögs uses the visible solidity of phenomena (an apple, a hat, butterflies, a cloud) to express something that is absent from her and yet felt absolutely.

**Accepting pain and sadness**

The complex interweaving of images in and between these two poems can be extrapolated to the work of other poets. The signature poem of Enkhboldbaatar, one of the founders of the poetry collective UB Boys, expresses a sense of desolation and confinement relative to the feelings evoked by Ayurzana and Ölziitögs. “I sit in a darkened room”, Enkhboldbaatar writes in his poem The Set (Absolute Values) extending the idea of confinement into another of the standard themes of Mongolian literature, the idea of facing the world, with all its difficulties, in a direct and self-aware way. Of course, this theme is also central to Buddhist literature, but there is perhaps a harsher – or at least a stronger – tendency in Mongolian literature (and arguably in Mongolian society as a whole) to accept pain and sadness, which can be seen in part as a manifestation of Danzanravjaa’s influence. For Danzanravjaa was scathing in his criticism of people who refused to look at and accept the entire collection, with references to flowers, the stars above; the entire cosmos takes on a central role.

**External influences: haiku and the Buddha**

The literature of neighbouring cultures has been a constant influence on Mongolian poetry. I have already mentioned the nomadic literatures of Central Asia, but of course the Buddhist poetry of Tibet and China has also exercised a powerful effect. Although Danzanravjaa never actually visited Tibet, the general monastic and specific Buddhist education that he received shows throughout his oeuvre: there are direct references to the poems of the 6th Dalai Lama, with whom he is often compared, and also less obvious references to the glu and gluas traditions of both secular and religious Tibetan poetry.

But in the contemporary world, Mongolian poetry has been influenced by cultures further abroad. Erdenezotog’s Mongolian Haiku series uses the traditional Japanese form in a loose way: rather than presenting an image followed by a short concluding idea (in the sense preferred by Basho), Erdenezotog often presents a single image over the three lines. So these are not haiku per se, but rather an adapted form, namely, Mongolian haiku: this recalls the way in which the premodern traditions of nature poetry and Buddhist poetry have been given a more modern voice.

As with traditional Japanese haiku, Erdenezotog’s Mongolian haiku evoke nature: the examples printed here are representative of the entire collection, with references to flowers, the snow, shining in the darkness, the lit candle melting down, the sound of the church bells, the stars shining in the darkness, and my Bombulei’s smile. How interesting, too, that the poet ‘feel[s] freedom in the dark darkness’. But this darkness is a natural darkness and, finally, he exchanges this reassuring darkness for the personal inner darkness of ‘my grief and sadness...’. The ellipsis here, more frequently used in Mongolian poetry than perhaps in Western poetics, seems to me to emphasise the poet’s understanding of his own futile and pointless life.

These three poets discuss the relationship between the inner and outer worlds, their inner and outer lives. This is of course not an aspect exclusive to Mongolian poetry, but I would argue that the deep sense of feeling for, and direct relationship to, nature is characteristic of Mongolian literature, at least from the earliest written sources. The nomadic instinct that informs Central Asian literature as a whole brings to the fore not only the earth and its creatures beneath, but also the heavens and the stars above; the entire cosmos takes on a central role.

**Sorrow**

I have come crawling to you,
Through arrogance and sudden drops in temperature,
Through the colours of the world and
Through the suppression of dreams.
I want to love you
With the kind of sweet affection
That can dwell only in a human being,
In my heart I mourn one thing,
That I’ve not been able to love another.
I regret I’m not a swallow on the wild steppe,
That I cannot soar to meet another.
I want to love you, to
Open the eyes of cross-legged Buddhas.
I’ve such a magic storm –
I want to make a lily in the snow glance up.
I’ve such a shining wind...
I want to love you... But
In the hazy smile of this moment
I can’t come close to you.
In this cold glow of arrogance,
I cannot come to you.
I wanted only to love you...

**Music**

Times of loud noise inside the ger
Of the fire’s smell...
The lion protects our heritage in the moonlight.
Father’s dreams underfoot,
Mother’s fingers on her rosary.
Only Buddha in their minds...
Their calm, clear eyes are heavy, their
Mantors flying.
An ornament of sound...

**L ÖLZIITÖGS (1972)**

Looking at mountains, I feel I am a mountain.
Looking at mist and haze, I feel I am a cloud.
After the rain has fallen, I feel that I am grass,
And when sparrows start to sing, I remember I am morning.

I am not a human, that’s for sure.
When stars flare up, I feel I am the darkness
When girls shed their clothes, I remember I am spring,
When I smell the desire of everybody in this world, I realise how my quiet heart is a fish’s.

I am not a human, that’s for sure.
Under the colourful sky, an immense EMPTINESS
Starting from today I am only...

**A secret whispered to God**

What do you like, God asked me in a whisper.
The sound of the church bells,
The lit candle melting down,
The snow, shining in the darkness,
And my Bombulei’s smile.

What don’t you like, God asked me in a whisper.
The sound of the church bells,
The lit candle melting down,
The snow, shining in the darkness,
And my son’s smile.
D ENKHBOLDBAATAR (1971)

A SET (ABSOLUTE VALUES)

(point (not a new start),
one (this is the real start),
comma (links a numerical sequence),
fifty-six (not an age, not an order, not anything),
comma (this could be the end),
comma (but this one’s a mistake),
another point (this delimits the values),
zero (the correct form) and, behind it, the letter O (same shape, different meaning),
infinity (this is the continuation),
point (the limit of the endless infinite),
the letter E (this is the end),
comma (starting over), and again the letter E (but this is where it starts),
comma (signal),
zero zero zero zero (four places),
the letter T (meaningless),
∞, (the most amazing (being other)),
point (geometrical), and again point (literal),
comma (this is how it ends). It means…,
continuing (this indicates the beginning) …

I sit in a darkened room,
Thinking about this and that.
The dull moon peels in through the window,
Like a woman’s eyes, gazing.
The clouds move awhile,
Plunging me into darkness.
My sight is far away now.
I feel freedom in the darkness.
From behind the clouds, the moon reappears.
Again, the room closes its walls around me.
I cannot see beyond the walls.
And close my eyes in desperation.
I leave behind the freedom of the dark,
And sit amid my grief and sadness…

(EMPHATIKOS)

Live not in song but in tears,
Don’t be too fast when you’re in love.
Be aware that you can barely see through rancour, and
In forgiveness, that all of us areinned against by life.
No, no, our fate has always been
To be an ordinary and downtrodden servant.
We have looked up to the sun,
We have had no history up to now.
My right hand tightly envelopes my left,
My heart tortures my brain.
Else desire and trust will gnaw themselves,
And my dear body will be mutilated.
We may oppose the fury of our fate,
But its hook will trick us.
As the roe deer is struck down by the hunter’s arrow,
And, helpless, collapses to its knees.
Oh yes, we are always slaves,
We are born into the hands of destiny,
And there we die.
But we must fight and,
If we fight, then death will be acceptable.
So live not in song, but in tears,
Live to endure, to struggle, and to struggle once again,
Like a sword, like a mountain cliff,
And barely able to see through righteous anger.
But, at the end, one thing:
In this struggle, you will never be victorious.
You will never win. And that’s because
There’s nothing good in anything.

(translated by Simon Wickham-Smith)

Buddha in a gulag of form

But while Erdengsetg’s haiku exemplifies the general tendency among young poets toward experimentation with common forms, almost none of them attempt to radically experiment with form itself. This is probably owing to the interplay of aesthetic conservatism in Mongolian culture and the fear of novelty and boundary-breaking that characterized Soviet culture after its initial radicalization during the 1920s. Thus there is no evidence of L=A=N=G=U=A=E poetry (a movement in experimental poetry), no abstraction, no fragmentation, no visual poetry.

I have been able to find only one poem, Enkhboldbaatar’s ‘A Set (Absolute Values),’ that pushes in any way against the envelope of form. It is a simple, line-by-line exposition of a series of numbers, letters and symbols. What appears to be a random list has, however, been infiltrated by additional punctuation and irrelevant letters, and the feeling evoked as the description continues is one of hopeless surreality. Given the arrow that ends the sequence, which ‘indicates the beginning,’ this hopeless surreality is set to continue ad nauseam.

In many ways, this abstract and apparently experimental poem repeats the feeling of the Enkhboldbaatar poem discussed above. Both poems emphasise a sense of futility, of spiralling misery, while conjuring (both literally and metaphorically) with ideas of freedom and darkness. We can positively see a source of these feelings in the situation of Soviet and post-Soviet Mongolia: the apparent hopelessness of being confined within a dictatorship has given way to perhaps an equal hopelessness democracy, where totalitarian control has been swapped for a nearly lawless free-for-all. But we can also see that other strong influence on Mongolian culture, Buddhist for Buddhists offers personal freedom but appears also to deny the sentient world; it is frequently portrayed as a via negativa, in such a way that it can be understood and, the poet remains frustrated. But the disconnect here is metaphysical; it brings to mind the inability to remember an entire, how Buddhism shows the fleeting quality of experience and, thereby, poignantly shows the poet the immediacy of his experience and thus of his mind. So the poem is also imbued with a feeling of acceptance, that this is how the world, the universe, is. This in itself a realisation of wisdom, an acceptance of the nature of reality, and expresses the influence of Buddhism upon Mongolian culture.

Language over meaning: the sound of thoughts conveyed

However, we can no longer characterise Buddhist thought as inherent to the Mongolian psyche. Seventy years of MPRP domination reduced explicit Buddhist practice to a minimum, although domestic and international efforts are trying to revive it. A more coherent understanding of Buddhism’s place in the contemporary literary scene can be found in the work of Bavuur. On a superficial level, there are copious references to Buddhism throughout his work, on a deeper level, however, it is the atmosphere created by his language in which Bavuur’s approach to spirituality is revealed. This atmosphere relates perhaps to a kind of animated aesthetic, as though the ‘real’ world were somehow crossed with a cartoon. The imagery thus becomes somewhat distorted and simpler, though in places it is considerably more potent and vivid.

‘A Very Big White Elephant’, for instance, refers to the ‘precious elephant’, which represents the strength of an enlightened mind, one of the Buddha’s seven royal attributes. So while this is a poem about a marauding elephant, it is also a poem about the nature of the enlightened mind. This particular approach to Buddhism might be seen as a kind of spiritual re-evaluation, even revolution. After all, this elephant has not only ‘commandeered’/ ‘Golden-temples, shining with blood’, he has also ‘left, shutting the eyes of the mighty and returned, shaking East and West’. That this appears to be only a reference to the precious elephant, rather than a poem specifically about it, leaves the semantic field open for individual interpretation, not unlike the fundamental openness of Buddhist practice.
On the spiritual level, then, 'A Very Big, White Elephant' is slightly unhinged, a dervish of a poem, where the poet's created world is more conducive to ecstasy than to contemplative calm. ‘Music’, on the other hand, is a quiet and diaphanous poem. Dwelling in the past, it is a conjuring of memory, of a family scene where harmony is effected through an upholding of tradition and Buddhist practice. In this way, we can see how Bavuudorj presents the traditional, ger-dwelling nomadic lifestyle within the context of a peaceful remembrance. There are commonalities here with other contemporary Mongolian poets, not least of them Mend-Oyoo, one of the most important voices of the generation prior to Bavuudorj’s. But among these young poets, the language of vision and memory points backwards to the national cultural traditions and forwards to a new way of looking at the changing world of Mongolian society: neither wholly nomadic nor wholly urban, neither wholly Buddhist nor wholly atheist.

Contemporary Mongolian poetry has suffered from being reared during the cultural isolation of the Soviet era, but it is nonetheless a vibrant force among Central Asian poetics. The work of these five young writers not only addresses the common themes of nomadic literatures but also the Buddhist tradition with which Mongolians are now starting to reconnect. In this way, then, these poets are closely following the tradition of Dzananjyaa, expressing their ideas of love and separation, of spirituality, of the natural world in a straightforward manner and with direct language. Furthermore, the almost total lack of formal experimentation bespeaks an almost total lack of formal experimentation bespeaks an emphasis on content over form, which reflects the practical nature of a nomadic culture.

But at the root of these poems there remains the visionary, dreamlike quality, a thread stretching back through the history of Mongolian literature. This quality is frequently expressed in dreamlike quality, a thread stretching back through the history of Mongolian literature. This quality is frequently expressed. Sound in the original is all but lost in translation, for poets such as the 6th Dalai Lama, Drukpa and Nyam-Ochir and is at the forefront of the small but influential Dalai Lama literary scene. The group’s English motto sums them up perfectly: ‘We are an oath to the state, an undimmed sadness.

A poet’s song, offered to humanity, is a song of freedom, a string of birds, a smile long gone, a poet’s verse, offered to the winter moon, is a burning love, a poet’s feelings, offered to the summer skies, is a flash of stars, the sun still burns untamed, waterweeds, swimming under a grass-green moon, next to my pillow, the moon a string of birds and clouds leave flowers with eyes of tears, as spring days long for rain, my thoughts find no rest.

In your absence

In my eyes there are butterflies, a felt hat, mirror and candle. In my eyes there are women, an apple, trees and a bird. In my eyes there are clocks, a key, cloud and the sky. In my eyes there is everything, except for you. Even the wings of the butterfly and the nice felt hat cause me sadness. Because you are not here, the sun is not yellow and the tree is not green. If I can’t see you and I can’t hear you, I don’t need ears and eyes, I don’t need anything.

In the dark, in the dark alone, you appear, There, where the whole world, time and existence, grow dim. I will close my eyes, therefore, Oh, this burdening light, this burdening sun...
Southeast Asia: an additional bibliographical tool


Jürg Schneider

T
t is spite of the abundance of printed bibliographies and increasing rel-

ance on internet-based tools and infor-
mation, this bibliography can usefully

support general and introductory read-
ing on Southeast Asia in the social sci-
dences. There are plenty of bibliographies

to serve the needs of researchers on

Southeast Asia. Kemp’s relatively recent (1998) Bibliographies of South-

east Asia published by KITLV lists over

5,360 bibliographies of which 433 refer to

the region as a whole. The remain-


remaining close if one thousand entries refer to more

specialised subject or geographical bib-

liographies. The magnificent indexes

of Kemp’s publication greatly facilitate

efforts to find specialised bibliographies

on the region, or any of its parts.

Contrary to what its title seems to indi-
cate, Antweiler’s (2004a) contribution,

Southeast Asia – A Bibliography on Socie-
ties and Cultures, is not a comprehensive

reference bibliography of publications

treating individual societies and cul-
tures within Southeast Asia. His aim is

rather to provide an ‘orientation about
general books on the whole region as

well as on books about specific topics

which are trans-nationally relevant with-
in Southeast Asia’ (Antweiler 2004:3). Perceiving the lack of short, general and

interdisciplinary bibliographies featur-
ing publications on Southeast Asia from

a general (regional) or disciplinary point

of view, Antweiler has collected about

900 references. These titles are pre-
sented in alphabetical order by author

name, without annotations. However,
deviating from the general rule of a

regional focus, some works on specific

topics or ethnic groups are included if

they are of ‘exemplary relevance’ or of

‘general importance for the region’. In

practical terms, this refers to studies that

have greatly influenced Southeast

Asian research and can now be consid-

ered classics, such as Freeman’s (1958)

study on ‘Iban Agricultural’. Evidently,

there is a lot of discretion at work here

regarding what one would consider a

work of exemplary relevance.

Coming with no indices, this book would

be difficult to use if it did not include

a CD-ROM with all its contents on a

word file. This allowed me to perform a

number of searches on the CD-ROM to

find out more about the potential uses

of the bibliography. A simple full-text

search on the term ‘history’ for exam-

ple produced around 40 titles, most of

which would be of genuine interest to

anybody intent to read up on Southeast

Asian history. As Antweiler indicates

in the preface, the references selected

are among the greatest part relatively

recent publications (post 1980s). The

English language dominates, but some

German and French publications are

also included.

Looking for broad introductory mate-

rial on forest issues in the region, I

obtained 14 references from a search

on ‘forest’, covering various disciplines,

also a good start to get a first over-

view of the subject. A final example: A

search on ‘agriculture’ yielded nine hits,

relatively low given the long impor-
tance of the subject to Southeast Asian

studies. This indicates that the compila-
tion is also a function of the research

interests of the authors, and that subjects of similar importance

may have received differential treat-

ment. In addition, search terms need

to be quite generic to produce useful

results. Also, a certain familiarity with

research on Southeast Asia is required to

assess the value of a search result as

the author provides us with no fur-

ther information or annotations on the

entries selected.

Thus, selectivity and interdisciplinarity
can be considered as the two merits of

Antweiler’s compilation. Drawing from

a narrow sample focusing on the region

as a whole, search results will tend to be

small and focused. The user is spared

long lists of hits that he or she would

then have to narrow down further. The

range of disciplines covered – from

anthropology, sociology, history, geogra-

phy to economics – may provide useful

leads into any of the disciplines of

this vast field of study.

A shortcoming is the lack of a review

section introducing the major discipli-

nary traditions and research areas rep-

resented in this collection which would

expand on the remarks on selec-
tion criteria in the introduction.

In sum, this book – or rather the accom-

panying CD-ROM – can be used to iden-
tify generally and comparative studies on

Southeast Asia. Thus, it may be useful for

those who want to find material for

introductory courses on Southeast Asia,

but also for researchers of specialized

topics within the region who are try-

ning to identify studies with a broader or

more comparative view.

References


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China & Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-Imperial World

By John W. Garver

University of Washington Press, Seattle 2006
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In recent years, Iran’s nuclear aspirations have dominated its relations with the US and Europe. China stands as Iran’s staunchest ally on the UN security Council, as well as its principal economic partner. It is a key component in Iran’s relations with the US and Europe. China stands as Iran’s closest ally, as well as its principal economic partner. It is a key component in Iran’s efforts to modernise its military and oil industry infrastructure.

Iran’s efforts to modernise its military and oil industry infrastructure have been a result of more than a decade of research. It also includes China’s role in assisting these programmes and supporting them. The massive urbanisation of contemporary China. This collection brings together some of the most recent original research on this emerging cinema and its relationship to Chinese society.

The contributors analyse the historical and social conditions that gave rise to the Urban Generation, its aesthetic innova-
tion, and its ambivalent relationship to China’s mainstream film industry and the international film market. Focusing attention on the Urban Generation’s sense of social urgency, its documentary impulses, and its representations of gender and sexuality, the contributors highlight the characters who populate this new urban cinema – ordinary and marginal-
ized city dwellers including aimless malefians, petty thieves, prostitutes, postal workers, taxi drivers, migrant workers – and the fact that these “floating urban subjects” are often portrayed by non-professional actors. Some essays concen-
trate on specific films (such as Shower and Sachas River) or filmmakers (including Liu Zhangke and Zhang Yuan), while others survey broader concerns. Together the thirteen essays in this collection give a multifaceted account of a significant, ongoing cinematic and cultural phenomenon.
**The Really Forgotten Korean War**


If the Korean War of 1592-98 is still often labelled a ‘forgotten war’, then what about the Imjin War of 1592-98? While there are now literally hundreds of works available in Western languages on the Korean War, Samuel Hawley’s volume is only the second devoted solely to the Hidyoshi invasions, and the first to give them their full due. Although the war is undoubtedly a key event in world history, even a basic description of its development was until recently unavailable. Previously, the only facet of the invasions that managed to draw the West’s attention were the exploits of Admiral Yi Sun-sin and his alleged invention of ironclad ‘turtle ships’.

This is a pity, because the Imjin War was a major event in the final stages of the traditional East Asian world order and in the transition to the modern period. The pragmatic, militaristic Japanese, spurred on by the megalomaniac warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi, clashed with the idealistic Confucian bureaucracies of Ming China and Choson Korea. An international war of a kind never seen before, it was perhaps the first example of modern warfare, with the speed, organisation and sheer size of the invading Japanese force unrivalled until the modern period: the more than 150,000 men conquered the 450 kilometres from Pusan to Seoul in just 20 days.

The war is also important in world history as a case study of the effects of Western missionary, trade and military expansion: the muskets that were perfected and used to such devastating effect by the Japanese had been introduced by the Portuguese in the 1540s, while many of the Japanese commanders and their troops were Christian converts. A Spanish missionary accompanying Japanese troops went back to the West its first eyewitness accounts of Korea, and missionaries or traders also introduced plants from the New World, such as red pepper and tobacco. Hideyoshi introduced plants from the New World, such as red pepper and tobacco. Hideyoshi. A Spanish missionary accompanied the Choson army suffered from the neglect and discrimination of Confucian officials, it drew heavily from Chinese military classics, which clearly inspired key military decisions. This is clear in General Sin Rip’s defence of Ch’ungju. Hawley shows that his strategy of ‘fighting with a river to one’s back’ was not mere folly but rather based on Chinese nautical precedent. By cutting off all escape routes for his untrained and inexperienced men, he hoped they would fight for their lives (pages 154-8).

While this reliance on Chinese military manuals proved disastrous on land, it worked very well at sea, where the Japanese had no answer for Yi Sun-sin’s superior battle strategies.

**Accommodating the lay reader to a fault**

The author uses secondary sources responsibly, but the shortcomings of relying mainly on English-language sources are obvious, as many date back to the very beginning of Western scholarship on Korea and Japan. Many primary sources, meanwhile, demand more rigorous criticism, for they may have served to paint their authors in a flattering light, as may have been the case for Yi Sung-yeong’s war reflections. Also, a few of the author’s generalisations are open to question, for example, that the Koreans did not need Chinese intervention, or that the Japanese were good fighters when defending high ramparts and bad ones when standing the ground of their adversaries.

It is disappointing that the author decided to apply remansation standards very loosely. All diacritics have been omitted, not only the macrons on Japanese vowels and the breves on Korean vowels, but also the apostrophes indicating aspiration. Thus the city of Ch’ungju is rendered as ‘Ch’ongju’ throughout, but with many similar place names (besides Ch’ongju there is also Ch’onju and Ch’ungjon), readers unfamiliar with Korean geography will be confused.

Japanese ‘megalomaniac warlord’ Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

Moreover, different remansation systems are often mixed, especially the McCune-Reischauer system and the Revised Romanisation System of Korea: thus we find ‘Kwak Jae-‘u’ instead of Kwak Chae-u (Mc-K) or Gwak Jae-u (Revised). Note also that many maps show battle formations at major engagements.

Perhaps these were editorial decisions in the interest of making the work more accessible to the general reader, but I think they are counterproductive, as they tend to confuse rather than simplify. On the whole, however, the author has succeeded in providing us with a much needed reference work which gives us all the basic facts about a devastating conflict that is crucial in understanding the recent history of northeast Asia. What remains to be done, however, is to move beyond the details of the battlefield into the realm of political, economic, cultural and social history to reveal the larger contours and effects of the Imjin War.

notes
2. The expression “oi shia y’i ebat”, literally “fighting with the river at your back”, was often used to mean “either win or die”. This expression came from the battle of Jöngkingou, in which the military commander Han Xin deliberately stationed his troops facing the enemy, with their backs to the river, leaving no escape route. The knowledge that there was no way out but victory or death inspired the soldiers to fight harder.

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A turtle ship replica at the military museum in Seoul.
The hegemony of Western music in colonised cultures led to the subsequent decline of traditional music making because of its relegation from central ritual and social functions to ‘native’ and ‘tribal’ contexts, such as entertainment for tourists or celebration of the past. The performances of gamelan (orchestras) on Bali, and as discussed by Helen Rees (2006), Naxi music in China’s Yunnan province are only two examples. Alternatively, one of the positive effects of colonialism for instance remains the introduction of the Western violin in South Indian Karnatic music (Meunier 2006; Weidman 2006).

Consensus and conflict

Governmental and religious music censor-ship is just one of the themes dis- cussed in Music and Manipulation. All contributors consider music as a com- munication system and take the social production of music rather than music itself as a starting-point for the under- standing of the relationship between music and society. Music can create both consensus and conflict as it is ‘a major tool for propagating group ide- ology’ (Stenhill), and as such serves as an important device for reinforcing collective actions and for delineating the lines of inclusion for social groups’ (p. 2). Importantly, while being part of a trans-national entertainment industry, music today has become a significant economic commodity. On the whole, the role of music in contemporary society raises moral questions in relation to censorship, propaganda, commercialisation and globalisation. Following a Preface by the editors and an introduction by Steven Brown, the book is divided in two main sections: eight chapters subdivided in three parts on the social use of music (‘Manipulation by Music’) and five chap- ters in two parts on the social control of music (‘Manipulation of Music’).

In the first part ‘Music Events’, Ellen Dissnayake draws parallels between ‘the evolutionary (biological) process of “ritualization” in animal communi- cation and the ritual (cultural) use of musical behaviour in human rites or ceremonies’ (p. 34). Despite the com- mericality of music today, she believes that ‘it is still possible in music to set aside, to some degree, everyday knowl- edge and experience so that...we can enter an “extra-ordinary” state, some- times even feeling transformed’ (p. 55). Peter J. Martin argues that going to a modern classical, jazz, pop or any other concert, shows signs of formalised ritual and reinforces identity. Ulrik Vogtzen, then, emphasises that both the language around music, that is culturally internal- ised by the listener, and mass media pro- vide increasing possibilities for musical manipulation. In part two ‘Background Music’, Adrian C. North and David J. Hargreaves unsurprisingly make clear that ‘it is extremely difficult to predict how customers or staff will react to a particular piece of music because any response to music is determined by three interacting factors, namely, the music itself, the listener, and the listen- ing situation’ (p. 177). Steven Brown and Tizere Thurrell question the validity of the dogma that ‘good music is good for you’. In their opinion, twentieth cen- tury music therapists and musical heal- ers of all times and places uncrutically ‘ignore social factors such as listening context, personal history, culture, and even species; in other words, all ignore music as a communication system’ (p. 145). Likewise, the idea (based on exper- iments with rats) that listening to the music of Mozart enhances performance of spatial reasoning tasks completely overlooks personal and cultural differ- ences. Undoubtedly, music can produce immediate physiological and psycholog- ical effects on people ‘but the extent to which there is a deterministic relation- ship between a given musical parameter and its effect’ is independent of cultural mediation and individual experience’ remains to be questioned (p. 149). In part three ‘Audiovisual Media’, the essays by, respectively, Philip Tagg, Rob Strachan and Claudia Bullerjahn consider the manipulative potential of music that occurs in a wide range of music media - including film, television, commercials and music videos - as well as at music events and as background music. In part four ‘Governmental/Industrial Control’, Marie Korpe, Ole Rettov and Martin Clonan focus on religion and government as the two main agents of music censorship. Besides the former Soviet bloc, Nani Germany, South Africa and the United States (where jazz and rock music have been called the work of Satan), they also refer to the extreme cases of music censorship in Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini and in Afghanistan under the Taliban. Afterwards, Joseph Moreno discusses the bizarre employ- ment of music during the Holocaust and Roger Wallis deals with the indus- trial control of music (i.e. the world of music copyright and the record- ing industry). In part five ‘Control by Resale’ Ola Stockfelt looks at the moral questions surrounding the re-use of music. Closely related, Ulrik Vogtzen and Yvonne Akerberg investigate the pros and cons of music copyright and, for example, ask themselves: ‘who would find it logical to pay a fee to Einstein (or his heirs) every time “his” knowledge would be used for something?’ (p. 355). In the epilogue, the editors reconsider the ambiguous relationship between music and morality without giving any definite resolution.

The light of Asia

Music and Manipulation is a timely book that, despite the overtly theoretical and repetitive style of writing, sets a standard for new research in this area and therefore deserves to be read widely. On the whole, disappointingly, the authors do not provide precise explanations about music’s powerful effects on people but, even so, their contributions contain fascinating material for further study. Moreover, the issues dealt with solely concern Western musical prac- tice and their treatment in the light of musical developments in Asia would surely extend our knowledge of music as a mode of communication. Much research is still needed in relation to the emergence of music as a commodity in a global market in the Asian context. In fact, perhaps more than in the West, it is the market rather than religion and/or state that controls (and censors) musical life in Asia today. The endless process of illegal CD’s, DVD’s and video’s as part of a global music market certainly stands in clear opposition to the Western feudal vision of property of music not being ownership. And how to explain the overall success of background music and Karaoke bars in Asia? What are the musical manipula- tions behind all this music and why is it always played so incredibly loudly in Indian buses? Equally, the controlling developments and changes in musical style and sound, musical behaviour and musical conceptualisation as a result of colonialism merits further schol- arly investigation. Recently, Gregory D. Booth (2005) wrote about the (colonial) history and social role of Indian wed- ding bands. Likewise, for example, a study of the influence of Christian hymnody and the harmonium on north Indian popular music traditions or one about the manner in which Sikh sacred music was canonised. Colonial rule would be welcome.

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Bob van der Linden (Ph.D., University of Amsterdam 2004) is a historian of modern music and musicology. His book Tradition, Rationality and Social Con- sciousness: the Singh Sahiba, Ayna Samaj and Akhmatdial Moral Languages from Colonial Persia, 1761-1941 (2007) was published by Delhi and his new research project concerns the relationship between music and empire in Britain and India.
Japanese apologies


Gerhard Krebs

T
he Japanese government turns a blind eye to the country’s colonial and second world war misdeeds – so goes the oft-heard criticism that periodically creates tension throughout the Far East. Jane Yamazaki, however, challenges the view that Japan has never apologised for past crimes, and argues instead that the rest of the world has turned a deaf ear on repeated Japanese expressions of regret. In recent decades Tokyo has apologised several times in different ways ranging from merely making excuses to expressing sincere regret. The problem often lies in language, since Japanese can be difficult to translate or leave a lot of room for interpretation. Yamazaki, therefore, not only details the history of Japan’s multiple apologies; concentrating on the years between 1984 and 1995, she also analyses their rhetoric and translates different expressions.

From ‘hansei’ to ‘chishma’: how to say ‘sorry’?

Yamazaki begins her chronology of Japanese apologies with the 1965 normalisation of relations with South Korea, when Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe expressed ‘true regret’ (makotoniikai) and ‘deep remorse’ (fukakanshi) over an ‘unfortunate period in our countries’ history’. Japan later used the same term in a joint communiqué when it normalised relations with China in 1972. ‘The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself [fukakanshi].’ ‘Hansei’ (remorse, ‘reflection’) is actually a weak expression of apology. Even sooner was Emperor Hirohito’s reference to Japan’s treatment of China during the second world war while visiting President Ford in 1975: ‘The peoples of both countries – endured a brief, unfortunate ordeal as storms raged in the usually quiet Pacific’. Three years later, when Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping visited Japan, Hirohito referred to the past by merely saying, ‘At one time, there were unfortunate events between our countries’.

In 1982 a controversy erupted over alleged revisions of Japanese history in school textbooks. Following what was perceived by many as Japan’s less than diplomatic handling of the situation, violent reactions occurred in China and South Korea. The rising tensions induced Japanese politicians to apologise more clearly, though they still used the rather lightweight ‘hansei’. In 1983, for example, on the United Nations’ 40th anniversary, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro declared, ‘Since the end of the war, Japan has profoundly regretted [koshishakuhansei] the unleashing of rampant ultra nationalism and militarism and the war that brought great devastation to the people of many countries around the world and to our country as well’. While regretting past wrongs, Yasuhiro stressed that Japan had suffered, too, a tactic repeated by other politicians.

The stronger ‘owabi’ (‘apology’) was first expressed in 1990, by Prime Minister Kaifu Yoshiro. He referred to Japan’s reference to the Second World War to South Korea’s President Roh, and has been used regularly since: ‘the people of the Korean peninsula experienced unbearable grief and suffering because of actions of our country…we [will] be humbly remorseful [hansei] on this and wish to note our frank feelings of apology (owabi)’. Simultaneously, however, Japan stubbornly denied maintaining second world war ‘comfort stations’ with forced prostitutes, most of them Korean. Cornered by Japanese historians, Cabinet Secretary Katō Kôichi publicly apologised to the ‘victims’ (higaishin) in January 1992. Visiting Korea the same month, Prime Minister Miyazawa Kôichî even called Japan the aggressor/perpetrator (kagaisha).

Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro’s August 1993 apology resembled Kaifu’s in 1990, but with one addition that other politicians later reiterated several times that Japan ‘will demonstrate a new determination by contributing more than ever before to world peace’. Hosokawa’s cabinet included three ministers of the Socialist Party, which had been calling for reconciliation with other Asian peoples and ‘sincere Japanese apologies to achieve that goal’. In Korea in November 1993, Hosokawa ‘apologised from the heart (chishma) for Japan’s past colonial rule’, calling his country the aggressor/perpetrator (kagaisha). The Japanese public approved of his mention of ‘aggression’ and ‘colonial rule’, but conservatives bristled. Having gone beyond what fellow party members and his coalition government were willing to admit, Hosokawa was at times forced to backtrack. Nevertheless, the next Prime Minister, Hata Tsutomu, uttered almost the same words in a May 1994 Diet speech.

In August 1995, as the 50th anniversary of the second world war’s end approached, the Socialist Murayama Tomiichi led a coalition government that included his long-time enemy, the conservative LDP. A known pacifist and advocate of non-alignment, neutrality and a closer relationship with Asian nations, Murayama apologised differently than Kaifu, Miyazawa or Hosokawa had, yet the world took him much more seriously. Ironically, his statement of apology advocate undermined his own government’s recognition of his apology: after a long debate and vociferous right wing pressure, the resulting Diet resolution was so watered down that the word ‘apology’ didn’t even appear. This reinforced the world outside Japan’s impression that Japan had never apologised at all. Later prime ministers, all of them conservative, restated Murayama’s apology almost verbatim.

The politics of apology: why say sorry?

Other nations also hâte to apologise for wrongdoings, the author writes, and cites as an example the long overdue American apology to Japanese-Americans for their internment during the second world war. She finds American and British apologies are typically selective and ignore broader cases such as slavery, the use of napalm in Vietnam, the Second World War. Indeed, when France passed a law, in February 2005, requiring history education in schools and universities to emphasise the ‘positive role’ of the French colonial presence on other continents, it spurred harsh criticism by the French left and vehement protests in the countries concerned, above all in Algeria and the Antilles.

As for Japan, Yamazaki admits that its apologies are sometimes expressed only in a general way concerning war, aggression, war atrocities or colonial rule. She also provides several examples of apology for specific violent events or practices, such as the Nanking massacre, biochemical warfare, sexual slavery, and mistreatment of allied soldiers and civilians. Japan’s reasons for apologising, according to Yamazaki, are several: to repair relations with Asian countries; to stimulate national pride, holding that Japan should concentrate on present and future problems instead of dwelling on past failures and focus on present and future problems; to assert leadership in Asia. But the author sees Japan’s apologies as insufficient, her evidence that they have been expressed is convincing. But the period covered by Yamazaki’s study ended over ten years ago. Since that time, regardless of any apologies expressed, Prime Minister Koizumi’s numerous visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and the Ministry of Education’s approval of a controversial textbooks, (in 2001 and 2005), that present a ‘new view’ of national history, has renewed a perception of Japan as an unrepentant. Still, Yamazaki’s book is a valuable response to the question of how Japan has dealt with its own history and of how the world has, or has not, responded.

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Japanese left-wing groups, unlike conservatives, are vehemently antimilitaristic and see the second world war as an instance of Japanese imperialism. Advocating closer ties with China, Korea and other Asian countries, they consistently demand a more remorseful stance and compensation for victims of Japanese aggression. The different political attitudes – conservatives versus left-wing – are also reflected in the choice of expressions: ‘comfort women’ versus ‘sex slaves’, ‘Nanking incident’ versus ‘Nanking massacre’, ‘China Incident’ versus ‘China War’. Yamazaki sees the conservative aversion to apology as a position of a massochistic view of history and also of a fear that apologising would imply the Emperor’s responsibility, if not culpability. But she neglects to sufficiently address conservatives’ fear that admission of guilt would invite demands for compensation.

Appearing unrepentant

The author believes that the South Korean government was ready to accept Japan’s 1965 apology – its ‘hansei’ – on the occasion of normalising relations – but that the Korean public was not. The Chinese government’s situation was similar, she says, but it later changed its attitude. Unfortunately, Yamazaki’s study ends with the year 1995, after which the Chinese repeatedly campaigned to blame Japan for its alleged lack of sensibility.

Other Asian countries believe Japan shouldn’t feel guilty or apologise at all. Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Burma and Indonesia have taken a neutral attitude, holding that Japan should concentrate on present and future problems instead of wasting time and energy on historiographical reflection. They support the position of Japanese apologists, who claim that the second world war was fought for the liberation of Asia from white domination. Taiwan’s reticence, meanwhile, probably reflects its ambivalence toward its former coloniser (1895-1945), close economic partner and ally in its campaign for recognition as the legitimate government of China, at least until Taipei lost that fight in 1972.

The author herself admits that some Japanese apologies have been insufficient, her evidence that they have been expressed is convincing. But the period covered by Yamazaki’s study ended over ten years ago. Since that time, regardless of any apologies expressed, Prime Minister Koizumi’s numerous visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and the Ministry of Education’s approval of controversial textbooks, (in 2001 and 2005), that present a ‘new view’ of national history, have renewed a perception of Japan as an unrepentant. Still, Yamazaki’s book is a valuable response to the question of how Japan has dealt with its own history and of how the world has, or has not, responded.

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Parting the Mists


Lucien van Valen

Aida Yuen Wong’s Parting the Mists portrays Japan as having exerted a positive and dynamic role in the development of ‘national-style painting’ in China. Using art, historical and linguistic sources, Wong focuses on the gradual transition to modernism in traditional Chinese art circles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a disturbing period of social and political unrest in China, when its artists looked to Europe and Japan. Foreign influences in technique and imagery were used by some and despised by others. In Wong’s vision Japanese influence is responsible for the emerging guohua (‘national-style painting’) as a style of modern Chinese painting. Coupling art and politics, she takes the discourse to a another level: ‘Despite its imperialistic ambition in China, Japan emerges...as a critical ingredient in China’s imagina- tion of “the nation”...the forging of a nationalist tradition in modern China was frequently pursued in association with, rather than in rejection of, Japan.’

It is very likely that the Chinese were influenced by their oppressor during that dramatic period in history, but I doubt the Chinese will ever be able to accept Wong’s concept. (It’s a starting point I myself find hard to digest). That said, the book reveals many interesting personal meetings and well document- ed anecdotes, for example, about the exchange of works of art.

Overlooked evidence

To support her theory Wong analyses several aspects of the artistic discourse; she addresses the education of Chinese intellectuals and artists in Japan and meetings between artists and entrepre- neurs, and provides rich information on early 20th century Chinese histories of art written by Chinese or Japanese con- nocisseurs. At the beginning of the 20th century large numbers of Chinese art- ists and intellectuals travelled to Japan, as Wong writes, ‘to be educated’ (p. xxix), language that suggests the trend was the equivalent of Japanese development aid to the Chinese. She provides a detailed overview of the early art his- torical surveys published in Japan and China, basing her argument on her analysis and comparison of their struc- ture and content. Few European examples are mentioned and she focuses mainly on Japanese written sources.

Wong presents several paintings as evi- dence of her theory. Of Horse and Groom by Zhang Daqian (Chiang Dai-chiang, 1894-1983, p. 19), which was exhib- ited in a Zhang retrospective at Wash- ington, D.C.’s Sackler Gallery, Wong writes, ‘The animals twisted torso and dancing hooves, as well as the groom’s strained posture, were not taken from the Tang dynasty or the Song dynasty, as stated in the catalogue, but from Meiji Japan.’ Zhang’s painting closely resem- bles Kano Hogo’s Gallant Steed under a Cherry Tree, a work shown at the Second Domestic Painting Exhibition in Tokyo in 1884.2 Although Wong might be cor- rect in her assumption that Zhang must have known Kano Hogo’s painting at least in reproduction, her conclusion is mistaken. In the Sackler collection I have seen the original painting that is identified as the model for Zhang’s painting: Tartare Horsemen and a Rolling Horse.3 If we compare Zhang’s painting with this 14th century work, it’s evident that this theme has been part of Chi- nese imagery for centuries, and long before the Hogo painting. Wong must have overlooked this painting in her comparison.

This leads to another flaw. China always had a strong tradition of artists follow- ing the great masters of the past, which have been discussed and hon-oured in traditional Chinese paint- ing manuals. To illustrate her argument that modernism in Chinese art history books must be ascribed to Japanese influence, Wong sometimes turns to ‘facts’ that are not solid. For example, in chapter two, ‘Nationalism and the writ- ing of new histories’, Zheng Wuchang (1894-1952) is presented as an ‘art- ist-cum-art teacher’ and a promoter of guohua. Zheng wrote several books on Chinese art and, according to Wong, ‘was determined to prove that Chinese art was more than capable of writing their own history of art’ (pp. 49-50). Yet on the next page she writes, ‘Although Zheng Wuchang was not beholden to Fukuzawa, Taguchi, or any single Japan- ese scholar in particular, he must have known the two surveys by Omura Sei- gai and Pan Tianshou.’ Wong repeated- ly uses ‘must have known’ to establish facts to prove her argument.

Japanese ‘Chinese-ness’?

In her concluding chapter, ‘Six Exhibi- tions and Sino-Japanese Diplomacy’, Wong presents a string of events and meetings between Chinese artists and their Japanese colleagues as a final proof of her theory. But for at least two centuries before this period, in certain circles Japanese intellectuals had been copying ‘Chinese-ness.’

Giving parts of this tradition back to China can hardly qualify as ‘Japanese influence’. Rather, mutual influence between Japanese and Chinese art has been indisputably present over a long period of history.

I enjoyed reading the book for the over- all impression it presented of a time of great change and moments of contact between two great Eastern traditions, but I am not persuaded by the writer’s theory that Japan was ‘the critical ingre- dent in China’s imagination of “the nation”’. I want to come back to the term guohua in connection to ‘nationalism’. Wong writes, ‘The bison ‘guohua was derived from the Japanese kokuga’ (page 12). In fact, traditional Chinese painting was, and still is, called Zhongguohua, 中国画, in contrast to Yōnghua, 日本画, ‘for- eign painting’. The term guohua, 国画, can be taken as short for Zhongguohua. Guo, 国, means country and Zhong, 中国, is the chinese name for China, while hua, 花, means painting. But Wong argues that guohua, 国画, is adopted from the Japanese kokuga, 藝術, a mere comparison of the written characters makes Wong’s argument dis- appear into the mist.

Notes

3. Tartare Horsemen and a Rolling Horse. 14th-15th century. Silk on panel, 120 cm x 65.5 cm; Acc. No. F 1916.526.

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This beautifully produced and printed book presents a visual and historic record of the development of the city of Lucknow, (Uttar Pradesh, India), from its establishment as the Nawabi capital in 1775 until its annexation by the British East India Company in 1856. The main visual source of the material used is the fabulous Alkazi photo collection. This naturally brings the focus of the book on the second half of the 19th century. A time when photography developed from pioneering activities into professionalism and advancing photomechanical techniques resulted in the birth of the postcard, around 1895. A selection of photographs dating from the 1850s to the 1920s testify of the birth of the postcard, around 1895. A selection of photographs dating from the 1850s to the 1920s testify to the many photographs and other illustrations which are rendered to sketch Lucknow’s development from a Nawabi capital into a spatial organisation influenced by European styles and programmes of decorations, testifying to the growing political pressure on the indigenous rulers, the Awadhi nawabs. Whereas Sophie Gordon focuses on the indigenous rulers, the Awadhi nawabs. Whereas Sophie Gordon focuses on the nine royal palaces which form the dream world of Nawabi culture from 1739 onwards, E. Alkazi and Peter Chełkowski focus on Lucknow’s number one monument – the Monumental grief Architecture is the focus of the book as it is the only means to express not only the city ‘s former wealth, but also the effects of general decay and the partial destruction caused by the ‘1857-58 Uprising’, (a mutiny by Indian soldiers serving under the British Army), in which ‘large sectors of a once radiant and sparkling city were reduced to rubble’, (p.7). Lucknow was transformed into a city of severe grief. The albumen prints of the Greek-British photographer Felice Beato (1834-c.1907) are the main source for studying the city’s architecture and design in the direct aftermath of the mutiny and are well represented in the book.” Beato is regarded as one of the first war photographers, documenting army campaigns and their devastating effects. The moment he heard of the mutiny and are well represented in the book. From Kothi to country house But the book is not meant to commemorate the Uprising. Its seven contributors construct a contextual background to the many photographs and other illustrations which are rendered to sketch Lucknow’s development from a Nawabi capital into a spatial organisation influenced by European styles and programmes of decorations, testifying to the growing political pressure on the indigenous rulers, the Awadhi nawabs. Whereas Sophie Gordon focuses on the nine royal palaces which constituted the dream world of Nawabi culture from 1739 onwards, E. Alkazi and Peter Chełkowski focus on Lucknow’s number one monument – the records of human and monumental disaster. His photographs of the human remains of the slaughter of around 2000 sepoys in Lucknow’s Sikandar Bagh are renowned, but it is his images of the ruined city which are featured in this book. The prints evoke the oppressive atmosphere of a city in ruins, with its ‘sounds of silence’. The absence of people in the compositions and the limited tone scale of 19th century photography, add a sense of drama. The eight enlargements of Beato’s 360 degree panoramic views taken from the minarets of the Asafi Mosque within the Great Imambara Complex, have great historic value and also bear witness to the British efforts to hastily dispose of any references to the city’s former glory by general clearance.

Felice Beato, albumen print 1858. Four albumen photographs from a set of eight views taken from one of the minarets of the Asafi Mosque, Great Imambara, Lucknow.

Felice Beato, albumen print 1858. Panorama of the Husainabad Imambara, Lucknow. The Alkazi Collection
The privately owned Alkazi Archive is available for scholars in New York, London and New Delhi and comprises 75,000 photographs of South Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. The book also includes a few 1858 views by Alixis de la Grange, Captain J. Milleken, P.G. Fitzgerald, Ahmad Ali Khan and Robert and Harriet Tytler. For a selection of his Delhi views see Jim Masselos & Narayani Gupta Beato’s Delhi 1857, 1997. Delhi, 2000: Ravi Dayal Publisher.

In brief, a marvellous book of serious scholarship and perfectly reproduced prints, which brings out the technical characteristics of each photograph. Revealing the splendours of Lucknow’s past, and to some extent, its present, was a must. If its architecture had not been the victim of such a monumental disaster, it would surely have become one of India’s most beautiful cities.

Bara Imambara or the Asafi Imambara. Built by Kifayutaullah between 1784-1791, this is the world’s largest complex devoted to the rituals and cult of Shia Imam Husain, who was massacred by Sunni muslims in Karbala (Iraq) in 680. Alkazi presents Beato’s 360 degree photographic survey of the complex - a cluster of buildings and open spaces formed by mosques, gateways, tombs and bazaars; Chelkowski provides a religious and cult framework. The still extant Husainabad Imambara, built by Muhammad Ali Shah in 1837-78, is another example of an Islamic monument of grief’. In Neeta Das’ contribution ‘The country houses of Lucknow’, we witness the process of acculturation between Nawabi and Western architectural styles. Das discusses fourteen ‘villa type’ houses (kothis) made by and for the European and Indian elite between the late-18th and early-19th century. The oldest kothi dates back to 1775 and was built by Captain Marsack for nawab Asaf-ud-daula, whereas nawab Saadat Ali Khan, who commissioned several houses and roads, showed a strong predilection for ‘things European’. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones traces the history of the Residency complex, the symbol of colonial power, which started as a modest bungalow, but was replaced in 1786 by a more impressive series of buildings. After the final siege of the British, the demolished, but much photographed, residency became an object of obsessive public interest, not least because of its cemetery containing the graves of British victims. Another intriguing monument, La Martinière, is discussed by Nina David. It is a tribute to the French military man, educationalist, ‘engineer-architect’ and businessman, Claude Martin (1735-1800). The central building of the complex, known as ‘Constantia’ was turned into a college in 1843 and still functions as such today. Martin’s skeletal remains are kept in the basement of the building; a tangible reference to a period in which Nawabs and Europeans could live side by side. Although the book is clear in its aims, the strict focus on architecture results in a somewhat ghost-like image of the town, in which photographic portraits of its inhabitants are seriously missed. As the Scottish essayist, Thomas Carlyle once wrote ‘portraits are the candle to history’. The ‘sounds of silence’ of the Uprising’s aftermath dominate the book in this respect. The only photograph which catches a glimpse of street life is a print of a shopkeeper by Edmund Lyon. In all the other photographs people are depersonalised and merely serve the purpose of stressing the architecture’s monumental and aesthetic qualities. Thanks to a valuable appendix by Stéphanie Roy, which includes short biographies of the various photographers, we at least get to know some of their background. Equally useful is the catalogue part of the book in thumbnail-format and the short descriptions of Lucknow’s buildings up to 1876, which includes details of their current state.

Notes
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Eyes on the Prize


Kerry Brown

In the mid-1990’s, I was based in Inner Mongolia in China. In a medium-sized book shop in a small provincial town, I remember coming across a multi-volume edition of the main works of all of those awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, translated into Chinese. The series fascinated me because, even with the English version supplied, I was unable to work out where the Laureates were. Julie Lovell’s study of China’s particular experience of aspiring to, and winning, Nobel Prizes, makes clear, that especially in the field of literature, the decisions of the Stockholm-based committee have sometimes been palpably political – choosing Winston Churchill as Nobel Laureate in Literature in 1953 – or deliberately strategic. Exiled playwright and novelist Gao Xingjian was awarded the prize in 2000. As Lovell explains, he ticked a number of useful boxes: he was Chinese; wrote experimental, obscure literature; he was an émigré and had attracted a small but devoted band of academic followers in the West who vouched for his intellectual authenticity. Despite his relative obscurity, Gao Xingjian was to become China’s first, and so far only, winner of the Prize.

‘Nobel Prize fever’

‘The Politics of Cultural Capital’ captures an interesting cluster of issues, and it is surprising it has taken this long for someone to look at the subject more closely. The Nobel Prize, in whichever discipline it is awarded, is in some sense an expression of Western commendation, and perhaps even an imposition of Western standards and ideals. But its allure has been reciprocated. Since the 1950s, six ethnic Chinese have received Prizes, however, all of them were based abroad. As a result, there’s been a sustained attempt in China over the last two decades to campaign for and secure Nobel Prizes for mainland scientists, economists and artists, (what Lovell calls ‘Nobel Prize fever’). This odd synergy between the Nobel Committee, (implicitly representative of Western cultural values) and the PRC (half inflating, half desiring this recognition from outside), captures many of the paradoxes of modernism in China. The recurring issue of how much China can, in its transformation, and reconstruction, ‘use foreigners for China’s good’ (weizhong liwai). Finding the balance between maintaining elements intrinsic to its own identity while also exploiting the advantages of foreign-inspired modernisation without being overwhelmed by them. The tension between these competing urges has run throughout China’s history in the last two centuries.

Gao Xingjian, China’s first, and so far only, Nobel Prize winner.

Gao Xingjian, China’s first, and so far only, Nobel Prize winner.

more recent writers like Wang Meng. An obscure, exiled writer and painter whose most significant work in China had been a Beckett-esque performance art piece about people waiting for a bus in Beijing that never turns up, (Bus Stop, 1981), was certainly not what they felt represented the best their literary culture had to offer. The People’s Daily greeted the announcement of the prize in 2000 with a sniffly ‘this is politically motivated’ statement. To this day, Gao’s works are not available in mainland China and his profile there is minimal. It would be interesting to see if an updated version of that series I came across in the mid-1990’s has a gap covering Gao’s period.

Literature, more than the sciences, was an area of particular aspiration, but also very specific problems, between China and the West. Lovell gives a very good overview of the huge differences in understanding on both sides. The consensus in the West, at least until very recently, was simple: Chinese classical literature, of course, contained some of the great works of human culture. But in the last half century, its literary outputs have been a ‘busted flush’, poleaxed by Maoist realism, and political-literary constraints. This perception has been compounded by the generally lamentable quality of translations available in the West. There is nothing on a par with the excellent products published in Japan, (by, among others, Kodansha Press), disseminating the best that contemporary Japanese culture can offer. For many years the best Westerners could expect from China were yellowed, bulky, stolid tomes issued from the Foreign Languages Press in Beijing. These lengthy attempts to articulate a Chinese cultural position, (in the hope of it being seen as credible by Westerners), more often than not ended up with works that came across as slightly bastardised – neither Chinese nor Western – using narrative devices and techniques from one culture and characterisation and context from another. This was hardly helped by a ten year shut down during the Cultural Revolution in which hardly anything was published. In the 1980s, the great market reforms introduced a similar phenomenon in literature – follow the market, go where the money can be made, (witness the honourably unprincipled career of Wang Shuo), and keep well clear of politics.

A celebration of obscurity

Lovell looks too at the careers of those Chinese writers who left China and tried to articulate positions in exile. People like Bei Dao and Yang Lian and the Misty Poets. While they certainly found an audience of sorts, as Yang Lian noted, they ended up being branded wholly on their being rebels, expected to produce further proof of the unending horror of the Beijing regime for their western audience; commodifying and promoting their own pain to get on. This limited the ways in which they were received, and meant that they worked within a straight-jacket that was placed on them as soon as they were seen as Chinese poets working outside China.

The constellation of competing problems, and desires and ambitions was unlikely to have a good ending. In fact, the Committee’s choice of Gao Xingjian in 2000 was probably less political than it might at first appear. Gao was someone who celebrated his obscurity (creating his own ideology of ‘Not I-ism’), took few public positions on political issues, and whose main work, Soul Mountain, first published in English in 1983, was primarily a narrative of self-exploration – what Lovell amusingly calls a ‘spurious tour’ of modern China; more introspection than declaration of a political manifesto. He had a devoted but small following in Europe, had not been part of any distinctly ‘exiled’ groups, and was unconnected to any prominent dissident. Choosing poet Bei Dao, perhaps, or other higher profile exiled writers would have sparked even more umbrage from the cultural establishment in Beijing. Gao Xingjian simply baffled most people inside and outside China.

There was an extra dimension to all of this, and though Lovell doesn’t deal with it in any detail, it impacted on the whole issue of awarding the Nobel Prize to China. That was the internal workings of the Nobel Committee itself, where only one of the members, Goran Malmqvist, was a Chinese specialist. Lovell alludes to the fact that in the last few years, the Committee have almost been seeking out ‘non-Western’ recipients. But there is a big question of how much these decisions are almost gestural, or based on any general principles of literary judgement. In its early years, the Committee sought for works which affirmed ‘universal values’. That meant ignoring writers like James Joyce, Joseph Conrad and Henry James for a-swath of others whose names are now hardly remembered. Such ‘universal values’ have more complex currency these days, and in trying to accommodate other cultures the Committee has been pushed into making some maverick choices. There is also the final question of just how meaningful these prizes ever are. That, however, should be the subject of another study.

Lovell has picked a good pressure point between Chinese and non-Chinese understanding. Like the awarding of the 2008 Olympics to Beijing, the symbolic import of a Nobel Prize and the ‘cultural capital’ it brought was to be judged worthy of a long hard campaign. While the Olympics seem to have paid off, (we will have to wait until the summer of 2008 to see if it really is the case), the Nobel Prize in Literature awarded in 2000 put paid, at least temporarily, to aspirations in that direction. The bigger question remains: just how far, in the 21st century, the Peace Prize can translate its immense economic growth and soft power into hard power and a positive cultural influence that is recognised and understood outside of China. That involves the issues of nation branding that most other nations are also grappling with.

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Negotiating the state in Mughal India


Karuna Sharma

State and Locality in Mughal India attempts to study the nature of power in early modern South Asia and the relationship between imperial sovereignty and local networks of power. The initial overview of the historiography of the Mughal state outlines the ‘structural-functionalist state’ model of the so-called Aligarh School and the ‘patrimonial-bureaucratic state’ as well as the ‘processual’ models as the major approaches to date. The present book is a critique of these models since, in the author’s view, they ‘isolate the state from social forces and overlook the extent of interconectedness’. The author engages with various theoretical frameworks in which power has been conceptualised (by Foucault and many other social theorists) to locate accommodation of local interests within the system of rule to illuminate the actual functioning of the Mughal state. Collecting information from extant Persian documents pertaining to two important commercial towns of Gujarat, Surat and Cambay, the author tries integrating the contestations from the weaker sections of society to emphasise that imperial power was constantly in a state of negotiation.

Hasan argues that negotiations, forging alliances and winning allegiance were more important factors in Mughal political success than military fastidiousness. Through these processes, the local power holders could be incorporated within the imperial system of rule and won over by the state as necessary adjuncts and co-sharers of power in mutually reinforcing relationships. They shared honours and perquisites, but without actually appropriating the symbols of imperial sovereignty. All of this led to a widening of the base of Mughal rule in Gujarat. The devolution of imperial power was not confined to local elites but permeated down to the common people as well.

This aspect of interconnectedness is already relatively well accepted in the historiography of the Mughal state, but Hasan’s analysis of the attitudes and shared nature of the Mughal state. The complex power relations involved in property transactions and the fusing of the domestic sphere with the larger system of rule is illustrated by an analysis of how the office of the qazi (an official appointee to settle disputes and punish offenders) functioned in close collusion with local structures of power. This office, which was rooted in local power relations, could be appropriated by social actors to preserve their interests. An understanding of the qazi’s role in property transactions sheds further light on the participatory, shared nature of the Mughal state.

The imperial fiscal system is yet another sphere that was regularly modified and reshaped by local power holders, merchant holders, and subordinate groups. In addition to this system, there were local customary levies which, though officially illegal, nevertheless had to be co-opted into the system of rule. The imperial system of revenue realisation themselves reinforcing and perpetuating the system of rule. Hasan calls this process the ‘ritualised participation’ of subaltern society in the political system. Other forms of resistance included violent acts (as in the khuda episode, which appears to have challenged the legitimacy of imperial sovereignty) and social crimes and banditry, which were acts of popular retribution for infringements of the shared normative system, namely the sharia. The mode of resistance employed by merchants, analysed here in detail, differed from other forms since the presence of corporate merchant bodies made it easier for both merchants and the state to contain areas of potential conflict within the existing political framework.

Hasan’s study brings to light various ways through which the local power holders and their customary practices impacted upon imperial sovereignty, showing the negotiated character of Mughal rule and its empowering of the local gentry and merchant classes. The reorganisation of fiscal administration by integrating local structure of levies within imperial system further augmented the perquisites and privileges of the local power holders. Thus in a bid to wrest cooperation from local social and political elites, the state created its own circuits which checked or curtailed power of the state.

This book is a solid piece of research and the author has culled information from hitherto neglected Persian sources. The dynamics of local-imperial interaction are examined through the lens of the locality. Local evidence pertaining to marriages, property transactions, and resistance is analysed and interpreted in such a way that the notion of a contested yet shared sovereignty stands justified. The book’s underlying assumption that the state and the locality represented two distinct political entities, however, belies the fact that the state itself was fluid. Like the normative system, the Mughal state was not a rigid and fixed edifice. Depending upon circumstances, it adopted different approaches towards accommodation or exclusion at different times and places. In the same way, the locality was quite fragmented in its articulation of power and influence. If the state did not approve of acts of transgression and was quick to act to maintain its system of rule, contestation or resistance thus took place within the framework of the state, not outside it. Whatever reservations one might have about the author’s theoretical approach, the book is a brilliant attempt toward an understanding of the nature of the Mughal state as it functioned in certain localities of Gujarat.

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The economic reforms and inequality trends; the politics of measurement and perception; Growth and inequality under reforms; political causes and consequences; Political-Economic institutions of governance and growth; Social and regional inequalities: Does faster growth help of hurt? Social policies for re- designing social inequalities; the politics of principles and practices; What constraints redistribution under unequilising growth: politics or economics? The theme demands transgressing across disciplinary boundaries and so ISA extends a special invitation to scholars in economics, sociology, anthropology, political science and geography. probable dates for the conference. For more information about ISA and updates on the conference visit www.isas.nus.sg

| Rapid urbanisation in Asia |


5th Asian Urbanisation Conference 18-23 August 2007, Chonburi City, South Korea

Rapid urbanisation and city growth in Asian countries have followed different political processes that have given rise to a variety of social, economic and political problems. With a view to promoting research on these problems, of which the geographical and economic characteristics are particularly emphasised, the Asian Urban Research Association is holding the 5th Asian Urbanisation Conference. The conference, hosted by Kangwon National University, hopes to attract highly qualified and active scholars in the field from various parts of the world, and expand the network of international professional contacts. The aim of the conference is to encourage dialogue and allow participants an opportunity to exchange views and experiences. There will also be an opportunity to analyse the situation of Asian urbanisation and the policies of different countries for their urbanisation processes, grasp new trends of research, evaluate urban and regional planning approaches and the processes per se, and to present research papers for discussion and selection for publication.

For more information visit www.ussm.m/ or contact shakila@ussm.my

The policy economy of growth, inequality and conflict

ISAS 4th International Conference on South Asia 29–30 November 2007, Singapore

Economic, social and regional inequalities constitute major sources of political friction, over which fierce and open violence has erupted. The rapid socio-economic and political tran- sitions underway throughout South Asia, there is pressing need to research interrelated processes among economic inequality and conflict and to draw out their implications for public policy. The 3rd International Conference on South Asia, organised by ISAS and IASA and discussing results of fresh research on this vital subject, for comparing and learning from national experiences within this framework and for promoting collaboration among scholars of the region.

Under the broad rubric of Political Economy of Growth, Inequality and Conflict, topics for discussion will include:

- Economic reforms and inequality trends: the politics of measurement and perception
- Growth and inequality under reforms; political causes and consequences
- Political-Economic institutions of governance and growth
- Social and regional inequalities: Does faster growth help or hurt? Social policies for re-designing social inequalities: the politics of principles and practices
- What constrains redistribution under unequilising growth: politics or economics?

The theme demands transgressing across disciplinary boundaries and so ISA extends a special invitation to scholars in economics, sociology, anthropology, political science and geography.

probable dates for the conference.

For more information about ISA and updates on the conference visit www.isas.nus.sg

The 10th International Conference on Thai Studies intends to bring together scholars from all disciplines and intellectual per- spectives on the politics of Thai Societies in a Transnationalised World: how transnationalism affects the nation’s life, prospects and identities; what kind of challenges awaits Thai soci- ety; how traditions could be modified and new mechanisms devised to cope with current and emerging challenges; and how Thailand can contribute to the world’s peace and prosperity. The dead- line for abstract and full paper submission is 15 September 2007.

For more information please contact website: http://www.thaiconference.ac.th or e-mail thaiconference@gmail.com

The 10th International Conference on Thai Studies

The Thai Khadi Research Institute

Thammasat University

Bangkok 10000, THAILAND

Tel: 662-613301-2 ext 22

Fax: 662-2622112

China: Evolution or revolution?

British Association for Chinese Studies Annual Conference 6-7 September 2007, Manchester, UK

The British Association for Chinese Studies (BACS) is pleased to announce that its 2007 Annual Conference will be held in conjunction with the Centre for Chinese Studies at the University of Manchester on 6-7 September 2007. BACS will be joined in Manchester by their sister organisa- tion, the British Chinese Language Teach- ing Society, holding their second BCLTS International Symposium.

The conference theme emerged from a ‘China Rising’ discussion. After decades of underestimating China’s contribution to world culture and its place in the world, in the last few years we have witnessed a Zhuge Guo re ‘China Fever’, certainly in Europe. We have also seen a counter-reaction with some people claiming China is overrated, but that lacks creativity and that the impressive progress China has made in recent years is all down to Western investment and models. What has China’s contribution to world culture been? Does China offer alterna- tive models? Are we witnessing a para- digm shift in the 21st century? Is our dis- course of China the Chinese language Teaching Society, holding their second BCLTS International Symposium.

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The first worldwide ethnographic collection about Japan, the Siebold Collection, in a historical Dutch canal house.

The SieboldHuis in Leiden offers the best from the old and new Japan in a house of historical stature; prints, lacquer and ceramics, fossils, herbaria, prepared animals, coins, textiles, old maps and hundreds of other treasures. All has been collected in Japan between 1825 and 1850 by the Bavarian physician Philipp Franz von Siebold. Siebold was sent as a physician to the Dutch trading post in Japan by the Dutch government, with the special assignment to collect as much information as possible about this mysterious country. Siebold collected a multitude of objects in a wide range of fields: botany, zoology, mineralogy and geography, as well as daily objects, artefacts, models, industrial raw materials and semi-manufactured products. He returned in 1850 and bought the house at the Rapenburg to live in and to show his Japanese collection. Siebold was known for decades as the Japanese specialist in Europe. In 2004 the magnificent building was restored to its old splendour and nowadays, it houses seven exhibition rooms, each with its own atmosphere. In addition, it offers a varied program of temporary exhibitions and numerous Japan-related activities.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

Calligraphic arts of Ogawa Toshu and students from the University of Leiden
Summer in the SieboldHuis – Okinawa, the other Japan, prints from Yuusuke Namiha
3 August 2007 – 9 September 2007
Floating Instant – Photos by Lucienne van der Mijle
28 September 2007 – 9 December 2007

ACTIVITIES

Leiden Film Festival – Japanese movies in the SieboldHuis
31 October 2007 – 4 November 2007
Siebold Lecture series – Thursdays 11, 18 and 25 November 2007, 6 p.m.

SieboldHuis
Rapenburg 19
P.O. Box 11087, 2301 EA Leiden
Tel.: +31 (0) 71 513 53 50
Fax: +31 (0) 71 518 68 13
E-mail: info@sieboldhuis.org
Website: www.sieboldhuis.org

Tel.: 040 655 53 83
Fax: 040 675 09 18
E-mail: dean_sos@usu.m

Call for Papers
Conference
SieboldHuis
Leiden, The Netherlands
24-25 January 2008

Anthropology of Elites Methodological and Theoretical Challenges

How do structures of power shape our society? This question lies at the core of many of the social sciences. Within anthropology, an understanding of power is central to many theories; however, the study of those groups which hold significant power (i.e. elites) is far less central within the discipline. Our conference explores anthropological approaches to studying elites.

An important book that deals with many of these issues is Elite Cultures, Anthropological Perspectives (Routledge, 2002), edited by Chris Shore and Stephen Nugent. This collection contains several highly relevant methodological and theoretical angles and interesting ethnographic examples. However, there has been little occasion for in-depth discussion on the matters raised in Shore and Nugent’s book since. Therefore, to further our ethnographic knowledge and deepen methodological and theoretical debates on elites we wish to create a platform of discussion in the form of the conference: Anthropology of Elites, Methodological and Theoretical Challenges. This conference will address the following themes:

1) Methodological questions regarding the study and ethnographies of elites. As Shore states, elites do not always recognise themselves as elites. It is a term of reference rather than self-reference (Shore 2002: 2). How, therefore, do we deal with this problem when studying elites? Moreover, elites are allegedly difficult to research. What are the different experiences regarding this matter? Finally, in anthropology the main research method is ethnographic fieldwork based on intensive participant observation, something that is often not feasible in the study of elite groups. How can we tackle these methodological shortcomings? Does anthropology have the right tools for studying elites? And furthermore, what ethical questions arise when studying elites?

2) What can the anthropology of elites contribute to elite studies in general? Shore notes that elites have been of much concern to sociologists, historians and political scientists, but anthropologists have hardly studied them at all (ibid: 2002: 10). However, an anthropological approach is important for understanding elites from ‘within’. In order to get a better grip of power structures in societies we have to understand the dynamic of elite cultures, and how elites employ their influence and power. We would like to pursue this debate at the conference by focussing on ethnographies of elites. Further, our aim is to deal with this matter in a debate with other social scientists involved in studying elites, in order to stimulate a multi-disciplinary approach in the study of elites.

3) What can ethnographies of elites contribute to anthropology in general? Shore argues that studying elites ‘provides a useful focus for addressing important anthropological and sociological concerns including language and power; leadership and authority; status and hierarchy; ideology and consciousness; social identities and boundary-maintenance; power relations, social structure and social change’ (ibid: 2002: 9). One of the most renowned ethnographies of elites Abner Cohen’s Politics of Elite Culture (University of California Press, 1983), for instance, addresses a range of these concerns. However, since the publication of Cohen’s work there have been developments, such as increasing modernisation, globalisation and transnationalism that have become core in anthropological research. Thus, we would like to establish what the variety of recent ethnographies of elites might contribute to understanding how elite studies relate to larger anthropological debates.

Important dates:
- 15 September 2007: deadline for submission of abstracts (max. 400 words) including CV of author(s) (max. 100 words)
- 15 November 2007: deadline for submission of papers (max. 8,000 words) Abstracts and papers should be written in English.

Please forward your submission to:
The organising committee: Professor Dr. Jan Ambink, Dr. Sandra Evers, Tjitske Salverda
E-mail: t.salverda@fsw.vu.nl

Any further queries or requests for information on the conference should be sent to the above e-mail address.

International Conference of the UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland / Irish Institute for Chinese Studies 16-18 August 2007, Dublin

China’s rapid growth over the last quarter of a century has propelled it to become the world’s fourth largest economy in 2006 and potentially it’s largest in the foreseeable future. This development has seen China’s 1.3 billion people begin a process of integration into the global economy and become a major driving force in the process of globalisation, particularly since joining the World Trade Organisation in 2001. There has been increasing interest and speculation as to the rising China and its cultural, political and legal practices today which have to be recognised and reconsidered within the context of globalisation.

This two day conference will be co-organised by University College Dublin and Renmin University of China and sponsored by the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban).

The conference aims to provide a forum for researchers, academics, practitioners and government officials and business executives to share up-to-date findings and developments in the fields of Chinese culture and language, Chinese economy and business, and the Chinese political and legal system in the era of globalisation.

For more information: www.ucd.ie/china elva@conferencepartners.ie

Rising China in the age of globalisation

Societies in transformation
8th Conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association 19-22 October 2007, Penang, Malaysia
Call for papers
Deadline 22 October 2007

Rapid globalisation, coupled with economic liberalisation and financial deregulation, has opened up the economics of the Asia Pacific region. Increasing wealth generation is heralded as a sign of significant personal and national success, while large numbers of people remain marginalised in poor paying and insecure jobs. Youth are under extreme pressures in terms of successful education and gaining secure employment. The media glorifies the consumer revolution, and we see increasing use of new technologies, which are changing forever the very fabric of work, family life, health and culture in the countries of the Asia Pacific. The region is seemingly now more integrated, with unprecedented levels of tourism, migration, and economic and cultural linkages. But, are the nations of the region, and their populations, becoming more divided, united or are they fundamentally unchanged over the past two decades?

The 8th conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association (APSA) aims to explore the various dimensions of the rapid social transformation of the Asia Pacific. Papers that empirically or theoretically address the themes of social transformation, in its diverse forms, are particularly welcome. Deadline for registration: 22 October 2007 Submission of full paper: 22 October 2007

The conference is co-sponsored by the School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and the Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPTRAST), University of Wollongong, Australia.

For more information visit www.asiapacificsociology.org or contact:
The Secretariat
The 8th Conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association
School of Social Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia
11800 USM
Penang, Malaysia
Beyond binaries: sociological discourse on religion

The interface of religious identities, with state and politics is creating communal, ethnic and sectarian conflicts in South Asia. In spite of its geographical vastness and thousands of communities, the region remains conceived by sociologists in terms of religious identities. By continuing to discuss religious experiences, identities and conflicts in majority-minority terms, sociological discourse has become a tool of power and domination.

Sajate Patel

Sociological discourse on South Asia has not grasped the complexities of religion as it faces modernity. Seminal assumptions of coloniality: whatever is known to knowledge created a matrix of binaries – West and East, modernity and tradition, materiality and religiosity – that representations of colonization generate. Community and sect were a colonial means of domina- tion. Anthropologists and sociologists accept these binaries, constructing the- ories of insomniac and continuous reli- gious traditions without realising that what they consider traditional is actu- ally a modern process. Binary language prevents them from generating the oppressions that binaries themselves construct (Patel 2006).

In India, the binary of majority and minority is not merely a discourse: cre- ating group classifications highlights differences and structures power. Soci- ologists play into this: cultural differ- ences are dissolved into a master nar- rative of majority and minority in order to empirically study groups. Such lan- guage confuses the social groups with the politics of constructing a major- ity based on upper caste perceptions of religious practices. Since the late 19th century, the British tried to organise India’s Hindu majority as a nation under upper caste, or savarna, hegemony. Today, in a context of global change, this project continues to define Indian society and politics.

Sociologist T.N. Madan has written the most on this topic, using descriptive and indological methods to understand India’s religions, pluralism and diversity and secular transformation of equality hier- archy binaries. He questions the process of modernity, but his language does not reflect the distinction between its domi- nance and its acceptance by castes and non-western modernities. Thus, Madan uncritically integrates the bina- ries of West and East, materiality and religiosity. Such a position cannot differ- entiate cultural practices among jatis and ethnic groups, and fails to assess how these differences are subsumed under an upper caste perspective on Hindus- ism. His latest book, India’s Religions: Perspectives from Sociology and History (2004), cites census statistics to suggest that Hindus form the largest religious community, followed by Muslims, Chris- tians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains. Two issues must be considered here: using numbers to determine the formation of religious communities, and using the census to identify religious groups.

The trouble with numbers

The census depends on individuals to identify their religious affiliation. G.S. Ghurye and M.N. Srivastava have com- mented that the census of 1871-72 and independent India was used to mobilise groups by defining identities. B.S. Chol (2007) has suggested that the census was a project of construct- ing self-identity but that self-identifica- tion occurred in response to the colo- nial government’s need for religious identities. British officials and anthrop- ologists studied India as a pre-modern civilisational society. Their initial task was to classify groups into communi- ties in order to rule over them. Cohn argues that British officials thought ‘caste and religion were the sociological keys to understand the Indian people. If they were to be governed well then it was natural that information should be systematically collected about caste and religion’ (1987:243). As a result, Nandini Sundar argues, census ‘statis- tics on identities became important as communities demanded entitlements on the basis of knowledge of a political which conflated representation (stand- ing on behalf of) with representa- tiveness (coming from a particular com- munity)’ (2000:13).

Cohn (1997:124) argues colonialism was sustained not only by superior arms, military organisation, political power and wealth, but also through ‘printing and the standardisation of languages, self-regulating and autonomous legal systems, official histories of the state and people and the celebration of national shrines, symbols and pilgrimage centres’ that were the part of British colonialism that was imposing on the state. Colonial conquest enabled ways to construct what colonialism was all about: its own self-knowledge (2001:3). Documenting community social behav- iour, customs and mores became a major project for the British, who used not only enumeration but age-old scrip- tural and indological methods to natu- ralise India’s religious and political systems. British and Indian anthropo- ologists built an extensive repertoire of knowledge on Vedic and post-Vedic scriptures and translated ancient Indian jatis and castes within enlar- guages. British officials relied on ‘native informants’, generally Brahmans, to codify practices and classify castes. The Brahmans had already elaborated the varna four-fold classification theory, but manipulated it to capitalise on new opportunities presented by the British.

The census also created spatial-cultural differ- ences, which implied two assump- tions: group distinction based on the West’s spatial-cultural structures and the creation of spatial-cultural zones; and the boundedness of these groups defined by numbers and now called castes by colonial officials. British colonial officials were linked to the caste system in the new language of hierarchy devised by colonial census officials. A religion came to define a ter- ritory; the state was placed in establishing Hindus as the majority and all other groups as the minority.

Cohn shows that the first census, in 1871-72, classified castes within each religious community. Subsequently, Hindu religious leaders, among the four varnas or in ‘catego- ries of outcastes and aborigines’. These officials recognised the difficulties and, Cohn adds, the labours of ending ‘two systems of classification’, but ‘it was widely assumed that an all-India sys- tem of classification of castes could be made’. If one was to assume the point of view of Brahmans and other savarnas, it codified their privi- leged perspective.

Finding religion

Madan’s position, then, only makes sense if it interrogates the binaries and abandons theories of power that construct the majority and minority as instruments of objectification. How can monastics be negotiated between groups that are objects of the politics of knowledge? And how are those who have formed their self-identities as a majority? Whose identities have been defined by the colonial state and savarnas who benefit from these defini- tions? When self-identities accept the hierarchy?

Madan and many of his contempo- raries who uphold ‘traditions’ don’t seem to recognise that ‘traditions’ are a construct of modernity. In their logic, South Asia’s major religions have rep- resentative resources that mitigate religious con- flicts. By being critical of secularism, Madan questions modernity and how secularism interfaces with politics to create religious conflicts. As he states, ‘...it is the marginalisation of religious faith, which is what secularisation is, that alienates the people from the perversion of religion’ (1991:396).

But is secularism the source of religious conflict? Or is the source the processes by which religion and religious affilia- tion have become part of the politics of identity? Is it the power of the sociological to assess these processes and explain how knowledge construction helped build the identi- ties articulated through them. Andre Belfrage (1994) appraises Madan’s use of the concept of secularisation as related to secularism and indicates the need to dissociate these two terms. On Madan’s use of scriptures to develop a position on India’s religions, Belfrage reminds us that theology alone is not enough to assess religion in sociological terms.

Madan’s ideas on India’s religions exemplify how colonial binaries were imposed on the language of the soci- ologist, who naturalised not only the concepts of majority and minority but also various theories that homogenised the West’s spatial-cultural structure and played a role in hegemonisation; social move- ments and intellectuals must mobilise the populace through ideas. This was how ‘religious’ modernity and ‘caste’, and other binaries, were traced into the 20th century. When it emerged the voice of the majority. Today it is being reconfigured, but its core princi- ples remain the same as those conceived in the late 19th century.

Historian Romila Thapar (1996:3-4) has argued that Hinduism was ‘a juxtapos- ition of the religious and the secular, of colonialism attempted to homogenise Hindus. Hinduism does not affirm a sin- gle God, prophet, founder, church, holy book, religious symbol or centre. faith is difficult to apply to its inherent diversity of beliefs, deities, schools of thought, practices, religious and cultural fairs. Hindus are more than six schools of philosophy, an idea of God that ranges from monism to dualism to polytheism, and rituals from the individual Bhava to the social ‘yagna’. Denominations like Vaishnavism, Shivism, Shaktism and Smartism try to organise Hindus around a specific deity or philosophy.

This diversity was reorganised in the colonial period. Religious groups called sangathanas (literally ‘organisations’ or ‘associations’) formed around gurus, who framed a group’s objective within the national narrative. Sangathanas functioned as socio-economic and political bases, to contest the colonialism, to organise (Sanghathanas) Hinduism against the colo- nial state and its religion, Christian- ity. Mobilisation entailed proselytising through a set of practices, called seva, combined with allegiance to a guru.

Sangathanas, seva and gurus all had pre-colonial existence, when they formed around sects and temples towns, but their late 19th century form was rad- ically different: it did not attempt to replicate the structure and culture of organisations established by the coloni- al state in the western tradition (Copley 2000:5). Colonialism attempted to build a congregation around a church – some were even named missions, such as one of the first, the Ramakrishna Mission – but they were instead built around gurus, who were considered the authen- tic interpreters of Hindu religion. At first, sangathanas were revivalist, seeking to either defend one particular Hindu tradition or denounce parts of a tradition in order to posit a less reductive but socially oriented religion. Eventually they were organised around seva, which included guru discourses (prauachan), prayers (jatang) and work as seva volunteers), for instance, teaching in schools and helping in disaster relief. Some sangathanas also established medical help centres, hospitals, colleges and universities.

The guru has been defined as a spir- itual teacher, ‘one who brings light out of darkness into light’. For example, in early 1800s, British officials tried to impose ‘the Indianisation of Western philanthropic means, religious education and missionary work, to bring the masses to Christianity’ (Copley 2000:5). Colonial- period gurus whose sanghanathas endured distinctive. Most were English-educated, from savaran upper caste ranks and experienced teachers; their writings were mainly in English and...
Beyond binaries: sociological discourse on religion in South Asia

Incorporated new, socio-political dimensions that dominance rather than friendship and equality defined the relationship between the guru and his disciples, as gurus encouraged obedience and loyalty and were considered elitist and authoritarian (2000:6).

While the tradition of seva is as old as Hinduism itself, its traditional notions of performing service to oneself, family and god in the four stages of life incorporated new, socio-political dimensions during the colonial period. Earlier texts defined seva in terms of personal aspects and gave it religious overtones. It belonged to the private sphere within the figurative walls of karmic isolation. In the late 19th century, seva was redefined as the individual soul’s pride in a new religious-political identity born of an imagined Hindu nation defined by gurus. At the time, Hinduism was threatened by Christian missionaries converting lower castes, and the colonial state’s new Western ideas. Hinduism confronted them by developing a new public identity through mobilisation of the populace as a Hindu nation. The idea of seva, the guru and the sanghathanas incorporated non-savarna groups into a major Hindu community.

The Swami and Hindu chauvinism

Swamiji Vivekananda’s self-styled Hinduism by ‘excavating traditions’ and expounding a sahara reading of Hinduism. In the late 19th century, his ideas became the foundationstone of majoritarian religion. His concept of seva ‘organized service to humanity’ (Beckerlegge 2000:60). Unlike his own guru Ramakrishna, who attempted to synthesize and universalise Hinduism’s many popular traditions (Sarkar 1997), Vivekananda was unique, given his stance that Hinduism is what the world needs to solve its social, economic and spiritual crises. Most scholars see Vivekananda’s ideas as radical and revolutionary, arguing that by focusing on the masses – the deprived, under-privileged, weak, exploited and diseased – Vivekananda modernized a very old religious tradition to fit contemporary and empowered Hindu society to be confident, self-sufficient and strong. Some interpret his focus on individual human joy, suffering, achievement and failure as Hinduism made ‘human-centric’, and his dislike of contemporary Brahminical upper-caste male view of Hinduism constructed one uniform narrative and model. It belonged to the private sphere, within the caste hierarchy and present within the social awareness and spiritual enlightenment that dominance rather than friendship and equality defined the relationship between the guru and his disciples, as gurus encouraged obedience and loyalty and were considered elitist and authoritarian (2000:6).

The above essay is an abridged version of the author’s keynote address at the 15th International Institute for Asian Studies Conference: The Making of Modern India. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists. The conference, held in Leiden, 23-30 June 2006, was organized by IAS and the European Association of Social Scientists.
The Generosity of Artificial Languages

A revolution in language heralded the birth of modern science. Latin was replaced by formal languages, such as algebra, born of artificial notations and practical devices like new numerals. Frits Staal argues that some of the roots of that revolution lie in Asia.

Frits Staal

Still ignored by the majority of Asian scholars who should know better, the Euro-American idea that “science” is ‘Western’ has long been discarded. Long before the modern period, Asian contributions to ancient and medieval science were expressed through classical languages such as Old-Babylonian, Chinese, Sanskrit, Greek, Arabic, and Latin. In their scientific uses, some of these languages were formalised to some extent, but they were not designed to express abstract relationships in a systematic manner. They were intimately linked to different civilisations and lacked universality. What happened next and cultivated during the 17th and 18th centuries was a revolution in language. The construction of formal languages grew out of natural language, artificial notations and special devices such as numerals. The replacement of Latin by such universal languages, in particular the languages of algebra, was a greater revolution than the so-called European scientific revolution.

The birth of artificial or formal languages

Some of Newton’s laws provide simple examples. They were not, at first, written in an artificial form. Newton formulated his law of motion in cumbersome, ambiguous and obscure Latin. Less than a century later, it was disambiguated, clarified and formalised by Euler by making use of an artificial language. It is now taught to children as “f = ma.”

A more dramatic example provides a demonstration of the thesis that some of the roots of modern science lie in Asia. Madhava of Kerala, Southwest India, who lived around 1400 CE, invented infinite power series that are expansions of pi and the trigonometric functions sine, etc. by using methods that led to the infinitesimal calculus. Similar developments led to similar findings by Leibniz and other European mathematicians three centuries later. In

her forthcoming book on the history of Indian mathematics, Indian mathematic, Kim Plofker refers to this discovery as the Madhava-Leibniz series of pi. The accompanying illustration depicts, on top, the infinite power series that expresses the circumference of a circle with diameter D (i.e., two times the radius R) in Sanskrit. It is followed by a translation into English by Kim Plofker. At the bottom is the series in its modern form which is basically the same as what was written by Leibniz.

Rarely of artificial notations and absence of an artificial language go far towards explaining why modern science did not originate in India or China. Old-Babylonian, Indic and Chinese other early forms of Asian mathematics inspired the algebra of the Arabs, but to what extent was that an artificial language? India developed a formal or artificial language for linguistics. It is now a science worldwide, but how could it have originated earlier by more than two millennia?

Jeffrey Oaks answered the first question in “Medieval Arabic Algebra as an Artificial Language.” It provides our account with an important missing piece: a historical survey of algebra applicable to Arabic and European languages. Start- ing with al-Khwarizmi, in the 8th century, the systematic verbal solutions of equations, it reached a symbolic form in the 14th century in the western part of the Islamic world.

Brendan Gillon’s “Panini’s ‘Ashbydhaayi and Linguistic Theory” gave a brief overview of Panini’s grammar, showing that the grammar was not only the syntax of Sanskrit but also its semantics. He then showed that three concerns that are central to current linguistic theory - compositionality, implicit arguments and anaphoric dependence - figure centrally in Panini’s grammar.

An example of generosity from modern logic started in 1942 with J.C.C. McKinsey coming to Berkeley to study intuitionistic logic with Alfred Tarski. Tarski had already seen that the work would best be reformulated in algebraic terms, and so the two of them tried three topics together in “The Algebra of Topology.” In the 1950’s, the computer scientist Edgar F. Codd developed a method for dealing with relational databases. Later it was shown that it was that another notation variant. Such unexpected generous explanations that Dirac declared of his own equation: “it is smarter than I am.”

Over-generosity

Jens Hoyng examined several examples of over-generosity. One is the extension by a 14th century Italian mathematician of rules like

4D − 4D 3 + 4D 5 − 4D 7 + …

Add or subtract alternately the diameter multiplied by four and divided in order by the odd numbers like three, five, etc., or 1/3 from the diameter multiplied by four and divided by one.

The result is an accurate circumference. If division is repeated many times, it will become very accurate.

Infinite Series Expansion of the Circumference of a Circle

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trees we can make the plural plants. Children pick it up soon but may go too far as in mus or sheeps. Philoso- phers, like Berkeley, as well as in Indian have always done it – claiming, for exam- ple, that the world may be explained in terms of substances and qualities because sentences consist of subjects and predicates.

Panini’s grammar is very generous. The techniques he uses to refer to groups of sounds, called “condensation” (prabaya- hara), are also used to refer to groups of nominal and verbal endings.

John Kadvany’s “Positional Notation and Linguistic Recursion” compared ancient relationships between linguis- tics and mathematics to modern ones. He noted that Lakhat got, two related words and the formal techniques of Panini’s grammar to explain how mod- ern mathematical computation is con- structed using formal linguistic skills and lan- guage structure.

The distinction between natural and artificial Joachim Kurtz supplemented Jeffrey Oaks’ contribution with an account of the surprising adventures of European Sylogistics - medieval reformulations of Aristotelian logic – in Late Imperial China. Since it involved the introduction of some 800 symbols for symbols for logical operations the work relied on Kanji characters found in logic textbooks imported from Japan.

Martin Stokhof’s “Hand or Ham- mer?” discussed ‘grammatical form’ and ‘logical form’ in early 20th century Euro-American analytical philosophy. Adding linguistics and the philosophy of language, he wondered whether the distinction between natural and formal languages can be maintained.

In “Can the world be captured in an equation?” Robbert Dijkgraaf discussed a variety of examples, some of them suggesting that physics benefits from the generosity of mathematics, others (especially in the quantum theory of strings) that they develop simultaneously, others again that reductionism plays a role or a sense of playful- ness or beauty is decisive.

The Indic contribution

The Indic approach to the exact sciences has generally preferred computation to theory, and so assigns a role to language, natural or artificial, different from that in European science. Roddam Narasimha examined the work of Bakhshali Manuscript of around 800 CE. Here computational tasks are displayed in an artificial lan- guage that is written with the help of symbols for arithmetical operations that forettle the algebraic equations of modern science. These displays did not lead to equations like the Newton/Euler f’ = ma, but their spirit survives in the famous diagrams that the self-confessed Babyloman Richard Feynman invented for doing calculations in quantum physics.

Most of the works of the Kerala school of mathematics are in Sanskrit, but one is composed in a Dravidian language. In “The First Textbook of Calculus: Yuktibhasa,” P.P. Divakaran examined a Malayalam work of the 13th cen- tury which describes the development of infinitesimal calculus for the geometri- y of the circle and the sphere, together with all proofs. These proofs are written almost entirely in natural Malayalam, without the help of a formal notation or even diagrams. Divakaran presented translations of two passages to illustrate the point that the lack of an artificial lan- guage did not hinder the communica- tion of the subtle reasoning involved in this new mathematics. He then argued that, nevertheless, an efficient artificial language is a prerequisite for abstrac- tion and greater generality and that its absence may have played a role in pre- venting the Kerala work from realizing its potential.

The story of generosity has not come to an end. One afternoon in Bangalore, at the time of writing this report, the author had a long conversation with Robbert Dijkgraaf and P.P. Divaka- ran, both primarily physicists, and Vidyunandan Namudurth, who started out as a physicist but is now respon- sible for Molecular Reproduction and Development Genetics. He declared and illustrated that “Every structure is generous.” It’s a good place to stop and think again.

Robbert Dijkgraaf referred to “the great little meeting in Amsterdam” and added “it was a gem.” The event owed much of its success to the lively rulings of the chairs who included Henk Baren- bregt, Kamalarew Bhattacharya, Dick van Dalen, Fenng Loui, Kim Plofker and Bram de Swaan. Like the Proceed- ings of the first, the papers will again be published in the Journal of Indian Phi- losophy. The present report owes much to conversations with Roddam Narasim- ha and P.P. Divakaran, strengthened by emails from Kim Plofker. The author thanks all and expresses his sin- cere gratitude to Shri K.S. Rama Krish- na of the National Institute of Advanced Studies at Bangalore for his generous computer and general IT assistance.

Frits Staal
http://philosophy.berkeley.edu/staal

The above essay is based on a workshop “The Generosity of Artificial Languages in an Asian Perspective.” The workshop was part of a series of academic events on the history of science in Europe and Asia, organised by IAS in May and June 2006. With thanks to Marloes Rozing.

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Frits Staal

"Some of Newton’s laws provide simple examples. They were not, at first, written in an artificial form. Newton formulated his law of motion in cumbersome, ambiguous and obscure Latin. Less than a century later, it was disambiguated, clarified and formalised by Euler by making use of an artificial language. It is now taught to children as “f = ma.”"
**The EU through the eyes of Asia: Media perceptions and public opinion in 2006**

In 2006, a study initiated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) of media and public opinion perceptions of the European Union was undertaken in six Asian locations - Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and mainland China. This article summarises the findings from the daily analysis of three newspapers and one prime-time television evening news in each location for the period 1 January – 31 October 2006 as well as from an online public opinion survey conducted in November 2006 (400 respondents in each location).

**What then of public opinion?**

Although for all the locations studied the EU constituted a major economic player this reality was not reflected when respondents were asked to rank the EU. The EU was given significantly less emphasis and importance and nowhere ranked higher than fourth, and in Japan and in Singapore only the sixth most important current partner. Opinions on the current state of relations reflected a similar pattern. Evaluations of the current state of relations with the EU were overwhelmingly viewed as positive everywhere (on average in excess of 85% describing it as steady or improving). Only Thailand displayed any meaningful level of discontent with 6.5% viewing the relationship as worsening. However, the relatively high percentages in both Thailand (15.4%) and South Korea (16.5%) that viewed the relationship as “improving” may also suggest that the past was somewhat more negative.

One specific EU event common to all Asian locations was the 6th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) held in Helsinki in the member state. When respondents were asked about the extent to which they followed this news item divergent patterns were evident. Singapore (45%) and Thailand (31.4%) maintained a high level of interest in the time in their shared disinterest towards ASEM – while South Koreans were the most actively engaged with ASEM (69.7% following news of the meeting).

Perhaps the most significant findings relate to the images of the EU. The survey asked respondents: “When thinking about the EU what thoughts come to mind?” There were some remarkable similarities across the locations (see Table 1). Firstly, the Euro is now widely associated with the EU even if this symbolic linkage distorts the reality that just 13 of the 27 member states have currently adopted the single currency. It featured in first or second place in the minds of Koreans, Japanese, Singaporeans and Europeans of Hong Kong. Secondly, for these four regions the notion of the EU as a positive example of integration was also prevalent in crystallising much of the EU identity and a unified image of the EU from an external Asian perspective. But thirdly, and perhaps paradoxically, in all locations the EU was also represented through individual Member States potentially undermining the notion of a collective group of 27 and reducing the EU to the interests of the EU15, for example. Thailand presented the most extreme case and was unique in predominantly presenting the EU in economic and country terms. This not-withstanding, the images expressed by the majority suggest that Asia has publics have a supranational appreciation of the EU rather than one based around nationally-limited images of “Fortress Europe” or national imagery.

**Can EU visibility in the Asian media be raised?**

A starting point would be to build on what Mr Solana has achieved. Here, the European constitution plays a crucial role. More the EU can have a single external personality, then the more understanding in the media and public opinion is likely to follow. Second, the Euro was a significant dominant image which, while not created for reasons of external perceptions, is now a symbol that the general public in the Asia-Pacific region associate with the EU. Increasing the visibility of Euro as an international currency in the region could be a way of raising visibility in general for the EU. Third, the positive interpretation of Europe’s integration project as a reference point (not a model) could be developed more assertively within ASEM, again increasing the profile and relevance of the EU among Asian citizens.

Increasing EU public diplomacy constitutes a fourth mechanism for addressing Asian perceptions of the Union. While greater financial resources may be part of the solution, a better strategy rather than just more money may be the more effective approach. Lastly, in terms of externally addressing Asian perceptions of the EU, persisting stereotypes can be promoted if it enhances its profile it must ensure that it can meet renewed and higher expectations. If the EU promotes itself and raises expectations of being a serious political actor, there needs to be the capacity to deliver, otherwise the project becomes self-defeating.

**Conclusions**

Persisting stereotypes can be promoted and maintained where the media fails to provide important new and accurate portrayals of actors. Such misperceptions based on inadequate knowledge and unbalanced media choices. The general low level of news reporting on the EU in Asia heightens this risk. While the data does provide some grounds for limited optimism the changing recognition that Europe is more ‘butter mountains’ and ‘tariff quotas’, and even conceding that the EU is still punching below its weight as a global actor, the media’s perception of the EU’s importance for Asia and its level of coverage is lower than is justified. There is a paradoxical challenge too: the EU has to be careful, if it enhances its profile it must ensure that it can meet renewed and higher expectations. If the EU promotes itself and raises expectations of being a serious political actor, there needs to be the capacity to deliver, otherwise the project becomes self-defeating.

More broadly, the analysis presented here is not disconnected from the wider debate on the nature and direction of the integration process. What happens externally does have important internal implications for integration. If there is a supportive external view concerning the purpose of the EU, if integration per se can provide benefits externally for Thailand, South Korea, Japan, China, Singapore and Hong Kong (whatever those may be) then the potential exists for a positive spill-back effect that might influence Europe’s public. Were European citizens informed about the EU’s wider agenda and that it is more valued externally than it is perhaps internally, there could be positive outcomes for the construction of European identity. Consequently, how the EU’s external image is represented and conveyed can play an important dynamic in the internal integration process. The success of that enterprise, however, depends upon the portrait of the EU as painted in the global media.

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**Table 1: Public Opinion ‘Dominant EU Images’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>EU Image</th>
<th>Individual countries</th>
<th>Exceptionalism/ problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>European union, integration</td>
<td>Individual countries</td>
<td>Exceptionalism/ problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Economic power</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>Individual countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>European union, integration</td>
<td>Individual countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>European union, integration</td>
<td>Individual countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>European union, integration</td>
<td>Individual countries</td>
<td>Disparities/ unfairness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The *EU through the eyes of Asia* is the pilot project of the European Studies in Asia (ESiA) network initiated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). This ongoing two-year trans-national study is a collaboration between ASEF and the National Centre for Research on Europe (NORE) and the European studies centres in the ASEAN region: Chulalongkorn University (Thailand), Korea University, National University of Singapore, Keio University (Japan), Hong Kong Baptist University and Fudan University (China). The project will be completed later this year. This article is a summary of the second interim report. Please visit http://asea.asia to view the full report.

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Technology and culture: Genetics and its ethical and social implications in Asia and Europe

Soraj Hongladarom

Genetics has become a prodigious force in today’s world. After the success of the Human Genome Project, which sequenced the entire genomic structure of humans, genetics has become much more powerful. Not only is genetics of importance to professional scientists, it, and the disciplines it has spawned have had an impact on wider society, religions, cultures and traditions. Since the genetic make up of human beings can be said to define what it actually is to be human, the social and ethical implications are profound. Moreover, as the sciences and technologies that make up these new fields have become part and parcel of the current globalising trend, there is a growing enthusiasm for genetics and its related disciplines. Countries, determined not to be left out, are ‘jumping on the genomic bandwagon’. It is not surprising then to see genetics at the forefront in Asia too.

On 17-18 March, 2007, the Center for Ethics of Science and Technology (CEST), Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, (in collaboration with the European Academy of Environment and Economy, Germany), organised an international workshop on “Technology and Culture: Genetics and its Ethical and Social Implications in Asia and Europe.” The workshop was part of the Eighth Asian Bioethics Conference, and also part of the Asia-Europe Workshop Series 2006/2007 organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation and the European Academy for Ethics of Science and Technology (CEST), Chulalongkorn University, for Ethics of Science and Technology (CEST), Chulalongkorn University, on more intensive and varied collaborations between them. Any differences can indeed be exposed, but it is not to say that all differences would, or could, be washed away. Be that as it may, the members became much closer and after two days of intensive meeting there a solidarity emerged among the members regarding the Singaporean proposal of ‘reciprocity.’ Solidarity is a concept that has roots within the Western tradition, but it can also be seen as ‘typically Asian’ too, given the shared interest of whole communities within Asia.

Having travelled from far away places to Bangkok, the members of the workshop came to an agreement that there are perhaps more similarities than differences between them. Any differences can indeed be exposed, that is not to say that all differences would, or could, be washed away. Be that as it may, the members became much closer and after two days of intensive meeting there a solidarity emerged among the members which, I am quite sure, will spur on more intensive and varied collaborations in the future.

The group also discussed how different norms and values, such as those apparent in the East and the West, could be reconciled. Margit Sutrop was critical of the notion that these values are simply too different to be reconciled under one system. According to her, values that are typically associated with the East, such as putting more emphasis on the community rather than the individual, downplaying individual privacy in favour of public order, etc., are also to be found in the West. Privacy, of course, was an important concept in the discussion of genetics because there was a natural concern about the genetic data of a population being manipulated in such a way that the rights of the people are undermined (this was the main focus of the lawyers who attended the workshop). When the issue was raised about how privacy is justified, then the different belief systems became apparent. My colleague Soppama Promta, also from the Philosophy Department at Chula, and Chantrexus Pa from Cambodia are Buddhists, and are naturally concerned with how the Buddhist teachings can be interpreted so that we gain further insights on the problem of privacy. Nonetheless, it was agreed that there are certain values that should be upheld no matter what cultural tradition one originates from. The group also discussed the Singaporean proposal of ‘reciprocity.’ This is an implicit agreement between the government and its citizens where the government expects certain loyalty from the citizens and they, in turn, accept a certain degree of restrictions for the sake of public order and stability. As an alternative the group discussed the concept of ‘solidarity’ which does not presuppose the hierarchical or paternalistic attitude which seems to be implicit in the concept of ‘reciprocity.’ Solidarity is a concept that has roots within the Western tradition, but it can also be seen as ‘typically Asian’ too, given the shared interest of whole communities within Asia.
ICAS at TEN

In ten years of existence the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) has brought more than 5,000 academics from 60 countries together at five conventions where four thousand papers were presented during more than a thousand panels. Behind these figures lies a world of multiple interactions across borders and disciplines which has resulted in new long-term international research partnerships. ICAS is established as one of the largest gatherings of Asia scholars in the world. In the run up to ICAS 5 in Kuala Lumpur, it’s a good time to both reflect on the last decade and look to the future.

Since 1993 the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) was looking for ways of internationalising Asia Studies. The main goals were to transcend the boundaries between disciplines, between nations and regions studied and between the geographic origins of the scholars involved. This concept acquired a name: International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) and it became a platform on which Asia scholars from across the globe could study problems of interest to all.

ICAS was officially launched in 1997 and IIAS became the host of ICAS 1. The announcement of the convention brought enthusiastic responses from every corner of the world. Nearly one thousand participants from 40 countries attended ICAS 1 in Leiden, the Netherlands. More than 350 universities, institutes, and organisations were represented. In 2001 the Freie Universität Berlin hosted ICAS 2. Two key decisions were taken in Berlin: 1) it was agreed that future editions of ICAS should, (for obvious reasons), be held in Asia, and 2) the ICAS Secretariat was founded to safeguard the continuity of the ICAS process. The main tasks of the Secretariat are: assessing new ideas concerning ICAS, publishing ICAS and its activities; organising the ICAS Book Prize; monitoring the ICAS Publication Series and keeping an up-to-date database on participating institutions, exhibitors and advertisers. The Secretariat is hosted by the IIAS.

Following the Berlin decision, ICAS 3 was hosted by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. The attendance was much higher than in Berlin both in terms of participants, (in particular those from Asia), and papers presented. Two years later, in 2003, ICAS 4 was held in China hosted by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. It was equally as successful as ICAS 3. At the opening ceremony of ICAS 4 the ICAS Book Prizes were awarded for the first time and the ICAS Publication Series was announced.

The ICAS Book Prize

The bi-annual ICAS Book Prize (IBP) is a global competition which provides an international focus for publications on Asia. The book prizes are awarded for: (1) best study in the humanities; (2) best study in the social sciences. Furthermore there is a prize for the most outstanding PhD dissertation in the field of Asia Studies. The 2005 winners in the social science category were: Elizabeth C. Economy (Institute for Foreign Affairs, New York) with The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge in China’s Future and Christopher Reed (Ohio State University) for Gugden in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937. Sam Wong (University of Leeds) was awarded Best Book Dissemination for his thesis on Community Participation of Mainland Chinese migrants in Hong Kong – rethinking agency, institutions and authority in social capital theory. Wong’s thesis is published as part of the ICAS Publication Series (AUP) and will be launched at ICAS 5.

Eighty new publications (46 humanities and 34 social sciences) and 10 PhD theses have been submitted for the 2007 ICAS Book Prize. This is 57% more entrants than IBP 2005. The Reading Committee - consisting of six respected scholars in the field of Asia Studies - has been particularly impressed by the high quality of the PhD theses and calls upon PhD supervisors to stimulate our young colleagues to submit their doctoral theses for the next IBP in 2009. The long lists, (consisting of 10 books in both categories), were announced in March 2007 at the AAS Annual Meeting in Boston. (For details see ‘The ICAS Book Prize: A Showcase for Asia Studies’ - part of the ICAS Monograph Series). All friends and sponsors of ICAS will receive a free copy of one of these books. The awarding of the aforementioned Multiregionalism and Multilateralism at ICAS 5. The hallmark for all books in the ICAS Publication Series is sound academic work that appeals to a wider public.

Sharing a future in Asia

At ICAS 4 in Shanghai it was announced that the Institute of Occidental Studies (IKON) and the Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA) at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) are to host ICAS 5. It takes place 2-5 August 2007 in the Kuala Lumpur Convention Center and will be the largest gathering of Asia scholars in the world. ICAS 5 has the theme ‘Sharing a Future in Asia’ and the programme offers more than 350 sessions with over 1000 active participants from 60 countries. In total 185 panels have been submitted of which 150 organised panels, (panels formed by a group of scholars who will present their papers within one or more sessions), and 35 institutional panels (sponsored by various organisations studying Asia in the broadest sense), have been accepted. A further 168 panels have been formed on the basis of individual submissions. This combination of organised and individual panels is an ideal mix and also a confluence of various paradigmatic approaches which typify the multi-disciplinary and border transcending character of ICAS. The wide variety of themes, disciplines, and regions covered promises an intellectually challenging convention.

One of the new features at ICAS 5 will be the ICAS Institutions’ Carousel. To showcase the different institutions that are participating, while at the same time (re)acquainting scholars with their activities, academic organisations have been invited to represent their institutions in the exhibition hall or have virtual presentations. In the ICAS Carousel, institutions will inform the audience about new developments and activities. Participants can explore new developments by visiting the exhibition hall where personal and virtual presentations will alternate. Presentations will be between five and 15 minutes.

ICAS 6 and beyond

The venue for ICAS 6 will be announced in the course of this year. At the time of writing, the secretariat is finalising the negotiations with the future hosts of ICAS 6. We can confirm that it will be an institution in East Asia. In cooperation with the local host we are striving to widen the platform in order to involve representatives from applied sciences and the field of innovative technology in particular. We are convinced that the ICAS activities will solicit strong support from Asia scholars and others worldwide and hope that as many as possible will become friends of ICAS enabling us to make ICAS stronger for the sake of all Asia scholars.

ICAS update

ICAS publication series

Recently ICAS signed a contract with the Amsterdam University Press (AUP) to produce an ICAS Publication Series consisting of monographs, edited volumes and Proceedings. Five volumes of Proceedings are currently being produced. The contents include 65 out of a total of 110 papers submitted to ICAS. The ICAS Proceedings are planned for publication in the course of this year and beginning of next year.

The first edited volume appeared in 2006 and is entitled Multiregionalism and Multilateralism: Asian-European Relations in a Global Context (Brabant, Berckx et al eds.). More titles are in the pipeline. The first volume to appear in the monograph series will be the re-worked thesis of the IBP prize winner Samuel Wong. (The prize is the publication of his thesis). ICAS 5 also sees the launch of Marileen Diefman’s The Rhythm of Strategy: A Corporate Biography of the Salim Group of Indonesia as part of the ICAS Monograph Series. All friends and sponsors of ICAS will receive a free copy of one of these books. The awarding of the aforementioned Multiregionalism and Multilateralism at ICAS 5. The hallmark for all books in the ICAS Publication Series is sound academic work that appeals to a wider public.

International Convention of Asia Scholars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Panels</th>
<th>Papers</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Leiden</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007*</td>
<td>Kuala Lumpur</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimated figures
IIAS hosts several categories of post doctoral researchers (fellows) in Asian Studies. Sponsorship of these fellows contributes to the institute’s aim of enhancing expertise and encouraging the exploration of underdeveloped fields of study. More information and IIAS fellowships application forms are available at: www.iias.nl/iias/fellowships For specific information, please contact: iiasfellowships@iet.leidenuniv.nl

Fellowship categories
Affiliated fellows, Research fellows, Senior fellows, IIAS Professors and Artists in Residence.

IIAS fellows can choose to be based in Leiden or at the Branch Office Amsterdam. All fellows currently engaged at IIAS are listed below selected by region of specialty and in alphabetical order.

Dr Sakhu Bandhpaydhay
Victoria University of Wellington
Affiliated fellow
Meanings of Freedom: Decolonization and Politics of Transition in West Bengal, 1947-1952
1 October 2005 – 31 December 2007

Dr Jyotna Agnihotri Gupta (the Netherlands)
Research fellow, within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme 'Socio-Genetic Marginalisation in Asia'
Cross-cultural comparative study of genetic research in India and Japan

Dr Ellen Raven (the Netherlands)
Project coordinator, within the network ‘South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaeology Index’ (ABIA) - sponsored by Gonda Foundation
1 June 2005 – 1 June 2008

Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt (the Netherlands)
IIAS Professor
Special Chair at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, ‘Asian History’
1 October 1993 - 1 October 2007

Dr Sanju Bath (India)
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by Gonda Foundation
Catalogue collection Sanskrit texts
5 January 2004 – 15 January 2005

Dr Karuna Sharma (India)
Affiliated fellow
From reverence to degradation: Women and labour in Medieval India c. 1200- c. 1800
1 January 2006 – 31 January 2008

Dr Suhnu Ram Sharma (India)
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by Gonda Foundation
A grammar of Manchurian language
1 May – 31 September 2007

Dr Jyotsna Agnihotri Gupta (the Netherlands)
Affiliated fellow
Researching tribal traditions in a changing society
1 March 2006 – 1 March 2007

Dr Greg Bankoff (UK)
Affiliated fellow
Columns of crying: Community and natural hazard in the Philippines
1 September 2006 – 31 August 2007

Dr Chin Yue Whah (Malaysia)
Affiliated fellow
Chinese entrepreneurship in Malaysia
1 May – 31 July 2007

Marianne Hulsbosch (Australia)
University of Sydney
Affiliated fellow
Poverty Shies and Pith Helmeets: Dress and Identity Construction in Ambon from 1850 to 1952
15 August 2006 – 15 November 2007

Prof. Mashudi Kader (Malaysia)
IIAS Professor, holder of the European Chair of Malay Studies
The morphologies and the movements of constituents in the syntax of classical Malay
1 October 2006 – 1 September 2008

Dr Ritsuko Kikusawa (Japan)
Affiliated fellow
An examination of the genetic affiliation of the Malay people: their internal and external relationships in the Austroasiatic language family
1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007

Prof. Lawrence Andrew Reid (USA)
University of Hawai’i
Affiliated fellow
Reconstruction of Southern Caribbean ‘Phrae Markers’
1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007

Prof. Hein Steinhauser (the Netherlands)
IIAS Professor
Special Chair ‘Ethnogeopolitics of East Indonesia’ at the Radboud University Nijmegen
1 September 1998 – 1 September 2008

Prof. Chiu Hei Yuan (Taiwan)
Institute of Sociology, Taipei
IIAS Professor
1 September 2007 – 31 August 2008

Dr Wang Feng (China)
IIAS Professor, holder of the European Chair in Chinese Studies
Chinese religion
28 August 2006 – 1 September 2007

Prof. Liu Zhongli (China)
Peking University
Affiliated fellow
1 July – 31 August 2007

Prof. Li Guangkun (China)
Institute of Sociology, Shanghai Normal University
Affiliated fellow
The history of Tibet and the Indian Himalayas
20 June – 30 November 2007

Zheng Ying Ping, MA (China)
Institute of International Information Research
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by CSC
The subcontinent below selected by region of specialty and in alphabetical order.

Dr Katia Chirkova (Russia)
Programme coordinator, within the programme ‘Trans-Himalayan database development: China and the Subcontinent’
1 February 2005 – 1 February 2009

Dr Prasanna Kumar Patra (India)
Research fellow, within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme ‘Socio-Genetic Marginalisation in Asia’
1 February 2006 – 9 September 2007

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1 October 1993 - 1 October 2007

Dr Mehdi Parvizi Amineh (the Netherlands)
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by KNAW
Strengthening Asia-Pacific Multilateral Security Cooperation: European Experience
15 February – 31 December 2007


Dr Ko Chyong Fang (Taiwan)
National Science Council
Affiliated fellow
Bing Family Back? The impact of cross-border marriages on host societies.
20 August 2006 – 20 November 2007

Dr Jan-Erik Lappanne (Finland)
PhD student within the ASSR/IIAS/NWO programme ‘Socio-Genetic Marginalization in Asia’
20 June – 20 September 2007

Prof. Sun Hongkai (China)
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (IEA)
Affiliated fellow
1 August 2007 – 31 January 2008

Prof. Liu Guangkun (China)
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Dr Mehdi Parvizi Amineh (the Netherlands)
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by KNAW
Strengthening Asia-Pacific Multilateral Security Cooperation: European Experience
15 February – 31 December 2007

Prof. Yu Yake (China)
Stationed at the Amsterdam Branch Office
Yunman Academy of Social Sciences
Affiliated fellow, sponsored by CSC
1 August 2007 – 31 January 2008
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 George van Driem 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: Susje Rath
s.rath@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 intermarried marriages continue to be seen as a form of the commodification of women, recent scholarship in intra-Aisa cross-border marriages challenges this dominant view.
Coordinator: Melody Lu
m.lu@let.leidenuniv.nl

Energy programme Central Asia
This research 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 HAS and the Clingendael International Energy Programme (CIEP), Den Haag.
Coordinator: Mehdi Parviz Aminesh
m.p.aminesh@uva.nl

Illegal but licit: transnational flows and permissive practices 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 limits of ‘seeing like a state’, and instead privileges the perspectives of participants in these illegal but licit transnational flows.
Coordinator: Willem van Schendel
w.vanschendel@uva.nl

Socio-genetic marginalisation 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 Slobboom-Faukter
m.slobboom-faukter@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.s.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

ABIAS 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 Cora Thousau-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: salama (religious scholars) and fatwas, tarekat (mystical orders), dakshah (propagation of the faith), and education.
Coordinator: Nico Kaptain
n.j.g.kaptain@let.leidenuniv.nl

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

Piracy and robbery on the Asian seas
Acts of piracy and robbery 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

Private and public old-age security arrangements in Asia and Europe

Joint conference organised by National Science Council (NSC), Taipei, Taiwan International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden, the Netherlands

Convenors
Prof. CHENG Li-Chen, Department of Social Work, National Taiwan University
Prof. Carla Risseeuw, Department of Anthropology, Leiden University, the Netherlands

Date and venue
5-8 September 2007, Campus The Hague, Leiden University at The Hague, the Netherlands

For further information
Martina van den Haak, IIAS, m.vandenhaak@let.leidenuniv.nl
The conference programme is available on www.iias.nl
> Arts agenda

**Austria**

Melbourne Museum
11 Nicholson St
Carlton, Victoria
T +61 3 9344 7777
www.melbourne.museum.vic.gov.au

**Until 22 July 2007**

Great Walls of China: dynasties, dragons & war

Over 50,000 kilometres long, the Great Wall of China is now a major international exhibition. 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 explored include the origins, construction, and function 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 South Wales
Art Gallery Road, The Domain
Sydney NSW 2000
T +61 2 9276 6100
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

**24 May – 5 August 2007**

Ishuhi Miyako: Mother’s

This exhibition of photographs by noted artist Ishuhi Miyako reconstructs the show she presented at the Japan Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2005, including a series of moving photographs of her deceased mother’s personal belongings.

**Canada**

Royal Ontario Museum
100 Queen’s Park
Toronto, ON M5S 2C6
T +1 416 586 8000
www.rom.on.ca/index.php

**3 June to 12 August 2007**

Drama and Desire: Japanese Paintings from the Floating World 1600–1850

This show presents the world of the 17th to 19th century Tokyo through extraordinary masterworks of ukiyo-e painting – ‘pictures of the floating world’ that depict daily life in Japan.

**China**

Vitamin Creative Space
301, 29 Hao, Hengjiu Chiganglu

**Until 22 September 2007**

The Poetic Spirit – The Art of Henry Tse Yee-kee Chao Shao-an Student Exhibition Series 1

**Denmark**

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art
DK-5000 Humlebaek
T +45-42 19 07 91
www.louisiana.dk

**Until 5 August 2007**

Made in China

This exhibition presents nearly a hundred works from one of the world’s largest collections of contemporary Chinese art, the Estella Collection. The selected works offer insight into the many currents that are moving through contemporary Chinese art and provide an introduction to art that is rapidly attaining an important position on the international art scene.

**France**

Halle Saint Pierre
2, rue Ronsard
75018 Paris
T +33 (0)1 45 38 72 89
www.hallesaintpierre.org

**Until 26 August 2007**

India: Neel Chand & Jyotsna Mashe

Neel Chand, born in 1934, and Jyotsna Mashe, born in 1934, both create works that connect art and landscape. This side-by-side view of their works is a first. The exhibition is also punctuated by other works of tribal and popular art.

**Germany**

Sparwasser HQ

Offensive for Contemporary Art and Communication

Torstrasse 161
10117 Berlin
T +49 30 21803001
www.sparwasserhq.de

**Until 9 December 2007**

Ho Tzu Nyen – Part of the Glowing Whistle Festival

Sparwasser HQ is launching its new program called The Glowing Whistle Festival. The first artist involved is Ho Tzu Nyen who presents his last project, Bohemian Rhapsody, a film recently produced for the Singapore Biennial. Ho Tzu Nyen’s work is simultaneously a court room drama (young men being sentenced to death), a documentary of its own production, and a vehicle that invites the spectators’ participation in an exercise of mental karaoke.

**Italy**

Museo d’Arte Contemporanea Roma (MACRO)
via Reggio Emilia
54 – 00188 Rome
T +39 06 670 70400
www.macro.roma.museum

**Until 28 September 2007**

Into Me / Out of Me

Into Me / Out of Me represents an exploration of the art of performance since the 1960s. The exhibition highlights three in their conceptual and metaphorical ways in which humans interact with each other, themselves, and material matter. The focus is on three prismatic and radical relationships between the internal and the external: metabolism, reproduction, and violence. Works by Nobuyoshi Araki, Patty Chang, Zhen Chen, Noritsushi Hirakawa, Tracy Nakazawa, and Rinkit Tiravanija are included.

**Pakistan**

Mohatta Palace Museum
7 Hatim Ali Road
Clifton, Karachi 75600
T +(92-21) 583 7669
www.mohattapalacemuseum.com

**Until 30 September 2007**

Tales of the Title: The Ceremonial Traditions of Pakistan

The Mohatta Palace Museum presents a panoramic view of the ceramic traditions of Pakistan from c. 1800 BCE to the present day. The more than 400 historical objects consist of architectural elements, tiles, and vessels from Mehrgarh, Multan, Ushur, Sitorak, Sehwan, Kamarehi Sharif, Thatta, Hala, and Hyderabad. Highlights include stunning calligraphic panels of Persian verses by Bahauddin Zakaria.

**Singapore**

Asian Civilisations Museum
1 Empress Place
Singapore 239755
T +(65) 6332 7798
www.acm.org.sg/exhibitions

**Until 31 August 2007**

Asian Beauty: 200 BCE to Today

This exhibition examines the many interpretations of beauty across Asian cultures.

**NUS Centre for the Arts Museum**

National University of Singapore
Lee Kong Chian Art Museum, UCC Annex 50 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore
T +673 4616 / 673 4613 / 673 4618
www.nus.edu.sg/museums/exhibitions.htm

**Until 1 December 2007**

Responding to the Divide: David Xiao

From landscapes and figures to flowers and birds, David Xiao painted a variety of subjects interpreted through traditional Chinese brush techniques and Western styles. He is most famous for his portrayal of small animals, especially cats and dogs that became his hallmark. On display are over 50 paintings, including some influenced by Fauvism, the Bauhaus, Cubism and Abstract Expressionism.

**Spain**

Fundación Telefónica
Gran Via 28
28013 Madrid
T +34 915 66 45 00
www.fundaciontelefonica.com

9 July – 6 August 2007

PhotoEspaña 2007: Zheng Huan

PHE07 will be offering more than 60 exhibitions with work by photographers and visual
artists from 31 countries. The Fundación Telefónica is mounting the largest ever exhibition in Spain by Chinese artist Zhang Huan. It is comprised of his work from the last seven years, taken both from Spanish collections and the artist’s own anthology. A previously unseen video will be screened depicting the creative process of a controversial artist whose work has frequently been censored by the Chinese government.

**Switzerland**

**Kunstmuseum Bern**
Hof widerstrasse 12
3000 Bern 7
T +41 31 328 09 44
www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/

**Until 21 September 2007 – 6 January 2008**

**Horn Please: The journey of the narrative from the 1980s to the present in Indian art**
This exhibition follows the journey of the narrative from the 1980s to the present by tracing certain critical moments in Indian art – moments of both assimilation and intervention – through which a particular kind of narrative was constructed. By representing scenes from everyday life, fictional happenings, mythology, and satire as well as using autobiographical, societal, and historical material, the contributing artists reflect an India that has changed economically, politically, and socially.

**Museum Rietberg Zurich**
Gablerstrasse 15
Zurich, Switzerland
T +41 (0)44 206 11 31
www.rietberg.ch

**Until 25 September 2007**

**Health, Healing, and Happiness: Chinese Art**
A comprehensive exhibition presenting a selection of rarely seen Chinese textiles from the museum’s collection. Most of the pieces date from the Ming and Qing periods dynasties with fine examples of imperial and court attire; garments used in the belief systems of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism; ceremonial costumes; and decorative hangings. Highlights include a pair of late Ming tapestry-woven chair covers with four-clawed dragons and a richly-coloured red-and-green silk Daoist robe.

**United Kingdom**

**Kunstmuseum Bern**
Hof widerstrasse 12
3000 Bern 7
T +41 31 328 09 44
www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/

**Until 23 September 2007**

**Ma Yang Feng - PRODUCTION**
The work of Ma Yang Feng relates to aspects of animal culture, specifically in relation to man-made environments and topographic modelling. He builds artificial landscapes and then photographs them and he makes films. He aims to look into ideas of anthropocentrism and its effects on animal habitats, and how humanity thinks itself as progenitors of aesthetic ideas.

**United States**

**San Jose Museum of Art**
3000 Bern 7
T +41 31 328 09 44
www.sjmusart.org

**Until 20 August 2007**

**Batik Transitions: From Classic to Contemporary**
Artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi combined the popular specialty, warrior prints showing legendary heroines from Japanese and Chinese history. From the historical woman warrior Tomoe to the fictional sorceress Takiyasha, Kuniyoshi’s dynamic portrayals show women who were not just passive beauties but strong, courageous, talented, and sometimes even wicked.

**The Metropolitan Museum of Art**
1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York, NY 10028-0198
T +212 535 7710
www.metmuseum.org/home.aspx

**Until 26 August 2007**

**Journeys: Mapping the Earth and Mind in Chinese Art**
This exhibition, featuring 70 works dating from the 13th to the 21st century, 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.
> International conference agenda

**July 2007**

9 – 11 July 2007
Leiden, Netherlands
3rd Urban Language Survey Seminar

**August 2007**

2 – 5 August 2007
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
ICAJS 5

12 – 18 August 2007
Stockholm, Sweden
International Water Week

16 – 18 August 2007
Dublin, Ireland
Rising China in the Age of Globalisation

18 – 23 August 2007
Chuncheon City, Korea, Republic of
9th Asian Urbanization Conference

26 – 28 August 2007
Singapore
Asian Young Researchers Workshop

**September 2007**

3 – 8 September 2007
Naples, Italy
Emotions and East Asian Social Life: Theory and Practice

5 – 8 September 2007
Leiden, Netherlands
Conferences on the Elderly, Asia and Europe Compared Conference

6 – 7 September 2007
Manchester, United Kingdom
The British Association for Chinese Studies Annual Conference

12 – 15 September 2007
Ankara, Turkey
European Society for Central Asian Studies (ECSAS) Ninth Conference: Central Asia - Sharing Experiences and Prospects Conference

13 – 15 September 2007
Victoria, Canada
New Cross in the Asia-Pacific Region Conference

**October 2007**

4 – 6 October 2007
Ottawa, Canada
4th International Conference on Women and Politics in Asia Conference

**November 2007**

1 – 4 November 2007
Guangzhou, China
The Cold War in Asia Workshop

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*Organised by the Centre for Chinese Studies, Manchester University*
15 – 17 November 2007
Albion, Michigan, USA
The Conference on the Study of Religions of India (CSRl) Annual Meeting conference
organised by CSRI, Albion College
contact: Selva J. Raj
sraj@albion.edu
www.albion.edu/csrli

15 – 19 November 2007
Waikiki, Hawaii
3rd International Conference of the Social Capital Foundation on Ethnic Diversity and Social Capital conference
convener: The Social Capital Foundation contact: conferences@socialcapital-foundation.org www.socialcapital-foundation.org

19 – 22 November 2007
Penang, Malaysia
The 8th Conference of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association conference
organised by APSA, Captrans, School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Univ. of Wollongong, Australia
dean_soc@usm.my
www.asiapacificsociology.org

19 – 22 November 2007
Georgetown (Penang), Malaysia
Asia Pacific Region: Societies in Transformation conference
organised by Asia Pacific Sociological Association contact: Asia Pacific Sociological Association dean_soc@usm.my
http://www.asiapacificsociology.org

21 – 23 November 2007
Singapore
Early Indian Influences in Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Movements conference
convener: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) www.iseas.edu.sg

22 – 24 November 2007
Lucknow, India
8th International Conference on Asian Youth and Childhoods 2007 conference
organised by Circle for Child and Youth Research Cooperation in India (CCYRCI) / JNPG Degree College, Lucknow contact: Vinod Chandra ayc2007@rediffmail.com
http://www.aisea2007.com/contact.htm

22 – 25 November 2007
Dunedin, New Zealand
17th New Zealand Asian Studies Society (NZAAS) International Conference conference
convener: University of Otago, New Zealand contact: nzasia-conference@stonebow.otago.ac.nz
www.nzasia.org.nz

23 – 24 November 2007
Rotterdam, The Netherlands
International Conference on Peaceful Coexistence conference
convener: Erasmus University, Rotterdam contact: info@gulenconference.nl
http://www.gulenconference.nl

27 – 30 November 2007
Berlin, Germany
Online Education Berlin: 11th International Conference on Technology-Supported Learning and Training conference
organised by ICWE info@online-educa.com
www.online-educa.com

1 – 15 December 2007
Kolkata, India
Annual winter course on Forced Migration Orientation Course Organised by The Calcutta Research Group in cooperation with the Government of Finland, UNHCR and the Brookings Institute Contact: forcedmigrationdesk@mcrg.ac.in / mcrg@mcrg.ac.in

December 2007
1 December 2007
Guangdong and Macao, China
Canton and Nagasaki compared: 1750–1870 conference
organised by Zhongshan University, Guangdong, Cultural Institute of Macao and Consulate General NL, Guangzhou contact: Evert Groenendijk evert.groenendijk@minbuza.nl

6 – 8 December 2007
Oslo, Norway
Approaching Elections in South Asia: Performances, Principles and Perceptions workshop convener: Political Culture in South Asia research project, Humanities Faculty, University of Oslo contact: pamela G. Price or Arild Engelsen Ruud p.g.price@iakh.uio.no or a.e.ruud@ikos.uio.no
www.hf.uio.no/ikos/forskning/forskningsprosjekter/south-asia/index.html

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