Economically and politically, Asia’s increasing importance has led some to see the 21st century as the Asian century. One of the major factors fuelling Asia’s remarkable growth is urbanisation. Gregory Bracken is the guest editor of The Focus, which zeroes in on Urbanisation in East Asia.
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The Focus Urbanisation in East Asia

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As guest editor Gregory Bracken points out, Asia is one of the fastest growing regions in the world. Economically and politically the region’s increasing importance has led some to see the 21st century as the Asian century. We are certainly likely to see an increasing shift…

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Despite architecture and the built environment confronting all of us in our daily lives, writes Leslie Sklair, they have received little attention in discussions of globalisation, capitalism or postcolonialism. Certain types of architecture can be hegemonic in a class sense…

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Historically, China has been culturally multivalent, with a heterogeneous range of cultures operating within the larger paradigm of the country as a whole. Jacob Dreyer explores this tension which is best realised in the Chinese coastal metropolises, Shanghai and the inland ‘northern capital,’ Beijing…

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IIAS in the new era

This first Director’s Note gives me the opportunity to introduce the Newsletter’s readers to some of the new initiatives IIAS plans to undertake in the coming years.

An important point is that all IIAS members share the sense that the Institute’s original mission—of initiating and facilitating innovative research in the study of Asia and creating new academic networks; supporting initiatives that address new themes and transcend national, regional and disciplinary boundaries; operating in collaboration with cultural and political institutions that focus on Asia; seeking strategic partners to set up new research partners; investing in talented researchers in the humanities, arts, social and environmental sciences; enabling young researchers in developing new projects—as is relevant as before, and that moving forward, this should continue to inspire our actions. As in the past, IIAS wishes to operate as a clearing house linking together people and communities sharing an interest in/on Asia, exposing scholars to the wider world and facilitating relations between scholarship and society at large. Since the years of the institute’s creation, however, IIAS’s global environment has changed tremendously. While it must keep its balance between local and global reaches, with the Netherlands and Europe as its base and Asia its focus, the Institute’s view is one of Asia as a global and dynamic actor, with links, ramifications and expertise shared across continents, from North America to Africa, the Middle East, and other world regions. In practical terms, IIAS must recognize this increased Asian prominence while taking into account the disparities that exist within the Asian region itself, and the vibrancy of transnational, intra- and inter-regional trends (in which European, African, American and Asian interests are more interwoven and interdependent than ever).

This global trend is taking place amidst a perceived crisis in the traditional Humanities and Social Sciences at universities in the West, with the Humanities often devalued and Asian Studies questioned amidst a market-orientated environment privileging ‘useful’ and quantifiable knowledge that can be turned into ‘products’ in a context where the distinction between universities and informal learning is becoming blurred with TV, Internet, etc. aimed at a more multiformal global public. At home, IIAS faces a trend towards decentralization between and within universities, and centralization of funding agencies, with increased competition for reduced funds.

IIAS’s answer to this new environment is to enhance its Asian relevance by increasing its visibility and focus. We want to do so by furthering IIAS’s institutional identity through the originality of its programmes and activities, its position as an independent, flexible, small institution, built on global networks, mutually-beneficial collaborative partnerships and well-targeted quality services, can earn IIAS the support of its various members, partners and stakeholders, its prime beneficiaries. Concretely, we aim to do so through well-targeted, mobilizing, programmatic thematic clusters in phase with contemporary Asian currents; through strengthened activities and services, with more internal coherence and tighter adherence to the general strategy; and through reinforced networks with strategically selected partners and initiatives in Asia, Europe/Netherlands and elsewhere.

Because the present Newsletter’s Focus section deals with one of IIAS’s three programmatic initiatives (Asian cities), I propose to briefly introduce them. All are built around the notion of social agency. Future activities, including fellowships, will be organized along these topical lines. The aim is not to reinforce networks with strategically selected partners and while contributing to forging new social consciousnesses. Contrary to still pervasive Western assumptions, until recently translated in development-related international programmes, this central role of the ‘urban’ in many regions of Asia is far from new. Cities and urban cultures have long been a feature of Asian history, with related issues of flows and fluxes of ideas, peoples and goods, of cosmopolitanism, metissage and connectivity at its core, framing the existence of vibrant ‘civil societies’ and micro-cultures of contestation.

BAS wishes to explore this longstanding Asian urban ‘tradition’, by linking the various elements of city cultures and societies, from the ancient period to modern times (colonial and post-colonial), into a broad multi-disciplinary corpus that can actively contribute to the development of Asian cities today. Through its fellowships, BAS aims to engage social scientists and scholars in the humanities—its traditional ‘clients’—together with activists, policymakers and city practitioners. The objective is to map out the contours of a new, integrated ‘Asian city knowledge’ rooted in the life and development of the cities themselves.

Cluster 2: Heritage and Social Agency in Asia

The general discourse on ‘heritage’ is a contested one. Whether articulated in the ‘Western’ or ‘Asian’ contexts, from civil societies or from states, they cover different—and some-time contradictory—definitions. Initially a Europe-originated concept associated with architecture, it evolved to mean a diversity of cultures and values, with the assertions of material and immaterial heritages (rather than the artificial dichotomy of ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’), and the importance of defining one’s own identity or identities vis-à-vis those of others. It also carries with it the subversive notion of local ‘ownership’, and therefore, social agency. In Asia, the notion of heritage is often associated with the construction of post-independence nation-state models and the definition of national ‘traditions’ and ‘authenticity’, with the idea of a pre/post colonial historical continuity. In similar fashion, the notion of ‘heritage’ and ‘memory’ became central to a number of post-imperial European states and intellectual circles.

This thematic cluster aims at addressing the variety of definitions associated with heritage and their implication for social agency, including those currently questioned of ‘national heritage’ or ‘shared heritage’. The wish is to focus on perceived ‘endangered’ local cultural heritages: languages, religious practices, crafts and art forms, as well as material vernacular heritage—issues increasingly prevalent in Asia’s fast-transforming landscapes with the affirmation of multiple voices and identities. The cluster also aims at directly engaging Asian and European scholars, artists, intellectuals and other ‘social educators’ in a constructive ‘civil society to civil society’ dialogue.

Cluster 3: Global Asia

IIAS wishes to push the academic understanding of various processes of globalization through three specific objectives: by challenging the euro-centricity of much of its literature and the rehabilitation of the central role of Asia and, by extension, other regions artificially sidelined by this literature—stressng notions of fluidity and interconnectivity that transcend existing delineated global regions; by countering the current tendency privileging contemporary processes of globalization over historical cases; by going beyond the ‘selfish’ knowledge-gathering process traditionally imbedded in Western academia, by engaging in several collaborative educational capacity-building initiatives with the aim of ‘multi-locating’—and thus enriching—the field of Asian studies.

Tackling these orientations should help develop a realistic comparative understanding of globalization processes and with them, the role of Asia in both time and space, thus avoiding the risks of ‘exceptionalisms’ and ‘exclusiveness’ that abound. Likewise, and without such exceptionalism, we wish to assert the constructive role European intellectual institutions can play in this global redistribution process. The aim is to provide insight into some of the cultural-historical processes associated with knowledge production and circulation as they affect patterns of globalization. Here too, the objective is to encourage interaction between disciplines, cultural and social practices, in the form of renewed trans-regional synergies at both academic and practical levels.

Again: welcome to IIAS!

Philippe Peycam
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With the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean War this summer, we are once again reminded of unresolved Cold War tensions. The March 26 sinking of a Republic of Korea (ROK)1 military ship, the Cheonan, with 46 of the crew found dead or still missing, has provided additional fuel for inter-Korean conflict while the current Lee Myun-bak administration has deliberately chosen a more conservative approach than its predecessors towards Pyongyang. While evidence strongly suggests, and global opinion largely concurs, that a North Korean torpedo caused the Cheonan sinking, little substantial evidence has arisen regarding whatever rationales may have been behind such a move.

**Cheonan Chronology**

Shortly after 9pm on March 26th the South Korean ship Cheonan split in two and sank off the Western coast of the Korean peninsula near Baengnyeong-do and the Northern Limit Line (NLL). Almost immediately the South Korean government claimed that the North was responsible. An investigation report released on May 20th by the Joint Civil-Military Investigation Group (JCIG) indicated that a CHT-G3D North Korean torpedo caused a non-contact explosion approximately three metres from the Cheonan’s gas turbine room. The same day, North Korea’s National Defense Committee denied involvement. Shortly thereafter a critical minority both within South Korea (such as the NGO People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy/PSD) and abroad questioned the findings, claiming a lack of transparency in the investigation and that inconsistencies and scientific testing did not match Seoul’s claims.2 Similarly and consistent with traditionally diverging North Korean policies, liberal and conservative parties debated the cause of the sinking and China’s potential role in restraining future actions.3 In July, the United Nations condemned the Cheonan sinking, however fell short of assigning blame. Meanwhile, the North Korean government never claimed any involvement.

While the Cheonan has received much attention internationally, inter-Korean military skirmishes are not uncommon. In December 1998, the ROK intercepted a North Korean vessel attempting to land near Yeonpyeong over six days, culminating in an exchange of fire leaving both sides with casualties. In June 2009, a South Korean fishing boat was captured after crossing the maritime boundary near Yeonpyeong. A 20 minute naval battle occurred in June 2002, leaving a damaged DPRK vessel and a sunken ROK vessel. In November of the same year, a North Korean naval vessel crossed into ROK waters and was later fired on by ROK navy. Last year a navy skirmish of the coast of Daechong Island left a North Korean ship severely damaged and 10 crewmen dead while the South Korean vessel and crew remained unharmed. Furthermore, during the apex of recent inter-Korean conflict, a southern fishing boat was captured by North Korea this August.

Assuming that North Korea was at fault for the sinking – which is the Western consensus with approximately three-quarters of South Koreans concurring – there are several possible rationales. First, the Cheonan sinking could be connected to the crisis of succession, with next generation leadership (e.g. Kim Jong Il’s youngest son, Kim Yong-un) or a faction within the government attempting to secure their position by being aggressive against the South. The combination of the strength of the military (believed to be the fifth largest in the world) and the ideological foundation of the party has prevented state collapse so far and most analysts expect the next generation of leadership to maintain a bellicose stance towards both South Korea and the US. The potential succession by a member of the National Defense Commission (NDC) may encourage small but high profile shows of strength. Similarly, the support of the military would be especially necessary if Kim Jong II’s son takes the helm, as he has no direct military experience nor a long period of tuition for accession in the way that Kim Jong Il had from his father, Kim II Sung. With the First朝鲜 Workers’ Party (KWP) delegates’ conference in 44 years scheduled for September, would-be successors have a further incentive to shore up support by maintaining an aggressive stance towards the ROK. The sinking could also be viewed as revenge for the Daechong naval encounter with the ROK in November 2009. In addition, a rogue military officer may have acted without higher orders, forcing North Korea to respond. Finally, the counterintuitive intent may be to persuade the ROK to restart aid and investment programmes largely reduced under the Lee Myung-bak administration.

**Changing directions?**

Some may view the Cheonan as a watershed event, limiting the possibilities of rapprochement. Even liberal parties within South Korea have toned down calls for a return to the engagement under the ‘Sunshine Policy’. The Cheonan incident has also encouraged military reform within South Korea to better combat low intensity asymmetric challenges. However, none of this resolves the underlying problems of North Korean insecurity or persuading North Korea’s traditional backers – mainly China but to a lesser extent Russia – from altering their stances.

The United States has consistently dwelled in employing economic sanctions towards North Korea to coerce more desirable behaviour. Not only has this largely failed in other situations (e.g. Cuba and Iran) but in the North Korean case it may potentially increase North Korea’s reliance on China. Chinese officials have been reluctant to support North Korean belligerence, yet at the same time have encouraged economic reforms and cooperation that could prevent regime collapse. By the 1990s, China provided North Korea most of its rule and consumer goods and nearly half of its food supply.4 With growing joint development agreements and meetings with military officials between Beijing and Pyongyang, American sanctions may have actually strengthened the North’s resolve and moved China from a reluctant supporter towards more than superficial relations. Chinese goals appear fairly straightforward: maintaining some sense of stability within the North Korean regime.5 The potential split only for military conflict but a collapsed North Korean state leading to a massive influx of refugees into China, as well as the potential of a US-backed ROK approaching the Chinese border is of great concern to China and thus actions which prop up the government remain in their national interest. One should not be surprised, then, that China has refused to assign blame to the Cheonan sinking to North Korea for fear of disrupting a government already on edge.

Whereas the US has consistently linked denuclearisation to the elimination of sanctions and the establishment of diplomatic relations, this fails to address that each party within the Six Party talks, other than a vague desire of regional security, have very differing goals. Instead, the US should encourage joint Korean economic programmes which potentially restrict North Korean actions while limiting growing Chinese influence. While one should never reward bad behaviour, the political costs of establishing formal liaisons, and thus encouraging future talks for formal recognition, outweigh the potential costs of increased conflict. Furthermore, instead of continuing the traditional path of sanctions, the US should continue the so far successful policy spearheaded by the Treasury Department of targeting North Korean shell companies abroad by tying host country assistance to future economic cooperation. So far such leverage has encouraged, including Vietnamese, to voluntarily target suspect companies so as to not damage growing relations with American firms. By encouraging economic stability in North Korea while also restricting illicit activities abroad, the US can reaffirm their commitment to South Korea and potentially encourage progress on stalled talks.

**Notes**

1. For this paper, the terms South Korea, Republic of Korea, and Seoul will be used interchangeably as will North Korea, dPRK, and Pyongyang for North Korea.


The participation of girls in the global labour market is lower than that of boys. As a consequence, there is a lack of qualitative data. Anna Ensing studied working girls in Dhaka, Bangladesh. She documented their activities and related hazards and studied the way working girls themselves perceive their position in society. The research results make clear that working girls live with three disadvantages: they are poor, female and young. These three factors reinforce each other and determine the girls’ position in society.

Anna Ensing

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Working girls in Dhaka, between public and private space

ACCORDING TO ESTIMATIONS from the International Labour Organization (ILO), female children are less frequently employed in economic activity but they are also less likely to be attending school and more likely to do household chores (ILO 2006; Buvinic et al. 2007). Most debates on child labour, however, have left the specific problems of the girl child unanswered. With the exception of prostitution and child domestics, research has tended to focus on male child labour.

In 2009, the Iloewoc Foundation conducted an anthropological study on working girls in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to gain insights about their participation in the labour market and the consequences of this work.1 The focus of the study was on three main groups: girls working in home-based industries, girls working in the public domain, and girls working in the formal industries.

The Bangladeshi law allows children to work in these ‘family enterprises’ and does not regularly employ hired workers’. Home-based jobs need not in themselves be considered hazardous, but they are often combined with household chores, usually the responsibility of women and girls. The real workload depends on the combination of work in home-based industries and household chores, which can in some cases be excessive and thus harmful for girls.

One of the main reasons why girls work is the difficult economic circumstances. Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries, such as the less relative of the family’s income earner, can be a direct cause for a child to start working. In cases of poverty, girls are more likely to be employed at home, while boys work outside.

Girls are mostly found working in the home because of cultural gender roles, which define the home as the proper place for women (Fahmy 1985). Especially unmarried underage girls tend to be involved in activities that restrict them to the private sphere (see also Naved et al. 2007). The girls agree that the home is the best place for them, and that ‘a safe job is at home’. In addition to safety, status and respect also play a role: an unmarried girl’s presence in the public domain could threaten her family’s honour. Girls consider a ‘good daughter’ absolutely crucial for girls, which is best demonstrated by socially acceptable behaviour (Joseph 1997).

Working in the public domain

Some girls, however, were nevertheless found working outside the home. We distinguished three main activities: scavenging, serving and begging. Although most girls do a bit of everything, working in the public domain can be explained by extreme poverty, which negates most social norms. Daughters will only be sent to work outside the home when parents have no alternatives. Thus, girls working outside their homes come from extremely poor families or they live without their (direct) family.

Working hours vary and are flexible for most street jobs but conditions are harsh and all jobs on the street are poorly paid. Brick-chipping and waste collection are harmful to health and most other activities are exhausting. The girls complained of the dirt, people are disgusted by them and this damages their self-esteem. Adolescent girls are particularly concerned about their physical appearance, mainly because they know they should be getting married soon.

Working in home-based industries

The growth of the Ready Made Garments (RMG) industries in Bangladesh in the 1980s and 1990s attracted large numbers of women and girls. However, threats of a boycott by many thousands of the very young girls were fired (see Bissell 2004). Today, girls start working in the factories as assistants at 14 years old. There are many hidden factors, such as operators. Girls generally approve of garment work because of the relatively good pay and safety measures.

However, the working conditions of women in particular are mostly in contravention of labour laws (see for example Nielsen 2005; AMRF Bangladesh & CCE The Netherlands; 2009; Hoon 2009), and the working conditions of underage girls are even more so.

Girls between 14 and 18 are legally allowed to work in factories, but only for a maximum of five hours per day and not more than five days a week. In practice, however, they work the same amount of hours as adult women. Because it is fulltime, a garment job cannot be combined with education, in an environment that is not favourable for the girls’ health (headaches, backaches, etc.) and we also documented cases of verbal abuse, physical punishments and sexual harassment. Girls are scared of their supervisors because of their abuse of power. Thus, despite the relative safety and freedom from domestic constraints, factory work is harmful for the health, morals and development of adolescent girls.

The girls’ view: three burdens

Poverty is the main problem for working girls and the foremost reason for having to work. The girls argue that rich girls, contrary to poor working girls, can go to a good school, they can eat all they desire, they don’t have to work at home. They don’t need to leave their relatives in the countryside and they don’t have to live in a slum. Furthermore, rich girls are not exposed to verbal abuse; they are more protected and respected by their environment.

In addition to being poor, working girls suffer because they are female. Males are favoured in Bangladeshi culture because daughters will be married and leave the home, while sons continue to bring benefits (income and a wife) to the family (Fahmy 1992). Girls are more often controlled by their families; they have to be more responsible and they are permitted less fun. Although working boys also suffer maltreatment, working girls endure more sexual harassment and disrespect.

The third threat to these girls is their young age. They feel that adult and married women live better lives than young girls; once married, they will not be bothered anymore, they will be respected by employers and other people and they can go outside without problems. Being older and being married improves safety and less vulnerability.

The three burdens reinforce each other: poverty forces girls into situations that conflict with gender roles and age norms but also denies them protection from society’s judgement and abuse.

Working girls in Dhaka, especially from 12 years onwards, take great responsibility for their own lives. Within the constraints, they have agency. They want to solve their problem and their surrounding difficulties. Deprived in their decision that the working girls cannot make for themselves. Girls start to work when their families need the support; they continue to work because they cannot solve their family’s problems any other way. Similarly, most girls choose to keep quiet when harassed out in public because raising their voice is a form of agency incongruent with the cultural norms for girls’ behaviour. And this would provoke worse reactions. Society’s structural constraints clearly limit the girls’ agency in these cases.

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Notes

1. See www.irewoc.nl for more studies on Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal.

The research project was financed by Plan Netherlands.

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The effeminacy of male beauty in Korea

Whether on TV or on the cinema screen, on billboards or in a shop window in a South Korean downtown shopping district, over the past few years a new trend in the styling of Korean male models and mannequins has emerged: despite their often chiselled physiques, the men use foundation and lip gloss, pluck their eyebrows, wear longish, wavy hairstyles, combine white garments with brightly coloured accessories, and generally present themselves both verbally and non-verbally in a soft and gracious, arguably vain fashion that, until recently, could have been neither common nor socially accepted.

Roald Malliangkay

ANY WRITER’S (or, for that matter, reader’s) judgement of what constitutes ‘effeminacy’ will, of course, be shaped by his or her culturally established views on gender roles. And, as is true for beauty, while one’s notions of masculinity and femininity may be culturally prescribed, ultimately any judgement as to what is beautiful or what is effeminate will be made on the basis of not only one’s surrounding culture or cultures but, subjectively, on the basis of complex internal factors, both conscious and unconscious. This writer claims no exception to this rule. Still, in Korea, where beautiful male pop icons are now commonly referred to as kkonminam (klik = flower; man = handsome man), Korean male beauty has, by any standard of judgement, taken on a distinctly effeminate quality.

Ambiguity surrounding notions of effeminacy hardly represents the only tricky issue here. Another involves the difficulty inherent in demarcating anything as the sole province of Korean popular culture. Because of the Internet and the ease of travel and communication, it has become increasingly difficult to define many aspects of popular culture as belonging to or originating in a single culture. Especially in the areas of design and styling, ideas are today shaped and redefined in ways that are increasingly homogenised and transnational. For the agencies of many Korean stars the lack of distinctiveness has become a deliberate factor in marketing their products overseas. Several popular boy and girl bands have one or more Chinese or Japanese members whose nationality cannot be easily identified based on their appearance alone. But they allow the inclusion of Chinese or Japanese lyrics, and they may guarantee an even larger foreign fan base, as well as more overseas support for actions against copyright infringement.

As a result of the homogenisation, a nation’s popular culture, as a unique, freestanding entity, has become almost impossible to circumscribe. Even so, it remains inevitable that nationalism as a unique, freestanding entity, has become almost impossible to argue that the Wave could significantly boost South Korea’s ‘soft power’. A notion immediately embraced by Korean policymakers.

Meanwhile, although a fair number of the actors appearing in the movies and TV dramas sold abroad were middle-aged, the Wave continued to be driven by young stars. Their often surgically ‘improved’ faces came to be used in ads for fashion and cosmetics-related products across Asia, with the biggest male stars also appearing on memorabilia of all kinds, including socks, jewellery and mugs. Few of these products were endorsed by the stars’ production agencies, but it is likely that their lawyers were too preoccupied with the growing problem of illegal downloads and counterfeiting to pay much attention, for example, to the unauthorised appearance of their star’s image on a key chain.

Four of the Wave’s biggest stars to date, singer/actor Rain, actor Lee Byung-hun, singer/actor Lee Jun Kii and actor Bae Yong-joon, are widely considered kkonminam icons. Rain often wears his hair tied up with a hair band and has, on occasion, worn very effeminate clothing and accessories, and Lee Byung-hun, with his perfect white smile, recently pleased many of his fans when he were eyeliner in the blockbuster film The Good, The Bad, The Weird. He does not appear very effeminate, because of his good looks and sharp dress sense he is nevertheless considered an exemplar of the trend in Korea.

In June 1978, a magazine for a female readership featuring romantic stories between males, notes that ‘the characters are really an imagined ideal that combine assumed or desired attitudes of both males and females. Thus the heroes can be beautiful and gentle, like females, but without the jealousy and other negative qualities that women sometimes associate with themselves’. Sagawa points out that because men are considered to experience fewer constraints both socially and sexually, many of the readers idealise the friendship and bonding between men as one ultimately based on love.

Writing on his fascinating website ‘The Grand Narrative’, James Turnbull argues that the prominence of Japanese scholars in East Asian cultural studies has led researchers studying the Korean phenomenon to place too much emphasis on the influence of yaoi fiction. He believes these are too preoccupied with the rising interest in yaoi, considering it anachronistic, preferring to attribute changes in the appearance of the idealized Korean man to the shift in married women’s attitudes toward the traditional gender divide...
that occurred rather suddenly in the mid 1990s, when modern literature and film began to question the roles assigned to men and women in traditional Confucian society. To many, issues of gender equality had for too long had to take a back seat to the wider aims of democratisation.1

Although one could argue that Japanese comics and animation were widely available in South Korea before the ban on Japanese popular culture was lifted, it is in fact difficult to find signs of the kikomann trend prior to 1998. Turnbull notes that, in addition to growing female disillusionment with the traditional roles of Korean men in the private and public spheres, the desire for a different ideal male figure also arose out of anger many women felt over being the first to be laid off after the so-called 'IMF crisis' hit in July of 1997. Indeed, although the role of a woman working in public had never been perceived very positively in Korean traditional culture, the crisis laid bare one of the rapidly developing democracy's major lacunas. Decades of significant gender inequality in the workplace thus combined with sexist attitudes to fuel women's burning resentments over their longstanding secondary status. While the softer male image was therefore partly born out of criticism, it also had the potential to make the opposite sex look more powerful.

Although Turnbull's perceptions of the influence of Korean women on the effermatisation of the Korean male icon carry some persuasive weight in explaining the disparity between the rather macho-like Korean concept of male beauty leading up to the mid 1990s and what we have seen since then, there are still other possible factors to consider. One concerns the enormous popularity of Korean pop entertainment among teenage girls.

Machos are so passé

In Korea, popular music can be divided into two general categories: that marketed primarily to middle school, high school, and university students and that directed to adult consumers. Although artists performing for each of these markets may share a predominant use of heavy make-up and accessories, the two categories are very different in terms of both the music itself and the manner in which it is performed. Where music for adults often entails single performers singing in a dramatic, traditional style with relatively little movement, music for students is quite the opposite. Apart from its energetic performance style and prolific use of electronic media, the youth formula generally entails a mix of romantic R&B-type ballads and rap. Audiences appear to be predominantly made up of girls who spend a lot of time and money on popular entertainment, have some idea of developments in popular culture in other areas of East Asia, and are likely to favour artists who they perceive would not treat them as sexual objects of attraction but as equals.

Today's students, after all, are less likely to find much appeal in the macho type that for decades dominated in popular entertainment. Those tough men usually had no chance of going to university and/or of leading normal, quiet lives. Instead, they were forced to show their grit as soldiers, gangsters, or policemen, often sorting out differences through violent means, while appearing fragile only in their inability to express their feelings in words. Although they were able to protect and financially support their love interests, they could not care less about the myriad social pressures exerted on women. While the brutish tough guy image may not jive with a male population that over the past few decades has attended college in high numbers when compared to other nations, since the 1960s that image had reflected accurately traits inherent in a legacy of two long-lasting military administrations and their cultural policies and a mandatory military service of up to three years. Especially considering that national service is still in place, albeit in reduced form, psychological remnants of Korea's military years continue to affect how many men express their feelings and deal with issues of conflict or stress.

Although relatively few sports stars have acquired kikomann icon status, soccer star Ahn Jung-Hwan has undeniably helped propel the trend. After scoring an historic goal against Italy that sent Korea through to the World Cup quarterfinals, Ahn – one of an unprecedented number of young university students to represent Korea at a World Cup – ran toward the audience kissing his wedding ring. The idea that at his moment of becoming a national hero Ahn would so openly express his love for his wife was uncommon. Although the act was not particularly noteworthy in itself, Ahn, with his very fair skin and longish, wavy hair was already, before the match, regarded as the pretty boy of the team. The goal and the team’s celebration were replayed over and over again in Korea, where it earned Ahn the nickname “Lord of the Ring.”

We may not know if Ahn wore his hair long because he was asked to by his wife, or because he knew that women in general would like it, or if he was simply following the advice of a male or female hairdresser. Nevertheless, his and others’ behaviour does raise the possibility that the trend was started, or at least supported, by men. Although good looks may now have become a marker of social success, as former president's Roh Moo-hyun’s eyelid surgery in 2005 possibly attests, longstanding pressures on men to be successful in society and provide for their families did not ease much after the economic crisis.

To this day, however friendly and good-looking a man may be, he is still judged by the degree to which he provides for his family’s well-being and what is printed on his business card. This may help explain why, in 2006, the suicide rate of Korean men was more than double that of women. I surmise that Korea’s kikomann provide a hint that men experiencing disillusionment with their traditional personas (for reasons similar to women’s disillusionment) are reacting, to a degree, by shunning conformity and embracing a style that makes them feel better about themselves. Yet if the trend continues, the pressure on men to conform to the new standard of beauty will increase and arguably add to their predicament.

Recent studies show that, in 2007, more than 40 per cent of Korean teenagers harboured a desire for plastic surgery and that even some young Korean males were choosing to go under the knife in the hope of improving their chances of finding a better job. The ever-increasing pressure on young women to conform to an ideal, surgically enhanced beauty may also lead some of them to turn away from the traditional male role model, towards a man who now understands, and may even to some extent share, the beauty burden. Still, today’s young woman is very unlikely to be looking for a man who is effeminate as she, or whose sexual orientation is in question.

On websites, one can find millions of comments from Korean fans about their idols’ appearance, including frequent complaints about kikomann stars dressing too effeminately or acting too girly. The star may have played the role of a gay protagonist in a movie or drama, but those stories rarely contest traditional gender roles. It was only ten years ago that a Korean celebrity came out in public for the first time. When VJ Hong’s 5’8” one day admitted that he was gay, he found himself laid off by his TV network. Not until after a massive public petition effort was in full swing was he offered another contract. Few men have publicly come out since. For some time, Hong’s name could often be heard mentioned alongside the names of male-to-female transgender stars Harisu and Park Yuri, even though he’s gay, whereas these women are neither. The three were viewed collectively solely on the basis of what they are not: models of traditional Korean male identity.

Today’s South Korea is a vibrant democracy, but its long-standing ideas about love, relationships and people’s roles in society have not changed much and remain topics of debate. However many movies, dramas, and songs discuss the issue of homosexuality or gender equality, there remains a big difference between this art reality and the real world. With time, however, and with the increasing influence of the Internet and its social networks, I expect that that difference will become somewhat opaque.

The kikomann phenomenon was born out of a combination of many factors, many of which are still active today. Whatever led to its emergence, it has now come to reflect both a male and a female ideal. It is ironic that even though the phenomenon may have arisen at least partially out of women’s disillusionment with traditional male roles and that today’s young girls prefer a softer, less sexist male figure, these can hardly be seen as triumphs for women. Kikomann have been unable to ease the pressure on women to conform to a beauty ideal either. While couples may increasingly share the beauty burden, this modern-era shift has little to do with the underlying predicament of the many men and women who remain disillusioned with the social roles assigned to them. For those roles to change, much more is needed than a cosmetic make-over.

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Notes
Until about 10 years ago, most cigarettes sold on black markets worldwide originated from legal sources. Major tobacco manufacturers were accused of unwittingly or unwittingly supplying smugglers on a grand scale. Since then, under pressure from various governments, the tobacco industry apparently has become much more careful in choosing customers down the chain of distribution, leaving a void on the black market to be filled by counterfeit cigarettes. One country is frequently mentioned in this context: China.

China is generally believed to be the main source for counterfeit cigarettes worldwide. Most counterfeit cigarettes sold on the black market in the United States are made in China. About 60% of the world’s illegal cigarettes are produced in China per year which would constitute about seven percent of the global (legal and illegal) cigarette market.1

In China, counterfeit cigarettes can be produced from tobacco by well-organised counterfeiters who have access to the necessary raw materials. Counterfeiters are also often involved in the production of cigarettes in illicit settings that sell counterfeit cigarettes as well. There is also a number of illicit production facilities that have also been discovered in underground chambers and in mountain caves.

In some cases counterfeit cigarettes are also made of non-tobacco waste such as sawdust, wood shavings and rotten vegetable leaves. In such cases, cigarette wrapping paper, filters and other material are collected from the waste sites. That said, it is not unusual for counterfeit cigarettes to be made of good quality tobacco.2

The actual manufacturing of counterfeit cigarettes requires rolling machines. In the past, purchasing cigarette rolling machines was extremely expensive. In order to bring costs down, counterfeiters bought used rolling machines from state-owned cigarette factories. With the development and expansion of counterfeit cigarette businesses, counterfeiters - like their legitimate counterparts - have started to invest in more advanced equipment. Prior to 2004 only 30 per cent of the cigarette machines seized were automatic; current figures for the counterfeit cigarette production line suggest that it is 90 per cent automated.

There is a large and diverse set of venues used for the production of counterfeit cigarettes. These include legitimate factories producing other commodities, warehouses, farms in rural and semi-rural areas, martial arts training schools, temples and private homes. A number of illicit production facilities have also been discovered in underground chambers and in mountain caves.

The cigarette counterfeiting business is characterised by a high degree of heterogeneity. There appear to be independent ‘entities’ involved in different parts of the business, as well as actors who are subcontracted to provide commodities and services for the process. There is a relatively high level of sophistication in the business in terms of the technology necessary for the production of counterfeit cigarettes; less so in relation to the links between actors or stages of the business. Relationships between actors in the business are very often based on a customer-supplier relationship. The role of corruption and violence in the cigarette counterfeiting business should not be underestimated. Corruption, although not present in all circumstances, can be significant. The role of corruption and violence in the cigarette counterfeiting business could be even more pronounced in the future.

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The cigarette counterfeiting business requires a degree of sophistication and management of resources and labour. Consequently, counterfeiting networks tend to have a naturally defined horizontal ‘structure’. In fact, there appear to be independent, autonomous ‘entities’ involved in the production of counterfeit cigarettes. One of them is said to be responsible for the production of the ‘Mercedes of fake cigarettes’.

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References
Perceiving Pakistan’s growing centrality to diplomacy in Afghanistan, the West has planned its policy of identification and engagement with the moderate Taliban. But India believes that in war there is no substitute for victory. Therefore, it has reasons to be wary of the idea of a political reconciliation with the Taliban. Crafting peace in Afghanistan requires the US not to overlook Pakistan’s sensitiveness towards Kabul, rather to be more attentive to Indian security concerns vis-à-vis Pakistan. Simply protecting its own interests in the region may not help the US in its mission.

Sanjeeb Mohanty

The US is searching for ‘good’ Taliban who can be weaned off violence and a deal to share power in. However, the US feels that the uncompromising core of the Taliban, with their radical ideological leanings, must be met with force and defeated. These moderates that it seeks are mainly foot soldiers, who have taken up arms simply for money and lend support to the hardcore Taliban. The US administration is more political and it is willing to concede that, from their perspective, the war in Afghanistan is unwinnable and therefore some level of negotiation and compromise is now unavoidable. In fact, the US and its allies have given a clear indication that they are willing to make a distinction between the Taliban and Al-Qaeda and deal with the former, or at least some sections of it.

A lesser evil

Presently, the Taliban is a major threat to Afghanistan and a destabilising factor in the South Asian region. However, a dialogue with the Taliban or the incorporation of its moderate elements into the process of governance seems to be the only available alternative left for the US to bring peace in Afghanistan. By negotiating with the moderates, the US hopes to isolate those hardline ideologically driven, fulltime fighters within the Taliban movement who contribute to the present unrest in Afghanistan.

The US does not see the Taliban as a threat to international security. The primary, perhaps, the only concern of the US has been to eliminate Al-Qaeda, which has a global, anti-US, jihadist agenda. The US strategy, therefore, focuses on what it perceives as the ‘real’ threat – Al-Qaeda – and considers the Taliban a lesser evil in comparison. According to the US, Al-Qaeda is a bigger threat because of its ‘proven links with international terrorism while the Taliban is identified with Islamist ideology, not directly with terrorism.’ 1 The Taliban, then, is treated as a different force with an ideological agenda. However, by tying the US to a fundamentalist ideology rather than directly with terrorism, the US fails to see the thin line that divides fundamentalists and terrorism.

The US war in Afghanistan can only be successful if the Pakistani military’s sanctuaries and sustenance infrastructure for the Taliban is dismantled. Any military surge must be backed by a political strategy which would ultimately defeat or render the Taliban irrelevant to the international community’s commitment to establishing effective governance, to enhancing the spirit of the Afghan people to fight the jihads and to secure Afghanistan’s future as an independent country in its own right.

Deceptive distinction

The Obama administration is drawing a deceptive distinction between ’good’ and ’bad’ Taliban and trying to do so is not only deceptive but could further complicate the situation in Afghanistan. It is certainly likely to sour the image of transnational terrorists. The US intention behind making such a distinction is a way of ensuring Pakistani cooperation, by accommodating its security concerns in Afghanistan. Even Pakistan’s suspicion about India’s presence in Afghanistan has led the US to underplay India’s role in the country.

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Overplaying Pakistan’s sensitiveness in the running of Afghanistan would enhance the nuisance capabilities of the US in conducting the military situation there. Pakistan’s dilemma on Afghanistan, therefore, is to be found in the military leadership’s convictions:2

The US war in Afghanistan can only be successful if the Pakistani military’s sanctuaries and sustenance infrastructure for the Afghan Taliban is dismantled. The US should rather search for a credible Afghan partner having support of the Afghan people, not of these moderate fundamentalists.

Conclusion

A wrong selection for negotiation may reverse the trend in a spite of a new winning strategy. Many see the US desperation to reach an agreement with the moderates as a part of its exit plan prior to 2012. Cutting a deal with the Taliban sends a signal that the US is not winning the war in Afghanistan. The staying power of the US in Afghanistan depends on how it understands the global nature of the Taliban threat. India, on the fronts of the global fight against terrorism, will definitely bear the brute of this myopic US attempt at a political reconciliation with Taliban, which is an integral part of the US-Pakistan strategy. It would be prudent for the US to systematically include India in crafting this strategy. “The West would better serve if it takes India’s concerns into account.” However, if the US remains determined to bring a distinction between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ jihadis, it will neither reduce the threat of terrorism in the sub-continent, nor weaken the spirit of Taliban as a fighting force.

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References
Three dreams or three nations?

A recent exhibition on South Asian photography entitled ‘Where Three Dreams Cross: 150 Years of Photography in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh’ highlights indigenous or native photographers as a marker of what India was before the two partitions. This is to suggest that there is a history of image-making that stands outside the ambit of European practitioners. The exhibition featured over 400 photographs, a survey of images encompassing early photographers and from the 19th century, the social realism of the mid-20th century, the movements of photography from the studio to the streets and, eventually, the playful and dynamic recourse with image-making in the present.

CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS – whether writers, musicians, painters and even photographers – have endlessly tried to understand cultural borders, whether we should and do look beyond borders, and whether those lines of separation mirror the inner workings and deeper cultures of engagement in our dealings with art, and even the curatorial practice engaged with expressing that art. Consequently, to ponder whether Indian photography is definable without Pakistan and Bangladesh, or whether South Asian photography is contained in these three nations alone, entails a series of assumptions and notions that counter the reasons for the separation of identity today, but simultaneously maintain how there are traceable differences that mark the development of photography in Asia.

The exhibition
Photography in Asia represents the coming of an age, digital, virtual and otherwise. The history of it is allied to a European history, one that sadly does not find its way into the exhibition. In trying to juxtapose the vintage elements of photography in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, do the images actually stand beside their contemporaries, struggling for space? The preface in the exhibition catalogue announces: ‘This project traces the characteristics of contemporary photography through its historical precedents, revealing the roots.’ This is a curatorial decision of working backwards, and therefore a significant amount of attention has been given to the self-determination of the curators in creating their personal links with the historical material in the exhibition is rarely seen as a starting point but rather, as a point of return. In taking this view, the exhibition peters away, marginally addressing the scope of differences in the exhibition. This is perhaps also because the chief curator (and photographer), Sunil Gupta makes a conscious attempt to avoid what he terms as ‘conceptual art’ from entering the realm of the exhibition. Gupta (born 1953) earned an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art, London in 1983. As photographer, curator and activist, he has worked extensively to represent Indian photography at the local level, as well as at international exhibitions. He brackets on a kind of intended play associated with the notion of heritage, the inherent contradictions that arise from the local to the global, often signaled in the mediations of the South Asian Diaspora, placed in a transnational landscape of cultural production. However, one can’t help feeling that the exhibition suffers to some extent from trying to understand the notion ‘who produces and for whom and why?’ Though the curators seek to highlight modes of practice that may tie the three nations together by virtue of the contradictions they share, the viewer is left wanting more insight into the intentions and the reasons behind the photographs on display.

Five distinct sections in the exhibition highlight distinct themes that draw the attention of the visitor towards classifications and subjects. These include, the portrait, family, body politic and performance and the street, each highlighting thematic passages. Over 70 photographers including Raghu Rai, Pushpamala N., Rashid Rana, Dayanita Singh, Raghuraj Singh, Umrao Singh Sher-Gil, Gaari Gill, Sheba Chachi Rashid Talalder, Ayeshra Vellani and Munem Waaf are presented in the show, with works drawn from important collections of photographic history, including the Allauz Collection of Photography (Delhi), the Abbashid Poddar Collection (Bangalore), The Udapad City Palace Museum Archive (Central India), Whitestar (Pakistan) and the Drik Archive (Dhaka). These are joined by many previously unseen images from private family archives, galleries, individuals and works by leading contemporary artists.

Exhibitions are part of a collective enterprise, a space where artists and their work often speak for themselves. Given that India had a vast encounter with photography in the last 150 years, any engagement with it in the current scenario entails work that assumes to undo, abet and evolve from what was done in the past. The bearing of such an exhibition, therefore, highlights three distinct modes of operation and the fraught relationships between past and present: the imperial, nationalist and the post-colonial. These represent continuities, ruptures and contradictions that have grown to modern, aesthetic in South Asia nourishment in the last 100 years.

The effect of photography on contemporary exhibition practice, such as that under discussion here, highlights the framework, mainly of the post-colonial (and even post-modern) as the point of engagement with the public. However, in the attempt at shaping the discourses on representation in visual culture today, the discussionpersets away, marginally addressing the scope of differences in the exhibition. This is perhaps also because the chief curator (and photographer), Sunil Gupta makes a conscious attempt to avoid what he terms as ‘conceptual art’ from entering the realm of the exhibition. Gupta (born 1953) earned an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art, London in 1983. As photographer, curator and activist, he has worked extensively to represent Indian photography at the local level, as well as at international exhibitions. He brackets on a kind of intended play associated with the notion of heritage, the inherent contradictions that arise from the local to the global, often signaled in the mediations of the South Asian Diaspora, placed in a transnational landscape of cultural production. However, one can’t help feeling that the exhibition suffers to some extent from trying to understand the notion ‘who produces and for whom and why?’ Though the curators seek to highlight modes of practice that may tie the three nations together by virtue of the contradictions they share, the viewer is left wanting more insight into the intentions and the reasons behind the photographs on display.

On the other hand, the exhibition purposefully avoids chronology. There is an emphasis on theme and the use of insinuation and reflection rather than a sense of temporal or even aesthetic progression, or in some cases iconic works featured from the history of the contemporary. Photography is realised as a form of cultural production in the present that lays claim to the past, and this is mediated and transformed by the act of display. Here contemporary practitioners from all countries, respond to cultural dilemmas in many and self-conscious ways and often remain caught in the discrepancies created by colonial history and the paradigms of it. Dayanita’s commentary on

Images from left to right:
1. Photographer from Mumbai, Unseen Artist, Silver Gelatin Print, c. 1900, 15 x 11cm.
The Alkai Collection of Photography.
2. Syed Muhammad Ahmad, Protest Against lack of electricity and water in Karachi, 2008, Digital print, 50 x 61cm.
The Alkai Collection of Photography.
3. The cover of the exhibition catalogue.
4. Homay Umerov, Pandit Nehru Releasing a pigeon at the National Stadium in Delhi, 1950s.
The Homai Aramchov The Alkai Collection of Photography.
6. Pushpamala N. Bombay Photo Studio, Navarasa Suite (Raudra), 2008-3, sepia toned silver gelatin print, 62 x 47cm. Shurundi and Ano Bose Collection, NY.

Mona Ahmed, the personal life of the eunuch who lives beside a graveyard, Pushpamala N.’s engagements with the historical archive, material and space, the use of mand by the Ivan Sundaram through a relay of works on his aunt and grandfather, Umrao Sher-Gil, these are only some of the links created that provide insights into the history of the contemporary.

Hammad Nasar, curator of the collections from Pakistan, mentions in the catalogue, the infusions of fine art and a documentary kind of photography that emerges from Pakistan. Nasar is a London-based curator, gallerist, writer and co-founder of the arts organisation, Green Cardamom, with a range of interests outside photography. He comments on the magic realism of some of the rahi khitch (soul pulling) photographers who line the streets of Lahore with older cameras. Important examples here are Gogi Pehewan and Mohammad Amin. Iftikar Dadi and Shaukat Mehmoon’s interaction with photography is of interest in connection with the genre of manipulating and altering the surface of the image, as one sees in painted photographs. Ban Abid’s work, represented in video and photographic forms, together with Rashid Rana’s investigation of photographic narrative structures creates an interesting juxtaposition with photographers in India, depicted through nuanced investigations of place and identity.

Here we take an interesting turn to Bangladesh, an important force in photography today, curated by Shahidul Alam, an important figure in the organisation and dissemination of photography in Bangladesh. Shahidul Alam studied and taught photography in London where he obtained a PhD from the University of London, starting out as a practitioner of photography in 1989. In 1989 he set up the Drik picture library and Pathshala - South Asian Institute of Photography. He is also a director of Choloe Mela, the festival of photography in Asia. In this exhibition, he brings forth the work of Golam Kasiem Dudy, an early photographer in Bangladesh who played a critical role in developing photography in Bangladesh.

Frictions
Historical material in the exhibition is rarely seen as a starting point but rather, as a point of return. In taking this view, the vintage material seems somewhat appropriated to the reproduction of material in the contemporary, rather than a point...
of initiation. There seems to have been an act of scrambling the images, perhaps a rightful solution in this case. Material is drawn from disparate collections and the thematics identified are often from older productions or exhibitions. The method devised to deal with this problem is to let the images speak for themselves. This is an important curatorial stance, but needed to be sussed out in more tangible and descriptive ways, allowing the unread viewer to take stock of the movements and international conditioning in photography in Asia. The impressionistic overview veers through the tracts of self-representation, portraiture, documentation and artistic recreation, where artists from the three countries try to contend with their own realities and, in doing so, they yearn to be understood.

From a wholistic point of view, exhibitions such as these are an interesting route into Art History. Here the social economic and, at times, political forces that shape artistic production and distribution come together, exciting varying degrees of pressure on artists, critics, curators, collection and dealers alike. Therefore, while encountering the exhibition, it becomes important to forge your own link with the works. How, then, does Muhammad Arif Ali—with his 2008 works of political rallies—compare with the sweeping panoramic images of Praful Patel in Mumbai in the 1950s? This leads us to compelling historical figures such as Homai Vyarawalla and Kulwant Roy, mirrored on a facing wall with architectural images by Lala Deen Dayal and by Bharat Sikka's gigantic views of contemporary Delhi.

Rooms of wonder yield the dynamic images of Vikas Roy, Ram Rahman and Abdul Kalam Aziz, leading further onto Muhammad Ali Salim, and even view by upcoming photographer from India, Shahid Datawalla. Further connections may be drawn between Syed Muhammad Adil and Tanveer Shahzad, while the historical images of Bosnia go well with Homai Vyarawalla and Whitestar images from Pakistan. Therefore in exhibitions such as this, it is important to identify why the juxtaposition of the old and the emerging, have led artists to confront the future of their own productions with varying degrees of emulation, rejection and creative departure.

Apart from talks by the three main curators, a compelling symposium was organised over two days in the Fotomuseum, Winterthur. The speakers included curators such as Pramod Kumar KG, who spoke on the life of portraiture in India, based on his extensive work in the Udaipur Archives. Ashaya Tankha and Surendra Natarjan invoked their experiences of ethnography and the archive and the representation of women in studio photography, respectively. Practitioners such as Dayanta Singh and Fazl Aboob spoke of their personal inspirations and experiences that led to the generation of their work. Sabeena Gadhokhali highlighted her interest in photography during and after the national movement in India, concentrating on press and magazine photography. One of the most intriguing talks was by independent practitioner and writer, Anees Serr, on his personal journey through the images and themes that underlay the exhibition and the complexity between the meaning and resonance of images and words.

In all, the exhibition presented more than pure aesthetic delight, creating horizons of contestation between themes and images. In a world where the art market seems to be sky rocketing—and artists are becoming ever more demanding of galleries and curators are vying to represent them—photography in Asia still seems to demand much greater academic input and real substantive criticism that would allow it to represent more than regional identity. Such an interaction would necessarily explain and exploit a landscape that has a powerful modern visual paradigm in order to highlight a sense of cultural difference in the 21st Century, a sense of heterogeneity in what is ‘seen’ and experienced. This is the world of global capitalism, citizenship, neo-imperialism, minorities, exile, secularism; and these are the boundaries that need to be transgressed for a more humanist understanding of the contemporary world.

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Note
1. The exhibition ‘Where three dreams cross: 150 Years of Photography in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh’ was on display at the Whitechapel Gallery, East London, in January 2010 and at the Fotomuseum in Winterthur, Switzerland, from June until August 2010.
Maulana Bhashani and the transition to secular politics in East Bengal

In the 1950s, a mass movement demanding national self-determination for the Bengali people emerged in East Bengal, then part of Pakistan. This movement was led by the politician-preacher Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, who, prior to Partition, emerged as a leader of marginalised peasants in Assam. Bhashani championed the twin demands that shaped the politics of East Bengal—the demand for national self-determination and the demand that the state distance itself from Islam. Peter Custers argues that, in fact, Bhashani led the transition to secular politics in the decades that preceded the emergence of Bangladesh.

ON MARCH 10, 1947, a day of non-cooperation was observed in the colonial province of Assam. That morning, the Molono (Muslim theologian) Bhashani succeeded in evading the British intelligence services who had issued instructions to arrest him. He crossed the Brahmaputra river in a nawa (a small boat), then travelled onwards by land in a bullock cart, eventually reaching the town hall of Feni. His support for immigrants had gathered for a public meeting calling for the formation of a separate state of ‘Pakistan’, comprising Bengal and Assam. Though the day of action was sponsored by the Muslim League, claiming to represent exclusively Muslim interests, Bhashani’s speech was free of the communal rhetoric to which other Muslim League leaders were prone. He insisted that unity between Hindus and Muslims could be maintained; his movement was directed against ‘British imperialism’—not against any religious community.1

Though Bhashani originally hailed from Shariatganj in East Bengal, (now Bangladesh), he derives his appellation ‘Bhashan’ from that region, a low lying area of Assam. It was here, in the late 1920s, that Bhashani built his own hut, after having been forced by the British colonial authorities to seek refuge beyond the borders of Bengal. Before this shift, the fiery theologian had started distinguishing himself as an opponent of the feudal zamindari system which formed the backbone of Britain’s rule over Bengal.12000 Bengal saw the emergence of a movement for tenants’ rights protesting unjust impositions by absentee landlords. It was actively supported by rural intellectuals, including lawyers and Islamic preachers. Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan, later to be known as ‘Bhashan’, was a key organiser of this movement.

In Assam, the Molono emerged as an effective and popular peasant leader, ready to champion the cause of the downtrodden. Perhaps paradoxically, he also emerged as a widely respected leader of the Muslim League and in 1944 he was actively supported by rural intellectuals, including lawyers like Bhashani.6 Yet, Bhashani was no conventional Muslim League politician. In 1944, at the very meeting where he was elected party President, Bhashani appealed to the League’s General Secretary, Siddiqul, not to act as a ‘postbox’ for the British authorities.2 He was later to recall that, at a certain point during his stay in Assam, he had actually allied with the Congress party so as to press the Muslim League into action26 Bhashani consistently pursued his religious leader and politician to advance the cause of the peasantry and on the eve of Partition, we find Bhashani combining the disposal of migrant peasants’ interests, with a principled opposition against communal hatred, and advocating the formation of a greater Bengal state.9

Bhashani as religious leader

Writings exalting Maulana Bhashani tend to focus on his politics, and the fact that he played a central role in the political evolution of (East) Bengal.3 This is a rather myopic view, for Bhashani’s politics cannot be understood without also taking into account the fact that he was a religious preacher with a huge following. Indeed, in Assam, Molono Bhashani was widely regarded as a pujari: a saint-like figure, commanding a large number of disciples who accepted his religious teachings, who were willing to support his politics, in particular his opposition to British colonialism.

Between 1907 and 1909, Bhashani attended the famous Islamic University of Deoband, where he received theological training. Deoband was widely regarded as a centre with progressive leanings. Several Sufi orders have influenced Deoband’s teachings. Its theologians are reputed to have shared an ‘anti-imperialist’ orientation, and to have actively propagated the need to end Britain’s domination over the subcontinent.13

There are clues to which currents within Islam Bhashani ultimately chose to embrace in his essay on the policy of ‘Rabbobay’, written in 1974, at the twilight of his political life.12 This essay indicates that, from 1946 onwards, the Rabbobay retained his guiding ideology. The Rabbobay preaches the unmediated equality of all people, whatever their caste, nationality or religion. What makes Rabbobay distinct, is that it advocates the abolition of private ownership on the basis of faith. Bhashani states: ‘Man is only a custodian, whereas Allah holds ownership over all properties that exist. Thus, the state should abolish all private ownership, and should distribute things in equal proportions, on the basis of need’.14

This statement reveals just how intertwined politics and religion were in Bhashani’s vision and life. Indeed, for him the message of Islam was so much a vision on how society should be structured economically, that he used every occasion to impress on his followers the need to engage in struggles for socio-economic change. Bhashani preached that the peasants needed to get organised.

Transition to secular politics

After Partition, Bhashani returned to East Bengal (East Pakistan). Here, he led a mass campaign in the 1950s in favour of regional autonomy and Bengali self-determination. This campaign was to play a key role in the Molono’s journey towards the secularisation of politics, for the momentum which the movement for autonomy gained decisively demonstrated that the hold of the Muslim League and of Pakistan’s rulers over the minds of the population in East Bengal was weakening, and that secularisation was truly possible.

Bhashani had already protested in public against Pakistan’s economic exploitation of East Bengal in the late 1940s.14 Furthermore, he had also ensured that the demand stating that self-rule (swayothshesen) be granted to the province was included in the programme of the (the) Awami League, a new party formed as breakaway of the Muslim League in 1949.15 In the campaign for the 1954 elections he turned the demand for autonomy into the public’s ‘heartfelt issue’ (jorer doh), showing that electoral campaigning can contribute significantly to a society’s politicisation.

After the party coalition he led had gained a convincing victory, he steadfastly continued building public opinion in support of self-determination, calling on students and other sections of the public to wear black badges on a province-wide day of resistance, and leading numerous rural demonstrations to vent the public’s discontent.15

The 1957 Cultural Conference at Kagmari formed the culminating point of Bhashani’s campaign in favour of regional autonomy, and is considered to be a milestone in Bangladesh’s history. The (by then renamed) Awami League had assumed governmental power in 1956. It soon became evident, however, that the ministers were bent on abandoning the party’s principles, in exchange for personal gain. It was under these circumstances that Bhashani, as the League’s President, called for a two-day council session of the party in Kagmari, Tangail, to be followed by a three day Cultural Conference. Bhashani used Kagmari to re-affirm the party’s ‘anti-imperialist’ stance.17 In his conference speech, Bhashani threatened—prophecically—that if East Bengal were not granted autonomy, the people would ultimately say ‘Assalamu Alaikum’ (goodbye) to Pakistan.18

Even today there is a tendency amongst a section of Bangladesh politicians, to obfuscate history and downplay Bhashani’s achievements. It is critically important to underline how Bhashani’s campaign for regional autonomy, which reached its peak at the Kagmari Conference, both created the environment for the secularisation of politics, and formed the precursor to the 1971 war for the independence of Bangladesh. Yet what nasty opposition the aged preacher-politician had to face in the wake of the Kagmari Conference, conservative jis and moloonas publicly vilified Bhashani, arguing that he was

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trying to disrupt Pakistan's territorial integrity. 18 Bhashani's own party colleagues were equally uncooperative. Editors in both West and East Pakistan openly denounced him for his uncompromising stance.20 Yet, despite all this, the history of East Bengal's subsequent evolution attests that Moulana Bhashani was a political pioneer.

Bhashani's struggle for secularisation of East Bengal's politics started well before the Kagmari Conference took place. Thus, at a Council session of the Muslim Awami League in 1955, he proposed that the word 'Muslim' be dropped from the party's name. And in his welcoming speech to the Kagmari Conference, he launched a month-long drive to help prepare for the holding of a conference of fisher folk. Over a hundred delegates are reported to have gathered for this event, termed 'singular' in the history of Bengal. 21 The Sharmelmon adopted a 12-point charter of demands, with strikingly concrete propositions, including: that import licenses for fishing gear be offered to professional fishermen; that fish and fishing waters be declared free for all; that anyone owning a net should be granted rights over water bodies. 22

Agan, not long after he had started his drive in support of fisher folk, in January 1958, the Moulana had already taken the initiative towards the formation of a peasant association, the East Pakistan 'Krishak Samiti'. 23 Soon after, however, the process of organizing in the rural areas was disrupted, when the military took over state power and imposed Martial Law. It was only in 1964 that organising could be re-intensified.

Clearly, the aged Bhashani in the Pakistan period made sustained efforts to promote the formation of union-type organisations, both in villages and towns of East Bengal. By the end of the 1960s, these efforts bore fruit and in a very explosive manner. Unfortunately, in this brief essay there is no scope to give a detailed description of Bhashani's role in the 1968-69 uprising against military dictatorship. It should be noted, however, that he personally launched the uprising in East Bengal, via a general strike held in Dhaka on December 7, 1968, and that he personally helped shape other tactics employed by the rising participants. In the aftermath of Ayub's fall, Bhashani's leadership in the uprising drew much international attention.

In the late 1940s, just after Partition, the sphere of politics in the province had largely been communalised. By the late 1960s, through the intense and sustained efforts which the Moulana and the politicians opposed to intolerance had made, the communal impacts in East Bengal had dramatically declined. The change in public discourse was very clear in the uprising against Ayub's dictatorship. The very success of this uprising indicates that the state could no longer exploit religion to manipulate the sentiments of East Bengal's population. Politics had largely been secularised.

Conclusion

Bhashani's efforts should be assessed within a broader, longer-term perspective. The period of the 1960s is crucial and represents an important point in the history of Bangladesh. Here two points may be revisited: First, Bhashani did not try to position himself beyond the parameters of a single religion. Bhashani's way of identifying with Islam, it may be argued, limited his scope for incorporating syncretic elements derived from other faiths into his own world view. While he surely displayed an affinity with Bengal's syncretic tradition, his approach was different from, for instance, the poet-writer Nazrul Islam, who used an imagery derived from both Hinduism and Islam. Bhashani's celebration of religious tolerance from within the framework of Islam has, for its own, positive, importance for the contemporary debate on secularisation and opposed polarity at a time when right-wing, Western politicians are trying to make their public believe that there is an irreconcilable conflict between the values of religious tolerance and Islam, the example of Moulana Bhashani reveals, with full force, that the opposite is the case.

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Notes

1. The observance of March 10, 1947 as 'Azam Day', and Maulana Bhashani's participation and speech at the gathering in Tejpur, are amongst others described by Bhashani's chief biographer Syed Abul Maksud, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani (Bangladesh National Press Corporation, Dhaka, 1994), pp. 67.


17. On Bhashani’s famous ‘akli’ threatening his ‘Azamdu Alokun’ to the existence of Pakistan, see e.g. Shah Ahmed Reza (1986), op.cit. p.71, for an overview of negative reactions to the Kagmari Conference, see e.g. Syed Abul Maksud (1994), op.cit. p.151.


20. For details on Bhashani’s involvement with the union of railway workers, see e.g. Abul Kalam Samsuddin, ‘Panchshshail Sharmalt Sarmat Andolen O Maulana Bhashani’ (in: Mohsin Sastrapani (2002), op.cit. p.170/171.


22. Ibid. p. 208.


Moving portraits and interactive voices from the British Raj

The study of South Asian colonial amateur films and oral history archives provides a particular insight into imperial identities that is not necessarily evident from other sources. The Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge, has recently made available online 280 films and 300 interviews documenting lesser-known aspects of the British rule in South Asia (see www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/dp/2010030401). The Centre’s online archives represent a timely and singular contribution to the current scholarship concerned with renewed negotiations of Britain’s imperial past and its relevance to today’s multicultural society.

The documentary relevance of the Centre’s online archives is intertwined with the ongoing digitization of the collections. Developing innovative educational programmes alongside the archival team, led by Dr Kevin Greenbank, is gradually building cross-referential links within its digital databases. Some of these cross-references are found on topics such as the building and operating of Indian railways, bridges and irrigation infrastructures, tea plantations, military operations, and the work of several British and Indian people alongside Mahatma Gandhi. In addition, the Centre’s online archives are supported by invaluable background information found across-in-house collections of photographs, South Asian newspapers, government microfilms, maps, and the donors’ files.

To date, over 300 interviews (see www.s-asian.cam.ac.uk/audio.html) and 280 colonial amateur films (see www.s-asian.cam.ac.uk/films.html) are accessible on the Centre’s website. The online oral archive highlights include, for instance, 120 interviews with former members of the Indian National Congress and of the Swaraj Party, as well as interviews with Roman Catholic and Anglican missionaries, former tea planters, railway engineers, members of the Indian Colonial Service and with British people who stayed on after the Indian Independence. While some of the colonial amateur films show details of mundane colonial life, others contain scenes of British rescue operations from Burma into India during World War II (the McKeird collection); repairs to railways in Sind in 1934 (the Bemidge collection); processes of Masonic lodges in Calcutta in 1927 (the Stud collection); scenes of Toda communities in the Nilgiri hills in 1930 (the Buchanan collection); the marriage of the Maharaj Kuma of Patala in 1932 (the Willmore/Pendleton collection), and relief operations in Punjab during the Partition of India in August 1947 (the Willmore and Burti collections).

Imperial and postcolonial counter narratives

The documentary relevance of the Centre’s online interwoven resources becomes evident across several collections providing either complementing or contrasting information on specific themes. One such theme is the representation of British and Indian women on film and how conventional means of portraying their ways of life are often contradicted by the women's oral testimonies. Thus, scenes showing an alleged carefree life, leisure activities and sports enjoyed by the memsahibs—wives of Indian Civil Servants, military or political officers—contrast with some of their recollections of colonial times. For instance, in an interview from 1978, Mrs. Marjorie Hall describes her experience as the wife of a British military officer posted to Jacobabad in the early 1940s in terms of: We were so busy surviving... [the British government] had no right to put families to places like that, it was criminal. You got up in the morning, you died in the afternoon, you were buried at night, [all] because you went bad so quickly.

A similar contrasting narrative is found when interpreting representations of Indian women across different visual and oral collections. Recurrent scenes of Indian women shown as Agha (child minders), tea pickers, poor villagers, or wives of Indian civil servants, would never convey the educational and political commitments of many Indian women. However, Indian women’s political agency becomes evident in some of their interviews as in the case with Mrs. Sawini Madan’s interview from 1970 (no. 147). A former teacher and village-industry specialist, she describes her work with women satyagrahis (nonviolent resistance activists) in inter-war Sialkot and Lahore, and her interest in Mahatma Gandhi’s movement of Basic Education, particularly when she taught the children how to “think in a way in which they could not only participate in their own development but [also] in the development of the[ir] country.”

Another example of counter narrative emerges when comparing scenes of the Indian Army with interviews describing the ideological dynamic among the ranks. Inter-war film scenes showing Indian Army parading, marching and undertaking military training find a new interpretative dimension when contextualised alongside oral records describing lesser-known social and political details. As a result, illustrative scenes of the 14th Battalion Rajputana Rifles from the Burton film collection, or of the 2nd/10th Gurkha Rifles from the Taylor film collection, are ideologically counteracted by various testimonies given by British and Indian military and political officers. For instance, Mr. Nilubhai Limaye, a former member of the Samyukt Socialist Party, mentions the attitude of the Indian Army towards the Indian independence as ‘very cold’ and ‘that most of them did not know that there was such a movement going on in the country.’
There are also examples of interrelated visual and oral sources that supply the researcher with multilayered, complementing background information. One such case is offered by the Dovy film collection and by Mr. C. H. Barry’s interview from 1933 (no. 008), both documenting in great detail the inter-war life and activities of Indian students enrolled at the Atchison College, Lahore. The two films from the Dovy collection, made by an unidentified filmmaker in the 1930s, show the College at a time when the Principal was C. H. Barry. While the films show general views of the College’s grounds and buildings, scenes of sports, horse shoes, swimming, gymnastics and field hockey, Mr. Barry’s recollections reveal the critical situation he faced when appointed as the Principal of the College in May 1933. At that time, he was offered the job with the caveat that the College ‘is bankrupt both in terms of numbers and finance. It is virtually bankrupt educationally. This is a last, desperate attempt to see whether it can be salvaged. We don’t blame you if it collapses because it’s more than likely that it will.’ The interwar film scenes and Mr Barry’s interview illustrate an important, and ultimately successful, decade in the history of an educational institution launched with the caveat that the College ‘is bankrupt both in terms of numbers and finance. It is virtually bankrupt educationally.

New contribution to digital humanities

By providing direct and uncensored access to original footage and interviews, the Centre of South Asian Studies facilitates and supports online scholarship reliant on critical practices engaged with the (re)production and representation of colonial memory, as well as with the re-assessment of how the past is continually reinscribed in the present. The Centre’s online dissemination of its collections mediates new debates about patterns of inclusion/exclusion inherent to identity building and colonial, racial, gender, class, religious and political discourse. It also proposes alternative ways of discussing issues of displacement, British Diaspora and social acculturation.

At the same time, amateur ethnographic records such as the Buchanon or Hopkinson film collections raise issues about the shifting relationship between official accounts and visual representations of colonial control. Across the Centre’s online collections, there are also examples of interrelated visual and oral sources that supply the researcher with multilayered, complementing background information. One such case is offered by the Dovy film collection and by Mr. C. H. Barry’s interview from 1933 (no. 008), both documenting in great detail the inter-war life and activities of Indian students enrolled at the Atchison College, Lahore. The two films from the Dovy collection, made by an unidentified filmmaker in the 1930s, show the College at a time when the Principal was C. H. Barry. While the films show general views of the College’s grounds and buildings, scenes of sports, horse shoes, swimming, gymnastics and field hockey, Mr. Barry’s recollections reveal the critical situation he faced when appointed as the Principal of the College in May 1933. At that time, he was offered the job with the caveat that the College ‘is bankrupt both in terms of numbers and finance. It is virtually bankrupt educationally. This is a last, desperate attempt to see whether it can be salvaged. We don’t blame you if it collapses because it’s more than likely that it will.’ The interwar film scenes and Mr Barry’s interview illustrate an important, and ultimately successful, decade in the history of an educational institution launched with the caveat that the College ‘is bankrupt both in terms of numbers and finance.

Overall, the Centre’s online collections represent records of public and private colonial memory and offer outstanding insights into imperial ways of life. Their relevance to the imperial studies curriculum illuminates the entwined British and Indian collective memory and challenges stereotypical representations of the two colonial identities and cultures. The comparative analysis of these films and interviews reveals novel imperial gender and racial dynamics, while the identification of particular instances of colonial visual rhetoric and postcolonial memorization proposes new methods of interpretation and acknowledgement of colonial societies. Thus, as first person narratives of specific times and events, the Centre’s colonial amateur films and postcolonial interviews advocate for the renegotiation of Britain’s imperial memory and past.

Lastly, the Centre’s online collections offer a palimpsest of documentary resources that presents illuminating imperial as well as post-colonial ideological and cultural frameworks. The examples discussed here show how the Centre’s cross-referential online archival resources invite renewed research of means of production and re-imagining of imperial memory, and how these visual and aural digital collections advance interconnected methodologies of critical literacy in the field of digital humanities.

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Notes
1. See the Berridge and Stokes film collections, the W.S. Benton and E.P. Mainprice photographic collections, and Brig. R.E. Gardiner’s interview (no 270).
2. See the Grant film collection and the F.G. Alderson-Smith’s interview (no 105) about touring with Mahatma Gandhi across East Bengal following the outbreak of communal riots. See also, E.B.H. Baker papers.
3. See the Barclay film collection and C. Sweeney papers.
4. See, for instance, Miss Anu Bandhopadhya’s interview (no 007).
5. See, in particular, the Kendall film collection.
7. See interview no. 148, 1970. Also, for records about the Indian National Army (INA) see S.A. Ayer’s interview (no. 172) about touring with Mahatma Gandhi across East Bengal following the outbreak of communal riots. See also, E.B.H. Baker papers.
8. See, in particular, the Kendall film collection.
10. See interview no. 148, 1970. Also, for records about the Indian National Army (INA) see S.A. Ayer’s interview (no. 172) about touring with Mahatma Gandhi across East Bengal following the outbreak of communal riots. See also, E.B.H. Baker papers.
An important five-year collaborative international research programme on ‘ Provincial Globalisation’ is being directed by Prof. Mario Ruten of the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), University of Amsterdam, and Prof. Carol Upadhyya of the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bangalore, supported by an Integrated Programme grant from WOTRO Science for Global Development (Netherlands). Dr. Anant Maringanti, the post-doctoral coordinator and a researcher on the programme explains the aims of the research.

Provincial Globalisation: the impact of reverse transnational flows in India’s regional towns

This is all about ‘genetics’! Harish Bhai, a prominent member of Dhamraj village community in central Gujarat, proudly declares. The genetics he is referring to is the fact that the village has a history of transnational migration that dates to the 19th century. People tracing their lineage back to this village live on three continents – Africa, Europe and North America. Although Harish Bhai himself rarely travels outside Gujarat, he plays a crucial role in mobilising remittances from members of this extended transnational village community, deploying these resources for village development works, maintaining family trees and records of donations and marriages, and encouraging people to come back to the village for special annual occasions that coincide with the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas – India’s official annual event when thousands of Overseas Indians congregate with government officials, business organisations and local cultural associations and NGOs to reinforce their ties with the motherland.

Although one may not come across such confident references to ‘genetics’ as the organising principle of transnational communities in other regions, such pride in linkages with relatives and community members overseas, in which family and kinship, business sense and philanthropic spirit, go hand-in-hand, is not unusual in India. How and why do people maintain such loyalties? What material and non-material resources flow back through the transnational networks that connect migrants with local communities? What are the implications of such connections and flows for development and for development policies in rapidly globalising India?

Such are the questions that drive the research programme on ‘ Provincial Globalisation’. The programme revolves around four central themes or propositions related to India’s international migrants and their ties to India:

1) Transnational migration is an important driver of globalisation and globalisation is experienced differently in medium and small-size urban centres in their peripheries, in contrast to metropolitan centres;
2) these differences may, in part, be related to the greater salience of caste and kinship networks in the provinces, which tend to get concealed by modernity in the metro cities;
3) such towns and their surrounding rural areas are not passive recipients of remittances and other migrant transfers, but rather are active nodes in forming and strategising around transnational flows and, hence, in the remaking of globalisation;
4) there is an urgent need to counter the sharp divide in much of the recent scholarship between research on remittances and migration and between studies on transnationalism and development studies.

The programme is built around five projects designed to examine transnational flows around three towns in three different Indian states – Anand in central Gujarat, Mangalore in coastal Karnataka and Gunur in coastal Andhra Pradesh. It will assess both quantitatively and qualitatively the social, economic, political and cultural consequences of reverse flows, which flow back through the transnational networks that connect migrants with local communities. What are the implications of such connections and flows for development and for development policies in rapidly globalising India?

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The Study

Anand

Anand in central Gujarat, capital of the state of Gujarat, is near the Arabian Sea, a few kilometres from the international airport of Ahmedabad. Anand is a place of intense religious activity. This is the birthplace of the BAPS (Bhagwan, or God) Swaminarayan movement. Founded in the 19th century, the movement is known to have led to an escalation in land prices and increased Polarisation of landholding. In this context, the research programme makes a case for a more comprehensive understanding of the consequences of such reverse flows, which will include an analysis of the social structuring of economic exchanges as well as their broader implications.

Programme structure

The programme consists of five independent but interrelated research projects located in three states of India, to be carried out by three doctoral students – Sandeepan Varadappa, Sanar Roohi and Sulagna Mustafi – and two post-doctoral researchers – Anant Maringanti (geography) and Puja Guha (economics). The PhD projects will be intensive micro-level studies of the selected regions, while the two post-doctoral projects will provide macro- and meso-level mappings of transnational linkages and flows at the regional, state and national levels.

Research sites and comparative analysis

The project sites, located in the states of Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, have been selected to represent contrasting patterns of migration, transnational flows, and development outcomes. They also share common features – all are productive agricultural regions that are rapidly urbanising, where the dominant landowning/agricultural groups have diversified economically – processes that, in turn, are linked to out-migration. However, the time-scale, type, and destination of migration differ in each case. These include a range of actors from domestic workers and other unskilled and semi-skilled labour going to the Middle East, to highly skilled and mobile professionals such as doctors and software engineers. While some receiving countries’ policies do not permit permanent residency, in other cases the migrants actually become permanent residents or citizens. These diverse environments shape the character of reverse flows. Although different types of migration are found in all the regions, for the purposes of this research programme the focus in each case will be on particular groups of migrants who appear to be most significant in terms of driving transformations in their home regions.

This multi-disciplinary perspective, encompassing the disciplines of sociology, social anthropology, economics, and geography, is essential to capture the diverse ways in which transnational flows are embedded in social networks and permeated by cultural values or political aspirations. The overall programme has been designed to facilitate comparative and multi-scale analysis by integrating the results of the individual research projects at different stages. The skills of the research team will be supplemented by consultations with development practitioners and a range of other stakeholders.

Significance

The research programme will produce significant academic as well as policy outputs. The programme will contribute to the literature on globalisation and transnationalism, as well as on migration and development, especially in the context of South Asia where such studies are inadequate, by moving down from the global and national levels to the region and locality. The research outputs will also contribute to national and international policy debates on migration, development, and the contributions of Overseas Indians to India’s development. In India, the debate on migration and development has been focused mainly on the economic impact of remittances. In this context, one of the main goals of this research is to bring material, social and cultural dimensions of migration into the same framework in order to arrive at critical insights into contemporary globalisation processes.

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Urbanisation in East Asia

Asia is one of the fastest growing regions in the world. Economically and politically the region’s increasing importance has led some to see the 21st century as the Asian century. We are certainly likely to see an increasing shift from an Atlantic-centred world to a Pacific-centred one, with all the ramifications that that will bring. One of the major factors fuelling Asia’s remarkable growth is urbanisation. The articles in this issue of theFocus are about the cities of Asia, and the scholars who have undertaken the research outlined here, most of it ongoing, come from a variety of different disciplines, including architecture, urbanism, sociology and the humanities. Their articles focus on East Asia and examine what cities such as Shanghai, Beijing, Manila and Kuala Lumpur are doing for (and to) their countries, as well as the wider region as a whole. They examine how these cities are positioning themselves in a rapidly globalising Asia and how some of them have made canny use of models imported from the West, yet have managed to retain their own identity. Indeed, by melding the different influences of East and West some of them have managed to create a new and dynamic urban environment.

Gregory Bracken
URBANISATION IS PLAYING A VITAL ROLE, particularly in China’s recent remarkable economic expansion. Alan Wheatley, in a recent article in the International Herald Tribune (13 August 2010), estimates the number of migrants in China to have reached 211 million in 2009. These people have been taking part in the largest mass migration in human history, sparked off by Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms in 1979. This ‘second revolution’ turned China into the world’s workshop and enabled the country to move into the footlights on the world stage. A carefully controlled capitalist enterprise, which goes under the rubric of ‘capitalism with Chinese characteristics’, has enabled China to overtake Japan as the world’s second-largest economy (which it did in August 2010). Some commentators even see the country as topping the US from its number one spot in 20 years’ time. America’s economy is still three times that of China, but if China manages to sustain its 9% per annum growth this could well be a possibility.

This economic miracle also has its downsides, which is particularly obvious in China’s cities. The country has a population five times that of the US and its per capita income is one per capita with countries like Algeria, El Salvador and Albania (i.e. approximately $3,600 per annum, whereas the US is approximately $46,000). Despite this, China has become the world’s largest market for passenger vehicles, reflecting an interesting new stage in the country’s economic development. The country no longer relies on the export of the cheap toys and clothes that first earned it the nickname ‘workshop of the world’, instead it has begun to turn to domestic demand in an effort to boost production and encourage Chinese people to buy the products that are made in the country. While this may seem a step in the right direction, it is having some unfortunate side-effects, such as the environmental impact of increases in steel and cement production, as well as an increase in the demand for power, which is still primarily fuelled by coal (China surpassed the US as the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases in 2006).

However, China has recognised this problem and has taken steps to address it. Li Daokui (an economics professor at Beijing’s Tsinghua University) was quoted last month in another article by Alan Wheatley as saying that investment in a low carbon economy, as well as urbanisation and development of the interior, will be the main factors sustaining China’s annual growth rate of 9% over the coming decade (International Herald Tribune, 17 August).

He sees the country about to enjoy a ‘golden period’, one which will see not only a new focus on energy efficiency but also on the shift to growth in the domestic sector we saw mentioned earlier. Red China, it seems, would like to be seen as Green China.

The changes that this rapid economic development have caused have been often painful, even for those who have seemed to benefit the most—their with good jobs in the country’s manufacturing sector. The Chinese government introduced a minimum wage in 2004, yet such moves, promising as they are, do not go far enough to alleviate the problems associated with the country’s rapid economic growth. As witnessed by the wave of strikes that affected the country earlier this year. The government’s apparent reluctance to repress these strikes is seen as a turning point in a country known for its lack of tolerance for labour militancy. This new-found tolerance is yet another sign of China’s new economic maturity. Concern for workers’ rights, and the gradual increases in wages that have resulted from it, are signs that China is leaving behind the old era of low-wage capitalism.

Yet what about those who have been left behind by this economic miracle? Or those who have been imperfectly able to partake in it? The ‘floating population’—millions of migrants, born out of the restrictive hukou registration system. These people simply disappear when the economy takes a downturn. They haven’t disappeared, of course, all they have done is returned home, which does nothing to solve their problems, in fact, it exacerbates them, as there’s nothing for them to go home to. One horrific example of the malaise associated with China’s rapid pace of change was the plight of attacks on rural elementary school children in the run up to the Shanghai World Expo. Economic pressure and the stress of life in a such a rapidly changing society, not only to mention the social stresses that have resulted from the One Child Policy, conducive to it is in principle, are having detrimental side-effects, with far too much pressure being placed on children to succeed, so they will be better able to take care of parents in their old age.

The debate over urbanisation and land reform that is beginning to engage the country is dealt with by Ana Moya Pellitero’s article, which looks at the influence the economic reforms are having on the countryside, as well as the cities, particularly the dangers faced by the vast floating population which is ripe for exploitation. Bogdan Stanceanu also examines China’s rapid urbanisation from the point of view of how high-speed city building may soon yield to an agglomeration of numerous large, non-agricultural settlements, where individual’s plights are increasingly irrelevant in these new utopias.

His article also examines China’s massive infrastructure upgrades, which are enabling this growth but asks what effect it will have on Chinese family life? This is what all of the papers in the focus are really about: the people who call these cities home. Some, like rural migrants, are mere sojourners in the city, but after a decade or two maybe they should start thinking of these places as home. That is, if they are allowed to.

Sojourners have been coming to Shanghai since its inception as a Treaty Port in 1842. Most of them lived in a housing typology that is unique to the city: the alleyway house. This is referred to by two authors: Non Akraraputra’s analysis uses the more general term living in his examination of the nostalgia that has engulfed this accommodation, just as it is in real danger of disappearing; Lena Scheen, in her examination of Wang Anyi’s famous novel, The Song of Everlastling Sorrow, refers to them by using the Shanghainese term lingtong. These alleyway houses feature almost as a character in the famous novel, which also acts as an encomium to a vanishing way of life. Lena Scheen also interviews the writer who reveals that she moved to the city as a young child and was always perceived as an outsider. The heroine of her novel is a woman who goes against the grain and suffers for it. ‘I can’t say Wang Qian is a representative of Shanghai’, says Wang Anyi, ‘then she is like Boston Ivy on the wall of an old Shanghai building: a beautiful decoration of the city’.

A number of the articles take a broader view of urbanisation in East Asia.

Jacob Dreyer examines how Beijing and Shanghai are vying with one another to be models for the rest of the country. These are two cities with very different characteristics, perhaps China could embrace the best of both worlds and benefit? Or will cities follow one or the other model and increase the polarisation between them? Leslie Sklar takes us away from China by examining the architectural iconicity in the transition from the colonial to the globalising city. He takes a look at Malaysia’s Multimedia Super Corridor, as well as the Petronas Towers and their role in helping Kuala Lumpur position itself as a global city. Finally, we come to a part of Asia that is somewhat underrepresented in discussions of globalisation and postcolonialism, that is the Philippines. Estela Duque’s article examines the role of the US Army in the Philippines between 1898 and the 1920s, and the effects it has had on Manila and its environs.

I worked for many years as an architect in Asia. When I returned to Europe to begin training as an urbanist I found that I had to unlearn some of the tools that had previously served me so well. Perhaps the most important thing I learned was that even though cities might appear to be made up of buildings, as well as the streets and spaces between them, the most important thing about them is people. Architects often concentrate exclusively on buildings (though the better ones do tend to take other factors into account), urbanists are better at seeing the spaces between buildings, not as empty space but as the connections that link the buildings to one another, which of course enables them to function. Spaces between buildings function very much like the spaces between the spokes of a wheel, the wheel’s integrity depends as much on the spaces as on the materials the spokes are made of. So when we look at the buildings not the spaces, would be anything without the people who inhabit them. This simple fact is something that is reflected in the thoughtful and timely essays contained in this focus of Sojourners, and it is also something that any reader should be made aware of enough to visit the places mentioned in the papers should bear in mind. A stroll through these cities’ streets should be enough to convince anyone that what cities are all about is not the cold geometries of stone but the people who call them home.

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Despite architecture and the built environment confronting all of us in our daily lives they have received little attention in discussions of globalisation, capital or postcolonialism. Certain types of architecture can be hegemonic in a class sense, serving specific class interests alongside their recognised aesthetic qualities. Until the middle of the 20th century this idea was discussed mainly in terms of monumentality and political power. However, in recent decades, with the spread of consumerism among the world, notably in the postcolonial, newly industrialised countries (NICs) of East Asia, Leslie Sklair argues that iconic architecture is becoming increasingly important to understanding capitalist globalisation.

Leslie Sklair

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Historically, China has been culturally multivalent, with a heterogeneous range of cultures operating within the larger paradigm of the country as a whole. Today, this tension is best realised in the Chinese coastal metropolis, Shanghai, and the inland ‘northern capital,’ Beijing, two cities equally convinced of their centrality, with systems of spatial organisation that, in addition to being completely at odds with each other, ratify their own roles. In so doing, they offer two equally valid models for other Chinese cities (the so-called ‘second tier’ and ‘third tier’ cities) to follow.

Beijing and Shanghai are both consciously jockeying for this global city status within a China that, still in the midst of finding its own version of modernity, has not yet crystallised around a single urban space. A China in which all roads lead to state power is one, necessarily, which revolves around the Forbidden City (or its contemporary equivalent, the Zhengyang men). Beijing, on the other hand, is two equally valid models for other Chinese cities (the so-called ‘second tier’ and ‘third tier’ cities) to follow.

The metropolis and the capital: Shanghai and Beijing as paradigms of space

Beijing, the political capital, is often given precedence in national discourses, controlled as those are by a centralising state based in Beijing, which has both explicitly and implicitly used media, concentration of academic and cultural institutions and language standardisation that posit Beijing as the true ‘centre’ of China. For Hung Wu, the spiritual centre of Beijing is Tiananmen Square. The urban design of Beijing—concentric ring roads—would seem to suggest that in a cultural sense, all of Beijing is suburb to the Forbidden City, an impression that is equally apparent on subway maps. Wu Hung writes that immediately after the 1949 revolution, the planner Chen Guo ‘identified the city’s traditional zero point… it is never the heart of metropolitan life.’

Tiananmen Square, ‘the center of the capital represents the political power by which it has subjugated its territory. This center, composed of the comings and goings of its representatives, is often apparently vacant…’

Clearly, this diagram is in the form of a gigantic altar surrounding a “gate of heavenly peace,” (to literally translate Tiananmen), designed primarily for the use of emperors, now claimed by their contemporary successors. This metaphor of a gate between heaven and earth still dictates the logic of the capital today: policy on high is translated into immediate political reality in Beijing. Beijing envisions itself as culturally central to China, a vision which itself defines culture as hierarchical, residing in closely guarded legacies of the imperial past in the Palace Museum, Forbidden City, etc. This vision, demanding even the subversion of language for its realisation, has no room for local dialects or ethnic difference, even representing China’s 56 ethnic groups with Han Chinese. This narrative crystallises around the political space of the centre of Beijing and its realisation requires its imposition and universal acceptance. This centre, however, is strangely deserted, echoing Anne Querrien’s concept of the capital: ‘The centre of the capital represents the political power by which it has subjugated its territory. This centre, sporadically alive with the comings and goings of its representatives, is often apparently vacant… it is never the heart of Metropolitan life.’

Shanghai is another story altogether. It is a series of centres, having at least three zones in different areas understood by Shanghai residents as ‘downtown.’ To once more use Querrien’s terms, Shanghai ‘offers its own mode of space-time to those for whom the principles of a sovereign people and a nation state do not apply.’ Shanghai’s gaze, when not narcissistically directed at its own image, is directed at the world outside of China. Shanghaiese have no doubt about the privileged status of their city; if it doesn’t really rival Beijing in political terms, that’s because politics is Beijing’s game and Shanghai isn’t playing. Though Shanghai, almost by definition, has no centre like Tiananmen, the Oriental Pearl Tower is as indicative of Shanghai’s spatial practices as Tiananmen is to Beijing. As with Tiananmen, it is both

Jacob Dreyer
symbol and centre of the city, a monument that has real social meaning as an organisational principle. If the square materialises the logic of collective gathering made monumental, the tower gives life to an entirely different logic of social organisation. The building would serve not only for transmission, but as a centrepiece of Pudong.11 It was seen as being central to the view of the Pudong New Area (an area that was largely unpopulated at the time of its construction) and the building was meant to be viewed from Puxi, the area on the opposite side of the river where the majority of residents live. In addition, the structure acts as a viewing tower itself. This triple function of spectacle – transmitting spectacle, enacting spectacle, and enabling spectacle – exemplifies the language of Shanghai's skyline.

Much of the admiration for Shanghai is based on visual evidence. Just look at Shanghai's impressive and imposing skyline and the confusion is obvious,14 writes an economist. Shanghai’s baroque finery is not a coincidence but fundamental to the perception that it is the natural economic centre of China. Shanghaiese writers have noted the commercial atmosphere of the city; Wang Anyi writes of the Shanghai opera of the 1920s that “the singing resembled everyday conversation, and the subject was the bitterness of not having the necessities of life, such as rice and salt – far from cry from... Peking opera, consumed by lofty ideas such as loyalty and patriotism.”15

It is worth noting that the names of both cities denote their geographic positions. If Beijing defines itself as the capital of the north, Shanghai epitomises the culmination of a different fellowship and tradition, that of the water cities of the Yangtze river plain; the city name situates it on the upper reaches of the Huangpu river. Ranciere recently wrote of the chaotic populism of port life, “a disease that comes from the port, of the Huangpu river. Ranciere recently wrote of the chaotic populism of port life, ‘a disease that comes from the port, of the Huangpu river. Ranciere recently wrote of the chaotic populism of port life, of the Huangpu and Hongkou districts; places that truly demonstrated in favour of in Tiananmen Square: ‘The social ideal of the Huangpu river. Ranciere recently wrote of the chaotic populism of port life, of the Huangpu and Hongkou districts; places that truly demonstrated in favour of in Tiananmen Square: ‘The social ideal of... Beijing's planners to leave the skyscrapers to the experts, but which is perhaps compromised by a past and present rivalry of port life, ‘a disease that comes from the port, of the Huangpu river. Ranciere recently wrote of the chaotic populism of port life, of the Huangpu and Hongkou districts; places that truly demonstrated in favour of in Tiananmen Square: ‘The social ideal of... Beijing's planners to leave the skyscrapers to the experts, but which is perhaps compromised by a past and present rivalry of...
The state of cities in China

The high-speed city building of reform-era China will soon yield an agglomeration of many large, non-agricultural settlements. China’s massive, geographically clustered urban core will repeat itself via a common set of distinguishable spatial manifestations. The stories of individuals’ plights and everyday life were irrelevant to the planning of this spatial spread. Instead, a totalising utopian vision, with the city itself as a subject, dominates the propagandistic narrative of urbanisation. Will the upgrade of infrastructure, some of which includes unprecedentedly fast high-speed rail, redeem conceptual planning biases by interconnecting the splatter-patterned urban spots across the country?

By 2020, a gigantic metacity is poised to dominate the country, aggregated along its eastern coastal periphery, between the Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong metropolitan areas and their respective enclaves. Clockwise from the top of the map, the northeast and the Bohai coastal region in the north, the Yangtze River Delta further south, the Pearl River Delta in the southeast, as well as the industrial cluster around Xi’an and Chongqing in the west, will serve as outlines of the conurbation.

Piper Rae Gaubatz explains that the key underlying societal changes allowing for the new spatial fabric of post-Mao China are the specialisation and gradual commodification of land use (Gaubatz: 28). The changes to both specialisation and commodification of land use have delivered new textures and forms that have resulted in questionable sustainability for such a large, urbanised mass, which has been almost exclusively planned on a block-by-block basis (with large blocks as the basic units). Commutes between residence and work, or business district, educational district and administrative district, are carbon-intensive and often based on private car use. Before the specialisation of land use for residential, commercial and industrial use, Chinese citizens often resided close to or in their place of work, eliminating the need for commuting. Furthermore, the loss of agricultural land in the areas surrounding the cities, becoming earmarked for industrial and/or urban development, lengthens the process of food procurement for the city dweller.

Better inter-connection, better life?

Of key importance, then, is China’s emphasis on the building of a massive, high-volume and high-speed transport network. The urban nodes within this evolving network are becoming integrated through a high-speed, large volume transport network of air, rail, expressways and water links. Different modes of transport are interlinked via multi-modal transport hubs.

Infrastructure is centrally coordinated and implemented: the national highway network plan, as well as high-speed rail development targets of the Ministries of Transport and Railways, respectively establish arteries for the relatively controlled but fast movement of people and goods. Additionally, the project resonates with political power through its sheer size and scale. The layout of the national expressway system sets out seven routes radiating from the capital, Beijing. These are enamelled with nine longitudinal north-south corridors and 17 east-west horizontal routes. The total length of the system will exceed 100,000 km (62,000 miles) (see map).

According to the Chinese Ministry of Railways, currently China runs 86,000 km (54,000 miles) of rail, the second most extensive network in the world. 6,552 km of these are high-speed tracks, the longest amount in the world. Within two years, 42 dedicated high-speed rail tracks will be finished, bringing the total number of newly built high-speed rail tracks to 13,000 km. China’s rail network will surpass 110,000 km. Of the new high-speed tracks, 5,000 km support transport speeds of 250 km/h and 8,000 km of them allow for transport at as much as 350 km/h. Arranged within a grid of four north-south and another four east-west corridors, the rail transport network will include ring infrastructures for the Bohai Gulf and the Pearl and Yangtze River Deltas. High-speed rail is integrated with an emphasis on inter-modal terminals: high-speed rail terminals are placed adjacent to airports and expressways.

Movement is of paramount importance for the prosperity of the cities’ and the country’s – if not the whole planet’s – sustainable future. The new fibres of transportation will need not only to connect but eventually integrate the urban spread of the last 30 years into a dense but functioning machine for living. China’s productivity will be upgraded by the increased speed of movement of goods and people.

The massive, newly built environment of China has appeared mostly at a low cost and at spectacularly high speed. The real loser in most of this urbanisation is farmland. It has been besieged by vertical cities, seemingly dropped from the sky.

To tabula rasa. Photo by Scott Kavecsery

Above: Twirls of multiple ribbons command vast areas of urban space.
After the 1978 reform, China embarked on an unprecedented urbanisation drive. The focus was on rapid expansion, driven by the policy of "one town, one city" and the "speed city" concept.

The consequences are radical transformations for the everyday practices of life. As part of the large-scale urbanisation movement, China’s path provides an opportunity to reassess the practices of planning, building, and community development themselves.

Towards some conclusions

The ethos driving the spatial change is often relying on an abstract ‘concept-city’ contained within a mantra of progress. The radicalism of the urban reveres progress at the expense of casual time and makes space the subject of technology alone. This utopian notion of the urban is both a hero and machinery of modernity. We have seen that urbanites are simply objects of urbanisation rather than subjects in charge of sustainable urbanisation and not just objects affected by it.

China is a hybrid of the results typically associated with these two types of planning, albeit overwhelmingly a type one with a very small input of type-two, its built urban spaces have the look and scale of abstract, visionary planning. In the urban landscape some organic emergence and informality prevails, but as research by Luofeng Qin on Shanghai’s structural transformation shows, little to no community collaborative practices of planning, building, and community development themselves.

The newsletter and commercial development. State capitalist market principles alone underpin residential and carries out the transformations, it is the local government. Top-down. If it is not the central government that dictates (Qin: 239). Only in exceptional cases is structural change not transformation shows, little to no community collaborative experience in urban form in China and declares that such a ‘city of objects’ is ‘the realisation of the anti-city texture city ideal’.

The narrated universal subject of the propaganda of urbanisation is the concept of the ‘city’ it’self and not the sustainable upgrade of myriad individuals’ daily act of life. The concept of the city, according to Michel de Certeau, is both a hero and machinery of modernity. We have seen that urbanites are simply objects of urbanisation rather than subjects in charge of transformation. Perhaps city dwellers, now or in the future, should gain the power and wisdom to constitute themselves as subjects in charge of sustainable urbanisation and not just objects affected by it.

There are, hence, clear implications in the new urban environment for design, architecture theory and planning: spatial planning interventions should be based on multidisciplinary input, community focused, and preferably lightweight. Furthermore, flexible frameworks should replace long-term planning. Yong He Chang, currently Dean of the Architecture Department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, deplores the emphasis on symbolism versus experience in urban form in China and declares that such a ‘city of objects’ is ‘the realisation of the anti-city texture city ideal’.

The Practice of Everyday Life. As part of the large-scale urbanisation move-ment, China’s path provides an opportunity to reassess the practices of planning, building, and community development themselves.

Neville Mars’ analysis on contemporary city-building is that two types of urban planning can be distinguished: one is founded on a belief in expertise and the power of ideas. The other distrusts grandiosity and abstraction, correct forms and other distrusts grandiosity and abstraction, correct forms and modular designs. Due to the availability of low-cost labour and large physical scales, high speeds can be achieved by an extremely short planning and design stage and the wide employ-ment of readily available standard and modular designs.

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The crux of this divide. Type one favours institutionalised, large-scale responses; while type-two planning focuses on surveying, charting, tracing the layout and composition of real-estate site, as well as the laying out and composition of the new structures. Due to the availability of low-cost labour and large physical scales, high speeds can be achieved by an extremely short planning and design stage and the wide employ-ment of readily available standard and modular designs.
A wave of migration from China's countryside to its cities has left a floating mass of dislocated people with little emotional connectivity to the places that receive them. Consequently, a space of illegality and irregularity has arisen in the periphery of China's urban areas. As this suburbia grows so does segregation, inequality, poverty and crime. State authorities, powerless to prevent rural to urban movement, opt for a 'demolition-redevelopment' model that forces migrants to locate elsewhere, quelling the growth of peri-urban slums. At the same time, a lack of space and opportunity and an unclear policy of urban integration result in a constant flow back to the countryside.

Before the national economic reform, the people's communes were responsible of their own agricultural and industrial goods and production. Communes also took charge of maintaining, repairing or renewing irrigation systems, dams and ditches, as well as carrying the costs of schools and healthcare. Development and gains were based on a structure of collective labour and common good. Rural communes also benefited from campaigns such as the Great Leap Forward (1958-61) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), when urban residents were mobilized to aid in the growth of the countryside. This resulted in a 'decentralized urban growth' (Lee 1992: 89-118). Towns and cities became centres of economic activity but not bases of residential expansion. Instead, townships (xiang) sprang up and hosted rural huku, where many farmers arriving from other rural villages could work and live. However, since 1984 and the first reform of the household registration system, many farmers along with their family members had become the urban population (jiagou) of the new urban form (Friedmann, 2005: 63). At such, the urban population rarely mixes with rural migrants who live on the fringes or in factories and construction sites. They become 'surplus migratory labour', leaving their farms in the hands of women, children and the elderly, making rural development virtually impossible. This is compounded by the phenomenon of farmers abandoning their uncultivated tracts of land, rather than renting it out for others to farm, because they see the property as their only form of security. The governmental slogan in the countryside is considered a 'dangerous class' (Friedmann, 2005: 63). As such, the urban population rarely mixes with rural migrants who live on the fringes or in factories and construction sites. It is an 'invisible population' that gathers together in groups originating from the same native place.

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Illegal migration to mega-cities
In the mid-1990s, migration affected approximately 80-100 million people (Stockman 2000: 65). Today, most newcomers to China's cities are temporary workers, construction labourers and housemaids. The numbers of temporary residents without formal urban household registration has increased. Cities like Beijing or Shanghai periodically eradicating migrant enclaves and repatriating the population because these areas are considered a threat to the public order (poor living conditions, social disorder and the deterioration of the urban environment). China’s ‘floating population’ is considered a 'dangerous class' (Friedmann, 2005: 63). As such, the urban population rarely mixes with rural migrants who live on the fringes or in factories and construction sites. It is an ‘invisible population’ that gathers together in groups originating from the same native place.

The state cannot control the numbers of these illegal rural migrants, the majority of whom end up in the informal and illegal economies or doing dangerous, dirty and difficult jobs in family enterprises, manufacturing industries, or as nurserymaids to middle-class households. All of them are paid below the minimum wage and exploited. Young women,
in particular, are at high risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. Migrants live in cramped dormitories or squeezed together in one room because their limited salaries don’t stretch to paying for a single room in an urban village. Even in these conditions, migrants still expect to save some money to support their families in the countryside, one of the major reasons why they left home in the first place.

Migrants have created a social space that falls outside official planning and implicates a transformation not only of the physical space in the cities but also of society in general (Zhang 2001: 202-3). They form alternative living spaces and build illegal structures, including temporary housing, stores, restaurants and street markets. At times of important international gatherings and events in China, the government mobilises clean-up campaigns and demolishes these illegal constructions. In the cities, illegal enclaves are called ‘villages’ (cun) and are preceded by the name of the province where the migrants come from. For example, hosts Henancun, Anhucun and Zhejiangcun. These villages are conglomerations of illegal dwellings located in peri-urban zones (Friedmann 2005: 70). There are also peri-urban villages around big urban centres that attract the settlement of rural migrants who, because of their rural status, cannot obtain state-subsidised housing in the cities (cun). These peri-urban villages provide them with opportunities for accessible and affordable housing and to live legally with their rural hukou. Often, indigenous villagers in peri-urban areas build housing units in order to rent them out to migrants (Zhang 2005: 248). The current law gives farmers autonomy over their land and they are not obliged to follow building codes. Consequently, many of these housing constructions evade planning regulations. The result is chaotic shanty areas that aggravate problems of spatial segregation. The government’s approach to urban development is its ‘demolition-development’ model. The local government allot indigenous villagers with a new registration household, upgrading them from rural to urban hukou. However, the migrant rural population living in these villages automatically acquire a status of illegality, forcing them to relocate and keeping them in a constant state of flux.

The establishment of the People’s Republic and a planned social economy induced the political goal to reduce the gap between rural and urban China. However, the good will ended as numerous social mobility restrictions grew and resulted in an even greater physical barrier between both worlds. With the shift from a planned to a free market economy, the aim, again, was to reduce the economic gap between rural and urban areas, privatising business and allowing the construction of competitive industries in rural areas. Manufacturing facilities in cities and peri-urban areas attracted cheap rural labour that helped to make the economy competitive. The government was permissive, granting flexible household restrictions in order to allow for the arrival of millions of workers to urban areas. However, despite attempts to eliminate the duality, rural migrants have not been fully integrated into China’s urban social structure. A lack of clear social policy in this respect makes it impossible to solve the problem of the constant movement of a ‘floating population’. Without a permanent abode and better housing conditions, the risk that migrants become a permanent urban underclass has become a reality. The migratory enclaves that have developed help them to maintain their social relations and to preserve a group identity, however, these ‘villages’ also isolate them into ghettos.

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References
Constituting governance: the US Army in the Philippines, 1898-1920s

This essay looks at the transformation of Manila and its periphery over two decades, beginning with the American occupation in 1898. The US Army's success in pacifying the provinces is frequently associated with its 'reconcentration' of the rural population, which cut off the insurgency's economic and material support. What is not recognised is that this was a spatial intervention and that it is equally important to examine how the state was constituted in order to understand how its technical or infrastructure programme worked. When the United States staged a theatre of war in the Philippines, the city was the initial site of operations. The official end of the Philippine-American War in 1903 transformed indigenous resistance into a guerrilla war with important implications for state superstructure and infrastructure. This study argues that the US military, represented by the Philippine Division, contributed to the early establishment of highly centralised state superstructure and regional reforms, including the initial decentralisation of regional autonomy and the later integration of Mindanao.

Sources of authority

It is important to establish the depth of the Philippines Division's involvement in post war rebuilding efforts. The First Philippine Commission, appointed by US President William McKinley on January 20, 1899, came on an investigative mission. The Second Philippine Commission (September 1900-August 1902) had legislative and executive powers to begin organising a system for governing the archipelago. It was only in July 1902 that an insular government was established, headed by William Howard Taft as first Governor-General. That year, in General Order no. 152 (July 7), US President Roosevelt relieved the Commanding General of the Philippine Division as Military Governor and placed him in a subordinate position to the Governor-General. These instructions contained an assumption of peace, referring to the end of the Philippine insurrection and a new task of creating local governments, except in those areas held by 'Moro tribes'.

According to Resil Mojares, the Philippine Division allowed the Spanish influenced municipal and provincial structure of local government to continue functioning. Between August 1899 and March 1900 the Philippine Division issued the earliest regulations for municipal organisation. It was only in September 1900 that the first civil legislation was passed, which provided two million Mexican dollars for road and bridge building and a repair programme for the entire archipelago – another task that fell to military responsibility.

Two civil laws were enacted in 1901 reorganising municipal and provincial governments in pacified areas – Act no. 82 (January 31) and Act no. 83 (February 6) – but they could not be enforced anywhere. Act no. 100 (March 9) enabled the Military Governor to appoint an administrative body in places plagued by insurgent activities. Furthermore, military control of a province was restored if insurrectionary activity resumed, as was the case in the provinces of Cotabato, Batangas and Bohol. The US military also continued to participate in civil affairs after the official end of the Philippine-American War in 1903, something that has not been well acknowledged. An examination of the legislation passed between 1901 and 1913 shows precisely what civil duties the military performed, including being detailed to various civil positions as bureau chiefs to clerks, and holding positions from chief engineers to draftsmen and from provincial governors to provincial police officers.

From January 1901, General Order no. 141 series 1900 made possible the release of a majority of the clerks in the Adjutant General's Office so that they may accept civil positions, all except two were enlisted men. A few months later, the Military Governor was authorised by Act no. 100 (March 9) to organise the administrative body where the Provincial Government Act could not be enforced. Act no. 123 (March 28) gave the Military Governor the option of assigning military officers 'quasi-civil functions' in these provincial posts. In 1903, Act no. 787 (June 1) authorised the organisation of a government in the Moro Province, contained provisions enabling US Army officers to be appointed as Provincial Governor, Secretary, and Engineer. Shortly thereafter US Army officers were allowed to act as attorneys representing United States' interests in Philippine courts, by Act no. 856 (August 27). According to Frank H. Golay, by this time 20 US Volunteers had been accused of offences such as embezzlement of public funds. Despite this, the appointment of military officers to insular government positions continued, filling an important gap in the colonial service.

In 1905, Act no. 1391 (September 8) allowed US Army officers to be detailed to civil districts as Governor and Secretary; and by Act no. 1416 (December 1) to the constabulary force (civil police) in positions ranging from director, military district chiefs to all ranks of officer (field, line, executive, supply and quartermaster, medical and ordinance). The following year, legislation enabled US Army officers to execute non-combatant roles: as justices of peace enforcing liquor traffic prohibitions. Act no. 1502 (June 26), made them 'peace officers', with powers to arrest and deliver to authorities those perceived as violators of sanitary
The early 20th century Philippines began with the Philippines achieved through more systematic ‘land use’ and transport—initially driven by aesthetic concerns, only later shifting to

Historians have pointed out that city planning in the US was

Tracing the pacification trail

The US military’s roles in pacified and non-pacified areas, especially Visayas, Mindanao and the Sulu

The US military’s experience in pacification

The productive and the destructive aspects of war are dicho-

American military administrators in Mindanao and Sulu archipelago used religious, historical, cultural and social differences to argue for a policy of integration.

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The Focus: Urbanisation in East Asia 27

Notes


Nostalgia has consistently been a motivation for the study of contemporary Chinese urban life. Scholars have produced an abundance of work on urbanism from a pro-historic preservation perspective and, for example, have long claimed that the *lilong* house (*li* means neighbourhoods, *long* means lanes) is an efficient form of housing for the residents of Shanghai. Non Arkaraprasertkul argues, however, that these studies fall short in terms of future city planning, as they omit the personal experiences and viewpoints of urban residents regarding the efficiency of such dwellings.

**Non Arkaraprasertkul**

**28 The Focus: Urbanisation in East Asia**

**Leaping beyond nostalgia: Shanghai’s urban life ethnography**

Soon after Shanghai became a treaty port in the 1840s, British developers built *lilong* houses to provide basic accommodation for Chinese labourers. A typical *lilong* neighbourhood is a walled community composed of a main lane running all or half-way across each housing block, connected by perpendicular branch lanes. *

**Lilong: a critical history**

The idea behind the *lilong* is to pack as many housing units, as economically as possible, into any single cluster. For instance, the original design of the *lilong* included lanes which function not only as the main and only access to individual residential units but also back-of-the-house service paths. This has the added benefit of minimising construction costs, since the two different functions pertained to mobility in the community were combined. Before long, however, residents had transformed this thoroughfare into an everyday ‘community corridor,’ utilising the area as space for all manner of activities from hanging out to chat and for community meetings, to cooking, washing clothes and selling stuff to gambling and so on.

This is a good illustration of how adaptations within *lilong* neighbours respond to the multiple social functions of the community, allowing its physical components to serve several purposes simultaneously. The success of the first series of *lilong* led to demands for the next. In fact, within a century of the first construction, more than 200,000 *lilong* dwelling units – of approximately 60 to 150 square metres per unit – had been built and the *lilong* had become the dominating characteristic of the urban fabric of Shanghai (see fig. 1 and 2).

Benefitting both servant Chinese and served Westerners, *lilong* houses became the epitome of communal and modern Chinese housing culture and were in high demand until a series of wars and local uprisings disrupted foreign industries, which was in essence the backbone of Shanghai’s economy, and which were followed by the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. Foreign commercial investment and employment disappeared due to the wartime turbulence and the radical changes brought about by Mao Zedong’s socialist central fiscal planning policy that followed it. During the hardship of this ongoing period of economic decline, residents were continually adapting the basic structure of the *lilong* to accommodate changing social and political circumstances. The residents adopted unique methods in order to flexibly utilise the formal space – in ways the original builders did not plan – to meet their daily needs.

The result was a change in the social structure both of the single unit and of the neighbourhood. Each unit was subdivided to house more families and allow for more commercial activity.

Since the 1970s, *lilong* houses have become increasingly popular among Shanghai’s burgeoning middle and upper classes. Despite the *lilong*’s serious infrastructural problems, due to the increasing population and adequate provision of maintenance in these ageing houses, many people see them as a viable alternative to expensive high-rise apartments. As this interest in the *lilong* houses increases, it is becoming increasingly necessary to understand how the flexibility of these urban spaces works. It begs the question, is it the residents who are flexible or the *lilong*, or perhaps both? (see fig. 3).

Today, Shanghai is undergoing unprecedented urban development, which can be attributed to the process of social reform (*shenhua*) and skyrocketing land values, both of which tend to encourage high-rise building. Deciding how to rebuild a ‘new’ Shanghai or to preserve the *lilong* is a critical history.

The ‘missing middle ground’

Needless to say, research from both sociological and historical perspectives that advocates the preservation of *lilong* indicates that high-rise development could be responsible for diminishing the social bonds and the relationships of the people in these communities. There have been a number of studies of the *lilong* made, in a variety of disciplines. Those from the fields of architecture are perhaps the most concrete in terms of implementation; yet they still rely on the extreme tabula rasa approach – i.e. how to rebuild a ‘new’ *lilong* neighbourhood – rather than the trying to establish a middle ground that tries to incorporate both preservation and urban development.

As a result of the One Child Policy (duzhengginsuanguo), there have been changes in the preferences for housing among multi-generational Shanghaiese residents and immigrants for which *lilong* may or may not be the answer. The study of the relationship between the physical infrastructure of *lilong* and the social formation of neighbours is important to the process of urban housing policy planning and could provide a counter-balance to high-rise development. Within the context of China’s unprecedented social reform, the knowledge and ideas gained from cultural and social anthropology are essential.

In an earlier paper, ‘Towards Modern Urban Housing: Redeﬁ ning Shanghai’s “Lilong”,’ this author presented a comprehensive study of the history and architecture of *lilong* and offered a new way of looking at the design of new housing in contemporary Shanghai. The idea was put forward that the low-to-mediumrise and high-density (LMRHD) housing is the most suitable for the city, but with a caveat that the author was ‘aware that this research might not completely ﬁ ll the noticeable void in contemporary thinking on architecture and urban housing in Shanghai.’

This paper is not an extension of this previous work on the *lilong*, quite the opposite in fact, this paper aims at disrupting and renegotiating the common perception – an axiom if you will – about the study of urban housing and design. It adamantly rejects the value of scholarship (including some of the author’s own work) as it ignores some of the most important aspects of design, that is, the understanding of the community-in-action from an anthropological perspective. Needless to say, as the introduction of this paper discusses, there are differences in several academic attitudes and perspectives towards *lilong*, which are important to the thorough understanding of housing design.
the condition of resistance in the environment of a community that has an important role in the design of social space.\footnote{4}

The principle methodology would be participant observation. While this could be construed as a ‘passive method’, ethnographers can never be passive in reality. In fact, people are going to expect contributions back from the field ethnographer and that is always a negotiated process. Regarding the use of such methods from Participatory Action Research (PAR) which requires full involvement of people in every aspect of research towards a goal (or best cases, of their choosing) for progress or development.\footnote{5} Another viable method is Participatory Appraisal (PA), which employs techniques such as ‘Photovoice’ – giving selected groups a disposable camera and have them photograph their neighbours to record the community’s strengths and concerns. The aim of the method is twofold: firstly, to get the participants to engage in a group process of critical reflection on the community and secondly, to develop an opportunity to look into the deeper content of the community that cannot be seen using the outsider’s perspective. In fact, the PA method (developed by Robert Chambers) is widely used in international development studies, with the aim of incorporating the knowledge and opinions of people in the planning and management of development projects.

Conclusion

The study of contemporary urban housing in large and emerging Chinese cities should be a fundamental attempt to understand residents’ lives and their inevitable processes of adaptation to the urban environment. It is controlled by a set of formal and informal rules and regulations that is different from other places in the world. The latest developmental stage of community-oriented urban housing design sparked important debate on the relationship between people and the built environment in the recent study of spatiality. This is a place where the limiting knowledge to physical space alone is redundant and where ethnography and anthropological work can fill in the gaps. What I have learned specifically from my study of the Lilong is the ‘condition of resistance’ in the environment of a community that has an important role to play in the design of social space.

\footnote{4} However, it would be unecumenical for an architect, commissioned to study and design a housing project, to spend a week or a month ‘hanging out’ like an anthropologist in the community to try and understand how things work in order to produce a good design. Instead, the lighter version of ethnography for housing research requires architects to pay attention to what they observe and to ensure they are keen to ask questions about the rationality behind certain activities that take place in the community, rather than to just look at the characteristics and physical condition of the existing architecture. That is, it is possible – and feasible – to conduct an ethnographic study of an urban community in order to derive the true understanding of the community for design.\footnote{5}

Such fieldwork aims at assessing the nature of Shanghai’s communities; a) the organisation of public space in such communities; b) the casual formation of semi-private space; and c) the social networks (community networks including clubs, exercise groups, religious groups, chess clubs, etc.), which constitute spatial arrangement; and d) the personal experience of inhabitants actively creating and/or maintaining both

Addressing the missing middle ground

To reiterate, given the scholarship of historians (particularly that from the 1980s to the present time) who have long claimed that the Lilong has been an ‘efficient’ form of housing for Shanghai residents, this paper seeks to ask a deeper question, from a community perspective, about whether or not Lilong should be considered as part of the future planning of Shanghai? The research on urban housing should be based on the study of the relationship between space and people, rather than just being led by a nostalgia for the Lilong. This approach is necessary to define how space is utilised, justified, and re-justified by the resident users, the people who stand in the middle ground between the physical form of their micro-communities and the ever-changing culture of China’s largest city. Does Shanghai accept the Lilong as its dominant dwelling culture? Or have financial factors resulted in these houses and neighbourhoods becoming as important as they have done?

The suggested primary research methodology is a ‘lighter’ version of ethnography as presented by Jan Wampler and this author in the work Community-Oriented Urban Housing Design for Beijing: Strategies for Livelihood and Urban Design (2008). In this paper, some basic study methods were suggested, such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews, which architects and urban designers can employ in order to understand the dynamic of communities. From this study of the community, the strategy paper proposed a series of experimental designs that represented ideas of ‘community-oriented housing’. That is to say, mixed-use, mixed-income, and mixed-housing type developments, as well as humanised and walkable neighbourhoods, and high-density, integrated open space, and environmental morphology. The study revealed that the process of familiarisation is crucial to architecture. In other words, ‘the site visit’ is a pathway to the preliminary understanding of the quality of space alongside the requirements of any programme. Without this first process of deep familiarisation with the locality of the site, architects will fail to derive a design that works and, as Jan Wampler claimed that the Lilong has been an ‘efficient’ form of housing settlement from the 1980s resulting in a typology of traditional health hazard displacement, drugs; changing structure towards a goal (in best cases, of their choosing) for progress or development.\footnote{5} Another viable method is Participatory Appraisal (PA), which employs techniques such as ‘Photovoice’ – giving selected groups a disposable camera and have them photograph their neighbours to record the community’s strengths and concerns. The aim of the method is twofold: firstly, to get the participants to engage in a group process of critical reflection on the community and secondly, to develop an opportunity to look into the deeper content of the community that cannot be seen using the outsider’s perspective. In fact, the PA method (developed by Robert Chambers) is widely used in international development studies, with the aim of incorporating the knowledge and opinions of people in the planning and management of development projects.

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The collective infatuation with colonial Shanghai – referred to as ‘Shanghai nostalgia’ in Chinese cultural discourse – sprang up in the mid-1990s when the city witnessed an explosion of destruction and renewal. Searching for a Shanghai identity in the midst of brutal transformation, Shanghai writers resorted, en masse, to this distinctive period in Chinese history. After being presented as the epitome of evil in the Maoist period, colonial Shanghai now reconquered its original representation of Western-style urban modernity. The typical Shanghai longtang, built in the colonial period and characterised by a unique mixture of Chinese and Western architecture – has become one of the main symbols, featuring recurrently in contemporary Shanghai fiction, of which Song of Everlasting Sorrow is one of the most representative examples.

**Song of Everlasting Sorrow**

Wang Anyi’s novel borrows its title from a narrative poem by Bai Juyi (CE 772-846) about the tragic love story between Tang emperor Xuanzong and his most beautiful concubine Yang Guifei. Being madly in love, the emperor neglects his state affairs until he has to flee because of an armed rebellion. His royal guards blame Yang Guifei and force the emperor to have her executed. The poem closes with Xuanzong’s lamenting words: ‘While even heaven and earth will one day come to an end, this everlasting sorrow shall endure.’

The novel Song of Everlasting Sorrow also ends in the murder of a tragic beauty, the ageing Qiyao whose life reflects Shanghai’s turbulent history. As though she is just one of the diverse elements that constitute a longtang neighbourhood, Wang Anyi only introduces Qiyao after four chapters of detailed description of the longtang setting. She embodies the ‘girlish longtang spirit’:

> Behind every doorway in the Shanghai longtang a Wang Qiyao is studying, embroidering, whispering secrets to her sisters, or throwing a tear-stained tantrum at her parents.

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> Behind every doorway in the Shanghai longtang a Wang Qiyao is studying, embroidering, whispering secrets to her sisters, or throwing a tear-stained tantrum at her parents.

Through Wang Anyi’s words, the protagonist of the novel seems to become the longtang itself, or, in the words of the Chinese journal Writer: ‘the city’s alleys, the city’s atmosphere, the city’s thought and spirit.’

While the timeframe of the three parts of Song of Everlasting Sorrow corresponds to the political periods of pre-Mao, Mao, and post-Mao China, it is not a historical novel in the strict sense. History and politics play their part behind the scenes, leaving their traces in Wang Qiyao’s life story. But what is most striking about the novel is how historical events are mirrored in the changing physical appearance of the longtang, that originated in the glorious days of cosmopolitan Shanghai:

First to appear are the dormer windows protruding from a rooftop tingzijian [the garret above the kitchen in longtang, this often rented out to struggling young writers and lent its name to a popular literary genre as a result] of those traditional longtang buildings, showing themselves off with a certain self-conscious delicacy; the wooden shutters are carefully delineated, the handmade rooftop tiles are arranged with precision, even the potted roses on the windowsills have been cared for painstakingly.

CONTINUED PAGE 32 >
My relations with Shanghai are tense

An interview with Wang Anyi

When Wang Anyi was only one year old, she moved to Shanghai with her mother, the distinguished Shu Diqian. Today, Wang Anyi herself is, arguably, the most influential writer of Shanghai and her stories consistently use the city as a backdrop. Yet in a recent public interview, Wang Anyi confessed that she ‘doesn’t feel Shanghaiese’, though she added, ‘but, neither can I say that I’m not Shanghaiese, because if I’m not, then where am I from?’

Ms Wang sits on the stage, wearing an ankle-length skirt and a long shawl draped around her shoulders. Her lively eyes scan the audience with curiosity. Sitting up straight, hair pinned back, feet placed firmly on the ground, hands clenched into fists on her knees, she exudes the air both of a distinguished writer and of a down-to-earth peasant woman; an intriguing paradox that she shares with several other mainland Chinese intellectuals.

It is not difficult to picture Ms Wang 40 years ago, when most ‘urban youths’ were sent to the countryside for ‘re-education’. Her mother is both a library, and a young girl with rose cheeks and braided hair, most likely wearing unionsio cottoned-padded clothes while swimming revolutionary songs to the violin and jam session. In particular, her early work deals with these experiences during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), after which she started writing stories that belonged to the so-called ‘roots-seeking literature’ tradition that explored traditional Chinese customs and values still present in the countryside. However, with the 1990s the city has turned inwardly towards the main subject of this interview: the city of Shanghai. Explaining this shift in her work, Wang says:

Although my work from before the 1990s doesn’t relate itself to the countryside, the city didn’t play a role in my work; it was always in the background of my plot. At that time, my work focused on the characters, their emotions, and how they grew in the story. Shanghai is the place where I live and I think people are usually not so conscious of their own living environment. So there’s probably also the reason that when I wrote stories set in Shanghai, I didn’t really reflect on the place where the characters were living. Since the 1990s, though my work still focused on novel and urban experiences, the city became more concrete, and sometimes even the main character of a story. For example, in my short story ‘The Street’, the street itself is actually the only character and forms the whole plot; I describe the houses, the cars, the people, but the people remain nameless. Although I am very critical of this story—I think it is rather boring—I still consider it an important turning point in my writing: from now on Shanghai became an important subject in my work.

After each question, Wang Anyi vigorously keeps on talking until she leaves the interviewer speechless for the next is her. She is short, quick-witted, and sharp, at times appearing to think out loud and until the interviewer interrupts her for the next. She is open, this shift in her work, Wang says:

I’ve felt I’m talking too much to myself, then I just have to write it down until it becomes a novel.

The story reveals how Wang Anyi continuously relates her position as a ‘new Shanghaiese’ to her writing profession, reminding us of the best-selling author Chen Danyan (often grouped with Wang Anyi and Cheng Nashan for their ‘nostalgic novels’ on Shanghai), who also moved to the city as a young child and frequently emphasises how her ‘outsider’s perspective’, as she puts it in an interview, ‘helped her to detect many subtle things ignored and taken for granted by local Shanghaiese’. It is precisely this distance that turns them into good observers, as Ms Wang modestly explains:

I haven’t experienced much, so most of my stories come from my imagination. Actually, you can call me a little boring or a coward with regard to life, but I do have passion and I like to watch other people’s lives. I’m not a writer but a spectator, observing the lives of others and even the most trivial things. When young people aspiring to become a writer ask for advice, I always tell them that the main talent of a writer is to observe.

A talent that Wang Anyi attributes particularly to women: not only because they ‘have a great capacity for strong emotions’ as ‘emotional beings’, but also, again, because of their ‘outsider’s perspective’.

Male authors often write about major events in society. Even when they write about personal feelings, it’s always related to these issues. Works by female authors have their own characteristics: we prefer to write about daily life. Why do people like Zhang Ailing (Eileen Chang) so much? I think it’s because she writes about the common people. This is why I personally prefer to read works by female authors. This is why I don’t dare to say that the protagonist Wang Qiyao represents the city, because if I would say that, readers might point out qualities that are missing. But I did try to keep many characteristics of the protagonist resistant with the city. For example, Wang Qiyao is from a common background, born in a common family, which is just like Shanghai. In China, Shanghai is a relatively mature society consisting of an urban middle class that barely inherited anything from the past, but had to start from scratch, on its own and without being too ambitious. So the city and its people take it one step at a time. What I like about Wang Qiyao, and what is also true for the city, is that although she is very pretty and tender, she is a strong woman at heart. She doesn’t care about her duties according to the social norms, but pursue things desired by contemporary values, which is why she is always defeated. But of course, Shanghai is a much stronger woman and it is developing into a megacity.

So, I can’t say Wang Qiyao is a representative of Shanghai, then she is like Boston key on the wall of an old Shanghai building: a beautiful decoration of the city.

Lena Scheen

Note

Wang Anyi (b.1954) is the author of numerous volumes of essays, short stories, and novels, which are gaining her increasing recognition around the world, ranging from China’s highest literary honour, the Mao Dun Prize (for Song of Everlasting Sorrow), to the Los Angeles Times Book of the Year Award (for which Booktown was a finalist). Currently Ms Wang is the Chairperson of the Shanghai Writers’ Association, and a professor of Chinese literature at Fudan University.

This interview took place during ‘Shanghai Week’, a festival organised by the city of Rotterdam in honour of the 30th anniversary of the Shanghai-Rotterdam sister city relationship and the Shanghai World Expo 2010. If you are interested in the full interview, please contact the author. With thanks to Nan Su (Dutch Sino Business Promotions) for her kind help with the translation.
This is the décor against which Wang Qiyao’s story begins in 1946, when she is 16 years old, reaching third place in a Miss Shanghai contest. Leading a glamorous life as a model and mistress of Kuomintang officer Li, Qiyao is able to escape her humble background. Her charmed life ends with Li getting killed in a plane crash and Qiyao being left with only a small box of his gold bars.

The novel ends with Wang Qiyao’s violent death: she is murdered for the one possession that she nostalgically used to keep the past alive – Li’s gold bars, symbols of old Shanghai.

The Shanghai longtang have grown gray; there are cracks in the terraces were all pried open suddenly, their secrets, conciliatory or compromising, damp and moldy, reeking of rat piss, were in the process of rotting away. […]

In the final part of Song of Everlasting Sorrow Shanghai embraces the market economy model. Wang Qiyao has more difficulties in adapting than her illegitimate daughter. As a former Miss Shanghai, Qiyao becomes a symbol of the colonial period and attracts a young boy who idolises her because of this. However, he soon realises that his beloved old city and Qiyao are both fading irrevocably away.

Amid the forest of new skyscrapers, these old longtang neighborhoods are like a fleet of sunken ships, their battled hulls exposed as the sea dries up. The Shanghai longtang have grown gray; there are cracks in the terraces were all pried open suddenly, their secrets, conciliatory or compromising, damp and moldy, reeking of rat piss, were in the process of rotting away. […]

References
### New for review

**GENERAL**

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**CHINA & HONG KONG**

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**JAPAN**

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**SOUTH ASIA**

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**NEW ASIA BOOKS**

newasiabooks.org is an indispensable tool for identifying, evaluating and purchasing new publications. Up to date listings of all recent and new academic books on Asia. Review, comment on and debate new publications in your field.
Dangdut Stories: A Social and Musical History of Indonesia’s Most Popular Music

By Andrew N. Weintraub
Oxford University Press, 2010
ISBN 978 0 19 539567 9
272 pages, paperback

A UNIQUE AND POTENT FORCE in contemporary Indonesian society and culture, dangdut is Indonesia’s most popular music. Dangdut, named for its characteristic drum sounds ‘dang’ and ‘dut’, was derogated as a debased form of popular culture in the early 1970s, commercialized in the 1980s, re-signedified as a form of national and global pop in the 1990s and localized within ethnic communities in the 2000s.

Dangdut Stories is a social and musical history of the genre, within a range of broader narratives about class, gender, ethnicity and nation in post-independence Indonesia (1945 to the present). Using a new interdisciplinary approach that synthesizes ethnomusicology, anthropology of media and cultural studies, author Andrew Weintraub connects the aesthetic properties and the uses and effects of dangdut music to social and material conditions in modern Indonesia. Dangdut Stories contains a wealth of new and original musico-cultural source material, in the form of interviews with dangdut stars, information from obscure journalistic resources and thoughtful analysis of dangdut standards, combined with a keen reappraisal of the existing literature.

Contents: Note on the Web Site; Introduction; Mythologizing Malaya: Discourse, Practice and the Stakes of Authenticity; A Doll from India, Mr Mahmud, and the Elvis of Indonesia; Melayu: Discourse, Practice and the Stakes of Authenticity; A Doll from India, Mr Mahmud, and the Elvis of Indonesia; Ecologies of Performance; Dance Drills, Faith Spells: Islam, Body Politics, and Dangdut in Post-Suharto Indonesia; Conclusion: Why Dangdut?; Glossary; References; Index.

Qing Governors and Their Provinces: The Evolution of Territorial Administration in China, 1644-1796

By R. Kent Guy
University of Washington Press, 2010
ISBN 978 0 295 99019 4
512 pages, paperback

DURING THE QING DYNASTY (1644-1791), the province emerged as an important element in the management of the expanding Chinese empire. With governors – those in charge of these increasingly influential administrative units – playing key roles. R. Kent Guy’s comprehensive study of this shift concentrates on the governorship system during the reigns of the Shunzhi, Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong emperors, who ruled China from 1644-1736.

In the preceding Ming dynasty (1368-1644), the responsibilities of provincial officials were ill-defined and often shifting. Qing governors, in contrast, were influential members of a formal administrative hierarchy and enjoyed the support of the central government. Both masters of the routine processes of administration and troubleshooters for the central government, Qing governors played crucial roles in the economic and political management of a larger and more complex empire than the Chinese had ever known. These increasingly powerful officials extended the court’s influence into even the most distant territories of the Qing Empire. Qing Governors and Their Provinces uses the records of governors’ appointments and the laws and practices that shaped them to reconstruct the development of the office of provincial governor and to examine the histories of governors’ appointments in each province. Intertwined throughout are colourful details drawn from the governors’ biographies.

Contents: List of Tables; Acknowledgements; Introduction. PART 1: The Burdens of History: Pre-Qing Territorial Government; The Qing Creation of the Province; The Conundrum of Competence; The Power of the Unexpected; The Imperatives of Continuity. PART 2: The Legacy of Military Occupation: The North and the Northwest; Negotiated Orders: The Lower Yangzi Valley and the Southeastern Coast; Regions into Provinces: The Middle Yangzi and the Lingnan; Communications and Provincial Government in Southwest China. Conclusions; Appendices. Abbreviations, Notes, Chinese Glossary; Bibliography; Index.

Through the Eyes of the King: The Travels of King Chulalongkorn to Malaya

By P. Lim Pui Huen
ISEAS Publishing, 2009
ISBN 978 981 230 773 6
178 pages, hardback

This book takes the reader to old Malaya as seen through the eyes of King Chulalongkorn of Siam. The King was probably the most travelled monarch of his time. He went to Java three times, India and Burma once, and Europe twice. In all these journeys, he had to pass through Singapore, and when he went westwards, he had to pass through Penang.

The King travelled to Malaya more than ten times – mainly to Singapore but also to Johor, Penang, Malacca, Taiping and Kedah. The narrative is told through historical photos and notes on the places he visited and pen sketches of the people he met.

Since King Chulalongkorn’s travels cover nearly the whole period of his reign, they reflect the different stages of his life and reign. We see him first as a young man eager to see the world and preparing himself to rule. Then we see him in middle age, in poor health and taking a respite from the cares of state. Lastly, we see him as a statesman withstanding severe pressure from aggressive British officials.

The context of each journey is discussed in the light of Siam’s relations with Britain and the northern Malay states that were still under Siamese suzerainty. Malaya was both holiday destination and confrontational space.

Contents: Foreword; Message; Introduction, 1871: A Study Tour; 1890: Prince Chakri; 1896: ‘Dress Rehearsal’ for Europe; 1897: En Route to Europe; 1901: Tour; 1871: A Second Study Tour; 1896: A Doll from India, Mr Mahmud, and the Elvis of Indonesia; Music and Rakyat: ‘Dance Drills, Faith Spells: Islam, Body Politics, and Dangdut in Post-Suharto Indonesia; Conclusion: Why Dangdut?; Glossary; References; Index.

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Cultural forms are like snow, crystal clear when hardened, opaque when soft

The study of popular music in East Asia has gradually developed into a field, largely due to the efforts of the Inter-Asia Popular Music Studies Group (IAPMS). Formally established in 2007, IAPMS is especially keen on involving scholars that are based in Asian communities, Amsterdam-based Jeroen de Kloet is one of several founding members of the group and his new book, China with a Cut: Globalization, Urban Youth and Popular Music directly relates to attempts by IAPMS to decolonise the field of study.


The scenes presented in the first three chapters, which ‘proliferate around specific genres’ are entirely absent in chapter four, which argues that ‘genre plays an important role in the technologies of the self,’ but mainly discusses the pop-rock divide (pp. 41, 140). This suggests that the scenes are useful to differentiate and describe what, in the end, is a single multifaceted and entangled PRC rock scene. Indeed, De Kloet suggests that musicians in China have a greater flexibility to switch and blend genres and styles than in the West (p. 123).

That said, ‘Musical Taste and Technologies of the Self’ is refreshing because it explores the uses of music as a symbolic toolbox in the processes of self-identity and reflexivity (paraphrasing pp. 140–141). Surveys and the analysis of fan mail provide insight into how audiences use music to articulate identities and to manage moods and emotions. China with a Cut covers three generations of urban youth: the noodleheads (lumang) of the early 1990s, the saw-cut (liumang) generation of the late 1990s and those born in the 1980s (dakou). Rising to prominence in the early 2000s. Most of the cases provided in chapter four was collected in 1997, but De Kloet argues that also younger Chinese face exceptional pressure from the family, the education system, politics and global capitalism, and hence similarly need music to vent and escape.

‘Global capitalism and the Chinese nation-state can work very well together, producing a hybrid mix of postmodernism and neo-nationalism, a mix which serves as the lubricant for the shared accumulation of capital’ (p. 175), argues De Kloet in chapter five. Nevertheless, in the face of the perceived commercialisation and internationalisation of the Chinese media, local companies are dominant in the music industry. Large transnational record companies such as Universal, Sony and Warner have limited operations in the PRC, mainly because of piracy and the need to cooperate with state-owned publishers. Taiwanese and Hong Kong companies such as Acer Smile, which signed Beijing bands in the mid 1990s because of their perceived authenticity but have gradually retreated, partly because of cultural differences. In this uneven landscape, foreign companies paradoxically stress Chineseess, whereas Beijing-based companies such as Modern Sky and Scream Records stress cosmopolitanism, argues De Kloet, turning the argument of the first three chapters on its head: ‘The local travels well globally, the global travels well locally’ (p. 180, cf. 191).’

To De Kloet, the idea of the velvet prison, in which artists internalise restrictions, is appealing but of limited use because musicians, producers and audiences often find loopholes and workarounds to get around these restrictions. These include playing dumb, providing other lyrics, delaying and working with publishers with the right connections or in parts of China that are less strict. De Kloet’s argument for a less top-down, hegemonic and more playful and negotiable view of state-control hits home.

China with a Cut is a crucial work in the emerging field of the study of Chinese popular music. In the 1990s politics and rock were alien to most. In 2003, Nimrod Baranovitch’s China’s New Voices describes ethnomusicologists’ efforts to uncover popular music of the 1980s and 1990s. De Kloet is the first to describe these themes in the music of the new millennium, adding much-needed perspectives from audiences and the industry. Furthermore, De Kloet opens important vantage points for researching transnational flows of both mainstream and alternative pop music.
The melancholy of Mocha

At first glance, this book seems to deal with an unlikely topic. Using architecture as a prime source, it deals with the history of a city, Mocha, which today lies in ruins. Even in 1909 there were only about 20 stone or brick buildings left in this once thriving port city. The reproductions of old photographs of various buildings are often captioned, in melancholy fashion, ‘now destroyed’.

Michael Pearson


MOCHA HAD A RELATIVELY BRIEF PERIOD of prominence in the trade of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. It rose under the Ottomans, from 1538. In 1635 it was taken by the Qasimi imams, a ruling group of the Zaydi shi’i faith based at various cities in the interior. Professor Um’s book covers the period 1650 to 1750, after which the town declined and, finally, was totally eclipsed by the rise of Aden from 1839.

Mocha could have been analysed as an ‘Islamic City’, or as an ‘Indian Ocean port city’. Indeed, Um is fully aware of the literatures on both topics, but she sees Mocha as rather different. The classic Islamic city was usually not a port. Mocha of course is a port and her study could have followed on from the two collections edited by Frank Broeze on Indian Ocean port cities. The difference is that much of the literature on port cities describes the rise of colonial port cities, while Mocha was indigenous, indeed was ‘owned’ by a distant interior state. Thus, it is analogous to an extent with the great port cities of Gujarat, especially Surat, which owed allegiance to the Mughal state located in the north Indian heartland.

Many urban histories restrict themselves to the bounded city, but Um stresses connections both to the hinterland and the foreland, the former being the Yemeni highlands and the foreland the vast littoral of the Indian Ocean. As she writes in her conclusion, ‘For Mocha one must emphasize the relevance of connected sites in a land-based network encompassing an agricultural hinterland, inland market centers, and distant highland capitals. One must consider the city’s maritime port counterparts and its surrounding extramural quarters. All these elements contributed to Mocha’s social, commercial, and political structure, its architectural and urban shape, and its historical significance. The city’s connections were constitutive of its identity and built shape, rather than external to them’. (p.187)

While Um uses what Arabic sources are available, most of her written information came from the records of the Dutch East India Company. She could have used them to write an economic study, along the lines of Ashin Das Gupta’s classic work on Surat. However, Um is innovative in that she uses these written sources, but crucially combines them with what can be discovered of the architecture of the city to depict the layout, the spaces, of this urban area which owed its existence to trade. As she writes, ‘I demonstrate that the culture of trade profoundly shaped the underlying structure of the port city, defining the principal orientation of its urban shape, the functional modes of its built elements, and the social hierarchies that dominated community life’. (p.11)

Interesting deviation

Following a cogent introduction, which nicely sets out the main themes, the first chapter sketches Mocha’s trade networks, both to the interior and around the Indian Ocean, and also summarises its political history. Chapter 2 is something of a deviation from the main theme, albeit an interesting one, for it deals with coffee. Um shows that the notion that Mocha’s trade was dominated by coffee is false, for it traded in many products, and other cities traded in coffee too.

From now on we get what is the real contribution, that is historical analysis enriched by the use of architecture. Chapter 3 uses the now familiar concept of littoral society to show that Mocha’s reach extended far inland, to the ostensibly ‘remote’ Zaydi shi’i Qasimi rulers. Flows went both ways, for there was a considerable degree of integration despite the inland capitals and Mocha being at least ten days’ journey apart. Um shows that Mocha’s revenues were crucial for the state, although regrettable she doesn’t have precise statistical data to prove this. However, by focussing on architectural matters, such as
the lavish buildings – both houses and mosques – erected in the inland by the governors of Mocha, she demonstrates the richness of the port city and how its maritime profits were taken and used inland. Other governors patronised religious matters, such as lavish versions of the Qur’an. A few did what perhaps one would expect, that is public works in the city from where their wealth came, but this was less important than their ‘inland’ patronage.

Chapter 4 uses very sparse sources to describe Mocha’s merchants, both wholesalers and retail. Um stresses the extensive interchange, not only of goods but also of personnel, with Mocha’s twin-city, Surat. As one example, a merchant prince of Surat, Muhammad Ali, undertook massive religious patronage in Mocha, as well as in Surat, in the 1720s. There is also good detail on more ‘local’ merchants, who even so maintained ties with the interior court, and often also with Surat. Qasimi imams also traded to Surat, via their nakhudas (ship captains).

Chapter 5 deals with the urban form and orientation of Mocha. Here is a valiant attempt to recreate a plan of the city from very diverse sources. Um shows that Mocha’s layout differed from other European and Arab cities where the market is central to the economic function of the city, in Mocha these functions were much more dispersed. There were really two foci: the maritime one on the seashore, and the inland one leading to the interior. As she says, ‘The two sets of spatial and built elements facilitated a transition between the realms of the Indian Ocean maritime network and the Zaydi highlands of the Qasimi imamate, mediated by the landmarks of a lowland Sunni village’. (p. 123)

The next chapter follows on to show that in Mocha the urban Ahm did not necessarily function as a residence for merchants as well as a place of trade. Indeed, there was no urban Ahm at all in Mocha, that is no public structures where trade took place. Rather it took place in the houses of merchants, including the Europeans, and this is a modification of standard analyses of the Islamic trading city. There is excellent detail on the layout of a merchant’s house, with family areas set off above the less restricted area where exchange took place and goods were stored. The merchant house also functioned to show the wealth and status of the owner. Not that this house-based focus for exchange was unique to Mocha. While it was not found in the standard ‘Islamic’ city, it was in other port cities around the shores of the Indian Ocean.

The final substantive chapter describes the baniyans, Hindu and Jain merchants originating in Gujarat. These men were saujourners, and did not bring their women with them. Most of Um’s data describes their work with the European traders, while we know less about their economic interactions with the dominant Muslim communities in the city. There is much that is familiar here. They played a crucial economic role in exchange, as brokers, yet were often ill treated and used as milch cows. Nevertheless, just as in Gujarat if they were oppressed beyond endurance they could withdraw, thus crippling trade in the city, until redress was promised and they were coaxed back. Despite being Hindu, they were treated like Jews and Christians, as dhimmis (non-Muslims), and indeed they were much more economically central than was the Jewish community. This was shown by the way some of the wealthier baniyans lived within the city walls, while Jews and other baniyans and less important ethnic groups were relegated to suburbs outside the walls.

The Conclusion offers a brief account of Mocha’s decline, and recapitulates the main themes. It ends with a very apt phrase for archaeology work, which would be invaluable.

This book deserves to be widely read, and praised. Um demonstrates familiarity with a host of secondary work in urban history, and where necessary challenges and modifies them. Her use of architecture as a key source is extremely innovative. In terms of Indian Ocean studies, we now have a few foundational studies, for example by Bose, the late Ken McPherson, Chaudhuri and Pearson, which sketch broad themes. We need many more micro-studies which can modify received wisdoms. Um’s book is an exemplary case study of what we need, and stands alongside Margariti’s recent comparable study of Aden in its use of difficult sources, and its successful analysis. Finally, I must praise the dedication, for Um very touchingly writes of her husband that ‘This book would mean nothing to me if he were not there to share in the joy of its completion’, p. xii.

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Indonesia changes rapidly. Politically, religiously, and socially the country is in a situation of constant flux. Newspapers and other news media give an astonishing picture of a country in some respects in rapid development to progress but in other aspects retreating into backward ignorance.

Dick van der Meij

Who is this ‘Indonesian Muslim’?


TRUE POWER RELATIONS have not changed much since the introduction of democracy, and 30 years of Soeharto rule and influence cannot be erased in a matter of years. A lot more time is needed to change the mindset of intellectually repressed Indonesians before we will see the emergence of an informed and capable intellectual discourse. Following all these developments in a superhuman endeavour and probably best attempted only after a long period of experience and exposure to Indonesian life and realities.

It would be incorrect to think that only present-day Indonesia is in a situation of flux. It has always been so. The historical lines leading up to the current situation are the subject of many books, including the two discussed here. Assyaukanie’s fascinating book discusses Islam and the secular state and all the ins and outs connected to this complicated issue. The history of the ill-fitting relationship between Islam and secularism—and indeed, the very possibility of such a relationship—is traced and explained in Assyaukanie’s work; it is further described using the three models of the Islamic Democratic State, the Religious Democratic State, and the Liberal Democratic State. The continuity and discontinuity of the models are elaborated as well.

Plattasch on his part goes into great depth in explaining the ins and outs of Muslim politics, political parties and currents does make it extremely difficult to claim that the ‘Indonesian Muslim’ is capable of doing whatever it is he or she is claimed to be. Indeed, Indonesian Muslims may find themselves just as surprised at what is claimed about them as are the authors who read these same books. Moreover, completely the Muslims being discussed in support of the author’s arguments live, think, work, and act in Jakarta, and this Jakarta-centric viewpoint also seriously undermines our understanding of the situation. The underlying assumption, that what Jakarta does and wants has an immediate impact on the lives of Muslims living elsewhere in the country, has not been sufficiently demonstrated and interestingly, rather than being questioned, is often seen as something so self-evident that it needs no substantiation. I have the strong impression that many Muslims living outside of Jakarta, or outside Java for that matter, cannot relate to, let alone be interested in or act upon, what Jakarta wants, especially since the introduction of regional autonomy which caused jakarta to recede into the far recesses of people’s minds. They certainly do not act upon jakarta’s desires. They have other things to do, making ends meet being first and foremost among them.

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Assyaukanie says in his introduction that ‘Existing studies on Islam in Indonesia are dominated by an anthropological approach…’. I have doubts whether this is so since sound expositions on method and approach are conspicuously absent from many of these works, which seem to start up with precious little attention to method or approach. It is therefore not an easy task to form an accurate picture of what is really going on in any scholarly defensible way.

The first thing the books teach us is that Indonesian Islam is fragmented to an unbelievable degree. This is why forming an accurate picture of Islam in the country is so extremely difficult. What may be found and demonstrated in one area is contested by the opposite in another region. Interestingly, this has not led scholars to simply accept this fact and to try to deal with it, but rather to insist on finding common denominators. Of course these exist, but are often so blatantly obvious that they become meaningless at best, and obfuscating at worst. Looking at the ins and outs of Muslim politics, political parties and currents does explain important aspects of Indonesian Islam, but only within those spheres and conclusions. Such notions cannot and should not be extended to people’s daily lives. As for many people all over the world, politics and daily life seem to take place on two different planets.

Rather than exposing history and its key persons for the umpteenth time, we need to discover what the underlying causes are of the multifarious ways that many Muslims in Indonesia seem to randomly hate many aspects of the West—like secularism—while accepting most other things unquestioningly, and where the overwhelming distrust Indonesian Muslims have of each other and of non-Muslims really stems from. Seeking out the underlying ideas of power and power distribution in Indonesia and the valid ways to demonstrate, or at times rather not to demonstrate, power and authority is a requirement for understanding why Indonesian Muslims in individual and collective action happen the way they do. An examination of the notions that underlie valid reasoning is useful if we are to explain the often alarming superficiality of argumentation.

The ordinary Indonesian Muslim is also in another way—perhaps unintentionally—dismissed. In his introduction Assyaukanie writes ‘I argue therefore there is no better measurement to judge the religious-political attitude of Indonesian Muslims than the general elections…’. It is unclear that most people never even found out how to vote, and that they have no inkling whatsoever about party programs? Does he not know that access to accurate information on politics is very limited in most places outside Java and outside the major cities elsewhere, and that people are prone to backlash and other forms of pressures to vote for a specific party? Is the underlying assumption that people vote consciously highly overstated everywhere in the world, and particularly so in the fledgling democracy that contemporary Indonesia still is?

Of importance are also the chapters on the implementation of the shari’ah in various districts in the country and the discourse, or sometimes lack thereof, surrounding this implementation. Especially with the current unclear relationships between the Central Government and the Regional Governments, a proper insight into the workings of shari’ah implementation is crucial.

Does my criticism above mean that the books are uninteresting? Of course not. They are welcome additions to the literature we have on the subjects they describe. They often throw new light on matters and provide more and otherwise hidden detail. One of the important things these books point out is Indonesian political and religious pragmatism (in my view often amounting to downright opportunism). Indonesian people know exactly what they want and need, and they will go to great lengths to get it. If religiously inspired politics prove useless in this regard, they have no qualms in dismissing them on the spot. This is an important element of Indonesian religious and political reality. This should also have been studied in the case of ‘ordinary Muslims’, who likewise have no use for excessive regulations and hollow political rhetoric. The failure of Muslim political parties in Indonesia to attract voters may simply occur because their programs and actions are too far removed from the voters who come to distrust them and thus vote for other parties. To sum up, perhaps we should be happy that most ordinary Indonesian Muslims keep cool heads and are not easily seduced by the ideas and actions of Muslim political parties, the Front Pembela Islam and the plethora of other institutions, ulamas, and Muslim organizations. They seem to know quite well where their priorities lie!

Dick van der Meij

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Race and multiculturalism in Malaysia and Singapore

Multiculturalism and ethnicity have become rather fashionable as research topics in Asian Studies. Several monographs and conference volumes have been published in recent years, especially concerning the situation in Malaysia and Singapore. This well-edited book by Goh et al. is a welcome addition to the existing literature in this field. The various contributions add further information to a topic which is highly sensitive and of great importance for the modern nation-states Malaysia and Singapore.

Holger Warnk

Bibliography


MALAYSIAS AS WELL AS SINGAPORE are multi-ethnic nation-states. In both states ethnicity, commonly referred to as ‘race’, is of crucial social and political importance. The topics of race were introduced by the British colonial administration which carried out censuses among its subjects which were categorised into diverse races. In consequence, they began to develop and imagine their own, partly new identities under these labels. This colonial legacy was well-cultivated in the post-colonial nation-states of Malaysia and Singapore and made a deep impact on national politics and the daily life of its peoples.

Racial stereotypes are present in both states and are of great relevance for the communities, even when they often form perfect examples for ‘invented traditions’. Take for example the term ‘Indian race’ in both states: while regarded as a uniform group, what lies behind the term is a great heterogeneity of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural aspects. In Singapore ‘Indians’ are regarded as Hindus and ‘Malays’ as Muslims, so in consequence Indian Muslims face many difficulties in attempting to receive money from state funds for Muslims (Tschacher 2010). What constitutes a ‘Malay race’ in Malaysia is laid down in the constitution (article 160). This crude definition includes elements from language, genetics, religion – the Malay race is Muslim – ethnicity and other fields. Furthermore, the ‘Malay’ in Malaysia are regarded as the original inhabitants of the country and thus are guaranteed special rights which has led to a policy of positive discrimination towards their group. Thus it is not surprising that the theme ‘race and multiculturalism’ in Malaysia is not a theme discussed by members of the Malay group, but mostly by authors of ‘Chineses’, ‘Indians’ and other backgrounds. This is also the case in this volume.

The book under review here is divided into eleven chapters, plus a lengthy introduction and a short conclusion. As space is limited, not all articles can be referred to here equally. Daniel Goh and Philip Helden mention in their introduction the roots of multiculturalism and ethnonationalism which they rightly find in colonial notions of races and culture. When both Malaysia and Singapore openly make use of the category ‘race’ in the state apparatus, the post-colonial situations in consequence create rather fixed, often close boundaries. The authors rightly state that these situations open up, which has created ‘possibilities in the politics of recognition, but has closed off many others’ (p. 3). When official categories of Chinese, Malay, Indian and others become institutionalized, what happens to those who do not belong to either of these identities? Goh and Helden proceed to give a very readable discussion of recent literature on multiculturalism. The overall good impression would have even been better if the authors had made attempted a definition of ‘race’ in the Malaysian and Singaporean context, something that is painfully missing.

In the first chapter Philip Holden gives the historical background of the passion for ‘race’ by analysing Singapore literature. Tracing the roots back to colonial times by analysing the literary works in the Straits Chinese Magazine, Holden successfully shows how racial stereotypes were already set by the Chinese themselves as the magazine was edited by Song On Siang and Lim Boon Keng, two highly influential members of the Straits Chinese community in Singapore between the 1890s and 1940s. Holden then moves on to Singaporean authors of the 1940s and 1950s who became influenced by anti-colonial nationalism and finally reaches post-independence Singaporean authors. He rightly states that this literature can cause ‘readers to reflect on their own racial subjectification’ (p. 21). The reading of texts from the past also has a particular value for deconstructing the state’s primal attitudes towards races and the legitimization of state multiculturalism in Singapore.

The essay of Gaih Cheng Khoo draws attention to the modern Malay movies of the late director Yamin Ahmad and the constructions of Malay-ness in her films. An independent filmmaker, Yamin Ahmad was only able to finish six movies during her lifetime. Many of her themes cover inter-racial and inter-religious topics and have been vividly discussed and sometimes also strongly attacked by movie critics close to the Malaysian government, by Islamic authorities as well as by Malay intellectuals. Some were even censored, although her movies have received considerable attention at international movie festivals outside Malaysia. Gaih Cheng Khoo meticulously analyses how Yamin Ahmad’s movies challenge Malaysian state-defined Malay subjectivity and gender stereotypes.

Kenneth Paul Tan’s essay also deals with movies and discusses racial stereotypes in contemporary Singaporean films. For Tan, most Singaporean commercial films demonstrate how neoliberal multiculturalism in Singapore uses stereotypical notions of race and still is ‘paranoid about racial otherness’ (p. 139). This is also confirmed by Daniel Goh’s excellent essay on Singapore ‘Chineseness’. Goh convincingly argues that being Chinese in Singapore is privileged because the discourse is state-defined. He discusses the elements of Singaporean Chineseness and how these become stereotypes and are used by state authorities. But not only governments become active in the construction of racial thinking and multiculturalism, as the article by Kelyn Su Yee and Law Kian Khun shows. Here the authors showed that the Malay hard rock scene in Singapore has hardened stereotypical racial representations of a rebellious and indistinct Malay youth (p. 170).

Racial stereotypes of Malays and Chinese are not the only ones discussed in this book. Vijay Varadswamy shows how HINDRAF, an association of several Malaysian Indian NGOs which was declared illegal on 15 October 2008, plays an important part in constructing Malaysian Indian identity. Charanpal S. Bal analyses ‘Punjabi-ness’ in a multiracial Singapore and its reconstructions in contemporary cinema. Furthermore, the ‘Malays’ in Malaysia is not a theme discussed by members of the Malay group, but mostly by authors of ‘Chineses’, ‘Indians’ and other backgrounds. This is also the case in this volume.


References

T. S. (eds. Fritz Schulze and Holger Warnk), 83-102. Wiesbaden: J.W.Goethe-Universität, Germany h.warnk@em.uni-frankfurt.de

The Review 39

Lanterns in Chinatown, Singapore. Photo by Anna Roberts.
When Rachmaninov’s late Romantic third symphony was premiered in London in 1936, the Daily Telegraph critic Richard Capell maintained that, while the composer still gave parties on the grand old scale, no gorgeous guests turned up. Though remote from the subject of Pieter Drooglever’s book, the remark came to mind when I received it. Here was a book on a scale that has become rare, made possible only by adding financial subsidy to authorial devotion. But – as Capell failed to recognize in respect of the symphony, now part of the repertory – some gorgeous guests do turn up.

Nicholas Tarling


In particular they come from the Dutch archives. Dr Drooglever’s book, started in 2000 and first published in Dutch in 2005, went hand in hand with his work on the documentation of Netherlands-Indonesia relations between 1950 and 1963. He has used other sources as well, and undertaken a number of interviews. But the book is particularly strong on the making of Dutch policy. This Drooglever begins with the very earliest contacts and carries up to the making of the 1962 agreement and the so-called act of free choice in 1969 that gives the book its title. The focus, however, is on the period after Indonesia secured its independence in 1949. Some of the story is familiar, but nowhere else can one find a fuller or more credible account. It seems on the whole to support the largely accepted conclusion that domestic politics was a dominant factor in what the Dutch did, not only, as Arend Lijphart pointed out, in respect of the initial decision not to transfer West New Guinea along with the rest of Netherlands India when they accepted Indonesia’s independence in 1949, but also during most of the subsequent decades when Willem Drees sought to hold his coalition with the Catholic Party together. Self-determination became an avowed objective, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the de Quay government shifted towards internationalisation and then more or less unavoidably towards acceptance of the Bunker plan in 1962.

Less is said about other powers. We do not learn much about the making of Indonesian policy, though we are given accounts of what the Indonesians did in public, at home, at the UN, in New Guinea, and what they said to diplomats and statesmen in other countries. The archives are, of course, not open to view, and like others Drooglever has to rely on what is in the public domain. Whether those archives would yield material that would make it easier to adopt a more positive view of Indonesian policy and practice we cannot know. Did the Indonesians, for example, feel genuinely concerned about the weakness of their frontier to the southeast of the archipelago, as, after all, their Dutch predecessors had? In general, it seems that the Papuans were again the playthings of domestic politics.

Giving a full account of the policies of other powers whose archives are open might have extended the book to Mahlerian lengths. But it is important to recognize that US policy was decisive. The Americans at the outset took what they considered a neutral view in the dispute that developed between the Dutch and the Indonesians. Arguably, it was that indeed that allowed the dispute to continue. When their stance changed, the parties had to settle. But the motives for the change do not seem very persuasive, at least in our post-Cold War times. It certainly failed to win the Sukarno regime over to a more moderate approach to the region, as Kennedy’s perhaps rather naive advisers hoped, for the regime soon pursued its confrontation of Malaysia. There again the US was unwilling to check it, despite pressure from the British. It was only with the overthrow of the regime and the decimation of the PKI that the US cause was won. Even then, the US was far from willing to interpose in the cause of the Timorese when Subharti’s regime behaved much as Sukarno’s had. More may also be said about the Australians, whose policy can, however, be plotted from a number of unpublished theses, such as P. Phelp’s ‘Australia, International Diplomacy and the West New Guinea Dispute, 1949-62’ (PhD thesis, Sydney University, 1996). Initially, they encouraged the Dutch to stay, while trying to prompt the US to support them. Yet when the Indonesians armed themselves – initially to put down the provincial rebellions but clearly with implications for the Dutch in New Guinea – the Australians made it quite clear that they would accept any agreement the Indonesians peacefully negotiated with the Dutch. In a rare slip, Drooglever gives two different dates for Subandrio’s persuasive visit to Canberra: it was in 1959, as on p. 377, not in 1960, as on p. 342. (Other false notes: the Pacific war opens in 1942 (p. 55); Nichols becomes Nicholson (p. 333); and Harriman’s first name is misspelled (p. 405). Australia indeed wanted good relations with its large neighbour. But it did not – and does not – always find it easy to settle on consistent terms to secure them. One issue was indeed the future of East New Guinea, TPNG as it then was. There the Australians wished to proceed rather more slowly with political advance than the Dutch in the West. They limited the collaboration between the two regimes, and presented an obstacle to the notion of a Melanesian federation. That notion appears on a number of occasions in the present book. It was in fact discussed more than once by the British, who were also considering how to dispose of their dependents, however, are less important than constructive endeavours, though they must take account of what the author calls ‘historical responsibility’. Of some those endeavours Esther Heidebuchel gives an account in her The West Papua Conflict in Indonesian: Actors, Issues and Approaches (Wettenberg, 2007), reviewed in this Newsletter in 2008.

Portuguese Timorese’s experience since the Second World War both echoes and contrasts with that of West New Guinea. A decisive difference lay in the role of the UN. But decisive, too, was the fact that it had never been part of Netherlands India ‘from Sabang to Merauke’. Post-colonial frontiers have largely followed colonial precedents. Perhaps the alternatives were worse. But the Papuans deserve a better deal, as this book, gently but powerfully, makes clear.

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The Newsletter | No.55 | Autumn/Winter 2010
The Cultural Heritages of Asia and Europe: Global Challenges and Local Initiatives

ON 2-3 SEPTEMBER 2010, BAS and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) organized a roundtable discussion in preparation for the 4th ASEM Culture Ministers’ Meeting (9-11 September 2010, Poznan, Poland).

During the two days, hosted in the VOC room of the Centraal Museum in the University of Amsterdam, Sabina Santarelli (ASEF) and Philippe Peycam (IAS) convened the roundtable, bringing together academic and civil society experts from Asia and Europe who openly discussed the multifaceted aspects of cultural heritage and the various challenges experienced.

The objective was to recommend concrete, context-related strategies towards development and social empowerment through cultural heritage.

Specific objectives of the roundtable included:
- To discuss key issues related to heritage, of relevance to civil society and possible cooperation between Asia and Europe in this specific field;
- To enable sharing of experiences related to sustainable policies and practices related to heritage management and awareness;
- Drawing from the agenda of the political meeting, to reflect on the work of civil society actors in heritage and reaffirm the value of their contribution in this field;
- To reflect on the work of civil society actors in heritage and reaffirm the value of their contribution in this field;
- To seek recommendations on heritage issues to policy makers at the Fourth ASEM Culture Ministers’ Meeting, and;

For the recommendations to the Ministers and the final report of this roundtable meeting, see www.iias.nl

IIAS Postdoctoral Fellowships 2011

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED for Postdoctoral Fellows at the International Institute for Asian Studies (August 2011 – July 2013).

The positions are intended for outstanding active researchers from around the world, to work on an important piece of research in the social sciences and humanities. Interdisciplinary interests are encouraged. A majority of the positions will be allocated to the more specific areas introduced in the Director’s note: Asian Cultural Heritage, Asian Urban Knowledge, and Global Asia. However, some will be reserved for outstanding projects in any area outside of those listed.

Deadlines: 1 April 2011 and 1 October 2011
For more information and application form, see www.iias.nl

Recherche en sciences humaines sur l’Asie du Sud-Est
Social Science Research on Southeast Asia

Un ensemble de / A set of

10 articles
Laurence HUSSON, Claire CHAUVEZ, Céline CODIREY, Nancha COLLOMB, Laurence MONNAIS, Céline DUMAS & Anne-Laure FAURAND-TOURAINE, Claudia MERLI, Pascale HANCART PETITET, Marie-Ève BLANC, Anne Yvonne GUILLOU & Evelyne MICOLLIER

3 notes
Frédéric BOURDIER & Ève BUREAU, Laurence HUSSON, Didier BERTRAND

The Newsletter | No.55 | Autumn/Winter 2010

Volkswagen Foundation grant for IIAS fellow

DR IRINA MOROZOVA, an IAS affiliated fellow since 2003, was granted a Volkswagen Foundation subsidy for a three year project entitled ‘The History of Perestroika in Central Asia’, starting in the fall of 2010. The project entails a cooperation with Dr. Galsara Altpavar (Vigne Research Center, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan), Prof. Gjigjikin Boldbaatar (Sociology Department, National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar), and Dr. Tolganai Umbetalieva (Central Asian Foundation for Developing Democracy, Almaty, Kazakhstan).

The project will add to the recent studies of social change in periods of structural crisis. In all post-socialist/post-Soviet countries, a shift from a socialist economy and communist party rule to the market-oriented model and neo-liberal ideology has been a painful process, which has led to economic decline, stagnation, social marginalisation and polarisation among different population groups.

The different development trajectories of post-Soviet Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and post-socialist Mongolia can be explained by a comparative analysis of the socio-political dynamics and reform during perestroika, the status of different elites in relation to Moscow, and particularities in cultural and religious institutions and identities before the disintegration of the USSR.

The project, with Dr Morozova as the principal investigator, is hosted by the Berlin Institute of Asian and African Studies at the Humboldt University, where Dr Morozova has taken up her position.

NUMBER 15 NOW AVAILABLE

MOUSONS
Recherche en sciences humaines sur l’Asie du Sud-Est
Social Science Research on Southeast Asia

Edited by Hyung-Gu Lynn

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There are few names among academic journals focused on Asia as rich in history and as evocative as Pacific Affairs. We explore contemporary issues that face a complex and interdependent Asia. Our international editorial board ensures articles are edited to the highest standard. Pacific Affairs’ book reviews are a must for any busy scholar or librarian to keep abreast of the latest literature in the field. Please see our website for further details.

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East Asian art history reconsidered

A report on the conference Living Legacies: The History of East Asian Art Reconsidered, held in Heidelberg on July 10–12, 2010

Anna Grasskamp

THE CONFERENCE LIVING LEGACIES took place in the heat of Heidelberg’s summer, attracting more than 180 participants. Its subtitle The History of East Asian Art Reconsidered promised an informative and self-referential presentation of the discipline. The conference program covered material from Bronze Age bronzes to contemporary Korean mosaics, an international range of subjects and speakers showcasing how interdisciplinary and international East Asian Art History presents itself as a discipline. Held in honor of Lothar Ledderose, the conference title “living” was adopted to suit the East Asian Art History’s subjects and could be associated as well with the lasting legacy of Lothar Ledderose’s work at Heidelberg. Not only did his publications and research projects form frequent points of reference during the conference, but also the presence of many of his former students, now themselves in museum and academic key positions, testified to the exceptional position that Heidelberg’s institute of Kunsthistorische Östliche Altertümer gained under Ledderose’s direction, intellectually as well as educationally.

Yet, the institutional position of the comparatively small discipline remains a point of debate, as the conference’s closing discussion revealed in turning remarkably fast from an evaluation of the intellectual state of affairs towards the often problematic institutional circumstances that the study and display of Non-Western art face. Thus, the circle was completed to the first conference panel which was originally dedicated to Picture Theories, but turned into a platform for debates on disciplinary, intellectual and institutional frameworks instead.

Hans Belting, Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe, discussed the case of Chinese contemporary art within the framework of Global Art, which he defines as a post-1989 and post-internet, multicultural as well as cosmopolitan phenomenon. Selected artworks supported his argument of art history as a discipline that has been driven by global events. Belting’s conclusions praised the way how East Asian Art History has responded to these changes and reflects itself in the current state of affairs of the discipline.

Angela Howard, Rutgers University, shared recent results from field work on meditation caves and murals in Xinjiang. She elaborated on the process of inscriptions between meaningfulness and function from a cultural context, especially in the case of Chinese wall paintings. Howard’s presentation underlined the importance of inscription-based research in comparing a “I was here” to sacred Buddhist inscriptions, from monumental to field work on meditation caves and murals in Xinjiang.

Leibniz’s knowledge theaters and early modern architecture. Horst Bredekamp, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, threw light on the inclusion and exclusion of non-European monuments and artifacts within the 17th, 18th and 19th century German historiography of art and material culture. Yukio Lippit, Harvard University, contextualized the study of non-European monuments and artifacts within the framework of the appearance of a putative “universal” classification system of bronze objects. Focusing on the analysis of incised and inlaid decorated bronzes, Bredekamp and Lippit contextualized the study between 17th and 19th century German historiography of art and architecture. horst bredekamp, humboldt-universität berlin, took the workshop from A Different Angle (Dame Jessica Rawson connecting European and Asian art) to Picture Theories, but turned into a platform for debates on disciplinary, intellectual and institutional frameworks instead.

The concluding panel on Material Cultures was opened by a study on the place of alcohol consumption in Chinese culinary culture by Thomas Höllmann, Universität München, and closed by Craig Clunas’ approach towards Ming tombs as gendered spaces. Taking jewelry and inscribed metal objects as points of departure to throw light on possible (female) networks of object exchange, Craig Clunas, Oxford University, seemed to immediately incorporate Rawson’s revision of the term ming. Using material culture as his point of departure, he revised Ming studies in revealing previously overlooked aspects of female agency.

Various presentations featured an inter-cultural perspective as side line or subsidiary approach, from an anthropological angle (Dame Jessica Rawson connecting European and Chinese repica) as well as from a comparative viewpoint (Marsha Haufler contrasted North Korean imagery with Chinese propaganda posters, Yoshio Funayama approached the Kyōto fire through sources on the Great Fire of London in 1666, and Jens Halfwassen, Universität Heidelberg, presented mosaics on open-air screens and external walls in 20th century North Korea and touched upon technological as well as political shifts within the imaginery of personality cults.

Most papers drew their arguments from three-dimensional Asian art and material culture. Yoshio Lippit, Harvard University, contextualized the importance of inscription-based research in comparing a “I was here” to sacred Buddhist inscriptions, from monumental to field work on meditation caves and murals in Xinjiang.

response to review of the Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan

I appreciate the opportunity to briefly respond to Professor Ben-Ami Shillony’s review of my book The Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan: Tudyokejiphef Propaganda and Debates in the 1870s (New York: Peter Lang, 2009) in the Spring 2010 issue of the Newsletter.

My remarks concern two sections of the review:

1. “[Kovalio] uses the self-made acronym CSA (Conspiracy and Scaphegoating Anti-Semitism), which unfortunately turns the reading less fluent. The transliteration of some Japanese words does not follow the standard system. Thus, the suffix ‘shita’ is spelled throughout the book as ‘shita’.”

2. “Kovalio seems to overstate his case, when he claims that the demonized image of the Jews in the last 150 years was created by the ‘conspiratorial minds’ of Sergey Nilus, Pope Pius IX, Karl Marx, Henry Ford, Adolf Hitler, Shiden Nobutaka, Itagaki Yûzo, Ans Mamour, Mahathir bin Mohamad, Edward Said, Noam Chomsky, Uno Masami and the like (p. 68), lumping together all these names into one anti-Semitic block may sound as fantastic as the accusations of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.”

Professor Shillony’s ‘relegation’ of CSA to a semantic eccentricity is disappointing, because the term devised it is the book’s core analytical instrument (pp. 2–13). CSA contains modern anti-Semitism’s two main components and as such constitutes an all-encompassing ‘means to achieve ulterior goals: religious, social, political, economic, global, national or personal’ (p. 7).

Furthermore, in the broadest epistemological sense, the book, through a purposely highly focused text (p. x) with copious endnotes, introduces the reader to CSA as a common denominator of all forms of anti-liberalism: from nationalistic, religious, Marxist (communist/sosiet) and Fascist, through non-Jewish, Jewish and Israeli anti-Jewish “Zionism” (which is political and anti-Semitic in all but name, since it aims to de-legitimize and eventually eradicate the Jewish State) and down to today’s very influential Islamist–Leftist alliance.

This can be illustrated simply by spelling out the manner in which some of the prominent individuals mentioned above are practitioners of CSA.

Through Sergey Nilus, the Osbome (Russian imperial secret police) conceived to concoct the Protocols to scapegoat Russia’s problems in the late 19th century on a Jewish ‘Zionist conspiracy’ to rule the world. Meanwhile Pape Pius IX scapegoated the democratic trends of the 19th century, to which the Vatican was opposed, on the ‘Jewish-dominated’ Free Mason order. In Zur Judenfrage (On the Jewish Question) and other writings, Karl Marx exaggerated the role of Jews, who accounted for just one percent of the population (most of whom were not capitalist), in German capitalism, providing a lasting cornerstone of contemporary anti-Semitism. According to which, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin added their anti-Zionism. Indeed, for the German Marxist and terrorist leader Ulrike Meinhoff – as also for her Japanese communist counterpart Shigenobu Fusako – anti-Semitism meant anti-capitalism. For his part, Henry Ford scapegoated the failure of his naive pacifism and the Bolshevike takeover of Russia on Jewish machinations, and financed a worldwide campaign to popularize the Protocols which he considered to be authentic.

As to Professor Shillony’s objection to the non-traditional translation I have used for some Japanese terms, as explained (p. 16), giving the reader access to authentic Japanese pronunciation enhances the intellectual experience and overall familiarity with the subject.

Jacob Kovalio
japanapacificrogers.com

This response has been shortened by the editor for reasons of space.
A wave to surf on: ICAS Book Prize 2011

A wave of books has washed ashore on the desk of the secretary of the ICAS Book Prize 2011 (IBP). In all 171 (2009: 89) books were submitted by more than 40 publishers worldwide: 75 in the Humanities and 96 in the Social Sciences categories. A trend which became visible in the last edition has now become manifest.

Paul van der Velde

WHEREAS FOR THE FIRST EDITION of the IBP 65 percent of the books fell in the category humanities and 35 in the category social sciences, now with this fourth edition it is the other way around. This marks a clear shift in field of research: from traditional to contemporary Asia studies.

More Asian authors

There is an even more important shift to be discerned which relates to the geographical background of the authors. Whereas only 10 percent of the authors were of Asian descent at the first edition in 2005, now about 50 percent of the authors are Asian. Asian studies are more and more done by Asians but their books are still predominantly published by western publishers. Only 10 percent were published by Asian publishers but a slight increase in the share of Asian publishers is noticeable.

It came as no surprise that many of the books are about East Asia, 64, but surprisingly Southeast Asia is the subject of 42 books while South Asia counts 27 publications. Seven books are about Asia in general and the same number can be placed in the category global. Noticeable is that hardly any books on Central Asia were submitted.

Popular themes handled from different disciplinary or comparative angles are: art and culture, (post-)colonial, gender and identity, history, international relations and politics, literature, media, Islam (a newcomer), literature, nationalism and state formation, religion, and society. Of these between 10 to 20 books were submitted. Themes with 5 to 10 books are diasporas and migration, democratisation, economy, health and medicine, and urban culture.

Just as last year only five edited volumes were submitted but it should be pointed out that groundbreaking edited volumes certainly stand a chance of winning one of the ICAS book prizes. At IBP 2009 one of the edited volumes made it to the short list in the humanities.

Number of PhDs tripled

Last year we formed a separate Reading Committee for the Best PhDs in the humanities and social sciences consisting of the prize winners of the 2009 edition of the IBP. Its mission was to triple the number of PhDs submitted. It accomplished the desired goal because 36 PhDs were submitted for this fourth edition of the IBP. We realize that this number is but a slight percentage of the total number of PhDs in the field of Asian studies on a two-yearly basis. So we will continue our efforts to get in more PhDs for the 2013 edition.

The long lists of the IBP 2011 will be announced on the ICAS website at the end of 2010 and short lists will be announced well before the meeting in Honolulu.

For more information see www.icassecretariat.org.
Announcements

ARThinkSouthAsia Fellowship

The ARThinkSouthAsia Fellowship is designed to help develop skills, knowledge, networks and experience of potential leaders in the cultural sector of South Asia which includes museums, the visual and performing arts, and digital media. We believe that by supporting exceptional individuals to make a step-change in their skills and career potential, we can bring substantial benefit to the cultural field as a whole.

Fifteen Fellows will be selected across South Asia. The Fellowship includes:
- A two-week residential course in March 2011
- A secondment/internship in Germany over the year 2011-12
- A concluding seminar in March 2012

The two-week residential course is designed to include a balance of theory and professional training and will consist of five to six modules which include the latest thinking in cultural management in areas such as strategic planning, project management, strategic finance and fundraising, marketing, communication and internet technologies amongst others. These modules will be led by a mix of Indian and international professional trainers and academics and will be supplemented by expert guest lectures. Participation in the residential programme is mandatory.

Each participant will be offered a funded four week secondment/internship best suited to his/her needs, interests and objectives in a cultural organization in South Asia or Germany. All participants will attend a closing seminar at the end of the Fellowship year to present and share updates on their projects and experiences from the secondments with new Fellows of 2011-12.

We welcome applications from practitioners working across a wide range of creative and artistic activities, as also from those who are working outside it but who demonstrate a knowledge, understanding and passion for the arts. Artists and persons with unconventional careers and experiences are also invited to apply.

As the residential course has a greater focus on practical learning, each participant is required to apply with a concrete project which he/she is planning or is involved in. This project should be described in as much detail as possible to allow for an understanding of the scope and skills required for the successful formulation of various management strategies.

For further details about how to apply and who is eligible visit www.arthinksouthasia.org
Email: info@arthinksouthasia.org

Rural China and its Global Connections

10th European Conference on Agriculture and Rural Development in China (ECARDC X)

April 8–10, 2011, Aarhus University, Denmark

When the first ECARDC conference was held in 1989, China’s opening to the outside world was already contributing significantly to globalization. However, it was still possible to think of Chinese village life as relatively isolated from global trends, but such a view is no longer tenable.

The 10th ECARDC will explore links between the global and the local in rural China. China is often described as one of globalization’s ‘non-Western’ cases. It has successfully attracted FDI, generated amazing economic growth, and created global metaphors such as Shanghai and Shenzhen. But how are the rural areas managing the challenges of globalization? Many observers predicted that China’s entry into the WTO in 2001 would generate a deep crisis for Chinese farming. While the consequences seem to have been less severe than many feared, it is useful to take stock after the first decade of WTO and to explore how global market forces affect China’s farmers, food security and agricultural practices.

Conference topics include:
1. Consequences of China’s integration in global markets for the organization of agriculture and the development of agribusinesses.
2. Who are the globalization winners and who are the losers in rural China?
3. The role of the central and local state, farmers’ organizations, and foreign and Chinese organization and companies in the globalization of rural China.
4. Connections between rural China and specific countries or regions of the world.
5. China as a player in the global market for agricultural products. What will be the consequences of Chinese agricultural outsourcing to other developing and emerging economies?
6. How does China’s agricultural development affect the world’s agricultural markets and prices?
7. Comparative studies exploring the “Chinese characteristics” of the way in which farmers are integrated in global commodity chains.
8. The evolving status of Chinese farmers—from peasants to citizens.
9. Rural governance reforms and their global connections.
10. Rural NGOs and their global connections.
11. Before 1949 many Chinese farmers were already producing for the world market, and a historical perspective could also be helpful to our understanding of China’s interaction with global markets today.
12. How has the exposure to global culture affected perceptions and expressions of the ‘local’ and the ‘rural’?

Panel and/or paper proposals
It is possible to present an individual paper, or to propose a panel with several participants. Participants who wish to present a paper and/or organize a panel must submit an abstract (max. 300 words) by 1 January 2011. Also participants who require a visa to Denmark (e.g. Chinese citizens) should register by 1 November, 2010. This will make it possible to send out invitations in time for visa applications to be made.

Please see the conference website www.ruralchina.dk/en/ecardc for details.

Goverance and Citizenship in Asia: Paradigms and Practices

18–19 March 2011, Hong Kong

This international conference is organized by The Centre for Governance and Citizenship of The Hong Kong Institute of Education, with the support of the Asia Pacific Governance Institute; the Journal of Asian Public Policy; Public Organization Review; and Public Administration and Development. The organizers invite researchers and practitioners from all parts of the world, especially Asia, to participate.

Central question: How is citizenship related to governance? Citizenship and participation have emerged as central issues in recent public management debates. They follow, and are a part of, the larger debate on ‘Good Governance’. However, little systematic effort has been made to define the concepts and delineate the links between the two domains of Governance and Citizenship. It is simply assumed that the concepts, and the values and arrangements they embody, are automatic and universal. It is time that two concepts be subjected to closer scrutiny and the relationships between them specified. Some of the questions that need to be addressed in order to make the concept useful for theorists and practical purposes include:

- What does citizenship mean in a globalized world?
- Is the concept of citizenship universal? Or does it vary across societies? Do the concepts developed in Western contexts apply to societies with communitarian outlook? If yes, then what are the specific features of citizenship in such societies?
- How is the notion of citizenship related to other essential tenets of Good Governance?
- What is the link between democracy and citizenship, and between democracy and governance?
- Specifically, is citizenship possible without democracy? Can participation in the policy process substitute for democracy? What are the expectations for public participation and engagement in non-Western societies?

Asia-specific themes
In the Asian context, governance and citizenship may well be construed differently because of different cultural, administrative and socio-political philosophical traditions. It is important to ground the studies of Asian governance and citizenship in regional institutions, civic virtues and values, as much as in global trends and advocates. Will the Asian experiences be different from Western counterparts in terms of their nature, scope, direction and pace of development, implying a distinct conception of governance and citizenship?

This conference will explore specific themes in governance and citizenship, with special reference to Asia:
- Asian Governance: Global Concerns and Domestic Realities
- Traditions and Modernity: Asian Traditions and Values
- Citizenship and Identity: Economic, Political, Social and Cultural Conditions
- Nationality, Cosmopolitanism and Transnationality: Exclusion and Inclusion

Abstracts of 250-300 words are invited from interested paper presenters, to be sent to the Conference Secretary (Ms Lo Oi-yu at email address oci@ied.edu.hk) not later than 15 September 2010. Acceptance of abstract will be confirmed by 15 October 2010. Full manuscripts for accepted papers must be submitted by 15 February 2011. Selected papers may be considered for special issue publication in the supporting journals.

Panel and/or paper proposals
It is possible to present an individual paper, or to propose a panel with several participants. Participants who wish to present a paper and/or organize a panel must submit an abstract (max. 300 words) by 1 January 2011. Also participants who require a visa to Denmark (e.g. Chinese citizens) should register by 1 November, 2010. This will make it possible to send out invitations in time for visa applications to be made.

Please see the conference website www.ruralchina.dk/en/ecardc for details.
IIAS Research

Programmes

BAS CENTRE FOR REGULATION AND GOVERNANCE

The BAS Centre for Regulation and Governance in Asia, in engaged in interdisciplinary research on theories and practices focusing on emerging markets of Asia. The Centre serves as a focal point of collaboration between researchers from European and Asian scholars. Its multidisciplinary research undertakings combine approaches from political economy, law, public administration, crisisology, and international relations. This research on crisisology, in particular, is the focus of regulatory issues in Asia and in developing theories of governance pertinent to Asian realities. Currently the Centre facilitates projects on State Licensing, Market Closure, and Rent Seeking; Regulation of Intra-governmental Conflict; Social Costs, Externalities and Innovation; Regulatory Governance under Institutional Void; and Governance in Areas of Contested Territory and Sovereignty. Coordinators: Tak-Wing Ng. t.w.ngo@hum.leidenuniv.nl

PLANTS, PEOPLE AND WORK

This research programme involves various projects that study the social history of cash crops in Asia. The programme is engaged in investigating the adaptation of the new markets opened up in the wake of the ‘European encounter’. The effects of these developments for the long-term development of these societies are fiercely contested. This research programme contributes to the discussion on the histories of globalisation by comparing three important systems of agrarian production across the last 200 years. The individual projects focus on tobacco, sugar, and indigo in India and Indonesia. Institutes involved: University of Amsterdam, International Institute for Social History (RISH, Amsterdam) and IAS. Coordinators: Willem van Schendel h.v.vanschendel@ru.nl and Marcel van der Linden mel@iias.nl

NETWORKS

The Annual Bibliography of Indology Indology is an annotated biblio-graphic database for publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. The project was launched by IAS 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 biblio-graphers, published in a series by Brill. The project receives scientific support from UNESCO. Coordinators: Ellen Raven and Gerda Theuns-de Boer e.m.raven@ias.nl www.abia.net

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 trim and reduce government financed 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:

The Network 45

The Network 45

For more information and the application form, see www.summerprogrammeasia.net
IIAS Fellows

CENTRAL ASIA

DR. IRINA MOROZDOVA

EAST ASIA

DR. MEHDI P. ARINEH

DR. GREGORY BROCKEN
Delft School of Design, TU Delft, the Netherlands. Sponsored by IAS. Urban Complexity in Asia. 1 Sep 2009 – 1 Sep 2011

DR. MO CHEN

PROF. DENNIS CHENG
Department of Chinese Literature, National Taiwan University. IAS Professor, holder of the European Chair of Chinese Studies; Sponsored by IAS, BICER and the Ministry of Education Taiwan. 1 Sep 2010 – 1 Sep 2011

PROF. CHRISTOPHER CULLEN

PROF. TORU FUNAYAMA
Institute for Research in Humanities (Jinbun kagaku kenkyusho), Kyoto University, Japan. Numata visiting professor in Buddhist studies. Scholastic tradition and practice in India and Chinese Buddhism 10 Sep – 18 Dec 2010


DR. MASAE KATO

MS TAKAOKI KONDO
Department of Japan Studies, Leiden University, the Netherlands. Sponsored by AsiaScope and IAS. Translating (Japanese) Contemporary Art. 1 Sep 2009 – 31 Aug 2012

DR. FRANCESCA DAL LAGO

DR. LIU JIANG
IAS. Transnationalizing Gender: The Everyday Practices of Live in Migrant Care Workers and Their Care 7 Oct 2010 – 3 Jan 2011

PROF. TAK-MING NG
IAS. Extraordinary Chair at the Faculty of History and Arts, Erasmus University, Rotterdam. History of Asia. 1 May 2008 – 1 May 2012

PROF. CARLA RISSELUW
Leiden University, the Netherlands. Agency in East and Europe. 1 Jan 2008 – 1 Sep 2010

DR. MARCJENT SLEIBOOM-FALUJKEN
University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. Human Genetics and its political, social, cultural and ethical Implications. 17 Sep 2001 – 1 Sep 2010

DR. HONGDUN SUN

DR. DOROTA SZAWARSKA
Leiden University, the Netherlands. Sponsorship by the J. Gonda Foundation. The Shaiva Religion in the pre-Islamic Indonesian Javapala. 1 Sep 2009 – 31 Dec 2010

MS. CERDA THIENS-DE BOER
Leiden University, the Netherlands. Researcher within the South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaeology Index (ABIA) Sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation. South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaeology Index 1 Nov 2002 – 1 Jan 2011

SOUTHEAST ASIA

MR. ANDREA ACRI
IAS, Leiden University. Sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation. The Shiaa Religion in the pre-Islamic Indonesian Javapala. 1 Sep 2010 – 1 Mar 2011

MS YETTY HAMING
Centre for Studies & Advocacy of Human Rights of Nusa Cendana University, Indonesia. 1 Sep 2008 – 1 Sep 2010

PROF. GERARD PERSINO

PROF. HAJIYAH BT KAHMI
Asian Languages and Cultures, NIE/NTU. European Relations to Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and its Influence on Malay-Indonesian Literary Development. 1 Sep – 1 Dec 2010

DR. EKA SIRMULYANI
The State Institute for Islamic Studies, IAIN Ar-Raniry Darussalam Banda Aceh Indonesia. ‘Public’ religious roles of Muslim women: ‘Tengku hoong’ (women ‘ulama’) and ‘Majelis Taklim’ (religious learning circle) in Acehnese Communities. 1 Sep – 30 Nov 2010

DR. IMRAN BIN TAJUDDIN
National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore. Mosque as cultural heritage in the former Netherlands East Indies. 1 Jul 2010 – 1 Jul 2011

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GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien Institute of Asian Studies Rothenbaumchaussee 32 • 20418 Hamburg • Germany Phone: +49 40 428874-0 • Fax: +49 40 4107945 E-mail: ias@giga-hamburg.de Homepage: www.giga-hamburg.de/ias Ask for your personal sample copy.
The Asian Art Society in the Netherlands was founded in 1918 with the intention of generating greater interest in Asian art, bringing interested parties in contact with each other, and advancing scholarship in this field.

Rosalien van der Poel

Join the Asian Art Society in the Netherlands today:

- Contribute to the preservation of the Rijksmuseum’s collection of Asian art and to the study of Asian art in the Netherlands;
- Support the acquisition of museological Asian art objects to supplement existing sub-collections in the Rijksmuseum;
- Receive the quarterly Dutch-language journal Aziatische Kunst and the Newsletter, which include information about presentations, excursions and exhibitions in the Netherlands and abroad;
- Attend lectures, meetings and excursions relating to the field of Asian art;
- Free entrance (with one guest) to the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

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Become a member by donating a minimum of 60 euro per year at www.vvak.nl. For more information, contact Rosalien van der Poel, info@vvak.nl.

THE SOCIETY STRIVES to achieve its goals by preserving and expanding its collection, organising exhibitions, specimen meetings and excursions, issuing publications, including the Dutch-language journal Aziatische Kunst and a Newsletter, and collaborating with like-minded societies in the Netherlands and abroad. The Society has 250 members, and set up the chair in Material History of the Cultural Interactions Between Asia and Europe at Leiden University.

From museum to pavilion

A dedicated museum of Asian art was essential to achieving the Society’s goals: a place in the Netherlands where Asian artworks could be permanently displayed. This was realised in 1952 when the Museum of Asian Art was inaugurated in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. The museum was relocated to the Rijksmuseum in 1952, where the collection has been housed ever since. The collection will once again be exhibited in its glory in a specially designed Asian Pavilion when the Rijksmuseum reopens in 2013.

The collection

Since its founding, the Society has brought together a multifaceted collection of Asian artworks. This internationally renowned collection now comprises 1730 objects, and continues to expand through the Society’s ongoing acquisition policy as well as through the gifts and bequests it receives. The Society’s collection includes a number of highlights, high-quality representatives of the most important Asian art forms. Because of the wide scope of the collection area and the enormous time span covered by the objects, it is almost impossible to use the objects in the collection to show the historical development of the various art forms, or to demonstrate how forms of artistic expression influenced each other time and time again. Despite this, interest in exhibiting the objects has never been a problem – as a chairman of the Board once wrote, ‘If it is beautiful, it will endure on every level’.

The collection is strong in several areas: ancient Chinese art (sculptures, bronzes, paintings and ceramics), Japanese paintings, prints and sculptures, as well as temple objects and other artworks from Indonesia. The collection also includes objects from India, Thailand, Laos, Sri Lanka, Korea and other Asian countries.

Rosalien van der Poel

Aziatische Kunst

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•  Contribute to the preservation of the Rijksmuseum’s collection of Asian art and to the study of Asian art in the Netherlands;
•  Join the Asian Art Society in the Netherlands today;
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