The Indian-based BKWSU arose from a Hindu cultural base, but distinct from Hinduism. It began in the 1930s as a small spiritual community called Om Mandli (Sacred Circle), consisting primarily of young women from the Bhai Bund community of Hyderabad Sindh, now part of Pakistan. Since the 1960s the community has been known as the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU), translated from the Hindi, ‘Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya’. It is significant that the movement included a ‘world’ focus in its name, even though active overseas expansion did not begin until 1971.
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A s I write, the world is coming to terms with the devastation wreaked by a tropical cyclone in Southeast Asia. There are fears of 100,000 dead and more than a million homeless in Burma. It is too soon to know the full extent of the destruction but there is no doubt that a massive humanitarian catastrophe has occurred. When disaster strikes the international community rallies and aid pours in to provide food, clothing and shelter. Let us hope that one effect of this catastrophe will be that awareness about the situation in Burma becomes stronger and that international involvement in the country will grow. Culture is a basic need and we should attend to this in times of crisis, too. This edition of the Newsletter features an article on Cultural Emergency Response - a special programme of the Prince Claus Fund for culture and development. This modest but important activity is helping to restore sites of cultural heritage which are destroyed by war or other catastrophes. As the authors put it:

“Culture defines and reflects who people are. It is both creative expression and social interaction. Although over time, the remnants of daily cultural activities may disappear, the art and architecture that form a people’s cultural heritage live on and become the pillars of their identity. They form the sources of hope and pride and the foundation on which people can reconstruct their lives.” I fully subscribe to this statement and I am glad that we can offer the authors this platform to expose their project of cultural ‘first aid’.

The theme of this issue is New Religious Movements. Many of these movements originate in Asian countries and have found their way into Asian Diasporas and become established in new countries. In fact, the world has witnessed a boom of New Religious Movements in the past 50 years. In countries with basic democratic liberties that led to the formation of a religious market, New Religious Movements compete not only with their national counterparts but also with a growing number of foreign groups from every religious stream. This theme covers several aspects of this phenomenon, such as the economy, organisation and leadership of such movements. IIAS is presently exploring possibilities of setting up an international research programme in this field and welcomes reactions.

Max Sparreboom
director

www.iias.nl

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

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

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

Religions are the earliest global organisations, their missionary activity preceding or accompanying trade and political domination across continents from centuries ago. Unlike the established religions, Buddhism, Christian- ity, Islam, which spread from their founders’ societies into totally new cultural contexts in an ad hoc fashion, the founders of new religious movements (NRMs) often adopted a world focus from the outset. This is reflected in the names of several Asian NRMs discussed below: Brah- ma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Church of World Messiah, World True Light Civilization Church (the orig- inal name of Mahikari), and Perfect Liberty Kyodan, signifi- cant in using English words in its Japanese name.

New religious movements typically arise and flourish in times of political and economic upheaval or rapid social change. Characteristically, they engage in institutional conver- t in a quest for self renewal and finding ‘here and now’ solutions to illness, poverty and unhappy relationships rather than focusing on beliefs in the hereafter. Often they offer ritual practices for doing so, whose outcomes, are frequently seen as miraculous. With the demise of rural peasant communities through industrialisation, rural-urban migration and the creation of urban work- ing class and middle class mass society, religious affiliation disengaged from family or community contexts and became a matter of individual choice. Along with these historic developments, the ‘spiritual supermarket’ of reli- gious organisations (see Pereira’s essay p.8) has grown in size, aided by the accessibility to its products provided by the internet. As a result, even established religions are sub- ject to global market forces and all must chart their long term growth or even survival strategies in a global context. Organisations must structure appropriately to implement these strategies, as corporations do, paying attention to the design of their products and services in cross-cultural contexts and managing their human resources effectively through appropriate training and staffing policies. Here, NRMs are experiencing the benefits of the ‘late developer’ effect. In the past they have more quickly to opportunities presented by information technology, and more flexi- bly to the needs and concerns of their membership base in rapidly changing societies.

Fertile ground
Asian societies have been fertile ground for the spawning of NRMs, especially Japan, whose unique experience of almost three centuries of national seclusion during the Tokugawa era provided a dramatic reversal - aggressive political expansion overseas and rapid social change at home through the adoption of Western industrial tech- nologies and public institutions after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Over 700 Japanese NRMs have emerged in the last two centuries. Homage must be paid to Peter Clarke who has pioneered the comprehensive survey of Japanese new religions overseas in English language publications. (see, for instance, Clarke 2000) Appropriately, five of the six case studies in this special theme issue deal with Japanese NRMs: Soka Gakkai (founded 1930), Church of World Messiah (1935) and Sukyo Mahikari (1959) have a truly global presence; Seicho-No-ie (1935) and Perfect Liberty (PL) Kyodan (1946) are most strongly represented in Western nations and developing countries, such as France, Portugal, Australia, Thailand (PL), Taiwan, Thailand, UK, Germany, Hong Kong, Australia (Seicho-No-ie). The Indi- an NRM, Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University also has a global presence, between that of Soka Gakkai and Mahikari, in terms of membership and locational range. The rapid expansion of Japanese NRMs in industrialising economies such as Brazil, a focus of the essays by Mat- suoka, Nakamaki and Pereira, or in marketing econo- mies such as Russia (a striking case here is that of the now discredited Aum Shinrikyo), highlights the power of NRMs to organise peer to peer supportive new commu- nities which provide alternative institutions for their daily wellbeing and cultural fulfilment. Indeed the rejection of Falun Gong by the Chinese government attests to the perceived potential power of NRMs to challenge the hegemony of the state.

Doctrine and drive
The NRMs’ drive to internationalise is sometimes aided by doctrinal elements, the most powerful one being that they are supra-religious, non-denominational, perhaps mono- theistic but transcending any one religion. This helps them to attract followers who are reassured that they will not need to renounce their current religious beliefs to join. In this forum, Sukiyo Mahikari (Supra Religion True Light and Seicho-No-ie (House of Growth) have philosophies such as this. Once inside the organisation however the com- plexive ‘corporate culture’ of daily rituals, regular study groups, codified modes of speech and behaviour, usually exert a stronger influence than anticipated and converts gradually drift away from their former social activities and religious observances.

The distinctive cultural base of Japanese NRMs, arising of Japanese Buddhist (Soka Gakkai) or Shinto (PL Kyodan, Mahikari, Messianity, Seicho-No-ie) traditions, or the Hinduistic Brahma Kumars NRM from India, demon- strate just how willing foreign members are to embrace the alien cultural systems underpinning these movements and effectively cut themselves off from family, friends and their wider societies, in order to fulfil the distinct lifestyle requirements of membership in their religion of choice. Asian NRMs are an example of the phenomenon of cultur- al colonisation of the West by eastern religious, aesthetic and martial arts movements.

NRMs as MNCs?
Building on the pioneering idea of Nakamaki (1985, Eng- lish translation 1993 and 2005), distinguished, ardent field researchers of Japanese NRMs, Hardacre (1988), Clarke (1993), Matsunaga (2000) and Matsuoka (2003), have noted the organisational parallels between Japanese mul- tinational corporations (MNCs), which began their inter- national advance in the 1960s, and the spread of Japanese NRMs which, despite an international presence in the pre- and post World War One eras in Japanese colonies in Manchuria, Korea, China and Taiwan and migrant worker communities in Hawaii and Brazil, began to expand their international membership into non-ethnic Japanese commu- nities at around the same time as the expansion of Japa- nese MNCs, post World War Two. Did the superior prod- ucts and production regimes of Japanese multinationals abroad support foreign positive opinion towards these religions, with their emphasis on personal development, positive thinking (see the essay by Matsunaga p.5), the restoration of respect into family and social relationships and their spiritual technologies of miraculous healing (for instance in the case of PL, Mahikari, Messianity)?

Recruitment of foreign members, both spontaneously, through word of mouth and serendipitous expansion into foreign locations (PL, Mahikari), and planned as an inter- nationalisation strategy supported by missionary activity (Soka Gakkai, Messianity), brought organisational cha- llenges to the movements: Language policies had to be decided: should rituals be translated (PL) or would it be more important to preserve the power of the words in their original language (Soka Gakkai International), the man- tras ‘Nama Myoho Renge Kyo’ and Mahikari, the Amatsu Nongoto?


How would foreign branches be staffed? Would it be nec- essary to send authorities from the headquarters in Japan (PL, short term posting, Messianity, lifetime posting) or India (BRWSU, long term posting), those who had been close to the founder and manifested spiritual power, who would have the credentials to safeguard the doctrine and the purity of ritual practices in a foreign culture where alien cultural practices did not provide adequate support for the new cultural forms associated with the NRM? Or would a training scheme with an international cohort of students provide religious specialists who would be able to fulfil their roles in any centre in the world (Mahikari)?

Where would foreign members be trained in the religious and administrative roles necessary to staff an organisation with growing global reach? Locally (PL, Messianity, Seicho- No-ie, BRWSU) or at headquarters (Mahikari)? What would be the basis of leaders’ authority (kinship ties with the founder (Mahikari), a lineage of discipleship from the founder (Soka Gakkai) or spiritual stature as recog- nised by peers (BRWSU)? And to what degree would decision making be decentralised to local contexts where leaders would be more in touch with the problems and worldviews of local members? What strategies could be adopted for recruiting and retain- ing members in cultural environments very disparate from the core culture of the organisation, causing members to undergo stress and dissonance in their dealings with old friends and family members who were not members of the movement? These and many more questions relating to the leader- ship, organisational strategies and structures of six repre- sentative Asian NRMs are discussed in the essays which follow. Aside from making the case for a theoretical comparison between globalised NRMs and MNCs in this special issue, the study by Matsuoka, of Seicho-No-ie and the depart- ment store Yanham which its leaders created, is a most valuable example of the real life conjunction of a Japanese NRM and a Japanese company with international opera- tions.

References


in 128 countries, territories and islands including Africa and the Middle East. Of the countries where BKWSU has centres, a significant number are Muslim majority countries. There are centres in Lebanon, Kuwait, Israel, Jordan, Iran, Pakistan, China and Egypt (BKWSU 2006). In many of these places the BKWSU has attracted a large number of previous and cur- rent and spiritual pilgrims in a way which is compatible with the ideas accepted within that culture. This has been true of the propagation process of the major religions today. Buddhism and Christianity for instance, when they them- selves were NRMs. Since its early days of setting up this centralised movement has been influenced by the invitation of someone from the local community (Nagel 1995). So, while the BKs believe that the world will become less difficult to inhabit, they consistently place themselves in some of the most challenging areas.

BKs conduct their main teaching activi- ties and programmes in a ‘centre’. Each centre is independent, yet there is regular communication amongst all levels of the organisation, and a key feature is that the top leadership are extremely accessible to those at lower levels of the hierarchy and indeed to ordinary members. In that sense, the organisation is a ‘we are all brothers’ type. Servant Leadership: humility, leadership by example, nurturing, empowering and a refusal to be treated as gurus or objects of dependence. Centre coordinators are appointed by ROCs, who also determine their transfer postings around the organi- sation. Coordinators are chosen for their ‘spiritual stature’ rather than age, gender, and so on, and this does not necessarily correlate to their length of membership in the organisation. While all members have a recognised and important place in the organisation and all are equally beloved by God - the Supreme Soul - there is a concept of ‘numerosity’ which describes one’s position in terms of spiritual stature in a ‘rosary’ of members. Because of the fact that human resource management in the organisation is based on this principle, there is usually anomalous support for the choice of leaders and conflict over posi- tions is rarely authority.

History

BKWSU’s founder, Lehkraj Kripalani, was the son of a schoolteacher, a follower of the Vaishnav sect and part of the Bhai Bund merchant community. He was pious, had a number of gurus, and enjoyed going on regular pilgrimages. While he was young, he saved up his earnings as a small merchant of wheat and entered the diamond trade. He quickly developed a reputation in the jewellery business and, as time passed, he became friends with many of the rulers and wealthy classes of North West India, who became his loyal clients.

Over a period of months, Dada Lehkraj (Dada is a term of respect for an older gentle- man. We will continue to refer to him as Dada or Dada Lehkraj), had a series of ex- ceptional and spiritual experiences and a refusal to be treated as gurus or objects of dependence. Following his spiritual experi- ences, Dada rapidly lost interest in his jewellery work and began spending extend- ed periods of time in contemplation. He reads extracts from his favourite religious scripture, the Shrimad Bhagawad Gita. Many of his local Bhai Bund community attended the readings, as such gatherings were common at that time. What was unu- sual was that the attendees, often women and children whose households were away on business, the basis of the Bhai Bund economy, would regularly experience them- selves to be bodiless, have visions of Dada as Krishna, an important Hindu god, and of themselves as princes and princesses in a paradisiacal world. In 1937 Dada Lehkraj, later known as Brahma Baba, placed his entire wealth into the hands of a small group of women followers. This spiritual community adopted the name of ‘Om Mandli’. For 14 years, the group lived in Karachi, in relative isolation from the rest of society. Many women returned to their families, but some remained. The group slowly grew to a self-sufficient com- munity, of between 300 and 700, devoting their time to intense spiritual study, medi- tation and self-transformation.

The Om Mandli was founded in a patriar- chal society where women are primarily daughters and wives and their first duties are to their families and husbands respect- ively. The BK movement was particularly revolutionary at the time, as women chose to live celibate lives, which in Hindu soci- ety was not an option for them. In the Sindh culture of the 1930s only men were considered worthy of the life of a spiritual renunciate (Nagel 1999, Pritick 1997). Yet through association with Dada Lehkraj, women of all ages and status were hav- ing profound spiritual experiences and leaving their family homes. Many of these founding members of the organisation underwent physical and emotional abuse when they left home, when, as unmarried women, they decided to remain unmarried or, as married women, they withdrew con- jugal rights and informed their husbands in writing that they were free to re-marry. The abrupt declaration of independence from women and girls was seen as a direct threat to family values and, because of this, there were a number of uprisings, with subsequent court-cases and attempts to destroy the spiritual community (Chander 1985, Nagel 1999).

Since Om Mandli, the BKWSU has contin- ued to expand. In 1971 the first overseas centre was established in London and in 1975 the BKWSU received NGO status with the UN, by which time its membership had grown to 40,000. In 1984 overseas expansion was evident in approximately 30 countries. In 1986 the BKWSU con- ducted its first international movement, the Million Minutes of Peace, for which it received seven UN Peace Messenger awards. As international membership has continued to increase, to 100,000 in 1988 and 800,000 by 2007, the organisation has built two new campuses, Gyanasaro- var (1995) and Shantivan (1998), at the top and the foot of Mt Abu respectively, to accommodate pilgrims who come in their tens of thousands from within India and from overseas for the regular meetings with the Supreme Soul, Shri Baba. Following the death of the founder in 1993, three Dadas (older sisters in Hindu) from the original group of the 1930s were desig- nated as spiritual leaders of the organisa- tion: the Chief Administrative Head who is in charge of the whole organisation, and two Additional Administrative Heads, one overseeing the Indian regions and one, based in London, overseeing the inter- national regions. Despite these titles, the Dadas are more like traditional elders who support and guide the BKs at all levels and guide the direction of the BKWSU in its service activities.

BK identity

BK members identify themselves as stu- dents and informally refer to each other as ‘brahmins’ or ‘Bks’. BKs form a spiritual community. All BKs are members of the practice of Raja Yoga. Raja Yoga, the most exalted or ‘kingly’ form of yoga, is a spiritual practice in which, through meditation, BKs explore the realisation of one’s position in terms of spiritual stature by God - the Supreme Soul - there is a direct connection and relationship with the Supreme Soul or God. A BK is considered to be someone who has accepted the Raja Yoga philosophy and lives by the princi- ples. BK philosophy comprises under- standings of the self, God, time, rebirth, karma (the law of cause and effect), the world and social behaviour.

Those in the Mandli had experiences of being separate and distinct from the world, of ‘soul consciousness’, which was central to their life. This awareness of being a soul, that is, a point of conscious and eternal light energy, still holds true to BKs in the tradition of BK’s meditation practice. All the disciplines and rituals they follow are in support of this relationship they experience with the Supreme Soul. BKs believe that all living beings, includ- ing both humans and animals, are souls; inextinguishable points of conscious light energy that live and express themselves through the vehicle of the body. Each soul is unique, indivisible and intrinsically pure and valuable.

Disciplines and lifestyle

BKs are taught to live a virtuous monk-like existence while remaining present in the world (Walsch, Ramsay, and Smith 2007). This involves practices such as an early morn- ing meditation (4.00am) and a daily spir- itual class, as well as abstaining from alco- hol, tobacco, sexual activity and drugs. BKs attribute considerable importance to food and accordingly there are strict principles; only pure vegetarian food, without onions or garlic, is cooked while in the awareness of God, and in a peaceful state of mind. After the food is cooked it is offered to God before being consumed. The major- ity of BKs will not eat cooked food unless a fellow BK has prepared it. BKs regularly have periods of silence and contempla- tion and frequently attend retreats for their personal spiritual sustenance, as well as teach meditation and other classes at cen- tres. The majority of BK members follow these principles whilst looking after their family and maintaining a relatively constant life according to the culture and in which they live.

Organisational change

In comparison with other NRMs the degree of change and adaptation to local cultures has been minimal in the BKWSU due to the strict adherence to the principles which constitute a spiritual technology for establishing the relationship with the Supreme Soul. For the inner circle of mem- bers, these principles are the main foundation of the organisation. However, in the way the organi- sation relates to the wider society, there have been some adaptations. When the BKs were new to the West, there was an emphasis on traditional teachings, prac- ticing meditation and living the disciplines of the path. However, since the late 1980s, the movement has reconfigured its iden- tity to interact more with the wider com- munity. The Westernisers have isolated the social change. A recent study on BKWSU by Walsch (2002), based on interviews and visits to a number of BKWSU centres within the UK and France, determines that the organisation has undergone a transforma- tion. BKWSU has moved from a clear perspective of world rejection in its early days, and a rejection of the ungodly world to a state of world ambivalence, where the imminent destruction has not yet taken place. Walsch determines that the organisation has taken a position from one where members isolated themselves from the world, through being solely a teaching organisation in India with firm ideas on spiritual community adopted the name of the path. However, since the late 1980s, the movement has reconfigured its identity to interact more with the wider com- munity. The BKWSU is considered to be ‘an indigenous feminism in a mod- ern Hindu sect’, noting that original mem- bers held for women, within the confines of the organisation, and visits to a number of BKWSU centres the BK movement that, placed in a post-modern world, has adapted itself and now offers a variety of programmes to suit the needs of different groups of people (Living 2002).

Thus BKWSU is a millenarian NRM now situated in a post-modern world. BKs are now involving themselves more in present day social concerns, such as education, disaster response and health outreach that are relevant in the day to day social concerns, such as education, disaster response and health outreach that are relevant in the BK movement that, placed in a post-modern world, has adapted itself and now offers a variety of programmes to suit the needs of different groups of people (Living 2002).

As a global organisation, akin to a multi- national corporation in terms of its glo- bal sweep, membership size, profita- tion and holding budget size, the BKWSU is distinguished by its practice of spiritual
In the Japanese corporate world, the multinational retail group Yaohan, which declared bankruptcy in 1997, was unusual in its close involvement with a Japanese new religious movement, Seicho-No-Ie. An examination of the interaction between these two organisations suggests both possible synergies, and serious potential pitfalls in the interaction of multinational corporations and new religious movements.

Blurring the boundaries between corporation and religion

Seicho-No-Ie, meaning the House of Growth, is a new religious movement founded in Japan in 1930, and was originally organised as a publishing company, publishing the thoughts of its founder, Taniguchi Masaharu, and popularising its teachings (Smith 2007). The movement teaches that there is a world of reality in which human beings are perfect, children of God; and a phenomenal world of our perceptions. In particular, the idea of expressing gratitude to customers through ‘service’ – that is, hard work in the store, was stressed. This use of Seicho-No-Ie teachings caused a crisis when an employee reported Yaohan to Taniguchi, the founder of Seicho-No-Ie, suggesting that the Wada family was using Seicho-No-Ie teachings to exploit employees. This led Taniguchi to the Wadas, and to suggest that their approach could cause a serious misunderstanding.

Inextricably linked

The response of the Wadas was surprising. They decided to formally extend the connection linking their family with Seicho-No-Ie to the entire Yaohan enterprise, and in the following year Yaohan held a six day induction training programme for new employees, in line with the general pattern for large Japanese companies. However the Yaohan programme was distinctive in its strong emphasis on spiritual training for new employees, in line with the general pattern for large Japanese companies. In particular, the idea of expressing gratitude to customers through ‘service’ – that is, hard work in the store, was stressed. This use of Seicho-No-Ie teachings caused a crisis when an employee reported Yaohan to Taniguchi, the founder of Seicho-No-Ie, suggesting that the Wada family was using Seicho-No-Ie teachings to exploit employees. This led Taniguchi to the Wadas, and to suggest that their approach could cause a serious misunderstanding.

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was Brazil, a choice suggested to Wada Kazo by the vice-chairmen of Seicho-No-Ie. It seems that Wada decided that the strength of Seicho-No-Ie in Brazil would help Yoshin to establish itself by providing both a source of employees and of potential customers. In the early 1970s, Yoshin opened a total of four stores in Brazil, however the combination of the oil shock of 1973 and the high rate of inflation in Brazil meant that the venture ran into difficulties, and by 1980 Yoshin no longer had any stores in Brazil. Despite this setback, Yoshin’s overseas expansion continued, to Singapore in 1974, Hong Kong in 1984, and subsequently to mainland China, as well as the US and the UK. Although employees of overseas branches were not required to become members of Seicho-No-Ie, Seicho-No-Ie principles continued to be used in Yoshin training programmes, a policy which met with a range of responses from Yoshin’s overseas staff. In Singapore Yae- han’s approach caused controversy. Muslim employees objected to references to ‘God’ in Wada Katsu’s lectures during the training programme, pointing out that Islam enforces the worship of one God, Allah, and that they could not therefore recognise Mrs Wada’s god. Training materials were re-written as a result, substituting the term ‘the Creator for ‘God’.

In Hong Kong the picture appears more complex. May Wong (1994) sug- gests that the Chinese employees were receptive to the content of the training programme, partly because aspects of the teachings such as the emphasis on filial piety and gratitude to seniors resonated with their own cultural background. However, Heung Wah Wong (1995) points out that local Chinese staff were largely excluded from Seicho-No-Ie activities with- in the company, and argues that this exclusion from the symbolic heart of the company reflects the differential value placed on local Chinese staff, who were seen as peripheral, compared to the Japanese managerial core.

Drawing on my own research, in Yaug’s Plaza in the UK, similarly, partici- pation in Seicho-No-Ie events such as meditation or prayer was confined to the Japanese staff. Seicho-No-Ie based training was offered to manage- rial staff, who attended courses in Hong Kong (an experience which met with a mixed response), but on the whole Seicho-No-Ie seemed to have little impact on the local staff. It was also noticeable that, at this distance from the headquarters of Yaug and from the Wada family, even the Japa- nese employees of Yaug UK showed little enthusiasm for Seicho-No-Ie activities, to the dismay of local Seicho-No-Ie groups, who had hoped that the opening of the UK store in 1995 would provide a channel for the respective organisations seem to have been good, at lower levels indi- vidual commitment to Seicho-No-Ie on the part of Yaug employees has been patchy at best, and sometimes characterised by active resistance, thus limiting the effectiveness of collaborations instigated from the top-

In the light of this, it is perhaps not surprising that Seicho-No-Ie and Yaug- han were also largely unsuccessful in making use of each other’s organi- sational strengths – although individual contacts at the higher levels of both companies were made, it was not clear whether these were ever translated into any positive collaborative activity in practice. In the UK case, for example, Yaug management was willing to let its premises be used for Seicho-No-Ie meetings, but Yaug employ- ees and their families would rarely participate in local Seicho-No-Ie group- organised events. In addition the store was very inconveniently located for local Seicho-No-Ie members, so meetings at the store tended to be poorly attended.

Overall, although Seicho-No-Ie has a considerable worldwide presence, the expansion of the movement was not helped by its association with Yaug, nor did Yaug derive any substantial benefits in its expansion overseas from its association with Seicho-No-Ie. It is difficult to draw firm general conclusions from one rather unusual case, especially given Yaug’s eventual bankruptcy – as the movement quoted above pointed out, the story could have been very different if Yaug had been successful. However, it does suggest that, however compelling the parallels and potential synergies between NRM’s and MNC’s may be, as the two types of organisation both seek to expand globally, the blurring of boundaries between them is experienced as problematic.

References

In the mid-1980s Hirochika Nakamaki wrote about Perfect Liberty Kyôdan (PL), a Japanese new religious movement with a strong presence in Brazil, comparing it to a multinational enterprise. Nakamaki was the first to name such religions ‘multinational religions’. A later article by Nakamaki on another popular Japanese NRM in Brazil, Seicho-No-Ie, employed the analogy of the epidemic to what he called endemic religion. This article briefly summarises the main findings of these two important studies.

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Japanese NRMs as ‘multinational enterprises’ and ‘epidemics’

PL’s propagation in Brazil started when one of its Japanese members went to Braz- il in early 1957. Subsequently, an instruc- tor was dispatched from the headquarters in Japan to help spread the movement, which gradu- ally became well established. It was further intensified after Rev. Tokuchika Miki, the Second Patriarch, began to travel overseas. In 1959, Rev. Tokuchika Miki, who had worked hard for religious coopera- tion, had an audience with Pope Paul VI in the Vatican in 1973. The photograph of the meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch is displayed in all PL churches in Brazil, and has had a profound effect on

avoiding friction with the Catholic Church. By the end of 1958, there was a total of 200 PL churches overseas: seven in the United States, one in Canada, 172 in Brazil, nine in Argentina, five in Paraguay, 11 in Peru, and one in France. PL has developed its overseas presence in a way which is analo- gous to that of Japanese multinational enterprises, which spread their business, employing local people and establishing organisations on a local level. In principle, all regular rituals and events are held only in Portuguese. However, it does suggest that, however compelling the parallels and potential synergies between NRMs and MNCs may be, as the two types of organisation both seek to expand globally, the blurring of boundaries between them is experienced as problematic.

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with the discussion. This process of indigenisation has been actively extended to ritual. Japanese sake (rice wine), kelp and dried cuttlefish which used to be offered at major ceremonies, have been replaced by wine and cakes in keeping with Brazilian culture.

Since the late 1950s, the national policy of Brazil's military regime has been rapid industrialisation. This has resulted in an increase in the migration of rural populations to urban areas and the trend towards nuclear families. People have been in search of new, more suitable lifestyles and moral codes to meet with the experience of urbanisation and the nuclearisation of the family. PL adopted measures to deal with these changes in an era of rapid social change, and thus was able to extend its influence among non-Japanese Brazilians in a short time.

Seicho-No-Ie (House of Growth)

Overseas propagation started soon after Seicho-No-Ie was founded in Japan in 1930. It spread first to Korea, Manchuria and mainland China under Japan's colonisation at that time, then to Hawaii, North America and Brazil, where many Japanese migrants lived. There were magazine subscribers in Brazil from 1930, but the first branch was officially established there in 1938 or 1939.

‘Ascedendor’ was published in 1963 as a monthly journal in Portuguese by the Seicho-No-Ie Young Members’ Association. This journal played a major role in propagation among non-Japanese Brazilians. 50,000 copies were published in 1973, and 370,000 copies in 1980. About 100,000 copies of ‘Ascedendor’ and about 120,000 copies of ‘Pomba Blanca’ (White Pigeon) have been published as of 1987 by the White Pigeons Association, a Seicho-No-Ie overseas organisation. This figure, however, does not reflect the correct number of believers, because one believer could buy and distribute dozens or hundreds of booklets to non-members.

The Seicho-No-Ie Propagation Head Office in Latin America is located in São Paulo. There are about 60 disciplinary training centers and two training halls in Brazil, and branch offices in Mexico, Peru, Argentina and Colombia. As of 1980, there were a total of 792 local instructors (kôshi-kôshi) and 216 practitioners (kômôdô-jisen) overseas. Of these, two thirds of local instructors and 80 percent of practitioners were in Brazil. In 2006 there were 302 points of propagation outside of Japan. The major bases of evangelism overseas are distributed across the US, Canada, Brazil and Taiwan.

According to Takashi Maeyama’s research, Seicho-No-Ie in Brazil has the following characteristics. It initially spread as a religion to heal diseases in the 1950s. The number of believers among the Japanese World War Two ‘warring side’ increased in the early 1960s. The number of women prevented him from being promoted to the level of instructor (kôshi), the higher rank. Instructing training seminars in Portuguese were finally organised from 1978, and many non-Japanese instructors were produced. However, the organisation itself is in the hands of executive members who are Brazilians of Japanese descent.

The founder, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Brazilian Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different. The foundation, Masaharu Taniguchi takes a strong position regarding the openness of all religions (bankyo-kiitsu). In his book, ‘Seimei-no-Joos (Truth of Life)’ he insists that there can be only one truth even though preaching methods are different.

The Seicho-No-Ie Portuguese division in Randanía what personal suffering Brazilians generally experience, they told me that top of the list is marital and parent-child problems, second is disease, followed by economic problems. Some pointed out spiritual issues as the fourth problem. As mentioned earlier, PL tries to offer solutions to these problems by face-to-face counselling between instructors and their followers. In the case of Seicho-No-Ie, the examples of ancestor-worship and the memorial service for the aborted foetus have become the most effective solutions it can offer for the daily life problems of its followers.

Regarding the common problems of divorce and abortion, which the Catholic Church deals with coldly, Seicho-No-Ie attracts favourable attention because it can offer for the daily life problems of its followers. In the case of Seicho-No-Ie, the examples of ancestor-worship and the memorial service for the aborted foetus have become the most effective solutions it can offer for the daily life problems of its followers.

Epidemicising multinational religions

Internationalisation and urbanisation in Brazil are producing a middle class, and mass society is emerging as a result. Since the 1990s, globalisation has added momentum to this trend. The roles that Japan’s new religious movements performed in the process of the formation of mass society have had an epicentral impact on Latin America where immunity to foreign religions is weak. Since the 1990s, Japan’s new religious movements, which grew up in Japan after the war, including PL, Ríseedo Kousakai, Renyukai, Seicho-No-Ie and Sôし-no-Monshû, have spread rapidly in Japan itself with their slogans of ‘conquering disease and fighting poverty’, ‘equality of the sexes’, ‘spirit of diligence’, ‘entrepreneurial spirit’, ‘revival of Japanese culture’ and ‘revival of Japanese civilization’, and are now performing the same civilizational-historical role in the formation of a globally developing society.

Various other important non-Japanese religious movements have been observed in Latin American society, and Japan’s NRMs are accepted as ethical belief systems for self-salvation. Both Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism have a significant meaning in mass society where the gap in the social hierarchy is wide. On the other hand, Japan’s epidemic NRMs may possibly show endemic Japanese religious hidden infectivity when mass society shifts from class society to non-class society. It is important that research on Japanese religions in Latin America be conducted with reference to this point.

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Notes
Ronan Pereira argues that a charismatic and strategically smart leadership is the key for a new religious movement to survive not just in its original society but elsewhere. His case in point is Daisaku Ikeda who, for good or bad, became the face of the neo-Buddhist NRM Soka Gakkai International (SGI). He masterminded its transformation from a parochial, lay Buddhist organisation into a major international religious movement that doubles as a non-governmental organisation.

A Japanese new religion in the age of globalisation: the role of leadership within the neo-Buddhist Soka Gakkai

The world witnessed a boom of new religious movements (NRMs) in the past 50 years. In countries with basic democratic liberties that facilitated the formation of a ‘religious market’, NRMs compete not only with their national counterparts but also with a growing number of foreign groups from every religious stream. Therefore, after passing this first test and surviving in its original society, a NRM must possess certain features and conditions in order to survive elsewhere.

In truth, the fate of a religious group in an alien society is dependent on a plethora of elements such as the deregulation of religion and demand for new religious alternatives in the host society, a choice between becoming an ethnic religion perpetuated by a minority group or a universal movement, and so on. However, for an NRM to become a global cultural system, a key role is played by its leadership. More than just engaging in prolific discourse and having the good intention to be successful, a leader must also be a good strategist and have that charismatic flame to invigorate his or her followers, giving them a sense of purpose, and enlisting them to dedicate themselves to the ‘noble cause of spreading the good news’. Charismatic appeal, strategic vision, and managerial ability are just some of the skills needed in the portfolio of the leader of a NRM aspiring to a global reach.

In the following section I will depict and discuss the case of one of the most controversial religious leaders of modern Japan, yet one whose accomplishments are unsurpassed among Japanese NRMs. Daisaku Ikeda (born 1928) is the president of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a neo-Buddhist movement that claims to have a presence in some 190 countries and territories (although having only 82 registered constituent organisations), with more than 12 million members.

The ordeals of a rising movement

Since its foundation in the 1930s by the primary school teacher and educational philosopher, Tsunesaburô Makiguchi (1871-1944), it has been a long and turbulent road for Sôka Gakkai (SG) in terms of attaining success in the global scene. During World War Two, SG almost disappeared due to governmental repression and the imprisonment of its leaders, which led to Makiguchi’s death while in prison. His disciple, Jôsei Toda (1900-1958) was initially reluctant, but took over the leading position to reorganise this lay organisation affiliated with Nichiren Shôshû (‘Orthodox Sect of Nichiren Buddhism’) by deemphasising study and education in favour of the unconditional and exclusive practice of Nichiren’s teachings. Thus, in less than a decade, the small study group became a truly mass movement with inroads into politics. Because of its aggressive conversion campaign, massive rallies and festivals, and an organisational structure inspired by the military, SG gained a very negative reputation as a cult-like, fundamentalist, fascist and violent group.

In 1960, Daisaku Ikeda became the third president of SG at the age of 32. Although he kept his mentor’s policy of ‘destroying the evil religions’ and expanding the movement at any cost, eventually Ikeda faced the common dilemma of anti-establishment movements: it became clear that the movement could not succeed unless it compromised and accommodated to the surrounding society. Therefore, gradually he deemphasised SG’s forceful conversion campaigns and expanded the movement’s cultural and educational activities.

In 1991, Soka Gakkai members were excommunicated from Nichiren Shôshû. While this freed the organisation from a traditional and limiting priesthood, at the same time it provoked a crisis of legitimacy. Previously, the two organisations lived in a symbiotic relationship that was mutually beneficial: the Nichiren Shôshû priesthood claimed to be guardians of the...
doctrinaire and ritual orthodoxy taught by the 15th-century monk Nichiren. While benefiting from the services of this authoritative and legitimating tradition, SGI members had sole responsibility for secular matters such as national and international conversion campaigns, fundraising to build temples, publications, cultural and political activities.

After the split between Nichiren Shiksho and SGI, both groups entered into a legal battle over assets and into competition for members. The dispute also exposed the opposing leaders to accusations of sexual exploitation, fraud, greed for money and power and so on. If Nichiren Shiko lost most of it to its lay organisation, SGI ended up with a major problem: the source of its sacred object (i.e., the gohonzon or mandala inscribed by Nichiren) was in the safekeeping of Nichiren Shiksho. Therefore, for a while new SGI members had no way of obtaining a copy of Nichiren’s mandala. The solution came two years later, in 1993, when the chief reverend of a former Nichiren Shiksho temple started offering SG members a copy of an alternative mandala transcribed by the 26th High Priest, Nikikan Shiden.

 Cohesion around Master Ikeda

In the period following the conflict with the priesthood, Ikeda added to his status of president of the organisation that of teacher and spiritual master for Soka Gakkai members. In order to guarantee internal cohesion under the leadership of Ikeda, some ideological principles and slogans were reinforced, such as shitei-funi (unity of master and disciple) and ai-ai-shin (different bodies united in mind and faith). In his writings and speeches, Ikeda frequently affirms that SGI members need to conduct the master-disciple relationship in the same way as between Nichiren and his disciples, and more recently between the founder, Maliguchis and his successor, Toda, than between Toda and Ikeda himself. Ikeda endeavours to nurture this relationship in many ways. For instance, there is no SG event, inauguration, anniversary of a group, or New Year’s publication without a note from Master Ikeda written especially for that special event. Thus, in contrast to the opinion of the sceptical Japanese media and critical, rival religious leaders, a member or a sympathiser sees Ikeda as a great leader and mentor who is tirelessly spreading the teachings of Nichiren and advancing the cause of world peace.

There is no doubt that Ikeda constitutes a classic case of a charismatic leader who ingratiates his followers and inspires them to dedicate themselves enthusiastically to the common cause. In doing so he plays a similar role to that of business leaders in managing their organisations through appeals to their corporate cultures. Among other qualities, a good business leader is expected to be a good team-builder, to get the best from his/her human capital and be a good motivator, to create a positive working environment. In these matters, Ikeda is an expert.

Ikeda: organiser and strategist

In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members. In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose,Ikeda launched in 1958 the project ‘Seven Bells’ as a working plan for Soka Gakkai members.

Another high-profile initiative of Ikeda was the formation of the political party Almeidão (Clean Government Party) which has become one of the main political forces in Japan. While maintaining his role as a great strategist and organiser, he also created a full-scale education system from kindergarten to university, art museums, and a host of other cultural, educational, and environmental institutions. In 1975, Ikeda established the ‘Soka Gakkai International’ (SGI) to oversee SGI’s affiliated chapters all over the world. In the following decade, SGI became a non-governmental organisation (NGO) member of the United Nations.

SGI is an exemplary movement of ‘inner-worldly aceticism’. Its philosophy is to be present in society and try to change it from within. There is no code for dressing, diet or particular lifestyle for members. From the outside, members look like regular members of their societies but privately they keep their practice of recitation of the mantra and faith in the gohonzon. SGI changes members’ participation in their culture of birth and unites them around the world, in a global SGI cultural system in a more invisible way - in the way people think and understand reality in terms of karma, of the mystical relationship with the gohonzon, Nichiren and Ikeda. SGI members tend to understand the tragedies in the world (such as wars, terrorism, the tsunami) in terms of the concept of mappo (the final days when the practice of the Dharma (law) degenerates). Their praxis is also oriented by its characteristic as an NGO dedicated to education, peace, environment, culture; whenever they participate in society or promote a public event, these events tend to be framed by a focus on these four areas. The case of SGI not only illustrates the role of leadership in transforming a NRM into a global cultural system, but also reveals some changes in the nature of religion in the contemporary world. For instance, it illuminates the struggle of religion to survive in the era of globalisation in which new religious movements are being proliferated, just as the traditional roles of religion have been appropriated by governmental agencies, NGOs, and liberal professionals, particularly therapists. In this regard, SGI has been successful as it maintains the structures and practices of a religious institution while displaying the dynamics of a NGO. This means that it sustains a strategy of dual speech, internally emphasising its ritual practice and its religious mission while externally focusing on its secular or ‘secularised religious’ performance.

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Notes:
1. A situation where there is no state-run or monopolistic church which controls religious affairs and people can freely choose which faith to follow and practice. In other words, a ‘religious market’ is one in which different religious traditions or denominations compete to each other for membership.
2. The change or suspension of laws and legal hindrances that make it difficult if not impossible for all religions to exist in a specific society.
3. Based on Nichiren’s philosophy that all religions different from his own were ‘evil’ and heretic.
4. Before the reorganisation in 1991, Ikeda was officially the president of SGI.

SGI. Courtesy of Editora Brasil

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Japanese religions have been propagated in Brazil since 1908 when the first group of Japanese immigrants arrived there. Currently there are approximately 60 branches of Japanese religions in Brazil and more than ten have been engaged in active proselytisation (Matsuoka and Ronan, 2007). Among these religions, Japanese new religions have been the most successful in acquiring followers, overshadowing the traditional Japanese religions, Buddhism and Shinto. The three major Japanese new religions in Brazil by number of followers are Seicho-No-Ie (‘The House of Growth’) (800,000 followers), Perfect Liberty (Perfect Liberty Ryaden in Japanese, henceforth termed ‘PL’) (70,000) and The Church of World Messianity (Sekai Kyōsei Aiko, henceforth termed ‘Messianity’) (400,000). Although these numbers may be inflated, it is safe to say that there are at least one million followers of Japanese new religions in Brazil. This fact may not seem remarkable when one considers the fact that there are over one million ethnic Japanese-Brazilians from the first to the fifth generation, or that São Paulo city has the largest Japanese immigrant population as a city in the world. But it is important to point out that over 95 percent of the followers of these religions are non-ethnic Japanese Brazilians.

By comparing Japanese religions and companies stationed abroad, Nakamaki proposes three categories of foreign-based Japanese religions (Nakamaki 1986). The first category is religions whose headquarters in Japan have neither eagerness nor policies to propagate abroad. Missionaries in Japanese MNCs (Hulbert and Brandt 1980) are an example of these religions. The second category includes religions that try to proselytise in foreign countries but only adopt some superficial aspects of the host culture and make every effort to maintain their own ways, rituals and beliefs abroad. Most schools of Japanese Buddhism and Tennō Kyō are typical of this category. The third category of religions is more culture-oriented. Coined by Nakamaki, religious egility includes religions that try to grasp the foreign culture positively and sometimes transform their established rituals to fit into the religious arena of the host society. Seicho-No-Ie, PL, and Messianity fall into this category. What happens in reality does not fall short of the expectation we may have, the most successful Japanese religions in foreign cultural contexts are those in the third category.

A pure Japanese policy
Each Japanese new religion in Brazil has tried to fulfill its own aims in terms of propagation. To understand the organisational aspects of Japanese new religions in Brazil, it is useful to refer to related aspects of the study of Japanese business abroad. Hulbert and Brandt, who study Japanese companies controlled by multinational corporations (MNCs) headquarter in Japan, the United States, and Europe, reach the following conclusion: in the Brazilian offices of Japanese MNCs, presidents are more likely to be Japanese, and control by Japanese headquarters is stricter than that of American and European MNCs (Hulbert and Brandt 1980). Japanese MNCs have tried to maintain the identities of their group’s companies abroad by installing expatriate Japanese managers as executives in these companies and maintaining strict control by the headquarters in Japan. This strategy may be called a ‘pure Japanese policy’.

Has Messianity adopted a ‘pure Japanese policy’? The Church of World Messianity of Brazil, (about which I published an ethnography entitled Japanese Prayer below the Equator), is a Japanese religion that has proselytised in Brazil (Matsuoka 2007). The Church of World Messianity, a religion founded by Ohada Motoki (1882-1955), has spread to 78 countries. In terms of the number of followers, significant countries are: the US, Canada, Brazil, Peru and Argentina in the Americas, Korea, Thailand and Sri Lanka in Asia, Angola in Africa and Portugal in Europe. It has approximately 2 million followers worldwide. Brazil has the second largest number of followers (400,000) following Thailand (600,000).

I will take the case of Messianity in Brazil in order to introduce some principles of organisational structure in new religions. Messianity was introduced to Brazil in 1955. The group increased the number of followers steadily and claims that it has 400,000 followers in 2007, and that over 95 percent of them are non-ethnic Japanese Brazilians. Messianity is best known for its religious activity jōhen - transmission of the light of God by holding one’s hand over the recipient. Messianity’s doctrine and practice is strongly influenced by that of Shinto, a Japanese traditional religion. For this reason, it might be considered that Messianity is rather out of place in the Brazilian cultural milieu and very different from traditional Brazilian religious orientations, which tend towards spiritism and Roman Catholicism. However in terms of doctrine and practice, there are some aspects that indicate continuity between Messianity and several influential Brazilian religions. An example is the belief in the existence of the world of spirit, from which human beings may receive transcendental power, a notion Messianity shares with Kardecismo, a French spiritism that has spread throughout Brazil, and also with the Brazil-born spiritism, Umbanda.

As mentioned earlier, it has been observed that the percentage of non-ethnic Japanese followers in Seicho-No-Ie, PL, and Messianity exceeds 95 percent. There are also many non-ethnic Japanese members of the clergy in these groups. The higher the rank of clergy, however, the higher the proportion of ethnic Japanese, and the presidents of the Brazilian chapters of all of these three groups are ethnic Japanese headquarters. From this data, we can surmise that these groups have adopted the ‘pure Japanese policy’ within Nakamaki’s typology, but major differences in the policies of these three groups must also be accounted for. I will try to elucidate Messianity’s policy for maintaining its identity by comparing it with those of the two other groups.

Following the lead of Branches in the US, Messianity had its origins in Brazil in 1908, and in 1939, at the 21st annual meeting of the Japanese mission in Brazil, the group was established under Watanabe, 13 of whom were Japanese religious leaders from Japan for a lifetime posting in Brazil, differs from PL which follows the more corporate model of sending ‘Japanese expatriate managers’ for a fixed term to Brazil, after which they return to Japan. According to Maeyama, an anthropologist who researched Japanese religions in Brazil, in 1957 Messianity had around 7,000 committed followers and 60 to 70 presidents of the Brazilian chapters of Messianity. By contrast, all successive presidents of PL have been Japanese who were sent to Brazil by the Japanese headquarters. They stay in Brazil for seven to nine years and then return to Japan. During this time, some learn Portuguese, some do not. Generally they are not committed to speaking Portuguese with the Brazilian followers. In terms of leadership, Messianity differs from both of these groups. The Brazilian president of Messianity, Reverend Tetuo Watanabe has been in Brazil for almost 40 years. Since Watanabe holds significant positions in Messianity’s global organisation, he travels frequently between Japan and Brazil. Therefore, he addresses followers only at special events such as The Festival of Heaven on Earth, but he speaks Portuguese very well and his dynamic preaching style is popular with followers. His speeches are regularly summarised in the monthly journal Jornal Messiânico.

By comparing the three groups, we can observe that Messianity differs from PL in one respect. In terms of leadership, it is useful to refer to related and suggested conclusions from the study Brazilian companies controlled by American MNCs in Europe, reach the following conclusion: in the Brazilian offices of Japanese MNCs, presidents are more likely to be Japanese, and control by Japanese headquarters is stricter than that of American and European MNCs (Hulbert and Brandt 1980). Japanese MNCs have tried to maintain the identities of their group’s companies abroad by installing expatriate Japanese managers as executives in these companies and maintaining strict control by the headquarters in Japan. This strategy may be called a ‘pure Japanese policy’.

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New Religions

New Religions in Brazil in 1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Ethnic</th>
<th>Other %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Brazilians</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenri Kyō</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seicho-No-Ie</td>
<td>99-100</td>
<td>0–1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messianity</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>80–90</td>
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<td>Sūka Gakkai</td>
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Messianity followed its proselytisation without financial support from the Japanese headquarters. But in the 1960s, the headquarters started sending mis- sionaries to Brazil and started dominating Brazilian Messianity. Thus, Messianity has...
Mahikari, often classified as one of Japan’s ‘new new religions’, that is, established in the post World War Two era, was founded by Okada Kotama (1901-1974), respectfully referred to in the organisation as Sukuninushisama (Great Saviour).

In 1959, Okada received revelations from God commanding him thus: ‘The time of heaven has come. Rise. Thy name shall be Kotama. Exercise the art of purification. The world shall encounter severe times’ (Okada Kotama 1967).

A global NRM based on miracles: Sukvo Mahikari

In Japanese, Mahikari means ‘True Light’, a spiritual and purifying energy. It can be partly conceptualised in terms of the Japanese ‘ki’ or the Chinese ‘qi’ (McViegh 1993), but is distinguished by its divine aspect, as the Divine Light of the Creator, Su God. People become members of Mahikari, or Kaimukite (those who go ‘hand-in-hand with God’), after attending the three day Primary Kenbu (training course), a kind of initiation (Huron 1991). Upon completion they receive an Otsuime (Divine lockets), which enables them to transmit the Divine Light from Su God, are treated with great respect. It must not be allowed to become wet or touch the ground. That is why children do not become kaimukite until around the age of 10, when they are deemed able to take proper care of the Otsuime. Members then have the ability to transmit the True Light following a detailed ritual procedure of praying to the Creator God, which involves bowing to the Goshintai (sacred scroll containing the Chon, symbol of Su God, and the central feature of each centre) and then to their partners as an act of paternity. Then, with their backs to the Goshintai, they recite in a loud voice, in archaic Japanese, the prayer of purification - Amatsu Ningentei - and True Light is transmitted to the forehead of the other person through the raised palm of the hand. Light may then be transmitted to the back of the head and other parts of the body, a complete session taking about 50 minutes. This practice is also known as oikyome (purification), tekasho (raising the hand) and Mahikari no Waza (the practice of Mahikari). Giving and receiving True Light daily and attending group ceremonies, which magnify the transmission of Light from Su God, are the fundamental activities of Mahikari members. Many new members come to Mahikari through being offered Light by an existing member in response to a problem with their health, relationships or finances. The miraculous healing of incurable diseases such as cancer and the change for the better in relationships and careers, is extensively documented in observably true case histories in the books by Dr Andris Tebecis (the Bucho or head of Mahikari’s Australia/Oceania division), and the monthly newsletter of the organisation. Mahikari teachings explain that misfortune is caused by spirits who attach themselves to the sufferer due to karmic relationships created by themselves or their ancestors. The process of purification with the Divine Light pacifies these spirits and causes them to leave the person alone. The result is then a healing on the physical, emotional or social plane. The bad deeds of oneself, (in this or former lives), or of one’s ancestors are what attracts the resentment of the spirits of those who have been harmed and thus they attach themselves to a victim and cause further suffering. Rather than driving these spirits away, in the conventional understanding of esotericism, the process of purification with Divine Light heals them as well and they leave voluntarily.

Mahikari – a supra religion

Mahikari is open to people of all religions and viewpoints and does not attempt to convert people from their existing religious beliefs (Smith, 2000). Rather it intensifies their understanding of the major spiritual teachings of their religion, which are common to all religions. For instance, members explained to me that a Catholic priest would become a better Catholic priest by practising Mahikari (see also Cornille 1994). The non-competitive nature of the organisation is demonstrated by the fact that there is a significant dropout rate of those who have received the Primary Kenbu, a fact freely mentioned by senior members. Mahikari beliefs also reflect this openness by incorporating elements of the ‘five major religions’: Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Islam and Christianity. This syncretism of belief systems is typical of NRMs. It is not only a recruiting device but also an acknowledgment that most religious traditions share a syncretism of belief systems is typical of NRMs. It is not only a recruiting device but also an acknowledgment that most religious traditions share the process of purification with the Divine Light pacifies these spirits and causes them to leave the person alone. The result is then a healing on the physical, emotional or social plane. The bad deeds of oneself, (in this or former lives), or of one’s ancestors are what attracts the resentment of the spirits of those who have been harmed and thus they attach themselves to a victim and cause further suffering. Rather than driving these spirits away, in the conventional understanding of esotericism, the process of purification with Divine Light heals them as well and they leave voluntarily.

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New Religious Movements

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19(1), Tokyo:

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Oshienushisama
modern bureaucratic principles are combined. For instance, the appoint
ritual principles) and medicine. In these systems, spiritual elements and
Corps,
and so on. There are also various leadership roles relating to the Youth
Group, Older Youth Group, Primary Students’ Group, Kindergarten Group
personnel who coordinate such groups as the Parents’ Group, Educators’
Within the
Canberra Regional Headquarters and Australian
organisation and may be transferred, often at intervals of about three years
after the
of beliefs and ritual practices.
Just as corporate cultures are understood in terms of theories of religion
attributes of large modern organisations to handle their global staffing,
and ritual, so may the rituals and belief systems of NRMs be analysed as
from the perspective of globalised corporate practices and corporate styles,
global spread. Thus it has been useful to look at religious organisations
from the viewpoint of globalised corporate practices and corporate styles,
even though they are located in the spiritual realm in the first instance.
Just as corporate cultures are understood in terms of theories of religion
and ritual, so may the rituals and belief systems of NRMs be analysed as
corporate cultures, as religions globalise and are forced to take on
the attributes of large modern organisations to handle their global staffing,
their cross-cultural memberships and maintain and control the orthodoxy of
beliefs and ritual practices.

A global cultural system
Membership in Sukyo Mahikari organises the lives of its followers on a
daily, monthly and annual basis. In daily terms they are required to give
and receive Light to family, members of the public both at the dojo and
outside. They are required to offer small receptacles of food and drink to
the ancestors at their home’s ancestral shrine. If they have had a Go-shin-
nai shrine inaugurated in the home, this requires even more care, since it
cannot be left unattended for long periods. There are no dietary codes or
dress codes for members, but interaction patterns tend to follow Japanese
standards of politeness and respect, and especially in the dojo, remov-
ing shoes, washing hands, bowing when passing in front of the centrally
placed Go-shin-nai, necessitate mental and behavioural adjustment away
from prevailing cultural norms in most non-Japanese societies. Gradu-
ally one’s social interactions tend to revolve around other Mahikari mem-
bbers and membership becomes a total life path. When visiting Suzu on
pilgrimage or other centres overseas, the organisational culture is such
that members feel no social or cultural distance between themselves and
other nationalities. Thus Mahikari can be said to be truly a global cultural
system.

In this paper I have argued that the distinctive organisational style of
Sukyo Mahikari has facilitated its rapid expansion overseas, and the main
element of its spiritual culture, the ritual practice of radiating True Light
has been a powerful factor in establishing uniformity in value systems and
behaviour of members in diverse cultures through the process of purifi-
cation of their innermost attitude (sonen). Moreover the occurrence of
miracles associated with the True Light has been the main reason for its
global spread. Thus it has been useful to look at religious organisations
from the perspective of globalised corporate practices and corporate styles,
even though they are located in the spiritual realm in the first instance.

Doshi, being of all nationalities, play an important linking role in the global
organisation and may be transferred, often at intervals of about three years
across national boundaries. For instance a former doshi at the Melbourne
centre was a South African, there have been two Japanese doshi serving in
the Canberra Regional Headquarters and Australian doshi has been posted
to the International Division in Takayama and to a centre in India.

Within the dojo there are different group leaders, coordinators and other
personnel who coordinate such groups as the Parents’ Group, Educators’
Group, Older Youth Group, Primary Students’ Group, Kindergarten Group,
and so on. There are also various leadership roles relating to the Youth
Corps. Yoko agriculture (a horticultural project based on organic and spir-
ritual principles) and medicine. In these systems, spiritual elements and
modern bureaucratic principles are combined. For instance, the appoint-
ment to a leadership role in one of these groups is officially made by
Oshienushisama on the basis of the individual’s spiritual qualities, yet the
size of the group, its hierarchical structure and the communication and
recording procedures mirror aspects of the large organisations found in
modern society.

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the Regional Headquarters Bunko. Male applicants should be no older
than 35 (younger for females) and doshi trainees are expected to be single
because they must live in the ‘bachelor’ dormitory accommodation at the
Training Institute in Takayama and then be posted for practical training to
any centre in the world for two years. The living conditions at the Train-
ing Institute are spartan, living expenses are provided by Oshienushisama
and their personal income thereafter is minimal. About ten percent of
each class are non-Japanese. Women slightly outnumber men as doshi
trainees, but they are required to resign from the role after marriage. It
is considered impossible for them to be able to manage the duties of
both doshi and female family roles together. After marriage and mother-
hood, many remain active members of Mahikari centres and assume the
role of junkambu (administrators assisting the centre chief). Male doshi
often remain unmarried until their late thirties or forties, and live a spar-
tan existence in the dojo itself, serving God 24 hours a day, giving Light
to members, helping the centre chief, maintaining the centre and looking
after the Go-shin-nai.

Wendy Smith
Science fiction provides us with more than a glimpse of futuristic visions, it allows us to probe questions of cultural history, politics and socio-economic change in societies. Chris Coto-Jones reveals his fascination for this sub-culture and Japan's long and mutating relations with 'weird-science'.

From science fictional Japan to Japanese science fiction

Chris Coto-Jones

The term ‘science fiction’ is of relatively recent origin, apparently coined by the genre-legend Hugo Gernsback in an editorial to his new magazine, Science Wonder Stories, in 1926. Nine years later the magazine changed its name to Astounding Science-Fiction, and thus the name entered history. However, throughout the 1920s and 1930s there was a plethora of competing terms: pseudo-scientific, weird-science, and Gernsback’s own early favourite ‘scientificism’.

Fiction that would eventually become labelled as ‘science fiction’ (or ‘sci-fi’) had been in existence for at least a century before. Convention dictates that the first piece of sci-fi was Mary Shelley’s gothic masterpiece, Frankenstein (1818), although the reasons for this originisation are far from uncontested. For some, it is enough to say that Frankenstein is the earliest text that still exists within what Damien Broderick (Reading by Starlight, 1993) has called the ‘imagetext’ of modern sci-fi (that is, within the set of stories that define literacy in the genre). For others, the issue is not conventional but thematic: sci-fi is about technology and mechanisation, necessarily a product of modernity and of the industrial revolution. Accordingly, the 19th century works of Shelley, HG Wells and Jules Verne should be read alongside Nietzsche’s proclamations about the death of God, Max Weber’s account of the ‘iron cage’ of modern bureaucratic machinery and Martin Heidegger’s stand against the self-alienation of Being in the face of the imperialism of technology.

Science fictional Japan:

In other words, sci-fi is the literature of the hopes and anxieties of industrial modernity, and it should come as no surprise that other industrial societies have produced their own ‘weird-science’. Indeed, Japan’s relationship with sci-fi began in its so-called ‘age of machines’ (kikai jidai) in the early 20th century with the work of writers such as Mizushima Niou and Yumeno Kyûsaku, who were writing contemporaneously with social critics and philosophers struggling with the problematics of modernity and its overcoming (kindai no chôkoku). Already in the late 1920s, Japanese writers (and scientists) were envisioning robots or ‘jûkô ningen’ (artificial people), and stories about them (including some claims to have invented them) appeared in popular science magazines in the 1920s and 1930s; at this time, such stories would have been labelled as aiô kagaku (imaginary science). It was not until the post-war period that the English terms ‘SF’ or ‘sci-fi’ entered popular usage.

 Historians of Europe as well as Japan will be quick to notice that this period corresponds approximately to what Eric Hobsbawm has called the Age of Empire (1815), in which the so-called Great Powers established and consolidated imperial rule across the globe. It is interesting to reflect that one of the other central, thematic concerns of sci-fi is often considered to be the encounter with difference, and occasionally with either the mystification or the demonisation of difference. In other words, sci-fi can be read as a thread in the weaves of colonialism and orientalism. Indeed, in recent years much of the most sophisticated work on sci-fi has come from the standpoint of post-colonialism. From this perspective, we see the beginnings of the creation of a science fictional Japan, as well as the coincident birth of science fiction in Japan.

The engagement of Western sci-fi with the East Asian ‘other’ in the first half of the 20th century (and then again during the years around the Vietnam War) is clearly informed by a kind of reactionary and an- cient frontier spirit. Classic comic-strips such as Philip Francis Nowlan’s Buck Rogers in 25th Century (the first US sci-fi comic strip, starting on 2 January 1929) and Alex Raymond’s Flash Gordon (beginning 7 January 1934) show America being overrun by the Red Mongols, and pit the all-American hero (Flash Gordon is quartered to death by the New York stock) against an evil (Chinese) Emperor Mong the Merciless of planet Mongo. However, perhaps the most remarkable of these pre-war texts is the Sixth Column (1933) by Robert Heinlein, which was originally serialized in Astounding Science-Fiction in January, February and March of 1934 (nine months before Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor). Heinlein depicts the invasion of the US by a force of ‘Pan Asians’, whom he identifies as a mix of Japanese and Chinese. The Americans defend themselves through recourse to a special ‘ray weapon’ that could be adjusted so that it would only damage people of a specific race. In many ways, Heinlein’s novel is an intriguing window into American fears about Japan’s imperial expansion and its proposed Co-Prosperity Sphere.

As one of the most influential voices in American sci-fi, Heinlein’s portrayal of the ‘Pan Asians’ has been extremely controversial, variously condemned and praised for its engagement with the volatile race-politics of the time. On the one hand, critics have accused Heinlein himself of anti-Japanese racism during the early 1940s. On the other hand, Heinlein and others have argued that his purpose was anti-racist, and that his text was an attack on Japanese and US racism at the time. Whatever the actual force of this book, the historical interest of Sixth Column vastly outweighs its literary quality, which even Heinlein himself lamented.

These sci-fi classics from the early 20th century illustrate very well the ways in which science fiction was a symbolic genre or a metaphorical discourse from its inception. Heinlein’s transparency in his depiction of the Japanese as Japanese, rather than as aliens from another galaxy with suspiciously Japanese or Chinese sounding names, was actually rather unusual. The tendency in sci-fi is to re-figure the encounter with the ‘other’ in terms of the encounter with the literally alien. Of course, the question of race politics within sci-fi has attracted a wide critical literature. In the post-war period, Samuel R. Delany would become a leading figure in this field, using his own science fiction and sci-fi criticism to explore and challenge questions of identity and difference, of exploration and conquest, of autonomy and assimilation. His 1977 Nebula Award winning novel, The Einstein Connection, has become a classic of its kind.

In the post-war period, however, it gradually became clear that the representation of Japan in science fiction did not have to orbit around negative racial stereotypes. No longer a military threat, Japan began to recapture some of the romantic mystery that it had once enjoyed in European eyes, such as in the work of Jonathan Swift (Gulliver’s Travels, 1726), whose archetypal explorer, Gulliver, famously travelled to the mystical land of Japan with a special letter of introduction from the king of Luggnagg, with whom Japan was apparently allied in the 18th century. By the time of the New Wave movement of the 1970s, Asia was already an explicit source of inspiration for the mystical futilities of the West, and 1980s cyberpunk placed the technologically thriving, contemporary Japan into the fictive futures of Europe and the US. In other words, whilst the fictions had slipped-streamed from negative to positive, Japan remained science fiction.

Science fictional Japan in the post-war world:

In the years immediately following the end of the Second World War, anxiety about the emerging Cold War was clear in the so-called ‘Golden Age of Science Fiction.’ In 1943, George Orwell’s masterpiece Nineteen Eighty-Four was published, in which the fictional nation of Eastasia is identified as one of the three superpowers of the dystopian future. In general the 1950s and 1960s are marked by intense political activism and by scepticism about the ability of technology to solve all problems, and the agenda is played out in the sci-fi of the time.

Central to these problematic was the horror of wartime technology, culminating in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. A common theme in Anglo-American sci-fi became the potential collapse of civilization triggered by the pursuit of technological advancement. Three of the most famous sci-fi novels of all time, Isaac Asimov’s Foundation (1953), Frank Herbert’s Dune (1965), and Heinlein’s Stranger in a Strange Land (1961), all appeared in this period. As we will see, the a-bomb also played a central role in the development of sci-fi in post-war Japan, albeit in a radically different way; the classic monster film, Gojû (1954) by Honda Ishirō, will become emblematic.

By the end of the 1950s and into the 1970s, however, there was a real turning point. The so-called ‘New Wave’ of sci-fi shifted the attention of authors and readers away from the technology-driven glo- ries (and anxieties) of ‘outer-space’ and towards the complex, human concerns of ‘inner-space.’ During this period there was a real focus on challenging social and cultural taboos, on radical political stances, and on heightened literary quality. Leading lights in the UK and the US were Michael Moorcock, Brian Aldiss, Roger Zelazny, and of course Samuel Delany (although some of these figures rejected the label).

One of the intriguing aspects of the New Wave was the way in which it re-appropriated and re-signified Asia, like many of the other cultural movements of the time. The New Wave was fascinated by spiritual aspects of Asian culture, such as Zen (DT Suzuki established his Zen Centre in California during the 1950s), Indian mysticism (just as the Beatles travelled to India in 1968), and the freshly popularised nature of Tibetan Buddhism. Indeed, Kingsley Amis famously condemned the New Wave for its fixation on stylistic innovation and for its persistent recourse to (what he called) Oriental religions and spirituality Zelazny’s Land of Light (1967) might be indicative...
One of the truly literary moments in this period was Nobel laureate Hermann Hesse's Das Glaspengehl, which was first published in 1927. A Common Ob- ject of interaction with the mystical East. In 1969, it was finally translated into En- glish as The Glass Bead Game, a novel that possesses a real sense of dynamic interplay as the pinnacle of human civilisa- tion, requiring consummate intellectual and spiritual development, which is iden- tified as a crucial concept in the novel. Indeed, Hesse's other novels also enjoyed an early in the 1960s (after his death in 1963) largely because of their resonance with the post-war social and intellectual movements of the time. Süderhalle (1932). Step- penwolf (1937), Journey to the East (1937).

This sci-fi re-figuring of Asia as a spiritual alternative to the technologically angst- ridden West was a common feature of many of the novels of the period, not to mention the already familiar orientalist trope in European literature. Indeed, it bloved into the sci-fi boom of the late 1970s and 1980s that followed the release of Blade Runner (1982) and Akira (1988) – as well as for George Lucas himself, many aspects of the Star Wars galaxy, specifically the mystical 'Jedi' Way, were derived from Thomson’s description of Japan presented with the admixture of Zoroastri- animism; the failed ‘force’ reconstituted qi or ki, Toda’s famously garbled English has been aptly evoked the role of Chinese-English.

Whilst the Star Wars phenomenon aban- doned the mystic East in favour of a New Wave in favour of sci-fi’s more popu- lar roots, it retained a certain nostalgic romanticism about representations of Asia as the ‘mystical East’ (Blade Runner, Akira, Japanoido sengen) as an alternative to coldly technolog- ised and alienated societies in the West. Interestingly, the next major movement in science fiction affected a re-technolog- ising of this mythical spirituality, often via the imaginary of Japanese technological advances.

The ‘cyberpunk’ movement of the 1980s, led by writers such as William Gibson, Bruce Sterling, and Shirow Masamune, created a new wave of international fans, as well as for George Lucas himself, many aspects of the Star Wars galaxy, specifically the mystical ‘Jedi’ Way, were derived from Thomson’s description of Japan presented with the admixture of Zoroastrianism; the failed ‘force’ reconstituted qi or ki, Toda’s famously garbled English has been aptly evoked the role of Chinese-English.

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When the Star Wars space operas were released in the late 1970s, Japanese sci-fi seemed to become more ‘Japanese’ than ever (Japan – The Land of Science Fiction). One of the intriguing things about the JISFC is its sense of the world. Whilst it makes no claims to being a ‘Worldcon,’ its history shows a much greater openness to (and awareness of) sci-fi from overseas. Indeed, unlike the Hugo Awards, there is a special Seiun Prize for the best translated novel, which has been won by such genre-greats as Frank Herbert, Robert Dolanzy, and David Brin. Conversely, the great Japa- nese sci-fi writers are almost unheard of in Europe and the US, despite the fact that many of them engage directly with the themes and questions raised by European and American authors, providing interest- ingly infected, alternative visions. To the extent that the ‘world’ is aware of Japanese sci-fi, it appears to locate the genre in the media of anime, manga and video games, neglecting the novels and short stories that were creatively ‘Japanese.’ These sci-fi novelists, some of whom are also brothers in ‘the cyberpunk’ movement, have made something of an impact in translation, and whose experimental sci-fi novel Daiden kampyo-ki (1958, translated as Last Exit to Planet Earth 2007) for the first time in the West. However, other accomplished writers will be lesser known, who have earned the background of the Vietnam War. Indeed, the 1970s and 80s were periods of incredible richness in Japanese sci-fi, at least partly because writers absorbed all of the previous SF tradi- tions from the West simultaneously at that time, rather than diachronically, resulting in unusual patterns, motifs and themes that were creatively ‘Japanese.’ Unlike his Anglo-American comparatist, Komatsu’s sci-fi was characterised not by the clastrophobic paranoia of the Cold War but rather by the grand teutonic move- ments of History (and the earth’s tectonic plates), which seemed to persist in impor- tantly re-shaping Japan. Indeed, the role of historical singularities (such as the apocalypse itself) in Japanese science fiction cannot be underestimated, and many of the most influential writers to emerge during the ‘golden era’ seemed to orientate their work around them. One such figure, who would later break through to world acclaim with the anime Akira (1988), after the manga of the same name (1982-86), was Otomo


Recently Leonardo DiCaprio announced that he would produce a movie version of the classic anime Akira. Not only that, but anime has broken through into the mainstream of Western pop culture: science fiction directors such as Oshii Mamoru (Ghost in the Shell, 1995) and Ōtomo Katsuhiro (Akira, 1988) are now iconic figures in their own right. It should come as no surprise, then, that what has happens to the storyline of Japan is not merely science fiction, but also a real-world context for a specific tra- dition of science fiction. That said, many have taken part in the Seacon of the Japanese science fiction Convention (the first JISFC was in Tokyo, 1956) – the annual event at which the prestigious
China’s development is uneven and unbalanced, with growing divisions between urban and rural areas, men and women, and different population groups. This trend is further exacerbated by the lack of effective governance. According to the 2007 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) compiled by Transparency International, China ranks 72 out of 180 countries. Former President Jiang Zemin admitted that the government had taken a significant hit by the time a reform programme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was launched in 2000, while the National Audit Association revealed that 10 percent of the funds earmarked for poverty alleviation went astray.

Since 2002, China’s development policy has shifted away from an over-emphasis on rapid economic growth towards sustainable development and deepening governance reform. In the 11th five-year plan for national economic and social development (2006–2010), the agenda for building a prosperous and harmonious society includes the adoption of a scientific and people-centred approach to development. This blueprint was reiterated at the 17th Communist Party Congress in October 2007, demonstrating the party’s concerns about the overheated economy and the widening social inequalities. In his political report to the congress, President Hu Jintao expressed his willingness to deepen the political reform process by prioritising democratisation within the party and gradually increasing citizen participation in public affairs, especially at the grassroots level, under the rule of law. For the first time he made it clear that he regards grassroots democracy as the fundamental engine of socialist-style democracy.

These policy changes may signal the determination of China’s top leadership to tackle the tensions and problems confronting the country, although some scholars believe it is unlikely that the state will seriously undertake democratisation. Others hold the view that China’s economic development will inevitably lead to greater democracy and they believe that China’s growing middle class will be the driving force for change. With the impact of globalisation on Chinese society and policy, the quest for democracy is inescapable. The question is to what degree the party/state has the capacity to deepen its experimentation with political reform, and what role society can play in this process.

The state capacity to democratisation
Minxin Pei, Director of the China pro- gramme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is pessimistic. He describes China’s transition as being trapped in partial economic and political reforms. He views the state as neo-authoritarian in nature, and thus self-destructive, and claims that improving its governance and representing societal interests will eventually exhaust its economic and politi- cal vitality. This is because the state has no effective means to address the current problems, given its inherent institutional weaknesses, characterised by pervasive patronage and corruption, which hinders efforts to enhance political accountability. The gradualist reform strategy centred on the state’s goal of political survival cannot lead to a fully fledged market economy under the rule of law. In his recent comments on the 17th congress, Pei stated that the Chinese leaders’ obsession with political stability can only hinder the overdue reform, which could be exacerbated by the likely economic consequences — falling consumer demand, diminished household wealth, rising bad bank loans and reduced corporate investment.

Will Hutton, Chief Executive of the Work Foundation and Governor of the London School of Economics, also warns that “China is running up against a set of daunting challenges from within its own political and economic systems that could well derail its rise, leading to a massive threat to the global economy.” Hutton, the state still imposes arbitrary, sometimes totalitarian, ideological interventions on society, which has no effective means to participate in the political deliberation process. Consequently, the state faces a crisis of ideological and political legitimacy. The party is, according to Hutton, “a moral and ideological empty vessel” that is unable to confront the escalating social protests and its own corruption. To address this, Hutton argues that China needs to develop independent and pluralistic public institutions built on the rule of law, an independent judiciary, freedom of the press and authentic representative government.

These perspectives on China’s transition remain highly controversial. Andrew Nathan, professor of political science at Columbia University, contends that Pei fails to provide ample evidence to support his thesis. He argues that China may not need Western democracy and full marketisation apart from reforms to streamline public administration based on controlled consultation processes. Nathan also questions whether the mounting social unrest is threatening the regime. He refers to the state’s achievements in bringing about change through political reorientation to redress the negative consequences of economic growth. And he sees unity within the party in deepening the reform process.

Democracy in China is a borrowed con- cept, according to Yong Xu, Director of the Centre for Chinese Rural Studies of the Central China Normal University, and a leading expert on village elections. The 1988 Organic Law on Village Committees provided the first institutional basis for China’s grassroots democracy. This form of rural self-governance is based on the separation of collective ownership of village property such as land, from individual user rights. This means that ownership per se is in the hands of the village committee, which is supposed to represent the collective interests of the villagers, rather than individual villagers. As such, farmers’ demands for village governance are inextricably linked with their interactions with the village committees over the management of common property. To a certain extent, the system of direct election of village committee leaders, established in the early 1980s to enhance political accountability, has strengthened citizens’ rights to legal justice to tackle the issue of infringement of villagers’ rights by the village committee leaders and higher-level governments. None- theless, argues Ching Kwan Lee and Mark Selden, professors of political science at Cornell University, “there is little evidence to date that these efforts by the central government and the citizenry have had significant effects in curbing the arbitrary powers of village leaders, still less that they have empowered villagers in the face of the party’s monopoly on formal power.” The lack of internal conditions such as democratic rules, procedures and skills of the villagers is further hindering the village governance reform process. These issues must be addressed first, according to Xu. In order to succeed in village elections, the higher-level township government must also undergo such a process; but he admits that this will be a tough task. Yet, he notes, one has to understand that in such a large country, the state will have to play a proactive role in guiding democracy.

Step-by-step democracy
Keqing Yu, director of the China Compara- tive Politics and Economics Centre (CCPEC), a central government think-tank, argues that the only form of democracy for China was endorsed by the 17th congress. The prerequisites for this pattern of democracy are a strong economy and modern political and legal frameworks. Given its complex social and economic realities, China can only adopt a gradual approach to democracy by pur- suing ‘inner-party’ and grassroots democra- cy first. His view resonates with those of other Chinese scholars, such as Tianyong Zhou, professor at the China Central Party School, and Xinjun Gao, senior fellow at CCPEC. In recognition of the current government structure, characterised by top- down administration and supervision, they claim that local governments lack accountability to the poor, who actually have few incentives to participate in public affairs. To Zhou and Gao, mechanisms for improving inner-party democracy will have to be explored and institutionalised in par- allel with grassroots experimentation. Only when the party itself becomes democratic will the centralised governance structure become more decentralised.

Culture also plays a role in societal and political change. Michael Johnston, pro- fessor of political science at Colgate Uni- versity, New York, argues that despite the increasing awareness of democratic val- ues, principles and practices among the public and politicians, the majority of the population are still overenveloped by Confu- cian values. As a result, Chinese society to a certain extent, is organised in strong net- works in which patron–client relationships play an overriding role in social and politi- cal relations. It is in these spheres that people are inclined to rely on consensual decisions and the more powerful, who inhibit the development of a pluralist society and further undermine the power of the citizen in holding the state accountable.

Political change in China hinges not only upon the state itself, but also on society as the agent of change. People are not entire- ly constrained by the binding superstruc- tures; rather, they are active agents whose culture, ideas, values and knowledge play an important role in driving the process of change. The roles of the state and soci- ety in political and social transformations are mutually reinforcing. This highlights a number of issues that require further study. What and how can power be trans- ferred from higher- to lower-level authori- ties and newly elected village committees, villagers and the wider public? What will this mean for the elected village commit- tees, which are fettered by their lack of control over resources and have little say in village administration, as the nomina- tion of their leadership is controlled by the higher-level authorities? Who are the champions of change and how are they driving it? And, in the context of the lack of democracy, as seen by the West, what model of democracy does the Chinese peo- ple themselves need?

Policy makers need to be convinced with viable options for tackling poverty and social inequalities through improvements in governance. The realisation of sustained growth coupled with democratic govern- ance can only be a protracted process. The promoters of democratic governance will have to confront resistance from differ- ent groups of actors with vested interests and identify and seize opportunities again and again, according to Jesse Ribot, senior associate at the World Resources Institute. All of this will require a viable programme that addresses the poverty and social divi- sions in a society that is dominated by a hierarchical and compartmentalised state. Perhaps the roadmap is there, but societal demands for measures to implement the new development agenda, and the reac- tions to them, require further studies.

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Notes
3. Pei, Minxin. 2006. ibid. See also Breinin (2007), who questions whether the no- tiation of policy indicates a change in the fundamental basis of policy.

Democracy by degrees: China’s roadmap for change?

China has reached a critical point in its development. Widespread poverty and growing social inequality are posing daunting challenges for social stability. The Chinese government seems aware of this, but needs to do more to empower the people to participate in the reform process.
Recent scholarship has witnessed an increasing interest in colonial customary law. Law has traditionally been seen in colonial history as an instrument of imperial domination, but the boundaries of investigations have expanded significantly as scholars examined how legal and social customs of the indigenous societies underwent changes under colonial rule.

Colonial courts and custom: comparative reflections on customary law and colonial modernity in Korea

The insight that colonial administrators in Africa attempted to consolidate their rule by inventing the notion of customary law has shed light on the relationship between imperial policies and the native systems of rules and practices. At the same time, the theoretical framework of legal transplant has helped our understanding of how old customs were integrated into the legal structure of the colonial powers. The colonial powers were either more or less in agreement that indigenous institutions should be recognised insofar as they were compatible with the dictates of natural law and morality and, of course, they did not impede colonial administration. Yet the actual course of implementing customary law in different areas was full of diversity and incongruity, intertwined with changes in imperial policy swayed by both the complex ties between colonial and metropolitan cultures and tensions among bureaucrats. Colonial customary law presents fascinating material for comparative analysis.

A Japanese version of Western law

The case of colonial Korea (1910-1945) is illuminating because its traditional legal system underwent a dramatic transformation into a modern Romano-German civil law system under Japan, which introduced to the colony modern laws that it had received from Europe only a few decades earlier. Shortly after Korea’s annexation by Japan, the government general imposed Japan’s Civil Code and Code of Civil Procedure as the general laws in Korea, but decided that most private legal relations among the Koreans be governed by Korean customs (the Ordinance on Civil Matters of 1912). Because Chosön Korea (1912-1910) did not have a body of private law, except for some scattered provisions in the criminal code, the Japanese needed to rely on the concept of custom. Colonial customary law was created with a specific goal of reshaping Korean laws and practices in line with modern legal concepts and principles in Japanese civil law. Colonial civil law in Korea was thus a Japaneseised version of Western law that was further adapted to the Korean situation through the legal machinery of custom.

Many jurists in the 19th and early 20th centuries were influenced by the major tenet of the German Historical School that law was the spirit of the people. Some prominent legal scholars were drawn to the investigation of native customs of the colonised and took part in the debates over what kind of colonial legal system was to be established. Henry Sumner Maine (1822-1888) was convinced of the absence of the concepts of rights and duties in custom in British India. Cornelis van Vollenhoven (1874-1933), on the other hand, believed in the sufficiency of custom law in meeting the needs of Indonesian society. Japanese jurists, with jurisdiction over both Korean and Japanese, were to be one of characteristic adaptation and adjustment. Ume Kenjiro (1860-1910) argued that Korea needed modern civil law to protect the individuals’ rights but claimed that a blanket imposition of Japan’s civil code on Korea would not work due to different cultural and social backgrounds. The colonial legal system in which Korean customs continued to regulate Korean family and succession matters, within the general principles of European civil law, or did it rather serve colonial interests and distort the indigenous legal tradition? Many legal historians around the world have struggled to grasp with similar questions. For instance, did the adat/kejawen (the colonial attempt to preserve the native custom or adat) in the Dutch East Indies, pursued apparently out of genuine respect for indigenous cultures, help Indonesians, or did it instead render them more vulnerable to outside manipulations? The question of colonial modernity continues to shape the discourses of customary law. A rounded and comparatively conceived study of colonial customary law can contribute to our understanding of the role of law in modern history.

Notes

Double migrants, diversity and diasporas: A snapshot of the Hindustani and non-resident Indian community in the Netherlands.

T

he Indian diaspora has become the subject of considerable academic and practical attention. Scholars speak of a global Indian diaspora or even diasporas (Oven). In 2000, a high-level committee of the Indian Parliament, led by Dr L.M. Singhvi (former member of parliament and Indian High Commissioner to the UK, 1991-1997), conducted a general survey of people of Indian origin (PIOs) and non-resident Indians (NRIs) having combined these two population groups with Indian links into a single category of the Indian diaspora. While some academics doubt the validity of such a broad category (Markovits), there is arguably much usefulness in now, as global travel and communication lead to a revival, re-establishment and reassessment of old links.

Western Europe and North America remain two of the most important migration destinations for Indians and people of Indian origin. In Europe, the United Kingdom has the largest population of South Asians - two million - well over half of whom are Indian. The Indian diaspora in the Netherlands is represented by both PIOs (the IndoSurinamese) and NRIs. The Netherlands has the second largest population of PIOs on the continent. The majority, approximately 150,000, are Hindustani (IndoSurinamese), double migrants with Dutch citizenship. The remainder, some 15-20,000, are NRIs who came directly from India and hold Indian passports. Their loyalty to India is expressed through cultural activities and political lobbyism in favour of India. The number of both communities is rising. It is estimated that between two and three thousand Indians in Holland are illegal immigrants. There are also about 20,000 Pakistanis in the Netherlands, who are culturally close to Indians and share a common history with Indians.

The Lalla Rukh

Holland's Hindustanis are descendents of indentured workers transported to Dutch Guyana (Suriname) from the territory which today forms the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, historically known as Hindustan. The first ship carrying human cargo from India was the Lalla Rukh, and it landed in Suriname on the 31st June 1873, (making 2008 a special year for the Hindustanis in Suriname who celebrate 135 years since their forefathers made the journey to South America). Many Surinamese are familiar with the Lalla Rukh from their history books, but it has also given its name to a foundation for Indo-Surinamese in the Netherlands. Some of my informants claim to be descendents of the first wave of 245 migrants transported on this very ship. The Lalla Rukh was to be followed by seven more ships, and in all about 32,000 East Indians were delivered to Suriname before indentureship was abolished. Interestingly, while several thousand East Indians returned to India, the family oral history of my informants tells of their forefathers' intention to return to India, but the last ship left for the subcontinent in 1926, and with all hopes of repatriation. However, the 'myth of return' was born.

Suriname gained independence on November 25, 1975. Subsequently, the period between 1975 and 1980 witnessed mass movement of the Surinamese, including those of Indian origin, to the Netherlands. This can partly be explained by economic reasons, but fears of Creole domination in Suriname are also cited as a reason for the massive Hindustani migration to the Netherlands. Intercultural relations in Suriname are complex. Both competition and cooperation between ethnic groups occurs in Suriname and these traits have been inherited by the Surinamese community in Holland. For many years, the government of the Netherlands made no allowances for these ethnic differences between the Surinamese and dealt with the community as an homogenous unit. The consequences of this included a rise in competition between the Creoles and the Indo-Surinamese and attempts by the latter to establish their own representative groups such as the 'Lalla Rukh'. Today, the number of Surinamese in the Netherlands is estimated to be 150,000, more than half of whom are Hindustani.

Economic and welfare provisions were made by the government of the Netherlands for the newcomers from the former colony. They were helped to find housing and work. Many Hindustanis found jobs as government and municipal employees, while some of them started their own business, particularly as shop owners. The government's policy of offering the newcomers accommodation in different parts of the country was designed to avoid a concentration of migrants' in Holland's cities, but in reality, this proved difficult to avoid, and it was not long before Hindustani communities emerged in Amsterdam (Bijlmermeer) and The Hague (Transvaal, Schilderswijk). These communities found themselves engaged in a process of searching for and constructing an identity. This process was itself complicated by the fact that the Hindustanis and the NRI Muslims are increasingly influenced by the ideas of global Umma and Muslim brotherhood. My research suggests that among NRI Muslims in the Netherlands, there is considerable friction between the Pakistani community and Sarnami Hindustani Muslims. For example, the Indian language of Urdu is one of the languages of religious instruction in their mosques.

The Hindustani Hindus are most eager to claim their links to India. The 1980s saw a significant number of marriages between Surinamese Hindu women and Indian men. This produced a significant number of children of mixed parentage but with strong Indian links. These families usually choose Standard Hindi as the language of communication at home. (For a period of six years until 1990, this trend stopped, but increasingly now there appears to be a renewed interest by Dutch-Indians and Hindustanis in each other). Despite these intermarriages, the Hindustanis and NRI communities remain wary of each other. Hindustanis from Suriname are often considered as being 'low caste' by the NRIs, while the Hindustanis often view NRIs as opportunists. Interestingly, a number of illegal immigrants within the community are Indians from India. So some Hindustanis see Indians as being of a lower social class. The existence of very influential Indian businessmen in the Netherlands and importance of the Brahman priests among the Indo-Surinamese perpetuates the stereotypes.

Language

It is apparent that for younger generations of Hindustanis and Dutch-Indians, the Dutch language and identity are important. Those Hindustanis who were born in the Netherlands are often not well-practiced in speaking and understanding Surinamese, also known as Sarnami. The Surinamese Hindi is a derivative of local Indian dialects close to Awadhi and Braj, and developed in isolation from the other Indo-Aryan languages. (Darmsteeg) There also

More than 175,000 Hindustanis (Indo-Surinamese) and non-resident Indians (NRIs) have made the Netherlands their home. In fact, Holland's Indian diaspora is the largest in continental Europe and a significant part of the Indian diaspora worldwide. The diversity of the groups and the complicated relations between Hindustanis and NRIs make the picture of the Indian diaspora in the country a multi-faceted mosaic. Yet, NRIs and Indo-Surinamese are united by their special relationship with the sub-continent.
Chinese Conjoinism gradually broadened its scope from traditional to modern owing to the influence of Ching Dynasty scholarship. Tai-Chen (1722-1777), in particular, believed that sentiments and desires are a valuable part of human nature, an idea in opposition to traditional Conjoinism, notably to Sung-Ming’s Neo-Conjoinism, who claimed that rationality is good and emotions are evil. Modern Chinese scholars, however, continue to give value and appreciate Tai-Chen’s work.

An ‘aesthetic education’: the role of ‘sentiments’ in the transition from traditional Conjoinism to modern aesthetics

Two such scholars were Liang Chi-Chao (1873-1929) and Tsai Yuen-Pei (1885-1959) who believed in the importance of aesthetic education as the foundation of aesthetic education. According to them, sentiments in an aesthetic context are a combination of elevated feelings, beliefs and attitudes related to the non-literal, abstract, and aesthetic personality. Aesthetic evaluations are made based on the sub-structure of sentiments. Thus they believed that health and beauty are temporal and not absolute, as the latter are elevated forms of thinking derived from the sublimation of the human spirit. They emphasized that aesthetic education contributes to the country and people.

Simultaneously, these two masters, under Gandhi’s influence, regarded aesthetic education, responded to public yearnings by developing a new way to appreciate aesthetic values. Aesthetics here refer to more than mere art; it’s a more general appreciation of beauty, of harmony and idealisation, or what is termed in many areas of art as compositional or aesthetic sense. In this article, I wish to create a sense of urgency to consider the importance of aesthetic education so that it might play a constructive role in developing their beloved nation.

A means to a harmonious society

Liang Chi-Chao was an emotionally profound and colourful man. His ideas about sentiments were derived from his participation in the Western aesthetic education, and responded to public yearnings by developing a new way to appreciate aesthetic values. Aesthetics here refer to more than mere art; it’s a more general appreciation of beauty, of harmony and idealisation, or what is termed in many areas of art as compositional or aesthetic sense. In this article, I wish to create a sense of urgency to consider the importance of aesthetic education so that it might play a constructive role in developing their beloved nation.

Freedom from the phenomenal world

Tsai held that all men experience love, hatred, fear, happiness, anger, sadness, etc., in the ‘phenomenal world’. Our emotions rise and fall like waves in response to the phenomenal world. Tsai believed the phenomenal world lure people to live and to work. Man’s way to perform a great task, for example, sentiments are like a demanding emperor to which mere rationality should yield. If a man is aware of his sentiments and follows them to the end, then he can achieve great things. Thus Liang claimed, ‘A good teacher should give judicious guidance to his students, according to individual sentiments’. The most efficient instrument for learning about sentiments is art, such as music, painting and literature, since they embody aesthetic principles that are universal and elevate the human spirit.

Tsai Yuen-Pei divided human spiritual functions into knowledge, will and emotions. He emphasised the importance of sentiments in particular and, like Liang, believed that music, painting and literature can help correct a person’s lost contact with sentiments. He coined the Chinese term Mei-Yu (‘aesthetic education’) and advocated it as a means of educating people to appreciate all forms of beauty. Ultimately, the practice of aesthetic education aims to cultivate the sense of sentiments in order to experience the sublime of the human spirit. ‘Man can be fearless and adventurous, ignored the facts of the human spirit, put away all the details. They can then be realised the meaning of the human spirit and the world beyond the individual, mundane, and corporeal.

It is, therefore, obligatory for an educator to lead us beyond the phenomenal world and cultivate an aesthetic education through the introduction of aesthetic education, whose aim is to cultivate one’s disposition and soul. Tsai devoted himself to the promotion of aesthetic education especially during the period of Japanese invasion. He thought the best way for people to love and help one another is by extending one’s sense of aesthetic function ‘of empathy’ is the key to uniting people. That is why Tsai tried so hard to promote aesthetic education. He thought aesthetic education should not only be provided in the form of art education, but also in daily life as a whole.

From theory to implementation: combining east and west

There was an inevitable contradiction between Tsai’s theory and that of Kant. For example, in Kant’s theory, sentiments are the essence of ‘aesthetic sense’, and the disinterested nature of aesthetic sentiments helps to make a man disinterested in gain or loss and helps to eliminate the utility of his intellect. According to Liang and Tsai, it’s inevitable that sentiments as the foundation of aesthetic education had no subjective purpose, while aesthetic education as the tool of cultivating man’s spirit includes the property of being purposeful.

According to Tsai, ‘aesthetic sentiments’ are derived from the interaction between a human’s inner sentiments and his external environment. In his opinion, however, aesthetic sentiments are neither inner emotions nor experiential, and they are certainly not concerned with the material objects in question. Rather, Kant believed that when people bracket physical sensations and practical utility derived from external stimulations, they will acquire a free mind capable of experiencing pure aesthetic sentiments.

In sum, Liang and Tsai claimed aesthetic sentiments were experiential ‘products’, whereas in Tsai’s thinking and effectiveness of aesthetic sentiments were disinterested and pure. The difference may lie in their emphases, with Liang and Tsai leaning towards the source and Kant at the result. Yet, in spite of these differences, Tsai laid the foundation for modern Chinese aesthetic education by adapting some of the insights of this theory, and Tsai’s theory of human sentiments injected new life into a traditional Conjoinism that had always valued rationality and dispassionate emotions.

Liang and Tsai started a series of plans to introduce lifelong aesthetic education to modern schools, families, and society, to make aesthetic education a necessary tool for building the nation. Unfortunately, their plans failed to come to fruition, mainly because the Chinese were hard pressed by political unrest and economic hardship. But they undeniably made a great contribution by laying the groundwork for modern Chinese aesthetic education. Because of their efforts to promote the paramount value of human sentiments, modern Chinese thinking regarding aesthetic education can develop into a new and promising field.
‘Culture is a basic need’

The Prince Claus Fund’s Special Program: Cultural Emergency Response

Ginger de Silva and Iwana Chronis

In the spring of 2003, the bombing and invasion of Iraq unleashed a wave of lawlessness that led to the looting of the National Museum in Baghdad. The images of looting of the National Museum in Baghdad were the catalyst that set the Prince Claus Fund in motion. When the River Arno burst its banks in 1966, thousands of volunteers and organisations from Italy, Europe and around the world came to the rescue of the museums, libraries and churches of Florence. In contrast, half a century later, there was no infrastructure that could help Iraq undo the damage. This sparked the Foundation to establish the Cultural Emergency Response program (CER) in 2004. Its first action was to help reconstruct the library of the University of Baghdad. In 2004, the library was reopened and students could resume their studies.

How it works

Iwana Chronis, the CER program coordinator, spends her days scanning the world for disasters of interest to her. She begins by identifying architectural and cultural heritage that are damaged or destroyed by man-made or natural disasters. Although there are a number of international organisations concerned with the protection of cultural heritage, CER was the first that was empowered to work swiftly for its rescue. CER’s ‘first aid’ comes in the form of initial financial support in order to implement basic repairs, help stabilise the situation and prevent further damage. The financial support is relatively modest – a maximum of €15,000 – but comes quickly and is an assurance that these emergency funds will be put to good use. In 2003, its first action was to help reconstruct the library of the University of Baghdad. In 2004, the library was reopened and students could resume their studies.

CER’s mandate is to provide ‘first aid’ globally for cultural heritage that has been damaged or destroyed by man-made or natural disasters. Although there are a number of international organisations concerned with the protection of cultural heritage, CER was the first that was empowered to work swiftly for its rescue. CER’s ‘first aid’ comes in the form of initial financial support in order to implement basic repairs, help stabilise the situation and prevent further damage. The financial support is relatively modest – a maximum of €15,000 – but comes quickly and is an assurance that these emergency funds will be put to good use. In 2003, its first action was to help reconstruct the library of the University of Baghdad. In 2004, the library was reopened and students could resume their studies.

CER’s work in Indonesia

Indonesia is an interesting illustration both of CER’s principles and CER’s work. When an earthquake followed by a tsunami struck the Indian Ocean in December 2004, Banda Aceh was the city closest to the earthquake’s epicentre. The regional capital was massively affected. Several mosques in Banda Aceh miraculously survived the water’s onslaught. They were left standing in the middle of the devastated landscape, and some – including the Baiturrahman and the Ulee Lheue mosques – were virtually untouched, a fact that many local people interpreted as divine intervention. In the weeks following the tsunami, these mosques not only offered a space for prayer and community activities, but also provided a symbol of hope and consolation for tsunami survivors. The importance of these surviving mosques illustrates how symbols of culture can have a therapeutic or healing function for people recovering from a catastrophe.

Indonesia in general has a high awareness of its cultural past and an important role for international organisations to identify damaged cultural heritage that needed CER’s support. The Imogiri neighbourhood – which was close to the earthquake’s epicentre - had been particularly badly affected. For centuries, Imogiri has been Yogyakarta’s batik district, and a great many of its inhabitants depend on this industry for their livelihood. But the earthquake brought this to a standstill. CER provided immediate support for the rebuilding of a batik centre with workplaces, a temporary museum and a flea market along with batik-training workshops. The reconstruction made it possible for Imogiri residents to resume their batik activities. It not only contributed to the preservation of their cultural heritage, but also to their social and economic recovery.

In March 2007, the Indonesian archipelago was again hit by an earthquake, this time affecting the province of West Sumatra. It was not recognised as a national disaster by the central government, a fact that had major implications for the level of emergency relief that the government provided. CER offered immediate support for the restoration of the Rao-Rao mosque in the Tanah Datar region of West Sumatra. It was built in the early 20th century in a unique architectural style that represents the region’s four ethnic communities. The earthquake shifted the roof from its supporting walls and further tremors could have caused the mosque’s collapse.

CER contacted a local heritage organisation, which approached the mosque’s management. With the backing of the Rao-Rao community, a request was submitted for CER’s support to stabilise the roof and the supporting walls so that the community could resume its religious activities without fear that the building would collapse. The contract partner was the committee that managed the mosque, a group of mainly elderly villagers. They assumed responsibility for the restoration activities, while an architect, who was an active member of the local heritage association, served as liaison between the committee and CER.

Of course CER’s work is not limited to Indonesia. In Sri Lanka, when the southern port town of Galle was hard hit by the 2004 tsunami, CER action helped a maritime archaeological institute to resume its work quickly. Also in 2004, the roof of a Greek Orthodox church in Nablus, Palestine that had been badly affected by bombing was restored. Following an earthquake that devastated the city of Bam in southern Iran, CER intervened to salvage and restore an important archive. Work is nearly completed in Herat, Afghanistan on the restoration of a mosque and a synagogue, both badly damaged by flooding and lack of maintenance. The list continues.

An open definition

CER defines cultural heritage as something tangible. This could include museums, archives, libraries, monuments, artefact collections, or documents. The definition is flexible and not limited to the past. For CER, material heritage may be historical or contemporary, formal or informal. Whether something is eligible for CER support depends greatly on the extent of the cultural value that the disaster-stricken community places on the damaged object.

CER believes that an emphasis on rescuing cultural heritage not only demonstrates respect and concern for culture; it also brings hope and consolation to disaster-affected communities, and expresses solidarity with their plight. In addition, the community’s role in the identification and implementation of the project works to restore self-esteem, a feeling...
Political choices and consequences

The identification of cultural heritage and its reconstruction is inevitably a political process. When assessing emergency relief proposals, CER always tries to consider the position of the proposed cultural heritage in its local context and its significance to the community. As a program of the Prince Claus Fund, CER shares a particular concern for heritage in ‘Zones of Silence’ – that is in communities that are marginalized or disadvantaged. The ‘silence’ may also mean smaller scale or geographically remote emergencies that might otherwise go unnoticed.

But societies are complex and a choice to restore a particular object will not only have political consequences for the community in question, it may also affect CER’s image and effectiveness within that region. As a Western-based organisation, CER has to be very sensitive to competing interests and to the potential impact, for instance, of getting involved with the restoration of an exclusively Christian heritage in a Muslim-dominated area. Local liabilities must always be considered when providing cultural emergency relief, as the very act itself can and will be interpreted along political lines.

In the five years since its inauguration, the Cultural Emergency Response program has steadily expanded its reach. CER works together with other international organisations concerned with the protection of cultural heritage, like UNESCO and the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS), an umbrella organisation that includes ICOM (the International Council of Museums), ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites), ICA (the International Council on Archives), IFLA (the International Federation of Library Associations) and CCAAA (the Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations). This network of heritage associations is not structured to respond quickly to emergency situations but it offers a wealth of knowledge that is invaluable in CER’s selection and restoration processes.

In its first few years, CER could accommodate up to 4 projects a year. In 2007 it contracted 10 projects, nine of which had been completed by March, 2008. CER’s budget initially came directly from the Prince Claus Fund, but its message that culture is a basic need is so obvious that in times of disaster has drawn the interest of other funders. CER has received $200,000 for a project of five years in additional funding from the Dutch National Postcode Lottery. CER has also approached the Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation and began talks with other organisations, including the Centre Ceramiche of the Municipality of Maastricht, which flagged funds for release as soon as the next emergency project was identified. In March, 2008, CER gave a presentation in Maastricht at the European Fine Arts and Antique Fair, TEFAF. Subsequently, several individuals came forward with pledges of €10,000 each for the ‘CER Guarantee Fund’ to be tapped as emergencies arise.

Why not prevention?

Catastrophes, by definition, are not preventable, but being prepared can make recovery a lot easier and faster. One of CER’s objectives, like those of other emergency organisations, is to draw national and international attention to the importance of cultural heritage and to the need to document it. After the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, it became apparent that there were no official records of heritage sites in the affected area, so it was difficult to take action. Privately funded organisations like the World Monuments Fund and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture are taking inventories around the world and helping countries set priorities for their own cultural heritage under threat, not only from disasters but also simply from neglect. In Indonesia, heritage associations are systematically identifying, recording and photographing important sites. So when an earthquake strikes, they are immediately prepared to visit each site and assess any damage. They understand what information they need to preserve their heritage and, if necessary, to react quickly to a cultural emergency.

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Asian Laureates

Mehri Maffun (Afghanistan) musicologist
Omara Khan Massoudi (Afghanistan) director of the national museum
Lida Abdul (Afghanistan) visual artist
Michael Paghosian (Armenia) actor
Harutyun Khachatryan (Armenia) filmmaker
Bhutan Archery Federation (Bhutan) archery
Tin Moe (Myanmar/Burma) poet
Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture (Cambodia) cultural institute
Tien Zhuang Zhuang (PR China) filmmaker
Cui Jian (PR China) rock musician
Wang Shixiang (PR China) craftsman
Kumar Shahani (India) filmmaker
Yotindra Jain (India) museum curator
Communalism Combat (India) publication/magazine
Bhupen Khakhar (India) painter
Komal Kothari (India) musicologist
G.N. Dave (India) cultural activist
Sardone W. Kusumo (Indonesia) choreographer, dancer
Jim Supangkat (Indonesia) art critic
Hari Dono (India) visual artist
Ayu Utami (Indonesia) writer
Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial (Indonesia) organisation that promotes debate and liberal discussion/interpretation within Islam
Slamet Gundono (India) puppeteer
Rakshisan Bani-Etemad (Iran) filmmaker
Jahan-e Ketab (Iran) publication focusing on cultural criticism
Ebrahim Nabavi (Iran) writer
Reza Abedini (Iran) graphic designer
Javed Al Assadi (Iraq) theatre director and author
6 Redza Piyadasa (Malaysia) art historian, critic
Ken Yeang (Malaysia) architect
Arif Hasan (Pakistan) architect/urban planner
Madsena Guhaar (Pakistan) theatre director
Michael Mol (Papua New Guinea) performance artist
Elena Rivera Mirano (Philippines) musicologist
Tsai Chih Chung (Taiwan) cartoonist
Farrokh Qasim (Tajikistan) actor/theatre
Bilokli Weavers: Yovita Moka (West Timor) weavers
18 Duong Thu Hong (Vietnam) author

Each year the Prince Claus Fund grants awards to artists and cultural organisations who are doing outstanding work in their fields. The Fund’s criteria include artistic quality, innovation and social engagement. Each year the Fund identifies a theme, such as ‘Culture and Conflict’ (2007) or ‘The Positive Aspects of Migration’ (2004) that helps focus the search for laureates and the activities undertaken in that year.

Prince Claus Fund Asian Laureates, partners and activities

There have been 48 Asian laureates in the 11 years that the Prince Claus Fund has been granting awards. They come from 24 different countries and territories, from Papua New Guinea to Turkey, from Malaysia to Syria, from Armenia and Tajikistan to West Timor, and Burma. They represent a range of different cultural disciplines. They are actors and visual artists, architects, cartoonists, dancers, filmmakers, graphic designers, historians, museum directors, musicians and musicologists, poets, philosophers, puppeteers, writers, and even a Chinese rock musician. Some are not individual artists, but organisations, such as Bhutan’s Archery Federation, the Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture in Cambodia, the magazine ‘Jahan-e Ketab in Iran and the Al Kamandjâti music school for children in Palestine. They represent a very rich tapestry of Asian and arts and culture, and they form an invaluable network of advisors for the ongoing work of the Fund.

In addition to granting its yearly awards, and the special Cultural Emergency Response program, the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development is active in a number of other ways:

- It extends financial assistance for special projects, including a ‘travel budget’ to help promote artistic exchange by allowing artists to participate in workshops, festivals and other activities in other countries. Nepalese poet Chirag Bangdel, for example, was able to participate in the International Poetry Festival in Medelim, Colombia in 2007 and Indonesian composer Michael Asmara was given the opportunity to take part in ‘The Timbre of Hue’, the International Symposium of Composition in Vietnam, in 2006.

- The Fund publishes its own occasional Prince Claus Fund Journal together with a publishing house in Asia, Africa, Latin America or the Caribbean. The latest journal, #15, on the theme ‘Culture and Conflict’ deals with Cultural Conflicts in China. It was published together with the magazine [and museum] Art Today in Shanghai.

- It supports cultural publications and through the Prince Claus Fund Library, it initiates books of special interest, particularly in the visual arts. For example, an interdisciplinary book on the graphic design and visual culture of Pakistan, From Mazaar to Bazaar, will be published shortly in cooperation with Oxford University Press, Karachi.

- In its Network Partner programme, the Fund selects cultural organisations around the world with whom it forms a longer term, collaborative relationship. Its recent Asian Network Partners include Komunitas Utan Kayu in Indonesia, the Drik Picture Library in Bangladesh, the Reyum Institute in Cambodia and BizArt Art Center in China.

I I A S N E W S L E T T E R # 4 7  S p r i n g  2 0 0 8  2 1
The coast of the east Indian state of Orissa has been home to intense maritime activity for centuries. Its coastal and estuarine waters have been used to transport hinterland grain and salt via ports in river mouths and lagoons, and traditional fishing-based maritime commerce still flourishes. While traditional boat-building has declined since the colonial era, Orissa remains one of the world’s richest areas for traditional boats, including the carved-belltied chsa and salts, the non-reverse-clinker-built danga, and the catamaran, whose structure was a sophisticated solution to navigating deep waters and aggressive surf.

Additionally, two or more catamarans could be joined to provide a wider platform in order to transport more materials or undertake a longer journey. Called a chapa (meaning ‘float’ in Oriya) in southern Orissa, it’s still operated during the Chandan Yatra or Sandal festivals to commemorate the representations of Radha and Krishna. In northern Orissa the chapa is known as ‘pui pula’ and is capable of carrying considerable loads.

Today traditional boat-building is in decline, but the design of the catamaran lives on. The Orissa coast demonstrates its unique importance: bigger, ‘better’ or technologically advanced boats cannot perform in such waters. Observing the catamaran in the context of the enormous range of boats found on this stretch of India’s east coast, one sees primitive man’s earliest conception of granting his ambition for a life afloat, a design to enable him to steal across a river or estuary in pursuit of or in flight from his enemy, and one wonders at this ancient design’s staying power.

The wisdom of ‘tied logs’: traditional boats of India’s Orissa coast during the colonial era

Cannanwar Navak

Watercraft innovation is possible when it satisfies the demands of all the above influences. Independent of physical geography, innovation in boat structure is an interplay between cultural tradition and economic imperatives. For instance, installing a false keel or rudder on a traditional boat might be induced by the new economic environment of marine fishing, but such additions do not change the existing traditional boat structure. Even today, the fibre-made motorised watercraft that operates off the Puri coast is a replica of the teppa catamaran.

In order to gain acceptance among a society’s fisherman true innovation in boat structure or shape must be sanctioned by relevant cultural practices and belief. In other words, it must be in harmony with long established cultural tradition. This was why there was no innovation in the catamaran’s structure, which satisfied locals for hundreds of years. So how and why did such an extraordinary form come into existence? And, more important, what were the factors that led to such remarkable continuity over several hundred years? The evolution of the catamaran boat-building tradition of Orissa might provide an explanation.

'Tied logs': the catamaran

The parava, a Tamil Nadu fishing community, were the first known users of tied logs (the catamaran derived from the Tamil Kathu Maran). Tied logs. In the fifth century the Tamil Chola Dynasty used them to invade parts of Southeast Asia. Up until the British colonial period, the surf-beaten sandy coastline that runs all the way from Tanjore, near India’s southern tip, to Orissa hardly ever saw any salt other than the brown trienn.

The Sewn Boat of Orissa, Maritime Heritage of India

In general, during the British colonial period, two distinct types of traditional catamaran existed: the finer and more elaborate model was found in the south, on the Coromandel coast from Cape Calimere to the Krishna and Godavari delta, the other was more primitive and less efficient and found north of the Krishna and Godavari delta.

The former, Coromandel model, was the catamaran at its most advanced state of development. Since a catamaran was essentially a log raft, an obvious inference was that it must be inherently clumsy in form, but this was by no means the case with the Coromandel catamaran, which possessed considerable elegance and beautiful lines. The Tamil Nadu coast fishermens produced a design with more variations, adapted for different methods of fishing, but the general type consisted of a variable number of precisely shaped logs tied together and accessorised with pieces such as bow stems and rowing-cells.

The more primitive and simpler type of catamaran was employed almost uniquely by the Telugu fisherfolk north of the Krishna and Godavari deltas. In Orissa, for example, on the shore of Ganjam District, it consisted of five logs joined to form a sharp point at the fore end, which was accessesed with two stem pieces that gave it a Tamli-style beak-shaped bow. The bows were perfectly aligned, thus the craft’s stem was abruptly truncated. Instead of being lashed together with rope, the logs were permanently pegged together; the craft’s comparatively small size allowed the crew to carry it up the beach without separating the logs. The three middle logs were usually the only boat-length pieces used, while the two exterior ‘logs’ were actually comprised of shorter logs carved and joined end to end to form two long, slightly conical pieces that were pegged to either side of the three middle logs. An equally concise ‘weatherboard’ was attached to the top of each of these exterior pieces to form the sides of the boat, which protected the crew and gear; the fore end of each weatherboard buttressed up against the aft end of the stem piece on its own side of the bow.

The teppu: an intermediate catamaran

A variation of these two general types came into being further south, on the coast of Konagapuram: a catamaran of larger size and superior timmer and workmanship. Called ‘teppu’ in Telugu, the hull consisted of two halves lashed together fore and aft, each comprised of a long log with a washboard set onto its outer edge and a beak piece pegged onto its fore end. When landing the rope lashings were untied and the two halves parted for easy carriage. The largest of these ‘intermediate’ catamarans included a long middle log and two shorter side logs held together by means of fore and aft lashings; when unloaded the catamaran separated into three pieces. A pointed but loose and not pegged on bow was also attached to the middle log, and a small, loose rudder hung aft between the outer log ends. Typically, two men operated this craft, but it was possible for one highly skilled, devious man to do it. Its main advantage was being able to pass through surf to the beach, and its main purpose was transporting cargo to and from ships anchored off the coast. For balance during the monsoon, a small outrigger was attached by means of two poles, and a bamboo mast was erected with a mat or cotton sail. When the sail’s tack and sheet were released, the sail fell alongside fore and aft; its light weight made it easily manageable.
Stable but unpopular: political parties after Suharto

Marcus Mietzner

Since the late 1990s, two authoritarian regimes (first Suharto’s Guided Democracy and then New Order) have been controlled and regulated the existence and activities of political parties in Indonesia. Under Suharto, the number of parties had been reduced to three, with the government’s electoral machine Golkar ensured of regular triumphs at the ballot box. By contrast, the post-1998 party system has witnessed almost no institutional restrictions or government interference. Except for a continuing ban on communist-leain- ing platforms, parties are largely free to choose their ideological orientation and organisational structure. In addition, all post-Suharto elections (two parliamen- tary polls and two rounds of a presidential ballot) have been widely acknowledged as free and fair. In this liberal climate, parties of all colours and convictions have mushroomed, with 17 of them holding seats in the current parliament and another 95 reg- istered at the Department of Justice and Human Rights.

Yet, ten years after Suharto’s fall, Indone- sian political parties are the target of fierce criticism by observers, civil society leaders and the general public. Opinion surveys show that Indonesians view the parties as corrupt, unresponsive, self-absorbed and ineffective. Newspaper columns regularly launch stinging attacks on party leaders, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have focused many of their pro- grammes on scrutinising the activities of political parties – or the lack thereof. At the same time, however, the party system seems surprisingly stable. Despite the con- stant ousting of criticism, there have been very few calls for the disbandment of the party-based democratic system, and parties continue to receive large numbers of new members. What are the reasons for this seemingly paradoxical situation? How to explain this love-hate relationship between Indo- nesians and their political parties? This article discusses the reasons for the insti- tutional solidity of the Indonesian party system, but also explores why this signifi- cant success has not been accompanied by higher levels of public support among ordinary Indonesians for the parties. After evaluating structural, political and ideolog- ical success, we will explore the state of Indonesia’s party system, I conclude that, despite ongoing problems, Indonesia’s parties deserve more credit for their contribution to the strengthening of democracy and the political system than is usually extended to them.

Stable

The first significant feature of Indonesia’s post-Suharto parties is their relative sta- bility and continuity. All large parties that contested the 1999 elections still exist a decade later. They are: the secular-national- istic PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), the former government party Golkar, the traditionalist Muslim party PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, National Awakening Party), the Islamic PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, United Develop- ment Party), the modernist Muslim party PAN (Partai Amanat Nasional, National Mandate Party), the PKS (Prosperous Jus- tice Party) – a puritan Islamic party that participated in the 1999 polls as an AK (Par- tai Keadilan, Justice Party), and the ultra- modernist Islamic party Partai Bulan Biru- tangan (Moon and Crescent Party). There has been only one noteworthy addition to this club of major parties in the last ten years: President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s Democratic Party (PD, Partai Demokrat), founded in 2001.

This stability of the party system is an unus- ual phenomenon among Asia’s emerg- ing democracies. Even in more estab- lished democratic systems, the lifespan of political parties is often much shorter. For instance, the average life expectancy of political parties in South Korea is three years, while parties in Thailand and the Philippines survive only a little longer. In Indonesia, by contrast, three of the big- gest parties were founded in the 1960s and 1970s, with the rest established after Suharto’s fall. Ten years into the post- authoritarian era, there are no signs that any of the larger parties will collapse any- time soon.

“The stability of the party system is an unusual phenomenon among Asia’s emerging democracies.”

The relative longevity of Indonesian par- ties is due to a mixture of politico-ideologi- cal and structural reasons. To begin with, most Indonesian parties are still rooted in distinct social, religious or ideological milieus, and the majority of voters feel reluctant to move between those constitu- encies. This entrenchment of paradig- matic divisions in Indonesian society has obstructed the internal modernisation of the mainstream parties, but has also been responsible for their institutional persist- ence. Furthermore, Indonesian law forces parties to establish a nationwide structure down to the sub-district level, strengthening their organisational roots and making it difficult for newcomers to challenge the already established parties.

The stability of the national party system is also reflected in the relatively high voter turn-out. In 1999 and 2004, par- ticipation in national elections ranged between 75 and 93 percent, a rate that even consolidated democracies would consider high. Even in direct elections for local government heads, in which the role of the parties is weaker, an average of 65 percent of registered voters took part in the ballots. While these figures are not an endorsement of the party system as such, they indicate that Indonesians deem it important to express support for the party of their choice. Another factor in the resilience of Indone- sian party politics is the almost complete absence of extremist parties that reject the current democratic system. In contrast to the 1950s, when most parties wanted to remove or substantially alter parliamen- tary democracy and replace it with either a communist regime, an Islamic state or authoritarian rule, the parties of the post- Suharto era have been strongly supportive of the democratic system. Even the more formalist Muslim parties have suspended their campaign for the introduction of sharia, or Islamic law, after their proposal for a constitutional amendment was voted down by an overwhelming majority in 2002. Since then, their politico-ideological orientation has been largely moderate and centripetal, further consolidating the core of the post-authoritarian polity.

Criticism

Despite these positive indicators for a healthy and functioning party system, Indonesians have not held back with their criticism of the parties and their leaders. In opinion polls, political parties have inversely ranked among the institutions consid- ered most corrupt, ineffective and unre- sponsive, and academic observers have echoed this sentiment with their critiques in seminars, newspapers and booklets.

The disappointment of ordinary Indo- nesians with their parties is reflected in stunning and unambiguous statistics: more than 1,000 local legislators, almost ten percent of the total number of parlia- mentarians across Indonesia, have been investigated for corruption since 2004. At the same time, more than 75 percent of Indonesians do not feel a strong sense of emotional attachment to any of the exist- ing parties. In local elections, voters have mostly opted for independent figures with only superficial ties to their nominating parties. In Aceh – the only province where non-party candidates have thus far been allowed to stand – nominees put forward by established parties suffered a series of crushing defeats.

To be sure, post-Suharto party politics have drawn a large number of rent-seek- ers, power brokers and opportunists into the centre of Indonesia’s new democracy. This is hardly surprising, given that the political parties today hold much more power than at any other time since the 1950s. Through their parliamentarians, the parties have authority over legislation, and through their participation in govern- ment, they dominate the executive as well. These extensive powers are too tempting for political and oligarchic operators to ignore.

Stable but unpopular: political parties after Suharto

Marcus Mietzner

Many Muslim parties in Indo- nesia suspended their cam- paigns for Sharia law following the failure to pass a constitu- tional amendment in 2002.

This vicious cycle of political corruption has been aggravated by the populist atti- tudes in Indonesian society and some circles of the NGO scene. In recent years, it has become a cherished habit for politi- cal commentators to decree every attempt by political parties to obtain money or institutional resources from the state. In 2007, even the planned acquisition of fax machines and laptops for members of the national parliament created a huge uproar. Similarly, it took ten years of post-Suharto reforms for legislators to be allocated a single research assistant each. While such anti-party critics can be certain of thunder- ous applause from the public, they have rarely come forward with alternative con- cepts for proper and transparent funding mechanisms for Indonesia’s parties.

Ultimately, the problem of corruption in Indonesian political parties cannot be solved by compelling them to reform the party financing system. It would be naïve to believe that parties can simultaneously engage in fund-raising activities, stay away from corrupt practices and be effective vehicles of political representation and aggregation. In the absence of member- ship contributions and public funding, Indonesia’s parties have so far been forced to concentrate on raising money instead of carrying out their functional duties. Indonesian observers and the general public should acknowledge this issue as an institutional defect. In addition, they should recognise that for all their faults, the parties have played a significant role in stabilising the post-authoritarian polity. As Indonesia approaches the 2009 elections, the party system appears reasonably solid, and the introduction of a parliamentary threshold of 2.5 percent for the upcoming polls is likely to make it even more com- pact and cohesive. Given the vulnerabil- ity and ineffectiveness of party systems in other emerging democracies, this is more than Indonesians could have hoped for when they began their journey into an uncertain transition ten years ago.

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The vicious cycle of political corruption has been aggravated by the populist attitudes in Indonesian society and some circles of the NGO scene. In recent years, it has become a cherished habit for political commentators to decree every attempt by political parties to obtain money or institutional resources from the state. In 2007, even the planned acquisition of fax machines and laptops for members of the national parliament created a huge uproar. Similarly, it took ten years of post-Suharto reforms for legislators to be allocated a single research assistant each. While such anti-party critics can be certain of thunderous applause from the public, they have rarely come forward with alternative concepts for proper and transparent funding mechanisms for Indonesia’s parties.

Ultimately, the problem of corruption in Indonesian political parties cannot be solved by compelling them to reform the party financing system. It would be naïve to believe that parties can simultaneously engage in fund-raising activities, stay away from corrupt practices and be effective vehicles of political representation and aggregation. In the absence of membership contributions and public funding, Indonesia’s parties have so far been forced to concentrate on raising money instead of carrying out their functional duties. Indonesian observers and the general public should acknowledge this issue as an institutional defect. In addition, they should recognise that for all their faults, the parties have played a significant role in stabilising the post-authoritarian polity. As Indonesia approaches the 2009 elections, the party system appears reasonably solid, and the introduction of a parliamentary threshold of 2.5 percent for the upcoming polls is likely to make it even more compact and cohesive. Given the vulnerability and ineffectiveness of party systems in other emerging democracies, this is more than Indonesians could have hoped for when they began their journey into an uncertain transition ten years ago.

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Raja Lorenzo II
A Catholic kingdom in the Dutch East Indies

R. H. Barnes

Purchased from the Portuguese in 1835, the small kingdom of Larantuka was one of the very few Catholic realms in the Dutch East Indies. Spread across the islands of Flores, Solor, Adonara and Lembata, it was famous for its patient and kind priests, who were much more purist than their Portuguese predecessors.

For nearly half a century, the title of raja passed consecutively among three brothers. The first, André II, was like his father, Gregorius Metz, an opium addict. He left governing to his brothers Dom Gaspar, ‘a very dangerous subject’, and Don Dominggo Ilé (referred to in letters as Mingo), ‘a great rater, but like the Raja himself [he is] enlised to opium’, both of whom, according to the first Dutch priest Jan Sanders, were resentful of their brothers. Another brother, Don Quino (Kina), was said to be the leader of a band of pirates (Laan 1962-1968: 8, 11; Steenrink 2005: 300). All of the brothers had multiple wives, and Kina was even married to a Muslim woman (Laan 1962-1968: 19).

André died on Easter Sunday 1861, and was replaced by Dom Gaspar. Locals linked André’s death with his efforts to rebuild the traditional temple in Lokea (the centre of Larantuka), which the mountain people wanted but which Sanders opposed because he deemed it a ‘house of the devil’. He was shocked to discover that the chief instigator pushing André to rebuild the temple was his brother Mingo, whom Sanders described as a ‘blackguard without equal’ (Laan 1962-1968: 45-47). The other raja, Don Dominggo, had also broken into Dominggo’s house, fleeing in the face of his family’s screams. Dice was one of his favourite pleasures, and he was no hurry to convert to Christianity (Franssen Report 5, Laan 1962-1968: 101-102). Such was the father of the future Raja Lorenzo II.

Gaspar was brought up by Roman Catholic priests in Diî, Timor, and was therefore ‘more intellectually developed than the other rajas’ (Humme 1874a, Heynen 1876a: 46-47). Heynen (1876a: 15) praised his acumen and memory. Nevertheless, the missionaries were disappointed in Rajas André and Gaspar, both of whom seemed imperfect Christians, too given to supporting heathens. The missionaries had several clashes with them over attempts to rebuild native temples. They placed their hopes instead on Lorenzo, whose father Kina died at an early, unknown date. Lorenzo was born in July 1853 and baptised ten years later (Laan 1962-1968: 376). He seemed to have been educated personally by the first Jesuit priest Gregorius Metz. Lorenzo could understand spoken Dutch and write Malay. Furthermore, he was a more committed Christian and evidently more pliable.

Premature hopes

Expectations ran high for the missionaries after Gaspar died of dysentery at the age of 57 on 24 January 1877, when Lorenzo was only 17 (Laan 1962-1968: 375-376, Ecoma Verstege 1877a). Resident Ch. M. C. A. M. Ecoma Verstege commented at the time, ‘according to the general feeling this death cannot be regarded as a loss...he alienated himself from subjects, while he was treated with a sort of disdain by his fellow villagers and neighbours’. Father Metz showed no sign of regret either.

The missionaries felt that Lorenzo, despite his youth, should now become raja. None of the other brothers had produced a male heir, and so far as the mission was concerned, Lorenzo was the only legitimate heir. The Dutch took over, the Rajas of Larantuka regarded themselves as independent monarchs with a tributary relationship to the Portuguese Crown. They were surprised and appalled to be sold.

In contact with Catholicism since the 16th century, the kingdom’s Christian minority was guaranteed freedom of conscience by treaty between The Netherlands and Portugal. Dutch Catholic priests were sent to the Christian population in 1860, and within two years the Jesuit Order assumed responsibility. The dealings of the Order’s members with successive Rajas of Larantuka often placed them in conflict with civil authorities, particularly regarding the religious practices of those who were not Catholic and the rajah’s obligations to them.

The Rajas’ line

The royal house of Larantuka claimed descent from the union of a man from the famous southern Timor kingdom of Wehale Waikuki and a woman of mythical origin in the nearby extinct Illi Illi Mandiri volcano (Dietrich 1993). The family were Catholic and spoke a Malay dialect but maintained important customary ties with those more or less overgoverned, the Lamalath-speaking peoples whom the Dutch priests usually referred to as ‘the mountain people’. Raja Lorenzo is said to have been the most religious of his line and to have respected traditional practices, including maintaining traditional temples. That system was not Catholic and was thus fiercely opposed by the priests, who were much more purist than their Portuguese predecessors.

Metz later wrote hopefully that, ‘Our new monarch shows more industry than his predecessor and is according to his own declaration animated with goodwill’. I hope to be convinced of that...if he keeps his word not to reign after Lorenzo reaches his majority, then I am satisfied, otherwise not easily’ (Laan 1962-1968: 383). Thus Raja Dominggo began his tenure not only without Metz’s full support, but with a degree of his resentment. Metz had an even lower opinion of Civil Commissioner Kleian. ‘The new Raja is certainly better than the departed; in my judgement he would be [even] better if we ever had the luck to be freed of Kleian...The Raja is not yet sufficiently self-reliant and dances too much after his [Kleian’s] pipes’ (Laan 1962-1968: 383).

A raja in waiting

Metz compensated for his disappointment by appointing Lorenzo schoolmaster in his fledgling school, teaching the children reading, writing and arithmetic, singing, and increasing the number of students. ‘His affable character and determination make him very suited for it; the children like him very much’ (Laan 1962-1968: 371, 1962-1968: 384).

Lorenzo was drawn into a controversy when the hamlet of Levarung, ‘out of fear of the mountain people, and perhaps also out of superstition [and] encouraged by the weakness of the Rajaj, wanted to erect its temple again. When Metz told Raja Dominggo, he called on the village head and forbade it, but the villagers did not stop, even when Metz himself went there. Dominggo forbade it a second and even a third time, to no effect. Finally, Metz sent Lorenzo to Dominggo, who turned him sent to Levarung with the demand that they stop. But he failed, and half an hour later they continued building. Dominggo sent Lorenzo back to take a drum – which the Raja had perhaps supplied to the temple – and found the mission-educated Doctor Java Mige! Lobato beating it despite being repeatedly forbidden to do so (Laan 1962-1968: 401). This episode’s outcome is unknown but exemplifies missionary attempts to Lorenzo to suppress local ritual.

Lorenzo was also drawn into conflicts with traditionalists living in villages behind the Illi Illi Mandiri volcano. Lewoloba’s village head threatened Lorenzo’s life, plainly because he was seen as the priest’s agent, but Lorenzo sent him back to take away a drum – which the Raja had perhaps supplied to the temple – and found the mission-educated Doctor Java Migel! Lobato beating it despite being repeatedly forbidden to do so (Laan 1962-1968: 401). This episode’s outcome is unknown but exemplifies missionary attempts to Lorenzo to suppress local ritual.

A change of purpose

Lorenzo made it known that things would be different under his reign. For example, he altered inauguration ceremonies to make them less ‘heathen’ and more Christian, and punished laxness in religious observances, imposing a one guilder fine on those who missed mass. A month after inauguration he put 20 people in stocks for practicing traditional rituals or superstition (Laan 1962-1968: 686-687). By doing so he was storing up trouble for himself and the priests with the colonial authorities, who thought that freedom of religion guaranteed in the treaty with the Portuguese extended to those the missionaries called ‘heathens’. He forbade anyone to make an alliance with any ruler without his permission. In case of war, no one could have anything to do with the Raja’s enemies, except to help to restore peace. No one could be judge in his own affairs, not even those in leadership positions. Disputing parties were not permitted to resort to an ordeal in which they or their delegates attempted to stab out each other under water to see who was right. Every subject was required to work. Whoever did not work for ten consecutive days was condemned to forced labour. The alternative to paying a guider for missing mass or for working on Sunday was five days of forced labour. Anyone caught drunk was arrested. No one could become a debt slave. No children or servants could be sold. Leaders and dignitaries always had to be decently dressed, since all those they ruled over also wanted to pass as being distinguished, this regulation resulted in no one going about half-naked anymore (Laan 1962-1968: 687-688).

In 1888 Lorenzo made a serious political mistake in a matter from which he might have held himself aloof, when he allowed himself to be drawn into a dispute between the Muslim Rajas of Lamalath and Adonara. This led Resident G. C. de Villeville to threaten to depose him (Laan 1962-1968: 228; for details, see Dietrich 1895-1905: 66-67). In 1893 de Villeville wrote unfavourable reports about priest on Flores, which Bishop Claessens rebuffed with a long defence. On a visit in April the Resident, accompanied by Kleian, asked Lorenzo why he was forcing people to attend mass under threat of a penalty and why he had not now a precedent has been established that there is no difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate child...The new raja sees this himself and now has told me quietly that he accepted the staff, but does not want to hold it longer than is necessary and that he will surrender it to Lorenzo as soon as he is married and comes of age’ (Laan 1962-1968: 379).

Metz did gain influence over him, but things did not turn out as expected. Civil Commissioner E. F. Kleian sent word that the local heads wished to pass over Lorenzo, who was too young to take over the government, which had fallen into decay owing to Gaspar’s indolence. Instead, they appointed Gaspar’s half-brother Dominggo (Ecoma Verstege 1876). A shocked Father Metz wrote the Bishop that things, ‘were a thousand times worse than I had dared to hope’. ‘I am not tormented by my desirs’, he told him, ‘I hope so!’ (Laan 1962-1968: 375),
building with a much larger building and a meeting house, where more mountain people could overnight. Furthermore, he claimed, the mountain people were more satisfied with the new buildings. However, when the Resident said that the Raja must officiate in making sacrifices in the heathen manner – which to the dismay of the priests his predecessors willingly did – Lorenzo refused (Laan 1962-1968: 280).

De Villeneuve retired and his successor W. C. Hoogkamer smoothed things over. The Raja was permitted to continue to levy fines for failing to attend mass and for marriage outside the church, and he did not have to erect a temple (the building Lorenzo claimed he had erected actually might not have counted in local eyes as a temple). Nevertheless, Hoogkamer also told the priests that Lorenzo should think more of a Self-confident Minority, 1903-1942

Lorenzo’s fall
Lorenzo began to show traits not just of independance, but waywardness. Complaints were made in 1834 that his agents were attempting to extract taxes in territory belonging to the Raja of Sikka (Laan 1962-1968: 96-97). In that year, too, Lorenzo led an army of 500 to Maumere (Steinbrink 2003: 145-147). The same charges were then repeated four years later (Laan 1962-1968: 103). He executed a relative whose support he claimed Lorenzo had repeatedly committed adultery, brought false charges against his subjects, exiled some and imposed exorbitant fines on others who moreover were innocent. Many fled to safety with the priests. The people and then the priests began to think that Lorenzo had gone crazy when the Resident said that the Raja must officiate in making sacrifices in the heathen manner – which to the dismay of the priests his predecessors willingly did – Lorenzo refused (Laan 1962-1968: 280).

Disputes in Sikka continued, and in September 1902 Lorenzo intervened with 1,000 troops (Kolonial Verslag 1902: 103-104, Laan 1962-1968: 1123-1130). Meanwhile, difficulties were developing on Adonara, in particular a war in east Adonara in which the civil authorities thought Lorenzo was deeply implicated (Barnes 2005). They responded by deposing and exiling him to Java in 1904, where he died November 1910.

Historically, Lorenzo’s reign was the last time a raja of Larantuka could try to claim any degree of independence sovereignty. His fall marked the beginning of a move toward a 20th century form of bureaucratic administration shaped by a militarily and financially much more powerful Dutch East Indies in which those local rajas who remained in office increasingly served only as figureheads. In the Flores region, the process was completed in 1960, when the national authorities eliminated the last remnants of the ‘ feudal ‘ power structure that the Republic inherited from the Dutch, by abolishing the office of raja. Summing up the consequences of the fall of Lorenzo, Steinbrink writes, ‘With the deposition of Lorenzo II in 1904 the dream of a Catholic kingdom came to an end ‘ (Steinbrink 2003: 59). In contrast to the kingdom, however, Catholicism flourished in the 20th century, and its leaders frequently found it easier to cooperate with civil authorities than their predecessors had in the 19th century (Steenbrink 2007: 81). Many of the underlying cultural and religious issues remain current, however, in the 21st century.
Betel-chewing in mainland Southeast Asia

Nguyễn Xuân Huy and P. A. Reichart

Betel-chewing goes way back. Areca nut and betel leaf are its two crucial components, born by the areca palm tree and betel vine, respectively. The areca palm tree was domesticated somewhere in the Malaysian archipelago. While excavations of ancient archaeological sites have never turned up betel vine or leaf remains, human skeletons bearing evidence of betel-chewing, dated to about 3,000 B.C., have been found in Duyong Cave in the Philippines. At Spirit Cave in north-west Thailand C. F. Gorman found carbonised areca-like grains carbon-14-dated to 7,000-5,500 B.C. (1970: 98), but their domesticity needs to be scientifically confirmed (C. F. Gorman, personal communication to Hien, 1970).

Hailing from a time closer to ours, the Vietnamese folktale ‘The Story of the Betel and the Areca Nut’ is well known all over the world and quoted in publica-

tions on betel-chewing. Until 2004, it was believed that this was the only betel-chewing-related folktale in existence, with multiple versions adapted from its original source, Liên Nam chích quái/results: (Collection of Extraordinary Tales from Liên Nam, hand-written version, 1695). But a careful screening of ancient and modern literature written in chữ Nôm, chữ Nàm, chữ Quốc Ngữ (chữ Việt), French, English and German from the 11th century to the present led to a wonderful discovery: the tale is actually only one of a series of six different types on the motif ‘The Origin of the Betel Chewing Custom’. The five other types are less popular, and each one presents its characters differently. All are told by the Việt ethnic group, while seven other ethnicities (Dao, Tày and Tháy in the north, Co, Katu, Sêdang in central Vietnam and the Khmer in the south) contribute their own folktales on the same motif.

Moreover, folktales about other motifs related to betel-chewing were also discovered, such as ‘The Monk Turned into a Lime Pot’, ‘The Novice Turned into a Spittor’ and a tale about the specific way the Vietnamese prepare betel rolls, ‘Why Do We Use a Tip-cut-off Betel Leaf’? In addition, we found nine tale variants with details and/or episodes concerning the areca tree, betel vine, betel quid and quid remains. Betel-chewing peoples are familiar with at least some of this rich folktale tradition. All of the tales share the same clear impact of Buddhism, as their characters experience endless incarnation, enlightenment.

Betel basics
Betel quid composition varies from place to place, but its core elements remain the same and consist of three components: the areca leaf, the areca nut and slaked lime. In northern Thailand, and to a lesser extent in Laos and Cambodia, dried areca grain is used in place of the fresh areca nut that is popular in other areas. White lime is popular in north and central Vietnam, while coloured (mainly pink) lime can be found in betel-chewing areas throughout mainland Southeast Asia. Tobacco is sometimes added to betel quid and the geographic distribution of its use is supposedly linked to coloured lime use. The manufactured ready-to-chew variety (usually sold under the name pan masala) is unknown in Southeast Asia, except in southern China.

Every betel chewer has to use certain tools to prepare his betel quid: a cutter or knife to cut the areca nut into quarters and a container for slaked lime. A complete betel service includes up to five components: a cutter or knife, lime tube, betel box, spittoon, betel mortar, betel cloth/towel. Betel service style and materials differ largely from country to country. Handicraft skills, patterns, and decorative motifs depend on local history and culture.

Lime containers in mainland Southeast Asia can be divided into two types: lime tubes in Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, were made of bronze or silver with a stupa-shaped lid, richly decorated and never taller than 15 cm; lime pots in Vietnam were made of ceramic or porcelain (or, very rarely, of bronze, silver or gold), shaped like the areca nut or a globe and stylistically glazed. The latter type is divided into two sub-types: one has a curved handle (north and south Vietnam) and the other has a noduled-shaped handle (in central Vietnam, where Champa influence still exists). A round spatula hole is also a main characteristic of Vietnamese lime pots, and some are decorated with calligraphic poems. Some Vietnamese lime pots were actually made in China or England.

The Buddhist sects strongly influenced lime container shape and design. In Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, where the Theravada sect attracted major followers, the tube lid was stupa-shaped. In Vietnam, where the Mahayana sect was strongest and pagodas didn’t include a tower, the potters chose to make their products in the shape of the areca nut. Today these once popular lime containers have totally disappeared from daily life. Collectors seek out ancient lime tubes and pots, while fake pots are made with a modern design and reserved for foreigners.

In Thailand, and to a lesser degree in Cambodia and Laos, areca cutters were developed in several forms and shapes, especially in royal courts and aristocratic families of dethroned dynasties. Nowadays, these highly decorated cutters have disappeared and been replaced by ordinary but sharp knives. In Vietnam, where areca cutters were unknown, areca knives...
became smaller and the blade thinner and sharper owing to technological advances. In the Bangkok suburbs, the Sam Sen market is famous for different commodities from Vietnam. The market is located in the former Lăng Gia Long (Gia Long village), where at the end of the 18th century Prince Nguyễn Ánh (who later became King Gia Long) twice sought refuge and local villagers are still called (pejoratively) vos Sam Sen. The betel service there expresses some Vietnamese characteristics, such as an areca knife in place of an areca cutter.

Roll me a quid
Betel roll preparation was highly developed in traditional Vietnamese society. A Landes has called it ‘the great art’ and said that ‘not everyone can prepare a quid that meets all requirements and only highly skilled ladies from one bonne maison can do it’.

Nowadays the casual quid is popular and chewers don’t care about skillful preparation. However, the special quid named bánh đa phượng (betel quid in the shape of phoenix wings) is highly appreciated in rituals, wedding ceremonies, religious festivities, and sometimes daily offerings to the ancestors altar or Spirit house. This kind of betel can be prepared in multiple ways and it’s not easy to decide which is the most elegant and attractive. The betel quid’s ritual role in such ceremonies has evolved to a level of such importance that even younger generations, whether living in the homelands or abroad, accept it.

In mainland China, Hu-nan Province, the young generation has been influenced by the new Taiwanese custom of betel-chewing and uses something similar to pa masala. This despite the fact that the Han majority group did not chew betel for centuries. On the other hand, in Yu-nan Province, near the Vietnam border, home to many people of the Tai ethnic group (Tai Hao Yu branch), areca palm trees that once provided nuts for chewing are now only decorative, because the chewing custom is disliked among the young.

The Vietnamese enclave of Jiang-bin District, in Khanh-si Province, is home to 15,000 Chinese- and Vietnamese-speaking inhabitants (as of 2004). According to a local folk song, they moved from the Đống Sơn area (which today is a commune in Hải Phòng City) to Jiang-bin in 111. While another age-old custom, the consumption of fish sauce (nuoc mắm, a typical Vietnamese sauce), has attained new popularity, betel-chewing is in decline. The elderly still chew it, but only in moderation.

Forever or nevermore?
Custom versus cancer
For centuries, people saw betel-chewing as a useful and elegant custom, as the following quotation attests: ‘When betel is chewed, hunger and thirst are inhibited and energy-requiring activities decrease in energy consumption. It generates a pleasant, bittersweet taste and stimulates in mild fashion the mind and the spirit, being able to freshen and sweeten the breath and to cleanse the mouth!’ (Oë-Thén 1914: 243). But recent research reveals numerous high risks and side effects. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC 2004), in its Betel-quid and Areca-nut Chewing, states that there is sufficient evidence in humans of the carcinogenicity of betel quid without tobacco, which causes oral cancer, and of betel quid with tobacco, which causes oral cancer and cancer of the pharynx and oesophagus. Areca nut alone is also carcinogenic to humans.

Cancer-screening conducted by P. A. Reichart revealed many cases of oral cancer or pre-cancer in elderly chewers throughout the region. Risk prevalence among various age groups still must be determined. Betel-chewing has declined by various degrees throughout the region, though no religion forbids its followers from chewing betel. At the beginning of the 20th century, 80-90% of the population practiced it; today no more than 5% do. It appears betel-chewing prevalence in Vietnam is still higher than in neighbouring countries, as statistical data reveals a stable old guard of chewers, but only time will tell how long that will last. The presence of betel and areca in rituals, however, seemingly flourishes everywhere: among majority and minority ethnicities, from Vietnam in the east to Thailand in the west. Sustained by religion, spirituality and fashion, and posing less of a health risk than tobacco, we hope that the ceremonial and ritual use of betel will endure.

Notes
1 Chữ Nôm is an old Vietnamese script that uses Chinese characters but with different pronunciation, grammar and syntax; it is not a kind of ‘WYN = WTS’. Chữ Nôm is a Vietnamese script that was modified from the chữ Nôm and represented the language of people on the street; it is a kind of ‘WYN = WTS’.
2 Chữ Quốc Ngữ – chữ Quyết is the current script of the Vietnamese, based on Latin characters.
During a recent visit to China, Bob van der Linden read Gao Xingjiang’s novels: Soul Mountain (1990) and One Man’s Bible (1999). In 2000, Gao was the first Chinese ever to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature. Yet, few of the Chinese van der Linden met knew of Gao’s existence and were surprised to hear that a Chinese had won this prestigious prize. In this essay he looks at why Gao’s work is banned in a country which annually regrets the absence of Chinese among the Nobel Prize winners and, with the 2008 Olympics just months away, is so eager for international recognition as a world civilisation and power.

Individuality, literature and censorship: Gao Xingjiang and China

Bob van der Linden

Gao Xingjiang’s own life story provided the inspiration for his novels and it certainly remains amazing. Born in 1940, he studied French in Beijing and subsequently became a professional French and English translator (of Samuel Beckett for example). His career as a writer began in the 1960s but he burned all his early manuscripts at the height of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) for fear that they could be used as evidence against him and might make his life in the countryside (where he was sent for “re-education” during the 1970s) even worse. As a member of the Chinese Association of Writers, Gao visited Europe (Paris) for the first time in 1979. One year later, he became a screenwriter and playwright for the Beijing’s People’s Art Theatre and subsequently gained a reputation as a pioneer of absurdist drama. Gao was the first to introduce the latest developments in literary theory and practice to the Chinese public and to redefine China’s literary heritage, so it was apposite to the times. His career began in the 1960s and subsequently became a professional French and English translator. As his English translator, Mabel Lee (University of Sydney), writes in the introduction to the book: Soul Mountain is a literary response to the devastation of Beijing’s People’s Art Theatre and subsequent gain of a reputation as a pioneer of absurdist drama. Gao was the first to introduce the latest developments in literary theory and practice to the Chinese public and to redefine China’s literary heritage, so it was apposite to the times. His career began in the 1960s and subsequently became a professional French and English translator. As his English translator, Mabel Lee (University of Sydney), writes in the introduction to the book: Soul Mountain is a literary response to the devastation of

The novel is full of melancholy for the past (stories from ancient Chinese history, visits to temples, monasteries, archaeological sites etc.) as well as for the ‘authentic’ and ‘exotic’ (‘dirty’ folks songs, rituals, shamans etc.), which Gao finds particularly among the ethnic minority peoples. On the whole, Soul Mountain deals with a world that, according to the author, was much destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and will be even more so in the near future, by, for example, the Three Gorges Dam in the Yangtze and by the ever-growing presence of the Han Chinese who today are to be found everywhere ‘there is money to be made’ (pp. 144-5). Also revealing in this contest is Gao’s description of the few remaining pandas wandering through southwestern China’s ever shrinking forests wearing electronic transmitters.

A meditation on the human spirit

In 1989, Gao was arrested and faced being sent to a prison farm. His plans to leave Beijing for southwest China became concrete following a misdiagnosis with lung cancer. Having confronted death, this experience left him feeling reborn and he resolutely decided to live life to the full. He began a 5-month journey from Beijing to Sichuan province and from there followed the Yangtze river to the coast. His flight became the basis for the staging of one of his plays. The narrative, addressed to his current German-Jewish lover, is a fictionalised account of the author’s youth and, above all, of the Kafkaesque anxieties of the Cultural Revolution, during which Gao played the three different roles of political activist, victim and silent observer. Undoubtedly these experiences made him into the individual writer he is. As he puts it himself:

You absolutely refuse to be a sacrifice, refuse to be a plaything or a sacrificial object for others, refuse to seek compassion from others, refuse to repent, refuse to go mad and trample everyone else to death. You look upon the world with a mind that is the epitome of ordinariness, and in exactly the same way you look at yourself. Nothing inspires fear, amazement, disappointment, or wild expectation, hence, you avoid frustration. If you want to enjoy being upset, you get upset, then revert to this supremely ordinary, smiling, and contented you (p. 198).

Soul Mountain is a literary response to the devastation of the self of the individual by the primitive human urge for the warmth and security of an other, or others, in other words by socialized life. The existence of an other resolves the problem of loneliness but brings with it anxieties for the individual, for inherent in any relationship is, inevitably, some form of power struggle. This is the existential dilemma confronting the individual, in relationships with parents, partners, family, friends and larger collective groups. Human history abounds with cases of the individual being induced by force or ideological persuasion to submit to the power of the collective; the surrender of the self to the collective eventually becomes habit, norm convention and tradition, and this phenomenon is not unique to any one culture.

The fate of the writer in exile

For Gao Xingjiang literature can only be the voice of the solitary individual writing in exile, away from the harsh daily political reality.
His sense of writing in exile came particularly to the fore when, in his earlier mentioned play Fugitives, he chose to portray the 1989 student protest movement (which led to the Tiananmen Square massacre) as naive rather than heroic. This naturally led to criticism from the students but at least he remained true to his commitment to literary truth above politics and showed no illusions about changing the world through his writings. All the same, I wonder if Gao (like the well-known intellectual and political activist Edward Said) does not confuse his living and writing in exile with ‘the actual state of every critical humanist in opposition to the professional expert who serves power while pretending detachment’ (Linden 2007). As actual state of every critical humanist in opposition to the professional expert Edward Said) does not confuse his living and writing in exile with ‘the same, I wonder if Gao (like the well-known intellectual and political activ 

When writing is not a livelihood or when one is so engrossed in writing that one forgets why one is writing and for whom one is writing it becomes a necessity and one will write compulsively and give birth to literature. It is this non-utilitarian aspect of literature that is fundamental to literature. That the writing of literature has become a profession is an ugly outcome of the division of labour in modern society and a very bitter fruit for the writer (Xingjiang 2000).

The so-called writer is nothing more than someone speaking or writing and whether he is listened to or read is for others to choose. The writer is not a hero acting on orders from the people nor is he worthy of worship as an idol, and certainly he is not a criminal or enemy of the people. He is at times victimised along with his writings simply because of other’s needs. When the authorities need to manufacture a few enemies to divert people’s attention, writers become sacrifices and worse still writers who have been duped actually think it is a great honour to be sacrificed (Xingjiang 2000).

In his Nobel Lecture, The Case for Literature, Gao emphasises that despite being an atheist, he always has had ‘reverence for the unknowable’ (Xingjiang 2000). Literature has a spiritual value for him and, accordingly, the search for the ‘soul mountain’ is a metaphor for all spiritual striving. Though, unlike Tan Twan Eng in his brilliant début The Gift of Rain (Eng 2007), Gao’s novels do not have predestination, as opposed to free will, as a major theme, there certainly exhibit a sense of fate. This is, in part, because his detached writing style, with pronouns functioning as characters, reflects his notion of the individual in exile. Alternately, in Eng’s novel the theme of predestination (i.e. the spiritual East?) together with the ‘exotic’ setting of colonial Malaya intentionally gather to the Western market. In contrast, Gao’s mourning for the ‘authentic’ (in denunciation of progress and practicality) and overall spirituality (if not acceptance of fate) in Soul Mountain seem more in line with the current Romantic but ‘imperial gaze’ among the (mostly young) Han Chinese towards the country’s ethnic minority peoples than with a conscious commercial choice.

Lost in translation?
Towards the end of Soul Mountain, Gao Xingjian writes:

“‘This is not a novel!’

“Then what is it?’ he asks.

“A novel must have a complete story.”

He says he has told many stories, some with endings and others without.

“They’re all fragments without any consequence, the author doesn’t know how to organize connected episodes.”

[…]

“No matter how you tell a story, there must be a protagonist. In a long work of fiction there must be several important characters, but this work of yours…?”

“But surely the I, you, she and he in the book are characters?” he asks.

“These are just different pronouns to change the point of view of the narrative. This can’t replace the portrayal of characters. These pronouns of yours, even if they are characters, don’t have clear images they’re hardly described at all.”

He says he isn’t painting portraits (p. 452-3).
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  Dancing in the Shadows: Shanok, the Khmer Rouge, and the United Nations in Cambodia.
This is a new study of the history, archaeology and numismatics of Central Asia, an area of great significance for our understanding of the ancient and early medieval world. This vast, land-locked region, with its extreme continental climate, was a centre of civilisation with great metropolitan cities. Its cosmopolitan population followed different religions (Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Buddhism), and traded extensively with China, India, the Middle East, and Europe. The millennium from the overthrow of the first world empire of Achaemenian Persians by Alexander the Great to the arrival of the Arabs and Islam was a period of considerable change and conflict.

The variety focuses on recent investigations in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. It provides a complex analysis of the symbiosis between the city life based on oases, and the nomadic peoples grazing their animals in the surrounding deserts. Other topics include the influence of the Greek colonists on military architecture, and the major impact of the arrival of the Arabs and Islam was a period of considerable change and conflict.

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Rebel with a cause: debunking the mythical mystical Tibet

In May 2003 I heard that a documentary was being made about the famous Tibetan monk Gendun Choephel (in Tibetan, dGe 'dun Chos phyil) who had travelled throughout Asia for many years to collect information about Tibetan Buddhism in particular. The director, Marc Matta, was producing the first Tibetan feature films to challenge the stereotyped Tibet portrayed by Hollywood. The Tibetan scholar Tashi Tsering told me about director Luc Schaadler’s painstaking effort and research: he’d travelled throughout Asia for many years to collect information about Choephel and interview people who had known him and scholars who had been researching this controversial figure now so popular among intellectuals and Tibetan youngsters as an incarnation of the rebirthed spirit of ‘Tibetaness’. As Schaadler says: ‘While their parents lost Tibet, the younger generation looked for role models that would allow a critical view of their own society. But the western world only slowly became aware of Choephel because his life story doesn’t mesh with our rigid image of Tibet, which prefers to portray Tibetans as victims rather than the makers of their own history.’

A best-selling New Age commodity

The long history of Tibet’s cinematic representation intersects with politics, power and diplomacy. Perhaps no film can claim to be an objective portrayal of a civilization, but filming in Tibet in particular was never a neutral act of documenting the culture. In the 1920s the British sent their first missions to Mount Everest and experienced the great difficulty of shooting film in Tibet. Apart from being ‘tremendously expensive’, there was the ‘ever-present temptation to heighten the incident, to stage effects, to compete with the product of the studio, and thereby to increase its value as a public entertainment, but run it as a sincere record of events.’ Tibetans themselves, however, were aware of the need to negotiate the cinematic representation of their culture and religious traditions in ways that clearly challenged the assumption that Tibetans had always been victims of the Orientalist view without having any real agency in it. As Peter Hansen states, ‘...the Everest expeditions redefined the power of Orientalism, the power to represent the Other, as the possession of both British and Tibetans.’

This fiercely negotiated relationship must be taken into account when viewing Schaadler’s ‘Angry Monk: Reflections on Tibet’, especially when comparing it to the many other films and documentaries on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism in particular. Schaadler himself claims that his film is meant to counter those documentaries ‘full of admiration for the monasteries, for the lamas and also for the nomadic society which has been celebrated as a remnant of an age-old, intact culture.’ Such attitudes have strongly affected the Western vision. Tibet as fairy-land, mystical kingdom, a lost paradise to be rediscovered, saved and preserved as an antidote to the Western materialistic way of life is a paradigm that has flattened the complex history of this ancient civilization.

While Spencer Chapman described the Tibetan nomads in Lhasa in 1937 as ‘attractive-looking people’ and ‘proud sunburnt men with a faraway look in their eyes’,2 Hollywood was releasing Frank Capra’s ‘Lost Horizon’, which created the long-lasting myth of Tibet as Shangri-La. During the last 70 years hardly any film challenged this mythical view. If, as claimed by the Tibetan writer Jamyang Norbu, ‘Hollywood, more than anyone else, could perhaps be held responsible for foisting the ‘magic and mystery’ image of Tibet’, Tibetans themselves must also take responsibility for helping to nurture it. The images of a victimised Tibet and endangered culture that must be saved from the ravages of the Chinese have become best-selling New Age commodities.

Leaving out the West and the Dalai Lama to focus on one monk’s struggle to tell the truth

This is the current perception against which Schaadler’s film must be viewed. When screened in Rome in November 2006, the seventh annual ‘Asiatica Film Manifest’, I was curious not only to watch the film but to see the audience’s reaction. Interestingly, the festival director chose to screen the film last and not on the same day as the three other Tibetan-related films. In previous days, John Bush’s documentary ‘Vajra Sky Over Tibet’, Liliana Cavani’s ‘Milarepa’ (1974) and the Tibetan Lama Neten Chokling Rinpoche’s ‘Milarepa’ (2002) were shown, preceded by introductions to Tibetan Buddhism and Milarepa and followed by a discussion with an audience keen to know about the history of a ‘holy Tibet’. When I heard the same old stories being told, I thought back to the much more conflictive audience reaction to the Tibetan filmmaker Pema Dongdup’s ‘We’re No Monks’ presented in Naples and Rome in 2004. That film portrays the anger and frustration of exiled young Tibetans, one of whom is the film’s director. Because of the strong artistic feeling of the audience reacted very strongly to what they regarded as an act that could not possibly be committed by a representative of the ‘peaceful Tibetans’ and vented their anger at the director, accusing him of misrepresenting his own culture, which was for them the last hope for world peace.

‘Angry Monk’ also raised a great deal of interest but not the same degree of criticism and denial. I assume it’s been far more difficult for a general audience to criticise a film presented as historical fact. Following the art of demystification: digesting the indigestible

As Tibetan cinema is beginning to flourish in the Diaspora, with more young Tibetans turning to filmmaking as a professional career, there is a risk that this new trend might be used to foster what Kliger calls ‘indigenous Tibetan hyperreality...created from a conscious and selective presentation of self to an audience with highly conditioned expectations’.3 He says the Tibetan culture presented in the West is indeed ‘idealized, homogenised [sic] and pastified’ to the extent that any challenge to this conventional image is deemed indigestible. Though no less challenging, ‘Angry Monk’ may be easier to swallow. It’s a thought-provoking film that introduces the Western public to a new way of looking at Tibet as a real country with a complex history and a far less mystical reality than they may have thought or hoped for. Less idealised, Tibetan culture emerges as a land of intracies where Buddhism sometimes contributed to a certain deal of obscurantism. While the film enlightens the general public, it could also be an excellent didactic tool in university courses and seminars. It would be truly disappointing if even now the same forces that imprisoned Choephel would once again hide reality, discarding it in favour of the mystified image so welcome in the West. Schaadler’s film is a non-conformist representation that follows in Choephel’s rebellious steps to debunk such myths as misrepresentations.

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References

Lifting up women without lifting the veil: an early 20th century Muslim women's movement in colonial India

Karuna Sharma

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the central Indian Muslim state of Bhopal was led by a succession of Begums, or high-ranking Muslim women. Siyaband Lambert-Hurley’s Muslim Women, Reform and Princely Patronage: Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum of Bhopal, London and New York: Routledge, 256 pages. ISBN 978-0-415-40192-0.

Through Sultan Jahan’s reform movement began among the elite of Bhopali society, her ideas on women’s autonomy eventually transcended community and class boundaries. Interestingly, she was quite conservative compared to other Muslim socio-religious reformers in India and other Muslim countries. Her Muslim identity evolved as she progressed in her educational reforms. She wore the veil and didn’t criticise purdah, yet upheld women’s national search for self through discipline, education and a thorough understanding of their rights (as written in the Koran). Because many Islamic injunctions are interpretable, she envisioned programmes befitting women’s autonomy according to her own understanding of Islam and strengthened by certain colonial imports, such as class sensibilities and health awareness. Since the reforms were initiated by Bhopal’s highest authority, they were automatic in many ways though not immune to criticism. But her stature and motivation helped her prevail over many of those criticisms, and she ingeniously mediated differences of opinion among two generations of women reformers.

Islamic in her own way
The author uses both primary and official records, and the reports of early organisations and institutions of the Bhopal state to identify socio-political organisation by (Muslim) women. This categorically debunks the stereotypical distorted picture of Muslim women as prisoners to household drudgery and sexual frustration, and instead brings to light issues related to their socio-political status, political identity and educational development. Movement leaders pinned for social and educational opportunities and to play a role in public affairs. The book reviews the administrations of previous Begums and their impact on Sultan Jahan. While all were aligned with Islamic precepts, rulers were largely tolerant of other religious and social groups, including Sultan Jahan. Her forays into politically charged Islamic universalism were patently political administration and educational programmes for women were patently different from the governments of other Muslim countries. Reformist ulama and male and female intellectuals formed the core of her administration, its members chosen on the basis of ability rather than their ideas. She was Islamic in her own way, equally embracing purdah and English education.

Contextualising women’s empowerment within the Prophet’s message as articulated in the Koran and Sunna, Sultan Jahan employed Islamic rhetoric to strike a balance between a woman’s domestic and official duties and her quest for knowledge. This was the best way to convince conservative Muslim parents to allow their daughters to attend school and to peacefully comply with what was essentially an educational programme imposed on high. Bhopal was the first Indian state to take such steps.

Its programme, eventually, addressed the masses; blended modern and traditional education; highlighted areas of women’s expertise – the home and the family – thus facilitating awareness among women to use their education their daily functions; and services, which were designed by women and for women, resulting in a woman’s movement with a distinct identity. Causally, the programme made it possible for students to observe purdah, arranged for enclosing cabinets, female staff and separate quarters to hold classes. Not long after the programme succeeded among the elite, scholarships were offered and the programme’s influence spread to the poor, enrolling widows, orphans and even non-Muslim women.

In health care education, her programme again stood at the interface of modern and traditional practices. Just as with Western medicine, ancient Bible medicine was revised and traditional health practitioners, or hakims, and more specifically midwives, improved their skills through proper, comprehensive bible training and the introduction of certain scientific techniques. She was driven to spread knowledge about sanitation, hygiene, basic child birth, first aid and home nursing because she believed they were all essential to making women autonomous in matters related to maternity and child welfare, which, by extension, contributed to national welfare. This was how Sultan Jahan envisioned empowering women in and outside the home. After participating in the programme, elite women took on the responsibility of educating poor women, according themselves professional status and fulfilling one of the five pillars of Islam, charity.

Balancing act: increasing autonomy, not at expense of custom or social duty
For Sultan Jahan, separate spheres for men and women were crucial, as a woman’s self-actualisation had to take place in an environment where women educated other women. She strongly felt that women interacting with women, exchanging bodily knowledge no less than religious knowledge, was a source of female autonomy. She appealed to Islamic and early Muslim history to buttress her educational reforms, promoting Islamic learning and adding doses of English education. The latter was necessary to broaden her reforms beyond a strictly religious model and provide mothers and wives with practical training. Once Sultan Jahan installed a woman’s official and domestic duties, she addressed cultural and other scholarly activities with élan.

Sultan Jahan was a visionary whose reformist discourse within a traditional context was a model for women to change their perception of themselves. It was made possible, as the author emphatically states, because the reforms emanated from the highest state authority – the Sultan herself. Her success lay in emphasising female domesticity and training capable housewives and good mothers – roles that received God’s adoration. The author discusses at length the initiatives taken to compose the curriculum, which overlapped other socio-religious reformers’ justifications for promoting female education. Her programmes created a constituency of women within the Bhopal state who were educated and could look beyond community, religious and gender boundaries. She encouraged preparing (especially poor) women for practical occupations, training housewives and wage earners rather than offering a strictly academic curriculum, which was quite unsuitable to the poor’s socio-economic conditions. This prevented them from falling into disreputable jobs. More than anything else, it was Sultan Jahan’s efforts to educate lower class adult women that set her apart from her fellow Muslim reformers.

Though she endorsed incremental change within the traditional context, Sultan Jahan was not averse to the West. She encouraged women to be selective in their approach to new ideas and Western culture. Her aim was to increase female political participation without compromising their social duties or the institution of the veil, which was why radical (women) reformers ratherthan the Sultan’s, because she neither called for radical change nor gave up the veil herself! A paradox, perhaps, but to her the veil did not obstruct women’s literary skills, leadership abilities or political wisdom.

Another interesting facet of Sultan Jahan’s – and, for that matter, of the Bhopal state’s – administration was the viability of the institution of kingship. Sultan Jahan maintained her loyalty to the British and proclaimed everlasting allegiance and submission to the king. Nevertheless, her administration’s particular traits, reflected in her reforms, reveal an ongoing negotiation between colonial power and the princely state. She used English education to advance and fit into the imperial structure, and negotiated with a range of colonial and Islamic models to empower women.

Unveiling a visionary
Lambert-Hurley has contributed an interesting perspective of a movement that placed Indian Muslim women on the cusp of a new feminism that crossed boundaries and strengthened the social and intellectual bonds of the women involved. An all-female sphere provided leadership roles and opportunities to organise and build networks, which, the author remarks, prepared them for future political activity.

In my understanding, Sultan Jahan wanted to create female camaraderie through issues that permeated their lives, and she drew on a wide range of reformist models – those provided by the colonial state, Alighari modernists and Deobandi Ulema – but in the end her enterprise could not be bridled by any of them, as her main aim was to assert women’s autonomy in a hitherto unknown way. Commendably, the author imparts this originality. Sultan Jahan was able to negotiate with Islamic conservatism and colonial discourse with ease, and engage with Western scientific knowledge and adapt it to address the specific concerns of Indian Muslim women. The Bhopal women’s reformist discourse responded to its colonial counterpart by extracting the best from it and then blending it with indigenous traditions to speak for the movement and other women. In sum, the author has deftly unveiled the poorly known story of Sultan Jahan.

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The European Union and Asia Reflections and Re-orientations

Edited by Peter.Andram and George Witzulu

313 pages
(European Studies volume 25)
Handbound Euro 63, /$ 94.50

This volume represents the first, in-depth, inter-disciplinary, analysis of the past, present and future of the European Union’s relations with countries, non-state actors and other partners across the Asia-Pacific region. Written by an international team of experts from both Asia and Europe, the volume covers a wide scope of subjects and throws light on a selected number of issues pertinent to current EU-Asia interaction.
Three’s a crowd?: declining US hegemony in the Asia-Pacific

Thomas S. Wilkins

The potential of Japan and Australia as ‘middle powers’ is the focus of the introductory chapter, which sets the stage for the book’s exploration of identity politics in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly its alleged lack of contrition for its wartime excesses, plays in shaping Japan’s and Australia’s security outlooks because of their close alliance relations with the United States. The contributors effectively juxtapose the second major aspect of the book – an advocacy of ‘human security’ – with ‘hegemony’, demonstrating how this new paradigm better captures the complexity of International Relations as it exists today. As the discipline adjusts to the globalised security environment of the new millennium, human security is therefore increasingly seen as ‘a concept whose time is approaching’ (p. 18). For the Realists labouring to define the state-centric paradigm that has so long monopolised the discipline, this is another battlefield in which American theoretical hegemony finds itself out of step with the rest of the world and thus under siege.

In conclusion, this volume should appeal both to academics and to policymakers interested in the dichotomy of Asia-Pacific geopolitics. The diversity of the contributor’s backgrounds – public policy, social ethics, defence, and the environment (known as broad’ or ‘extended’ security). The whole project is thus a challenge to the dominant Realist and state-centric paradigm of International Relations.

A global ‘state of emergency’?

In part one, entitled ‘Hegemony and East Asia Relations’, Mustapha Kamal Pasha records how the hegemon constructs and employs the ‘war on terror’ as the necessary global ‘state of emergency’ that justifies the increasing close security cooperation between these powers, around which a burgeoning academic literature is now appearing. Placing these three powers at the centre of their analysis, the contributors cast a critical eye over Tokyo and Canberra’s complicity in maintaining the American hegemonic system and point to the vulnerabilities of the trilateral accord.

The volume is divided into four parts, plus introduction and conclusion. In the Introduction Michael S. and Larry Marshall establish the overarching framework of the book, that is, the contradictions between hegemony and human security in the prevailing regional order. First they establish a working definition of ‘hegemony’ as ‘used both in its traditional definition as inter-state predominance/rule by force and its Ciccinian meaning as an organizing principle’ (p. 5). They note that Washington’s attempts to bolster fading US hegemony possess the danger of ‘entrapping’ Tokyo and Canberra in policies detrimental to their real interests. Moreover, they contend list pursuit of hegemony is largely incommensurate with basic ‘human security’, defined by the United Nations Human Development Program Report (1994) as ‘freedom from fear’ and ‘freedom from want’. The contributors, in the main, are estranging themselves from wider engagement in the region. He concludes that ‘there is no reason to contain China. But there is every reason to check Washington’s global hegemony’ (p. 59). In the introduction, they challenge the ongoing transformation in Tokyo’s and Canberra’s policies detrimental to their real interests. Moreover, they contend list pursuit of hegemony is largely incommensurate with basic ‘human security’, defined by the United Nations Human Development Program Report (1994) as ‘freedom from fear’ and ‘freedom from want’. The contributors, in the main, are estranging themselves from wider engagement in the region. He concludes that ‘there is no reason to contain China. But there is every reason to check Washington’s global hegemony’ (p. 59).

Part two – ‘Japan’s Security Dilemma’ – examines the ongoing transformation in Tokyo’s international relations towards a more assertive posture. This essentially points at the ‘Japan’s rising’ thesis, one that is now gaining serious traction among policy-makers and academics. The authors of chapters 3, Michael T. S. and Jomo, Yosihiko and Yasuyuki Shimakato, disentangle some of the key aspects of this thesis, focusing their attention on the political efforts to revise Japan’s ‘peace constitution’ and the ramifications this would have on regional security. Naturally, such questions feed into the controversial role that Japan’s colonial history, in particular its alleged lack of contrition for its wartime excesses, plays in shaping identity politics around the region.

A new role for ‘middle powers’?
The potential of Japan and Australia as ‘middle powers’ is the focus of Part three. Here the central question is whether these two states can contribute individually, or in tandem, to a more effective system of regional security cooperation. Once again, this builds on an important debate surrounding the recent augmentation of bilateral ties between these states, as shown by the 2007 Joint Security Declaration. Michael Hamel-Green’s chapter contends that Tokyo and Canberra’s loyalty, subservience even, to Washington underlines their efforts at multilateral solutions and support for the UN. He cites their intensified diplomatic and military relationships with Washington, and their participation in coercive military exercises such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), as evidence. Nest Allan Patience looks at the role these two powers have played in the South Pacific arc of instability. He suggests that if these countries can overcome the legacy of ‘neo colonial arrogance’ there may be a chance for ‘niche diplomacy’ in which their middle power identity is reinvented to address issues of poverty, governance failure, and aid delivery more constructively. In this they could prevent the small/weak countries of the South Pacific becoming ‘failed states’ – breeding grounds for violence, instability, and terrorism.

The subject of Part four is ‘Global Governance and Sustainability’ in which Tetsuya Yamada and Shigeko Fukai interrogate the complex question of regional (and global) governance and present their cases for how states and civil society could cooperate in influence in a multipolar world. Yamada reveals his scepticism over whether the reform of the UN can effectively challenge the hegemonic power of the West/US since the very institutions upon which the structure of the international system is predicated are manifest instruments of its propagation (APEC, IMF, World Bank, UN Security Council). Fukai rejects the American Realist/Jewish assumption, as articulated by Condoleezza Rice, that ‘national interest’ should override the development and function of the ‘international community’. She addresses the vital issues of managing global resources in a sustainable fashion and one that represents a more equitable distribution between the ‘global north’ and ‘south’.

When contemplating ‘Future Possibilities’ in the book’s conclusion, Joseph Camilleri asserts that Japan and Australia are unduly constrained in reforming their security outlooks because of their close alliance relations with the US. These defence pacts were forged over half a century ago at a time when the geopolitical landscape looked completely different and the Cold War security agenda was basically confined to opposing the alleged ‘Soviet threat’. Camilleri suggests that both countries would do well to reevaluate their alliance ties by breaking free of their dependence upon their ‘great and powerful friend’ to pursue security policies that better reflect broader human security and regional integration priorities. For Japan and Australia they advocate joining the growing list of countries that now uphold the human security foreign policy paradigm, which included Canada (another ‘middle power’), most of Scandinavia, and Ireland.

One of the great strengths of this volume is the way it addresses so many of the key intellectual and policy debates appertaining to Asia-Pacific security. These include ‘hegemony’ and ‘human security’, but also US-Japan-Australia ‘trilateralism’, ‘Japan rising’, and ‘the future of the UN’. One of the core arguments of the book, that of declining American hegemony, fits well with Realist predictions in International Relations, which posit that states will seek to maximise power/security through internal mobilisation of resources and alliance formation/strengthening. The US is currently pursuing both, though for how long this can be sustained with an economy teetering on the brink of recession and in the face of waning public support among its traditional allies, is uncertain. The current crisis of American ideology and ‘soft power’, triggered by the ‘war on terror’ and invasion of Iraq, has ‘severely eroded America’s international credibility and legitimacy’ meaning that partnership with Washington has become a much less enticing prospect (p. 6). Being seen to act as America’s ‘deputy’ in the Asia-Pacific now incurs substantial costs. First, Washington has become a more demanding protector, pressuring Japan and Australia to increase their ‘burden sharing’ through military integration and participation in overseas expeditions, in order to ameliorate the effects of its own ‘imperial overstretch’. Second, elite support in Japan and Australia for the alliance through involvement in American wars in the Middle East not only attracts international opposition, but is also manifestly unpopular with very large sections of domestic opinion. In light of these factors, the contributors suggest that Japan and Australia should detach themselves from such encumbrances and seek more independent paths as middle powers.

The contributors effectively juxtapose the second major aspect of the book – an advocacy of ‘human security’ – with ‘hegemony’, demonstrating how this new paradigm better captures the complexity of International Relations as it exists today. As the discipline adjusts to the globalised security environment of the new millennium, human security is therefore increasingly seen as ‘a concept whose time is approaching’ (p. 18). For the Realists labouring to define the state-centric paradigm that has so long monopolised the discipline, this is another battlefield in which American theoretical hegemony finds itself out of step with the rest of the world and thus under siege.

In conclusion, this volume should appeal both to academics and to policymakers interested in the dichotomy of Asia-Pacific geopolitics. The diversity of the contributor’s backgrounds – public policy, social ethics, defence, human security, and sustainability – is a notable strength when looking at the multifaceted dimensions of geopolitics. Though the book may be ‘considered a critical project – in the sense that security is equated with ‘emancipation’, rather than ‘national defence’. The arguments presented are measured and never slip into polemic, while at the same time add up to a persuasive case for the reassertion of human security priorities in the destructive wake of America’s ‘war on terror’.

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Notes
The search for security in East Asia

Frans Paul van der Putten

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t security organisation capable of providing security to the region. The 'rise of China' is widely regarded as a development that simultaneously complicates security relations in East Asia and makes them more relevant to the rest of the world. This book, Crump's work, is wide-ranging. By combining the histories of many countries into a single volume, the book is a welcome addition to existing literature. However, a consequence of the country-based approach is that the narrative largely avoids taking a regional viewpoint. Apart from the two thematic chapters on migration and crime, only the conclusion gives a brief analysis of how security affects stabilisation in the Asia Pacific as a single geographic entity. While the book has much to offer, it does little to highlight the common characteristics of the Asia Pacific area during the twentieth century, in terms of security or otherwise.

Cold War frontiers

A regional perspective on international security is provided by Cold War Frontiers in the Asia Pacific by Kimie Hara. This book analyses how current territorial issues have their origins in the Peace Treaty of San Francisco that ended the 1945 war between Japan and the Western Allies. The author focuses on how the limited role of signatories, Japan as the defeated nation was obliged to sign. The USSR, denied any influence during the drafting process, refused to be a party to the treaty. The People's Republic of China (on the mainland), the Republic of China (on Taiwan), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) were not even invited to sign the treaty. Thus, the treaty was fundamentally flawed from the outset. Lastly, the issue of war crimes that existed because of the collapse of the Japanese overseas empire were now to be approached in ways that provided direct strategic benefits to the US. Initially the US policymakers had been inclined to solve territorial issues according to historical and legal guidelines, in principle providing a solid basis for long-term regional stability. By the final treaty no longer had this aim.

Hara contends that Washington intentionally maintained, or even created, territorial disputes in order to insert 'wedges' between the US area of control and the communist world. The purpose of these wedges was two-fold: firstly, to keep regional allies firmly on the side of the West, and secondly, to fortify the US military position in the region. One example is the Kuriles dispute between the USSR and Japan. Hara posits that this dispute could probably have been resolved, but that the US ensured that this would not happen, in a bid to keep closer ties between Tokyo and Moscow. Moreover, an end to the Kuriles dispute could threaten the American position on Okinawa, the main US military stronghold in East Asia. Hara also argues that the way in which the San Francisco Peace Treaty was drafted intentionally exacerbated tensions over Diaoyu/Senkaku, South China Sea and the Tokto/Tokyo island. Furthermore, the author suggests that American policy towards these issues has not fundamentally changed since 1950.

The exploration of the effects of the peace treaty rather than the root causes of current territorial disputes. It would, therefore, be premature to conclude that the treaty and US foreign policy are the primary cause of these problems. Still Hara's conclusions question how committed the US really is to stabilising international relations in East Asia. Would Washington allow a peaceful resolution of these issues at the cost of a weakened strategic position? Costs that could ultimately include military withdrawal from South Korea and Japan, the end of Taiwan's role as a barrier to China's naval expansion, and a shift of Washington's regional allies towards closer cooperation with Beijing.

Conclusion

To conclude, Crump provides us with a useful historical overview of modern history in the Asia Pacific, while Hara offers a thorough analysis of the origins of the main security issues in East Asia. Both authors contribute to understanding China's role in international security. The most provocative of the three books is Hara's. His conclusion that 'present US strategy may [...] not necessarily favor clear resolutions of the various unresolved territorial disputes (p.155) is noteworthy. It questions many of the key premises behind the peace in East Asia since 1953 – might be less committed to regional stability than many in the West acknowledge.
Elections as popular culture

Meredith Weiss

Watching the pomp and austerity of this year’s US presidential election, one can’t help but wonder what such rituals represent, beyond the mere fact of choosing a new head of government and state. There is the element of carnival, of course, but also a persistent subcurrent of deeper meaning: that this overblown, pricey, closely-managed circus still does represent a chance for the ‘people’ self-consciously to assert their sovereignty. Against such a backdrop, Chua Beng Huat’s lively edited volume, Elections as Popular Culture in Asia, offers an especially welcome stimulus. The volume presents a series of engaging descriptions and analyses of campaign festivities and foldes across states, but also poses deeper questions of how citizens interpret and enact their own roles in election tableaux - the distinction between ‘democracy as a political goal and the election as an instrument for attaining it’ (p.149).

Chua’s straightforward introduction lays out the rationale for the book and syntheses insights from the case studies that follow. The volume grew out of a workshop in early 2005 on the preceding “year of elections across Asia.” It takes as a premise that campaigns are about more (or less) than just providing information for the rational weighing of choices, and elections, the aggregation of rational, solitary actions. Rather, even where electoral rules keep real choice in check, elections hold out hope for the governed of a better future - that this time, their vote could make a difference - and “remain the primary channels of popular participation in politics” (p.6). Contending parties assert their popularity by drumming up crowds and creating ‘news’, offering the illusion, at least, of sufficient popular mobilisation to confirm the winner’s legitimacy in a world of hegemonic electoralism. Meanwhile, elements from civil society take advantage of relaxed rules and crowds to press their own agendas, including encouraging deeper and broader participation. The full syndrome is embedded in a specific culture and context, though; the script is hardly universal, however much elections as a concept may be presumed to be so. It is with this paradox that the volume engages, reading elections as an artefact and aspect of the popular culture in which they take place.

The chapters that follow address elections of 2004 (or the closest thereto) in Taiwan (by Ko Yufen), Hong Kong (Wan-chau Sheu and Pak-wan Wong), Indonesia (Jennifer Lindsay), the Philippines (Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr.), Thailand (Pitch Pongsawat), Malaysia (Francis Loh Kik Wai), India (M. Madhava Prasad), South Korea (Keeyeung Lee), and Japan (Kazori Tsurumoto). While the quality is high throughout, some contributors follow Chua’s prompt better than others. Several could have benefited from deeper engagement with the workshop process and other chapters to sharpen their points. For instance, in faulting Japan’s Public Office Election Law for discouraging popular engagement, Tsurumoto concludes ‘It is more the case in Taiwan, or at least the more developed countries, that campaign expenditures, particularly those on radio and television, are an obstacle to political participation’ (p.267). The problem would be less in South Korea than in Japan, perhaps, but that is not what Shae and Wong elide in discussing the “translating the meaning with which citizens vest can be a political instrument new and as well as more advanced scholars, and offers side notes in, for instance, fieldwork methods (most charmingly in Tsurumoto’s contribution) and ways to work with emerging electronic media (especially the ‘chapters by Lee and Pitch’). Overall, the volume is an engaging addition to studies on popular culture and a useful corrective to overly structural approaches to elections, without pretending to offer the last word.

Meredith L. Weiss
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A complex conflict

Nicholas Tarling

This book rightly describes the West Papua Conflict as complex. Held outside Indonesia when the Dutch accepted its independence in 1949, the territory was subsequently incorporated – after a long Indonesian ‘confrontation’ of the Dutch – as a result above all of the intervention of the United States and the involvement of the UN. The Bunker agreement brokered by the US prescribed an Act of Free Choice. Indonesia carried that out in ways of the inadequacy of which the UN did not complain, and which indeed the Indonesians were to use as a precedent for incorporating East Timor, though that by contrast was not met by UN compliance.

Partly as a result of the inadequacy of the process, incorporation led to new conflicts. Though members of the small Papuan elite were a little more involved in the Bunker process than the author suggests, the Act of Free Choice was, as John Salford has shown, something of a scandal. Papuans could only resent the policies the Indonesians pursued, displacing even the cooperative element in the elite, exploiting Papua’s mineral resources, in particular through the deal with Freeport that Denise Leith has explored, introducing large numbers of migrants from other parts of the archipelago, who came both under government transmigration schemes and of their own volition. Such activities provided a fertile ground for resistance, often described as OPM, Organisasi Papua Merdeka, though it was not their own volition. Such activities provided a fertile ground for resistance, often described as OPM, Organisasi Papua Merdeka, though it was not unified. In turn the Indonesian army, TNI, secured a reason and an excuse for action, and as elsewhere it acted in a way that maximised abuse and increased opposition, so enhancing its argument that it continued to be needed: it gets a per diem for a special deployment, whereas it would be better rewarded for creating situations that did not need one.

The dislodging of the Soeharto regime changed the situation, but only in part, making the conflict yet more complex. Though their implementation was sure to be no easy matter, decentralisation and democratisation held the prospect of improvement. But the independence of East Timor added to the Indonesian fear of breakup and distrust of foreign intervention. The reforms in Papua were as a result all the more half-hearted and confused, and the TNI’s repressive activities all the more difficult to restrain.

My own study of Britain’s policy towards West New Guinea in the period before the Bunker agreement showed how small the Papuan elite was and also how divided (while one British official referred to the Javanese as ‘borne imperialists’). Divisions among Papuans remain a feature of the complexity of the situation, encouraging divide-and-rule tactics and making any overall negotiation more difficult.

Repetitive analysis but sensible conclusions

It is on the prospects of a negotiated settlement that the present book focuses. It proceeds by an extensive and at times repetitive process of analysis which may try the patience of the reader. But, well informed by interviews and by research in libraries, on the net and among unpublished theses, it reaches sensible conclusions, which reward the reader and, more important, may provide materials for the negotiation that seems the best chance for an unhappy land in which a relatively few outsiders have an informed but passionate interest.

Independence seems an unlikely prospect, and even if achieved, might only create a non-viable state, rent with internal dispute. The best prospect, the author suggests, is special autonomy, and properly carried out, it might meet the expectations popularly attached to the magic word independence. But it has, of course, been on the tapis so long and so ineffectually that the Papuans have lost any trust in the Indonesian government’s promises. It is essential to restore or create that trust. The Indonesians have, after all, good reason to do so. But whatever the approach, its implications will carry across the rest of the archipelago and improve the Republic’s relations with the outside world, though none of that can really be achieved without putting the role of the TNI on the constitutional and fiscal basis it should occupy in a modern state.

It is also, the author rightly suggests, necessary to seek means by which the Papuans can negotiate and accept such a solution. She sees the greatest hope in the concept of Papua Land of Peace. Papuans might find their unity in that rather than in the concept of Papua Land of Suffering. The focus should be on the future, putting off, without abandoning, the redemption of past abuses.

The book, a thesis at Giessen, is published in Germany but in English. We must be grateful that the results of German scholarship thus become more widely available. The English is far from idiomatic, however, and at times its idioms increase obscure the meaning. An English copy editor would have made an important message clearer.

Nicholas Tarling
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In the space of seven decades, the Asian region has gone from being torn apart by conflict, both ideological and military, to enjoying a period of untrammelled development, prosperity and growth. In the era of the cold war, it was the US that kept its sights on Communist China, with no open diplomatic contact, from its military bases in Japan, and South Korea. In the 1960s and 1970s, even after the US’s rapprochement with China, the war in Vietnam saw overspill into Cambodia, and Indo-China, leading to tens of thousands of deaths. Indonesia’s bloody suppression of Communist insurgency in the mid-1960s and its annexation of East Timor in 1975 were the more dramatic symptoms of a region judged by one writer in the late 1960s to be on a knife edge. The skirmishes between the USSR and China in 1969 were the most potently disturbing of these, bringing two nuclear powers face to face.

In 2008, China and India are charging ahead, contributing more to global GDP growth this year than the US or Europe. China remains a one party state, but its politicians and business people talk the language of commerce with remarkable conviction – enough to persuade foreign investors to make China, year in and year out, the largest receiver of Foreign Direct Investment globally. Consumer markets in China and India offer the real growth potential. Even Vietnam and Laos are embracing capitalism, inspired by what they see as China’s ‘Beijing consensus’ state led development model. There is an Asian way, they seem to be saying, and Japan, China, and a host of other Asian countries are showing it.

The stability and security of Asia is a good thing. No wars were more terrible than those fought in this region in the 1950s and 1940s. That these countries now co-exist peacefully is an extraordinary political achievement, ranking alongside that of the creation, and growth, of the European Union, with all the prosperity that has delivered. China and India are lifting more people out of poverty than any other governments in history. This is China’s chief defence in justifying its lack of political reform. ASEAN plus three has been one attempt to create a political cohesiveness around these very diverse countries, and supplement and help this stability.

There are two things that might worry us, even while celebrating the achievements in Asia, in the months and years ahead, however. The first in fact is that history might have been forgotten, but it has not been buried. The haughtiness of the Chinese population, more than their pragmatic politicians, is, as Susan Shirk points out, in her interesting account of Chinese-Japanese relations in ‘China: Fragile Superpower’ a good case in point. Under Mao, from 1949 to his death in 1976, Japan was regarded oddly benignly. There were no anti-Japanese riots, nor, after diplomatic relations were resumed in the early 1970s, constant imprecations from one side for apologies over historical injustices. In the last ten years, though, Japan’s perceived lack of contrition has become a big issue in China, in the blogosphere, in chat rooms, and in the press. The hint of China becoming a member of the UN Permanent 5 in 2005 was enough to bring students out in the streets in Beijing. There are similar historical ‘issues’ left over in the Korean peninsula, which has been called the last front of the Cold War. And Japan’s desire to assert itself a little more away from American oversight is the continuation of a long process of emerging from the impact of the Second World War. Throughout Asia, history is perhaps silent, but not absent. The start, after years of negotiations, of the trial of the Khmer Rouge leadership still alive in Cambodia under the auspices of the UN is a reminder of just how recent, and unhealed, some of this terrible history is.

This connects to the second issue. Scratch the surface of history in Asia soon leads back to some uncomfortable questions. The unresolved problem of Taiwan is only the most striking of these. As a country like China starts to flex its muscles, and shows it has genuine economic and political clout, this creates real concerns, in the region, and in the rest of the world, about how it, in particular, might revisit some of these historic questions. In the past, its leadership could at best berate the outside world for being ‘capitalist’ oppressors, belonging to the other side, enemies who would never come round. Now China is so plugged into the global economy, it can actually back up some of its words with hard action. Are we really so confident as we were a decade ago during the last cross-strait crises, that China won’t actually do something if Taiwan does move towards declarations of out and out independence? And is the nationalist strand in Japan so wedded to its pacific constitution now that it doesn’t look at the militarisation of China as a major issue that it will need to start doing something about, and build broader political support for this? North Korea may have started to co-operate again – but as the era of Kim Jong Il draws to a close, and issues of succession rise their heads, will it accept that radical economic reform is the solution to the separation of the Korea – or a final, all or nothing devastating attack?

Essentially, the question that remains unanswered is this: with so much prosperity, and with a clear dividend from years of peace, is it realistic to think that the issues above can just be tolerated, left on a shelf out of the way, to a day, in the future, when in a sense they wither away, and become less press

We are pleased to announce the launch of VerreTaal, an online database of Chinese literature in Dutch Translation:

VerreTaal is a collaboration between the Department of Chinese Studies and the Sinological Library at Leiden University and the Research Centre for Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Using English as the interface language, VerreTaal aims to provide a research tool for translation studies, (comparative) literary studies, (inter)cultural studies and area studies, Chinese studies and other academic fields – and for the general reader and library user.

The database lists Dutch-language, direct and relay translations of works originally written in Chinese. At present it includes book titles in poetry, fiction and non-fiction, and drama. Entries in multiple-author anthologies contain individual author names, story/essay titles and corresponding page numbers where available. In the near future, we hope to expand the database to include journal publications.

VerreTaal can be browsed by authors, translators, titles and subjects, or searched using traditional and simplified Chinese and Hanyu Pinyin. It has been tested on various platforms and browsers and is accessible free of charge at http://www.unileden.net/verretaal/.

Audrey Hajjini, Research Centre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong
Hanno Lecher, Librarian, Sinological Library, Leiden University
Maghiel vanCrevel, Professor of Chinese language & literature, Leiden University

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Dr Kerry Brown

Comment

History and the present in Asia

Kerry Brown

Announcement Wertheim Lecture 2008

Asia from Down Under: Regionalism and Global Cultural Change

By: Prof. Dr. Ian Ang (University of Western Sydney)

5 June 2008, in the Auditorium of the University of Amsterdam, 15:00 – 18:00

Globalisation has seen nation-states increasingly align themselves into regional blocs, perhaps the most prominent of which is the European Union. The formation of such transnational regions is based on geographical proximity and shared economic and political interests, but the very idea of a region, such as ‘Europe’, is underpinned by strongly held notions of cultural affinity. It is often cultural arguments and discourses – pertaining to identity, civilization, religion, even race - that determine regional inclusion and exclusion.

What does this mean for a country such as Australia and its place within (or outside of) the Asian region? As a Western nation-state in an overwhelmingly non-Western region, Australia holds a prime position for observing processes of global cultural change in a time when Asia - home of the two new economic powerhouses of China and India and of the world’s largest Muslim nation, Indonesia - is set to become the centre of the global force field. Australia’s complex and ambivalent relationship with Asia provides valuable insight, particularly for Western Europe, into the cultural manifestations of the gradual decentring of the West.

Ian Ang is Distinguished Professor of Cultural Studies and Australian Research Council Professorial Fellow at the Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney. She holds a doctorate from the University of Amsterdam, where she studied and worked from 1973 until 1990. She is the author of a number of books including Watching Dallas (1985), Desperately Seeking the Audience (1993), Living Room Wars (1996) and On Not Speaking Chinese (2001).

The Wertheim lecture is jointly organised by Asian Studies in Amsterdam (ASIA), the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS).
The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology

Gangtok, the capital of the Indian Himalayan state of Sikkim, is home to the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (NIT), India’s foremost centre for the study of Tibetan and Himalayan Buddhist culture. The Institute includes a museum, a Tibetan library and a general reference centre on Tibet and the Himalayas. Set in extensive grounds on a ridge at Deorali, to the south of central Gangtok, the main buildings are constructed in typical Tibetan Buddhist style, with the wall paintings of the veranda depicting the four celestial guardians linked to four directions in the four-world Mountain, Mount Menlou.

The Institute was established on land donated by the 11th Chogyal of Sikkim, Sir Tashi Namgyal, in memory of his late son Paljor Namgyal, and the foundation stone of the Institute was laid by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet on the 10th of February 1957. It was declared open by the then Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on the 1st of October 1958.

Since its inauguration, the Namgyal Institute has sponsored and promoted research on the religion, history, language, art and culture of the people of the Tibetan cultural area, which includes the Indian Himalayan state of Sikkim. Interested researchers and visitors are welcome, and the NIT welcomes and can facilitate scholarly research in relevant areas.

The Institute has published a scholarly journal, the Bulletin of Tibetology since 1954, along with numerous books over the years. The NIT’s library holds one of the largest collection of Tibetan works in the world outside of Tibet, as well as a museum of Tibetan iconography and religious art. The museum contains a collection of rare statues, ritual objects, traditional art objects, thangkas (painted, woven and embroidered scrolls) and ancient manuscripts in Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese and Lepcha (the language of one of Sikkim’s indigenous tribal groups). Among the most notable of the manuscripts are: the Prajna Paramita and Asatashastra written in Tibetan gold script, an 11th century palm-leaf manuscript of the Saratama Prajna Paramita by Ratnakara Shanti; and a 12th century Chinese manuscript of the Prajna Paramita Sutra that was brought from South Korea. The exhibition of statues and art objects is dominated by a majestic silver image of Manjushri – the Bodhisattva of knowledge – that was brought to the Institute from Tibet.

In the summer of 2002, the NIT’s current Director, Mr Tashi Densapa, undertook to expand the Institute, restructure its research wing and increase international collaboration. This is being done through the creation of new research programmes, lectures, seminars, exhibitions, fellowships, publications and collaboration with foreign scholars.

Among its new research programmes is a project to document the social history of Sikkim’s 60-odd monasteries and digitalise their textual holdings, while the Visual Sikkim project undertook to digitalise old and rare photographs of Sikkim, both in India and abroad. This has resulted in the creation of a digital image bank and a number of photographic exhibits at the NIT, currently the Institute is hosting an exhibition of photographs documenting the historical relations between Sikkim and Bhutan, which was opened by the Bhutanese ambassador to India in November 2007.

The Institute has also established a visual anthropology project in order to produce an enduring digital record of Sikkim’s vanishing indigenous and Buddhist cultures. Its first film, “Tingvong: a Lepcha village in Sikkim” has been screened at several ethnographic film festivals in Europe and Asia. Its first film, “Tingvong: a Lepcha village in Sikkim” has been screened at several ethnographic film festivals in Europe and Asia.

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Encompass: of local histories and global perspectives

Encompass students receive training in reading and working with Dutch source materials, as well as a broad introduction to histories that may be written by using these sources. They also have the opportunity to develop their general research skills. The programme stimulates students to develop a global outlook in their studies, and to use Dutch primary sources to write local and regional histories that go beyond the traditional colonial interpretations. This two- and three-year educational programme, which begins with a conversion year at the BA level, ultimately leads to an MA or MPhil degree. It is carried out in close cooperation with the Dutch National Archives, the Argo National Republic Indonesia in Jakarta, and several partner universities in Asia. For five consecutive years - from 2005 to 2010 - twelve scholarships are available annually for students from Monsoon Asia and South Africa. The first year commences with a one-month intensive Dutch language course, followed by semi-intensive language courses throughout the rest of the year. In addition, the students take courses in history and write a BA thesis.

As this goes to press, the students of the Encompass BA group are writing their theses. Subjects vary from concubines in the Dutch Indies between 1900-1910 to the social history of contemporary 21st century India. The academic background of the students is as diverse as their thesis subjects, but it is turn out, the two are not necessarily related. Many of the students seize the Encompass programme as an opportunity to get involved in new fields of study. An interview with four of the Encompass students reveals that one student has moved from urban history to the history of nationalism, another has switched disciplines from sociology to history and for a third, the Early Modern period is a whole new subject.

The primary sources used by students for their research are equally diverse and paint an excellent picture of the wealth of material that is available in and around Leiden: pictures in the collections of the KITLV (Royal Netherlands Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies), 17th century travel accounts in the Douma Room of the University Library; newspapers and other documents in the National Archives in The Hague are but a few examples of the sources that are currently used by the BA group. All students are excited about the proximity of so many sources, and intend to work on them even more in-depth during the MPhil phase of their programme.

However, using Dutch sources also means that the students have to master the Dutch language prior to going to the archives. For some, this has a complicated language’.


Guangzhou and Nagasaki compared

Evert Groenendijk

I n commemoration of 400 years of Dutch relations with Guangzhou (Canton), the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Guangzhou published an edited volume in 2004, written by Chinese and Dutch historians titled: Sailing to the Pearl River. Because the book was very well received, an academic follow-up on a comparative theme seemed a good idea. In close cooperation with scholars from Japan, China and the Netherlands it was decided to organise two international academic conferences – one in China in 2007, and one in Japan in 2009 – on the ancient port cities of Canton and Nagasaki, as well as their satellite cities Macao and Hirado.

The first of these two conferences, titled: Canton and Nagasaki Compared 1730 –1850. Dutch, Chinese, Japanese relations, was held between December 3-7, 2007, in Guangzhou and Macao. This conference was organised by the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Guangzhou, in cooperation with the Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, the Guangzhou Museum, the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Macao S.A.R. Government, and financially supported by Leiden University, the Univer-

City of Tokyo, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden. Some 25 scholars presented their research. Comparative studies of the port cities of Canton and Nagasaki, which both served as a window to the outer world during the early modern period of China and Japan, are few and far between, even though in the past both cities played similar historical roles as brokers of trade, information and culture with foreign powers. Coincidentally, Dutch East India Company servants were active in both cities for a very long time and kept diaries of their daily routine and dealings with the Chinese and Japanese merchants and officials. (The English translations of the diaries composed at the Dechema factory in Nagasaki have been published for most of the 17th and 18th centuries and are available at the Japan-Netherlands Institute, Tokyo and the Leiden History Department. The first Canton diary was recently published in Macao and is available at the Macao Cultural Institute.)

The conference started at the Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou. The three keynote speakers and co-organisers opened the conference on Monday morning: Professor Cai Hongsheng (Sun Yat-sen University) described Canton on Nagasaki and their respective hinterlands, Professor Leonard continued on page 46
The transactions of the conference will be published in the course of 2008. The second session was devoted to the French East Indies in the early Republican period. Miki of the University of Tokyo).

The differences in the daily life of the people representing the European Companies in Guangzhou and on Deshima are currently Director of Research for the Leiden University), and immigration aspects for Chinese travelling to Japan (Dr. Watanabe of Kyoto); the import of Chinese and Dutch books into Japan (Prof. Wim J. Boot of the State University of Utrecht, Joma landed in the Scheveningen High Security Penitentiary. August, Joma landed in the Scheveningen Blacklisted as a terrorist organisation. Somehow, I couldn’t dislike the fellow, all the more so since he confessed to his iso- lation among his semi-literate brothers in arms. Whenever one of them had business down the slope—buying food or cigarettes, arms. Whenever one of them had business

The differences in the daily life of the people representing the European Companies in Guangzhou and on Deshima (Nagasaki during the Napoleonic War, and Dr. Jan van Campen of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam commented on the extensive Chinese collections of late-18th century Dutch collectors.

The first theme was Control and administration of the (local) government. Papers includ- ed with a comparison of the founding histories of Macao and Hirado. Professor Haneda Masashi (University of Kitakyushu) focused on the fundamentally different roles that linguists played in both cities, and the collections of these pieces of art abroad. Ms. Ito Shiori (Chiba City Museum of Art) and Dr. Jiang Yinghe (Sun Yat-sen University) described the develop- ment of Kitakyushu) commented on the extensive Chinese collections of late-18th century Dutch collectors.

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On Friday, the role of Macao was placed within a somewhat broader time frame. Professor John E. Wills Jr. (University of Southern California) gave a short introduction on the early republican period.

Before setting sail for Macao where the second part of the conference was hosted, we spent Wednesday morning visiting the Guanghai Museum and Shuman Island, where foreign factories were established from 1583 onward, after big fires had destroyed the original buildings in Shishingan (or ‘Thirteen Factory Street’). En route to Macao, we vis- ited the old Humen Fort along the narrows of the Bocca Tigris, where ships used to pass on their way to Huanghai Anchorage.

In Macao the second part of the conference kicked off with the third theme: Acceptance and refusal of foreign thoughts: influence on people’s daily lives. Eight speakers presented their research on different aspects of ordinary life, trade, dangers etc.

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know about IIAS!

in Inner Mongolia they know about IIAS! I think we should capitalise on that. Now, under the new Director, and I and the board very much want him to support. We should try to elaborate more on IIAS’ potential, is the state of citizenship. People need is a kind of deep local knowl which indicates more or less an area in our world, in which we’re interested; there are a lot of dynamics directly interacting with interests in the West. So in terms of dialogue, its extremely relevant. Also to invest in this local knowledge. And really then language matters.

MO: To finish then, what words of advice would you have for people at the start of their career in the field of Asian Studies?

H: Go for it! I mean, this is the most exciting and most dynamic developments that are taking place and it’s your chance to experience all kind of vibrant changes and such rich dynamics. And it helps if you’ve been there, it helps if you’re back, you start to learn about you’re society.

the faces of many of them as they try tofluence our neighbours with their revolu- tionary spirit. And I think that we shouldenough to work for the patience of the standard wage, but as the woman who works for me put it, they then would starve because they are unwilling to work. And the people are desperately short of both work and cash. Alas, apart from words, these NPA’s also carry guns in an area that is basically in the springtime of life. As a result, Ithe country for the time being. My travel agent could still squeeze me in on one of the suddenly heavily booked KLM flights, and so I arrived as a refugee in Amsterdam on the 10th of September.

After being held incommunicado for seventeen days, Joma, or rather the procureu- sement he founded, went to the Philippines’ closest friend to take if the rebels wanted to put pressure on The Hague. Of course, at the time I was an adventurous, young anthropologist, I would not have minded to enjoy a few weeks of jungle hospita- lity, but now, in my retirement, I happily leave such experiences to those who still are in the Netherlands. I think its totally useless to try to

47

IIAS has a very clear role in terms of research, but in order to survive it needs to stay relevant and develop outside of research. We have the expertise to become a knowledge hub, we have the expertise to become the place for people to come to connect with other Asians, for informa- tion on Asia, but also its incredibly impor- tant for us to develop this role as a bridge between academia and the outside world. HSN: absolutely, I can only agree with that. This is one of the very attractive things. Because IIAS is not fully part of a university. It is the kind of liberty we have and that should be capitalised on as well.

MO: Asia’s going through a lot of changes at the moment and it’s a hot topic in the media and the world at large. China is in particular. Do you see this reflected in the research going on in the Netherlands and Europe?

HSN: There is this danger in the Nether- lands that we might be in the process of provincialising. That has to do with uni- versities because at the level of the universities it nows the Dears that decide what is most profitable and, based on market considerations, Asia is not relevant. It’s too small, it’s too far away and faculties think they should invest in multicultural diversity, that kind of thing. And its basical- ly focused on the Netherlands, and that is extremely dangerous. But there is very little we can do other than to engage universi- ties in these debates. What I’m really wor- ried about though is that there is a loss of the simple ability to learn a language. How many students today learn Indonesian, or for that matter how many are able to speak Thai? I think there is a considerable number that are still interested in China, that’s not my main worry, but how many are able to speak with ordinary people in India apart from in English? And that also has to do with the decline of Area Studies after the cold war. Area Studies was over, it was no longer necessary, except for the Middle East and Afghanistan of course, these hotspots.

AY: Do you think that there is a case now for Area Studies in terms of Asian Studies? Particularly in respect of the position of China and India?

MO: Even in Inner Mongolia they know about IIAS!

Among Neighbours

home to the longest running Mao-inspired insurgency in Asia

Niels Mulder reflects on his retirement in the Philippines, -

NETW ORK ASIA

IIAS can be a kind of friendly host for those debates, that’s very intriguing. That is an art, public intellectuals, those kind of wider that should be continued. And the way IIAS

建立 this Newsletter, a very impor-

tant means of communication and I think
developing in terms of research, there are

thought for the next couple of years it is our
cased. And that is a wonderful challenge. I

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define what Asia is, I mean people in Japan have no sense of belonging to people in Sri Lanka whatsoever, it is a Western construct which indicates more or less an area in our world, in which we’re interested; there are a lot of dynamics directly interacting with interests in the West. So in terms of dialogue, its extremely relevant. Also to invest in this local knowledge. And really then language matters.

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Programmes

Asia Design

This programme will consist of a number of individual projects related to graphic design - from classical graphical art and communication to the rapidly emerging fields of cyberculture (New Media, videogames, etc.) and animanga (anime and manga) in East Asia - and architectural design in Asian megacities. The projects address both the physical and social aspects of design.

Institutes involved: IIAS, Modern East Asia Research Centre (MEARC), Delft School of Design (DSD)

Sponsored by: IIAS and AsiaScope

Coordinator: Prof. Chris Goto-Jones and Dr Manon Osseweijer
c.goto-jones@let.leidenuniv.nl
m.osseweijer@let.leidenuniv.nl

Catalogue of Sanksrit manuscripts

In 1939, two centuries of 17th and 18th century Sanskrit manuscripts arrived at the Kern Institute, University of Leiden. This Gonda/IIAS project is preparing a scientific catalogue of the roughly 500 South Indian Sanskrit manuscripts written on palm leaves in ancient Indian scripts such as Grantha, Telugu, Malayalam, Nāgā and Nānditāgrām. Coordinator: Saraju 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 intermarriages continue to be seen as a form of the commodification of women, recent scholarship in intra-Asia cross-border marriages challenges this dominant view.

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

Energy programme in Central Asia - EPA

Established in September 2007, this programme addresses the domestic and geopolitical aspects of energy security for China and the European Union. The geopolitical aspects involve analysing the effects of competition for access to oil and gas resources and the security of energy supply among the main global consumer countries of the EU and China. The domestic aspects involve analysing domestic energy demand and supply, energy efficiency policies, and the deployment of renewable energy resources. Within this programme scholars from the Netherlands and China will visit each other's institutes and will jointly publish their research outcomes.

Institutes involved: Institute of West Asian and African Studies (IWAAS) of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Energy Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (IACSS), Graduate School of Economics and Business, University of Leiden.

Sponsored by: NWO, ASO and IAS

Coordinator: Dr Mehril Panizti Aminin
m.p.aminin@uva.nl

Illegal but licit: transnational flows and permisive polities in Asia - IBL

This research programme analyses forms of globalisation-from-below, transnational practices considered acceptable (licit) by participants but illegal but licit transnational flows.

Sponsored by: IIAAS and AsiaScope

Coordinator: Willem van Schendel
w.vanschendel@usa.nl

Socio-genetic marginalisation in Asia - SMAP

The development and application of new biomedical and genetic technologies have important socio-political implications. This NOW/ASSR/IIAS research programme 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, Nāgā and Nānditāgrām.

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

NEW: Searching for sustainability in Eastern Indonesian waters

The threat of biodiversity depletion calls for the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), especially in rich natural environments like the marine space of eastern Indonesia. Most approaches to the establishment of MPAs, however, are science-based. Several interconnected developments demand a constructive analysis of the societal impacts of a predominantly technical and science oriented approach to the establishment of MPAs around the world. This new programme focuses on MPAs in eastern Indonesia (Wakatobi, Komodo, Derawan, Raja Ampat) and will facilitate the exchange of Dutch-Indonesian, German and Australian researchers. The aims of the programme are to (1) engage in a methodological training workshop for the three Indonesian partners plus six of their colleagues/staff members and (2) to collectively write a research proposal (2009-2010) on the social-economic and governance conditions of Marine Protected Area development.

Sponsored by: KNW, IAS, Wageningen University, Australian Research Council, Center for Tropical Marine Ecology Bremen (ZMT), German Partner institutes: Wageningen University, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Reger Agricultural University (IPB), The Nature Conservancy-Murdock University (Perth, Australia), ZMT (Bremen, Germany)

Coordinator: Prof. Leontine Visser (WUR/IIAS) and Dr Manon Osseweijer (IIAS)
m.osseweijer@let.leidenuniv.nl

Networks

Ageing in Asia and Europe

During the 21st century it is projected that there will be more than one billion people aged 60 and over, with this figure climbing to nearly two billion by 2050, three-quarters of whom will live in the developing world. The bulk of the ageing population will reside in Asia. Ageing in Asia is attributable to the marked decline in fertility shown over the last 40 years and the steady increase in life-expectancy. In Western Europe, ageing populations developed at a slower pace and could initially be incorporated into welfare policy provisions. Currently governments are seeking ways to limit and contain state-funded social welfare and health care, including pensions systems, unleashing substantial public debate and insecurity. Many Asian governments are facing comparable challenges and dilemmas, involving both the state and the family, but are confronted with a much shorter time-span. This research programme, in short, sheds light on how both Asian and European nations are reviewing the social contract with their citizens.

Research network involved: Réseau de Recherche Internationale sur l’Age, la Citoyenneté et l’Intégration Socio-économique (REIACTIS)

Sponsored by: IIAAS

Coordinator: Prof. Carla Risseeuw
c.risseeuw@let.leidenuniv.nl

ABIA South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology index

The Annual Bibliography of India Archaeology is an annotated bibliographic database for publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. The project was launched by IIAAS 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.

Coordinators: Ellen Raven and Gorda Theuns-de Boor
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 authority in the 20th and early 21st centuries. This research programme analyses forms of globalisation-from-below, transnational practices considered acceptable (licit) by participants but illegal but licit transnational flows.

Sponsored by: NWO, IIAAS

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m.sleeboom-faulkner@sussex.ac.uk

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For details: www.iias.nl
Call for Panels and Papers

Korea

Think Asia!
Daejeon, Korea 6-9 August 2009

ICAS 6 will be hosted by the Chungnam National University (CNU), the Center for Asian Regional Studies (CARS) and Daejeon Metropolitan City and will be held in the Daejeon Convention and Visitor’s Bureau. The overarching theme is: Think Asia! More than 1,500 Asia Studies specialists are expected to come to Daejeon. This city is located in the heart of the Korean peninsula and successfully merges its long history of culture and tradition with leading research in science and technology.

Deadlines are:
- 15 October 2008: Submission of Individual Abstracts
- 15 October 2008: Submission of Organized Panels: organized by a group of different (national) backgrounds.
- 15 November 2008: Submission of Institutional Panels: constituted and sponsored by an institution, an association or a network.

Submission of abstracts and panels is possible as of 15 March 2008 at the ICAS website.

Please note that all abstracts and presentations should be in English. Submission of abstracts for panels and papers can be made through ICAS 6 registration forms available at http://www.icassecretariat.org

ICAS Book Prizes
For the third time the ICAS Book Prizes will be awarded in the categories: Humanities, Social Sciences, Best PhD and Colleagues’ Choice Award.
Deadline: 31 August 2008

ICAS Publications Series
A selection of the ICAS 6 papers will be included in edited volumes of the ICAS Publications Series at Amsterdam University Press.

Financial support
Financial support for travel and lodging will be made available to a selected number of PhD students and young academics.

Information
The International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) is one of the largest biennial gatherings for Asia scholars to meet and discuss new developments in the fields of the Human and Natural Sciences. Since 1998, ICAS has brought more than 5,000 academics from 60 countries together at five conventions.
For more information on ICAS 6 and requirements for participation, please visit http://www.icassecretariat.org
The aim of the conference is to reflect the international state of academic research on contemporary Chinese art and will therefore include a focus on methodological approaches. It is designed to provide a forum of vital exchange and to strengthen further international cooperation within this growing, yet largely undefined field.

We are very much looking forward to your answer and suggested topics in order to conceive the ideal call for paper. Further recommendations as well as suggestions for the conference are warmly welcome.

Please let us know your name, institutional affiliation, the title of your project, as well as a very brief outline of your theses (3-5 sentences).

Please send your proposal to: bigothilopenner@gmx.de

Chair of the Institute for East-Asian Art History at FU Berlin:
Prof. Jesang-Hye Lee-Kalisch

Waters in south and southeast Asia: interaction of culture and religion 3rd SSEASR conference
3 – 6 June 2009
Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

The 3rd SSEASR (South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion) conference on Waters in South and Southeast Asia: Interactions of Culture and Religion, co-sponsored as an IAHM Regional Conference, will be held in Denpasar from 3 – 6 June, 2009. The conference will be held in collaboration with Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) and Universitas Hindu Indonesia (UNHI), Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.

More information on the website: www.sseasr.org

Contact: Prof. I Wayan Rai, PhD, Rector, ISU Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

For more details please contact: Ms. Alyson ROZELLES at alysonrozelles@nus.edu.sg

Young academic research on contemporary Chinese art Conference, 2009
Free University, Berlin, Germany

For attention of all those working on aspects of contemporary Chinese art in the academic context.

With reference to an international conference, planned for the year 2000 at the Free University in Berlin, Germany, we are currently setting up a list of persons around the world, who are active in the academic research on contemporary Chinese art, with a special focus on graduate students writing their PhD in the field.

The 8th ICOPHIL is also coordinated with this year’s celebration of the Centennial of the nearby University of the Philippines which should add an additional festive air to the proceedings.

Although the date for submission of proposals is past, attendance is encouraged as the conference is open to the public.

For further information about the conference, registration cost and methods of payment, housing, and other relevant information, see the website maintained by the Secretariat (www.pssc.org.ph/ icophil/). For inquiries or further information, please contact: Bernardita R. Churchill, President, Philippine Studies Association.

The 8th ICOPHIL Secretariat
Philippine Social Science Center
Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman
1101 Quezon City
Philippines
Tel: 63-2-924-9701 or 63-2-924-1910
Fax: 63-2-922-9621
icophil@pssc.org.ph

Call for papers
Rethinking Urban-Rural Interactions in China’s Agricultural Development: Beyond the Urban Bias?

The 8th ICOPHIL in Manila, conference will be scheduled for July 23-26, 2008
PSS Center, Quezon City, Philippines

The Eighth International Conference on Philippine Studies (ICOPHIL) will be held on July 23-26 and is hosted by the Philippine Studies Association at the Philippine Social Science Center on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City. The Philippine Social Science Council serves as Secretariat. The ICOPHIL conference series is held once every four years at an international hosting institution and provides anyone working in any aspect of the study of the Philippines the opportunity to meet colleagues from around the world. Many friendships have been made or renewed and valuable collaborative projects have been launched thanks to contacts made at earlier ICOPHIL meetings. In 2004, the 7th ICOPHIL was hosted by Leiden University in The Netherlands where almost 270 scholars presented papers during seventy panel sessions. Looking ahead, in 2008 the 7th ICOPHIL will be hosted by Michigan State University in East Lansing.

This year’s conference theme is “Philippine Studies for the 21st Century: New Meanings, Critics, and Trajectories.” There are plans for over eighty panels, special sessions designated for plenary speakers, and evening cultural events. The organizers hope that this year’s ICOPHIL will provide a forum for scholars to reflect on Philippine realities in the new global era. If this goal is realized, the conference will reflect on the conceptual Philadelphia Studies and chart new directions for the 21st century.

The 8th ICOPHIL is also coordinated with this year’s celebration of the Centennial of the nearby University of the Philippines which should add an additional festive air to the proceedings.

Following the 16th and 17th CCP National Congresses convened in 2002 and 2007 respectively, the current Chinese leadership has given high priority to effectively address the serious human development challenges. Official discussions have been founded to disemphasise the exclusive pursuit of GDP growth and now also attach importance to social security and welfare, equity, social justice and redistribution of resources from different sectors, regions and social groups; sustainability, and equal sharing of development benefits by the Chinese people; represented in such discussions as campaigns as ‘building a harmonious society’, upholding the “scientific development view”, ‘people-centred and balanced development’, and ‘industry and rural agriculture’, and since 2006 the ‘construction of the new socialist countryside’ movement. New policy initiatives introduced in the 11th CCP Central Committee, sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, and Chongqing of an urban-rural integrated development programme, and various social protection schemes for rural-urban migrants across the country. Yet we may only be able to glean the gravity of the problems and the daunting nature of the tasks of integrating urban-rural development from the provisional official time table: full integration of urban and rural social welfare, for instance, is currently scheduled for 2020. Whether this timeline is realistic is probably less important than the longer-term effects of the new policies.

Against this backdrop and in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the historical turning point in China’s modern history – the 3rd Plenary Session of the 11th CCP Central Committee, ECAE/DC IX has launched the conference theme – Rethinking urban-rural interactions in China’s agricultural development: Beyond the urban bias? We invite Chinese indigenous academics and international scholars, development practitioners and those of diverse policy arenas to contribute thoughts, papers and panels around the broad theme as stated above. The wider aim and objectives of the conference involve not only a critical reflection on and rethink of China’s recent development trajectories entailing development strategies, policies and outcomes, but also, drawing on the above-mentioned conference theme to provide a comparative basis to compare with developed and other developing countries and regions of the world, consider similarities and differences between rural development and urban-rural divide or integration, the lessons China can learn from such a comparison, and what contributions that the Chinese experiences can make, theoretically, methodologically and empirically, to our understanding and knowledge of...
processes of development and change and what effects this can create on development policy and practice within China and beyond.

Topics under this broad conference theme may include the following:

1. Exploring theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding urban-rural relations and interactions, as well as their policy implications for urban-rural integration in China;
2. Historical experiences of agricultural and rural development in China and beyond;
3. Examining and comparing the differences and similarities of agricultural and rural development, industrialisation and urbanisation processes, and the dynamics of urban-rural interactions in the Chinese Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and the rest of the world and mutual lessons to be learned;
4. Charting and comparing the various aspects in respect of the complexities, diversities and outcomes of the urban-rural ‘divide’ or ‘integration’ across time and space in China drawing on empirical evidence;
5. Examining the theoretical, methodological, empirical and policy relevance of a risk perspective on agricultural and rural development or urban-rural integration;
6. Globalisation and its impact on local processes in China’s agricultural and rural development;
7. Examining the institutional and social contexts where urban-rural differences have been sustained, reproduced or reshaped in respect of resources and their (re)distribution, rights and entitlements, fiscal reforms, policies and practices, kinship, family, marriage and gender relations;
8. Livelihoods, rural-urban and rural-urban migration and linkages, rural-entrepreneurship, social capital, and social networks and connections in China.

When addressing the above topics, you may wish to discuss their specific aspects, for example, the market (of commodities, labour, credit and finance), property rights, ownership, the state (e.g. democratisation, civil society, governance, fiscal systems), society (e.g. poverty, inequality, social exclusion/inclusion, social support mechanisms, community organisation and participation), culture (e.g. changing values, norms and social practices, consumerism, democracy, and power, shifting identities), technology (e.g. emerging forms of agriculture, including biotech farming, agro-industries, agro-businesses, skill development, scale, investment, extension and innovation, as well as commercial integration), environment (e.g. environmental degradation and the impact on farming practices, ecologically sustainable farming and diversified management, organic agriculture and green products), social risk (e.g. its social context and public policy relevance, risk regulation and management regimes, and perceptions of and responses to societal and environmental (risky) trends), and the impact of climate change.

International Conference: Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual
9-29 September - 2-October 2008
Heidelberg, Germany

Collaborative Research Centre 619 highlights the relationship between ritual studies and ritual dynamics and breaks new ground in the research.

The Collaborative Research Centre 619 “Dynamics of Ritual” (SFB 619) at Heidel- berg University, the largest research institute in the world, focus on the subject of rituals, the ways they change and their inner dynamics. The center performs pure research with the aim of develop- ing theories with cross-cultural validity, and presenting explanatory models for the socio-cultural significance of ritual action, as for instance in the legitimisation of power or creation of identity, crisis therapy, or the maintenance of order. At present, nineteen projects are being conducted by over 50 researchers from the fields of Anthropology of South Asia, Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern History, Assyriology, Classical and Modern Indol- ogy, Comparative History and the History of East Asian Art, the History of South Asia, Islamic Studies, Medical Psychology, Musicology, and Theology. SFB 619's Spokesman Axel Michaels is Professor of Classical Indology and Managing Director of the Excellence Cluster “Asia and Europe” (www.scc.uni-hd.de). To alongside this, an interdisciplinary project is creating theories with an interdisciplinary per- spective, Asia will also constitute a major regional focus of the conference. The theme also extends from Hindu monu- ments of southern India from the early Middle Ages to the Colonial era, and from historical to contemporary China, Japan, and Asia specialists such as Johan- nes Bronkhorst (Leiden), Hermann Kulke (Kiel),

Chinese to English literary translation CELTIX PROJECT

A project to develop a comprehensive database on Chinese to English Literary Translation (CELTIX) has been launched by Research Centre for Translation at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) with the support of the Asia Pacific Cen- tre. Cooperating partners include among others the CUHK University Library Sys- tem, the Foreign Languages Press in Bei- jing and the Centre for Chinese Studies, National Central Library, in Taipei.

The database will be searchable in Eng- lish and Chinese (characters and Hanzi Pinyin); fields include author and transla- tor, source and translation titles, author and translator’s dates and gender, and bibliographical data on source and transla- tion publication; it will cover English translation publications worldwide of tradi- tional, modern and contemporary Chi- nese literature from China’s mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan; and access will be free of charge.

Users will include English-speaking teachers and students of Chinese as a foreign language; Chinese speakers learn- ing English; scholars in Chinese Studies, Translation Studies and Cultural Studies; Chinese-English translators, publishers and scholars; and general readers of Chi- nese literature in English translation.

Preparations are underway for a pilot project which will give full-scale operation to the end of 2008. Interested parties who would like to con- tribute as partner institutions or individ- ual translators are cordially invited to contact the project coordinator, Bonnie S. McDougall, or project manager, Audrey J. Heins, at the Research Centre for Translation (email: nct@cuhk.edu.hk).

A key note speaker from Indonesia will comment on these findings and reflect on land law and justice in the second plenary session. Honouring the work of the Leiden schol- ar Van Vollenhoven, the workshop on 28 August focuses on adat law. It revolves around the question of how the development of customary law in Indonesia and other developing coun- tries can benefit indigenous peoples. The evening programme will screen a film from around a recent Indonesian film comedy (with English subtitles) showing issues of land disputes and customary law in a modern urban setting.

On Friday 29, researchers, policy mak- ers, and activists will discuss issues of urban land management in the big cities in Indonesia.

The seminars and workshops, in co- operation with the International Institute forAsian Studies (IIAS), will include the launching books on law and politics in Indonesia.

For more information and updates as well as to register, visit http://www.vi.leidenuniv.nl/ and click on ‘events’.

A N N O U N C E M E N T S
Mr Jan Eerik Leppanen  
Socio-genetic Marginalisation in Asia Programme  
Sponsored by NWO  
Socio-genetic Marginalisation and Vulnerable Ethnic Groups in Southwest China  
1 September 2005 - 31 September 2008

Dr Melody LU  
Sponsored by MESRC  
IAS  
Gender, Migration and Family in East and Southeast Asia  
1 February 2006 - 1 September 2009

Dr Shao-li LI  
Department of History, National Chengchi University, Taiwan  
Sponsored by NSC  
Homo Alchemy: Japan’s Chemical Industry and the Transformation on the Culture of Body in Colonial Taiwan  
1 October 2008 - 31 March 2009

Prof. Kurt Radtke  
Research fellow within the Energy Programme Asia  
Sponsored by CASS/INAS and IAS  
The Impact of “Globalization” on Security Issues (in particular “Energy”) in East Asia  
1 October 2007 - 30 June 2008

Prof. Carla Rissieuw  
Leiden University, the Netherlands  
Ageing in Asia and Europe  
1 January 2008 - 1 January 2010

Prof. Hyun Joon SHIN  
Institute for East Asian Studies, Sungkyunkwan University, Korea  
IIAS Professor, holder of the European Chair of Korean Studies  
History and Present of Popular Culture in Korea from Inter-Alia_Perpective  
21 January 2008 - 21 January 2009

Dr Margaret Sleebom-Faulkner  
Socio-genetic Marginalisation in Asia Programme  
Sponsored by NWO  
Human Genetics and its political, social, cultural and ethical implications  
17 September 2001 - 1 September 2005

Ms SulI SU  
Socio-genetic Marginalisation in Asia Programme  
Sponsored by NWO  
1 September 2005 - 1 September 2008

Dr Takayo TAKAHASHI  
Waseda University, Japan  
Ethnic Identity of Okinoerabu Islanders in Japan  
1 January 2008 - 31 December 2008

Dr Thomas WIlkins  
Center for the Pacific Rim, University of San Francisco, United States  
Sponsored at the Branch Office Amsterdam  
30 May 2006 - 17 July 2007

Dr Massae KATO  
Socio-genetic Marginalisation in Asia Programme  
Japan in “Asia” in relation to the “West” as a Reference Group  
1 March 2005 - 1 September 2008

Prof. Len ANC  
Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney, Australia  
Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam  
Asia from Dowan: Under: Regionalism and Global Cultural Change  
1 May 2008 - 7 June 2008

Dr Peter Custers  
Religious Tolerance and Intolerance - The Historical Experience of Bangladesh  
1 May 2008 - 30 September 2008

Dr Silvia d’Intino  
Collège de France, Institut d’Extrême Orients, Paris, France  
Sponsored by the Gonda Foundation  
The Stanisławski Teatr in Poland  
1 June 2008 - 1 June 2008

Prof. Jan Houben  
Leiden University, the Netherlands  
Visiting Professor at the Indian Institute of Human Sciences  
1 January 2008 - 1 January 2010

Dr Alice McKay  
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, United Kingdom  
The Recovery and Reception of Classical Tamil Literature in late 19th and early 20th Century Tamilnadu  
1 December 2008 - 30 April 2009

Prof. Dranasa Kumari PATRA  
Socio-genetic Marginalisation in Asia Programme  
Sponsored by NWO  
Cross-cultural comparative Study of Genetic Research in India and Japan  

Dr Om Prakash  
Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, India  
Sponsored by the Van der Bergh-van Heemstede Foundation  
The Travelling World of the Indian Oceon, 1700-1800  
27 June 2008 - 27 July 2008

Dr Ellen Raven  
Leiden University, the Netherlands  
Sponsored by the Gonda Foundation  
South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaeology Index (ABIA)  
1 June 2009 - 1 June 2009

Ms Rituparna ROY  
From across the Shadow Lines: Tracing the Trajectory of Bengali-Hindu Refugees in the Novels of Amaita Ghosh  
1 January 2008 - 31 December 2008

Dr Markus Schleiter  
Sponsored by the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung  
Localised Statehood: Social and Cultural Practices of a “Tribe” Development Project in India  
1 April 2008 - 30 September 2008

Prof. Alexander Stolarov  
Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, Russian Federation  
Annotated Database of Early Medieval North Indian Copper Plate Grants  
6 October 2008 - 14 November 2008

Mr Vincent Toumier  
Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris, France  
Sponsored by the Gonda Foundation  
Enriching an Ongoing Study on the textual History of Mahaviha  
1-138 and the Settlement of a specific Conception regarding the Career of Bhadradatta  
1 December 2008 - 30 April 2009

Dr Rajesh Venkatasubramanian  
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, India  
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The Recovery and Reception of Classical Tamil Literature in late 19th and early 20th Century Tamilnadu  
1 October 2008 - 31 December 2008

Dr Dipika Mukherjee  
Negotiating Languages and Fencing Identities: Transcultural-Indian Women in the Netherlands  
1 December 2008 - 1 January 2009

Dr Barbara Andaya  
Asian Studies Program, University of Hawaii, United States  
Which also Bequeath Fruit: Christian Minorities in Southeast Asia, 1711-1945  
29 May 2008 - 28 August 2008

Dr Greg Bankoff  
School of Asian Studies, University of Auckland, New Zealand  
Cultures of Caring: Community and Natural Hazard in the Philippines  
1 September 2004 - 31 August 2008

Dr Mathias Diederich  
University of Klaatschum, Swedich Development of Islamic political parties in Post-Soviet Indonesia  
10 July 2008 - 10 August 2008

Dr Michele Ford  
The University of Sydney, Australia  
In the Shadow of Singapore: The Limits of Transnationalism in Insular Riau  
1 January 2008 - 1 January 2010

Prof. Mashudi Kader  
School of Humanities, University Sains Malaysia, Malaysia  
IIAS Professor, holder of the European Chair of Malay Studies  
Sponsored by Ministry of Education in Malay  
The Morphology and the Movemental Consequences in the Spirit of Classical Malay  
1 October 2006 - 1 October 2008

Dr Nico Kaptain  
Leiden University, the Netherlands  
Islam and State in the Netherlands in East Indies: The Life and Work of Sayfud Uthminn (1822 - 1914)  
1 May 2006 - 1 May 2009

Dr Loren Leons  
Center for Asian Political Science Transformation Studies, University of Wollongong, Australia  
In the Shadow of Singapore: The Limits of Transnationalism in Insular Riau  
1 January 2008 - 1 January 2010

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Negotiating Languages and Fencing Identities: Transcultural-Indian Women in the Netherlands  
1 December 2008 - 1 January 2009

Dr Nathan Porsh  
Sponsored by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP)  
Islamic Education, Secular Education and Civil Society in South Thailand  
1 March 2007 - 31 August 2008

Prof. Hein Stienhauer  
Department of Southeast Asian Languages and Cultures, Leiden University, the Netherlands  
Ethnolinguistics with a special Emphasis on Southeast Asia  
1 September 1998 - 1 September 2008

Dr Inna Morozova  
Moscow State University, Russian Federation  
Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam & Leiden  
Sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung  
Conflict, Security and Development in the post-Soviet Era: Towards regional economic Cooperation in the Central Asian Region  
24 April 2005 - 31 December 2008

Dr Malih P. Aminih  
Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam & Leiden  
Programme Coordinator of Energy Programme Asia  
Sponsored by KNAW/CASS and IAS  
Domestic and Geopolitical Energy Security for China and the EU  
1 September 2007 - 1 September 2010

Prof. Wim Boot  
Leiden University, the Netherlands  
Japan in “Asia” in relation to the “West” as a Socio-genetic Marginalisation in Asia Programme  
1 March 2005 - 1 September 2008
**International Conference Agenda**

**May 2008**

22 - 23 May 2008
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Indonesia ten years after (1998-2008) conference
convenor(s): Oost Indisch Huis, University of Amsterdam
organized by KITLV/ASIA & Inside Indonesia
KITLV@KITLV.nl
www.kitlv.nl

28 May 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
IAS Fellow Symposium symposium
organized by IIAS
contact: Saskia Jans
s.jans@let.leidenuniv.nl

**June 2008**

2 - 4 June 2008
Bonn, Germany
Media in Peacebuilding and conflict prevention conference
organized by Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum
g20@die-world.de

3 - 6 June 2008
Bali Island, Indonesia
3rd SEEASAR conference: Water in South and Southeast Asia: Interaction of Culture and Religion conference
organized by SEEASAR, ISI and UNHI
secretariat@seeasar.org
www.seeasar.org

13 - 15 June 2008
British Columbia, Canada
41st Annual Conference of Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast conference
convenor(s): H. Tyedmers organized by Centre for Asia-Pacific initiatives, University of Victoria, Canada
tyedmers@uvic.ca
http://capiconf.uvic.ca/index.php?cp=3

16 - 17 June 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
Secularization and Changing Religiosity: Cases from Taiwan and the Netherlands workshop
convenor(s): Prof. Hsueh-yuan Chiu organized by IIAS
contact: Martina van den Haak m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.ias.nl

21 - 22 June 2008
Liverpool, United Kingdom
14th ASEASUK Conference conference
organized by John Moores University
contact: Dr. Ben Murtagh bm10@sussex.ac.uk

26 - 27 June 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
ISMED10 conference
convenor(s): Dr. Marian Klamer organized by IIAS
contact: Martina van den Haak m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.ias.nl

28 June 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
International Workshop on Minority Languages in the Malay/Indonesian Speaking World workshop
convenor(s): Dr. Marian Klamer organized by IIAS
contact: Martina van den Haak m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.ias.nl

30 June - 3 July 2008
Nantes, France
3rd World Forum on Human Rights conference
convenor(s): International Convention Center organized by Permanent International Secretariat Human Rights and Local Governments
secretariat@picdh.org
www.picdh.org

**July 2008**

1 - 3 July 2008
Melbourne, Australia
17th Bannial Conference: Is this the Asian century conference
convenor(s): Matika Vicius organized by ASAA/Monaah University
http://www.secureregistration.com/Asia

10 - 12 July 2008
Verona, Italy
Seventh ESPFO Conference: Putting People First: Intercultural Dialogue and imagining the Future in Oceania conference
organized by Università di Verona
contact: Sigrid Hafner
Sigrid.Hafner@formazione.univr.it

**August 2008**

8 - 9 August 2008
Bandung, Indonesia
Creative communities and the making of place conference
convenor(s): Organizing Committee, Arte-Polisi organized by Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB)
contact: Dr. Woorjantari Soedaranono artepolisi@at.itb.ac.id
www.at.itb.ac.id/arte-polisi

15 - 18 August 2008
Hanói, Vietnam
The Harvard Project for HPAIR 2008 Asia-Domestic Conference conference
convenor(s): Harvard University Cambridge, MA organized by Harvard University
http://hpair.org
http://www.hpair.org

**September 2008**

1 - 5 September 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
The 12th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeology (EurASEA) conference
convenor(s): Maudie Kloöke organized by IAS
contact: Martina van den Haak m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.ias.nl

21 - 24 August 2008
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
HPAIR Business Conference 2008 conference
convenor(s): Harvard University Cambridge, MA organized by Harvard University
http://hpair.org
http://www.hpair.org

29 - 30 August 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
Empires and emporia: the Orient in World-Historical Space and Time conference
convenor(s): Jos Gommans

organized by Leiden University
contact: r.wenema@let.leidenuniv.nl

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1 - 5 September 2008
Leiden, Netherlands
The 12th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeology (EurASEA) conference
convenor(s): Maudie Kloöke organized by IAS
contact: Martina van den Haak m.van.den.haak@let.leidenuniv.nl
www.ias.nl

1 September - 1 November 2008
Bangkok, Thailand
The 10th International Conference on Thai Studies conference
organized by Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University
contact: Anucha Thirakanont

organized by Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University

18 - 21 September 2008
Washington, D.C., United States
Central Eurasian Studies Society Ninth Annual Conference (2008) conference
convenor(s): Center for Eurasian, Russian & East European Studies organized by Georgetown University, Washington D.C.
CEES@muisc.edu

19 - 22 September 2008
Buggia, Malta
The Social Capital Foundation (TSCF) conference
convenor(s): Dolmen Resort Hotel
organized by TSCF Belgium conference@socialcapital-foundation.org
www.9tsocialcapital-foundation.org

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