The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

IIAS
International Institute for Asian Studies

theNewsletter

Encouraging knowledge and enhancing the study of Asia

53 'Indigenous' India

THE FOCUS PAGE 16-26
Markus Schleiter and Erik de Maaker present 'Indigenous' India – six essays focussing on a deeper understanding of the processes by which 'tribes' and 'tribal identities' are being sustained, redefined, created and denied.

Contents

THE FOCUS

16-17 Guest Editors Markus Schleiter and Erik de Maaker introduce this issue's theme of Indigenous India with their

article *Indigeneity as a cultural practice: 'tribe' and the state in India.* 18 Virginius Xaxa discusses how 'tribes' have been incorporated into the colonial and post-colonial state in India in *'Tribes', tradition and state*.

19 In *'You know, we are Indians too!'* Bert Suykens examines how displaced 'tribal' people fleeing violence in Chhattisgarh are encountering the state in their new home of Andhra Pradesh.

20-21 Prasanna Kumar Nayak discusses the strategies adopted by the Indian government to further 'tribal' development, in *The rise and fall of 'tribal' development in Orissa.*

22-23 In *Between nurture and neglect: providing welfare to the Ongees of Little Andaman Island*, Vishvajit Pandya reveals how state welfare mediates the Ongees' lives and shapes their identity.

24-25 *Taking root in Bangladesh: states, minorities and discourses of citizenship* by Ellen Bal shares the

unexpected insights she has gained into current changes concerning indigenous people's politics in Bangladesh. 26 How to understand *'adivasi'* identity is the subject of Luisa Steur's article *Indigenous identity: burden or liberation?*

Dr Philippe Peycam new Director of IIAS

AS OF 1 APRIL 2010, Dr Philippe Peycam will be the new Director of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS).

Dr Peycam is a historian by training. He received his MA (DEA in French) from the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne University in Paris. At the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, he wrote his PhD thesis: Intellectuals and Political Commitment in Vietnam: the Emergence of a Public Sphere in Colonial Saigon (1916-1928).

From 1999 to 2009, Dr Peycam was the (founding) Executive Director of the Center of Khmer Studies in Siem Reap. This research centre supports the largest academic network on Khmer and Mainland Southeast Asian studies in the world. As Director, Dr Peycam gained extensive experience in institution building, management, designing and overseeing multidisciplinary programmes, raising funds from public and private sources as well as organising community-oriented initiatives and civil society support-programmes.

Dr Peycam's academic interests lie in modern Vietnam and Southeast Asia. His current research at the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore is a broader reflection on postcolonial and post-conflict situations that also includes other regions of Asia as well as Africa. This intellectual trajectory stems from an early interest in phenomena such as colonialism and modes of cultural resistance to it; the creative role of the City as a privileged environment for new forms of intercultural interaction; the importance of cultural representations from tangible and intangible heritage to institutional knowledge production; and the challenge of building and maintaining genuine cross-cultural, transnational bridges out of these contexts. Dr Peycam sees these intellectual interests as having implications for concrete policies in today's postcolonial societies.

Dr Philippe Peycam will combine his position of Director of IIAS with his academic work.

EuroSEAS 2010

The sixth EuroSEAS Conference will be held on 26-28 August 2010 at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Call for papers

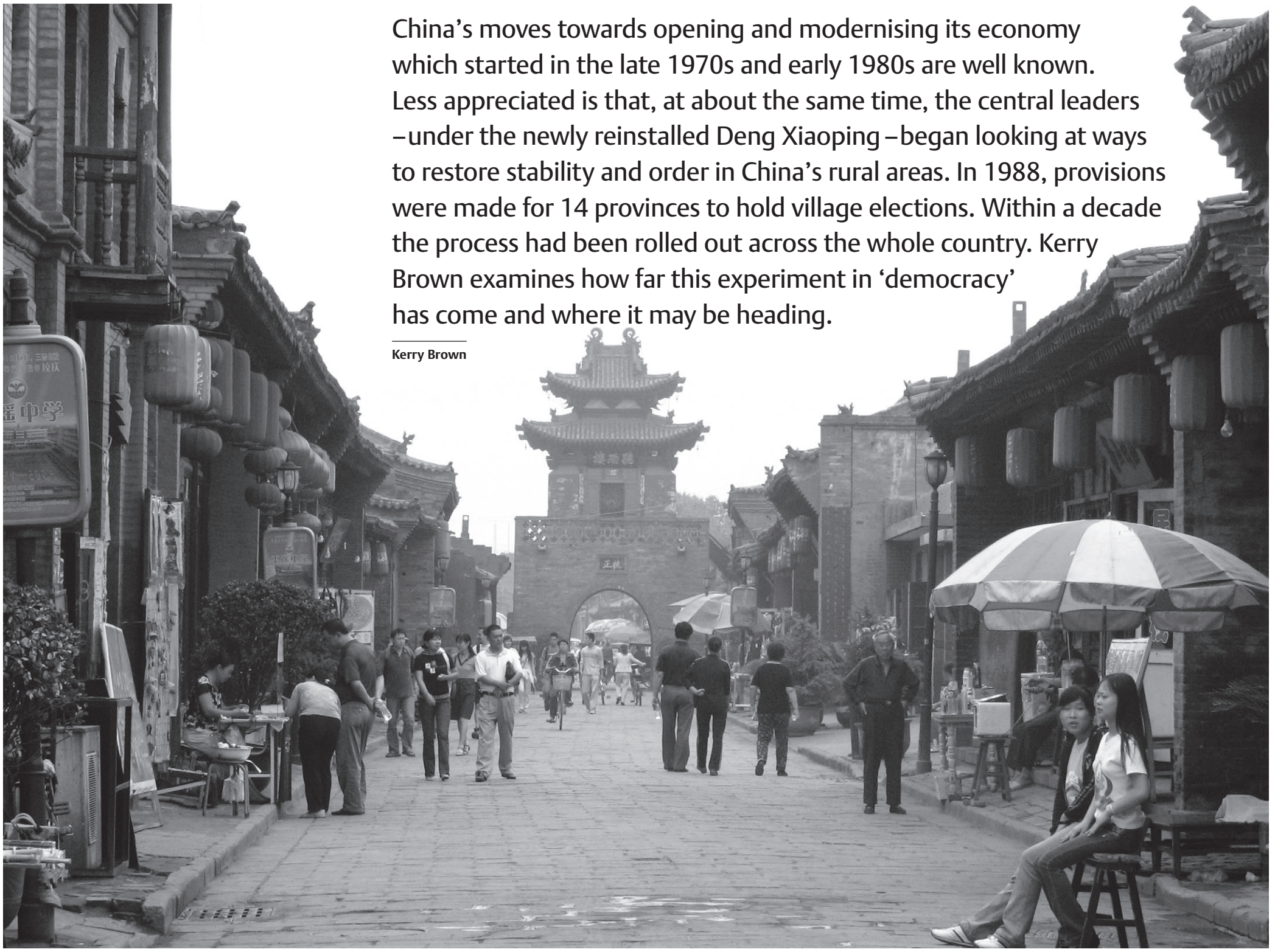
More than 50 panels have now been accepted for the conference and all scholars with an interest in Southeast Asia are cordially invited to propose individual papers.

Information about the panels and how to propose individual papers is available at the conference web site:

www.globalstudies.gu.se/english/newsandevents/conferences/EUROSEAS/Panels/

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

The future of village elections in China



China's moves towards opening and modernising its economy which started in the late 1970s and early 1980s are well known. Less appreciated is that, at about the same time, the central leaders –under the newly reinstalled Deng Xiaoping –began looking at ways to restore stability and order in China's rural areas. In 1988, provisions were made for 14 provinces to hold village elections. Within a decade the process had been rolled out across the whole country. Kerry Brown examines how far this experiment in 'democracy' has come and where it may be heading.

Kerry Brown

THE YEARS OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION from 1966 onwards had seen much of the administrative and social infrastructure in rural China depleted. China's education system had been interrupted. In some areas of the countryside, there had been a worrying descent into anarchy, with cliques, local strongmen and illegal groups literally running whole areas as their own special constituencies. In the early 1980s, the first moves were made to redress this situation with elections held to install Village Committee leaders in Gansu, in the north west of China, and Guanxi, two of China's least developed provinces.

These areas had very specific problems, caused by them both having a large proportion of ethnic minority dominated areas. They had challenges of governance that the use of basic elections could be used to address, allowing locally-respected people to have their leadership legitimised by processes accepted by the local and national government.

Much like the creation of the household enterprise system, and of town and village enterprises which were occurring at about the same time, there was a dynamic mixture of local improvisation and flexible central government policy in the evolution of what, finally, became the first Organic Village Election Law in 1988. This allowed for elections with more candidates standing than places to be filled, non-Communist Party members as candidates and secret ballots. Fourteen provinces were first included in this process, rolling out to the whole country when the revised, second Organic Village Law was passed in 1998.

Village elections have been described as a massive experiment in democratisation, and a process of education for over 700 million Chinese. In the last 20 years, over 3.2 million people have been elected via these elections, 20% of them non-party members, in over 650,000 Chinese villages. In view of the sheer size of this process, it is surprising that only now academics in Beijing are starting to systematically assess what these elections have achieved for the governance of rural China.

Village elections have been described as a massive experiment in democratisation, and a process of education for over 700 million Chinese. In the last 20 years, over 3.2 million people have been elected via these elections, 20% of them non-party members, in over 650,000 Chinese villages.

Scholars at Beijing University and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences have put together exhaustive amounts of data from the elections held in the last decade, drawing conclusions and setting, perhaps, the basis for a possible expansion of this experiment to higher levels of government.

Although in the 1982 Chinese Constitution (the latest), three formal levels of government are set out, in practice there are five, from Central, through provincial, prefectural, county, down to township. Village government stands as an informal level of administration with no strictly legal basis. But it is via village level officials that over half China's population still engage with authority and relate to the state. The ability of these officials to govern is critical.

Mixed results

Since the 1990s, village elections have had very mixed results. In some areas, they have achieved better, more efficient levels of administration, more accountable systems of resource allocation, and the removal, because of poor performance, of officials by electorates that are dissatisfied with them. But the analysis of data so far is very unclear on whether, for instance, villages in poor areas or middle income areas, or in the more developed, wealthier coastal areas produce the best results. According to one academic interviewed in Beijing in August 2009, it seemed to be that the poorest and wealthiest areas held the best elections, with proper competition, and the election of officials to lead the Village Committee who were much more accountable to local public opinion. Middle income areas were much more contentious, with provinces in the centre of China like Hunan, Henan and Hubei failing, in some areas, to hold elections for a number of years (they are meant to be held every three years) because of the levels of disorder and violence that they provoke. Other analysis however seems to imply that middle areas have held the most effective elections, with poor areas suffering from low elector turn out and chronic levels of proxy voting, and wealthy areas being dominated by elites who can buy elections.

The most that can be said is that the situation across China is very complicated. In some areas, there is the reappearance of factionalism or tribalism, with family groups dominating villages and succeeding continuously in getting their favoured candidates in. In other regions with large proportions of ethnic minorities, there is the sensitive issue of the local and central government's fear of the introduction of policies locally that might favour one ethnic group over another. There are poor levels of voter turnout amongst women in many areas, with the abuse of proxy voting to the extent that in one case, one person voted on behalf of over 60 other electors. In other areas, businessmen who have recently emerged have spotted that being head of the Village Committee gives power to disburse land which belongs to migrant labourers who have left an area and do not return after a five year gap. Village Committees also have planning powers over construction projects which, of course, have a strong commercial edge. The dominance of these business elites in some areas has led to cases of vote buying.

On a field trip to a village about two hours from Beijing, in Hebei province, I was able to see some of these issues crystallised. Interviewing one retired farmer, it was clear that he felt that the current village committee head was corrupt and incompetent. He claimed that in the next village, there were proper elections, with real debate on the day when the votes were cast, with each candidate able to stand up and say why they were the best choice. These meetings got very lively, and often led to well attended and very open debates. But in his village, the elections had been a formality, with little real competition. The former CPC brand Party Secretary had been voted in, and had managed to make himself even wealthier since his election by allowing the building of a large hotel in the area, despite the fact that it was on a greenfield site and therefore disallowed under recent central regulations to try to prevent yet more precious agricultural land being put over to residential or industrial use. In such a small community, he said, it was impossible to conceal from others who you had voted for, and there was intense pressure put on you, by friends and relatives of the main candidate, to vote for specific candidates.

This example raises the vexed question of the relationship of the village committees to the Communist Party machinery. The Village Election Law and the associated legislation and regulations around it does place most of the administrative powers in village government with the committee. As in other areas of Chinese political life, the role of the party is still very significant, and there is no strict rule about who in the end has the final say – Party Branch leader or Committee Leader. Some provinces like Shandong have tried to solve this by only allowing Party Secretaries to stand in elections, so that in effect the final successful candidate will be both village committee head and Communist Party local branch head. Shandong's solution, while pragmatic, creates dissatisfaction because it places all the power in the hands of the Party. That was not the original idea.

One interpretation of the Party's willingness to tolerate elections in the early years, in any case, was the ways in which this served as a good method of talent-spotting good officials and then recruiting those who were not Party members into the Party. This has happened in a lot of cases across China. Many candidates successful in village elections, which are salaried positions, are then able to move up to the next level of government, in townships, where they are able to enter the formal civil service system with the benefits that brings with it.

Overall, village elections in China over the last 20 years, however mixed the results, have probably delivered well conducted, and successful elections in about 50% of the areas in which they have been held. But now there is the question of where they can be taken, and what meaning they may have for the larger question of elections in higher areas of government in China.

Next steps?

According to one activist based in Beijing, who supports those who have stood in village elections and then been disallowed their victory because of corruption or malpractice, the events held in 2008 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the passing of the original Village Election Law in Beijing were described by some who attended them as being 'more like going to the funeral of the process, rather than a celebration of its success.' While the government of Jiang Zemin till 2002 did tentatively play with expanding elections up to township levels, and looked at some experiments made in this direction in Jiangsu province in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the whole process was put on hold. Under the very cautious leadership of the current leader Hu Jintao, there have been no further moves.

One interpretation of this is to see that the kind of issues village elections were meant to deal with – better standards of governance at the village level, the delivery of social justice, accountability by officials, transparency in decision making, etc – while they are still regarded as being very important, have now been shifted to within the Party. As one analyst said, the 'Village Committees', at the start of the village election process, were there to do the state's dirty work – collect taxes, implement the one-child policy, and deal with social stability issues. For the first two of these, at least, things have improved. The current government has removed many of the taxes which were laid upon farmers, and the one-child policy has now had a generation in which to be socially accepted, and in some areas is being relaxed. There was never any intention that village elections were meant to deliver a blueprint or an experimental basis for something that could then be migrated from administrative government to within the Communist Party itself.

The focus of the Hu-Wen government, therefore, has been in the area of delivering the sorts of things that village elections were meant to achieve – accountability, fiscal responsibility, efficiency – but within the Communist Party by what Hu Jintao famously called in his speech at the 17th Party Congress in October 2007 'intra-Party democracy.' In essence, the Party must sort its own house out, rather than look purely to society around it to improve that. In berating Communist Party cadres for needing to be more 'morally upright and have greater integrity' Hu is therefore supporting the clear focus on making the Party more accountable to itself.

In this context, village elections have hit a ceiling, and there are, as yet, no signs that they will be extended beyond the current stage. This has been recognised by some of the main foreign organisers who offered practical support for elections in the early phases, through advice on monitors, practical implementation, and the drafting to the two election laws. The Carter Center, for instance, and the Ford Foundation have been two of the most deeply involved, but beyond very specific technical areas (in one case publication of books assessing the last two decades of elections) their main energies in China are now concentrated elsewhere.

There has also been a shift towards working on the extension of civil society, and the legal sector, in the last five years. When the first elections were held in the 1980s, civil society could barely be said to exist in China after the highly politicised years of the Maoist area, and the legal infrastructure was effectively being built from scratch. These two areas are now flourishing and delivering many of the things, in terms of public participation in decision making, feedback on government services, and holding authority accountable, that, at least in rural areas, were once the province of elections and village committees.

There is one newer area of activity, which is the creation of enhanced resident's committees in urban areas. In some cities, like Shanghai, studies by Fudan University have shown that these have had surprising results in some areas, helping residents to lobby municipal governments about local environmental issues. The enfranchisement in some form of urban dwellers was an important priority for the Jiang Zemin administration, which saw a period of intense urbanisation in the 1990s, accompanied by the laying off of up to 60 million employees from state-owned enterprises during the Zhu Rongji industrial reforms of 'letting the small go, and strengthening the large.' The appearance of a new swath of people on the labour market meant that, firstly, people became much more mobile, moving from their native provinces to where jobs existed, and secondly that cities like Shanghai and Beijing saw sudden increases in their population. Over this period, the internal passport *'hu kou'* (household registration) system was relaxed to the point that, in the early 2000s, there was even discussion of scrapping it altogether. The final element was the liberalisation of the housing market, with people able to be much freer in getting loans (usually on 15 year terms) to then buy apartments and property to live in in the places where they found work.

Resident committees were built on the basis of the old household committees of the past, which had existed from the 1950s onwards in China. But they lack the air of intrusive surveillance that the old committees had, and instead have become a way to create at least some social cohesion in very newly created and liquid urban communities where people feel very little sense of belonging anywhere, and a high proportion of people are from outside. As with village elections, resident committees involve the voting in of members, and the holding of a form of elections and hustings. In that sense, they continue the educational function of the village ones.

Whatever the individual achievements of some committees in cities, however, there is widespread cynicism about their significance and function. One official I interviewed in Beijing about them dismissed them as 'something for the retired and the unemployed.' He said that very few people working were involved in the committees or bothered standing for them. Another in Shanghai said that they were 'things that the vast majority of people in cities were barely aware of.' At the very least, however, they supply some institutional infrastructure in cities for voting for local representatives, and that may, in the future, when the enfranchisement of city dwellers becomes more of a priority, be useful for the government.

Stagnation

The relative stagnation of the village elections at the moment is symptomatic of a lack of political will right at the top of the Communist Party of China itself about how to carry forward meaningful political reform. While there is a strong awareness of the need to continue improving the levels of government service, and to satisfy the increasing numbers of Chinese who may now be classified as middle class, both in the countryside and in the cities, the challenge remains how to do this without ceding major territory from the Party itself, and allowing for some of the relaxations which, in the eyes of the current Chinese leadership elite, led to the disintegration of the Communist system in the Soviet Union. The Colour Revolutions which occurred in former Soviet Union areas over the last two decades are looked at negatively in China, and have been studied intensively in order to avoid what are seen as some of the mistakes made by Communist Parties in these areas.

This lies behind the CPC's extreme caution. There are no signs at the moment that this will change. Critics within China, even amongst the academic community, who align themselves with the new leftism (*xin zoupai*) have even claimed recently that elections, far from addressing the problems of governance and stability in the countryside, have made things worse, leading to anarchy in some areas, and battles between different groups in local societies. One academic complained that in fact contemporary China suffers from 'too much democracy', because in many areas where elections are held there is a lack of consensus, with everyone standing up for their own limited interest, and no sense of a wider society. These may well sound like excuses in order to avoid carrying reforms further, but at some level, they are symptomatic of the lack of consensus within the decision making elite about what the next steps might be for political reform in China, and how village elections might offer some kind of basis for this. One thing is clear. Leaving things as they are at present is not an option. On that, at least, everyone in China agrees.

Kerry Brown
Chatham House, UK
kerry.brown01@googlemail.com

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Iran: social revolt and prospects for change (part 1)

Iran's regime faces a serious crisis with the outbreak of mass demonstrations following the elections of June 2009, and the death of the dissident cleric Hossein Ali Montazeri last December. Some commentators have compared the unrest in Iran with that of 1978. Indeed, the current situation is the most profound evidence of destabilisation of rule since the Islamic Revolution of 1978/9. Compared with protests in the recent past (1990s and 2000s), this revolt has engaged Iranians on a scale which transcends age, ethnic background, income level, or geographical location. Are we witnessing a repeat of the revolutionary movement of 30 years ago? In the first of two articles examining the prospects for Iran, Mehdi Amineh looks at the position of the current regime in relation to the oppositional forces and the conditions for change.

Mehdi Parvizi Amineh

Above: Protester holds up poster of the dissident cleric Hossein Ali Montazeri who died in December 2009.

THE POST-ELECTION REVOLT OF JUNE 12, 2009 created a 'revolutionary' potential for confrontation with the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). The power structures of the IRI have always been characterised by factionalism, but the recent developments showed that contradictions and differences between different factions have reached a tipping point. The regime has responded with violence and repression, leaving no possibility to make a compromise based on 'general interests' between competitive factions within the power block, as was the case during the charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. As a result, the conflict and contradiction within the ruling elite and their social supporters intensified the regime's instability.

In addition to the lack of elite unity, the IRI also faces a legitimacy crisis caused by a number of factors. First, in the last two decennia a type of secular/liberal oriented interpretation of political Islam has been developed by a segment of the dominant political elite – including Abdul Karim Soroush, Ayatollah Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari, Mohse Kadivar and Hasan Yousefi-Eshkevari. A second factor is the contradictory nature of the Constitution of the 'Islamic' 'Republic' which seeks to combine theocratic and democratic dimensions of the legitimacy of the system. At the same time, the gap is increasing between, on the one hand, the ideas and practices of the Islamic regime and, on the other hand, the contradiction between the dominant Islamic ideology and the demands of the people in urban areas – mainly the youth, women, minorities, and students – as a result of the failure of Islamisation of the society's norms and values by the regime. Thirteen years after the victory of the IRI '[...] the ruling clerics, despite their intensive financial and organisational resources and consistent brutality in eliminating their secular opponents, have failed to create a religious order in the country. Iranians today appear to be less religious in comparison to the public of other Islamic countries, and the trend in their value orientations is towards individualism, gender equality, democracy, and national identity'.[1]

Furthermore, one of the main political characteristics of the IRI is its chronic administrative inefficiency in managing the country's affairs. This phenomenon has intensified during Ahmadinejad's presidency. It is characterised by the failure of his populist political economy, which manifested itself in inflation, recession and increasing unemployment. State capacity for effective action requires elite cohesion and widespread diffuse support for the regime in society. In a situation where there is no elite cohesion and unity of the leadership, economic crisis is not solved, leading to instability in society. This opens up the possibility of political mobilisation by oppositional forces. The post-election protest movements in Iran were primarily caused by demands that the new government was unwilling to meet, or even hear; an inconsistency between the increasing political demand of the people and the result of the election. But this is an incident; just a trigger that shoots us into a wider world of political action. It is known that the presidential election has little real impact on Iran's controlled system.[2]

When the main political factions – the radical and fundamentalist faction (Khamenei-Ahmadinejad) and the conservative/pragmatic faction (Rafsanjani) – publicly manifested their differences, it created an opening for action from below; a feeling of expectation from the people that the conservative/pragmatic elements should accept the demands of the 'Green Movement' (the name given to the mobilisation of the people which occurred during and after the June 2009 elections).

The peaceful mass protests of the people after the elections were not tolerated. On the contrary, they were brutally and violently suppressed by the security forces. In the case of authoritarian regimes a legitimacy crisis brings forward realignment among elite segments. In such a situation, the winning side may be the one that is able to obtain support from paramilitary security forces. In this case, the role of the Revolutionary Guard expands. As a result, regimes don't hesitate to subordinate the protest movements. With weeks of suppression in Iran by the security forces, public anger has now mixed with fear, further delegitimising the current regime.[3]

The impact of the current movement on the future of the IRI

A combination of a deepening conflict within the ruling class and an intensified conflict between the dominant political elite and society was crucial in the emergence of the people's movement. To analyse whether the current movement in Iran is a serious threat to the stability of the IRI, it is necessary to investigate the challenges that the current movement creates for the regime and to what extent the regime is able to control the situation. Two factors are crucial for the outcome of the current crisis: (1) The position of the regime's coercive apparatus and its ability to use it to eliminate oppositional leaders and organisations. (2) The position of the leaders of the protest movement and their ability to mobilise the masses and create a new alternative ideology for change.[4] (To be examined further in Part 2 of this article, to appear in IIAS Newsletter #54).

In recent months, the IRI has sought to control the situation with the repression of mass demonstrations and by arresting key elements of the oppositional forces. (According to some sources more than 200 members of the opposition have been arrested). These two factors, together with the lack of a strong leader of the opposition with related 'new' ideas/ideology and organisation, make it difficult to sustain the mobilisation of the people against the current regime. The preliminary conclusion is that civil society organisations in Iran are not strong enough to maintain a level of activity that could realise political change.

Furthermore, the protest movement revealed the nature of the power structures of the regime. The Supreme Leader is the now the main decision-maker in the whole system. In fact, the protest movement delegitimised and changed the position of Supreme Leader from a constitutional and mediating element in the system to an absolute autocratic ruler.

Concurrently, the protest movement threatened the dominant ruling faction and alarmed the regime into continuing with free elections. Moreover, the movement has created a dilemma for the current regime. If it chooses to preserve the republican components of the IRI and continues to hold presidential elections every four years, then it risks unwanted electoral turnout. However, if the regime continues to pressure its opponents and limit the participation of the people in elections, it will delegitimise itself further. Another outcome of the movement, then, is that distrust among the people over political participation can lead to a loss of the regime's legitimacy. With other words, the republican components of the IRI will gradually decline and the IRI will become an increasingly theocratic system. As such, the regime can only find support from non-democratic institutions and interest groups and conservative clerics.

Four elements of regime stability

Following the Iranian political scientist Bashiriyeh, there are three main elements of regime stability, namely: legitimacy, elite cohesion or unity of the leadership, and the security apparatus and its ability to keep the regime in power and restore order. I posit that a fourth factor is important and should be taken into account: a sufficient level of state income and independent state revenue. Only the third and fourth elements appear to be present as a basis for the stability of the current regime in Iran.[5]

Legitimacy

Under Ayatollah Khomeini (1979-89), the legitimacy of the young IRI was based on populism. Populism is authority based on the charismatic leadership of a strong person, combined with the mobilisation of the masses through appeal or manipulation. 'Populist Islamic rule, which is incompatible with the trend of modernization and democratization, pushed the society into permanent revolution, traditional authority, Islamization of the social fabric, and fragmentation of political desires'.[6] The Iran-Iraq war (1981-1988), together with this populist-revolutionary ideology empowered the authorities to mobilise the masses and suppress the oppositional political organisations, parties and associations.[7] However, Khomeini had failed to institutionalise his charisma into a coherent party and social force and with his death, the regime's populist-revolutionary ideology gradually lost credibility and support. Khomeini's successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is not a charismatic leader, does not have the same religious standing and, therefore, does not have the same authority among the population in general and the clergy in particular. This created

The peaceful mass protests of the people after the elections were not tolerated. On the contrary, they were brutally and violently suppressed by the security forces.

an opening for struggle between factions or elite fragmentation. That said, the appearance of competitive political factions within the ruling class, accompanied by the emergence of new intellectual movements with a more liberal and secular orientation, gradually led to the decline of the legitimacy of the fundamentalist faction of the IRI.

Elite cohesion

The current events in Iran have brought the disputes and conflicts between the ruling elite and various factions to a head. Consequently, it is difficult now to make new conditions for consensus. The differences between reformist, conservative/pragmatists and fundamentalists on the one hand, and disputes within *ulama'* circles and religious institutions as well as between the political and the military elite on the other, have intensified substantially.

There are a number of reasons for this political tension and the lack of elite cohesion in the IRI. The IRI is unique in a sense that it combines a theocratic mode of rule based on the *velayat-e faqih* system (the Governance of the Jurist), which was institutionalised in the constitution of 1979. As a result, Iran is an amalgam of both republican as well as religious institutions, all of which exert political power. This blurs the lines of authority. At the same time, Iran is unique among non-democratic regimes, having regular parliamentary and presidential elections with a (limited) choice of candidates, as well as relatively open discussions in parliament.[8] The duality of this system was the result of the existence of liberal and theocratic forces when the constitution was drafted. Today, there are three 'republican' institutions: the legislative *Majlis* (parliament), the executive and the judiciary. Parallel to these republican institutions there exist multiple religious supervisory bodies, the most important being: the Guardian Council (*Shora-ye negahban*), the Assembly of Experts (*Majles-e Khobregan*) and the Expediency Council (*Majma'-e Tashkhis-e Maslahat-e Nezam*). Thus, the legitimacy of the IRI is twofold; a theocratic mode of rule (the divine) and a republican mode of rule (the popular) are deemed simultaneously legitimate.

Consequently, ambiguities and tensions are inherent to the formal political structure. The theocratic element, however, has primacy. For example, the religious supervisory body the Guardian Council checks all bills going through parliament on constitutionality and compliance with the *Shari'a* (Islamic Law). It also decides which candidates are qualified to become a Member of Parliament, or to run for the presidential elections. The *velayat-e motlaqeh faqih* system must be accepted in respect of presidential elections, according to which the Supreme Leader (Khamenei) is the ultimate decision-maker. This limits democratic participation, and the Republican institutions function as a disguise for the true nature (that is theocratic-authoritarian) of the IRI.[9] Although reformist candidates did manage to achieve some electoral victories, their power was effectively reduced by the constitutional powers granted to the Supreme Leader who is able to block any attempts at reform that would threaten the existing hierarchy.

The recent political developments revealed the superiority of the religious supervisory bodies and the authoritarian element of the IRI. Moreover, the outcome of the June 12 elections, which was unacceptable to the theocratic elements in the IRI, showed the contradiction in the political system of the IRI and the roots of a clash between different political institutions and forces.

Left: women protesters from the Green Movement, the opposition movement formed during the June 2009 elections.

Although the ruling elites are divided, almost all have an interest in sustaining the IRI. To be part of the regime and to criticise it heavily is to dig one's own grave.

Besides the inherent tension between political institutions and democratic and theocratic elements in the IRI, another factor creates disunity at the political level. This is the existence of multiple rival power centres which are organised around powerful individuals like Rafsanjani, Khamenei or Ahmadinejad, or groups like the Society of Islamic Coalition (*Jam'aiyat Mo'atalefeh Islami* – JMI). Almost all power centres control streets mobs, have their own (para-) military forces, financial resources, media, intelligence, ideology, clerical support, foreign diplomatic relations, courts etc.[10] Some of these power centres have even become governments within themselves, providing housing, education, healthcare etc; and most are very influential in some state institutions. Often they have managed to operate beyond legal frameworks. With multiple power centres there is not one government but many. This undermines and weakens central government and its authority.

Although the ruling elites are divided, almost all have an interest in sustaining the IRI. To be part of the regime and to criticise it heavily is to dig one's own grave. Furthermore, while certain segments of Iranian society oppose the current regime, others continue to support it. This support is primarily the result of the structures of the Iranian economy. A private sector barely exists in Iran. On the contrary, a great proportion of the labour force is employed in the public sector and therefore economically dependent upon the state and public institutions. Many religious institutions and *ulama* too are dependent on states subsidies and as a result they support the regime politically or choose to remain passive.

The coercive apparatus and independent state revenue

The ruling faction of the political elite rests on two pillars of power: the security forces and the oil and gas industries. These two pillars form the main pillars of the regime at the moment and are inseparable. State revenues from oil and gas exports make it possible for the dominant faction to finance the military forces in order to suppress oppositional forces and maintain order. Furthermore, revenues are exchanged for support and to buy political loyalty and obedience. Oil and gas revenues enable the regime to persist,[11] and the distribution of oil revenue in combination with repression essentially pacifies the majority of the Iranian populace.

Above: Young men of the *Basij* militia, a paramilitary group within the Revolutionary Guard.

Constitutionally, the armed forces in the IRI are under the command of the Supreme Leader and composed of two main components: the regular military; and the revolutionary military, which is made up of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) with its paramilitary *Basij* militia and the Law Enforcement Forces (LEF).[12] They are loyal to Khamenei and his dominant faction.

While the role of Iran's regular military is to defend against external threats to the country, the *Basij* militia was established to deal with internal threats against the regime. In November 1980 Ayatollah Khomeini ordered the establishment of an institute called the *Basij-e Mostazafin*. Subsequently, the *Basij* was expanded to mosques, schools and universities. Initially, the main task of the *Basij* was construction in the urban and agricultural sectors. However, after the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war the *Basij-e Mostazafin* came under the command of *Sepah Pasdaran* (Revolutionary Guards) and it transformed into a paramilitary unit. According to official documents, during the Iran-Iraq war, more than 550,000 students were sent to the military fronts. Of this number 36,000 were killed or disappeared in the war; 2853 became disabled; and 2433 were arrested by the Iraqis. Over the past 30 years this institute has developed further and is now used for the purposes of the ruling elite.[13] In the last decade, the *Basij* has been used as a social pressure group to propagate the ruling ideology and disrupt public manifestations of students, youth and women. According to official figures, there are currently 4,6 million students, from elementary to secondary schools, enrolled in the *Basij*, being trained in 700 bases (schools). These young *Basijis* (mainly under 18 years old) played a key role in suppressing the people during the recent social protests and demonstrations. Some parents actively encourage their children to participate in the *Basij* in order to give them access to organised holidays and guarantee access to universities via the 'University Share for members of the *Basij*' arrangement. The IRI is ultimately responsible for the organisation, training, agitation and stimulation of young *Basiji* to engage in violence, first in the war with Iraq and now on the streets.[13]

The Revolutionary Guard has been playing a key role in Iranian politics, especially since the election of President Ahmadinejad in 2005. The Guard itself and the companies run by the Guard obtain major contracts in every sector of the economy; from airport construction to telecommunications to car manufacturing. Consequently, its power in recent years has increased in all facets of national affairs, cementing its support for the current regime in Iran.

In Part 2 of this article, to be published in the next issue of the IIAS Newsletter (#54 Summer 2010), I will examine the position of the oppositional forces in relation to the state and look at the prospects for change.

Mehdi Parvizi Amineh
Programme Director Energy Programme Asia-IIAS
University of Amsterdam
m.p.amineh@uva.nl

I would like to thank Sander de Rijke for his assistance in this project.

Notes

1. Moaddel, Mansoor. 'The Iranian Revolution and its Nemesis: the rise of Liberal Values among Iranians', in *Comparative Studies of South, Africa and the Middle East,* The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Iranian Revolution, Vol. 29, no.1: 2009, p. 126.
2. Some scholars and journalists give too much credibility to the electoral system and the various elections that have been held. The 2009 elections were neither free nor fair in the democratic sense. The fact that the Supreme Leader could legally and constitutionally ban non-Islamic candidates removes the democratic potential of the election. Reformist and democratic forces could easily be sidelined via the obligation to ideological conformity; rendering any efforts at democratisation effectively invalid.
3. Radio Farda's interview with Iranian scholar Hossein Bashiriyeh concerning the recent political development in Iran, September 5, 2009 at 12:59pm.
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Alamdari, Kazem. 'The Power Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Transition from Populism to Clientelism, and Militarization of the Government', in *Third World Quarterly,* Vol. 26, No. 88.pp. 1285-2005
7. Abrahamian, Ervand. 2008. *A History of Modern Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8. Chehabi, H.E. 2001. 'The Political Regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Comparative Perspective', in *Government and Opposition,* Vol. 36, No. 1, 48
9. Alamdari, K. 2005. 'The Power Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Transition from Populism to Clientelism, and Militarization of the Government', in *Third World Quarterly,* Vol. 26, No. 8, 1285-1301.
10. Ibid: 1293.
11. The state's oil-revenue has two other effects: First, reliance on oil exports hinders diversification of the economy by creating the 'rentier state'. It is easier for a government to satisfy its financial needs by capturing rents from oil revenues than investing in the sectoral economy and collecting increased tax revenues in the long term. As a result, attempts to diversify Iran's economy beyond the energy and public sector throughout the 20th and early 21st century have failed. Resource abundance and development in this case don't go hand-in-hand. Moreover, the availability of resources often leads to competition for the control of oil revenues which In Iran has encouraged bad governance and corruption. Secondly, the state's oil revenues hinder democratisation and maintain authoritarianism. In a resource rich country, oil-revenue becomes a substitute for tax-revenue. This way the state can act independently of society and is less sensitive to political demands. In other words, oil revenues make it less necessary for the Iranian ruling elite to be responsive to society's needs. Rather it becomes more repressive and arbitrary. Governments reliant on tax revenue need to compromise with social forces and have to provide benefits, good governance, rule of law and accountability in return. The phenomenon that resource revenue hinders both development and democratisation is called 'the resource curse'. It is a challenge to Iranian society to turn the resource curse into a blessing. In Iran, the oil and gas exports constitute 85% of total exports. The fact that the recent high oil prices resulted in an enormous inflow of capital available to the ruling elite and the government of Ahmadinejad is also relevant in this context, augmenting the resources available to strengthen the regime.
12. The LEF was established in 1990 (during the Rafsanjani presidency) out of various Islamic revolutionary committees (*Komiteh-ye Enqelab-e Eslami*), the City Police (*Shahrbani*), and the gendarmerie (countryside police). During the first decade after the revolution the revolutionary committees – mainly composed of members of the Conservative faction – together with the regular police were responsible for implementing law and order in Iran. By merging them with other police forces in 1990, President Rafsanjani reduced their scope of action. The committees are not so visible on the streets anymore today but maintain an independent structure and activities. (Hermann 1994: 546).
13. See the interview of Ali Taefi, The Learners-Basiji and the Increasing Violence between the Children by the Radio-Deutsche Welle-in Persian, September 23 2009: http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4718243,00.html.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Beyond Copenhagen: what role for Asia?

The Copenhagen summit on climate change brought Asia's major economies China and India to the forefront of negotiations, underlining their essential role in dealing with this global challenge. Despite, or perhaps rather because of their participation, the resulting Copenhagen Accord lacked progress on almost all fronts. However, the engagement of Asia and China in particular, remains critical for the success of any international regime on climate change.

Bram Buijs

THE END OF 2009 saw the biggest climate change summit to date, but left behind few results and many doubts about whether a global governance framework to deal with the issue can ever be organised successfully. What was originally designed to yield an important 'as-conclusive-as-possible' follow-up treaty to the Kyoto Protocol, brought forth a three-page statement omitting many of the most crucial issues. It was clear from the outset that the position of the US made the original objective – a legally binding treaty – impossible. At the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Singapore in November 2009, President Obama acknowledged as much when he endorsed a 'one agreement, two step approach'. Yet despite these lowered expectations, no political agreement could be reached on what would need to be confirmed by a binding treaty, for instance at the COP-16 meeting in Mexico in November 2010.

The Copenhagen Accord

The only explicitly quantified goal in the Copenhagen Accord is the long term commitment to keeping a global temperature increase below two degrees Celsius. This reaffirms the critical threshold presented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). However, it lacks the vital step of translating this into global emission reduction goals, both medium- and long term, let alone affirming a rough 'burden-sharing' of required reductions between developed and developing countries. To put this in perspective, it is worth recalling the G8 summit in Italy in July 2009 which elicited an agreement on a long term goal of reducing global greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2050, with an 80% reduction objective for developed countries.[1] Furthermore, at a side meeting of that summit, 17 nations including Brazil, China, India, South Africa and the G8 had already agreed on the two degrees threshold; so in this regard the Copenhagen Accord yielded little progress. While a common goal in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) arena has stronger authority and support than the G8 pledges, the Copenhagen Accord was not unanimously endorsed but merely 'noted' by the General Assembly of the Parties to the Convention. One of the most fundamental issues still to be resolved is the role of the Kyoto Protocol in a future international climate change regime, a major point of dispute between the US and the major developing countries. Whether the Accord provides enough common ground to make it a significant starting point for a new international framework on climate change remains very doubtful.

On the positive side, many countries announced national emission reduction targets in the run-up to Copenhagen. Pledges from both developing and developed countries, have now been officially appended to the Accord and considerable financial support was promised to the most vulnerable developing countries. However, illustrating the failure of Copenhagen from a 'climate' perspective, none of the major parties present increased their reduction targets in the course of the negotiations.

Asia's increasing prominence in the climate change debate

It became clear in Copenhagen that Asia has arrived at the forefront of climate change negotiations. Whereas the negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol revolved mainly around striking an agreement between the European Union and the US, together with other developed countries, the COP-15 summit saw China and India, Asia's biggest emerging economies, around the table with the US, Brazil and South Africa engaged in last-minute negotiations. It reflects the importance of Asia in addressing climate change, as the predominant share of growth in emissions will take place there, with the main drivers being the continuing economic development and rising welfare levels in China and India.

It became clear in Copenhagen that Asia has arrived at the forefront of climate change negotiations.

Consequently, any solution to the climate change challenge must lie in Asia. With China and India accounting for more than one-third of the world's population and growing fast economically, their increasing energy consumption and carbon footprint pose a major challenge to international energy markets and the climate alike. Per capita energy consumption and emission levels are still far below Western levels, signifying that there is still a staggering potential for further growth.[3] As an example, if all Chinese would have the same per capita oil consumption as the US, today's complete world oil production (about 85 million barrels per day) would be required just to satisfy China's needs.

A crucial factor contributing to the rapid rise of emissions from China and India, is their reliance on coal. Coal is the most carbon-intensive fossil fuel, releasing about double the amount of carbon dioxide when combusted compared to natural gas. Unfortunately, it is also the most widely available and cheapest of all fossil fuels: China and India have the third- and fifth-largest proven reserves of coal, respectively. As a whole, Asia is projected to account for 97% of all incremental consumption of coal globally up to 2030, with China accounting for 65% and India for 20%.

As a consequence, projections indicate that Chinese energy-related carbon dioxide emissions will nearly double by 2030, while India's emissions will come close to tripling. The share of these two countries in global annual emissions has risen from 14% in 1990 to about 25% now, and is expected to rise to 37% in 2030, with China accounting for 29% and India for 8%.[4] Considering that global emissions should start falling before 2020 in order to have a decent chance of limiting the temperature increase to two degrees, this growth in emissions will be very hard to accommodate. While part of these rising emissions might be compensated by declining emissions in developed countries, action must be taken in developing countries as well in order to have any chance of meeting a two degree scenario.

China, India and other developing economies offer huge opportunities for mitigating emissions as they are still in the process of development. Since much of the energy-consuming infrastructure – e.g. power plants, cars and buildings – is not yet in place, there is still a chance of shifting towards a more low-carbon developmental pathway. According to some studies, China would be able to reduce its emissions by nearly 50% by 2030 if it would vigorously deploy low-carbon technology options currently available, such as power generation from renewable energy sources, electric cars and energy-efficient buildings. The speed of starting implementation is crucial however, with 30% of the mitigation potential already lost after a five year delay.[5]

Yet for both China and India economic development is currently the absolute priority. China, wary of being lured into future restrictions, reportedly played a critical role in eliminating suggested global emissions reduction targets from the Copenhagen Accord. Moreover, a mention of 2010 as the deadline for a legally binding treaty was also removed.

Carbon intensity targets and a way forward

In spite of their conservative behaviour at Copenhagen, China and India both took an unprecedented initiative by declaring *carbon intensity* targets, indicating how much they would lower greenhouse gas emissions relative to the size of their economy. Even though both targets are not overly ambitious, they do signal an important step forward.

In recent years, China in particular gained much acclaim for its progressive policies promoting renewable energy sources and increasing energy efficiency. China is already the largest generator of power derived from renewable energy sources. It has the largest installed capacity for hydropower, and is the world's biggest growth market for wind energy and nuclear power. These measures improve China's energy security and reduce environmental problems arising from coal use, but there is also a clear strategic economic perspective to this Chinese energy policy. Chinese companies are among the world's largest manufacturers of solar panels and a great number of Chinese wind turbine manufacturers have sprung up and started looking at sales possibilities abroad. The Indian wind energy company Suzlon is already a significant global player. Furthermore, research and development is being scaled up in the field of electric cars, cleaner coal technology and carbon capture and storage techniques.

These trends have the potential to contribute significantly to the global transition to a more sustainable energy system and are to be cherished. Yet, how these will develop and what will be the political reaction in Europe and the US as international competition in low-carbon industry sectors becomes fierce, is another key question for the future of international climate change and energy policy. In order to stimulate the development and deployment of low-carbon technologies worldwide, while countering issues concerning economic competitiveness, some kind of global climate change regime remains essential. In the case that further UN summits do not yield results, it will become necessary to look at different cooperation systems, in order to secure an environment encouraging economies to pursue a low carbon-growth strategy. Given its crucial position in the climate change debate, one thing is clear: regardless of the future format of such a regime, Asia must be part of the solution.

Bram Buijs
Clingendael International Energy Programme
The Hague
The Netherlands

See www.clingendael.nl/ciep for CIEP research papers, including the CIEP Energy Paper 'China, Copenhagen and Beyond'

Notes

1. The G8 consists of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. G8 Italy 2009, *Chair's Summary:* http://www.g8italia2009.it/static/G8_Allegato/Chair_Summary,1.pdf.
2. G8 Summit Italy, 2009. Declaration of the Leaders of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate: http://www.g8italia2009.it/static/G8_Allegato/MEF_DeclarationI.pdf
3. Per capita emissions for China stand at about half of the OECD average, for India at one-tenth.
4 All carbon dioxide emissions and coal consumption statistics and projections are based upon the International Energy Agency's *World Energy Outlook 2009*.
5. See McKinsey&Company, *'China's Green Revolution'*, 2009, and Clingendael International Energy Programme, *'China, Copenhagen and Beyond'*, 2009.

Haitian disaster relief: implications of Chinese and Taiwanese assistance

The human and economic toll of the January earthquake in Haiti highlights the institutional weakness of many poor countries when faced with natural disasters. With difficulty providing basic services before the earthquake and the destruction of many aid centres (including the UN mission headquarters), the need for immediate foreign assistance is undeniable. While the immediate international response has been remarkable, mirroring that of the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake, another factor may go largely unnoticed: China's offer of assistance.

Timothy S. Rich

CHINESE OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE post natural disaster have become more commonplace in the past decade and the government's response to the Sichuan earthquake in 2008 provided valuable experience for humanitarian efforts elsewhere. The Haitian case however differs from previous humanitarian efforts not because of the geographical location, but that the Caribbean nation is one of the 23 countries with diplomatic relations with Taiwan instead of China. A holdover from the Chinese civil war, countries must choose to recognise either the People's Republic of China (PRC) or the Republic of China (or ROC, Taiwan's official name) as the legitimate government of all of China. Cold War tensions benefited the ROC as it retained a diplomatic advantage up through the 1960s due to strong American support. Since the PRC's entry into the UN in 1971 and the Sino-American rapprochement culminating in formal relations in 1979, the once competitive battle turned overwhelmingly in Beijing's favour. Even after Taiwan dropped claims to the mainland in 1991, China's refusal to allow dual recognition like that of divided Korea has perpetuated this diplomatic battle.

Small state power

Where diplomatic battles in the past usually centred around powerful nations withholding recognition to smaller states (e.g. the US' non-recognition of Cuba), in the case of the diplomatic battle between China and Taiwan, small, relatively powerless states hold the bargaining chips. Most of Taiwan's current allies are island microstates in the Caribbean and the Pacific, with a declining number of holdouts in Africa and Latin America. Furthermore, Taiwan's relations with most of its allies lack firm foundations, as evident by the 12 countries which have switched recognition more than once between China and Taiwan in the past 20 years.[1]

Despite emerging as a global power with near universal diplomatic recognition, Chinese officials have continually viewed international responsibilities within the framework of minimising Taiwan's formal relations. To accept Taiwan's attempts for greater diplomatic space undermines the PRC's goal of unification. Even the loss of tiny St. Lucia in 2007 was viewed within the framework of Beijing's 'One China' policy. To put this in further perspective, China twice threatened to use its UN Security Council veto to block peacekeepers in Guatemala and Macedonia at times when both had formal relations with Taiwan, a veto China has actually only used six times since gaining a seat on the Security Council.[2] Although Chinese assistance has on occasions been granted to non-recognising nations (including peacekeepers to Haiti in 2004), this has usuallybeen as part of attempts to encourage a switch of diplomatic recognition in what both sides of the Taiwan Strait condemn as 'dollar diplomacy'.

Dollar diplomacy

Financial assistance, from debt forgiveness to funding for public projects, has played no small part in the establishment and maintaining of diplomatic allies for both China and Taiwan. Development assistance has been particularly important to Caribbean nations that otherwise may not be economically viable on their own. For years Taiwan has remained the dominant donor to Haiti as well as many of its Caribbean neighbours, including in the past the Dominican Republic.[3] Aid packages have ranged from improving infrastructure and paying salaries of police to ego projects such as stadiums. In the Haitian case, Taiwanese aid has in several years equalled a fifth of the Haitian government's annual budget. It should not be surprising, then, that one former cabinet minister suggested that Taiwan does not 'give us any reason to look after' the PRC.[4]

China in recent years, however, has been increasingly willing to match Taiwan's assistance packages. While Chinese assistance packages to Africa have received extensive attention.[5] increased efforts throughout Central America and the Caribbean have garnered scant attention. Although Sino-African relations may be considered mutually beneficial economically – China gaining access to natural resources and diplomatic recognition in exchange for economic assistance – relations with Caribbean nations are less clear cut. Haiti and others in the region have little to offer China or Taiwan other than formal diplomatic relations and their support or opposition in seating Taiwan in the UN. However, as both Taiwan and China place such a high premium on formal relations, small countries can make greater demands for assistance. Under these conditions, Taiwan's immediate response to the Haitian earthquake – humanitarian assistance matching China – gains greater relevance.

Haitian disaster relief may rekindle diplomatic battles between China and Taiwan and usher in another era of 'dollar diplomacy'.

Haiti has been one of Taiwan's strongest allies since establishing relations in 1956, in no small part due to Taiwan being a major donor to the island in recent years. Although relations between China and Taiwan have markedly improved under the Ma Ying-jeou administration, including a tacit agreement to end 'dollar diplomacy', this does not eliminate the underlying incentives for either side of the strait. However, the combination of China's economic boom, cross-strait competition and the island in crisis presents an opportunity to tie much needed aid to cutting relations with Taiwan. While one should applaud China rising as a responsible global power, the potential political incentives behind these actions should not be ignored.

Timothy S. Rich
Indiana University
tsrich@indiana.edu

References

1. These include Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, the Gambia, Lesotho, Liberia, Nauru, Nicaragua, Niger, Senegal and St. Lucia.
2. Lewis, Paul. 1999. 'China Votes a U.N. Force Out of Balkans'. *New York Times* February 16: 11.
3. Lynch, Maria. 2003. 'Taiwan Lavishes Aid to Secure Solid Caribbean Basin Allies'. *Miami Herald*. December 7.
4. VOA News Report. 2003 'Haiti and Taiwan (May 27)'. http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/taiwan/2003/taiwan-030527-2ad06368.htm .
5. Jiang, Wenran. 2009. 'A Chinese 'Marshall Plan' or business?' Asiatimes.com. January 14; Jiang, Wenrang. 2009. 'Fuelling the Dragon: China's Rise and Its Energy and Resources Extraction in Africa'. *The China Quarterly* 199: 585-6-9; Mohan, Giles and Marcus Power. 2008. 'New African Choices? The Politics of Chinese Engagement'. *Review of African Political Economy* 115: 23-42.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

'Merdeka': images of hostile territory

The autonomous press photo agency, *Indonesian Press Photo Service* (IPPHOS), established in 1946 by Frans and Alex Mendur and the brothers Umbas, was the first and formerly the largest photo agency in Indonesia. The IPPHOS images were mostly taken during Indonesia's struggle for independence in the period 1945-1949, and today are the only exisiting agency images from this time. Collections of the state-owned ANTARA photo agency and BERITA Film Indonesia were destroyed after the failed communist coup of 1965. Art and photo-historian Louis Zweers gained privileged access to this partly damaged collection which has survived the turbulent period and is now in the National Archive of Indonesia (*Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia*) in Jakarta.

Louis Zweers

AT THE START OF 1946, President Sukarno fled Jakarta for reasons of safety and established himself with his family in the former palace of the Governor in Yogyakarta, the capital of the new Republic. At the same time, many Indonesian officials as well as members of the temporary parliament moved from Jakarta to Yogyakarta in Central Java. Even the headquarters of the Indonesian army, the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI) were established in the city in the former *Grand Hotel*, renamed *Hotel Merdeka*. This overcrowded, wartime city – the battlefront of Java – was also home to a number of unknown Indonesian photographers from the *Indonesian Press Photo Service* (IPPHOS).

The IPPHOS collection reveals that the agency's photographers frequently depicted the daily life of ordinary Indonesian citizens, but also their enthusiasm for Indonesia's leaders. President Sukarno is visible as a small figure at mass meetings, cheering crowds surrounding him. The pictures of demonstrations and speeches in that revolutionary period show the population's support for the nationalistic leaders and the struggle for independence. The people of Indonesia were in pursuit of freedom and this is reflected in the many photographs of young, armed Indonesian guerrillas with captions like: 'Indonesian militia are prepared for the fight against the Dutch enemy', or: 'Indonesian fighters are ready to resist the attacks of the Dutch military.'

The Indonesians armed themselves with old Dutch equipment, weapons seized from the Japanese army and second rate armaments from the provisional army factories of the Republic of Indonesia. Poorly armed and without payment the Indonesian fighters faced a superior Dutch army with tanks and aeroplanes. The guerillas were forced to developed rapidly a variety techniques that avoided open conflict. For example, when retreating, they applied 'scorched earth' tactics and blew up bridges and destroyed European government buildings, factories and houses. The Indonesian fighters, with the support of the people, became mobilised for the fight against the colonial opponent and images from the IPPHOS collection show young Indonesian women and men bearing simple, even primitive, arms. Female militia march with sharp bamboo sticks (*bambu runcing*) along the steps of the presidential residence in Yogyakarta. Vice-President Mohammed Hatta and a young General Sudirman, the famed founding father of the Indonesian army, salute the troops.

The pugnacity and involvement of Indonesian women and young men in the revolution are frequently represented and the original photo captions shout out that they are ready for the fight against the Dutchmen. Interestingly, the photographs show the preparatory activities of the young Javanese guerrillas but almost none depict the actions themselves. There are virtually no images of hard fighting. Similarly, there are only a limited number of photographs recording the Indonesian victims of Dutch military violence. This is remarkable given the high number of Indonesians victims at that time. In one of the few images available, Indonesians are seen sneering at Dutch soldiers of the *'Andjing Nica'* of the KNIL (Royal Netherlands Indies Army) infantry battalion - with a reputation for supporting the hard treatment of guerrillas. The caption uses the pejorative term 'Dutch Dogs' (*Andjing* =dogs; NICA =Netherlands Indies Civil Administration). Equally significant is that the thousands of Indo-Europeans and Chinese who fell victim to Indonesian violence are also not shown. In fact, the IPPHOS photo collection is predominantly propagandistic, with the images emphasising the young Indonesian generation and their persistant fight for independence.

There are virtually no images of hard fighting. Similarly, there are only a limited number of photographs recording the Indonesian victims of Dutch military violence. This is remarkable given the high number of Indonesians victims at that time.

It was extremely difficult for Dutch photographers and journalists to gain access to the areas controlled by the Indonesians at that time. Reports from those areas which occasionally appeared in weekly magazines or daily newspapers generally originated from foreign press bureaus. Some exclusive picture stories from Yogyakarta, the capital of Sukarno's Republic, did make it into the Dutch illustrated magazines, the *Katholieke Illustratie* and *Panorama*. According to the captions, the photographs came from an American photo agency and both illustrated magazines had acquired the exclusive rights to these unique reports. However, these photographs had in fact been taken by the Dutch war photographer Hugo Wilmar. Wilmar had managed to get himself a presscard from an American press photo agency and presented himself as an American press photographer. He succeeded in getting himself on a flight from Batavia (Jakarta) to Yogyakarta with an international group appointed by the UN Security Council, the Committee of Good Services. Apparently, the Indonesian officials had no suspicions that Wilmar was a Dutch citizen. Consequently, he was able to work unimpeded in Yogyakarta. Not only was he able to photograph the activities of the Indonesian side, including the army on exercise and Sukarno making a speech to his troops but Wilmar even managed to get access to the Indonesian nationalistic president at home. The two Dutch illustrated magazines who published these extraordinary images made no mention that they had come from their own photographer, because the Editor-in-chief was frightened that it would put Wilmar in danger. These picture stories with tens of photos made an enormous impact in the Netherlands. The photographs showed just how poorly-armed and badly-dressed the Indonesians were. They carried bamboo sticks, wooden exercise-guns and weapons they had managed to capture from the Japanese and Dutch. They wore a ragbag of clothing pulled together from all kinds of uniforms, mainly Japanese. Some of the soldiers had very long hair, having sworn to themselves that they would only cut their hair when the Dutch disappeared definitively from Indonesia. The captions of the images in these Dutch reports emphasise the bad equipment and organisation of the enemy's army and along with the text composed by the editors they give a propagandistic slant to Wilmar's photographs. In fact, the Dutch daily newspapers and illustrated magazines who published on the situation in Indonesia, did so according to information provided by the army information service (renamed in the spring of 1947 as the '*Dienst voor Legercontacten*'). The images reflect a docile and uncritical Dutch press whose reports left the Dutch reader in no doubts about the 'troublesome' Indonesian antagonist.

Louis Zweers
Erasmus University, Rotterdam
zweers@fhk.eur.nl

Art and photohistorian Louis Zweers' latest book (in Dutch) is
Koloniale Oorlog (Colonial War) 1945-1949, Van Indie naar Indonesie.
Carrera Publishers, Amsterdam.
December 2009.

Right:
Yogyakarta, Java, Indonesia, 5 October 1946. Parade of the Indonesian Army at the central square during the first anniversary of the military forces. The display of power is striking. In photographs the army seems very professional, but the Dutch military information service estimated at that time that only one in four Indonesian soldiers possessed a firearm. Collection IPPHOS, ANRI.

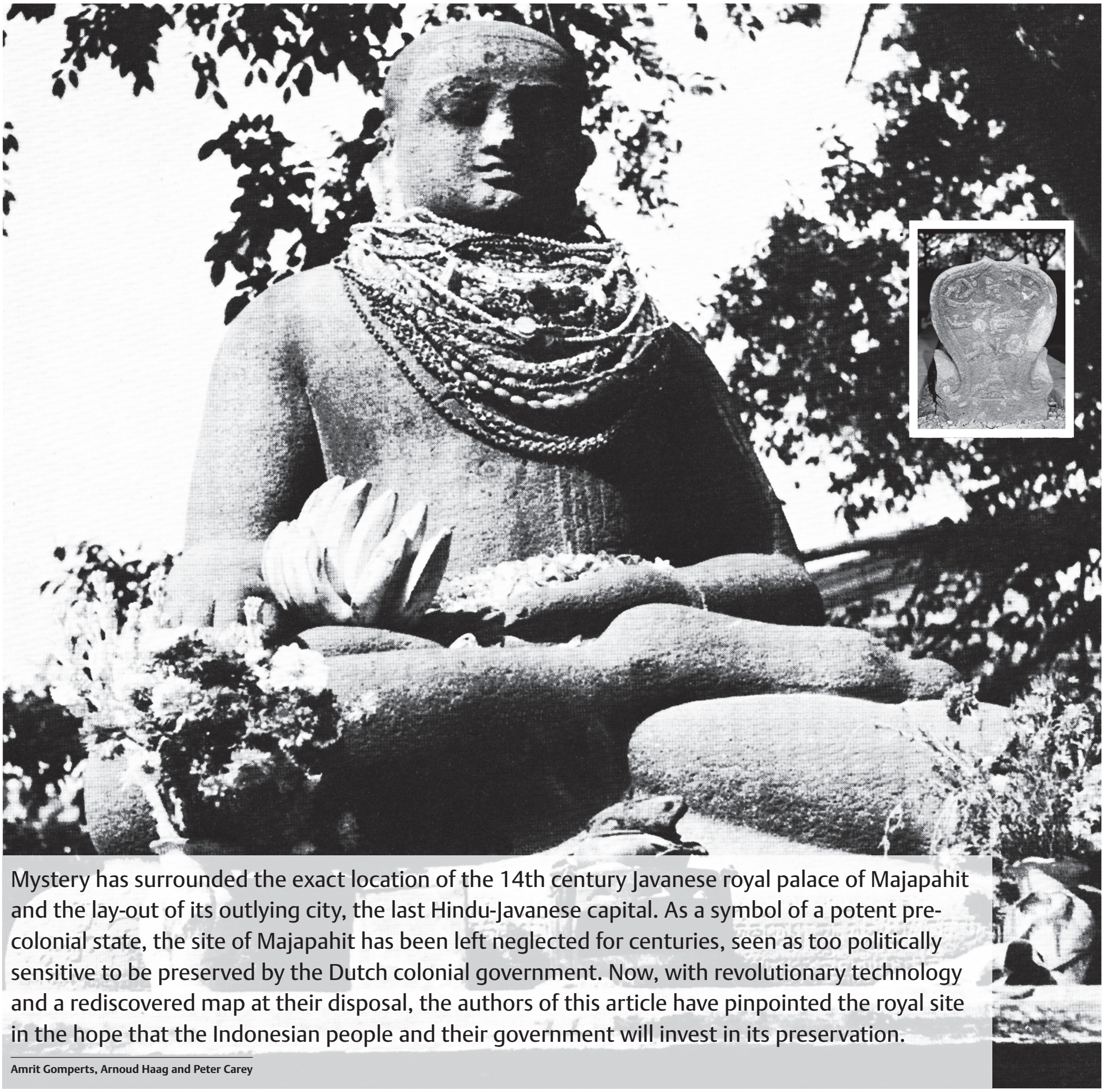
Right:
Malang, East Java, Indonesia, 1946. An Indonesian gives weapons training to young pupils of a secondary school. Collection IPPHOS, ANRI.

Above:
Yogyakarta, Java, Indonesia, 5 October 1946. The headquarters of the Indonesian Army, the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI) was established in the former Grand Hotel. Sukarno on horseback, like the 19th century freedom fighter Raden Dipanegara, inspects the Indonesian Army. In the background, a young General Sudirman, Commander-In-Chief of the Indonesian Army, is visible in his white uniform on horseback. This meeting took place during the first anniversary of the military forces in the Central Square of the capital of the Indonesian Republic. Collection IPPHOS, ANRI.

Below:
Yogyakarta, Java, Indonesia, 1946. An Indonesian soldier holds a machine gun. Collection IPPHOS, ANRI.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Rediscovering the royal capital of Majapahit



Mystery has surrounded the exact location of the 14th century Javanese royal palace of Majapahit and the lay-out of its outlying city, the last Hindu-Javanese capital. As a symbol of a potent pre-colonial state, the site of Majapahit has been left neglected for centuries, seen as too politically sensitive to be preserved by the Dutch colonial government. Now, with revolutionary technology and a rediscovered map at their disposal, the authors of this article have pinpointed the royal site in the hope that the Indonesian people and their government will invest in its preservation.

Amrit Gomperts, Arnoud Haag and Peter Carey

THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA partly bases its claim to national unity on the last Hindu-Javanese kingdom of Majapahit (1293-1510s). The first king Wijaya (reigned 1294-1309) began the construction of the royal palace of Majapahit in present-day Trowulan, some 55 kilometres southwest of Surabaya, on the eve of the Mongol-Chinese invasion of Java in 1293. In the second quarter of the 14th century, the famous Prime Minister Gajah Mada (in office 1331-1364), initiated an expansionist policy. This enabled the Hindu-Javanese kingdom to exert its political influence beyond Java to other parts of the archipelago from the Malay Peninsula to present-day Papua. The kingdom fell into decline in the early 15th century.

Throughout the entire colonial period (1619-1942), the Dutch were aware of Majapahit's imperial legacy – a form of pre-colonial Javanese state which continued to cast its long shadow over the Dutch-governed East Indies: the Java War (1825-30) leader, Prince Diponegoro (1785-1855), for example, referred to its possible revival as a 'great and mighty empire' as he sailed along the islands in the eastern archipelago on his voyage into exile in Sulawesi in May-June 1830 (Carey 2008:590). So potent was Majapahit's historical image that no colonial government was willing to facilitate its revival. This was particularly the case in the early 20th century, when early Indonesian nationalist leaders, who understood the need for nation-states to use historic symbols for the legitimation of their cultural and national identity, began to use Majapahit as a claim for Indonesian sovereignty over the Dutch-controlled archipelago. When Sutan Sjahrir (1909-1966) addressed the UN Security Council at Lake Placid in New York State on 14 August 1947, he referred explicitly to Sriwijaya and Majapahit as the historical forerunners of a united Indonesia. After Indonesia's independence in 1945, Majapahit became the symbol par excellence of the young republic's territorial integrity. Today, Trowulan is often visited by high-ranking Indonesian politicians and army officers for the purpose of meditation at the Hindu-Javanese ruins. The powerful associations linked to the name 'Majapahit', however, stand in sharp contrast to the status of the present-day remains of the vanished court-city. Nowhere is the statement 'archaeology is politics' more valid than in the case of Majapahit.

Although nearly everyone in Indonesia is convinced that the Majapahit capital was situated at Trowulan, archaeologists still argue about the exact location of the royal palace and the lay-out of the surrounding city. We, the authors, started our research by posing the following question: where exactly was the Majapahit royal palace situated? We decided to adopt simple but classical archaeological methods: reading Javanese texts, consulting a wide variety of cartographic sources and interpreting what remains *in situ* in the present-day Trowulan landscape. We were able to benefit from technologies which have revolutionised our knowledge of the world in the past decade: the GPS satellite positioning system, GIS (Geographical Information Systems) software and Google Earth. Moreover, during the course of our research, the possibility gradually dawned on us that the exact location of the royal city may have already been indicated by the Dutch archaeologists of the Netherlands East Indies Archaeological Service (*Oudheidkundige Dienst*). Even so we had to prove it. Adopting the systematic approach of a critical review of existing scholarly literature, we came across a few anomalies and surprises. This short communication gives a summary of findings presented in our recent articles (Gomperts et al. 2008a, 2008b, 2010 forthcoming, Gomperts 2010 forthcoming).

Fig. 1 (main picture): The statue of Joko Dolog portraying Bharada, the mythical figure who according to the tradition drew the dividing line between the kingdoms of Janggala and Pañjalu in 1052.

Fig. 2 (inset): An Islamic grave of a member of the Majapahit royal family on the northwestern side of the cemetery of Troloyo.

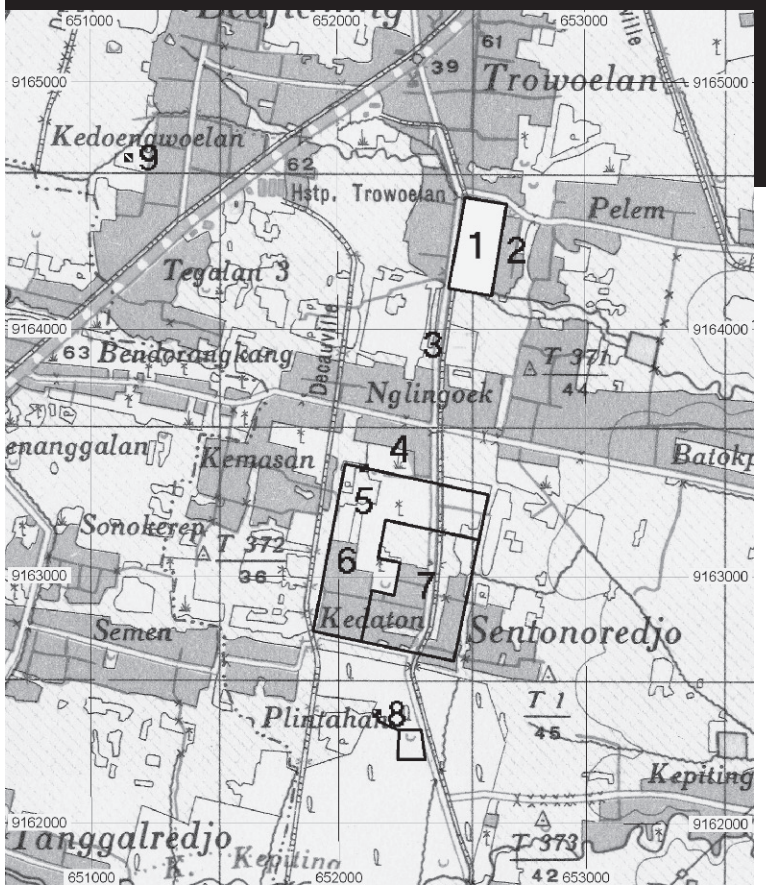


Fig. 3 (above):
A few important sites in the 14th century Majapahit royal capital drawn on a 1941 topographic map:
1. Sĕgaran Tank
2. Market
3. Large square or *alun-alun*
4. The *wanguntur* or *pangastryan* audience-yard
5. Palace-gate
6. Royal palace
7. Area of the private royal quarters in the palace
8. Islamic graves of members of the Majapahit royal family at Troloyo cemetery
9. The statue of Joko Dolog at the former Buddhist cemetery of Wurare.

The 'lost' map found

Interest in the archaeology of the vanished 14th century royal city of Majapahit really started during the British occupation of Java (1811-1816) when Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781-1826; in office 1811-1816) ordered the Dutch army surveyor, Captain J.W.B. Wardenaar (1785-1869), to make a plan of the site of the ancient royal capital. Although Wardenaar's October 1815 plan was since considered lost, the plan's legend – based on information the engineer captain gleaned from local villagers – and a few drawings with handwritten notes, which were donated to the Batavian Society of Arts and Letters (*Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*) after Wardenaar's death in 1869, enabled the mining engineer and pioneer of modern volcanology, Rogier Verbeek (1845-1926), to attempt a reconstruction of the map in 1887. However, a few uncertainties remained about Verbeek's identifications. It took us two years of research to trace the lost map of Majapahit in the 1939 Drake Collection of the British Museum on 12 March 2008. The map at scale 1:12,150 shows the location of 15 main archaeological features in the area, including the well-known – and still extant – remains of the Bajang Ratu gate, the Sĕgaran tank, Candi Brahu and other Hindu-Buddhist sites, as well as a few temples which have since vanished. When we finally projected a digital scan of Wardenaar's plan of Majapahit as a half-transparent overlay over the available high-resolution satellite image of Google Earth, it was a sensation (Wardenaar 1815). The plan appeared to be geometrically highly accurate, allowing us to georeference – that is, to apply geographical coordinates – with GPS mapping software to an accuracy of 30-50 metres and to make an accurate verification of the mapped spots on site with a GPS receiver. From the *Plan of Majapahit* and the accompanying legend and notes we were able to pinpoint the location of the vanished royal palace in the hamlet of Kĕdaton – a Javanese toponym which significantly refers either to the private royal quarters in a palace or to the royal palace itself. Also traceable was the place where the Majapahit kings were seated – flanked by four royal elephants – while watching formal festivities held on the great expanse of the large Sĕgaran (literally, 'The Little Sea') tank, the most prominent surviving archaeological site at Trowulan today. We now possessed a benchmark which allowed us to relate references in Javanese texts to accurate sites on the ground. Furthermore, Wardenaar's plan shows the original position of the statue of Joko Dolog (literally, 'The Fat Youth') which represents a Buddhist *Aksobhya* (literally, 'The Imperturbable One') with his right hand touching the ground in emulation of the Lord Buddha's classic calling the earth to witness gesture (Fig. 1). The statue was moved to Surabaya in 1817 and its original position was lost. On the basis of the georeferenced position of Joko Dolog's statue on Wardenaar's plan, we were able to identify the exact spot where the statue had stood in 1815. The Buddhist identity of the area is further confirmed by a villager who witnessed the excavation of a large statue representing the Hārītī, the Buddhist guardian goddess of children whom parents of prematurely deceased children worshipped. The Javano-Sanskrit inscription on the pedestal of Joko Dolog's statue refers both to the Buddhist sage Bharada, who is said to have marked the political boundary when King Airlangga (reigned, c. 1019-1052) divided his realm into the kingdoms of Janggala (Jīwana) and Pañjalu (Daha), and the consecration of the statue at the cemetery of Wurare by King Kĕrtanāgara (reigned 1268-1292) in 1289. In a future publication, we will analyse the archaeological evidence and argue that the position of Joko Dolog in 1815 coincides with the legendary cemetery Wurare (from *awu rare*, literally 'children's ashes') which was also known as Lĕmah Tulis and Lĕmah Citra (Fig. 3). Moreover, in our view, the statue itself represents the image of the legendary figure who presided over the political division of Java in AD 1052, Bharada, a conclusion also arrived at independently by the art historian, Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer (personal communication, 10 October 2009).

A Balinese account

18th century Balinese rulers took an active interest in the Majapahit ruins at Trowulan. During the Surapati insurgency (1686-1703) and its aftermath up to the time of the 1718 Surabaya War, sizeable Balinese armies were present in East Java. The first ruler of the Balinese kingdom of Mengwi, Gusti Agung Anom, made a pilgrimage to the site of the royal city in 1714. The official historiography of the Balinese court of Klungkung, the Middle Javanese *Kidung Pamañcangah*, written in the beginning of the 19th century by an anonymous Balinese author, refers to the ancient capital of Majapahit and to several landmarks within the town, most of which can still be identified on site on the basis of Wardenaar's mapping. In reverse order, the Middle Javanese text describes how from north to south the following can be found: the Sĕgaran tank, the *alun-alun* square, the *pangastryan* or *wanguntur* audience-yard and the royal palace itself. We conclude that, as with Wardenaar's mapping process, the description of Majapahit in the *Kidung Pamañcangah* relies on an oral tradition, probably based on a Balinese visit to Trowulan in the 17th or early 18th century (Gomperts 2010).

Stutterheim's work

During the Dutch colonial assault on and sacking of the Balinese court of Cakranĕgara in Lombok in 1894, the scholar J.L.A. Brandes (1857-1905) managed to save the Old Javanese text *Nāgarakĕrtāgama*. In the text, the court poet Prapañca describes the lay-out of the Majapahit royal palace and city a few years before 1365. Ever since Brandes' discovery, the archaeological identification of the Majapahit royal palace has focussed on the textual exegesis of Prapañca's intricate formulation in the Old Javanese language. To date, at least eight different translations and several reconstructive mappings of Majapahit have been published on the basis of this text. However, Prapañca's description is couched in such arcane Old Javanese that the differing spatial interpretations based on his text have only served to confuse Trowulan archaeology. In our view, both Wardenaar's mapping and the description in the Kidung Pamañcangah are sufficiently reliable and detailed for the identification of the site of the royal palace. In July 1941, the Dutch archaeologist, W.F. Stutterheim (1892-1942), wrote a review of all the available interpretations. This posthumously published monograph (Stutterheim 1948) provided the most realistic translation and interpretation of Prapañca's text. Indeed, as soon as we had projected Stutterheim's reconstructive plan on several maps with GIS software, it became apparent that he had plotted his plan on topographic maps of the area and had a definite location of the palace in mind when he finished his draft monograph (a later version of which was completed in February 1942 just before the fall of the Netherlands East Indies to the Japanese). Hence, without explicitly saying so, Stutterheim based his interpretation of Prapañca's description on an archaeological analysis of the remains and landscape of Trowulan (Gomperts et al. 2008b).

Moreover, the eight-pointed aureole is the emblem of the Majapahit royal family. It is depicted on several Islamic graves at the cemetery of Troloyo. Stutterheim (1948:105, n.246) rightly concludes that these graves belong to members of the Majapahit royal family who adopted Islam from the 1370s (Fig. 2). The close proximity of the Troloyo graves to the royal palace on the map underlines the importance of the new religion, Islam, at the end of 14th century Majapahit (Fig. 3).

Thus, we now possess three different sources – Wardenaar's plan, the description in the Kidung Pamañcangah and Stutterheim's monograph - which all independently and unambiguously situate the vanished royal palace in the hamlet of Kĕdaton.

During the course of our identification of the location of the Majapahit royal palace, we also discovered a few small errors in Stutterheim's translation of Prapañca's text. These have quite important spatial implications for the lay-out of the royal city. For example, remains of outer and inner palace walls marked on the archaeological maps and still extant in the 1920s allow us to determine the exact footprint of the vanished royal palace as well as the position of the market. The total length of the outer palace walls appear to have measured some 2.5 kilometres in circumference. Therefore, we conclude that the Majapahit capital had a much smaller royal palace than those of the mid 18th century central Javanese courts of Yogyakarta and Surakarta. Indeed, our map shows almost the entire area of the Majapahit capital in the 14th century (Fig. 3). From the area on our map and the population densities we are able to estimate that the capital had a population not exceeding 25,000 inhabitants.

Site destructions

The first British Resident of Japan (Mojokĕrto) and Wirasaba (Mojoagung), Lieutenant H.G. Jourdan, completed his report of the area in April 1813 following the British annexation (Jourdan 1813:352-64). In his report, we find reference to the production of bricks. Several 19th century Dutch reports mention the massive clearance of brick remains from grounds, cadastrally allocated to colonial entrepreneurs in the sugar industry. Indeed, anyone who visits Trowulan today will be able to witness that the tradition of brick making still remains central to the local economy of Trowulan. However, the process of removing top-soils for on-site fabrication of commercial building bricks in improvised pits has now reached industrial levels as the high-resolution satellite imagery of Trowulan available at Google Earth testifies. On the basis of a number of small-scale topographic maps, observations on site and digital elevation models (DEM) projected over historic maps, the scale of site destructions and removal of soils is immediately apparent. We estimate that at least 20 million cubic metres of soil with brick remains have been removed since Wardenaar's plan was made in 1815. In fact, major parts of the foundations of the palace walls still extant in the 1920s have vanished since the 1980s. The demolition of medieval brick-walled wells happened before our very eyes when we visited the site in mid December 2008. All this is a direct consequence of the fact that the *Oudheidkundige Dienst* –perhaps under pressure from local Dutch sugar estate owners –never implemented policies for protecting the Majapahit remains in Trowulan. Dedicated and professional archaeological excavations are more necessary than ever at the present time. For example, the local farmer, who owns the land at the spot where Stutterheim identified the palace gate, recently informed us that substantial brick foundations exist there. We also recommend a professional excavation of the site of Joko Dolog before local treasure hunters destroy what is left of the once legendary cemetery of Wurare. The implementation of a robust regime of archaeological site preservation is imperative to ensure that future generations of archaeologists are not deprived of access to the glory that was pre-colonial Java.

Concluding thoughts

We have now reached the end of this short communication. May it inspire the Indonesian authorities and its talented people to a better appreciation of their historical heritage and encourage them to save as much as possible for posterity. As former President Sukarno so frequently observed: no nation can survive without a knowledge of its historical past. Majapahit embodies in its urban archaeology the transition from Java's Hindu-Javanese past to the modern Islamic society of present-day Indonesia (Fig. 3). The 14th century city was not only the last Hindu-Javanese capital, it was also the first urban community where members of a Javanese royal family adhered to the new Islamic faith. The royal capital thus marks the intersection of Indonesia's modern age.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the Bupati of Sragen, Mr Untung Wiyono for his sponsorship of our research, the historical anthropologist Dr Roy Jordaan and the art historian Drs Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer (formerly Rijksmuseum) for their assistance in the writing of this communication.

Amrit Gomperts is an independent scholar who publishes on Old Javanese and Javano-Sanskrit texts and Javanese archaeology (amritgo@planet.nl).
Arnoud Haag is an agricultural engineer who works as a consultant in hydrology and irrigation in Southeast Asia (arnoudhaag@yahoo.com).
Peter Carey is Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College, Oxford, and currently Indonesian Country Director of the UK disability charity, The Cambodia Trust (petercarey@cambodiatrust.org.uk).

References

Gomperts, Amrit. 2010 forthcoming. More on the Archaeological Mapping of the Fourteenth-Century Majapahit Royal City at Trowulan from a Balinese Description in the Kidung Pamañcangah. *Liber amicorum* volume to be published in April 2010.
Carey, Peter 2008, *The Power of Prophecy; Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1785-1855.* Leiden: KITLV Press.
Gomperts, Amrit, Arnoud Haag and Peter Carey. 2008a. De veertiende-eeuwse Javaanse hofstad Majapahit alsnog op de kaart gezet. Caert Thresoor 27, 3:71-78.
...2008b. Stutterheim's Enigma: the Mystery of his Mapping of the Majapahit Kraton at Trowulan in 1941, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 164, 4:411-430.
...2010 forthcoming. Mapping Majapahit: J.W.B. Wardenaar's Archaeological Survey at Trowulan in 1815. *Proceedings of the 12th conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists* (Leiden, 1-5 September). Edited by Marijke Klokke and Véronique Degroot. Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies.
Jourdan, Lt. H.G., 28-4-1813, Ms. 'Report on Japan and Wirosobo'. London: British Library, India Office Library & Records, Mackenzie Private collection 21 (10).
Stutterheim, W.F. 1948. *De kraton van Majapahit.* 's-Gravenhage: Nijhoff.
Wardenaar, J.W.B.. 1815. *Plan of Majapahit.* The original map can be viewed online at the site of the British Museum at http://www.britishmuseumshoponline.org/invt/cda00261622. Our translation of Wardenaar's Dutch legend into English can be consulted at: www.iias.nl/files/IIAS_NL53_12-13.pdf

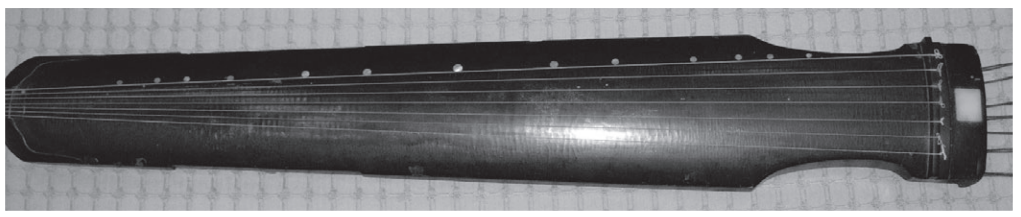
The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

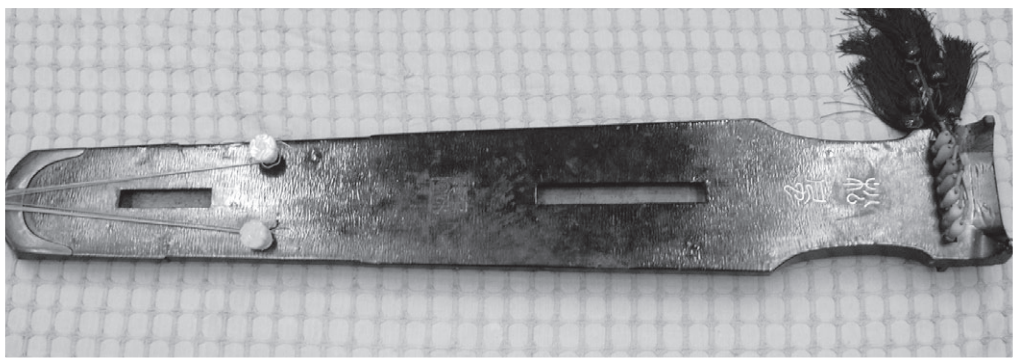
Van Gulik and the Chinese Lute

The Dutch sinologist, Robert Hans van Gulik (1910-1967), was once voted as being among the 100 foreigners who had significantly influenced Chinese culture in the 20th century. Orientalist, diplomat, musician, writer, Van Gulik is probably best known for his stories, the Judge Dee mysteries. Yet this polymath also had colourful 'amateur careers' in Chinese arts such as painting and calligraphy and he was the first sinologist to study the Chinese lute. Mei-Yen Lee examines Van Gulik's contributions in this regard.

Mei-Yen Lee

Above:
Dr. Robert Hans van Gulik (1910-1967)





Above:
Van Gulik's lute, 'Pine Wind' (literally named), was made at the end of the Ming dynasty, nearly 400 years ago. Provided by Prof. Willem van Gulik.

NO OTHER MUSICAL INSTRUMENT is so often depicted in Chinese paintings, or so often mentioned in Chinese poetry as the 'Chinese lute'. 'Chinese lute' is the rather poetic name coined by Van Gulik for this ancient seven-stringed zither, known in Chinese as the *ch'in* or *guqin* ('*gu*' = old; '*qin*' = stringed instrument). While he clearly stated in his book that he was aware that the *guqin* is not, in fact, a lute, he adopted the organologically incorrect term as he thought Westerners would more easily associate 'lute' with poetry and intellectual life. The chinese lute has undergone few changes in more than three thousand years and it was prized as the primary musical instrument played by Chinese scholars, who used it to express their feelings through a rich variety of techniques which have been preserved in *guqin* handbooks.

An amateur career

Van Gulik's best known writings on the lute are '*The lore of the Chinese lute: an essay on the ideology of the Ch'in'* (1940) and '*Hsi K'ang and his Poetical Essay on the Lute*' (1941), both published by Sophia University in Tokyo. These two books confirmed Van Gulik's status as the first sinologist in the western academy to attain expertise on *guqin* music. Although, in recent times a handful of Westerners have published extensively on the *guqin* and its repertoire, these scholars were more or less illuminated by Van Gulik's writings.

Van Gulik's interest in the Chinese lute began in his student days and continued throughout his life. In 1933, Van Gulik wrote an article for the periodical *China, 'Wu Liu Hsien Sheng'* (The Wise Man of the Five Willows), the name given to T'ao Ch'ien (T'ao Yüan-ming), a famous poet and lute player, with a distaste for official duties and a predilection for flowers and wine. Van Gulik's article concludes with the words:

"what remains in one's memory is no more than the strangely melodious and pleasant sound of Chinese poems; there was the tune of a lute; there was a garden full of roses and chrysanthemums. There was some wine and some feeling of melancholy. No more than that".

Between 1935 and 1942, Van Gulik was posted to Japan. It was from there that he made a trip to Peking in the autumn of 1936, keen to collect antiques and ancient books. During this trip, he also purchased an ancient Chinese lute which he learned to play with the famous Master Ye Shi-meng, a member of the Fujian Minnan school of performance, to whom he later dedicated his book *'The lore of the Chinese lute.'* He also began doing serious research on the Chinese *ch'in* and its music, purchasing books and manuscripts on the subject and visiting Chinese lute players. On his return to Tokyo after his first visit to Peking in 1936, Van Gulik ordered a lute table and continued his mastery of the *ch'in* with a Japanese teacher.

He wrote a number of academic papers on the subject. He spent many months poring over important historical Sino-Japanese literature in a famous Tokyo library, the *Naikaku, bunka*. In 1939 he wrote in his notes: 'I played the lute every day in Tokyo.'

When Van Gulik was posted to Chungking (1943-1946), he joined the famous Chinese lute society *T'ien-Feng Ch'in She*, (the Heaving Wind Lute Association). It brought him in contact with prominent scholars such as the aged Yü Yu-jen and with colourful figures like General Fen Yu-hsiang. Van Gulik was the only foreigner and also the youngest member of the *T'ien-Feng Ch'in She* and the membership opened the door for him to study the *ch'in* further under the tutelage of masters such as Guan Ping-hu, Guan Zhong-hang and Yang Shi-bai.

A missing definition

In *'The Lore of the Chinese Lute: An Essay in Ch'in Ideology'*, Van Gulik conscientiously and carefully collected, translated and interpreted many texts regarding the Chinese lute, also including illustrations and four appendices.

Van Gulik reveals his motives for writing the book in the Preface:

"Although the tones of the lute may be featured, when listening to them, who shall be able to fathom their significance?"

"This essay is an attempt to describe the cultural significance of a Chinese musical instrument, the seven-stringed lute." (p.VII)

After studying these texts, Van Gulik found that the historical and cultural significance of the lute (*'Ch'in-tao'*) outweighed the significance of the Chinese lute music itself. For a Westerner to have this prescience is truly surprising. Moreover, *'Ch'in-tao'* did not have a set definition in Chinese culture, something anomalous from a Western standpoint, and so Van Gulik set out to create some definitions:

"Literally: the Way of the Lute, meaning: the inner significance of the lute and how to apply this in order to find in the lute a means for reaching enlightenment." (p.35)

"This term Ch'in-tao might be translated as 'the doctrine of the lute'; but as we do not possess a special text where the principles of this doctrine are set forth, I think a vague term like 'ideology of the lute', is the more suitable translation." (pp.35-36)

In his translation of Chinese *Ch'in-tao*, Van Gulik attempted to create not only a literal translation, but also a cultural interpretation by addressing the social implications of the texts that he had analysed. While it is possible to describe the *Ch'in-tao* in a way that is accessible to Westerners, Van Gulik's definition is inadequate. This is because, due to the nature of Chinese philosophy, the definitions of spiritual concepts are derived from lifestyle rather than from academic knowledge.

Van Gulik said:

"In the long course of its development, Ch'in ideology benefited by its lack of delimitation; because of the absence of a fundamental text, Ch'in-tao was able to absorb a great wealth of various conceptions." (p.36)

_Ch'in_ ideology

In order to help him explain the concepts of *Ch'in-tao*, Van Gulik analysed the establishment and evolution of *Ch'in* ideology in relation to Chinese Confucian (social), Taoist (religious) and Buddhist (psychological) influences. Van Gulik notes, for example, that according to the doctrine of Confucianism, playing the lute is a way to keep men in good spirits:

"Thus the lute, through its capacity for restraining human passions, was a suitable instrument for everyone desiring to become the ideal statesman and ruler of the Confucianist school of thought, the Superior Man or Chün-tzû." (p.43)

He also asserted that Taoism and Confucianism were both connected with the ideology of Ch'in-tao, but that their explanations and appreciation of this concept differ considerably:

"...it will be clear that next to the influence of Confucianist literary tradition, Taoist conceptions also contributed to the formation of Ch'in ideology, and promoted its further development." (p.48)

Van Gulik's opinions were the key to the Chinese *Ch'in-tao*, but there was some confusion in other statements he made about pre-*Ch'in* Taoist thought and the later form practiced from the Han dynasty onwards.

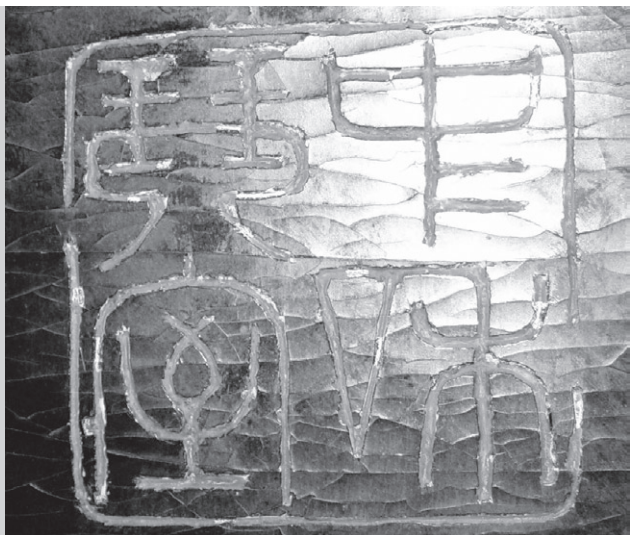
Taoism and the _Ch'in-tao_

Van Gulik wrote:

"These early Taoist conceptions are the foundation on which the most imposing monuments of Chinese thought are built. It seems, however, that these teachings were taken in their literal sense already at a fairly early date. Especially in the first century A.D., when Taoism was reorganized after the example of Buddhism, the accent fell more and more on the materialistic aspects of meditation. Meditation was no longer exclusively considered as a means for salvation, but chiefly as a means for obtaining occult powers, to perform all kinds of magical feats. So the passage of Lieh-tzû quoted above was interpreted as a description of a method of accomplishing levitation, while Chuang-tzû's definition of yang-shêng was taken to refer to the art of prolonging life. The lofty teachings of Taoism degenerated into alchemy, aiming at transmuting metals and finding the elixir of immortality. Returning now to the lute, we see that the fundamentals of ch'in ideology described above fitted in exactly with Taoism, both with its philosophical and with its alchemistic aspect." (p.46)

The flaw in Van Gulik's viewpoint is his idea that the Chinese drive for longevity –through controlling their desires, using breathing techniques and imbibing special herbs –was equivalent to Western alchemy. In fact, the two schools of thought are very different, with merely superficial similarities. Since the Han dynasty, the Chinese have associated excellent musicianship with longevity. This was related to their concept of vital energy, or *'Ch'i.'* Van Gulik mistakenly linked Taoism with distinctly different Taoist entities. There were other important viewpoints in his works:

"Playing the lute purifies one's nature by banishing low passions; therefore, it is a sort of meditation, a means for communicating directly with tao. Its rarefied notes reproduce the 'sounds of emptiness', and so the music of the lute tunes the soul of the player in harmony with tao. Further, as we shall see below, the measurements and the construction of the lute all stand for cosmic elements, so its contemplation is conducive to a realization of eternal truths and cosmic harmony." (p.46)



Right:
Van Gulik's 'seal cutting' on the bottom board of his lute 'Pine Wind'. Provided by Prof. Willem van Gulik.

How could playing the lute purify one's nature by banishing low passions, and allowing one to communicate directly with *tao*? Van Gulik proposed his opinions as follows:

"Seen from the more materialistic angle, playing the ch'in was a means for purifying the body, thus bestowing upon the performer freedom from sickness, and longevity. To obtain these blessings, neo-Taoistic writers recommend, in addition to fasting, etc., exercises for learning to regulate breathing, lien-ch'i. Now, playing the lute is said to harmonize the circulation of the blood, thereby regulating the breathing. In this way the vital Yang essence in the body is cultivated, and evil influences are driven away. As the philosopher Kuan-tzû observes: 'to regulate the blood and the breath, in order to obtain longevity'." (p.47)

Van Gulik's analysis was a general description and would have offered a more profound explanation had he gone further in his discussion of Chinese philosophy. In fact, we return again to the idea that man's vital energy, or *'Ch'i'*, is the most important element in Chinese lute music.

Before playing the lute, the lute player has to sit still with a peaceful mind, meditating to avoid the intrusion of distracting thoughts. Once the lute player concentrates his thoughts and frees himself from the indulgence of earthly materials, his soul can be drawn into deep peace and his body's vital energy, or *'Ch'i'* can function well. After a skilled performance, the lute player will reach a high level of perfection. The melody of the lute music continues to reverberate; that is the significance of the *Ch'in-tao*.

Conclusion

Van Gulik said: 'Lute amateurs indignantly protest against the designation of lute music as an art, for it is far more than that, it is a Way, a path of wisdom, *tao*.' This concise statement sums up Chinese *Chin-tao*'s significance.

In fact, Van Gulik must have been very close to unlocking the secrets of Chinese culture. Although he made many interesting points about Chinese lute knowledge, it's a pity that he didn't develop further his discussions regarding the major schools of Chinese philosophy. That said, while his interpretations were imperfect, they still constitute an invaluable study today.

Mei-Yen Lee
National Pingtung University of Education, Taiwan
meiyenl@yahoo.com
melee@mail.npue.edu.tw

With thanks to Prof. Willem van Gulik, Mrs. H.de Vries-Van der Hoeven and Mr. Frank Kouwenhoven for additional information.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Indigeneity as a cultural practice 'tribe' and the state in India

In recent decades, India has seen a re-emergence of 'tribal' movements. To be 'tribal' plays an important part in identity claims advanced by many of the 84 million people who the Indian state has categorised as such. These claims are encouraged by that same state, which allocates substantial resources for the welfare and development of 'tribal' communities. Academic debates on the dynamics of social categorisation acknowledge these cultural, political and economic dimensions, but nevertheless continue to centre on the extent to which Indian 'tribes' can and should be seen as an essentialist (colonial) invention. New research is focussing on a deeper understanding of the present-day processes by which 'tribes', and 'tribal identities' are being sustained, redefined, created and denied. This section of the IIAS Newsletter includes six essays that analyse manifestations of contemporary Indian indigeneity as cultural practices.

Markus Schleiter and Erik de Maaker

THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEMOCRACY, as India is often referred to, is renowned for its extreme social inequality, as well as its great cultural diversity. Both characteristics are manifest in relation to the 'tribes' as a culturally distinct but – by and large – socio-economically deprived segment of the Indian people. India at large has some of the world's most wealthy people. As a result of the country's economic liberalisation, from the 1990s onwards, it also boasts a middle class of about 200 million people. Unfortunately, in addition to the rich and the middle classes, India continues to have as many people below the poverty line as all of Africa taken together.

India's fast economic development promotes a more or less homogenised urban culture, but nevertheless it remains a country of extreme cultural diversity. Its more than a billion citizens are divided along religious, linguistic, regional and ethnic lines, resulting in a large number of distinct groups, the membership of which is said to be decided by birth. Such birth-groups (of which caste is but one manifestation), are sustained by the rather persistent practice to marry within the group. There are new and old tendencies to cross social boundaries on economic grounds, and the idea of the 'love' marriage is gaining ground against that of a marriage 'arranged' by one's relatives. Nevertheless, even the young and highly educated elite, who benefit the most from India's high economic growth and cultural liberalisation, by and large continue to marry within the birth-group. Religion, caste and ethnicity do not become irrelevant when people engage with global modernity, but are redefined – which includes drawing new boundaries – and continue to act as assets that allow people to hierarchically distinguish themselves from others.

The fact that social categories are acknowledged and emphasised by the state plays a major role in India. This draws on a long history of assertive policies, which are invigorated by the proactive nature of the Indian constitution. The leadership of the pre-independence Indian National Congress, and notably the constitution's main architect Bhimrao R. Ambedkar, were acutely aware of the deprivation of India's poor. The constitution, and its later amendments, provide a framework for radical politics of compensatory discrimination. Apart from the reduction of caste based inequality, these provisions also aim to have a positive effect on what are known in India as the 'tribal' communities (however, significantly, these provisions have so far left the Muslim population out). Although far less numerous than the *dalits* (a term used to refer to erstwhile 'untouchables'), the 'tribal' communities are in many respects considered as even more vulnerable and thus in need of state protection.

'Tribe', as a social category, has not just emerged as an assertive category of an independent postcolonial state, but was introduced prior to that by the colonial state to describe communities that were not believed to be part of 'mainstream society'. Here, the colonial administration has supposedly drawn on terms such as *atavika* (forest dwellers) or *girijan* (hill people), groups who were at the margins of the postcolonial states. Over the last century, many 'tribals' have settled to urban environments, where they either became deprived day labourers, or more recently, became economically highly successful professionals. The majority of the 'tribal' population is located in rural areas, few of them living in (remote) forests, or in hills and on mountains. Rather than identifying 'tribals' with one of the major religious traditions, they are said to have their own, unique sets of beliefs and rituals. 'Tribal' groups are believed to be outside the caste hierarchy, and attributed an acephalous social organisation. The colonial administration, in its efforts to categorise the South Asian population, created extensive listings and descriptions of the various 'tribes', their traits and habitats.

These colonial descriptions have provided the basis for the creation of 'schedules' (listings) of 'tribal' groups for each federal state in present day India. The category 'Scheduled Tribe' refers today to a 'tribe' being administratively registered by the government, qualifying members of this group for preferential treatment such as access to reserved seats in schools and in electoral bodies, as well as the provision of specific numbers of government jobs. Crucial for the recognition of people as members of a 'tribe' are administrative practices. An extensive administrative machinery exists of government run 'tribal' development initiatives, which plays a major role especially for the development of rural areas with a high percentage of 'tribal' population. Not only have benefits that are associated with being 'tribal' invigorated the boundaries of 'tribal' groups, they have also provided an incentive to people to try and have their group registered as such, in order to gain access to these benefits.

'Tribe' plays an increasingly important role among political movements in India. Organisations representing 'tribal' communities unite as *adivasis* ('first people') and claim that they are 'indigenous' to India (Xaxa 1999). The presumption is then that present day *adivasis* or 'tribes' are distinct cultural communities which are historically marginalised and/ or are descendants of the 'original' inhabitants of a given territory. The latter positions other residents of the same territory as the descendants of later migrants, who are subsequently denied 'first' rights towards that land and its resources (Baviskar 2006, Karlsson and Subba 2006). Political movements that build on 'tribal' or *adivasi* claims tend to further reify the cultural characteristics of these communities: ancestral rituals become staged performances, and photographs of 'tribal' dress and material culture are pictured as hallmarks of 'tribality' on calendars and so on. However far such cultural vignettes are removed from their earlier setting, they allow many of the people concerned to link the present to the past. Contemporary public displays of 'tribality' tend to be romanticised imaginations that have gained prominence due to specific historical and political circumstances, but that does not mean that the people who belong to the communities concerned do not share certain pasts, habits and cultural practices that set them apart from others. Notably, the latter sort of claims are not only advanced by democratic means, but are also more or less explicitly associated with various insurgency movements in central and north east India. Some of these movements have been at war with the Indian state for more than half a century, and are considered by the state as a very serious threat to its integrity.

Above inset:
Lugu Murmu of the Birhor 'tribe' and Markus Schleiter enjoying a drink in the vicinity of the weekly market of Durdura, Mayurbhanj, Orissa (photograph by Shyamranjen Hembram).

Above:
Display of 'tribal' dance at the Adivasi Exhibition 2009, Bhubaneswar (photograph by Markus Schleiter).

The fact that social categories are acknowledged and emphasised by the state plays a major role in India. This draws on a long history of assertive policies, which are invigorated by the proactive nature of the Indian constitution.

Contemporary academic debates on the applicability of categories such as 'tribe' and (more recently) 'indigeneity' in India have a long history. The category 'tribe' has been criticised from the mid-20th century onwards and the forefathers of an anthropology on Indian 'tribes' continue to inspire both popular opinion in India as well as academic debates. G.S. Ghurye (1963[1943]) argued that there were no sociological grounds on which a fundamental distinction could be made between caste and 'tribe'. One of his main opponents was the self-taught anthropologist Verrier Elwin (1964). Contrary to Ghurye, Elwin argued that 'tribals' were the custodians of unique cultural traditions that were not just distinct but superior to both the Indian and European mainstream. Elwin feared that a denial of the distinctiveness of the 'tribes' would result in their being categorised as low caste Hindus, despised and rejected for habits that went in many ways against the grain of the mainstream population. Thus perceived, the debate on 'tribe' cannot be disconnected from the efforts made to define mainstream Indian society as centred on a kind of high culture, far removed from what then becomes the folk culture at its margins. In many ways, these juxtaposed positions continue to be of importance in the debate on 'tribe' in India today. On the one hand, there has been a steady stream of contributions of those who consider 'tribe' as a colonial construct (such as: Bates 1995; Unnithan-Kumar 1997; Pels 2000; Shah 2007). On the other hand, there are sustained efforts to reinforce the case for 'tribe,' stressing the uniqueness and distinctiveness of 'tribal' customs (such as: Singh 2002; Peffer and Behera 2005).

Most of the essays included in this collection are based on new field research. The authors go beyond discrediting 'tribal' essentialism, to enquire into present day cultural practices of building and upholding indigeneity in India. Proceeding from contemporary academic perspectives on culture as something that is continuously reconstituted, essentialising imaginations of Indian 'tribes' cannot hold ground (such as: Bourdieu 1992; Das and Poole 2004). More specifically, essentialising ideas on Indian 'tribes' are – similar to hybrid claims of identity – contested in political discourses and as such common Indian people and government bureaucrats themselves are critical of notions such as 'ancient tribes'. The question then is not whether or not Indian 'tribes' are authentic, but rather why and how members of 'tribes', political leaders as well as government officers construct 'tribal' authenticity in a politicised arena, and how this relates to the social and cultural realities 'on the ground'.

Virginius Xaxa analyses the relationship between 'tribal' communities and the state. He argues that although it had been shown that 'tribal' communities were, even in precolonial times, integrated at the margins of states, the general assumption is that 'tribal' communities were and are outside the state. Xaxa shows that the measures taken by the Indian state derive from 'tribes' being perceived outside the state as well. The state intends to protect 'tribals' against mainstream society, strengthening 'tribal' cultural institutions, while at the same time furthering their integration with mainstream society. However well intended these measures are, their goals are contradictory, resulting in policies that in one way or another fail to deliver.

Above:
An occasion for rice-beer in a Santal-farmstead, Durdura, Mayurbhanj, Orissa (photograph by Markus Schleiter).

Prasanna Nayak provides a historical perspective on efforts made by the Indian state towards the development of 'tribal' communities in Orissa, reflecting on changes that have taken place over the last 40 years. He argues that the officers in charge were initially showing great commitment, however, in later decades their involvement became more habitual, which had great consequences for the quality of the programmes conducted. Nayak argues that a lack of curiosity results in officers maintaining naïve imaginations of 'tribal communism'. Consequently, they succumb to the well-to-do villagers, instead of ensuring that the deprived ones are taken care of. Programmes would not only benefit from a greater commitment, but also from a greater usage of social scientific insights that bypass such romantic notions.

Contrary to the emphasis of the Indian state on economic and societal integration of 'tribal' groups in Orissa, it has been very hesitant to do so on the Andaman Islands. There, most of the efforts are focussed on sustaining 'tribal' culture, as **Vishvajit Pandya** shows in relation to the Ongee. Pandya suggests that this policy is subverted by large scale migration from mainland India to the islands. The extensive contacts that exist between these migrants and the Ongee cannot be acknowledged, but force the government to take measures that counteract their effects. The result is that 'tribal' culture becomes reified by state agencies, swapped back onto the Ongee who are supposed to follow it, and are stimulated – if not obliged – to comply with this state interpretation of their Ongee customs.

However complex the relationship of the Indian state to 'tribal' communities can be, groups that are unable to negotiate a relationship with the state are definitely worse off. **Bert Suykens** focuses on encounters between government officers and Gottekoya who have fled the Maoist insurgency in Chhattisgarh to the neighbouring state of Andra Pradesh. There, they have taken refuge in a forest area. Forest guards try to evict them, burning down their makeshift houses, while Andra Pradesh state refuses to provide relief since it suspects them of having Maoist sympathies. Having fled the Maoists, but not being acknowledged as refugees by the state, the Gottekoya suffer double marginalisation.

Ellen Bal analyses another instance of people who seek recognition by the state. Moreover, her essay takes us to Bangladesh, and shows that the involvement of the Indian state with 'tribal' communities has a bearing on neighbouring countries as well. Historically, Bangladesh evolved as a Bengali (primarily Muslim) nation. Garo speaking people are located on both sides of the international border dividing India and Bangladesh. Whereas Garos used to be politically excluded from a national Bengali identity, spokespersons for a Garo 'nation' are now referring to a transnational Garo identity in order to claim a position within the Bangladeshi state. The Garos of Bangladesh have 'embraced the discourse of indigenous people and indigeneity' in order to claim a place as a minority community within Bangladesh.

Bureaucratic practices in government offices, and the viewpoints of the officers who conduct these, shape substantially imaginations of 'tribality'.

Finally, **Luisa Steur** shows that for a movement to position as *adivasi* can be very effective, even if such claims are historically and sociologically not at all viable. She discusses different approaches by which such a movement can be analysed. 'Deconstructivists' warn against the adverse effects of an indigeneity discourse, stressing its communal components, as well as the pressure that it can exert onto members of the communities involved who fail to fit the 'romantic images of *adivasi*ness'. Contrary to this, 'strategic essentialists' consider adopting an '*adivasi* identity' as a strategic move, given the legitimacy that is attributed in popular discourse to 'indigenous' claims to land. Steur shows how academics can move beyond these rather limited approaches, which is required if the complexity of the ways in which subaltern communities relate to the state is to be understood.

Recent debates on global indigeneity approach it primarily as a cultural imagination, in line with modern claims to hybrid identity (Gupta & Ferguson 2001). However, we rather argue for a shift from deconstructonism towards a deeper understanding of processes of building, maintaining, connecting and upholding cultural imaginations. Research in relation to 'tribes', 'indigneity' and cultural diversity in India provides paradigmatic examples of essentialist indigeneity politics, involving many differing actors who maintain a complex relationship to their purported identity. Research approaching the topic from this angle, is likely to yield new insights. For instance, the cultural and social arenas in which the leaders of 'tribal' movements operate, can be revealed by research along the lines of that of Luisa Steur. And, for instance, the administrative impact on the categorisation of 'tribes' cannot be explained based on an analysis limited to the constitution of development plans. Rather, everyday bureaucratic practices in government offices, and the viewpoints of the officers who conduct these, shape substantially imaginations of 'tribality', as is evident in the contributions by Prasanna Nayak and Vishvajit Pandya. Approaching the theme from yet another angle, it is also worth researching how 'tribal' movements are constituted, and how much support their spokespersons manage to gather among the people they claim to represent. From this perspective, attention should also be given to how 'tribal identities' connect to people's lifeworlds, since such 'identities' will normally not only be legitimised with reference to a past, but also be rooted in various ways in present day cultural practices. India has a long history of on the one hand acknowledging, fostering and celebrating diversity, coupled to bitter social conflicts at the expense of its minorities. Analysing the dynamics at play can provide us with new perspectives on the politics of positive discrimination in other parts of the world, while creating awareness of the dark shadows that identity politics can cast.

Erik de Maaker
Leiden University
maaker@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

Markus Schleiter
IIAS fellow
mschleiter@yahoo.com

Erik de Maaker is a lecturer at the Institute for Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology of Leiden University in the Netherlands. He wrote his PhD on the relationship between religious ideas and the conceptualisation of social relationships among one of the hill dwelling communities of north east India (*Negotiating Life: Garo Death Rituals and the Transformation of Society* – Leiden University, 2006).

Markus Schleiter is affiliated research scholar of the International Institute for Asian Studies. He worked as a part-time lecturer at South Asia Insitute, Heidelberg and at the Institute of Ethnology, Goethe University, Frankfurt. He recently completed postdoctoral research on *'Localized Statehood: Social and cultural practices of tribal development'* by means of anthropological field studies in a settlement of Birhor 'Tribe' in Orissa, India. He is currently designing a future research project on indigeneity in India and Bangladesh entitled *'The making of indigeneity: Santali romantic video films and the mediation of culture beyond a region'*.

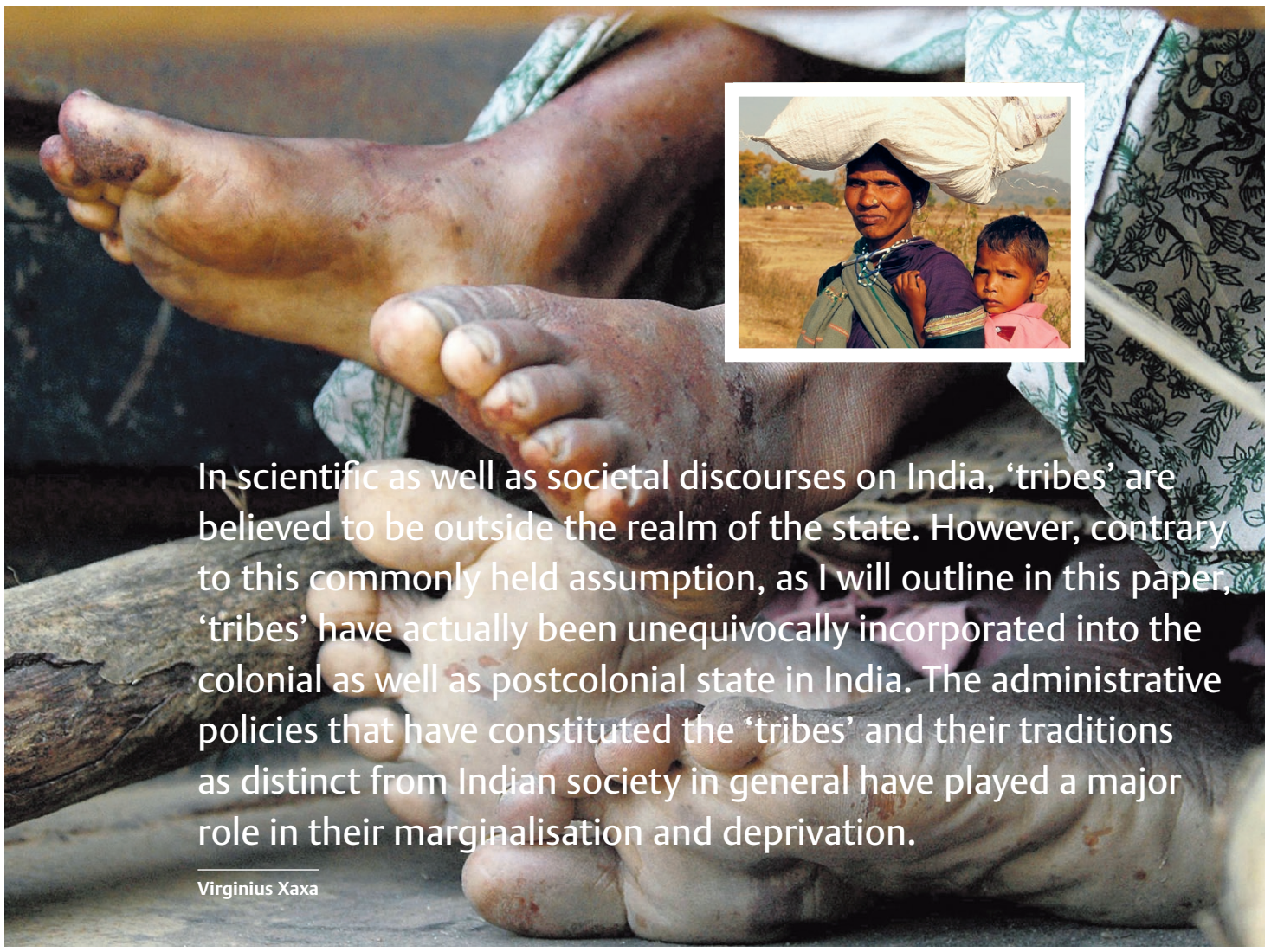
Note
The authors are most grateful for a generous grant from the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, Germany which provided Markus Schleiter with the opportunity to work on this newsletter theme.

References

Bourdieu, Pierre [1980] 1992. *The Logic of Practice.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Baviskar, Amita 2006. The Politics of Being 'Indigenous', in: B.G. Karlsson and T.B. Subba (eds.) *Indigeneity in India.* London: Kegan Paul, pp. 33-50.
Bates, Crispin 1995. 'Lost Innocents and the Loss of Innocence?' Interpreting Adviasi Movements in South Asia. In: Robert H. Barnes (ed.), *Indigenous Peoples of Asia.* Ann Arbor: Associaton of Asian Studies, pp. 103-120.
Das, Veena and Deborah Poole 2004. State and Its Margins: Comparative Ethnographies. In Das, Veena and Deborah Poole (eds.), *Anthropology in the Margins of the State.* Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, pp. 3-34.
Elwin, Verrier 1964. The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin: An Autobiography. New York: Oxford University Press.
Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson 2001. Culture, Power, Place: Ethnography of an Era. In: Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson (eds.), *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology.* Durham: Duke University Press.
Ghosh, Kaushik 2006. Between Global Flows and Local Dams: Indigenousness, Locality, and the Transnational Sphere in Jharkhand, India. *Cultural Anthropology* 21 (4): 501-534.
Ghurye, Govind Sadashiv [1943] 1963. *The Scheduled Tribes (The Aboriginees So-Called and Their Future).* Bombay. Bhatkal.
Karlsson, Bengt G. and Tanka B. Subba 2006. Introduction, to *Indigeneity in India*. London: Kegan Paul, pp. 1-18.
Kohl, Karl-Heinz 2006. Coming Back to One's Own: What Happens to Tradition in Neo-Traditional Movements? In Rottenburg, Richard; Burkhard Schnepel and Shingo Shimada (ed.), *The Making and Unmaking of Differences: Anthropological, Sociological and Philosophical Perspectives.* Bielefeld: Transcript, pp. 97-106.
Pels, Peter 2000. The Rise and Fall of the Indian Aborigines: Orientalism, Anglicism, and the Emergence of an Ethnology of India, 1833-1869. In: Peter Pels and Oscar Salemink (eds.) *Colonial Subjects; Essays on the Practical History of Anthropology.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, pp. 82-116.
Peffer, Georg and Deepak Kumar Behera 2005. Tribal Situation in India: An Introduction. In: *Contemporary Society: Tribal Studies (Vol VI: Tribal Situation in India).* Delhi: Concept Publishing Company. pp. ix-xvii.
Shah, Alpa 2007. The Dark Side of Indigeneity: Indigenous People, Rights and Development in India. *History Compass* 5/6: 1806-1832.
Schleiter, Markus 2005. Enduring Endangerments: Constructing the Birhor 'Tribe', Development Officers and Anthropologists from early twentieth-century colonial India to the present. In Huggan, Graham and Stephan Klasen (eds.), *Perspectives on Endangerment.* Olms: Leipzig, pp. 71-82.
Schleiter, Markus 2008. *Die Birhor: Ethnographie und die Folgen: Ein indischer 'Stamm' im Spiegel kolonialer und postkolonialer Beschreibungen.* Heidelberg: Draupadi.
Singh, Kumar Suresh 2002. *People of India: introduction.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Unnithan-Kumar, Maya 1997. *Identity, Gender and Poverty: New Perspectives on Caste and Tribe in Rajasthan.* Providence: Berghahn.
van Schendel, Willem and Ellen Bal 2002. Beyond the 'Tribal' Mindset: Studying Non-Bengali Peoples in Bangladesh and West Bengal. In Pfeffer, Georg and Deepak Kumar Behera (ed.), *Contemporary Society: Tribal Studies: Concept of Tribal Society: Volume V.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, pp. 121-137.
Xaxa, Virginius 1999. Tribes as Indigenous People of India. *Economic and Political Weekly* 34 (51): 3589-3595.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

‘Tribes’, tradition and state



In scientific as well as societal discourses on India, ‘tribes’ are believed to be outside the realm of the state. However, contrary to this commonly held assumption, as I will outline in this paper, ‘tribes’ have actually been unequivocally incorporated into the colonial as well as postcolonial state in India. The administrative policies that have constituted the ‘tribes’ and their traditions as distinct from Indian society in general have played a major role in their marginalisation and deprivation.

Virginius Xaxa

TO POSITION ‘TRIBES’ OUTSIDE THE STATE – and outside Indian society in general – is part of an until now influential anthropological debate on ‘tribes’ in India, which has explored, in particular, the level of integration of ‘tribes’ into wider society. It was the eminent Indian anthropologist Andre Béteille, who positioned tribes outside the control of the larger precolonial Indian states (Béteille 1986). To counter this, Surajit Sinha has argued that tribes, as a dimension of a ‘little tradition’, cannot be adequately understood unless they are seen in relation to the ‘great tradition’ of Indian society (Sinha 1958). These positions notwithstanding, it can be argued that before the arrival of British rule in India, diverse forms of political organisation could be found in ‘tribal’ societies. At the village level, the large majority of the ‘tribes’ had a simple system of a ‘traditional’ administration directed by a headman. At a larger scale some of these groups developed into a principality or kingdom. Moreover, many ‘tribes’ were well integrated into the countless little kingdoms of India. However, even if some ‘tribes’ such as the Santhals in Eastern India remained outside the precolonial states of India, they cannot in any way be treated as disconnected from the ideas, values and practices represented by Indian society in general, and it has to be stressed that almost all of them had been in close interaction with that broader society.

Under the garb of larger national and regional interests, the state has invariably pursued the interest of the dominant sections of society over the interest of the ‘tribal’ communities.

Revolts and rebellions

With the rise of British rule the situation changed. Far from being outside of the state, ‘tribes’ were incorporated into the colonial state structure through war, conquest and annexation. This was followed by the introduction of new and uniform civil and criminal laws as well as administrative structures that were imposed on ‘tribal’ traditions and ethos. Further, the notion of private property was introduced and in many parts of ‘tribal’ India landlordism replaced a lineage or community based landownership. The intrusion of colonial rule and administration into the ‘tribal’ areas led to a large scale movement of ‘non-tribal’ people from the plains to these ‘tribal areas.’ This resulted in large scale eviction of ‘tribes’ from their land through force, fraud, deceit and so on. ‘Tribal’ communities did not keep a land registry or land records. Also, a lot of member of ‘tribes’ lacked knowledge of reading and writing. There are quite a few instances in which new settlers took advantage of this, forging evidence and documents in their favour. The local administration, which was usually manned by ‘non-tribal’ administrators, worked hand-in-glove with their ethnic kinsmen to ensure smooth transfer of land from ‘tribals’ to ‘non-tribals’. The court language was alien to the ‘tribes’ and as such many villagers could not defend themselves in court against the accusations made. Over and above, the colonial state made claims to forest land, thereby denying the rights ‘tribes’ had so far enjoyed over the forest (Singh 2002; Bosu Mullick 1993). All these developments gave rise to widespread discontent and restlessness, leading to a series of ‘tribal’ revolts and rebellions all through the late 18th and 19th centuries (Raghavaiah 1979).

The idea of ‘tribes’ as outside the Indian state was reinforced, when in response to these colonial ‘tribal’ movements, the British administration coined the idea of an administrative structure that would be, to a certain extent, consistent with ‘tribal’ tradition. Accordingly, after much experimenting, a governmental system for ‘tribal’ areas was created that, in certain respects, differed from the general Indian administration. The distinct legislative and executive measures adopted were primarily aimed at protecting and safeguarding the interests and welfare of the ‘tribes.’ From 1874 onwards, ‘tribes’ or ‘tribal areas’ were governed by the Scheduled District Act. This term applied to districts that had a majority ‘tribal’ population, and were taken up by the government in a schedule, hence ‘Scheduled Districts.’ As per this Act, the Government was required to specify what laws were to be enforced in the Scheduled Areas or Districts while laws implemented elsewhere in India did not necessarily apply to the Scheduled Areas or Districts.

‘Scheduled Tribes’

Without considering their ambivalent colonial origin, arrangements made for the administration of the ‘tribal’ areas during the British period were by and large continued in the post-independence era. Provisions made for the administration of areas inhabited by the ‘tribes’ were specified in the Indian constitution (Verma 1990). As such, in addition to emphasising the fundamental rights of ‘tribal’ people, similar to those of other citizens, the constitution of India contains many special assertions for the ‘tribes.’ These include among others their statutory recognition (article 342) as the ‘Scheduled Tribes,’ so that special administrative measures could be addressed to them. Among these are a proportionate share (quota) in state employment and proportionate representation (quota) in the national parliament and in the state legislative assemblies (articles 16 (4), 330 and 332). The constitution also ensures protection of the ‘tribal’ languages, dialects and culture so that their distinct identity and tradition can be maintained (article 29). Furthermore, the constitution acknowledges the postcolonial continuation of a special administration of ‘tribal areas’ in the form of 5th and 6th Schedule Areas. The 5th Schedule Area provides for the establishment of Tribal Advisory Councils in ‘tribal’ dominated areas of mainland India and the 6th Schedule Area provides for the Autonomous District Councils which operate in the North Eastern Region of India. Tribal Advisory Councils consist of members of which three quarters are to be representatives of the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assembly of the respective federal state. The function of the council is to advise the federal government on matters pertaining to welfare and interests of the ‘tribes’ in the state. Autonomous District Councils on the other hand provide ‘tribal’ communities space for a certain legal and administrative autonomy, a form of self-governance. Thus, a clear and strong legal framework exists, anchored in the constitution of India, within which the national state’s agenda for the social, economic and political ‘upliftment’ (as it is locally referred to) of ‘tribal’ people has to be understood.

Notwithstanding these extensive provisions, ‘tribal’ people have not gained a lot from them. The cause of this is that despite claims to the ‘protection’ and ‘upliftment’ of disadvantaged ‘tribes,’ national development is key to the state agenda of post-independence India. This national development has primarily been envisaged in terms of large scale industrialisation, mineral exploitation and infrastructure development (dams, irrigation and power projects). Benefits of such projects have, however, gone primarily to the members of the high castes and people living in urban environments, not to marginalised ‘tribal’ people living in the rural hinterlands. Under the garb of larger national and regional interests, the state has invariably pursued the interest of the dominant sections of society over the interest of the ‘tribal’ communities. ‘Tribal’ areas in states like Jharkhand and Orissa have witnessed large scale industrialisation, mineral exploitation and infrastructure development projects. Examples of such projects are the Bokaro Steel Plant and the UCIL mines in Jharkhand, as well as the Hirakund Dam, Rourkela Steel Plant and Mahanadi Coal Fields in Orissa. Nevertheless, in these states the percentage of ‘tribal’ people who live below the poverty line is much higher than in other Indian states, or even than the national average. Even when it comes to literacy and to various health related indicators, the figures for Jharkand and Orissa are far worse than for India as a whole.

The ‘upliftment’ of ‘tribals’

For the social and economic ‘upliftment’ of the ‘tribals,’ the state has, especially in central India, from time to time come up with new legislation and institutional arrangements. Such arrangements, though aimed at protecting and safeguarding ‘tribal’ interests, did not initially include references to their traditions. Rather, national development initiatives were responsible for the erosion of traditions. For example, in the 1960s, nation wide, the Indian state initiated the Panchayati Raj, (an institution for local self-government). Within the ‘tribal’ areas, the introduction of the Panchayati Raj contributed significantly to the decline of traditional systems of governance. Similarly, ‘tribal’ languages and local religious ideas and practices, which the state aims to protect, have been eroded under influence of state practices (education of ‘tribals’ through state languages and non-enumeration of their distinct religions in the decennial census enumeration) ushered by post-independence India. Paradoxically enough, however, in more recent times there have been attempts to restore ‘tribal’ traditions. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (popularly known as PESA) and The Scheduled Tribe and Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act of 2006 (known as RFR). Both acts aim to provide renewed space for ‘tribal’ traditions. The RFR Act aims to restore the traditional rights ‘tribes’ earlier used to enjoy over forest, which the colonial and postcolonial state have taken away from them. PESA, much more controversially, claims to restore a ‘traditional’ system of governance in ‘tribal’ areas that has either ceased to exist, or has never existed at all.

In ‘tribal’ areas, rather than reinstating the ‘tribal’ village headmen, the widespread introduction of government authorised, democratically elected Panchayat village councils has contributed significantly to the decline of the ‘traditional’ village meetings, reinforcing the power of the government administration. I am not necessarily in support of the ‘traditional’ authority of the village headmen, but it has to be said, unfortunately, however well intended these Acts are, the promises held by them stand for nothing. Rather, as it works out, these acts heighten the deprivation of the ‘tribes’ of India.

Virginius Xaxa
University of Delhi
xaxavirginius@yahoo.in

References

Béteille, Andre. 1986. The Concept of Tribe with Special Reference to India. *European Journal of Sociology* 27(2): 297-318.
Bosu Mullick, S. 1993. Jharkhand Movement: A Historical Analysis. In Mrinal Miri, (ed.) *Continuity and Change in Tribal Society.* Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study.
Raghavaiah, V. 1979. Background of Tribal Struggles in India. In Anita R. Desai (ed.) *Peasant struggles in India.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Roy Burman, B. K.1994. *Tribes in Perspective.* New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
Singh, Kumar Suresh. 2002. *Birsa Munda and His Movement 1872-1901. A Study of a Millenarian Movement in Chotanagpur.* Kolkata: Seagull Books.
Sinha, Surajit. 1958. Tribal Culture of Peninsular India as a Dimension of Little Tradition in the Study of Indian Civilization: A preliminary Statement. *Journal of American Folklore* 71:504-18.
Verma, R. C. 1990. *Indian Tribes through the Ages.* New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India.

'You know, we are Indians too!'

Inset: A family of Gottekoya refugees in front of their burned down house in a forest in Andhra Pradesh. Photograph by Sheikh Haneef.

Main: A Gottekoya refugee in a forest in Andhra Pradesh. Photograph by Bert Suykens.

As a consequence of a violent conflict between Maoist insurgents and the Salwa Judum, a vigilante group, in Chhattisgarh, thousands of people belonging to 'tribal' communities fled to the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh. Based on his fieldwork in the area, Bert Suykens sheds light on the complicities and logics of these 'tribal' people's encounter with the state.

Bert Suykens

ONE EARLY MORNING, in November 2007, I reached the house of a journalist in a small town in northern Khammam (Andhra Pradesh). We planned to visit an IDP (Internally Displaced Person) settlement of the Gottekoya 'tribe' that was located in the forest, 20 kilometres from his home. I told him of rumours that, over the last weeks, there had been a build up of Naxalite presence (a Maoist insurgent group) in the forest area. To my astonishment, the journalist reacted to this news with panic, and refused to accompany me. He told me that it would be impossible to go to the forest, at least for a week or two. As it turned out, the night before two people – allegedly taken from neighbouring Chhattisgarh – had been executed in the woods near to the Gottekoya settlement. They had been sentenced in the forest by a *Jan Adalat*, a Naxalite People's Court. The evidence that led to the execution had been presented by a Naxalite prosecutor. The trial was referred to by most of the people I met that day as a 'gathering of the Gottekoya'. I had previously conducted interviews with some members of this 'tribe'.

In June 2005, a violent conflict broke out between Naxalite insurgents and the vigilante Salwa Judum in Dantewara, in the south of the Indian state of Chhattisgarh. The Salwa Judum is a (non-state) law enforcement group under the leadership of the Congress politician Mahendra Karma, that was initially supported by the BJP, the ruling party in Chhattisgarh. Casualties due to the conflict in Chhattisgarh have quadrupled, from 98 in 2004 to 200 in 2005 and 462 in 2006[1] *(see figure 1)*. As a consequence of the violence many members of 'tribal' communities have fled their homes. Some of them are still staying – not always of their own volition – in Salwa Judum camps, while others have sought refuge in Maoist controlled areas. A third group, estimated to comprise between 20,000 and 30,000 people, many of them from the 'Gottekoya' community, fled the violent encounters in Chhatisgarh to the bordering state of Andhra Pradesh, where I visited their makeshift hamlets.

The Naxalites are an insurgent movement named after Naxalbari, a village in the Darjeeling district of West-Bengal. In 1967 a group of marginalised peasants started a protest movement against landlords and moneylenders. Under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar – and inspired by the Chinese revolution and Maoist thought – guerrilla squads were formed to wage war against the rural oppressors. By 1972, the movement was largely suppressed, following the death in jail of the movement's chief leader and tactician Mazumdar. However, insurgent activity continued, and in 2004 the current main Naxalite group, the Communist Party of India – Maoist, came into being with a merger of the Maoist Communist Centre and the People's War Group. With more than 7000 cadres, the Naxalites are presently active in what is known as the Red Corridor. This zone ranges from Andhra Pradesh in the South to Bihar in the North, encompassing almost the whole of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, as well as parts of Orissa, Maharashtra and West Bengal. In June 2009 the Naxalites were proscribed as a terrorist organisation under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act by the Indian government.

'At home we had two governments: the Naxalites and the Judum. They both wanted to arrest us. If you support the one government, the other one will burn your house or kill you. That is why we went away'.

Confrontation with the state

My interviews with members of the Gottekoya 'tribe' who had fled the conflict took place in villages located inside forests in northern Andhra Pradesh. As usual, on that morning we took a ride on a motorbike, followed by a longish walk to reach the forest settlements, inhabited by the IDP. The paths we walked were difficult to find. It was a maze: there were many twists, turns and forks. Without a guide it would have been impossible to remain on the right track. Once we arrived, there was not much to see besides small, bleak hamlets with a few slash-and-burn fields located nearby. Often, inhabitants would disappear when we arrived in a village for the first time. Strangers are viewed with suspicion, as they can pose a threat to the villagers. When we reached one of the settlements, our attention was immediately drawn to charred wooden poles, which were used as a construction material for the huts. I was told: 'Our homes have been set on fire by officials of the forest department. Only recently, we could build them up again... This has been the third time that they destroyed our houses'. It is illegal to stay and cultivate forest land (which is controlled by the Indian Forest Service – IFS), and these IDP are considered as encroachers (illegal occupants) by the forest authorities. Consequently, officers of the forest department removed, and in this case repeatedly burned down their houses.

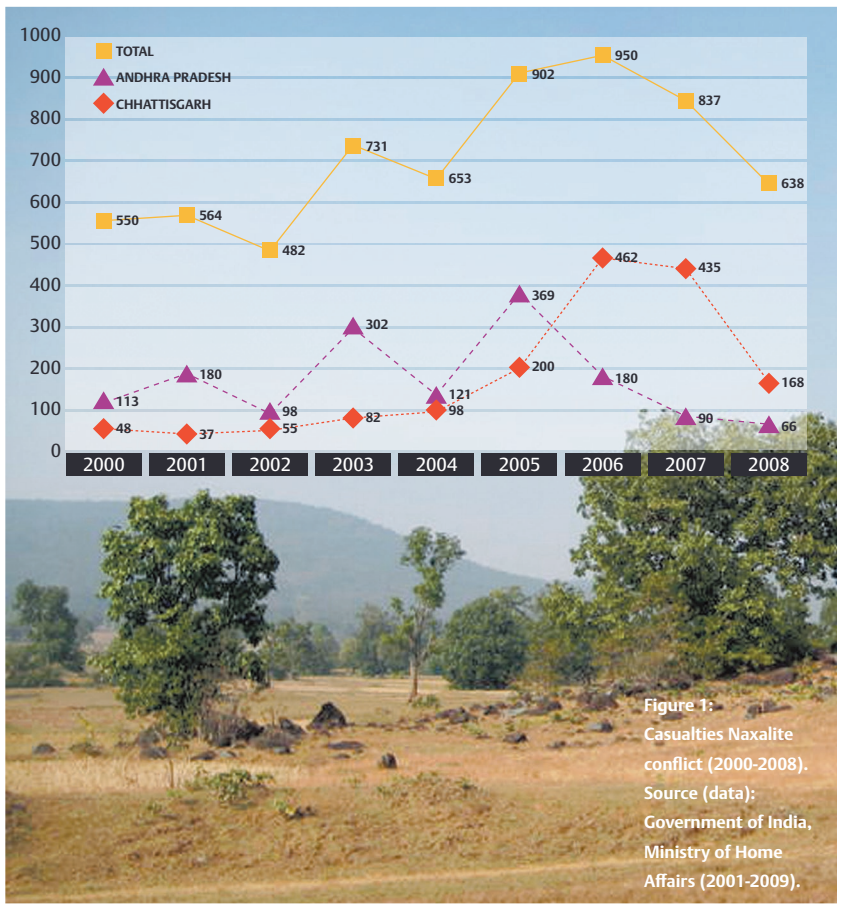


Figure 1: Casualties Naxalite conflict (2000-2008). Source (data): Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs (2001-2009).

Persecuted by forest officials, the refugees receive little consideration from the rural administrative and welfare authorities. This even though local officials are well aware of the existence and problems of the IDP. They argue: 'Since we can no longer deport them (a high court order had ruled against this – BS), our policy is just to ignore them.' As a consequence, they do not receive ration cards. Without ration cards, people are unable to obtain inexpensive rice at heavily subsidised government rates. Since their villages are deemed illegal settlements, they also miss out on governmental development work in support of village infrastructure and, for example, have to rely on dingy ponds to obtain drinking water. Children do not attend school, either because the government refuses to build schools in the vicinity of the forest hamlets, or out of fear of detection if the refugees were to send their children to a regular school. Staying under the radar of the state, rather than claiming rights and support, has become the preferred tactic of these people.[2] Furthermore, it is noteworthy that in the state of Andra Pradesh, the Gottekoya are not classified as a 'Scheduled Tribe'. The Gottekoya are a Gondi/Chhattisgarhi speaking branch of the Koya 'tribe' and are not considered indigenous to Andhra Pradesh. However, just five kilometres north, in Chhattisgarh, they are registred as a 'Scheduled Tribe'. (Other Telugu speaking Koya, such as the Dora Koya, do have this status as indigenous Scheduled Tribe in Andhra Pradesh).[3] Being classified as non-indigenous, the Gottekoya are also excluded from any entitlements meant for members of 'Scheduled Tribes' in Andhra Pradesh. Moreover, although they could technically still benefit from some of the government welfare programmes that operate area-wise, the officers in charge refused them access to this sort of aid since the refugees did not qualify as locals.

'You know, we are Indians too'

This quotation stems from one of my interviews with two Gottekoya who recently fled the violence in Chhattisgarh. This statement was directed against the forest department, the revenue department and the Integrated Tribal Development Agency, the triumvirate of government agencies in the area. It must be understood in the light of their day-to-day interactions with these local representatives of the Andhra Pradesh state that are all too often framed by violence rather than support. A comparable view on 'authority' was voiced by one of my interviewees about the situation in his home state of Chattisgarh: 'At home we had two governments: the Naxalites and the Judum. They both wanted to arrest us. If you support the one government, the other one will burn your house or kill you. That is why we went away'.

Most of my interviewees agreed that their situation had slightly improved with the move to Andhra Pradesh, as they were confronted with less violence there than in Chhattisgarh. But members of these 'tribal' communities are still caught in a desperate 'catch-22': (1) They receive no protection from the state, indeed their huts and belongings have been repeatedly burned by state agents. (2) The Naxalites, although they have lost some of their former hold on the area, use the dense forest for bases and come to the forest villages for shelter and food. The fear they incite in the forest and among police department officials means the Naxalites are able to offer some, although not complete, protection to the IDP 'encroachers'. (3) By the simple fact that the idea exists among the local government officials that there is support for the Naxalites with the IDP, the state can/will not supply welfare or protection. They are, as a group, considered 'anti-social elements... killers and thieves' (interview with police officer). (4) As a state revenue official logically concluded: 'We cannot give help to people who support the Naxals'.

It is very unfortunate that those who took refuge because of being under the double threat of 'two governments' at home, are now considered avid supporters of the rebel government by the state in which they sought refuge. As a consequence, members of the Gottekoya 'tribe' are now confronted with state violence, while at the same time they are ignored by state welfare agencies.

Bert Suykens
Conflict Research Group
University of Ghent
bert.suykens@ugent.be

Notes:

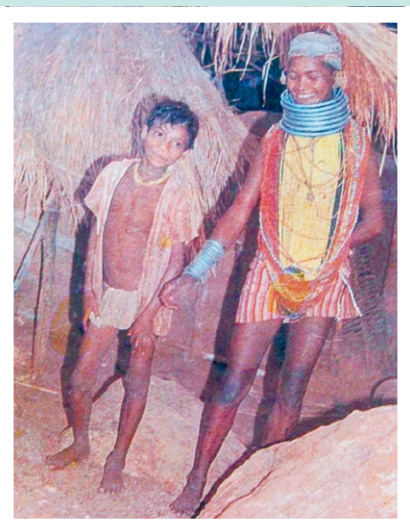
1. In 2008 civilian casualties dropped sharply in Chhattisgarh, probably due to pressure from both the Supreme Court and the centre against the Salwa Judum movement. As far as our information goes, the return of the IDPs has not yet been initiated.
2. See also Shah, Alp. 2007. '"Keeping the state away": Democracy, politics and the state in India's Jharkhand'. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N. S.)* 13: 129-45.
3. Kornel, Das 2006. *Tribals and their culture: Koya tribe in transition.* New Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

The rise and fall of ‘tribal’ development in Orissa

Prasanna Nayak discusses the nature and history of strategies undertaken by the Indian government to proceed the development of ‘tribal’ communities in Orissa from the 1970s onwards. Examining the very nature of pursuance and the impetus for achieving results, he reveals two distinct phases in ‘tribal’ development in the state, and calls for an analytical and empirical approach to future practice.

Prasanna Kumar Nayak



Above:
Bondo couple 1980, Muduliparha, Malkangiri, South Orissa.

ALREADY IN THE EARLY 1970S, at a time when ‘tribal’ development received new impulse from the Indian government’s 4th five year plan, many development activities in the field of horticulture, animal husbandry, agriculture, health and education, as well as the construction of roads, buildings and dug-wells were undertaken in rapid succession in the ‘tribal’ areas of Orissa. Political will for making tribal development a priority continued with the 5th Plan, from 1974 onwards, with activities reaching a peak in the early nineties, the end of the 7th Plan. At that time, I was making frequent trips to different ‘tribal’ areas in the north, south and west of Orissa. What impressed me most during my extensive field visits was the host of activities pursued by the field officers and staff of development agencies and the schoolteachers in residential ‘tribal’ schools, and their concern for and commitment to the ‘tribal’ people. Added to that, the frequent supervision and monitoring of the activities and assessment of progress by government officials was really quite noteworthy. Despite lapses and many shortcomings in the execution of the development schemes it remained satisfying to observe that there was discipline in the government machinery of development administration.

What impressed me most during my extensive field visits was the host of activities pursued by the field officers and staff of development agencies and the schoolteachers in residential ‘tribal’ schools, and their concern for and commitment to the ‘tribal’ people.

Among the ‘tribal’ development success stories in Orissa from that period are the orange, lemon, ginger and banana plantations, as well as the high yielding rice cultivation in Ramgiri-Udaygiri areas, home to a large population of Lanjia Saora. The orange, ginger, banana and pineapple plantations in the Niamgiri areas where mostly members of the Dongria Kondh ‘tribe’ live were also very successful development schemes. The same can be said of the cultivation of vegetables in the hills which gave people the opportunity to earn cash in addition to pursuing their traditional subsistence agriculture on the hill slopes. Cash crops and vegetables were also encouraged among the ‘tribal’ villager’s adept at plough cultivation on the plateaus, plains and terraced fields. They were also trained to raise bovine animals. Orissa’s ‘tribal’ schools were well managed, and provided a congenial environment for their pupils. Teachers worked hard at teaching and shaping these children with a spirit of dedication. The children responded with good performances and examination results were satisfactory. Although there were severe public health issues in most of the ‘tribal’ areas, primary health centres (PHCs) were established and free medical services were available for ‘tribal’ people. At the same time, road networks were developed at a rapid pace, facilitating the communication and transportation of development input to many villages. Dug- and tube wells were installed in most of the villages and many families availed themselves of the benefits of irrigating their land. It can certainly be argued that the quantum of infrastructure work and economic development activities undertaken during the seventies and spilling over into the early eighties resulted in significant progress and lasting development in the ‘tribal’ areas of Orissa.

Initially, the pursuance of economic development programmes and the modus operandi of the development agencies were in no way disruptive to the socio-cultural and community life of the ‘tribal’ people. Instead, development personnel were enthusiastic about their development goals and engaged with local people when problems arose. Politically, these ‘tribal’ areas were relatively quiet. The development policy plan, the project personnel, people and politics seemed to be in harmony with each other! The result of the development activities undertaken in ‘tribal’ areas was a slow and steady progress with tangible results and lasting effects.

However, there were some frustrating results and negative consequences too, largely attributable to introducing multiple development schemes. The areas where people were receptive to development intervention reaped the benefits of development. They not only produced more, they also developed purchasing power and moved from bartering systems to the market and money. Taking advantage of their transition, shopkeepers and traders flooded these areas, applied their tactics and manoeuvered to siphon away the development benefits for themselves. In the competitive market, the ‘tribals’ could not withstand the market pressure and succumbed to exploitation by tradesmen. Nevertheless, the standard of living of these people clearly rose, and, at the individual level, some were able to change their lifestyle. The irony is that in the process of developing the ‘tribes’ the development personnel were lacking an empirical understanding of the situation and deeper knowledge of the ‘tribal’ socio-cultural system. At the same time, without the theoretical and analytical skills required, they were unable to recognise the economic differentiation existing in ‘tribal’ villages. For example, some families were landless and poor while others belonged to the land-owning group. They took ‘tribal’ societies to be an ideal community practising some sort of primitive communism. The end result was that the majority of the benefits of development went to the well-to-do families, who were able to win the confidence of the development staff. The hiatus between the better off and the worst off widened further.

The neo-development strategy of the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) in the 1970s had been designed on the basis of an ambitious review of the early approaches to ‘tribal’ welfare in the post-independence period. Although the anthropological perspectives of tribal development had been given due consideration, the area approach coupled with demographic determination played a major role in formulating the TSP strategy. Macro-coverage of the tribal area, delineating Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDPs) on the basis of survey and sampling and implementing economic development programmes in haste – without paying adequate attention to the felt needs of the ‘tribal’ villages in keeping with their cultural and human resource bases – clearly had its limitations. The desire to tackle development and achieve development goals sooner rather than later prompted the development strategists to insist on rapid actions at whatever cost. As their optimism in this regard shrank, they shifted their attention from covering one section of ‘tribal’ people to as many sections as possible, thereby making it explicit that they had covered the entirety of the ‘tribal mass’. It gave the practitioners a great feeling of satisfaction. Without taking a pause to evaluate this development undertaking or to sort out the problems that had arisen from such an approach they continued and extended this trajectory, introducing yet more multiple packages for the benefit of a few. Showing the number of beneficiaries and calculating the money spent at the end of a scheme was assumed to be evidence enough of their development achievement. Information on quantity dominated that on quality.

Above:
A Bondo girl weaving her waist cloth *Nodi* with her traditional loom.

Above:
Bondo woman being treated by visiting medical doctors during a ‘health camp,’ 1980, Muduliparha, Malkangiri, Orissa.

Above:
Goats supplied to the widows and lone parent wifes of husbands held or sentenced for committing homicide 1979-80.

Above:
Bondos visiting a Public Health Centre 1980, Muduliparha, Malkangiri, Orissa.

Below:
A Bondo woman shaving another.

What happened next?

The 1990s witnessed a relatively quiescent period in 'tribal' development. The development schemes and programmes were implemented less enthusiastically and with less rigour. In the initial phase of the TSP, the newly recruited field staff (most of them from the coastal districts) were young and unmarried. They were curious to work in the hinterland and to pursue development programmes at a participatory level, getting personally involved. No family burden meant that they could work long and tirelessly in the field. In later years, however, these same people married and had children. Inevitably their attention turned towards their families. After having been in the field for between five and 10 years, they had grown accustomed to the area and had acquired the necessary skills for living among the 'tribals' and the local people. But as these field workers grew older, they lost the zeal and zest they once had for development work. After 10 to 15 years in the field they were further discouraged when the project funding was curtailed, often to the extent that there was only enough money to cover staff salaries. But these staff found themselves with less work to do. Consequently, many development workers started looking for ways to earn extra income. They joined the local people in trade and business. The field officers and their superiors were eventually transferred. Supervision and monitoring of the development projects became lax as those appointed to replace them were devoid of the spirit and enthusiasm to take up any challenge. What's more, neither merit nor any suitable selection norm was followed any more for the recruitment and posting of officers and staff in the field. Frustration was the order of the day and postings in 'tribal' areas were discredited.

Having reached a climax in the late eighties, the buzz of development activities pursued in 'tribal' areas slowed to a faint hum and, in fact, moved at a pace that registered no positive impact. Worse still, it can be argued that the impact was negative. The people's expectations were belied resulting in widespread disillusionment. Out of disgust, they rejected the changes they had previously accepted. In some cases they resorted back to their traditional means of subsistence and in other cases, while they did not regress, they did not move forward. The woes of 'tribal' people multiplied. They felt increasingly insecure as they no longer received the same level of support and protection from the development agencies and they no longer retained the strength which they had once derived from the traditional community-based institutions. It didn't take long for businessmen to arrive in the area and take advantage of the situation. In the face of exploitation, the 'tribal' people seemed to lack the courage to counter the moneylenders and traders.

Today, most of the development schemes that are in operation in the 'tribal' areas of Orissa follow a set pattern without making any breakthrough. A visit to any rural governmental development office and its activities in the field today will reveal just how casually things are being managed, as if the energy has drained away. The phase of acceleration is now over. Development institutions are languishing. Infrastructures built in the recent past remain unused serving no purpose anymore. The only signs of life to be found around the agricultural and horticultural farmhouses and sapling centres are the security guards watching over them. There are hardly any farming activities anymore. 'Tribal' schools give the impression that there is no schooling environment and that there is sickness everywhere. There is utter negligence at the level of the schoolteachers who are estranged from their authorities. In short, there is no concern and no commitment. People no longer receive the required services from Primary Health Centres (PHCs) which are crippled by absenteeism among doctors. Roads to villages have become potholed and years go by before they are repaired. In many areas roads that had been constructed as a part of the development efforts served little or no purpose to ordinary people.

Looking back, the first phase of neo-development action clearly benefitted 'tribal' people. Infrastructure facilities were created and their areas improved appreciably. Development was visible. Today, people have much less faith in the development agencies and their managers. Moreover, in recent years the 'tribal' situation and scenario have become increasingly politicised, creating a situation which is very difficult for the agencies to handle. People are feeling the difference between the first phase of agencies' attachment and empathy for the people and the second phase of detachment and apathy. This strikes a discordant note and quite often results in scuffles between the agencies and the people.

Towards a future development strategy: research scientist as practitioner?

The depicted scenario of change inside the governmental development machinery from its zenith in the 1980s to its nebulous remains is a matter of grave concern today. The conduct of everyday affairs in development offices needs much greater attention. The 'tribal' leaders who are at the helm of affairs, the machinery of development administration and the 'tribal' activists have to rise to the occasion and reformulate the 'tribal' policy and redesign the development strategy for the tribal areas and the people. A major re-think is essential at this juncture. A new philosophy has to grow, be propagated and practised. Round table discussions across party lines and professional orientations need to be held and development formulae ought to be evolved. Bias and bossism have to be checked. Impressionistic assessments and individual prescriptions should not be weighed in terms of the status of the person providing them, and automatically put into practice. Rather, observed and relevant knowledge from the field has to be considered first. The science of development must take precedence over vested interests. Facts should be brought to the fore. The development variables and the social and cultural correlates must be examined in the context of the specific 'tribe' and the 'tribal' area, taking into account the human resource potential, techno-economic skills, available natural resources and cultural excellence of the people; schemes should be formulated and implemented accordingly. The facts of 'tribal' societies cannot be collected mechanically by filling out schedules but by closely interacting and keenly observing the people and their interpersonal relationships. The problems of the people have to be examined scientifically and solved analytically.

In order to develop micro-areas and micro-societies in the present context it is imperative to observe that they have been changing; their dependence on natural resource bases is decreasing and their propensity to market orientation is increasing. Anthropologists as micro-social scientists participate in the change processes of the groups they study and, by virtue of their training and orientation, are sensitive to the needs and values of their fellow human beings as individuals or as groups. They have the capacities to turn experiences, impressions and bias through introspection and discussion into knowledge. Looking from below implies that the realities are being seen most critically, and thus scientifically. It is not a question of anthropology's relevance but of its responsibility. In our context, an anthropologist should render his knowledge to help the people he studies and the country as a whole. He cannot just watch and see planners trained in other disciplines making all kinds of mistakes. It is his duty to intervene, advise, and direct since he has the theory and the method to give valid suggestions that can stand the test. There is a need to study the values, social organisation and other aspects of 'tribal' culture before embarking upon any form of change if we want to avoid costs of all kinds. The anthropologist's observation technique and his understanding of the interrelations of social institutions have important contributions to make to development. Practice is the proof of theory and this precept should be borne in mind.

The social scientist has a moral responsibility to caution the development agents and agencies to handle 'tribal' development conscientiously, rather than casually. Better, the scientists should take up the challenge, go out into the field situation, from where they can acquire knowledge, and use it then and there to benefit the people concerned. Should the sponsors of 'tribal' development wait any longer to endorse this new agenda?

Prasanna Kumar Nayak
Utkal University, Orissa
prasannanayak51@gmail.com

References

Basu, Ashok Ranjan and S. Nijhawan 1994. *Tribal Development Administration in India 1994.* New Delhi: Mittal Publications.

Behura, Nab Kishore and Nilakantha Panigrahi 2005. Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG) and the Role of Government in Orissa. In Chaudhari, Sarit K. and Sucheta Sen Chaudhari (ed.), *Primitive Tribes in Contemporary India: Concept, Ethnography and Demography: Volume 2.* New Delhi: Mittal Publications, pp. 227-258.

Deogaonkar, Sashishekhar Gopal 1994. *Tribal Administration and Development: With Ethnographic Profiles of Selected Tribes.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

George, Jose and S. S. Sree Kumar 1994. *Tribal Development: Legislation and Enforcement.* New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers.

Sachs, Wolfgang (ed.) 2007. *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge As Power.* Johannesburg: Witwaterstrand University Press.

Satyanarayana, Meruvu, 1990. *Tribal Development in India: A Trend Report.* New Delhi: Inter-India Publications.

Verma, R. C. 2002. *Indian Tribes through the Ages.* New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Between nurture and neglect

The Ongee are one of three 'Primitive Tribal Groups' inhabiting the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Although questions over their survival continue to generate concern in the global media, for all intents and purposes they remain 'protected' under the laws of the Indian state. A welfare regime has been instituted to look after their physical well-being and ensure the preservation of their distinctive culture and life practices. Vishvajit Pandya takes a closer look into the ways in which this state provided welfare mediates the lives of the Ongees and shapes their identities.

Vishvajit Pandya

Above: Ongees at the Dugong Creek coastal camp, Little Andaman, 1984. Photograph by Vishvajit Pandya.

FOR THE SEVERAL INDIAN COMMUNITIES that live in villages on the fringes of the Ongee 'tribal' reserve on the Islands, 'tribal' welfare is a much resented practice. Settlers who have made their homes in these parts of the Islands, perceive the structure of welfare as expensive, as partial and inherently flawed. For them the so-called 'primitive' communities are no longer 'primitive'. They seek to be modernised, they want to be educated and enjoy the material markers of civilised existence. This is an argument that has also received much attention in the Island media, as well as in online discussion forums that debate the future of the 'tribal' communities of the Andaman Islands. The 'Light of Andamans,' a local weekly newspaper, for instance, has repeatedly published articles criticising the intent, structure, and policies of tribal welfare. Notwithstanding the veracity of these arguments, it is clear that this critique of 'tribal' welfare is ad hoc, prejudiced and very often uninformed. Indeed, issues of 'tribal' welfare only make news whenever they seem to impede larger projects of Island development. Though 'Tribal Welfare' and 'Island Development' as such are seriously at odds with each other, what unites them is a dogged refusal to acknowledge the history and agency of 'primitive tribal groups' such as the Ongee. Representatives of the state and civil society vie with one another to speak on behalf of the Ongee but refrain from any attempts to acknowledge their capacity to decide the course of their own lives. What emerges from both the public and private discourses of 'tribal' welfare in the Andaman Islands, is an ambiguity that throws the community into a liminal zone of existence sustained by postures of nurturance but flawed by inherent neglect. It is this zone of ambiguity that I seek to explore and address.

Self-destructive encounters with outsiders

Until about 1885, nearly 700 Ongee hunter-gatherers were the sole occupants of Goubalambabey (Ongee name for Little Andaman), a 732 sq km circular island, which is part of the Andamans group of Islands. By 1895, following a series of violent encounters with the British colonisers, the Ongees were, as colonial official records put it 'pacified'. These instances of violence, as well as the allurements and gifts provided by British colonisers, are remembered even today by Ongees in myths and songs that condemn the outsider and caution against further contacts for fear of more violence and eventual extinction. This history of Ongee fears of the outsider is complemented by a felt sense of disorder within the community. Feelings towards a condition of disorder are exemplified by an acute demographic imbalance in the Ongee community, which has resulted in a growing inability to find marriage partners in compliance with clan exogamy regulations. These regulations are based on a four-clan division, associated with distinct parts of the forest and the surrounding coastline. (See Pandya 2009: 29-70). The historical and cultural impact wrought upon their community by the outsiders is often symbolised and commemorated by the Ongees by visually marking specific rocks or *kugey* on the shores. The *kugey* are meant to signify the tragic fact of the Ongees' self-destructive encounters with the outsiders. For the Ongee these memories are also meant to reinforce the belief that conditions of disorder and flux are culturally given.

By 1895, following a series of violent encounters with the British colonisers, the Ongees were, as colonial official records put it 'pacified'.

Notwithstanding these Ongee perceptions of their condition, the question that arises is how, and to what extent, the Ongees have been able to pursue their sense of order and balance in a context where an increasingly intrusive regime of the Outsider takes control of their bodies, their living space and their life-practices? A large number of studies have shown how historically the structure and practice of colonial rule, the outbreak of disease and the constant influx of settlers on the island have compounded the complexity of problems faced by the Ongees. Settlers increasingly undertake illegal poaching and extraction of forest resources from the Ongee reserve forest. By 1981, it seemed as if the Ongees were under siege. The number of non-tribals on Little Andamans had grown to a staggering number of 7,214. They seemed to encircle the 100 or so Ongees restricted to the protected reserve territory; this was an unprecedented development as at any given time in order to manage the small community of Ongees, only about 20 welfare staff would be officially allowed within the reserved settlement. They would be under the strict surveillance of the administration and restrained from any practices that would jeopardise the cultural integrity of the Ongees. In the context of the growing demands of settlers on the Islands, a change in official policy *vis-à-vis* Ongees was evident. It was made implicitly clear to the Ongees that they would have to restrain or modify their hunting and foraging practices as areas of the already degrading forests had to be portioned off and allocated as cultivation fields to settler communities.

State gestures of welfare

Yet, much of these problems remain unacknowledged to the Indian state, that with its gestures of welfare and nurturance had settled the community within the purportedly protected confines of the Dugong Creek Tribal Reserve that could be only entered with official permits. By 1950, the total population of Ongees stood at 150. In 1956 the Ongees were guaranteed governmental care under the Tribal Protection Act (Article 243, Clause 2 June 1956) and subsequently the Ongee had been classified as a 'Primitive Tribal Group' by the administration. 'Tribal' development institutions were directed to follow a strict policy of 'non-interference' *vis-à-vis* the Ongees, the Jarawas, the Great Andamanese and the Sentinelese. It may be noted that all these groups formed a very small and unique Indian population that was completely dependent on traditional hunting and gathering practices. Regardless of the stated policy of non-interference, the thrust of the Indian state was to protect these communities as 'Primitive Tribal Groups' on the one hand, and to groom them into modern subjects of welfare on the other (See Awaradi 2002). The assumption being that such subjects would participate in modern economic practices within the protected regime of state welfare. The Ongees for instance, were settled at Dugong Creek not merely as protected subjects but as custodians of a newly-introduced economic enterprise– the coconut plantation. In order to reduce their dependence on foraging activities the administration also provided 100 Ongees food rations through the state's welfare agency *Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti* (AAJVS) established in 1976. The primary role of the AAJVS was to oversee the protection and promotion of those cultural institutions and practices deemed essential for the survival and growth of the Andaman tribal groups. The contradictions inherent in this philosophy of welfare and the flawed nature of its practice were soon evident in the gradual narrowing of the state's concerns to a point where all that seemed to be politically significant was to keep the Ongee community alive. They were to be nurtured as a demographic entity of 100 Ongees irrespective of the consequences such a regime of 'state imposed nurturance' would have on their lives and their sense of themselves.

The utter purposelessness of governmental institutions of welfare becomes evident when scrutinised closely. The benches in the community school remain vacant; the medical centre remains dusty with a local junior doctor who is often on leave. The social worker stays in his quarters waiting for the next pay check to arrive. The man in charge of the plantation, in consultation with the social worker, makes sure that each day at least some Ongees are marked as present for 'work' at the coconut plantation and certifies that those absent or abstaining from work are either pursuing 'traditional forest work' or have retreated into the forest to prepare for an imminent child birth in the group. State officials are known to welcome news of childbirth and welfare staff on the ground are seen to allow more rations and gifts if the Ongee promise to work at the plantation, or if they promise to make children.

Looking back at state welfare over the last 40 years, however, what stands out are solely governmental rituals of protection. On the arrival of a state visitor, Ongees scattered in the forest are herded towards the helipad and there they are given biscuits as incentives and fresh clothes to make them presentable. They are ordered to stand in a line, witness the unfurling of the national flag and listen to the speech made by the dignitary. Most of the Ongees today understand simple Hindi language commands and demands, but not the grand speeches made by the state officials and visitors. The rituals of welfare remain mired in mutual incomprehension but the show goes on. Concerns are expressed, demands are made, and the administrative ceremony comes to a ritual closure. Ongees scatter and often scuttle away to the forest till the time they feel the need to come to the settlement again to collect free rations.

Of death and demography

Apart from official visits, what makes 'news' related to the Ongee settlement is the birth of a child in the community. Ironically however, irrespective of periodic births the total population always remains around a 100. It was only during the Asian tsunami of December 2004, that a huge national and international concern about the survival of the Ongees was raised. It was found to the surprise of many, that the Ongees had survived the natural disaster (see Pandya 2005). Officials expressed their relief, but made little or no effort to understand their precarious conditions in the aftermath of the disaster, apparently content with the knowledge that the numerical strength of the community remained unaffected.

Moving away from official thinking on the subject, it may be noted at this point, that birth rate in the community has remained low as a result of a particular cultural logic that has come to define rules of marriage and remarriage in the community. This logic translates into a practice that allows the eldest single man or woman in the community to marry the first available individual from a prescribed band, irrelevant of age difference. In 1984 when the total Ongee population was 101, there were 26 married couples. Sixteen married couples were formed out of remarriages of individuals who had lost a spouse. Among the 26 couples, the age difference between the husband and wife was in most cases nearly 10 to 15 years. This imposed an almost inevitable limitation on the childbearing capacity of the married couple.

On December 9th 2008 the breaking news from the Port Blair administration was that over the preceeding three days five Ongees had died. The cause was attributed to their drinking some chemicals found in plastic containers that had washed up on the coast of Dugong Creek (http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Pollution/Andaman_tribesmen_die_of_toxic_drink/

Providing welfare to the Ongees of Little Andaman Island

Above:
At the request of a representative of the Indian state, Ongees have decorated themselves with clay paint to receive Lieutenant Governor Mr Kampani at the the Dugong Creek coastal camp, Little Andaman, 1984. Photograph by Vishvajit Pandya.

articleshow/3813023.cms). Suddenly, the population had dropped from the magical figure of 100 to 95. In subsequent days three more deaths occurred and the number was pushed down to 92. The figure of 100 that somehow been maintained for over 40 years was suddenly blotted out. The administration flew an emergency medical team to Dugong Creek on the afternoon of 10th December. The situation was developing rapidly as by the time the visiting medical team had arrived 16 more Ongees were fighting for their lives after they too had consumed the lethal concoction. There were real fears that the Ongee numbers could decline to an all time low of 77. The 16 Ongees who needed intensive medical attention were flown into Port Blair to be treated at G.B. Pant Hospital; while undergoing treatment another death was reported. On 13th of December 2008 15 Ongees were discharged and sent back to Dugong Creek. The administration had succeeded in holding the total number of Ongees at 92, thereby staging a successful damage control exercise.

The press statement from the administration emphasised that the Ongees consumed something they thought was alcohol. Implicit in this is the fact that alcohol is a substance known to Ongees. Predictably however there was no attempt to explain why or how alcohol could have been known to the Ongees over the years. To do so, the administration would have to admit that only four kilometres away from the Dugong Creek settlement, outsiders ran a lucrative enterprise of the production and sale of locally made illicit liquor, which ethnographers working among the Ongee have known about since 1983 (See Pandya 2009: 37-39). The administration was either in denial or being deliberately oblivious of the fact that welfare officials on the settlement knew of the Ongees being consumers of hooch (See Venkateswar 2004: 166-169). However, statements by the administration sought to sustain the image of the Ongees as innocent 'primitives' who accidentally consumed the lethal contents of a jerry can that washed up on the shores of Dugong Creek.

Nurturing a population

In the flurry of state rituals of welfare that followed, the authorities announced that they would henceforth enforce stricter measures for ensuring the safety and security of all the 'tribal' people on the Islands so that such incidents would not take place in future. The Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory ordered a forensic analysis of the liquid traces in the containers found by the Ongees. On December 14, 2008, top officials of the administration from Port Blair went down to Dugong Creek and arranged a 'counselling camp' for the bereaved Ongee family members. In course of another state organised power drama, the Ongees who have historically depended on gathering from forest and coastline were advised to avoid consuming unidentified items and other harmful items found on the seashore. As I write, in November 2009, no reports from the forensic investigation have been forthcoming or able to confirm the official statement that the cause of the Ongee deaths was poisonous chemicals washed up on the beach. This silence has meant that the fact of the supply of spurious liquor into the Ongee settlement cannot be refuted. The watchful gaze of the Island administration notwithstanding, and in spite of the control of movement into or out of the Ongee reserve territory, it is evident that the survival of the remaining Ongees remains uncertain.

The December 2008 tragedy stands out as a case of prime neglect that is yet to be explained by the state. The subsequent act of nurturance does little to change this reality.

To dispel the shadows cast on its welfare practices, the AAJVS announced, on the January 31st 2009, that they had organised a unique event. Four of the Ongee widows who had lost their husbands in the December tragedy were remarried to eligible members of their community. The state welfare authority patted itself on the back for a great accomplishment, seeing itself as a matchmaker carefully calibrating the choice of partners among the 24 adult males and 32 females. The obvious objective of the exercise was to increase the number births in the community, thereby raising the possibility of pushing up the population to the pre-December 2008 figures.

The point to note here is that even if the state wanted to point to the uniqueness of the event of Ongee widow re-marriage, there is nothing unusual about it within the community. Out of the 94 remaining Ongees, the percentage of male and female children since 1983 has always hovered between 65% male and 35% female. In fact, 82% of the Ongee adult women in the community at Dugong creek were married at least once before and 60% were married twice or more before (See Pandya 1993). In other words, widow marriage has been a historical practice with the Ongee.

Yet, the way the AAJVS organised the re-marriage ritual was far removed from Ongee tradition. The traditional mourning period was not adhered to and the marriage was arranged at the state's behest and not by community elders. Making it a state spectacle replete with senior administrative officials as guests - although officials added the qualifier, that the marriage rituals were performed in accordance with the communities' conventions and with the consent of elders –meant that the very act of arranging and staging such marriages became a self-contradictory proposition. The AAJVS had ignored its own fundamental directive –not to interfere with or attempt to mediate the cultural practices of the 'Primitive Tribal Groups'. Furthermore, AAJVS's paradoxical attempt to conserve Ongee culture actually re-invented or redefined Ongee traditions and the bases of Ongee identity. The administration has declared that it will soon be organising similar ceremonies for all the widows in the community.

The December 2008 tragedy stands out as a case of prime neglect that is yet to be explained by the state. The subsequent act of nurturance does little to change this reality. The AAJVS officials who visited and arranged the ceremony to marry widows do not yet seem to be able to come out with the truth of the 'mysterious' deaths of the Ongee husbands. Today the Ongees remain colonised by state agencies that oscillate between blatant neglect and zealous nurture in response to the demands of welfare book-keeping. In the process, what goes unnoticed is the fact that the institutions, practices and the very logic of welfare, slowly but gradually deepen Ongee vulnerability.

In accordance with the states' representation of the Ongees as a 'threatened primitive culture' the welfare agency sustains the construct of Ongees as a people who need to be protected and nurtured through a subtle yet elaborate machinery of intervention. The state is seen to work on the premise that any recognition of the Ongee capacity to change or question the construct of the 'primitive' would be tantamount to an acknowledgement of its failure to preserve the 'primitive' in its authentic condition. The refusal to look beyond the demographic imperative of welfare into the agential imperative of welfare is what makes the state's policy of protection so ambivalent. It is at this point of ambivalence that the logic of nurturance translates into fatal neglect and threatens the lives of those who are deemed to enjoy the unceasing protection of the state.

Vishvajit Pandya
Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technologoy (DA-IICT), Gandhinagar, India.
pandyav@yahoo.com

References

Awaradi, Sangappa A. 2002. *Computerized Master Plan: For Welfare of Primitive Tribes of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.* Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Administration.

Pandya,Vishvajit 1993. *Above the Forest: A Study of Andamanese Ethnoanemology, Cosmology and the Power of Ritual.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp 105-145.

Pandya, Vishvajit 2005. When land became water: Tsunami and the Ongees of Little Andaman Islands. Anthropology Newsletter (American Anthropological Association. Washington D.C) 46 (3): 12-13.

Pandya, Vishvajit 2009. *In The Forest: Visual and Material Worlds of Andamanese History,1858-2006.* Maryland: University Press of America.

Venkateswar, Sita 2004. Development and Ethnocide: Colonial practices in the Andaman Islands. Copenhagen: IWGIA.

Taking root in Bangladesh

Recently, a Garo friend of mine became a high-profile *adivasi* representative. He's considered by (non-Garo) donors, politicians, academics and media to be an important spokesperson for indigenous people(s) and is frequently consulted on a variety of 'indigenous' issues. When I visited Bangladesh last year, my friend and his wife asked me to stay with them. As a result of their generous offer, I gained unexpected insights into current changes concerning indigenous people's politics in Bangladesh, not least, how drastically the recently introduced international discourse on indigenous peoples has impacted identity formation amongst the Garos.

Ellen Bal

SIXTEEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE among the Garos of Bangladesh have revealed to me how the worldwide debate on indigenous people has enabled not only the Garos but other ethnic minorities to take their place on the stage as more equal and respected citizens. However, my time with the Garos also taught me that indigenous identity representations do not quite concur with my findings as a historian, who wants to unravel the historical complexities of identity building by the Garo people. An incident which occurred in my friend's house so clearly illuminated the profound impact of 'indigenous peoples discourse' on notions of self and public representations of Garo history and traditions, amongst a new generation of young educated urban Garos.

Young urban traditions?

One morning, I had interviews lined up with a number of young staff members of my friend's small NGO. Most of them were Garo, two of them Chakma. Among the many things we discussed, we also talked about the photographs decorating one of the office walls. These portrayed a festive celebration of *wangala* (originally a Garo harvest festival) in a way I had not seen before. With the disappearance of the traditional *sangsarek* religion, *sangsarek* rituals had lost much of their relevance and appeal. Only in the 1990s, the Christian churches had revived the celebration of *wangala* in 'a Christian way', in order to bring Garos from different denominational backgrounds together, and to emphasise their distinct Garo cultural and religious (read: Christian) identity.

The photographs in the office, however, showed no overt signs of Christianity. I saw young women dressed in beautiful, recently designed Garo costumes, cheering at the launch of a sky lantern (a newly introduced element clearly inspired by Buddhist festivities). Some of the women wore jewellery, which I later learned had been collected by my friend during his trips to Thailand, India and The Philippines. Expats from Dhaka (representatives of the European Commission and various European embassies) cheerfully participated in dances and rituals, wearing curious hats and colourful 'tribal' make-up, as well as their ever present cameras. Yet, when I commented teasingly that these snapshots presented a wonderful example of the invention of tradition, one of the young staff members became upset and sternly informed me that I was looking at true Garo traditional culture. Missionaries had spoilt *wangala*, but their boss (my friend) had reintroduced original Garo culture. He had purified it of recent Christian influences, restored the authentic festival, and thereby also reduced the influence of church leaders, who had spoilt the festival in the first place. I realised at that moment how quickly and strongly the recent introduction of indigenous peoples discourse (with an emphasis on authentic indigenous culture) has influenced notions of Garo identity, culture and history. This young girl needed no exploration of 19th and 20th century history 'as it had been' but an assertion of Garo culture as truly indigenous.

The Garos of Bangladesh

At present, Garos constitute less than ten percent of the 'other peoples' of Bangladesh, an extremely marginal segment of just one percent of the total Bangladeshi population. Since the 1960s, Garos have begun migrating to cities such as Mymensingh, Chittagong and in particular Dhaka in ever increasing numbers. They leave their villages to look for work or to follow higher education (at colleges and universities). Exact figures are not known but during my last visit I understood that ever increasing numbers of young people are leaving for Dhaka or other big cities, in search of jobs in domestic service, beauty parlours, or the garment industry. Each village that I visited had seen dozens of its young people leave. Villagers told me amusing stories about these migrants returning to their homes in the villages during Christmas holidays, with their trolley bags and mobile phones, as if they had come straight from Dubai.

The government of Bangladesh did not recognise their minorities as indigenous peoples and in 1993, the international year for the world's Indigenous People, the term 'indigenous peoples', was still fairly unknown in Bangladesh.

Only a minority of Garos are citizens of Bangladesh. The large majority live in the Garo Hills in India (and the surrounding plains of Assam). An international border has separated the Bangladeshi Garos from the hill Garos since 1947. Partition resulted in a much stricter division than ever before. Although trans-boundary mobility has never stopped, Indian and Bangladeshi Garos increasingly developed in different directions. Bangladeshi Garos were more oriented towards Dhaka, influenced by Bengali language and culture, and obviously affected by the distinct political developments before and after the independence war of 1971. Nevertheless, differences between hill Garos and those from the Bengal plains have existed much longer. Already in 1901, Major Alan Playfair in his famous monograph on Garos separated 'those who inhabit the Garo Hills district, and those who reside in the plains and are scattered over a very wide area of country.'[1] At present, the segmentation into (Indian) hill Garos and (Bangladeshi) lowland Garos is also reflected in the names they give themselves. Bangladeshi Garos call themselves *Mandi*, which means 'human being'. They refer to the Garos from the Garo Hills as *Achik* ('hill person').

Indigenous people and the state of Bangladesh

For a long time the international discourse on indigenous people only marginally influenced minority issues in Bangladesh. At present however, 'indigenous peoples' or *adivasi*[2] issues not only figure prominently on the agendas and in the policies of donor agencies and NGOs, but have also become part of government policies in Bangladesh. Even the national Planning Commission has now included a separate section on 'tribal people' (TP) and 'tribal' issues in its report on poverty reduction (2005). The report states, for example, that '[o]ver the years the tribal people have been made to experience a strong sense of social, political and economic exclusion, lack of recognition, fear and insecurity, loss of cultural identity, and social oppression (...) TP are losing their own heritage, which threatens their sustainability.' Although the government of Bangladesh has not officially recognized its minorities as indigenous peoples, the Planning Commission does state that '[a] lesson can be learnt from the experiences of other nations that accommodate ethnic nationalities, for example China, India, Denmark, Norway, New Zealand, and Australia' (p.137).

The acknowledgement that 'tribal' minorities are in need of special attention on the basis of their distinctive cultures, experiences, socio-political circumstances, etc. is – unlike in India – a new development in Bangladesh. Despite some odd exceptions, the successive states of East Pakistan and Bangladesh have generally ignored, neglected, or (violently) excluded local 'tribal' minorities. The Partition of 1947 and the subsequent birth of Pakistan and India also marked the beginning of distinct political approaches on either side of the Indo-Pakistan border vis-à-vis 'tribal' minorities. In postcolonial India, special national and state policies were formalised in the Constitution to 'uplift' the backward tribes. Cultural and ethnic diversity were understood as prime features of the newly established Indian nation. The postcolonial state showed the same systematising urge that its colonial precursor had displayed. Although the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes already admitted in 1952 that no uniform test to classify the 'Scheduled Tribes' had been developed, an extensive list was prepared of all 'tribes'. The Garos of Meghalaya, India, are among these so-called Scheduled Tribes (ST).

Similar notions of diversity and multi-ethnicity have not developed in East Pakistan and Bangladesh. The citizens of these successive states were either conceived as Muslim or as Bengali. The successive states of Pakistan and Bangladesh never bothered to collect systematic information on the 'tribal' population. Nor did they develop formalised policies regarding 'backward' groups. The government of Bangladesh did not recognize their minorities as indigenous peoples and in 1993, the international year for the world's Indigenous People, the term 'indigenous peoples', was still fairly unknown in Bangladesh.

States, minorities and diversity

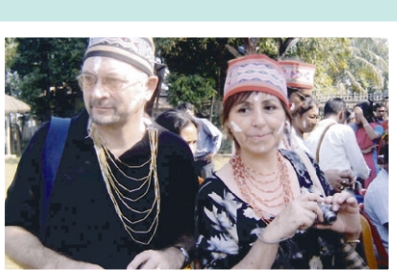
My first acquaintance with the Garos from Bangladesh dates back to November 1993.[3] I had just commenced my project on the ethnicisation of community relations in Bangladesh and focused on the Garos as a case-study. At the time, Northeast India was off limits for foreigners, and a war was going on in the Chittagong Hill Tracts between the army and local minority communities. The Christian Garos seemed a 'suitable' community for my studies. My historical perspective allowed me to scrutinise how they had come to constitute the distinct ethnic community they are today. Available sources (unpublished and published

Below:
Garo girl wearing a 'traditional' dress at the *Wangala* celebrations in Achkipara, Bangladesh. Photograph by IDPS, Indigenous Peoples Development Services.

Right:
Garo girls performing a 'traditional' dance at the *Wangala* celebrations in Achkipara, Bangladesh. Photograph by IDPS, Indigenous Peoples Development Services.

States, minorities, and discourses of citizenship

Above:
Garo girls posing for the photographer at the *Wangala* celebrations in Achkipara, Bangladesh. Photograph by IDPS, Indigenous Peoples Development Services.



Above:
European visitors at the *Wangala* celebrations in Achkipara, Bangladesh. Photograph by IDPS, Indigenous Peoples Development Services.

documents and oral history) revealed, among other things, the significance of the role of the successive states of British India, East Pakistan and Bangladesh in the complex and ongoing processes of identity formation and the articulation of Garo ethnicity in Bangladesh.

In *A recent history of Bangladesh* (2009), Willem van Schendel provides an elaborate account of the historical and contemporary complexities of national identity formation processes in Bangladesh (and previously in East Bengal and East Pakistan).[4] He points to the paradoxical relation between two dominant and competing models for identification: the Bengali and the Muslim identity. The shared Muslim identity stood at the basis of independent Pakistan, free from British domination, and different from Hindu-dominated India. The Bengali identity gained momentum in the struggle against West Pakistani domination. Garos and many other Bangladeshis do not adhere to these competing identifications. These non-Bengali, non-Muslim Bangladeshis –roughly estimated at one per cent of the total population – are neither Muslim nor Bengali, and they have always remained, to some extent, excluded from mainstream society. I could present several instances of the states of Pakistan and Bangladesh excluding Garos from equal participation as full-fledged citizens.

One extreme example is their flight from East Pakistan in 1964. Within a time span of only a few weeks, thousands of Garos fled across the border into India, since the government (knowingly) failed to protect them against the mass influx of local Muslim settlers and refugees from Assam. Their flight was not merely a result of this sudden immigration of thousands of land-hungry settlers (supported by local police and the East Pakistan Rifles), but also caused by a lingering sense of insecurity among these Garos ever since the birth of East Pakistan. This experience only intensified the feelings of insecurity among those who eventually returned, for many years to come. I heard many stories about people refraining from planting new trees, for example, afraid these investments would go waste if they had to flee again.

Bangladesh for Bengalis

The birth of Bangladesh in 1971, the attitude of state leaders at the time, and the ensuing politics and practices also present a striking example of how state and identity formation can be interconnected.

After East Pakistan's Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won the elections that would have made him prime minister of Pakistan, the Pakistani army came into action. On the night of March 26, 1971, a nine-month war began in which between three hundred thousand and one million East Pakistanis died. Within two to three months after the outbreak of the liberation struggle, the border area and home to the lowland Garos had turned into a war zone. Garos (and this time also their Bengali neighbours) fled to the camps in India on the other side of the border. Already at the very beginning of the war, the government-in-exile approached the Garos to join the Freedom Fighters and many young Garos joined the *Mukti Bahini* (Liberation Force). One informant told me about their excitement and hope for a better future:

> *"We wanted an independent country. We had been exploited by the Pakistanis. We wanted to live in this country with the dignity of citizens of a free country. In those days they [Pakistanis] did not recruit the adivasis ['tribals'] in their army or in the police force; they totally ignored the adivasis. Another thing was that we wanted to prove our feelings for the country, that we also loved this country. We wanted to show that we were also citizens of this country."*

When, in December 1971, the Indian army administered the final blow to the Pakistanis and Bangladesh became an independent country, many Garo refugees were eager to return to their villages and to a new country that held the promise of a better future.

Nevertheless, it soon became clear that Sheikh Mujib favoured a democratic country on the basis of secular principles and the ethnic Bengali identity, and had no intentions of turning Bangladesh –either officially or ideologically –into a multi-ethnic country. In 1972, a Chakma delegation met Mujib to discuss the demands of the inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Their demands included autonomy and a special legislature for the Hill Tracts. Mujib simply refused to accept any of the demands of the hill people and 'angrily threatened to drown the tribals in a flood of people from the plains...'[5] During a visit to Rangamati in 1975, Sheikh Mujib addressed the crowd as brethren. He told them to become Bengalis, suggesting they forget the colonial past, and asked them to join mainstream Bengali culture. The crowd then left the scene, to which Sheikh Mujib responded with the threat to send the army and Bengali settlers into the hills.[6]

While the Garos never experienced the same situation of repression and warfare that was inflicted on the hill people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in the period after 1975, they did learn about Sheikh Mujib's attitude towards the ethnic minorities. One of my Garo informants reported the following:

> *"Again we came back. There was no rehabilitation programme of the government. Only Caritas and some other organisations helped the people. Some Garos went to see Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. They told him: 'We are tribals so we need special care from the government.' They presented him millam-spie [Garo shield and sword] as a souvenir. Sheik Mujib said to them: 'All people here are Bengali.' The Garos told him that they needed special protection, but he refused. He told us that we are Bengalis, and said 'You do not need any special privileges.'"*

Two years later, in 1973, Sheikh Mujib stated that the ethnic minorities would be promoted to the status of Bengali, and in 1974, Parliament passed a bill that declared Bangladesh as a 'uni-cultural and uni-linguistic nation-state'.

During the first years after independence, Garos found themselves urged by the state leaders to unite as Bengalis, and after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, again as Muslims. Yet they firmly rejected both identities and instead emphasised counter discourses in which they presented themselves as Bangladeshi Garos and Christians. In the process they further unified as a distinct ethnic community in Bangladesh, different from Bengali Muslims/Muslim Bengalis, but more strongly rooted than before in Bangladesh; the country which they now claimed as their motherland, despite the fact that the motherland still had not accepted them on their own terms.

Epilogue: taking root as Garos of Bangladesh

During my last visit, in April 2009, I witnessed a new step in this process of taking (and claiming) root. The Garos have firmly embraced the discourse of indigenous peoples and indigeneity to emphasise their belonging to the country, while pointing at the specific problems and challenges they as an indigenous community are still facing (and share with other indigenous communities). The Awami League (considered a pro-*adivasi* party) in power and indigenous people's issues firmly on the donors' agendas are clearly to the advantage of this process of empowerment and emancipation. The indigenous or *adivasi* discourse unites Garos with other minorities inside and also across the Bangladesh borders and inspires the Garos to reassert their distinct identity as Garos *and adivasis*.

The Garos have firmly embraced the discourse of indigenous peoples and indigeneity to emphasise their belonging to the country, while pointing at the specific problems and challenges they as an indigenous community are still facing.

In order to assert their indigenous identity, Garos are carefully turning to the Garo Hills in India, the cradle of 'authentic Garo culture'. They brush aside the fact that they never formed a homogenous community with a single culture and language, and rather emphasise the similarities and uncritically rely on studies of the language, culture, and history of hill Garos. In their process to unite with other *adivasis*, they stress their common (historical) experiences with human rights violation, land grabbing by Bengali settlers, and forceful expulsion from their lands, and discard the many differences they faced and are still facing.

It can be argued that the experiences of the Garos of East Pakistan/Bangladesh are marked by at least three different, albeit somewhat overlapping phases, during which these Garos from the Bengal delta adopted and/or emphasised different identity markers setting them apart from the dominant Muslim/Bengali population of the country. Of late, the Garos of Bangladesh have embraced the label of indigenous peoples, uniting them inside and across borders, with Garos and other 'tribal' minorities, and encouraging them to invent themselves as authentic, indigenous (hence culturally distinct), people of Bangladesh. This process in which they assert (and invent) their indigenous and Bangladeshi identity may not exactly coincide with the historian's ambition to reveal 'historical complexities and fragmentations', but at this very moment it seems to offer new roads to becoming full-fledged citizens on terms that have already entered state policies.

Ellen Bal
Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam
ew.bal@fsw.vu.nl

Notes

1. Playfair, Alan [1909] 1975. *The Garos.* Gauhati and Calcutta: United Publishers, p. 59.
2. Unlike in India, where the local term *adivasi* was introduced many decades ago and long before the United Nations declared 1993 as 'the international year for the world's Indigenous People', in Bangladesh, *adivasis* and Indigenous People(s) are synonymous with one another.
3. See Bal, Ellen 2007. *'They ask if we eat frogs': Garo ethnicity in Bangladesh*, Singapore, Leiden: ISEAS/IIAS.
4. van Schendel, Willem 2009., *A History of Bangladesh.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Talukdar, Sakya Prasad 1988. *The Chakmas. Life and Struggle.* New Delhi: Gian Publishing House, pp. 50-51.
6. Chakma, A. B. 1984. Look Back from Exile. A Chakma Experience. In Wolfgang Mey (ed.), *They are Now Burning Village after Village: Genocide in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh.* Copenhagen: IWGIA, pp. 58-59.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Indigenous identity: burden or liberation?

With the rise of *'adivasi'* ('indigenous' or 'tribal') movements in different parts of South Asia in the past two decades, the question of how to understand '*adivasi* identity' has become hotly debated: is it a burden, inviting distorted stereotypical depictions of subaltern people, or is it a promising means toward their liberation? As Luisa Steur's fieldwork on the *Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha* (AGMS), the main *adivasi* movement in Kerala, demonstrates, answers to this question can be of immediate political consequence.

Luisa Steur

A DECONSTRUCTIONIST APPROACH to indigeneity considers '*adivasi* identity' a colonial and/or bourgeois-nationalist construction (see e.g. Bates 1995, Bindu 2009) that mixes notions of supposed indigeneity, a 'tribal' way of life, and an official legal category ('Scheduled Tribe') into an essentialist, romantic myth. This approach warns against the danger of the xenophobic shadows of indigeneity: nativism, 'communalism', as well as 'oppressive authenticity' through which proletarian *adivasis* who fail to fit romantic images of *adivasi*ness become marginalised even further (see Baviskar 2007; Shah 2007).

A strategic essentialist approach, on the other hand, sees '*adivasi* identity' as a social fact and a generally accepted reference to a shared (though not uniform) history of marginalisation and resistance and a different way of life, embodied in those people asserting themselves as *'adivasis'* (see e.g. Xaxa 1999). This approach warns that deconstruction can undermine the legitimacy of *adivasi* identity as a political discourse and thereby disempower the many democratic initiatives based on it (see Karlsson 2003).

The Muthanga struggle: where the dilemma becomes real

The dilemma between these two approaches to the question of *adivasi* identity politics was particularly stark during the 'Muthanga struggle' of the AGMS in Kerala. The over-determination of *adivasi* identity by colonial historiography, bourgeois imaginaries, and the state, and the problems this causes for movements like the AGMS, were salient. Yet, criticism of these identity constructions ran the danger of being misused by opponents of the movement.

Leading up to the struggle was a march organised in 2001 by what was then still called the 'Adivasi-Dalit Action Council' –an alliance of formerly 'untouchable' groups (today calling themselves '*dalit*'/'oppressed') and 'indigenous' or 'tribal' groups (*adivasis*). As a result of the march, CK Janu, the *adivasi* woman leading the movement, signed an agreement with the then Chief Minister of Kerala for the redistribution of land to landless *adivasis*. The agreement was met with general approval in Kerala as *adivasis* were seen as a generally 'destitute' but 'innocent' community, to whom finally some justice was being done. The AGMS was however criticised, including by the Communist party, for accepting to be offered 'alternative' rather than 'alienated' land, and thereby supposedly not only giving in to 'land-grabbers' interests' but also betraying *adivasis*' deeper sentimental bond to their 'ancestral land'.

Such criticism ignored the fact that most landless *adivasis* in Kerala belong to historically nomadic communities that, unlike 'upper-caste' (as they call themselves) land-owning *adivasi* communities such as the Kurichiyas, have no conception of a particular piece of 'ancestral land' actually belonging to them. Well into the 20th century, communities such as the Paniya, the largest *adivasi* community in Kerala, and the Adiya, to which C K Janu belongs, were bonded laborers working the land of upper-caste (usually Nair) landlords. It can well be argued that by not clinging to the trope of 'ancestral land', the AGMS was in fact standing up for the interests of the most impoverished *adivasis*.

When it became clear in 2003 that the government was not making serious efforts to implement the agreement that was signed in 2001, the AGMS decided to take action. The usual land occupations in Kerala organised by *adivasi* workers in the 1990s targeted government-owned plantations that were collapsing in the wake of the agricultural crisis. But in 2003, in response to the widespread criticism that had been launched against them for agreeing to have the government allot 'alternative' rather than 'ancestral' land, the AGMS leadership decided to occupy a piece of (industrially depleted) forest land in the Muthanga wildlife sanctuary. This was allegedly an *adivasi* 'homeland' where various 'temples of *adivasis*' had been discovered. Since it was a protected nature area, occupying it was also more likely to attract attention from the national government and media, and help by-pass the obstructions posed by local interests and politicians unwilling to implement the agreement.

Dalit activists were crucial in upholding the occupancy – they contributed money, helped transport people to Muthanga, propagated the struggle to the media, and lived at the Muthanga occupation themselves. Nevertheless, following the Indian state's strict legal distinction of 'Scheduled Castes' (SC) and 'Scheduled Tribes', the AGMS chose to represent itself in an imaginary of pure '*adivasi*' identity. For instance, CK Janu and Geethanandan, second leader of the AGMS and in fact from an SC community, interpreted the journey to Muthanga as 'thousands of refugees going to their ancestral lands… convers[ing] with the spirits of the mountains with ease, as though they got back their freedom that they lost centuries ago'. Moreover, though the majority of the participants in the Muthanga struggle were from Paniya and Adiya communities –traditionally agricultural labourers – the AGMS chose a bow and arrow, used only by a few better-off *adivasi* communities in Kerala, and a tree, symbolising *adivasis*' special bond to nature, as the symbols forming their flag.

The discourse struck a chord and the AGMS received support both from national and international civil society groups. For a while this prevented the government from evicting the activists from Muthanga. In the course of the weeks during which the activists occupied Muthanga, those opposing the occupation however found a way to undermine the movement precisely by 'exposing' the movement as not in fact one of 'real *adivasis*'. An environmental group lead by local notables wrote a 'spot investigation report' in which they claimed that 'it must be pointed out that 'Ms CK Janu is not representing the real *adivasi* cause'. They observed that other *adivasi* groups living near the occupation had complained they felt threatened by the movement and reported that the activists had started ploughing rather than 'nurturing' the land as evidence of them not being 'real *adivasis*'.

As it started to be noticed that not all of the people present at Muthanga were local *adivasis*, rumours began circulating that the movement had been infiltrated by 'foreign' groups like the Tamil Tigers or the People's War Group. The imagery of '*adivasi*' authenticity used by AGMS to mobilise wider support began to crumble and demonstrations against the occupation were staged by political parties. Eventually the government felt legitimised to send in a massive police force that brutally suppressed the occupation, leaving two people dead.

Though the AGMS initially received support via a romanticised image of *adivasi* identity, there was a delicate balance to this game, which eventually turned against itself, legitimising the violent repression of the movement. It is difficult to extract any conclusions about the relevance of deconstruction versus strategic essentialism from this case –there is a real dilemma. Yet, my fieldwork in Kerala also opened up questions that might lead beyond the dilemma.

A way forward?

Deconstructivist scholarship has countered the reification of *adivasi* identity and created space for more flexible political interpretations. Had the influence of this scholarship been stronger on the media in Kerala at the time of Muthanga, perhaps arguments about whether or not the activists there were 'real *adivasis*' could have been exposed as nonsensical from the start. Instead, merely a vulgar version of deconstructionism reached the mainstream media, where it worked to undermine the legitimacy of the AGMS precisely by showing that it was not led by 'real *adivasis*'. Why then, despite the seeming inevitability of such perverse logic, is '*adivasi*ness' still such a popular discourse in subaltern movements today?

Deconstructivist scholarship has countered the reification of adivasi identity and created space for more flexible political interpretations. Had the influence of this scholarship been stronger on the media in Kerala at the time of Muthanga, perhaps arguments about whether or not the activists there were 'real adivasis' could have been exposed as nonsensical from the start.

Considering that many AGMS activists used to engage in Communist politics –CK Janu for instance belonged to the agricultural labourers' union of the CPI(M), and Geethanandan led a Marxist-Leninist faction –we might ask, more specifically, why activists shifted from socialism to indigenism, not just in Kerala but in fact all over the world in the last quarter of the 20th century. Under what conditions do activists tend to reinforce rather than reject the stereotypical images directed at them? Rather than discrediting contemporary *adivasi* leaders, such questions would help to understand the limitations on political mobilisation in a 'neoliberal' age, as well as formulate a critique of the romanticised imaginary that 'civil society' demands of subaltern representation.

Scholars working within the strategic essentialist paradigm are more inclined to place themselves in the position of *adivasi* activists and represent, rather than criticise, their concerns to a wider audience. Here, however, it is surprising that they gave so little voice to the alternative articulations of *adivasi* identity that were equally present in the AGMS. Strategic essentialists seem to have become overly essentialist in ignoring the involvement of *dalit* activists, the explicit alliances made with *dalit* groups, the claims of the AGMS of representing the 'poor', their demands for 'the right to live' and for employment, and indeed the fact that most AGMS leaders have a Communist background (see Steur 2009). Instead scholars tended to focus primarily on what was 'new' about the AGMS and what emphasised its purely '*adivasi*' character.

This sets this approach on a collision course with deconstructivist scholarship. Considering the dangers of strategic essentialism turning against itself, it also seems to stray away from the primary goal of supporting *adivasi* movements and representing their politics as close to the 'emic' as possible. Surely the more 'modern', class-based and anti-caste forms of *adivasi* politics also deserve scholarly representation.

Luisa Steur
Central European University (Budapest)
Reese Miller exchange student, Cornell University (Ithaca)
Managing Editor
Focaal –Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology
luisasteur@yahoo.co.uk

Above left: Election campaign poster of C K Janu, leader of the Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha. Photograph by Luisa Steur, 2006.

Above right: Adivasis at a land occupation in Northern Kerala. Photograph by Luisa Steur, 2006.

References

Bates, Crispin. 1995. 'Lost innocents and the loss of innocence': interpreting adivasi movements in South Asia. In *Indigenous Peoples of Asia*, ed. R.H. Barnes, A. Gray and B. Kingsbury, 103-19.

Baviskar, Amita. 2007. Indian indigeneities: Adivasi engagements with Hindu nationalism in India. In *Indigenous Experience Today*, Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Starn, 275-303. Berg Publishers.

Bindu, K. C. 2009. The Tribe in the Early Census Reports: Constructing the Nation, Hindu and Outside Hindu. Paper presented at BASAS Conference, March 30-April 1, Edinburgh.

Karlsson, Bengt. 2003. Anthropology and the 'indigenous slot'. *Critique of anthropology* 23 (4): 403-423.

Shah, Alpa. 2007. The dark side of indigeneity? Indigenous people, rights and development in India. *History Compass* 5/6: 1806-1832.

Steur, Luisa. 2009. Adivasi mobilization: 'identity' versus 'class' after the Kerala model of development? *Journal of South Asian Development* 4 (1): 25-44.

Xaxa, Virginius. 1999. Tribes as indigenous people of India. *Economic and political weekly* 34 (51): 3589- 3596.

New for review

General

Chaban, Natalia and Holland, Martin and Ryan, Peter, eds. 2009
The EU through the Eyes of Asia Volume II: New Cases, New Findings
World Scientific. pp. 254, tables, 978 981 4289 81 8

Lim, Bliss Cua. 2009
Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic and Temporal Critique
Durham and London: Duke University Press., ill., 978 0 8223 4510 7

Powers, John and Prebish, Charles S., eds. 2009
Destroying Mara Forever: Buddhist Ethics Essays in Honor of Damien Keown
New York: Snow Lion Publications. pp. 293, 978 1 55939 341 6

Central Asia

Marat, Erica. 2010
The Military and the State in Central Asia: From Red Army to Independence
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 160, 978 0 415 49347 5

Ostrowski, Wojciech. 2010
Politics and Oil in Kazakhstan
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 206, 978 0 415 48580 7

China

Assandri, Friederike and Martins, Dora, eds. 2009
From Early Tang Court Debates to China's Peaceful Rise
Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. pp. 158, 978 90 5356 795 1

Barman, Charles. Edited by Barman, Ray. 2009
Resist to the End: Hong Kong, 1941-1945
Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. pp. 308, ill., 978 962 209 976 0

Bickers, Robert and Yep, Ray, eds. 2009
May Days in Hong Kong: Riot and Emergency in 1967
Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. pp. 222, tables, 978 962 209 999 9

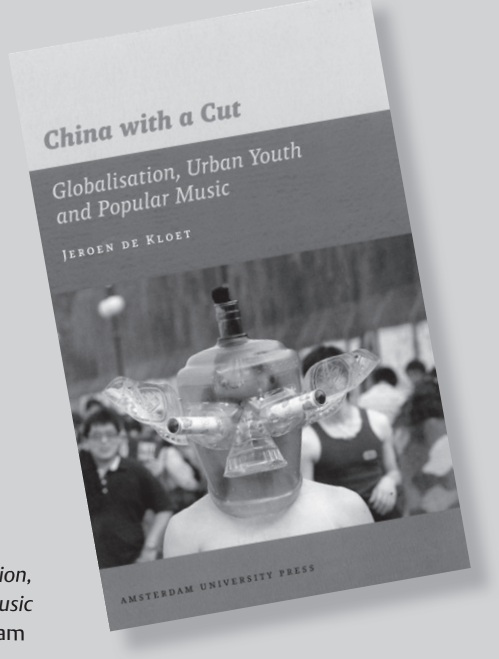
Clart, Philip and Crowe, Paul, eds. 2009
The People and the Dao: New Studies in Chinese Religions in Honour of Daniel L. Overmeyer
Nettetal: Sankt Augustin. pp. 542, ill., 978 3 8050 0557 9

Dijk, Meine Pieter van, ed. 2009
The New Presence of China in Africa
Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. pp. 222, tables, 978 90 8964 136 6

Duara, Prasenjit. 2009
The Global and Regional in China's Nation-Formation
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 253, 978 0 415 48290 5

Idema, Wilt L. 2009
Judge Bao and the Rule of Law: Eight Ballad-Stories from the Period 1250-1450
USA: World Scientific., ill., 978 981 4277 01 3

King, Richard, ed. 2010
Heroes of China's Great Leap Forward: Two Stories
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 132, 978 0 8248 3436 4



De Kloet, Jeroen. 2010
China with a Cut: Globalisation, Urban Youth and Popular Music
Amsterdam: IIAS/Amsterdam University Press., ill., pp. 255, 978 90 8964 162 5

Kwong, Bruce Kam-kwan. 2010
Patron-Client Politics and Elections in Hong Kong
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 156, tables, 978 0 415 55142 7

Lin, Xiaoping. 2010
Children of Marx and Coca-Cola: Chinese Avant-Garde Art and Independent Cinema
Honolulu: University of Hawai'I Press. pp. 312, ill., 978 0 8248 3336 7

McMahon, Keith. 2010
Polygamy and Sublime Passion: Sexuality in China on the Verge of Modernity
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 215, 978 0 8248 3376 3

Moskowitz, Marc L. 2010
Cries of Joy, Songs of Sorrow: Chinese Pop Music and its Cultural Connotations
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 165, ill., 978 0 8248 3369 5

Ng, Maria N. 2009
Pilgrimages: Memories of Colonial Macau and Hong Kong
Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. pp. 144, ill., 978 962 209 208 2

Riemenschnitter, Andrea and Madsen, Deborah L., eds. 2009
Diasporic Histories: Cultural Archives of Chinese Transnationalism
Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univesity Press. pp. 285, colour ill., 978 962 209 080 4

Yongnian, Zheng. 2010
The Chinese Communist Party as Organizational Emperor: Culture, Reproduction and Transformation
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 251, tables, 978 0 415 55965 2

Zehou, Li. 2010
The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 257, 978 0 8248 3307 7

Zhan, Mei. 2009
Other-Worldly: Making Chinese Medicine through Transnational Frames
Durham and London: Duke University Press. pp. 240, ill., 978 0 8223 4384 4

Zhang, Yingjin. 2010
Cinema, Space, and Polylocality in a Globalizing China
Honolulu: University o of Hawai'I Press. pp. 257, ill., 978 0 8248 3337 4

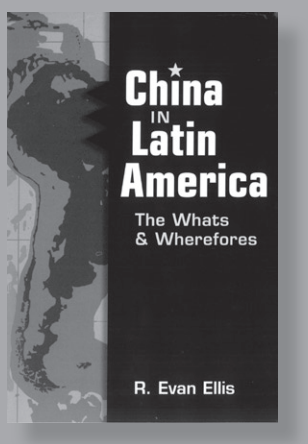
East Asia

Fu-Sheng, Renata and Franke, Wolfgang, eds. 2009
Otto Franke, 'Sagt an, ihr fremden Lande': Ostasienreisen. Tagebucher und Fotografien (1888-1901)
Nettetal: Steyler Verlag. pp. 527, ill., German, 978 3 8050 0562 3

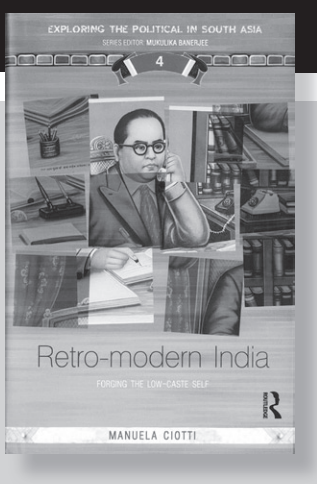
Vovin, Alexander. 2010
Korea-Japonica: A Re-Evaluation of a Common Genetic Origin
Honolulu: university of Hawai'I Press. pp. 273, 978 0 8248 3278 0

India

Chakrabarty, Bidyut and Kujur, Rajat Kumar. 2010
Maoism in India: Reincarnation of ultra-left wing extremism in the twenty-first century
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 250, maps & tables, 978 0 415 54486 3



Evan Ellis, R. 2009
China in Latin America: The Whats & Wherefores.
Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. pp. 329, 978 1 58826 650 7



Ciotti, Manuela. 2010
Retro-modern India: Forging the Low-Caste Self
London, New York and Delhi: Routledge. pp. 292. 978 0 415 56311 6

Mukherjee, Sumita. 2010
Nationalism, Education and Migrant Identities: The England-returned
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 181, 978 0 415 55117 5

Sherman, Taylor C. 2010
State Violence and Punishment in India
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 246, 978 0 415 55970 6

Sinha, Jagdish N. 2008
Science, War and Imperialism: India in the Second World War
Leiden: Brill. pp. 278, 978 90 04 16645 5

Indian Ocean Isles

Um, Nancy. 2009
The Merchant House of Mocha: Trade & Architecture in an Indian Ocean Port
Seattle and London: University of Washington Press., ill., 978 0 295 98911 2

Indonesia

Coen, J.G. Holtzappel & Martin Ramstedt, eds. 2009
Decentralization and Regional Autonomy in Indonesia: Implementation and Challenges
Singapore: ISEAS/IIAS. pp. 432, 978 981 230 820 7

Drooglever, Peter. 2009
An Act of Free Choice: Decolonization and the Right to Self-Determination in West-Papua
Oxford: One World. pp. 854, 978 1 85168 715 2

Japan

Brisset, Claire-Akiko. 2009
A la croisee du texte et de l'image: paysages cryptiques et poemes chaches (ashide) dans le Japon classique et medieval
Paris: College de France, Institut des Hautes Etudes Japonaises. pp. 548, colour ill., French, 978 2 913217 20 1

Lee, Yeounsuk. 2010
The Ideology of Kokugo: Nationalizing Language in Modern Japan
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 262, 978 0 8248 3305 3

Mauclaire, Simone. 2009
Le Nom, L'Ecrit, Le Non-Dit: Mentalites rurales et 'culture intermediaire' dans le Japon medieval
Paris: College de France, Institut des Hautes Etudes Japonaises. pp. 349, French, 978 2 913217 23 2

Reitan, Richard M. 2010
Making a Moral Society: Ethics and the State in Meiji Japan
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 229, 978 0 8248 3294 0

Korea

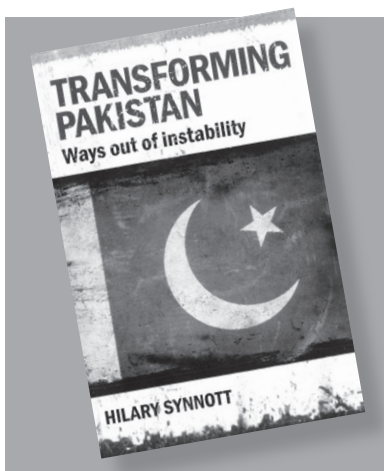
Abelmann, Nancy. 2010
The Intimate University: Korean American Students and the Problems of Segregation
Durham, NC: Duke University Press. pp. 201. 978 0 8223 4615 9

The Korean Insitute of Traditional Landscape Architecture. 2009
Korean Traditional Landscape Architecture
Seoul: Hollym. pp. 472, colour ill., 978 1 56591 252 6

Kim, Yung-Hee. transl. 2010
Questioning Minds: Short Stories by Modern Korean Women Writers
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 233, 978 0 8248 3409 8

South Asia

Banerjee, Debdas and Goldfield, Michael, eds. 2008
Labour, Globalization and the State: Workers, Women and Migrants Confront Neoliberalism
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 262, tables, 978 0 415 55890 7



Synnott, Hilary. 2009
Transforming Pakistan: Ways out of Instability
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 198, 978 0 41556 260 7

Southeast Asia

Barnett, Louise. 2010
Atrocity and American Military Justice in Southeast Asia: Trial by Army
Oxford and New York: Routledge. ill., pp. 277, 978 0 415 55640 8

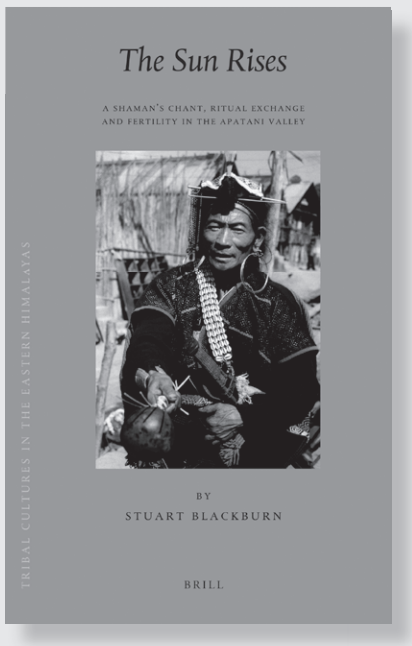
Gonzalves, Theodore S. 2010
The Day the Dancers Stayed: Performing in the Filipino/American Diaspora
Philadelphia: Temple University Press. pp. 215, 978 1 59213 729 9

McDaniel, Justin Thomas. 2008
Gathering Leaves & Lifting Words: Histories of Buddhist Monastic Education in Laos and Thailand
Seattle and London: University of Washington Press. pp. 358, ill., 978 0 295 98849 8

Tarling, Nicholas. 2010
Southeast Asia and the Great Powers
London and New York: Routledge. pp. 272. 978 0 415 55238 7

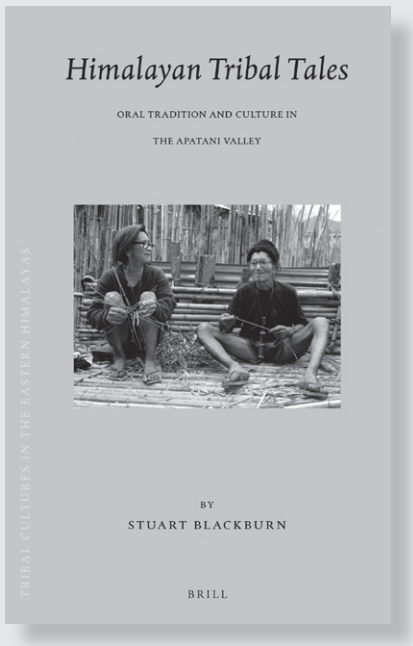
Bookmarked

Book series: Tribal Cultures in the Eastern Himalayas



Volume 3: The Sun Rises
A Shaman's Chant, Ritual Exchange and Fertility in the Apatani Valley
Stuart Blackburn
Brill. March 2010
ISBN 978 90 04 17578 5

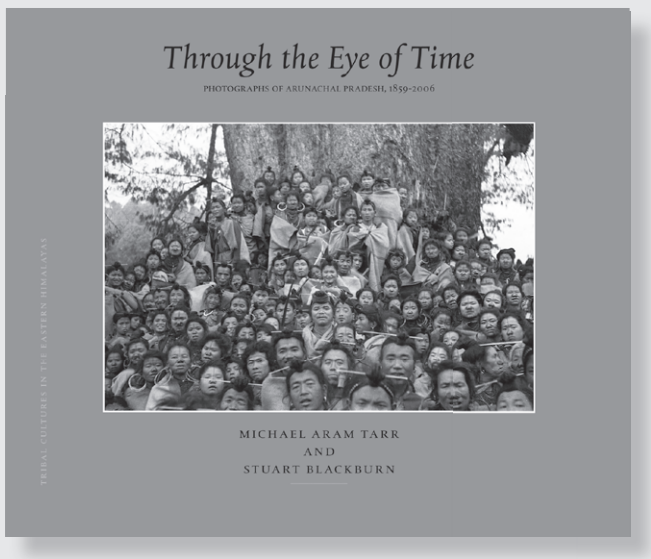
At the centre of this study is a shaman's chant performed during a three-week long feast in the eastern Himalayas. The book includes a translation of this 12-hour text chanted in Apatani, a Tibeto-Burman language, and a description of the events that surround it, especially ritual exchanges with ceremonial friends, in which fertility is celebrated. The shaman's social role, performance and ritual language are also described. Although complex feasts, like this one among Apatanis, have been described in northeast India and upland Southeast Asia for more than a century, this is the first book to present a full translation of the accompanying chant and to integrate it into the interpretation of the social significance of the total event.



Volume 2: Himalayan Tribal Tales
Oral Tradition and Culture in the Apatani Valley
Stuart Blackburn
Brill. 2008.
ISBN 978 90 04 17133 6

This study of an oral tradition in northeast India is the first of its kind in this part of the eastern Himalayas. A comparative analysis reveals parallel stories in an area stretching from central Arunachal Pradesh into upland Southeast Asia and southwest China.

The subject of the volume, the Apatanis, are a small population of Tibeto-Burman speakers who live in a narrow valley halfway between Tibet and Assam. Their origin myths, migration legends, oral histories, trickster tales and ritual chants, as well as performance contexts and genre system, reveal key cultural ideas and social practices, shifts in tribal identity and the reinvention of religion.

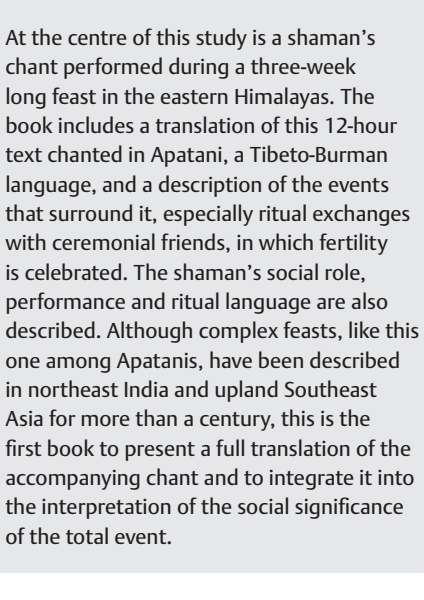


Volume 1: Through the Eye of Time
Photographs of Arunachal Pradesh, 1859-2006
Michael Aram Tarr and Stuary Blackburn
Brill. 2008.
ISBN 978 90 04 16522 9

This is the first visual history of Arunachal Pradesh, a state in northeast India bordering on Tibet/China, Burma and Bhutan. Based on archival and field research, it illustrates a century and a half of cultural change in this culturally diverse and little-known region of the Himalayas.

More than 200 photographs, half archival and half contemporary, reveal that tribal cultures in this remote mountainous region have been continually reacting to external forces and initiating internal innovations.

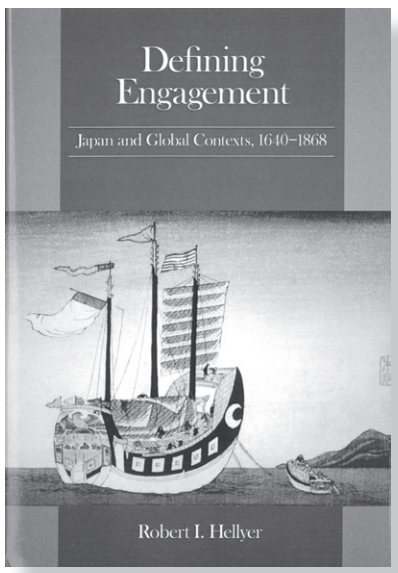
The Introduction places the archival photographs in their wider context, emphasising the complexity of the colonial encounter and uncovering personal stories behind many of the images. The sequence of photographs, juxtaposing the historical and the contemporary, shows us the uneven and sometimes confusing mixture of past and present that is emerging in Arunachal Pradesh.



Globalsalafism: Islam's New Religious Movement
Edited by Roel Meijer
Hurst and Company. 2009
ISBN 978 1 85065 979 2

'Salafism' and 'Jihadi-Salafism' have become significant doctrinal trends in contemporary Islamic thought, yet the West has largely failed to offer a sophisticated and discerning definition of these movements. The contributors to Global Salafism carefully outline not only the differences in the Salafi schools but the borader currents of Islamic thought that constitute this trend as well. They examine both the regional manifestations of the phenomenon and its shared, essential doctrines. Their analyses highlight Salafism's inherent ambivalence and complexities – the 'out-antiquing the antique' that has brought Islamic thought into the modern age while maintaining its relationship to an older, purer authenticity. Emphasising the subtle tensions between local and global aspirations within the 'Salafi method', Global Salafism investigates the movement like no other study current available.

Defining Engagement: Japan and Global Contexts, 1640-1868
Robert I. Hellyer
Harvard University Asia Center. 2009
ISBN 978 0 674 03577 5



Presenting fresh insights on the internal dynamics and global contexts that shaped foreign relations in early modern Japan, Robert I. Hellyer challenges the still largely accepted wisdom that the Tokugawa shogunate, guided by an ideology of seclusion, stifled intercourse with the outside world, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Examining diplomacy, coastal defence, and foreign trade, this study demonstrates that while the shogunate created the broader framework, foreign relations were actually implemented through cooperative but sometimes competitive relationships with the Satsuma and Tsushima domains, which themselves held largely independent ties with neighbouring states. Successive Tokugawa leaders also proactively revised foreign trade, especially with China, taking steps that mirrored the commercial stances of other Asian and Western states.

In the 19th century, the system of foreign relations continued to evolve, with Satsuma gaining a greater share of foreigh trade and Tsushima assuming more responsibility in coastal defence. The two domains subsequently played key roles in Japan's transition from using early modern East Asian practices of foreign relations to the national adoption of international relations, especially the recasting of foreign trade and the centralisation of foreign relations authority, in the years surrounding the Meiji Restoration of 1868. As before, this realignment of Japan's engagement with the outside world was defined by multiple actors and agendas and by interactions with fluid global contexts.

If you would like to review one of the titles featured in New For Review or Bookmarked, email: iiasnews@iias.nl

The rise of China: setting the alarm bells ringing?

Beijing's rising power and foreign policy still arouses much suspicion and mistrust. While *Rise of China* argues that there is a great risk of destabilisation and confrontation, the regional perspectives in the book offer more ground for optimism.

Bram Buijs

Left:
A Chinese military honour guard.

Right:
A child at a kindergarten in the farming village of Buyan, China shows the peace sign during a performance.

Hsiao, Hsin-Huang Michael and Cheng-yi Lin, eds. 2009.
Rise of China. Beijing's Strategies and Implications for the Asia-Pacific.
London and New York: Routledge. 312 pages.
ISBN 13 978 0 415 46882 4.

THIS MULTI-AUTHOR VOLUME provides an all-round analysis of China's rise, debating economic, political, social and military aspects. As the subtitle suggests, a particular focus is put on the regional impact and consequent responses that China's rise is causing. This important part occupies more than one-third of the book and covers the perspectives of the US, Japan, India, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

A certain alarmist flavour pervades the book, as it gives a rather critical and distrustful view on China's rise. Elements of the 'China collapse' and 'China threat' schools of thought resurface in various chapters. On the one hand, the actual success of China's development is being placed in doubt, with an emphasis on the issues of internal social unrest and the economic problems confronting China. On the other hand, China's international posture is being critically analysed. A large part of the discussion focuses on whether one can substantiate China's claim that it is pursuing a strategy of 'peaceful development'. The conclusion of the first introductory chapter gives a quite clear verdict and mentions that '…no one can really believe that China's rise could be only peaceful' and holds that 'it is unrealistic to expect China to emerge as a benign, pluralistic, and democratic state in the near future' (pp. 17-18).

China's rise as a prelude to a new Cold War

The first chapters deal with the discourse on China's rise and Chinese foreign policy. Masako Ikegami takes a quite outspoken position, arguing that 'China's grand strategy to mitigate and challenge the U.S. hegemony could eventually lead to a new Cold War'. She discards China's proclaimed 'peaceful rise' strategy as 'a mere rhetoric or a strategic propaganda' (p. 22), pointing out the destabilising nature of China's rapid military build-up and its alliances to rogue states that are upholding authoritarian regimes, 'hindering the prospect of democratization'. In a section entitled 'PLA's determined preparation for attacking Taiwan', Ikegami suggests that the PLA's quantitative and qualitative military build-up 'has reached the point to enforce unification on Taiwan' (p. 31). China's 'charm offensive' activities, such as the promotion of Confucius Institutes, are met with suspicion and are even likened to the cultural diplomacy practices of fascist Italy under Mussolini. In the following chapter, Szu-Chien Hsu discusses China's 'party-state developmental syndicate' and stresses the importance of the perception of the nature of China's rise, referring to Kenneth Waltz's *second image*. Hsu takes a more detached approach, but also concludes that 'as a developmental model, the path of China's rise has strong negative implications for international peace and stability' (p. 77).

It is quite interesting to compare these rather negative qualifications to other perceptions offered in the book. An excellent treatment of Chinese regional policy is given by Rosemary Foot. She carefully analyses the arguments that China has put forward to support its claim that its rise is going to be peaceful and not disruptive, for example by insisting that 'because of the timing of its rise to power – in a world that is now globalized and regionalized – its rise will not be like that of Japan and Germany in 1930s.' (p. 136). While not dismissing the many fault lines in the regional relations, she notes that major objectives for the Chinese leadership for the coming 10 to 20 years are to reach an 'all-round affluent society' and to keep a focus on domestic development while avoiding regional and global tensions or conflict. The proposition that Chinese regional behaviour is, in general, quite conflict-averse is corroborated by the study of China-ASEAN relations by Carolina G. Hernandez. China's increasingly active engagement with ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) are interpreted as positive developments, underlining that China has definitely cast aside its distrust of regional associations and is instead functioning more and more like a status-quo power. Breakthroughs have been achieved concerning the maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea by the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and a trilateral agreement between China, the Philippines and Vietnam for the joint prospecting for oil and gas in the area. As Srikanth Kondapalli mentions in his chapter devoted to the topic: 'Overall, China has taken a modest, if advantageous, position on the territorial disputes' (p. 159). Another turning point in China-ASEAN relations has been the financial support offered to the region by China in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-1998. The recent proposal by China to form a China-ASEAN Free Trade Area has been a further step that created much goodwill. However, Chien-peng Chung argues that China's involvement in and influencing of regional fora such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the ARF can also serve as evidence that 'China still feels that it might have to face a prospective policy of containment by the United States' (p. 181). Concerning China-India ties, the lingering border dispute is hampering true progress and the alleged Chinese assistance to Pakistan's nuclear programme has been seen as a 'clear message being sent to India of near perpetual hostility' (p. 241). This leads Vikram Sood to accuse the Chinese leadership of a 'long history of deceit and duplicity' and reflect upon China's rise that 'the potential for future conflict is inbuilt in this massive military and economic growth' (p. 237).

Inevitable conflict, but with whom?

Yet apart from the improving Chinese relationship with Southeast Asia, some ground for optimism is derived from other developments. Hong Kong citizens' approval ratings of the central government in Beijing did increase in recent years after they had hit a low point in 2004. China-Taiwan relations entered a more stable phase after the turbulent 1990s. Quite remarkably, given the analysis of China's rise at the start of the book, the most optimistic contribution comes from Bruce Cumings who analyses the American perspective on China's rise. In an eloquent and rather kaleidoscopic chapter Cumings argues that, in the end, an American business coalition is driving engagement with China, which already for a quarter century is based on 'peaceful cooperation and competition' (p. 192). 'Underpinning this business/politics coalition is a relatively simple fact, namely, that China does not even remotely threaten the United States technologically, commercially, financially, or militarily.' Concerning the military build-up vis-à-vis Taiwan, Cumings maintains that 'the seemingly absurd truth is that China's capabilities to invade and take over Taiwan are not relatively much better today than they were in June 1950' and assures that 'Americans should rest easily about Chinese military capabilities' (p. 206).

What is most striking in the analysis of China's rise in the light of recent events is the discussion on the domestic challenges, especially those of economic nature. The chapter on increasing social unrest and protest groups by Chih-Jou Jay Chen gives a thorough treatment on the subject, yet is not able to confirm that social unrest is actually starting to pose a significant threat to the Chinese regime. Challenges to China's continuing economic development are discussed by To-Far Wang. Wang's chapter seems slightly imbalanced as it does not really take into account Chinese efforts to change the structure of the economy to the manufacturing of higher value-added products and to strengthen the capacity for innovation, research and development. Instead, his treatment of the subject treads mostly on familiar problems such as the untrustworthiness of GDP and unemployment statistics, overheated investment, trade friction and corruption. Chang Ching-his from the National Taiwan University is quoted as stating (in 2006) that 'China's economy is already on the verge of a breakdown, and a hard landing is bound to happen at any moment.' (p. 188) Although Wang does not go as far as to say that an economic collapse is imminent, he nonetheless advices the Taiwanese government to take precautions against the negative impacts of a downturn of the Chinese economy.

A certain alarmist flavour pervades the book, as it gives a rather critical and distrustful view on China's rise. Elements of the 'China collapse' and 'China threat' schools of thought resurface in various chapters.

The interesting part, however, is that some of the issues mentioned have (re)gained a new poignancy in the unfolding of the financial and economic crisis that started in 2008. Wang mentions the unnatural dominant position of the 'Big Four' state-owned banks in China in controlling the country's banking assets and their lingering problems regarding non-performing loans. This issue has returned back to the top of the agenda now the government has been pressuring the state-owned banks to ease their lending conditions as part of the national economic stimulus package. Wang also presciently remarks that 'China's overdependence on the international market and unrestrained manufacturing sector put it at risk of falling to an international recession, meaning that once the international market slows, China's economy is bound to plummet' (p. 119). Another striking observation is made by Yoshifumi Nakai discussing the attitudes of the Japanese Ministry of Finance (MOF) towards China. China is considered a high-risk market since 'the Chinese bubble economy, the overheating of the real estate market, and the oversupply of buildings in the major cities, will collapse sooner or later. […] the accumulation of bad loans will cripple the national banks and the securities market. The MOF is familiar with all these troubles in Japan, and finds no reason why these troubles will not trouble China soon.' (p. 220)

Overall evaluation

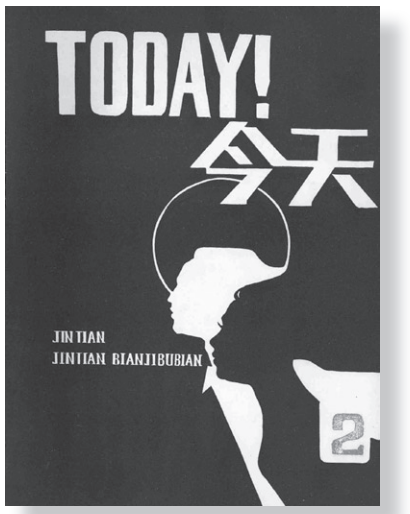
The *Rise of China* volume is edited by Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao and Cheng-yi Lin, both associated with the Academia Sinica in Tapei, Taiwan. In total more than half of the contributing authors come from academic institutes either in Taiwan or Hong Kong. Although a fully integrated, comprehensive and shared vision can not be expected from a volume written by 17 authors, the striking contrast in perspectives between some chapters, as apparent in the case of Cumings versus Ikegami, hampers the book in making a strong case for an overarching view on China's rise and should be considered a serious flaw. A second noteworthy observation is that both Korea's are lacking a specific treatment and get sparse attention in the whole book, despite the regional focus and despite their importance for the regional political balance.

All in all, the book falls in a category in which competition is particularly fierce. *China's Rise and the Balance of Influence in Asia* edited by William Keller and Thomas Rawski received a quite positive review (in *IIAS Newsletter* No. 50, Spring 2009). One of the hallmark publications in this field, which shares a similar structure to *Rise of China*, is David Shambaugh's *Power Shift. China and Asia's New Dynamics* (University of California Press, 2005). In terms of research and insights offered, *Rise of China* cannot match the, admittedly high, standard set by Shambaugh. Nonetheless, the volume consists of a good number of very informative chapters, and would be a valuable addition to the library of any researcher or layman interested in this field.

Bram Buijs
Clingendael International Energy Programme, The Hague
bbuijs@clingendael.nl

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

The sound of modern Chinese poetry



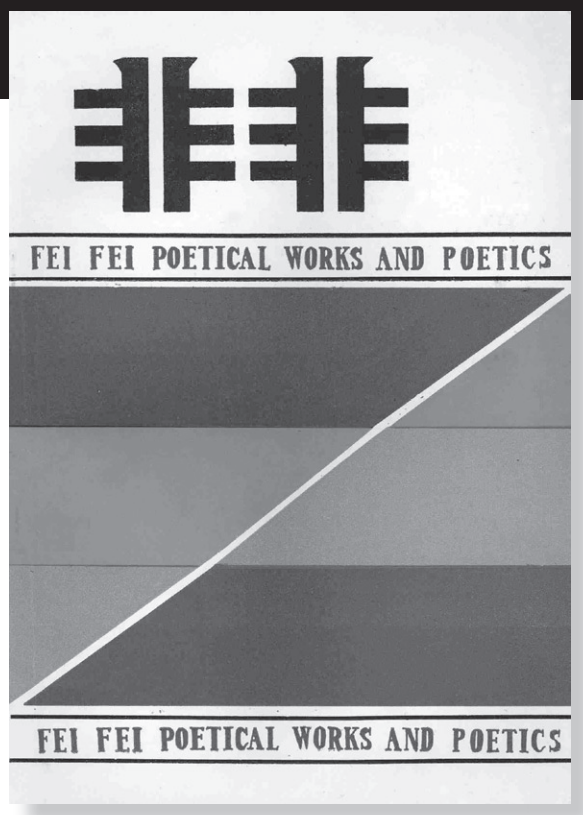
Right:
Cover of unofficial Chinese poetry journal *Today* # 2, from 1979.

Above:
The cover of the 2001 # 17-18 double issue of *Poetry Reference* (诗参考).

'Poets,' writes Zang Kejia in the late 1930s, *'Open your throats, / Aside from spirited singing of songs of war, / Your poetry shall be dumb silence.'* Zang's exhortation of his fellow poets in war-torn China highlights a perennial issue in discourse on cultural expression: literature and art are functional categories, not ontological ones, and many of their countless definitions are fundamentally normative and value-judgemental in nature. For his part, Zang needs but four brief lines to disqualify any and all poetry that is not 'sung' –meaning, recitable, and actually recited –and doesn't aspire to propel its audience into action. Conversely, poets and readers of other persuasions might equally dismiss Zang's poetry as mere political propaganda, and hence unworthy of the genre.

Maghiel van Crevel

Left:
Cover image from China Poetry Forum, 20 April 1938.



Right:
The cover of the 1986 opening issue of the unofficial Chinese poetry journal *Not-Not*.

Crespi, John. 2009.
Voices in Revolution: Poetry and the Auditory Imagination in Modern China.
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. x + 229 pages.
ISBN 978 0 8248 3365 7.

In *Voices in Revolution: Poetry and the Auditory Imagination in Modern China*, John Crespi shows that in China, for most of the 20th century the issue of recitation and that of goal-oriented, paraphraseable content were inseparable. Discussions of recitation were almost invariably linked up with the question of what the poetry in question wanted to accomplish, not just for its own sake, but in society at large. More broadly, especially in the socio-historical context of modern Chinese literature, Crespi's investigation of the acoustics of poetry provides a framework for revisiting the distinction of aesthetic and communicative functions of literature and art, specifically of poetry – and hence, of poetry's very definition and that definition's local determinants.

Crespi demonstrates that in modern China, minimally up until the end of the Mao era, the trope of *voice* and the actual *voicing* of poetry generated a turbulent discursive space for profoundly politicised literary activism. His study is thoroughly researched, as regards both the source material and the disciplinary theory he brings to bear on it (Charles Bernstein, Paul Zumthor and others). Crespi duly notes that studying sound is difficult in light of its ephemeral nature; and that even recordings – which hardly exist for his data to begin with – will not reproduce the moment of the poem's original performance in full. Methodologically, then, his monograph is a study of the poetic voice inasmuch as the latter appears as poetic subject matter, and inasmuch as it can be *imagined* to sound in recitation, on the basis of the *written* texts that are privileged in most scholarship on literature. In addition, he draws heavily on a wide variety of discourse on the poetic voice and recitation, from polemical theorising by poets and critics in the 1920s and 1930s to the meticulous instructions offered by a 1975 recitation primer.

Voices in Revolution is analytically strong and well written – if occasionally a little dense, with a proclivity toward accumulating abstractions. It is exemplary in its economy of words. Just under two hundred pages long, it lays no claim to complete coverage of poetry recitation in modern China. Instead, it offers an extended, coherent essay that leaves the reader with much captivating literary-historical fact, and a stimulating perspective on an area of cultural production that has remained under-researched to date. As such, it is an important contribution to the field of modern Chinese literature and culture at large.

Cultural modernisers: the communicative vs. the aesthetic
In his opening chapter, Crespi focuses on the transition from empire to nation, and the concomitant shift in the relative weight of written and spoken language in elite cultural discourse. For empire, he turns to the Great Preface to the ancient *Book of Songs*, and to the long-dominant notion of the script and canonical texts in the classical, written language as constituting and preserving the institutions of empire, and indeed of Chineseness. For the nation, he draws on Lu Xun's 1908 essay 'The Power of Mara Poetry.' Here, the poet's voice articulates what Crespi calls a 'national interiority' which locates the origins of poetry in 'a spontaneous, emotional, sincere, expressive human interior' (p.25) and is identified with both the modern individual and the modern nation.

Crespi duly notes that studying sound is difficult in light of its ephemeral nature; and that even recordings – which hardly exist for his data to begin with – will not reproduce the moment of the poem's original performance in full.

He goes on to discuss late 1910s and early 1920s essays by Qian Xuantong, Hu Shi, Zhou Zuoren, and Yu Pingbo, which help relocate linguistic authority in the popular national subject. Crucially, the analysis shows how the thinking of these internationally-minded cultural modernisers, which was clearly influenced by the global trend of 19th century Romantic-nationalist thought, remained compatible with Chinese-traditional poetics, in its ultimately political perspective on language and literature.

What was the effect of these new imaginations of the poetic voice on poetry and poetical debate? In chapter 2, Crespi first discusses what he calls Hu Shi's contradiction. While Hu hoped that the New Poetry would be outward-looking, reflect on the national condition, and present societally grounded emotion, for the means to this end he referred to a 'natural' prosody which was inward-looking inasmuch as it posited a measure of self-orientation of the literary text. In the period between the literary revolution of the late 1910s and the beginning of the War of Resistance against Japan in 1937, this manifestation of the tense interaction of social engagement and poetic autonomy – which is ubiquitous in Chinese literary history – leads to a conceptualisation of poetry as an emotion-driven, primarily communicative discourse by 'populist' authors such as Chen Nanshi, Jiang Guangci, and Ren Jun; and as a primarily aesthetic enterprise by 'academic' authors like Xu Zhimo, Wen Yiduo, Zhu Guangqian and many others of the Beijing (Beiping) 'salon recitationists.' The latter generally theorised less but practiced more than their counterparts, so to speak, even if this remained an incrowd affair. Shen Congwen noted that the populists' professed aim of effective communication would in fact be advanced by some attention to aesthetics. But his deconstruction of an unhelpful binary opposition was to have little chance in wartime, when literary development was shaped by the urgently felt need for propaganda more than anything else.

Wartime poetry as propaganda
The next three chapters of *Voices in Revolution* examine wartime poetry recitation from complementary angles. In chapter 3, Crespi explains how the notion of 'recitation poetry' (*langsong shi*) that was emerging as a discrete literary category was fiercely contested, with Liu Qing sarcastically comparing it to 'performable drama' and 'edible food.' Crespi first considers a 1939 essay by Liang Zongdai, who harboured grave doubts about this poetry's potential for eliciting the 'mass effect and collective response' (p.71) that were its main goals, and stressed that these very goals would compromise the quality of a 'musicalized prose' (p.72) – as opposed to straightforward colloquial speech – that should be the hallmark of modern poetry in China and elsewhere. By contrast, proponents of recitation poetry energetically followed in the footsteps of populist authors of the preceding years, pretty much drowning out the aestheticist argument. They took their style to extremes, leading to poems such as the one by Zang Kejia that opens this review, with Gao Lan as one of the most prolific and least subtle among them. The imagination of the poetic voice in these texts is hardly very imaginative any longer: this is little more than bellowed-out pamphleteering – with, remarkably, much room for recitation, and the sounding of the poetic voice, as *subject matter* of the poetry itself. Yet, Crespi manages to reconstruct the recitation discourse in its historical context in such a way as to make one reconsider this dismissive assessment immediately upon formulating it, and to remind one of the need to take into account the aforementioned local determinants of any poetics. After an extensive discussion of wartime theorisation of recitation poetry by Xu Chi and Hong Shen, he makes the interesting observation that later war poems feature pessimistic images of the loss of voice and of the listening audience.

Much archival research must have gone into Crespi's reconstruction, in chapter 4, of the actual occurrence of poetry recitation during the war, in the areas of Guangzhou, Wuhan, Yan'an, Shanghai, Chongqing, Chengdu, and Guilin. Poets (including Pu Feng, Huang Ningying, Mu Mutian, Ke Zhongping, Jiang Xijin [aka Xi Jin], Guang Weiran, and of course Zang Kejia and Gao Lan), critics and organisers invested huge amounts of energy and agency in what Crespi calls the consolidation of recitation poetry as a genre. In terms of recognition and effectiveness in contributing to the war effort, however, the results were by and large disappointing: 'wartime poetry recitation was often an alienating rather than unifying or uplifting experience' (p.103). Highfalutin ideals and theories eroded against the exigencies of life in wartime – and, notably, against insufficient technique on the part of not a few of the reciters, many of whom let the efficacy of their performance suffer from emotional overkill. Also, for all the ideological desire of its advocates to connect with the common folk, the recitation of New Poetry was on the whole still something done by and for intellectuals. Yet, despite its many failures, wartime recitation efforts crucially helped provide a launchpad for Communist-revolutionary poetry recitation in the Mao era. The discussion of wartime recitation ends with a brief sketch of Zhu Ziqing's late 1940s 'situational poetics' (chapter 5), which stresses the inseparability of the performed poem from the moment of performance. One phenomenon from the war years one might have wanted to learn more about in chapters 3 to 5 is that of 'street poetry' or 'street corner poetry' (*jietou shi*), which Crespi mentions only in passing.

The Mao era and beyond
Chapters 6 and 7 focus on Mao-era and post-Mao poetry recitation, respectively, and tell two fascinating tales. In the early 1960s poetry recitation finally makes it big, in live performance, related events such as competitions and children's rallies, and radio broadcasts. Crespi's central point in chapter 6 is that at this point, the genre's success inevitably draws attention to an inherent, highly problematic tension between the lyric and the dramatic: between what should be a genuine feeling of heartfelt revolutionary passion on the one hand, and the theatricality of tightly choreographed recitation, on the other. He argues that this tension undermines the notion of a totalised, monolithic structure of cultural production and reception, and that it helps qualify what remains of images of the Mao era as culturally barren and uninteresting. The powerful material he uses to illustrate the hybridity of what he calls 'calculated passions' (p.142) includes memoirs of professional actors tasked with the recitation of texts taken from the Socialist-Realist canon – such as He Jingzhi's 'Song of Lei Feng' – and a 1975 primer of poetry recitation that exemplifies the uneasy combination of an appeal to emotional authenticity with painstakingly detailed technical instructions.

The final leg of the journey takes the reader into the 21st century. Chapter 7 presents a discontinuity in Crespi's narrative: the politicisation of poetry that runs through China's cultural history from antiquity all the way to the Mao era is no longer prominently present. True enough, state-sponsored production of poetry along more or less Maoist-poetical lines continues, but as only one of many threads in a textscape that has become richly diversified, and in many ways depoliticised. At the same time, poetry recitation as part of (semi-)public life continues in present-day China, and is in fact experiencing something of a renaissance; in that sense, this case study is very much in place. Crespi begins by contrasting two recitals from 2005, one 'unofficial' or 'independent' and one 'official.' He proceeds to question any sharp ideological dividing lines between them, since they both come under the larger, overarching category of the 'event' (*huodong*), which has succeeded the Maoist 'mass campaign' (*yundong*) as an organising principle in (semi-)public life. Incidentally, in itself, their shared status as 'events' doesn't detract from considerable differences between today's unofficial and official Chinese poetry scenes, even as the boundaries are becoming blurred. Crespi submits that poetry recitation as 'event,' however unofficial or 'independent,' is very much part of the 'culture economy' (*wenhua jingji*, p.170ff), and thus of a bigger, largely state-engineered socio-historical picture. His description of his realisation of this point during his fieldwork, and the ensuing reflection on his work as a researcher, are a fitting conclusion to his book.

In closing
While Crespi is right in saying that the sounding voice in poetry deserves more attention, as most scholarship privileges the written text and what is perceived as paraphraseable content, his assertion of the auditory imagination as a new perpective is a little repetitive and sometimes over-insistent. Similarly, his claim that attention to sound in recitation by different generations of poets and theorisers entailed a *de*-privileging of the visual is somewhat forced, and not invariably convincing. Also, there is the occasional risk of confusing two different dimensions in which the distinction if not the opposition of the auditory and the visual plays out: (1) as aspects of the poem's performance, where the auditory is foregrounded by reading out loud, and the visual by reading silently, and (2) as aspects of the poem's subject matter, especially its imagery. Finally, while Crespi's methodological negotiation of the difficulties of studying sound is fully legitimate, one would have hoped to hear – quite literally – more of recitation as it has flourished in recent years. Let's hope the author will continue to do fieldwork, and have a chance to make some of his recordings available online.

But these are minor criticisms of a major study. *Voices in Revolution* is a carefully crafted, solid, sophisticated and insightful book. In its attention to the auditory, and to some of the most politicised moments in modern Chinese poetry, it is a sterling contribution to the balance of various perspectives and approaches that scholarship requires.

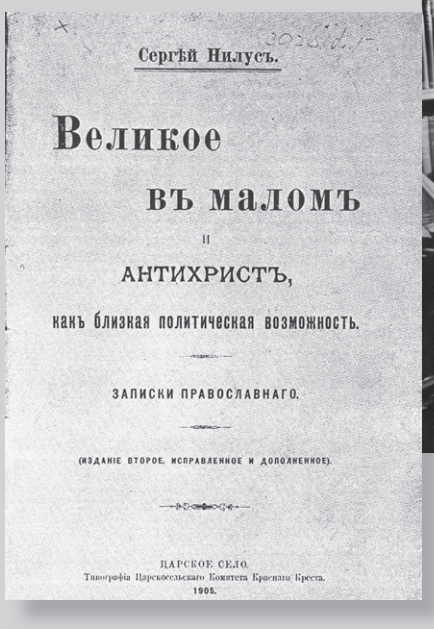
Maghiel van Crevel
Leiden University
m.van.crevel@hum.leidenuniv.nl

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

The Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan

The 1920s were a crucial period in modern Japanese history, when new and revolutionary western ideologies, like communism and fascism, entered Japan and found adherents there. Anti-Semitism was one of those western ideologies to arrive at that time. It offered a simplistic explanation of the perplexing turmoil of the world. It appealed to conservatives alarmed about communist subversion and to those attracted by conspiracy theories. Few publications have dealt with the strange phenomenon of Japanese anti-Semitism.[1] This thin volume is an important addition to that literature.

Ben-Ami Shillony


Сергѣй Нилусъ.

Великое

въ маломъ

и

антихристъ,

какъ близкая политическая возможность.

ЗАПИСКИ ПРАВОСЛАВНАГО.

(ИЗДАНІЕ ВТОРОЕ, ИСПРАВЛЕННОЕ И ДОПОЛНЕННОЕ).

ЦАРСКОЕ СЕЛО.
Типографія Царскосельскаго Комитета Краснаго Креста.
1905.

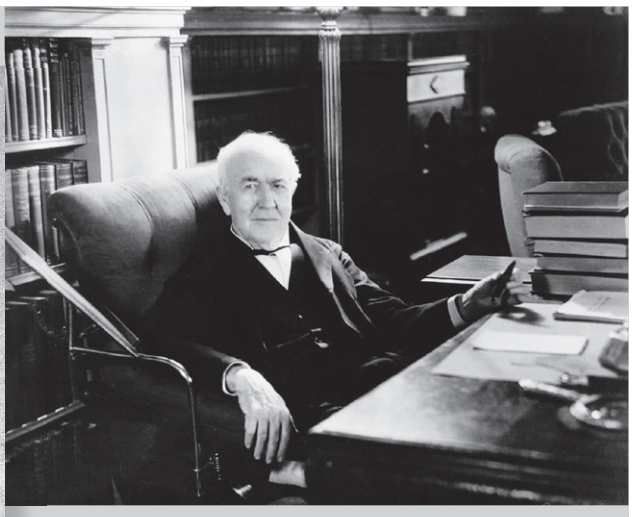
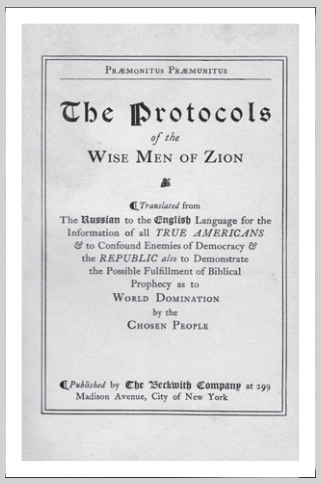


Fig. 1

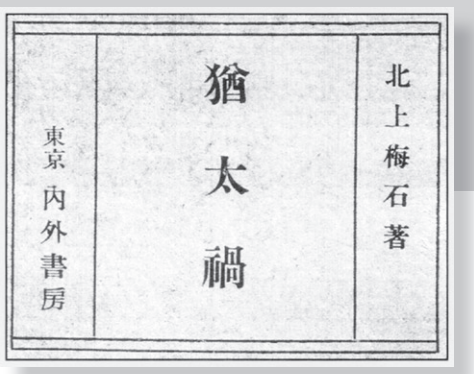

PRÆMONITUS PRÆMUNITUS

The Protocols
of the
WISE MEN OF ZION

Translated from
The **Russian** to the **English** Language for the
Information of all *TRUE AMERICANS*
& to Confound Enemies of Democracy &
the *REPUBLIC also* to Demonstrate
the Possible Fulfillment of Biblical
Prophecy as to
WORLD DOMINATION
by the
CHOSEN PEOPLE

Published by **The Beckwith Company** at 299
Madison Avenue, City of New York

Fig. 2


北上梅石著

猶太禍

東京 内外書房

Fig. 3

Thomas Edison (above right) and Henry Ford (above left) were outspoken anti-Semites, promoting the *Protocols* and blaming the Jews for the evils of the world.

Fig. 1: A reproduction of the 1905 Russian edition by Serge Nilus, appearing in *Praemonitus Praemunitus* (1920).

Fig. 2: *Praemonitus Praemunitus* – The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion. The Beckwith Company (1920).

Fig. 3: A reproduction of the cover of *Yudayaka* (The Jewish Peril), the title on the original front cover of Kitagami Baiseki's book published in 1923 in Japan.

Kovalio, Jacob. 2009.
The Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan. Yudayaka/Jewish Peril Propaganda and Debates in the 1920s.
New York: Peter Lang. xviii+114 pages.
ISBN 978 1 4331 0609 5

JAPANESE ANTI-SEMITISM lacked the religious and social roots which fed the animosity toward Jews in the west. It remained an intellectual fad that did not produce the physical attacks and other measures against Jews, which characterized western anti-Semitism. Moreover, Japanese anti-Semitic writers sometimes expressed admiration for the rich and clever Jews, who allegedly control the world, and advocated befriending them and learning from them.

In search of scapegoats

The Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan. Yudayaka/Jewish Peril Propaganda and Debates in the 1920s focuses on the appearance and acceptance of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in Japan in the decade broadly known as Taishō Democracy. As Kovalio points out, the *Protocols* were a forged document, concocted by the Paris branch of the tzarist secret police (*Okhrana*) at the beginning of the 20th century. The aim of the forgery was to deflect popular Russian discontent from the government toward the Jewish conspiracy to subvert the state. The document carried the minutes of an alleged conference of world Jewish leaders, in which they worked out their grand strategy to control the world. The purported author of the document was Sergey Nilus, a Russian occultist and a former anarchist who reverted to Russian-Orthodox Christianity. The *Protocols* were translated into many languages and gained considerable notoriety in many countries in the years following the First World War and the Russian Revolution. They provided an easy explanation to millions of bewildered people, looking for scapegoats to exorcize their miseries. The enigmatic, rich and influential Jews presented a perfect scapegoat. Even in the US, which had not been ravaged by war and revolution, the *Protocols* gained a wide audience. As Kovalio shows, prominent American figures, such as Henry Ford and Thomas Edison, were outspoken anti-Semites, promoting the *Protocols* and blaming the Jews for the evils of the world.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion were introduced into Japan by Japanese army officers who had participated in the Siberian Expedition of 1918-1922, helping the fiercly anti-Semitic White Russian troops who blamed the Jews for the Russian Revolution. As Kovalio shows, in the Japan of the 1920s, as in the west at that time, anti-Semitic ideas were voiced by respectable people and appeared in reputable journals. In 1921, the liberal monthly magazine *Chūō Kōron* welcomed the return of Crown Prince Hirohito from his European tour with the words: 'We are elated to welcome back His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince, confident now that our serious fears that He might be hurt by violent Koreans or Jewish plots did not materialize' (p. 2). The first publicised Japanese edition of the *Protocols* appeared in the March 1920 issue of the magazine *Shinrei*, the organ of the religious sect Ōmoto-kyō. In 1924, the Buddhist nationalist leader Tanaka Chigaku ran for the Diet's Lower House on an anti-Semitic platform. In the anti-Semitic literature, based on the *Protocols*, the Jews and the Freemasons were accused together of being part of the same international conspiracy.

Forgery and fantasy

Yet, as Kovalio shows, not all Japanese intellectuals subscribed to anti-Semitic ideas, and there were those who criticized the Jewish-conspiracy theory. Professor Yoshino Sakuzō of Tokyo Imperial University, the leading liberal thinker of the 1920s, attacked the anti-Semitic writings of this time. In essays in *Chūō Kōron* in 1921, he dismissed the *Protocols* as an absurd fabrication unworthy of Japanese intellectuals. Himself a Christian and a Freemason, Yoshino ridiculed the identification of the Jews with the Freemasons, showing that until the late 19th century, Jews were not admitted to the Masonic Order. Another liberal Christian scholar from Tokyo Imperial University, Yanaihara Tadao, rejected the childish accusations of the Jews, pointing out that only a few of the world's capitalists were Jews and only a few of the Jews were capitalists. Yanaihara dismissed the accusation that Zionism was a Jewish tool to control the world, and expressed support for the Jewish return to Palestine. Other critics of anti-Semitism included Uchimura Kanzō and Hasegawa Nyozekan. Kovalio translates a roundtable symposium on 'The Jewish Question,' which appeared in *Heibon* magazine in 1929. In that symposium, the participants praised the Jewish financier Jacob Schiff who had extended help to Japan during the Russo-Japanese War. The conclusion of the symposium was that the *Protocols* were a forgery, Zionism did not aim to subvert the world, and the Jewish conspiracy was sheer fantasy (pp. 50-57).

In the last chapter of his book, Kovalio discusses current Japanese anti-Semitic literature. He claims that in postwar Japan, the Jewish-conspiracy theory has been replaced by an Israeli-conspiracy theory. He regards Professor Itagaki Yūzō of Tokyo University as the leading exponent of this leftist-Islamic form of anti-Semitism. He laments that in today's Japan no brave intellectuals, like Yoshino Sakuzō and Yanaihara Tadao, have come out to challenge the Israel-conspiracy theories.

However, Kovalio seems to overstate his case, when he claims that the demonised 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, Shiōden Nobutaka, Itagaki Yūzō, Anis Mansour, Mahathir bin-Mohamad, Edward Said, Noam Chomsky, Uno Masami and others (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.*

Eccentricities

Kovalio uses both the terms 'Judeophobia' and 'anti-Semitism', but often prefers the lesser known Japanese phrase 'Yudaya-ka' (Jewish peril). As a result, anti-Semitic writers become 'Yudaya-ka ronja' (Jewish peril advocates). He also uses the self-made acronym CSA (Conspiracy and Scapegoating Anti-Semitism). Such unfamiliar terms make 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 'shta.' One also wonders why Karl Marx is constantly referred to as Karl Heinrich Marx, which is factually correct but not the standard form. These small eccentricities do not detract from the value of the book as an important source for the study of prewar Japanese anti-Semitism.

Ben-Ami Shillony
Professor Emeritus
Department of East Asian Studies
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
shillony@mscc.huji.ac.il

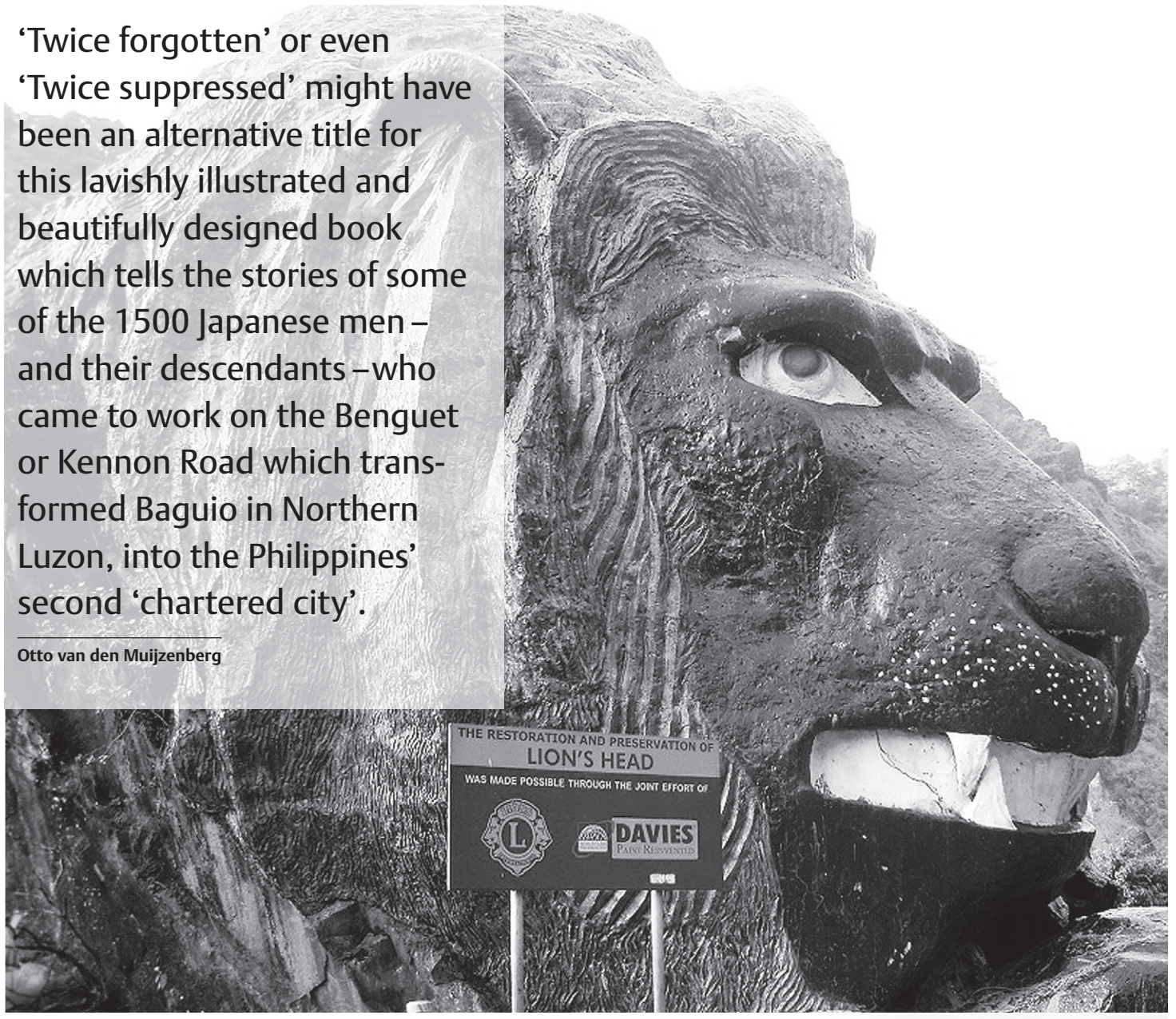
Note

1. See for instance: Goodman, David G. and Masanori Miyazawa. 1995. *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype.* New York: The Free Press; Rotem Kowner, 2006. 'On Symbolic Antisemitism: Motives for the Success of the Protocols in Japan and its Consequences,' *Posen Papers in Contemporary Antisemitism,* No. 3. Jerusalem: The Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; and my own, Shillony, Ben-Ami. 1991. *The Jews and the Japanese: The Successful Outsiders.* Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle.

‘Twice forgotten’; ‘twice suppressed’

‘Twice forgotten’ or even ‘Twice suppressed’ might have been an alternative title for this lavishly illustrated and beautifully designed book which tells the stories of some of the 1500 Japanese men – and their descendants – who came to work on the Benguet or Kennon Road which transformed Baguio in Northern Luzon, into the Philippines’ second ‘chartered city’.

Otto van den Muijzenberg



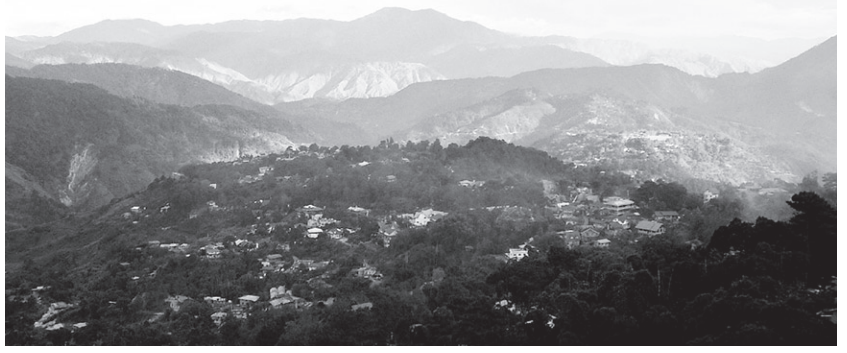
Afable, Patricia O. ed. 2004.
Japanese Pioneers in the Northern Philippine Highlands. A Centennial Tribute 1903-2003.
Baguio City: Filipino-Japanese Foundation of Northern Luzon, Inc. maps, ill., apps, 330 pages. ISBN 971 92973 0 1

UNTIL RECENTLY, FILIPINOS OF JAPANESE descent preferred to pass for Chinese *mestizos* or dissimulated their mixed ancestry. This was particularly true in Baguio, the site of the third-largest community of Japanese in the American Philippines before the Pacific War. The early American administration of the Philippine colony (from 1899 onward) was bound to the increasingly strict immigration legislation at home which by the end of the 19th century had put an end to the flow of Chinese and Japanese labourers to America’s west coast.

Many American administrators ‘on the ground’ in Manila and the provinces considered Filipinos unfit for work on the infrastructure needed to fulfil the modernisation promises that accompanied their takeover of the colony from the Spaniards. Manual labour by Americans was minimal, however, so much so that the admission or even active recruitment of Japanese and Chinese was deemed necessary. It was politically unwise, however, to make these ‘foreign orientals’ visible in public documents accessible to anti-imperialists at home and nationalists in the colony alike.

It is therefore exceptional to find documentary evidence for the presence and work of some 1500 Japanese men who came to work on the mountain highway that had to be hacked out of the mountains to connect the Central Luzon lowlands to the newly projected colonial ‘Hill Capital’ of Baguio, 1500 metres above sea level. Coming from peasant families in provinces where the new Meiji land taxation caused extreme poverty, the young Japanese men described in this book often spent their last penny to find a place on a ship which would bring them to the Philippines.

After much delay, the 45 kilometres of this Benguet or Kennon Road had been finished in 1905 at the cost of hundreds of labourers who perished from undernourishment, sickness (the 1903 cholera epidemic) and accidents (falls from scaffolding, blasts). Japanese labourers were then laid off and returned home, others went to Manila or Davao. The populous settlement in Davao has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Hundreds stayed on, however, in Baguio as well and found employment in the construction boom, as carpenters, masons, foremen and contractors. New arrivals would link up with them, and several Japanese became entrepreneurs. The story of Baguio, the pet project of the powerful Secretary of the Interior in the Philippine Commission, Dean C. Worcester and his colleague, the later Governor-General W. Cameron Forbes, has been told in many official publications of the time, and in more scholarly post-colonial work by Robert Reed, Howard Fry and James Halsema. However, the role of the Japanese in the formation of the prosperous urban community in the interbellum period has hardly been noticed in those writings, reason enough for the editor and her contributing authors to produce the work reviewed here.



Top:
The *lion’s head* along the Benguet or Kennon Road is a landmark synonymous with Baguio City.

Above:
The ‘hill capital’ of Baguio City.

A second, and probably more important, reason for why the Japanese role in building Baguio into the Philippines’ second ‘chartered city’ has been neglected is to be found in the Japanese occupation from December 1941 to April 1945. Having been the most fiercely resistant to the Japanese ‘Co-prosperity sphere’ of all Southeast Asian nations, the Filipinos and returning Americans deported all Japanese nationals in 1945. Left behind were hundreds of Philippine wives and children of mixed ancestry who had not been registered as Japanese nationals. Even though most of them had not in any way ‘collaborated’ with the Japanese occupation forces – often the opposite – it became wise behaviour for them to dissemble Japanese ancestry, and take on Filipino names. Even then many of them had difficulty in obtaining access to education and jobs, tagged as they were as relatives of a bitterly hated enemy.

Anthropologist Patricia Okubo Afable and her team, all belonging to the Japanese-Filipino community, should therefore be complimented with their persistent and successful efforts to convince so many descendants of the early Japanese to tell their (grand-) fathers’ life histories, to show remaining family documents and to permit reproduction of family photographs with not just the Filipino, but original Japanese names. Extensive research in American collections by the editor, as well as a lucky find of the archive of one of the Baguio Japanese photographers, added images of the public works, buildings, saw-mills and the early lay-out of Baguio City. Making this book contributed to a growing self-identification and re-building of a Japanese-Filipino ‘community’ in the late 20th century Philippines.

A broad historical introduction structures the Japanese history in the Mountain Province roughly in phases characterised by successive foci on, respectively: the road and bridge building, construction, and retail trade activities, the latter simultaneously with diversification into agricultural and horticultural enterprises. The later part of the interbellum period saw a rapid expansion of tourism with great opportunities in the hotel, photography and transportation sectors and in which Japanese participated and sometimes succeeded in building an exclusive Japanese ‘niche’ for themselves. Finally, gold mining made the 1930s in the city and environs a relatively prosperous period, compared to the rest of the country, and again Japanese profited from these chances, sometimes as partners of American or European entrepreneurs. In this chapter and succeeding parts captioned The Building Trades, Agriculture, The Sagada-Bontoc Community, The Japanese Association and the Japanese School, and The Japanese Community, the socio-economic history of the transformation of a pioneer community into a settled, internally diversified and stratified migrant society is reconstructed. Innovations by the Japanese in vegetable and flower gardening, silk production, architecture, retail trading, lumbering and transportation are shown in rich detail, often in combination with biographical notes.

The reliance on mainly second and third generation female descendants as informants for this oral history book guarantees an intimate view on the internal operation of the families. A considerable proportion of the Japanese men intermarried with local women. Inspection of an appendix with names of Japanese men, their wives and children, even if this list may not be representative, yields an estimate of nearly half of the unions being mixed. This seems to belie the popular myth that unlike the Chinese, the Japanese in the Philippines refused to intermarry and integrate into the local society. The women belonged to what were termed ‘mountain tribes’ by early American anthropologists, particularly those speaking Ibaloy, Kankanay, Bontoc and related languages. These wives played important brokering roles for the Japanese men towards the local economy and society. Continuing to work their own gardens and fields and often trading too, they worked as intensively as the husbands outside the house to sustain their families. Although communication between partners in many cases remained difficult, with neither of the partners having had much education, let alone training in acquiring a foreign language, the impression conveyed by their descendants is one of great marriage stability.

As time went by, however, a certain level of ‘Japaneseness’ was sustained and later on even reinforced in the group, with the recruitment of Japanese brides by those who could afford it. Successful and rich merchants, contractors, transport entrepreneurs and, later on, wealthy vegetable farmers in the La Trinidad valley founded (in 1924) and sustained the Japanese School of Baguio, which became a focal institution for the migrant group, including some of their ‘mixed’ offspring. In the late 20th century the school became the trigger for a revival of a sense of Japanese-Filipino identity, as well as linking institution with relatives in Japan.

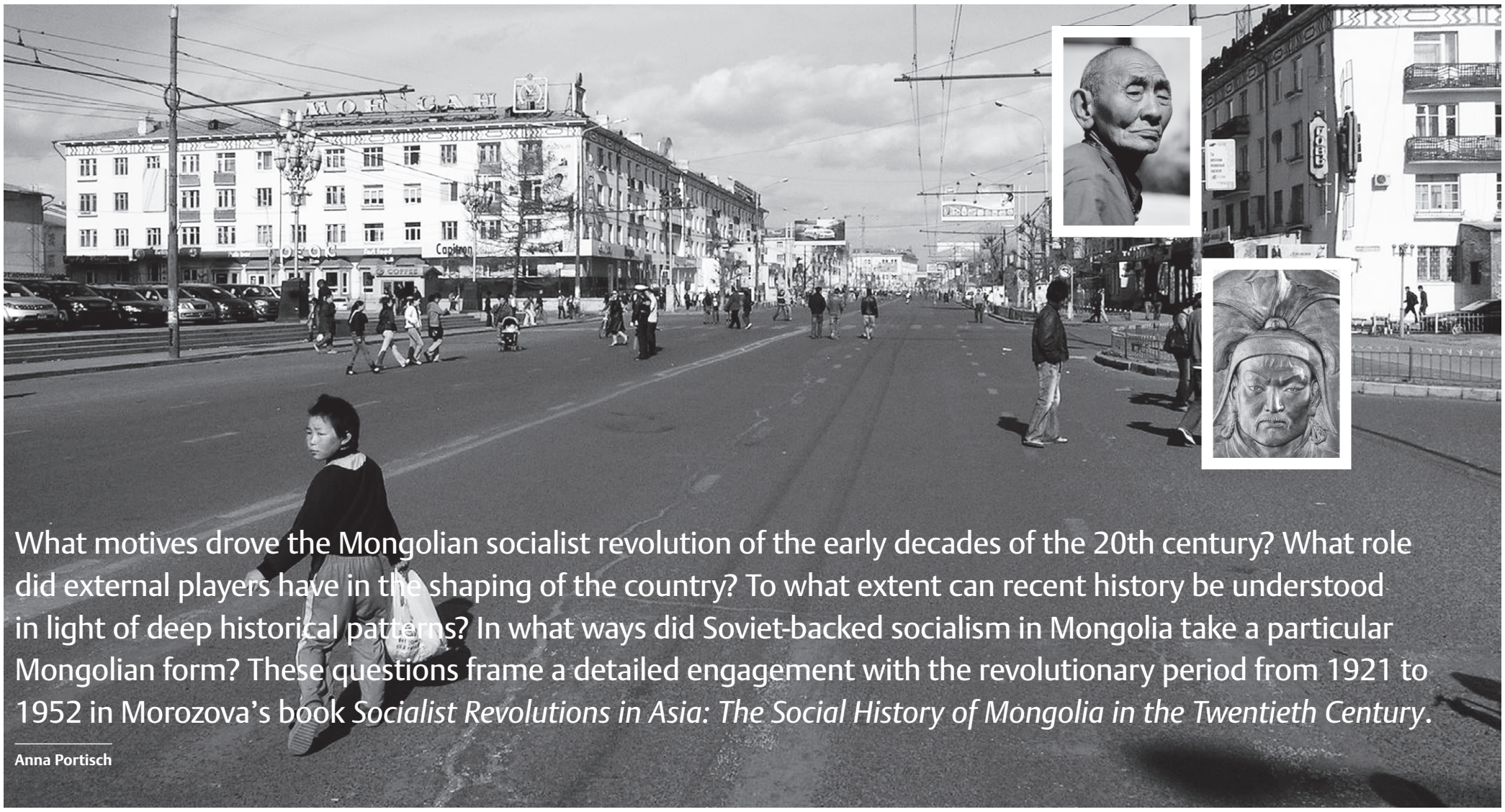
The character of the book as a centenary memorial shows in the many names and photographs of groups and families, which are important to the descendants, their friends and former neighbours, but less so to the general reader. Several biographies of carpenters, builders, contractors, farmers, prominent businessmen and contractors give the reader a feel both of the family life and the occupational activities. They attest to basic values which these successful migrants impressed on their children and employees, like hard work, honesty and precision. Overlaps in information between the chapters might have been reduced, and the scholarly reader may have liked to read a more explicit analysis of the wealth of data provided in terms of migration or ethnicity theory.

The rich content of the book, however, both in terms of the more than 300 beautifully reproduced photos and of the carefully researched information makes it an indispensable source for a better, more ‘bottom-up’ understanding of the history, not only of the Japanese pioneers and their offspring, but also of the urbanisation process of Baguio and surroundings in the first half of the 20th century. Hopefully, it will inspire others to retrieve from oblivion, or wilful neglect, the past of similar hyphenated Japanese descendants elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

Otto van den Muijzenberg
Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research
University of Amsterdam
O.D.vandenMuijzenberg@uva.nl

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

The socialist revolution in Mongolia



What motives drove the Mongolian socialist revolution of the early decades of the 20th century? What role did external players have in the shaping of the country? To what extent can recent history be understood in light of deep historical patterns? In what ways did Soviet-backed socialism in Mongolia take a particular Mongolian form? These questions frame a detailed engagement with the revolutionary period from 1921 to 1952 in Morozova's book *Socialist Revolutions in Asia: The Social History of Mongolia in the Twentieth Century*.

Anna Portisch

Morozova, Irina Y. 2009.
Socialist Revolutions in Asia: The Social History of Mongolia in the Twentieth Century.
London and New York: Routledge. IX-X, 172 pages.
ISBN 978 0 7103 1351 5

Above:
Present day Ulaanbaatar, Peace Avenue.

Inset top:
A Mongolian lama.

Inset below:
Ghengis Khan.

MOROZOVA'S BOOK DESCRIBES the period from the fall of the Manchu-Qing Dynasty in 1911 and the subsequent Mongolian declaration of independence, through the purges of the 1930s, collectivisation and nationalisation of the economy, the Second World War, to the building of a consolidated socialist system with a planned economy under the leadership of Choibalsan. In the early stages of the socialist revolution, the main political motive across the ideological spectrum was a concern for negotiating a relatively independent position in relation to both China and Russia. As a result, the alliance with Russian Bolsheviks was initially perceived by the various Mongolian political players as a temporary measure to assure the country's independence. The book describes in detail the political manoeuvring of different factions from the 1920s onward, for instance the 'old rightists' and the 'young leftists', differing in terms of their political leanings and stance on the question of nationalism and the continuing role of the Buddhist community as a political force, but also importantly reflecting a generational divide. The book provides fascinating glimpses into the coexistence of the community of Buddhist lamas and revolutionary developments in its description of the gradual process by which power was taken from the Bogd Khan and the wider community of Buddhist lamas, and the eventual violent expropriation of its property and undermining of its power in the Jas campaign of the late 1930s.

Managing the Buddhist 'problem'

Interwoven with this process, the book describes the Soviet influence, particularly that of the Comintern (Executive Committee of the Communist International), on political developments from the 1920s onwards. In the 1930s, this is described as an often delicate negotiation process of minimising the influence of those political elements tending towards nationalism and the restoration to political power of the Buddhist community and pan-Mongolism on the one hand, and extremist revolutionary factions on the other. The Comintern sought to limit extremist tendencies because, it was perceived, their drive to radically undermine the power of the Buddhist community and its displays of disrespect for elders and tradition might have resulted in opposition and counter-revolutionary activity. The final organised purges of the Buddhist community which took place in the late 1930s are thus presented as a result, not of the influence of the Comintern or pressure exerted by the Soviet Union, but instead as a measure by the Mongolian authorities to solve its own economic difficulties: '…by the beginning of the 1930s, the new authorities in Ulaanbaatar started to notice that their social and political problems had become especially sharp given their economic difficulties – they lacked the means for revolution. To solve the problem, the new political elite began using 'old' repressive methods inside the country.' (p. 64).

The gradual consolidation of the power of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party is understood to have been based on a terror that '…was not foreign to Mongolian history. Long before Chinggis qan 'the submissiveness of the steppe inhabitants had been maintained by cruelty…'

This perspective on the purges of the 1930s is indicative of an underlying assumption which informs the book as a whole. In this context, the violence turned upon the Buddhist community is interpreted as an expression of an inherent tendency of Central Asian nomads towards economic expansion through forced expropriation of resources of neighbouring, often sedentary, cultures. In this case, the '…military expansionism of Central Asian nomads … turned inward and targeted the homeland', i.e. the community of lamas (p. 64). This 'imperative' for Eurasian nomadic societies to periodically explore and conquer neighbouring lands has emerged in response to a vulnerable and unstable ecology, it is argued. Moreover, this imperative has given rise to a model of government based on kinship and clan structures, but also the need for a cohesive and stabilising force, that of a powerful ruler, an autocratic power, and tight social control of subjects: these are two 'key features of Eurasian nomadic empires… and of the Mongol Empire of the thirteenth century in particular' (p. 4). Morozova's argument has a further twist. She suggests that the Central Asian latent tendency for military expansionism has profoundly influenced Muscovy under the Golden Horde; that this tendency was repressed during Manchu-Qing rule in Outer Mongolia itself; and that it was 're-taught' to the Mongolians by the Bolshevik Russians. She draws parallels between 'key features' of Mongolian society of the 13th century and the 20th century and suggests an historical continuity.

'Deep historic roots'

In a similar vein, the gradual consolidation of the power of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party is understood to have been based on a terror that '…was not foreign to Mongolian history. Long before Chinggis *qan* 'the submissiveness of the steppe inhabitants had been maintained by cruelty…' (p. 84). This casts the violence and terror of the 1920s and 1930s as a distinctly Mongolian product, while the subsequent mass revolts signalled that '[s]omething was lacking to force the population to obey the power-holders. What could it have been? An autocratic ruler, a punitive despot, *qan*-father?' (p. 84). Choibalsan is understood to have come to embody this *qan*-father role, necessary for national unity. Morozova thus seeks to ' …debunk the myth that confiscation [of the Buddhist community's property] and collectivisation [of the economy] were entirely imposed upon the Mongols by Soviet advisers as something alien to their society and culture' (p. 84). Instead, she argues, the Mongolian socialist revolution had deep historic roots in the Mongol Empire of the 13th century.

While such a hypothesis of historical continuity contributes interesting perspectives to the existing literature, I should like to raise a few reservations in this context. First of all, the idea of military expansionism coupled with autocratic rule and tight social control in the 13th century Mongol Empire has been critically scrutinised, for instance by Kaplonski (2000). A more inclusive and critical discussion of these historical processes might have been useful, since this is posited as one of the 'key elements' influencing 20th century Mongolian history. Moreover, the author's suggestion entails a type of 'politico-historical product' that might be 'exported' across cultures and historical periods, and subsequently 're-imported'. Such a view significantly downplays historical and cultural specificity. It also entails a notion that such a 'nomadic imperative' might have 'lain dormant' for over two centuries of Manchu-Qing rule in Outer Mongolia, only to be 're-ignited' under Soviet influence. This presents a strangely static view of political models, and ignores the influence of the Manchu-Qing rule and the substantial Chinese population in Mongolia. Ultimately, it also paints Mongolians with one brush, as though unanimously being driven by such a 'nomadic imperative'. Yet what is described throughout the book, in the historical detail, is ideological, political, religious and generational difference and contestation.

Finally, the notion begs comparison with the other cultural and historical contexts, for instance the period of the Cultural Revolution in China. From a comparative perspective, the notion clearly cannot be sustained that a political system dominated by a single party and a 'life-long' head of state, combined with tight social control and temporary 'inward' directed purges might be the unique outcome of a Central Asian nomadic socio-political system.

On the other hand, it is surely possible to maintain that Mongolians themselves bear responsibility for the excesses, as well as the achievements, that characterised the period from the 1920s to the 1950s, without having to resort to a notion of an archetypal 'nomadic imperative'. Nevertheless, such a stance does not necessarily remove the active hand the Russian Bolsheviks and the Soviet Union had in influencing the course of Mongolian history. Surely there is a role for historical continuity, as well as radical change, and ultimately historical reinvention in our understanding of the recent history of Mongolia.

Anna Portisch
School of Oriental and African Studies
ap48@soas.ac.uk

References

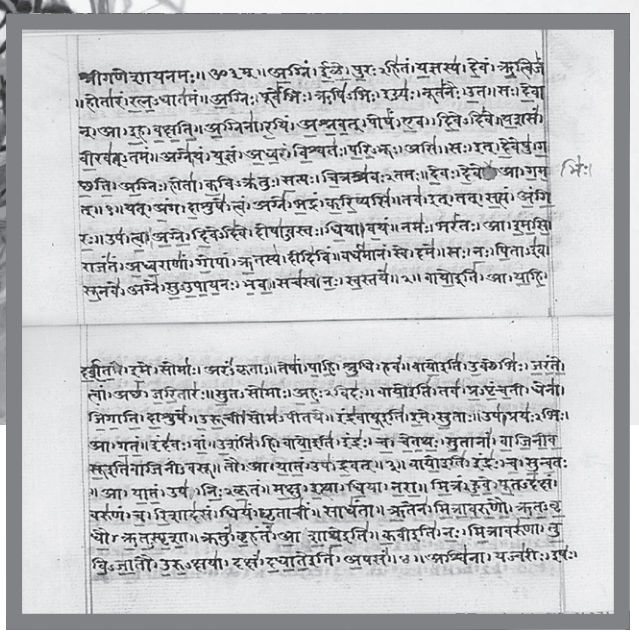
Kaplonski, Christopher. 2000. *'The Mongolian Impact on Eurasia: A Reassessment'.*
A. Bell-Fialkoff, ed. *The Role of Migration in the History of the Eurasian Steppe: Sedentary Civilization vs. 'Barbarian' and Nomad.*
New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

‘Meaningless’ mantras and birdsong?: discovering the Vedas

Veda, from the Sankrit root *‘vid’* (‘to know’), literally means ‘knowledge’. It conjures up ideas of ancient and sacred texts brimming with knowledge and wisdom. Moreover, to most Hindus the Vedas are the divine base on which present-day Hinduism rests. The Vedas were not originally books, however, but orally transmitted insights into the vernacular of the time and place. Frits Staal’s book invites readers to take a fresh look at the Vedas and the people who first brought them to India.

Annette van der Hoek

The insight that mantras and birdsong are similar is quite new, but the fact that rituals (for instance of territory and mating) are also performed by animals is something the Vedas themselves already mention: ‘the layers of grass on which offerings are made, constitute a nest’.



Above inset: *Rigveda* manuscript written in devangari script.

Staal, Frits. ed. 2008.
Discovering the Vedas Origins, Mantras, Rituals, Insights.
Penguin Books India, New Delhi. 419 pages.
ISBN 978 0 14 309986 4

STAAL’S BOOK CONSISTS OF FIVE PARTS. The first extracts information from the oral tradition and from the field of archeology in order to paint a picture as historically realistic as possible –a picture of the Vedic people and their route of migration that led them from the Tarin Basin through what is now Kazakstan towards present day Pakistan and India. Along the way they picked up Soma, an intoxicating drink made from a plant, that was to become a trademark item of the Vedic culture. Also along the way, and with time, the language of these Vedic travellers changed, from Indo-Iranian into what has become known as Indo-Aryan.

For so long we have been taught that hordes of Aryans invaded the Asian subcontinent with their horses and chariots. Staal says that this was geographically impossible. Instead he suggests they must have been a relatively small group of people, carrying their knowledge of horses and chariots in traditional ways - in the form of riddles or sing-song sayings, along often mountainous terrain that simply wouldn’t have permitted travel with horses and chariots. Staal also questions the notion of caste so often ascribed to the Vedic era. As a small and nomadic group the Aryans couldn’t have afforded or imposed strict rules of caste and hierarchy but would instead have intermingled and intermarried with the more indigenous tribes they found on entering the subcontinent. According to Staal, caste must have been a late or even post-Vedic instruction.

Part two of the book, twice as long as any of the other sections, provides information, selections and translations of the four canonised Vedas and of the Upanisads, also known as ‘the-end-of-the-Vedas’ and as sessions of ‘sitting-down-close’ between teacher and pupil containing the beginnings of Indian philosophy.

A famous poem from the Rigveda (RV 10.129) which Staal presents as a poet’s ‘thinking-out-loud’ and which needs no further explanation, is a timeless question of man:

The non-existent did not exist, nor did the existent exist
at that time.
There existed neither the mid-space nor the heaven beyond.
What stirred? From where and in whose protection?
Did water exist, a deep depth?

Death did not exist nor deathlessness then.
There existed no sign of night nor day.
That one breathes without wind through its inherent force.
There existed nothing else beyond that.

[...]

This creation-from where it came to be,
If it was produced or if not-
He who is the overseer of this world in the highest heaven,
He surely knows. Or if he does not know...?

Part three, in Staal’s own words, ‘attempts to shed light on mantras and rituals about which many absurd statements circulate’ and which are ‘the chief channels through which Vedic contributions entered what came to be known as Hinduism’.

‘Meaningless’ mantras
Mantras, says Staal, are meaningless. Not only because they were so historically when the early portions of the Rigveda were guarded by a few families in a language not spoken by most of the people that surrounded them but also because intrinsically mantras seem not to convey meaning in the way a natural language does.

Two of the reasons given for this apparent meaningless character of mantras –which are nevertheless experienced as powerful –is that they are often contradictory or inconsistent and that although there is a tradition to teach and transmit the sounds of a mantra there is no tradition to teach or transmit its meaning. The form of the mantras, therefore, seems much more important than their meaning.

Mantras resemble birdsong
Part three explains, in quite some linguistic detail, that the syntactic structure of a mantra is, interestingly, often closer to birdsong than it is to natural language. This is demonstrated,for instance, in the use of sheer indefinite repetition –a,a,a,a,a –which is not a part of our everyday sentence construction and in the use of sequences –bha, bhu, bhi, bho –that again natural language wouldn’t feature except for maybe in a child’s play with words.

In this way mantra is akin to ritual, another important feature of the Vedic culture. Ritual too consists of practically unchanging, fixed, recursive and at first sight meaningless actions that differ from actions in daily life. And again, though rituals are handed down from one generation to the next, their meanings are not.

The insight that mantras and birdsong are similar is quite new, but the fact that rituals (for instance of territory and mating) are also performed by animals is something the Vedas themselves already mention: ‘the layers of grass on which offerings are made, constitute a nest’.

Parts four and five are the shortest in the book and both briefly scan the horizon of the subject at hand, and its movements inwards and outwards. What can we learn from the Vedas, asks Staal? And in what broader perspective can we put them?

Just as a certain ritual (the Shrauta ritual) developed from the directive ‘facing East’ to ‘facing in all directions’, Staal too sees that with the breakdown of the different Vedic schools and the emergence of classical Upanisads a development towards universality occurs within the Vedic civilisation. The Vedas don’t represent a religion, he says, with a certain narrowing outlook, but rather a civilisation. One that can teach us too, to look in all directions.

It could teach us even to look towards directions we don’t know or yet understand and that the constructed language of a mantra might be pointing at –similar to the way in which a mathematical equation describes part of reality in a language not known to all.

Buddhism, Staal feels, give the Vedas a broader scope as Buddhism is in some respects closer to the Vedas than some of the later developments of Indic thought and religion. Staal sees not only similarities in ideas and basic philosophy between the two but also observes that some centuries after our ‘Vedic nomads’ –and dictated by the same mountainous area –Buddhism traveled partly the same route.

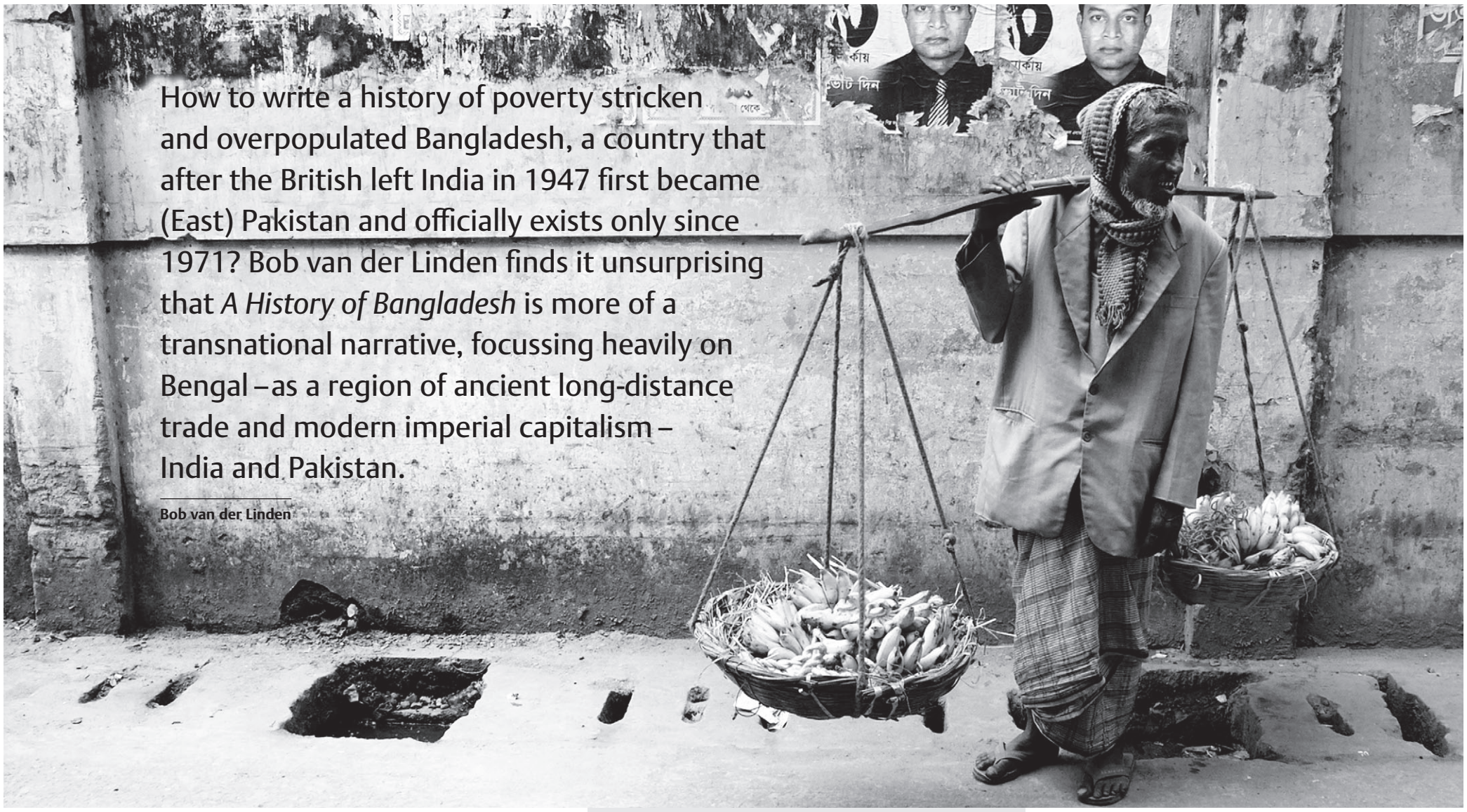
For so long we have been taught that hordes of Aryans invaded the Asian subcontinent with their horses and chariots. Staal says that this was geographically impossible.

Staal is originally a logician. His approach uncovers a great deal about the Vedas and the people who first brought them to India: logical insights that do away with some notions about the Aryans that even ‘Indians and Indologists’ grew up with. But a verse containing information on horse-rearing and chariot-making, can still be deeply philosophical at the same time –‘standing on his chariot, the excellent charioteer leads the horses wherever he wishes. Praise the power of reins, the ropes follow his mind’ (RV 6.75.6). And a mantra that is so called ‘meaningless’ can still convey a lot of meaning at levels other than the apparent meaning of its words. Especially since the contradictions and inconsistencies that Staal sites as proof for the apparent ‘meaninglessness’ of mantras are known in several Indian poetic and spiritual traditions to convey the fullness of life and it’s paradoxes. It is precisely through the clarity of Staal’s logic that this opening –or even missed opportunity –shows. This leaves scope for deeper probing into meanings behind the apparent ones or the missing ones. Perhaps to be explored in another book?

Annette van der Hoek
Samvaad –Institute for Indian studies
Rotterdam Business School
annette@samvaad.nl

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

A history of Bangladesh



How to write a history of poverty stricken and overpopulated Bangladesh, a country that after the British left India in 1947 first became (East) Pakistan and officially exists only since 1971? Bob van der Linden finds it unsurprising that *A History of Bangladesh* is more of a transnational narrative, focussing heavily on Bengal – as a region of ancient long-distance trade and modern imperial capitalism – India and Pakistan.

Bob van der Linden

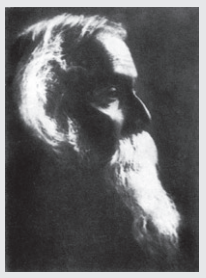
Schendel, Willem van. 2009.
A History of Bangladesh.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xxiv + 347 pages.
ISBN 978 0 521 67974 9.

...ultimately, this first widely available one-volume examination of the whole span of Bangladesh history is a welcome contribution to South Asian historiography and deserves a wide readership.

TO MAKE THE STORY even more intriguing, Van Schendel decided to deal with long-term processes related to the might of the region's nature and geographical conditions (Part I) as well as with the 'middle range trends' of Bengal's imperial encounters with the Mughals and the British (Part II). Even so, almost two thirds of the book (Parts III-V) concern the recent 'high politics' of the famine of 1943, the Partition of British India, the Bangladesh Liberation War, the creation of the national cultures of, consecutively, 'Bengaliness' and (Muslim) 'Bangladeshiness', the tense relationship with India, military rule (1975-90), Cold War politics, and so on.

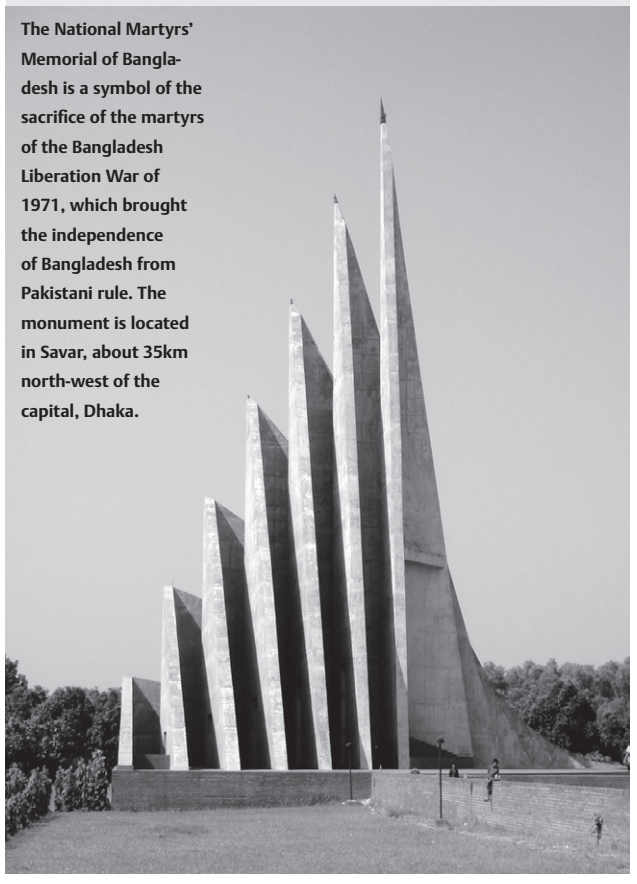
In Part I, Van Schendel expands on Richard Eaton's idea of Bengal as a region of 'multiple frontiers' (from *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Besides the natural land-water frontier (north-south), and the ancient cultural 'Sanskritic' frontier (west-east), there are also the agrarian, state, Islamic and Bengali language frontiers, which after their expansion led to tensions among human winners and losers, the latter of course often being the (non-Muslim) ethnic minorities. What I find missing in the book, however, is a specific discussion of what can be labelled the 'imperial intellectual frontier', which since the 19th century undeniably has been the most crucial 'frontier'. For was it not during the imperial encounter that existing ideas became more rationalised and new ones introduced in the context of processes of state formation and an emerging liberal public sphere? Did Bengalis not become increasingly self-conscious of their own traditions and the wider world during this period? And did their subsequent activities, though generally to their own amazement, not result in Pakistan and Bangladesh?

On the whole, Van Schendel does not explain how Bengalis created a liberal public sphere, in which processes of identity formation, rationalisation and intellectual interaction between metropolis and colony come together. For example, he mentions several times the continuing popularity of Rabindranath Tagore and his songs among the people in the region. On the one hand, this refers to the continuity and resilience of Bengali culture in the face of the banning of Tagore's music by the Pakistan government, as well as contemporary radical Muslim politics in Bangladesh. Yet, on the other, Tagore's songs (known as *Rabindra Sangit*) are also part of Bengal's internationalism and liberalism under colonial rule. His eclectic compositions not only made use of various classical Indian musical styles but, in accordance with the English folk song movement, also included a fascination with folk music, especially that of the free-spirited Baul mystics. The latter was atypical in South Asia at the time, while 'primitive' folk music was looked down upon by the Indian musical elites, who instead defined and canonised their national 'classical' north (Hindustani) and south (Karnatic) Indian music traditions. Then again, under the influence of Western musical practice, Rabindranath was the first composer in South Asia to regard his songs as inviolable entities, while in the rest of the subcontinent singers kept on going endlessly with their musical improvisations.



Rabindranath Tagore

In the light of Rabindranath's Hindu background and internationalism, it certainly remains fascinating how Tagore's music has retained its importance for such a long time among Bengali Muslims. This all the more so because it was solely after his death in 1941 that he was canonised as Bengal's greatest creative artist and became worshipped in the region. Before that time, most Bengalis saw him as a product of Western influence. My point, however, is that *Rabindra Sangit*, and indeed also the recent reappearance of (his) Baul songs in the repertoire of youth bands in Bangladesh and Indian Bengal, has much to do with the 'internal' Orientalism, 'invention of tradition' and modernist aesthetics that make the study of South Asian intellectual history so ambiguous and appealing. It is cultural tensions and continuities like these that should have been drawn out more in a work that aims to look at the long-term processes that shaped contemporary Bangladesh (p. xxv). In this context, I believe, the use of 19th century categories such as 'religion' and 'nationalism' also should have been problematised, if only from an educational point of view.

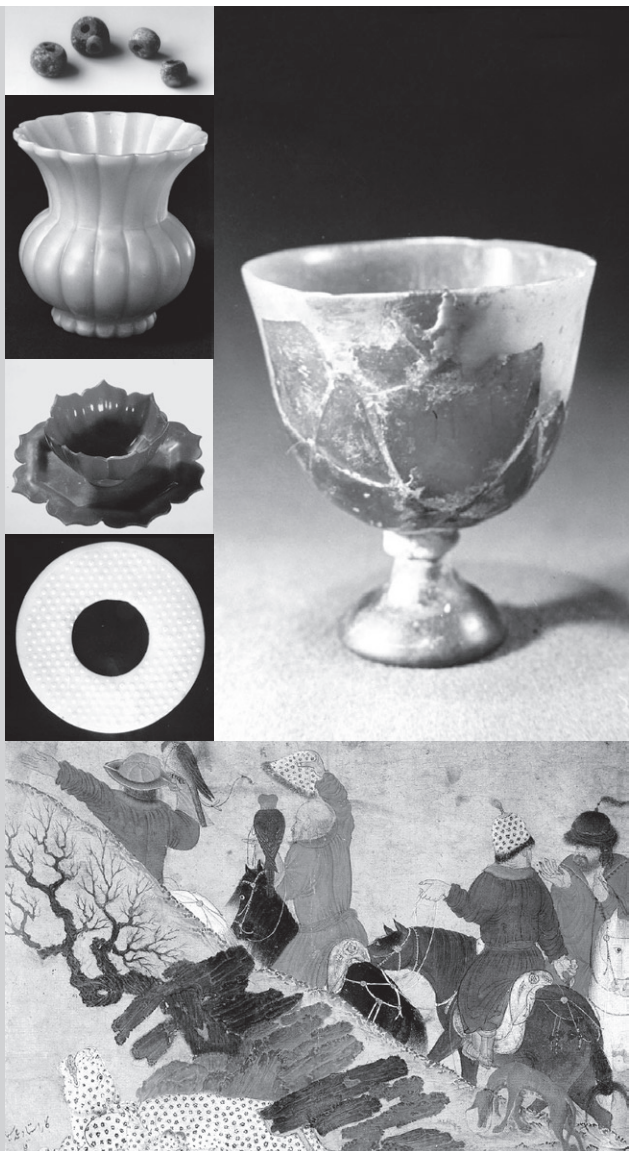


The National Martyrs' Memorial of Bangladesh is a symbol of the sacrifice of the martyrs of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, which brought the independence of Bangladesh from Pakistani rule. The monument is located in Savar, about 35km north-west of the capital, Dhaka.

Conversely, I am doubtful about Van Schendel's remark that history is 'keenly debated' (p. xxiv) in Bangladesh. On the contrary, I would think that after many years of military rule and censorship the situation is nearly as gloomy as in Pakistan. In any case, *A History of Bangladesh* is not concerned with these supposedly existing debates or current world historical ones, though a discussion of them undeniably would have made it a more urgent textbook. Having said all this, however, it should be clear that these criticisms are solely my response to Van Schendel's statement 'Those who are familiar with the story will find my account highly selective' (p. xxv) and, ultimately, this first widely available one-volume examination of the whole span of Bangladesh history is a welcome contribution to South Asian historiography and deserves a wide readership.

Bob van der Linden is a historian of modern South Asia and the author of *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: the Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2008) and *Music and Empire in Britain and India: Tradition, Internationalism and Cross-Cultural Communication* (in preparation): vanderlinden.bob@gmail.com

Ancient glass from the Silk Road



Brigitte Borell finds a most welcome English edition of a collection of papers presented at a series of symposiums and workshops in 2004 and 2005, previously published in Chinese. The 24 papers, each one a chapter in the book, are written by scholars from China, Japan, Korea, Uzbekistan and the US, and they reflect the newest research in the field of scientific and archaeological studies on ancient glasses in Eastern Asia.

Brigitte Borell

Fuxi, Gan, R.H. Brill & Tian Shouyun, eds. 2009.
Ancient Glass Research along the Silk Road.
Singapore: World Scientific Publishing.
473 pages, ill., maps & tables. ISBN 978 981 283 356 3

THE MAJORITY OF THE PAPERS in this volume originate from the field of archaeometry – the application of scientific techniques to the analysis of archaeological material, in this case ancient glasses. The compositions of glasses vary in terms of period and region and the study of their chemical compositions has proved to be an important and useful tool. The categorisation of ancient glass into different glass families or glass systems is based mainly on the intentional use of different fluxing agents in the primary process of making glass. These fluxes offer valuable information about the period and region in which a glass originated. It may also allow important conclusions about trade and trade routes. The basic distinction into glass families may be further refined through studies of trace elements, lead-isotope analyses and strontium-isotope analyses, which provide a valuable supplement for classifying glasses according to geographical origin (chapters 3 and 4 by Robert Brill).

Space does not allow a review of each of the contributions in detail. Where it seems appropriate, some of the chapters will be outlined together in a larger thematic context.

The first two, rather substantial, contributions by Gan Fuxi set the stage and together comprise almost a quarter of the book. In Chapter 1 Gan Fuxi gives an overview of the origin and development of ancient Chinese glass from 'faience' and frit beads (1100-800 BCE) and the earliest glasses (500-400 BCE) through the historic periods up to 1900. Chinese glass production relied mainly on two kinds of fluxing agents: lead and potash (saltpetre was probably used for potash), producing different glass compositions in certain periods. Gan Fuxi's timeline of Chinese glass distinguishes five different periods: (1) He suggests the few early finds of potassium alkali glass (500-400 BCE) originate from Central China. More detailed quantitative analysis would be welcome for future research in this regard. (2) The second or Han period (400 BCE -200 AD) reveals the characteristic Chinese lead-barium glass production generally thought to be located in the Yangzi River valleys and a potash glass which prevailed in the southern and southwestern regions during this period. (3) Post- Han period lead glasses (200-700 CE). (4) potash-lead glass (600-1200 CE). (5) potash lime glass (1200-1900 CE).

In Chapter 2 Gan Fuxi presents an overview of the several routes subsumed under the term the Silk Road, presenting analyses of glass finds from the Warring States period to the Yuan Dynasty, the discussion focusing on the early periods and early trade connections. Four different Silk Roads are discussed together with the glass objects found in their areas: Firstly, glass finds in the area of the 'Northern (Steppe) Route' show the wide distribution of glasses made in inner China and in the West; a late highlight are the Islamic glass vessels from an early 11th century tomb. Secondly, along the 'Northwestern (Oasis) Silk Road' glass finds from Kiziltur, Xinjiang, dated to 1100-800 BCE, are considered to be local produced but with Western Asiatic glass technology. For the Qin and Han periods, definite imports of Mediterranean and Western Asiatic glass are documented, as well as the spread of Central Chinese lead-barium glass to the western part of Xinjiang. Later, Sasanian and Islamic glasses were imported along this route. Thirdly, the 'Southwestern (Buddhist) Silk Road'; here the Sichuan-Yunnan-Burma-India route is represented by finds of lead-barium glass, potash glass, and a few finds of western soda lime glass in Yunnan and Guizhou from the Warring States to the Six Dynasties periods. Finally, the section on the 'Southern (Sea) Silk Road' deals with glasses found in Guangxi and Guangdong. Hepu in Guangxi was the seat of the Hepu commandery in the Han period and a flourishing harbour and starting point for the maritime Silk Road. Most of the Han period glasses unearthed in Guangxi are potash glasses, many with characteristic Chinese shapes and therefore considered to be locally made, whereas those from Guangdong are mostly lead-barium glass. Both types of glass were probably also exported overseas through the ports of Guangdong and Guangxi. From the Six Dynasties to the Tang period a number of imported glass vessels of Mediterranean and Western Asiatic origin attest to the activity of the ports of southern China, from where such imported glasses might also have been transported north into central China.

A large proportion of the other papers in this volume are devoted to detailed studies on glass finds along the 'Northern' and 'Northwestern Silk Roads' and their chemical analyses. Chapters 3 and 4 by Robert Brill present finds from Afghanistan to Xinjiang with some Central Asian glass compositions of plant-ash soda lime or mixed-alkali glasses. Chapters 7 and 8 by Abdugani Abdurazakov focus on finds from Uzbekistan, which reveal a variety of Central Asian glass compositions from the ancient and mediaeval periods and later. Chapters 11, 13-18, by several Chinese scientists and archaeologists, present glass artefacts and their analyses found in northern provinces such as Xinjiang, Gansu, Shaanxi, Inner Mongolia etc., which allow interesting conclusions on early trade connections. Chapter 19 by An Jiayao discusses the earliest blown Chinese glass vessels found in Northern Wei contexts of the 5th century CE. Referring to a passage on the Western Lands in the *Bei shi*, she suggests that the technique of glassblowing was introduced to northern China by immigrant Central Asian craftsmen from Bactria (the country of the Dayuezhi), who settled in the Datong area.

Several papers deal with glass finds along the 'Southern Silk Road'. Chapters 5 and 6 by Insook Lee set the stage for the Silk Road of the Sea with emphasis on the maritime bead trade.

The categorisation of ancient glass into different glass families or glass systems is based mainly on the intentional use of different fluxing agents in the primary process of making glass.

By the late first millenium BCE, Southeast Asia was part of a world trading system linking the civilisations of the Mediterranean Basin and Han period China. The maritime network is seen as extending to Korea and Japan, where a similar diversity of glass compositions compared to those found in China occur. Chapter 9 by Koezuka and Yamasaki deals with early potash glasses in Japan dated to a period from the 3rd century BCE to the 3rd century CE. In Chapter 10 Akiko Hokura et al. investigate the glass reliquary in the Toshodaiji in Nara, examined with a portable XRF spectrometer; the results suggest an Islamic plant ash glass. Chapter 20 by An Jiayao presents new finds of Islamic glassware found in 10th century contexts in Guangzhou, representing the extent of imports through the port of Guangzhou.

Chapters 21 (Li Qinghui et al.), 22 (Fu Xiufeng and Gan Fuxi), and 23 (Ma Bo et al.) with numerous analyses of glass artefacts found in southern and southwestern China make an important contribution to our knowledge of the extent and frequency of distribution of potash glass and its coexistence with lead-barium glass. Among Han period glasses from Hepu in Guangxi povince, potash glass by far predominates (Chapter 21) indicating – in conjunction with statistical analysis on trace elements (Chapter 22) – the making of potash glass in the Guangxi area. The findings on potash glasses are certainly among the most interesting results of research. Since the discovery of the potash glass composition among glasses from southern China in the mid 1980s in the analyses by Shi Meiguang and those by Robert Brill, much more data is now available. However, the question of where the making of the potash glass originated is still unresolved, and is touched upon also by some of the other papers (see below, Brill ch.3,4, Lee 5). It is also found in Japan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, and southern India. Different compositional groups can be distinguished within the potash glass family (Lankton and Dussubieux 2006), here future research might further refine regional differentiation. Potash glass was very likely made in different places, one of them was probably in southern China or northern Vietnam. The detection of thallium as a trace element in two potash glass ear spools of characteristic Chinese shape might indicate that some raw material – or possibly just the cobalt colourant – came from southwest China, where thallium deposits occur in Guizhou (Brill ch.5: 156-158). Whereas the Chinese-made glass objects are usually ornaments, a group of glass vessels made of potash glass, found in of Han period tombs in Guangxi, is of particular interest. The potash glasses and their possible connections with the routes of the maritime Silk Road will certainly remain an interesting field for further studies.

In the last chapter 24, Gan Fuxi et al. present the earliest dated find of glass imported from the West to Central China – eleven eye beads made of a soda-lime glass from a tomb in Xujialing, Henan, dated about 500 BCE. A few more such finds of Western glass are known from the tomb of Marquis Yi, Hubei, and two more tombs from Henan.

Rooted firmly in the field of archaeometry, the volume presents altogether more than 40 tables with chemical compositions of glass found in China, derived from different analysing methods. The emphasis is clearly on the early periods, from the origins of early Chinese glass in the mid-first millenium BCE and its first flourishing production in the Han period. The English edition will certainly be appreciated, and not only by specialists, as it facilitates access to recent results in a fascinating field of research. For the more generally interested reader a more careful proofread, in particular with regard to the rendering of geographical names, would have been helpful; these, however, are minor flaws. The volume will serve as a new compendium for studies on early Asian glasses, in the same way that, for almost two decades, the 1991 English publication of the Proceedings of the 1984 International Symposium on Glass, Beijing did.

Brigitte Borell
Independent scholar, Heidelberg, Germany
b_borell-seidel@hotmail.com

References

1. Fuxi, Gan. ed. 2005. *Si chou zhi lu shang de gu dai bo li yan jiu: 2004 nian Wulumuqi Zhongguo bei fang gu bo li yan tao hui he 2005 nian Shanghai guo ji bo li kao gu yan tao hui lun wen ji*
(Study on ancient glass along the Silk Road: proceedings of 2004 Urumqi Symposium on Ancient Glass in Northern China and 2005 Shanghai International Workshop of Archaeology of Glass). Shanghai: Fudan University Press. ISBN 978 730 905 479-8.
Proceedings of the XX International Congress on Glass, Kyoto, September 27-October 1. Tokyo 2005 (CD-ROM).
2. Lankton, J. and L.Dussubieux. Early glass in Asian maritime trade: a review and an interpretation of compositional analyses. *Journal of Glass Studies* 48, 2006 121-144.
3. Brill, R.H. and J.H.Martin. eds. 1991, *Scientific Research in Early Chinese Glass.* Corning: The Corning Museum of Glass.

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

A moderniser with a firm foot in the Classical world

Phan Châu Trinh (1872-1926) was a Vietnamese intellectual and educator whose life coincided with the establishment of French Protectorate rule over his native country. He advocated for engagement with the French colonial regime in order to transform Vietnamese society. His subsequent activism for 'popular rights' ('*dân quyền*') led to his arrest in Central Vietnam and eventual exile in France from 1911 to 1925. In the final months of his life, Phan delivered two landmark lectures, which Vinh Sinh has included in a carefully assembled volume which is sure to become the standard English language work on the life and thought of Phan Châu Trinh.

Bradley Camp Davis

Far Left:
A temple at Hue, Vietnam's feudal capital from 1802 to 1945 under the rule of the Nguyễn dynasty.

Left:
Phan Châu Trinh.

Phan Châu Trinh and his Political Writings.
Ithaca: Cornell University Press/SEAP. 141 pages.
ISBN 978-0-87727-749-1

PHAN CHÂU TRINH and his Political Writings is a work that rewards the reader with insightful analysis and provocative questions. As Phan Châu Trinh composed in both literary (Classical) Chinese and romanised Vietnamese (*Quốc Ngữ*), this volume also displays Vinh Sinh's acumen for translation. Few other scholars are suited for the challenge of representing Phan Châu Trinh's life and thought in such a learned manner.

An introduction (pp.1-56) follows some selected photographs and a useful biological chronology. Vinh Sinh provides four translated works in this volume: 'A New Vietnam Following the Franco-Vietnamese Alliance' (pp.57-86), 'Letter to Emperor Khải Định' (pp.87-102), 'Morality and Ethics in the Orient and the Occident' (pp.103-124), and 'Monarchy and Democracy' (pp.125-140).

Vinh Sinh places Phan Châu Trinh in a historical context and traces the emergence of Phan's intellectual outlook in the early 20th century. The revocation of financial power from the imperial government, left in place by the French administration, stripped the Vietnamese monarchy (*Nguyễn*) of legitimacy, thus contributing to Phan's view of the *Nguyễn* Dynasty as venal, ineffectual cowards. (p.5) While the Introduction also repeats some perhaps more contestable claims about French rule in Vietnam, such as the notion that it 'prohibited the development of an entrepreneurial middle class' (p.6) and exacerbated the impoverishment of the 'peasantry' (p.6), Vinh Sinh's adroit narration of historical context provides useful background for a re-examination of Phan Châu Trinh's thought.

Phan's intellectual outlook is the chief concern of not only the Introduction but of the entire volume. As a part of the 'Enlightenment Movement,' Phan Châu Trinh belongs to an intellectual/activist strata which includes Liang Qichao in China and Fukuzawa Yukichi in Japan; thinkers who emerged from the traditional literary elite and sought to promote 'modernisation' through various reforms. (pp.8-9) Fukuzawa, who coined a translation of the term 'democracy' into Classical Chinese (the shared literary and administrative idiom of China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam), hosted Phan Châu Trinh in Japan where his work on educational reform took him in 1906. When Phan returned to Vietnam later that year, he carried with him designs to foster an Enlightenment Movement to strengthen the morality of the Vietnamese nation and rescue its people from the corrupt rule of the predatory *Nguyễn* dynasty.

With the cooperation of the French, the leaders of Vietnam could cultivate an educated, mature Vietnamese population. In Phan Châu Trinh's view, a people cured of ignorance would ensure peace and prosperity.

As Vinh Sinh reminds us, Phan Châu Trinh displayed a fondness for the works of Mencius (*Manh Tử*/*Mengzi*), a philosopher and statesman active in China during the 4th century BCE.[1] (p.12) Along with the Chinese reformer Liang Qichao, Phan participated in a Yokohama-based intellectual movement that excoriated the traditional elites of China and Vietnam. In Phan's estimation: 'pedants and self-serving, greedy, 'white-robe' mandarins found it possible to ignore the humiliating loss of their nation's independence' (p.14). In a sense, this betrayal of the people by their rulers resulted from an abandonment of traditional, Mencian notions of good governance.

In 'Letter to Emperor Khải Định (1922),' composed on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to France for the Marseilles Expedition, Phan Châu Trinh takes aim at the *Nguyễn* monarch. Phan's politically engaged 'Confucianism' contrasts, as he describes it, with the Emperor's 'reckless promotion of autocracy.' (pp.45-47) Pressing this point, Phan mocks the Emperor for emulating failed autocrats of French history such as Louis XIV. (p.47) Officials and the *Nguyễn* monarchy have, as Phan sees it, forgotten 'true Confucian philosophy' (*tổ thuật Nho Giáo*). (p.49) The abuses of *Nguyễn* Dynasty rulers and their obsequious lackeys stemmed from their malicious neglect of the reciprocal relationship between king and subject (*vua*/*tôi*). (p.50) As he was educated in European political philosophy as well as the works of Mencius, Phan's criticisms also exhibit the influence of Montesquieu, who wrote that those with autocratic tendencies and contempt for 'subjects' tend to 'neglect(s) the management of public affairs.' (Montesquieu, p.19)

To counteract the corrosive effects of imperial autocracy on the people of Vietnam, Phan Châu Trinh argued for a modernising movement. For Phan, modernisation referred to the strengthening of Vietnamese society through the introduction of 'democracy.' (p.53) The translated materials in this volume provide an opportunity for investigating Phan's particular notions of democracy, which resonate today 'in a world transformed by increasing globalization.' (p.53) Vinh Sinh concludes his introduction to the life and thought of Phan Châu Trinh by hailing him as 'the first and most eloquent proponent of democracy and popular rights in Vietnam.' (p.55)

The translations of Phan Châu Trinh's work in this volume contain elaborations on the themes of autocracy, democracy, and the need for modernising reform.

A New Vietnam Following the Franco-Vietnamese Alliance, 1910-1911
Originally written in Classical Chinese, this piece posits that Vietnam, as a nation forged through persistent historical struggle against China, must take advantage of the French Protectorate system to modernise itself. Phan Châu Trinh clearly sets himself apart from his famous contemporary, the celebrated anti-colonial activist Phan Bội Châu (1867-1940). European thought, according to Phan Châu Trinh, can help a modernising Vietnam resist both the historically constant threat of Chinese rule and the puerile temptation to employ aimless violence in the name of national independence. 'Nationalism,' Phan Châu Trinh states, 'is rooted in human nature.' (p.58) He credits 'the Europeans' with identifying this truth, the universal presence of what Phan, in Vietnamese, refers to as '*dân tộc chủ nghĩa*.' (p.58) Phan Châu Trinh's appreciation for the 'vigorous and forward-looking European political theories' contrasts with both the 'weak-kneed scholars' of Vietnam and the incendiary rhetoric of Phan Bội Châu. (pp.60-61) Phan Châu Trinh, who lived in France for a time, characterises Phan Bội Châu as 'ignorant of world trends.' (p.75) Phan Bội Châu's lack of worldly knowledge manifests itself, according to Phan Châu Trinh, in a complete disregard for European thought. Instead of a measured consideration of diverse philosophies and their relative merits for improving the situation in Vietnam, Phan Bội Châu, in his critic's estimation, has a 'penchant for destruction.' (p.76) His ideas, according to Phan Châu Trinh, amount to a worship of chaos and death: 'The dead bodies were piling up, yet he still regretted that the deaths caused by the dynamite were not sufficient [to provoke the French].' (p.81)

Regarding the French occupation of Vietnam, the thing against which Phan Bội Châu so ardently struggled, Phan Châu Trinh offers a unique analysis: 'During the past several decades, the French have not adopted an enlightened policy in Vietnam because they have believed that the Vietnamese are contented with their ignorance…' (p.481) The burden for changing the oppression experienced under French rule, for Phan Châu Trinh, fell squarely on the shoulders of the Vietnamese people. His high expectations for the populous, and his criticisms of Phan Bội Châu, also rely to a certain extent on Phan Châu Trinh's rather paternalistic view of the people as ignorant and aimless. (p.80) With the cooperation of the French, the leaders of Vietnam could cultivate an educated, mature Vietnamese population. In Phan Châu Trinh's view, a people cured of ignorance would ensure peace and prosperity.

Letter to the Emperor (July 15, 1922)
The next translation in Vinh Sinh's volume is a heated excoriation of the Khải Định Emperor (1916-1925) by Phan Châu Trinh, originally composed on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to France during Phan's exile. Written in Classical Chinese, Phan's 'Letter' cites the work of Mencius and the *Analects* (*Luận Ngữ*) to criticise a monarch viewed by the author as venal and autocratic.[2] (pp.88-89) Phan's 'Letter' presents an example of the anti-authoritarian elements discernable within the Confucian (*Nho*) scholarly tradition.

Phan enumerates the crimes perpetrated by the *Nguyễn* and the monarch Khải Định against the Vietnamese people. 'If one applied universal justice' he warns, 'it would be impossible for Your Majesty to escape punishment from our people.' (p.88) According to Phan, the crimes are as follows: '1. Reckless promotion of autocratic monarchy;' '2. Unfair rewards and punishments;' '3. Reckless demand for kowtow;' '4. Reckless extravagance;' '5. Improper dressing;' '6. Excessive pleasure outings;' '7. Shady deals behind the present visit to France.' (pp.88, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97).

Perhaps the most biting criticism in Phan's 'Letter' comes after the conclusion. In a Notes section, Phan remarks that his term of address for the Emperor indicates a 'severed' relationship and the fact that they now communicate 'on equal terms.' (p.102) He also, in note 'c,' elaborated on the corruption of Confucian philosophy by autocrats such as the Khải Định Emperor for whom the Qin (*Tấn*) Emperor provided a model

for governance and official behaviour. (p.102) Finally, Phan's harshest bit of judgement in terms of the Emperor's intellect occurs in note 'd' as follows: 'I have added end-of-sentence punctuations for sentences in this letter, fearing lest it might take you too much time to read.' (p.102) Conventionally, notation marking the end of sentences was absent in Classical Chinese texts, as the discernment of breaks in prose depended on the erudition of the reader. Punctuation was, and still is in a sense, regarded as a crutch.

Morality and Ethics in the Orient and Occident (1925)

The next translation in this volume also displays Phan Châu Trinh's sustained tirade against the corruption of traditional morality in Vietnam. Delivered as a public address in 1925, this piece is based on an original lecture composed by Phan in *Quốc Ngữ*, the contemporary romanised Vietnamese script. Phan makes a clear distinction between morality and ethics. Morality, for Phan, represents 'fine values and superior qualities handed down by ancestors' (p.103) and 'can never be changed.' (p.105) Ethics, by contrast, 'are often variable.' (p.105) Phan elucidates an understanding of the evolution of ethics that both explains the subjugation of Vietnamese society by a foreign power and offers a way forward toward an independent Vietnam.

For Phan, the end of World War One brought about the 'passing of the Age of Nationalism' and the beginning of the 'Age of Social Ethics.' (p.106) Social ethics (*luân lý xã hội*) had a basis in a sense of 'public justice' (*công đức*) and were the most advanced stage in the 'natural evolution of ethics,' a process that Phan claimed also included 'familial ethics' (*luân lý gia đình*) and 'national ethics' (*luân lý quốc gia*). (pp.106-107) Public justice, the foundation of social ethics and, consequently, of advanced ethics, depended on a notion of 'personal justice' (*tự đức*). (p.107) Phan argued that the sense of personal justice in Vietnam had been corrupted.

Phan's account of the corrosion of personal justice in Vietnam places the responsibility firmly on the shoulders of the *Nguyễn* monarchy. 'Autocratic monarchs,' not unlike the first Qin Emperor (221-209 BCE), had misused the teachings of Confucius and Mencius to deceive the people. (p.107) Prior dynasties, in Phan's estimation, treated the people of Vietnam in a manner that accorded with the Mencian/Confucian ideal to a much greater degree. (p.111) The *Nguyễn*, according to Phan, merely couched their rule in the cosmetic dress of classical philosophy to win the support of privileged scholar-officials. The fact that the French, after the late 19th century, controlled Vietnam as a series of Protectorates only strengthens the case against the *Nguyễn*. Phan notes that Vietnamese people should 'hold no grudges against the French' because the cowardice that enabled the establishment of Protectorate rule emanated from the gradual destruction of ethics caused by those in power. (pp.113-114)

This essay also contains an interesting summary of Phan's ideas about European ethics and morality. At the outset, he posits an essential difference between European and Vietnamese people. Phan notes that the two possess very distinct '*dân khí*,' a term that Vinh Sinh renders as 'public spirit' but might also be translated as 'national' or 'popular essence.' (p.115) Although somewhat outside the purview of this volume, the notion of *dân khí* resembles the concept of '*Volksgeist*' as popularised by Herder.[3] Phan compares favourably the intellectual activity in France during the 17th and 18th centuries to that of China prior to the Qin Dynasty. (p.116) European thought, which for Phan includes Montesquieu and Rousseau, can 'enhance the teachings of Confucius and Mencius.' (118) However, Phan cautions against blind worship of 'Western Learning' (*Tây Học*), pointing out instead that the idea of 'democracy' (*chủ nghĩa dân chủ*) also appeared in the work of Mencius. (p.118) The philosophical traditions of Europe, for Phan, largely resonate with the true, uncorrupted, pre-Qin Dynasty Mencian/Confucian philosophical tradition despite the essential difference separating the populations of Europe and Vietnam.

Phan's passionate plea for a new ethics involves nothing less than the survival of the Vietnamese nation. In contrast to violent revolt, Phan advocates the cultivation of an ethical sensibility that could revive the internal moral universe of Vietnam. 'We have lost our national independence because of our ethics,' he concluded. (p.122) Phan's goal is a wealthy and strong Vietnam, an aspiration that connects him to other reformers in Japan, Korea, and China. If a new ethics takes root, 'no matter who will come to live with us on this land, they will no longer look down on us.' (p.123)

Monarchy and Democracy (1925)

The theme of national respectability appears in the final translated work in this volume, 'Monarchy and Democracy.' In this piece, Phan Châu Trinh clearly explains his ideas regarding the abuse of Confucian philosophy by autocratic rulers and the advantages of democracy for strengthening Vietnamese society.

Phan's political writings and thought were heavily influenced by both Confucius (551-479 BCE) and Mencius (372-289 BCE) arguably the most famous Confucian after Confucius himself.

Right: Confucius
Inset: Mencius

Phan's account of the corrosion of personal justice in Vietnam places the responsibility firmly on the shoulders of the Nguyễn monarchy. 'Autocratic monarchs,' not unlike the first Qin Emperor (221-209 BCE), had misused the teachings of Confucius and Mencius to deceive the people.

This essay raises a point that deserves some emphasis. Phan argues that the sharp contrast between Confucian philosophy and 'modern civilization' results from the mendacious work of misguided people. (p.125) Especially in light of Alexander Woodside's recent work (*Lost Modernities*), scholars engaged in research about Vietnam should take this insight quite seriously.[4] A more nuanced picture of modernity must take into account the mutual co-figuring of civilisational norms.[5]

Phan continues to criticise the mischaracterisation of Confucian philosophy. He guides the reader through the early history of China, explaining the rise of hegemony and autocracy under the first Qin Emperor and the subsequent disappointment of the ideals of benevolence and gentlemanly cultivation. (pp.130-132) Most significant for Phan, the autocracy that typified 'East Asian' countries neglected the reciprocity of the sovereign/subject relationship. (p.132) As in earlier chapters of this work, Phan views the work of Mencius as an effective foil to the authoritarian abuses visited upon the Confucian tradition by the *Nguyễn* monarchy.

Phan closes this piece with a brisk account of democracy in European history. He contrasts the supremacy of the rule of law in France with the rule of men under the *Nguyễn*. (pp.138-139) Ultimately, Phan envisions a Vietnam wherein the people will be made happier by democracy and self-strengthening, a Vietnam that can be achieved partially through a correct understanding of philosophical traditions.

Although Vinh Sinh's work is laudable for its achievements, it also contains some minor errors. French military officer Francis Garnier, identified as a 'French pioneering explorer' (p.4 note 6), died during a battle with the Black Flag Army in 1873, not 'during China's Taiping Rebellion.' (ibid) A line from *Mencius* as quoted by Phan Châu Trinh suffers from a lamentable typographical error, causing '*Đồ thiện bất túc dĩ chính vi chính, đồ pháp bất năng dĩ tự hành*' to be rendered into English as 'Virtue alone is *sufficient* for the exercise of government; laws alone cannot carry themselves into practice.' (p.51, emphasis added) A footnote that explains the origins of '*Việt Nam*' fails to mention its appearance in Court correspondence in the early 19th century, positing instead the oft-repeated claim that its first appeared in 1945. (p.57 note 1) Also, a minor oversight appears in Vinh Sinh's translation of Phan Châu Trinh's 'Monarchy and Democracy.' *Khitan*, not 'Qietan,' is the standard English-language rendering for the rulers of the Liao Dynasty. (p.132) However, these are minor blemishes on an otherwise well-crafted work.

Impressive and inspiring, Vinh Sinh's *Phan Châu Trinh and his Political Writings* should be read by anyone with an interest in the philosophical discourses of political and societal reform in colonial contexts, Vietnamese intellectual history, and the history of early 20th century reform movements in East and Southeast Asia. The issues raised by Phan Châu Trinh concerning pre-Qin philosophical traditions, democracy, and social transformation still reverberate in the present day. All readers will finish this volume with a fresh appreciation for the work of a frequently overlooked but inarguably important Vietnamese intellectual.

Bradley Camp Davis
Visiting Scholar
Eastern Washington University (US)
bcampdavis@gmail.com

Notes

1. For an English translation of *Mencius*, see D.C. Lau (tr.), 1987. *Mencius*. New York: Penguin.
2. D.C. Lau (tr.), 1979. *Confucius: The Analects*. New York: Penguin.
3. F.C. von Savigny is credited with this first articulation of the idea of *Volksgeist*. See G. A. Wells, 1959. *Herder and After: A Study in the Development of Sociology*. The Hague: Mouton and Company. pp199-202; Robert Reinhold Ergang, 1966. *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*. New York: Octagon Books. pp85-86 ('national soul'); and Isaiah Berlin, 1976. *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas*. New York: The Viking Press. p149.
4. Alexander Woodside, 2006. *Lost Modernities: China, Vietnam, Korea and the Hazards of World History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
5. For one discussion of alternative or 'multiple modernities,' see Frederick Cooper, 2005. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp113-149.

News

IIAS Fellow Symposium

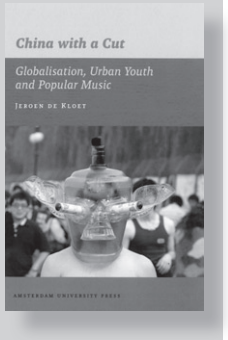
TO REFLECT ITS BROAD SPECTRUM of research themes, the International Institute for Asian Studies held a symposium on 17 December, 2009, during which three IIAS researchers showcased their work in progress to their professional colleagues in the Netherlands:

Kalsang Gurung
Where Do They Come From? Expansion of Shenrab Miwo's Ancestors

Ya-Pei Kuo
The Second Encounter between Confucianism and Christianity: Chinese Conception of 'Religion' and Missionary Discourse of Jiao

Richard Boyd
The Comparative Politics of Rent Seeking and Development

Each presentation was followed by the comments of a discussant. The symposium was open to all: MA and PhD students, researchers and lecturers.



As part of the same event, IIAS launched a new IIAS/Amsterdam University Press book: *China with a Cut: Globalisation, Urban Youth and Popular Music* by Jeroen de Kloet.

The winner of the National MA thesis prize was also announced. This award consists of the honorary title of Best MA Thesis in Asian Studies and a 3 months fellowship at IIAS to write a PhD project proposal or a research article. The prize was awarded by Professor Henk Schulte Nordholt, chairman of the IIAS board.

The Research Cooperative: an online network for the research publishing community

PETER J. MATTHEWS, of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, and founder of The Research Cooperative describes the origins and aims of this new online network for students and researchers which aims to facilitate their work being published in 'a suitable form that will reach suitable audiences'.

The Research Cooperative is a result of my long involvement with research and research publishing in different countries, disciplines, and linguistic settings. In 2001, I asked a computer programmer to customise a standard online bulletin board so that offers and requests could be made for help with editing and translation. The original site attracted a few hundred members, but little activity. The members could not easily learn about each other, and could not communicate outside the work forums provided. There was little room for free association and serendipity. In 2008 I adopted a generic social network system created by Ning.com. At little cost, commercial advertising has been removed, and management of the site requires no programming knowledge.

Since May 2008, more than 1000 people have joined. Our members come from a wide spectrum of countries, linguistic settings, and disciplines, and include researchers, research students, science writers, editors, translators, illustrators, publishers and others.

The Research Cooperative is distinct from all other research-related networks that I know of. Our purpose is not to encourage online discussion of research topics – innumerable sites already provide such opportunities.

We are strictly focused on developing a broad community that can:
1. Raise the quality of manuscripts submitted for publishing,
2. Promote more effective communication among all the people involved in research-based writing and publishing,
3. Promote the spirit of mutual support among researchers, so that they help each other and publishers through reading, editing, translation, peer review and in other ways, and
4. Give inexperienced editors, translators, illustrators and others opportunities to offer volunteer or low-cost trial services, in order to gain experience and become professional, if that is their goal.

I view the Research Cooperative as an experiment in applied anthropology. Like any other human community, the research publishing community needs to recognise itself as a community, it needs to recruit new members in order to maintain physical continuity, and it needs to transfer knowledge from older to younger generations. The Research Cooperative has been created to help students and researchers worldwide get their work published in a suitable form that will reach suitable audiences. The academic world cannot exist without communicating with society in general. Our logo shows two individuals facing out to the world, while giving each other mutual support, back to back. The logo symbolises the basic individuality and communality of all researchers, and all people.

Finally, I would like to note that an exponential increase in publishing initiatives in recent years has not been matched by an exponential increase in the human networks needed to support publishing. Publishers need not only contributors, but also editors, translators, reviewers, and readers. There can be no effective public library of science (in the broadest sense) if our efforts are spread across too many initiatives, online and in print. The Research Cooperative can help, but only to the extent that we succeed in building a large membership that includes publishers, while staying focused on the main bottlenecks in research communication: writing, editing, translation, review.

For more information visit: http://cooperative.niing.com

Marloes van Houten wins IIAS MA Thesis Prize

ON THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2009, Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt (Chairman of the IIAS Board) awarded Marloes van Houten (University of Amsterdam) the first IIAS MA Thesis Prize in the field of Asian Studies written at a Dutch university.

Marloes van Houten won the prize, which consists of an IIAS fellowship, for her thesis entitled *'Nepal's Civil War and its Impact. Conflict impact, social capital and resilient institutions in the CPN-Maoist heartland communities of Nepal'*.

Her thesis, which was supervised by Prof. Gerd Junne (University of Amsterdam), is a successful combination of political science and anthropology. Marloes van Houten investigates the post conflict situation in a relatively isolated region in Nepal. She combines a theoretically informed political anlysis with a good sense for local variations and a bottom up approach which is illustrated by moving life histories, while she also provides relevant policy recommendations. An impressive achievement.

The 5 nominees for the Best MA Thesis Prize were:

Miriam L. Brenner (University of Amsterdam)
Hammer, Sickle and Igil. A study of the evolution of Tuvan music.

Farabi Fakih (Leiden University)
Political Java in Modern times. The political thoughts of Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Noto Soeroto 1908-1930.

Marloes van Houten (University of Amsterdam)
Nepal's Civil War and its Impact. Conflict impact, social capital and resilient institutions in the CPN-Maoist heartland communities of Nepal.

Rosalien van der Poel (Leiden University)
Rijk Palet. Chinese exportschilderkunst overzee.

Dermott J.Walsh (Leiden University)
Re-Visiting Nishida's Ethnics. The influence of confucianism in An Inquiry into the Good.

New online, peer-reviewed journal *Korean Histories*

The idea behind *Korean Histories* is a simple one: to present new perspectives on Korean history. This new biannual, peer-reviewed, online journal focuses on historiography as a social process in Korea. It is devoted to research that also relies on sources other than conventional written historical documents and highlights the role such unconventional sources play in the formation of historical visions of groups and communities, but also of historians, professional and non-professional alike.

Social representations of Korean Histories reveal much about the production, contents, dynamics and functions of historical narratives in society, in particular when unconventional, easily accessible and non-hegemonic media such as music, art, religious concepts, the internet, blogs, advertisements or literary texts are used.

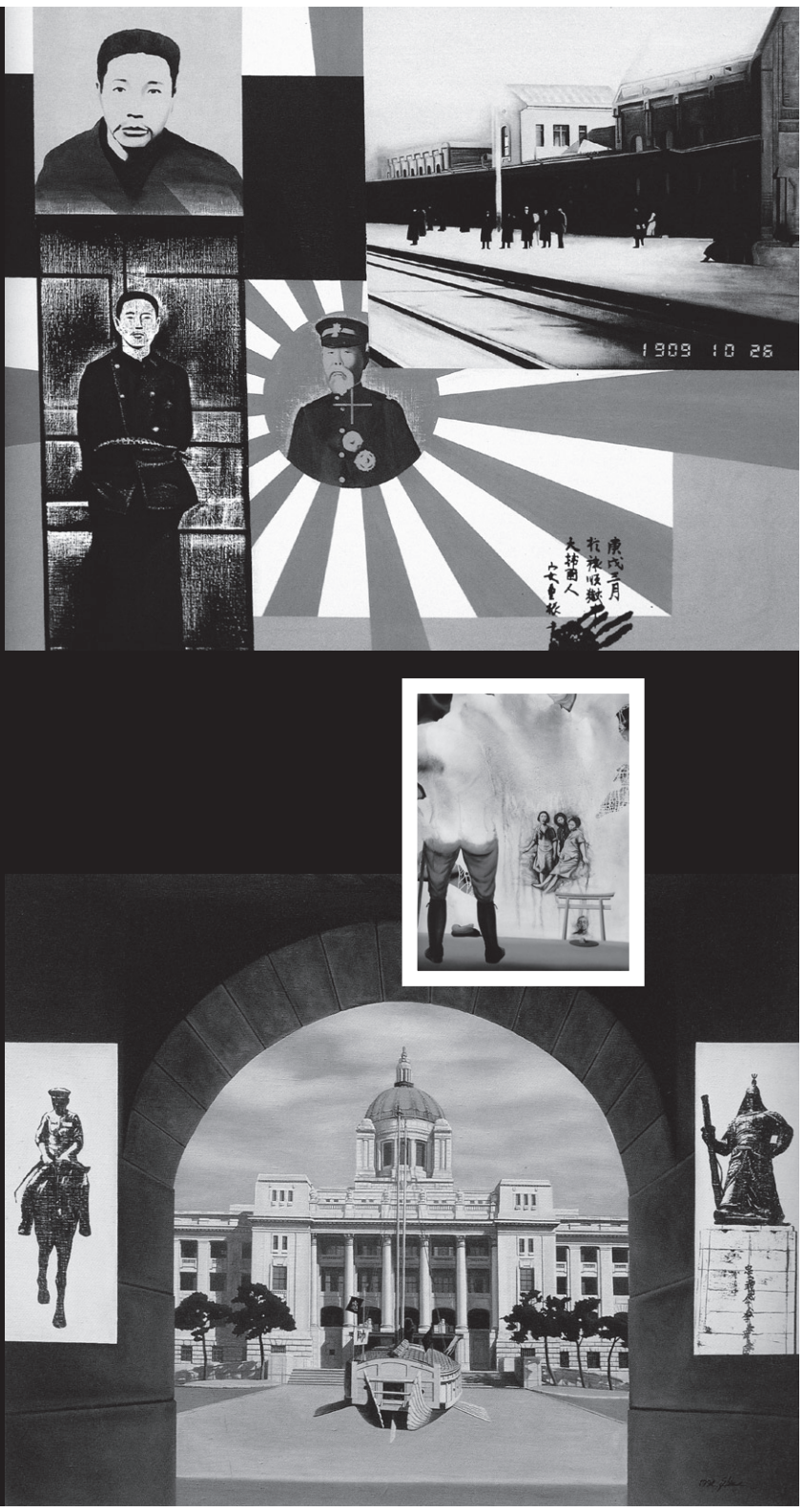
Korean Histories is a platform for articles that engagethese issues. In order to present and enhance the understanding of both widely accepted and alternative perspectives on Korean history, the journal embraces a wide range of topics, approaches and periods, united by the introduction and/or use of unconventional and informal sources and a continuous awareness of the social functions of historiography.

Korean Histories welcomes original research articles, research notes and book reviews. The journal will also make source material available that is in the public domain. Its editors-in-chief are based at Leiden University and the Academy of Korean Studies

The first issue is now available online at: www.koreanhistories.net

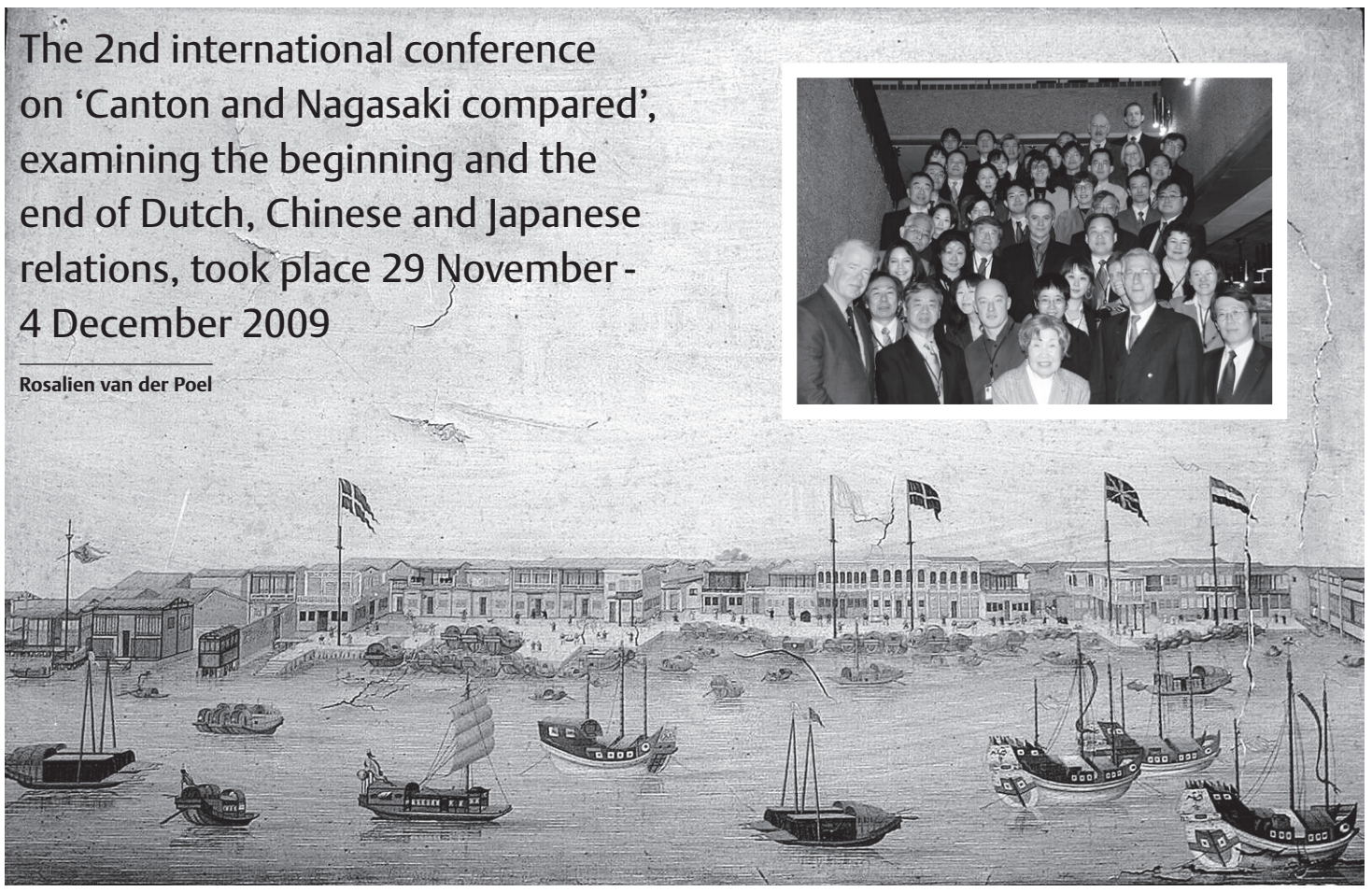
Korean Histories is a part of the Leiden Univeristy Centre for Korean Studies' research project History as Social Practice: Unconventional Historiographies of Korea. This project is sponsored by a generous grant from the Academy of Korean Studies in South Korea.

For more information, please contact the managing editors:
Remco Breuker rebreuker@koreanhistories.org
Koen De Ceuster kdeceuster@koreanhistories.org



The 2nd international conference on 'Canton and Nagasaki compared', examining the beginning and the end of Dutch, Chinese and Japanese relations, took place 29 November - 4 December 2009

Rosalien van der Poel



Above:
The trading stations (*hongs*) at Canton National Museum of Ethnology (Museum Volkenkunde), unsigned, c. 1780.

Inset:
Group portrait showing all participants of the conference.

SOME 30 SCHOLARS from Japan, China, the Netherlands, Taiwan, Thailand, France and United Kingdom came together for the second international academic conference on the ancient port cities of Canton and Nagasaki held from November 29 to December 2, 2009 in Tokyo and on December 3 and 4, 2009 in Nagasaki. The general theme of the conference, organised by the University of Tokyo in cooperation with Nagasaki University, was the beginning and the end of Dutch, Chinese, Japanese relations at these two flourishing port cities in the 17th, 18th and first half of the 19th century. Ports characterised as 'two hotbeds of information gathering' by Leonard Blussé, Leiden University.

Philip de Heer, ambassador of the Netherlands in Japan and Shi Guanghe, Counsellor of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Japan, prefaced the conference with some words of welcome and both emphasised the importance of this international gathering and the research on the history of both port cities from a comparative angle. Haneda Masashi, Director of the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, remarked that the potential of the conference lay in building a road towards a new world history: 'It is important to seek a methodology through which to look at Eurasia and the rest of the world as one, rather than depending on existing modes of historical description that are based on nation states and a duality between Europe (the Occident) and Asia (the Orient). A national history does not exists. At the least it is a matter of regional history, but the real point at issue is that we realise it is all about 'world history''.

Ten central themes
To make the conference a coherent whole, all papers were clustered round ten central themes to compare the cities with each other. Below is a short impression of all given papers:

The beginning of the system
At the first session three speakers gave a comprehensive overview of the beginning of the trade system between the West and the East. Leonard Blussé (Leiden University) sketched the organisation, hierarchical meaning and practical execution in outline of Dutch court journeys to Peking and Edo – the tribute system in Qing China and Tokugawa Japan. Dong Shaoxin (Fudan University, Shanghai) discussed the impact of Portuguese-Dutch conflicts on the Macao-Nagasaki trade in the early 17th century. Dhiravat Na Pombejara (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand) presented his paper *The English EIC and its Siam-Japan Trade, c.1612-1626.*

Government and trade
The papers of the second session included the trade links under separate control in early Modern East Asia by Iwai Shigeki (Kyoto University). A lot of new and interesting research material came out of the lecture *Qing Dynasty Hui merchants' trade activities in the background of trade between East and West and their influence* by Wang Zhenzhong (Fudan University, Shanghai). His paper reiterated the importance of the hinterland for the port cities in China, which flourished because of the well-organised trade system and commercial trade routes in the hinterland. Oka Mihoko (University of Tokyo) gave a good analysis of the circumstances of foreign captives, particularly Southern Europeans, in Guangzhou and Nagasaki, in the 16th and 17th centuries. She also examined the ramifications of their treatment on the subsequent relationship between foreign captives and the maritime control systems adopted by the political authorities in China and Japan.

Links between Canton and Nagasaki
The paper *Book road: from China to Nagasaki* by Zhou Zhenhe (Fudan University, Shanghai) informed the audience about the import of large quantities of books from China (*Kanseki*) in Edo Japan. This Sino-Japanese book trade was of great significance to the cultural exchange between the two countries, as well as the book history of China. Yoshida Tadashi (Tohoku University, Sendai) sketched the transmission of vaccination to Japan by the Chinese route. The first vaccinations were introduced in Macao and Canton in 1805 but it wasn't until circa 1849 that a Japanese doctor successfully vaccinated three children in Nagasaki.
The study of Zhang Wenqin (Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou) *From 'Ri Ben Ji Yu' to 'Ao Yi'* can help us track the historical path of cultural exchange between East and West as well as the language exchange between China and foreign countries.

Trade and institutions
The theme of trade institutions was highlighted by four papers among which *Economic links with Ayutthaya* by Shimada Ryuto (Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka). Ryuto examines the maritime trading patterns and its changes in East Asia during the early modern period. François Gipouloux (CNRS, France) gave an insight into the phenomenon of risky business and the management of uncertainty. He combined economic history, business history and company law history in order to better understand similarities and differences between forms of maritime ventures in the Mediterranean world and the South China Sea between the 13th and 17th century. The paper of Liu Yong (Xiamen University) described how the Dutch supercargoes led the European protest against the establishment of the Co-hong in 1760, and failed. This event illuminated the huge divergence between European and Chinese perceptions of the Sino-European trade and their attitudes towards it.
Lissa Roberts (University of Twente) tried to answer the question what role did Canton and Nagasaki play in the history of science? Roberts presented the two port cities as concentrated centres of accumulation – of specimens, experts and customers – where formal and informal modes of governance managed the global circulation of knowledge and skill.

Merchants and people at port cities
In her lecture *The factory and the people in Nagasaki: otona, tolk, compradoor* Matsui Yoko dealt with the Deshima-otona, the official responsible for the Dutch compound, and the compradores, suppliers of the daily commodities needed by the Dutch factory. Yoko considers these officials within the context of the Nagasaki city system. Isabel van Daalen (Het Japan-Nederland Instituut, Tokyo) presented two short overviews of how interpreters in Canton and Nagasaki earned supplementary income, using members of the Namura interpreter family as a case study.

The end of the system
In the course of the 19th century various factors brought about the end of the trade systems. Murakami Ei (Yokohama National Univeristy) made a comparison between the end of the Canton and the Nagasaki trade control systems. In Canton, the system collapsed dramatically and entirely, and it took a long time to rebuild a new system. In Nagasaki, the trade control system was succeeded by the treaty ports system with relative ease. These differences also influenced the manner in which China and Japan later embraced modernisation. Using a series of Cantonese export paintings, documents from the Chinese and American diplomatic archives of the 1840s and 1850s, English journals published in Canton, and some westerner's letters and diaries, Jiang Yinghe (Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou) investigated the background and construction of the American Garden at Canton quay from 1842 to 1857. The paper *Guangzhou and the last days of Siam's tribute to China after the Opium War* by Murao Susumu (Tenri University) and Masuda Erika (Academica Sinica, Taipei) focused on the activities of Siamese tributary missions in Guangzhou during the 1850s, a period when Siam gradually seceded from the Chinese tributary system.

Export of arts
With her paper *Japanese export paintings in the 19th century* Ito Shiori (Chiba City Museum of Art) examined the activity of Kawahara Keiga (1786-1865?). She classified Japanese export paintings in two overlapping categories: paintings which 'happened to be exported' and paintings which were 'made to be exported', and as a result provided a new vision for both Japanese export paintings and Chinese trade paintings.
Anne Gerritsen (University of Warwick) presented some initial comparisons between Western observations of manufacturing porcelains for export in 17th century China and Japan, through the ports of Canton and Nagasaki. Her examination of contemporary travel accounts revealed interesting differences. Liu Zhaohui (Fudan University, Shanghai) explored the historical background of Rua Central, Rua dos Mercadores and Rua das Estalagens in Macau, where Kraak porcelains were unearthed, and investigated their relationship with the ceramic trade in the 17th century. With her paper *Chinese and Japanese export lacquer: the beginning and the end,* Cynthia Viallé (Leiden University) attempted to answer questions such as why would the Chinese be exporting Japanese lacquerwares when there was also a large scale production of pieces for export for the European market? Who were the Chinese supplying with these Japanese export lacquers? And, what was the difference in Chinese export and Japanese export lacquer objects?

Towards modernity
Among other papers, Ren Seikichi (Nagasaki University) spoke about the construction of a cultural sphere in cities around the China Sea. Himeno Junichi (Nagasaki University) compared six photographers, who took photographs at both or either Canton and Nagasaki between the 1840s to 1860s. In doing so, he conributed to the understanding of modernity and colonisation and, moreover, the meaning of world history.
George Wei (University of Macao) investigated and portrayed the importance of the contribution of Canton and Macao to China's modernisation.

Views from the west
Zhou Xiang (Sun Yat-sen University) researched the observations of American male traders, recorded in their correspondances. These letters, written in Canton and Macao, reveal the important role of American traders in the establishment of Sino-American diplomatic relations. Wulan Remmelink (Leiden University) showed us a two-way, intercultural exchange of scientific knowledge through botanical illustrations in her paper *Botanical illustrations: an instrument for Eastern-Western scientific exchange in late 18th and early 19th century Nagasaki and Canton.*

Challenges to the system
Documents relating to the voyage of the English ship, *The Return*, which docked in Nagasaki in the summer of 1673, were the subject of of Timon Screech's paper (University of London), *The projected English return to Japan in the 1670s*. Using these documents, Screech considered how and why – half a century after the withdrawal of the English East India Company in 1623 – the voyage back to Japan was planned and also the reasons for its ultimate failure. At this last session Toyooka Yasufimu (University of Tokyo) researched the British occupation of Macao in 1809 as a foretaste of the transformation of Sino-English relations. In the final paper of the conference, *The ensign of the Bakufu: a prehistory of Hi-no-maru,* Matsukata Fuyuko (University of Tokyo) described how Japanese vessels identified themselves in the Tokugawa period and how they later tried to show their affiliations to Western-style warships.

Everyone hopes the transactions of the conference will be published in the course of 2010.

Rosalien van der Poel
Independent researcher
rhmvanderpoel@kpnmail.nl

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

ICAS

The ICAS Book Prize 2011

THE ICAS BOOK PRIZE (IBP) seeks to honour the best of Asian Studies. The IBP 2011 will be awarded for outstanding Asian Studies English-language works in the fields of the social sciences and humanities. We now invite authors to submit their books with copyright dates running from July 2008 to July 2010. The winners of each category will receive €2,500 in prize money.

Preparations for the fourth edition of the IBP are in full swing. Rightly so, because the deadline of *15 August 2010* is fast approaching. The Reading Committee consisting of senior Asia scholars is being assembled. Their names will only be divulged during the awards ceremony in Honolulu. From 1 January to 1 March 2011 the online voting for the Colleagues Choice Award will be open. The winner of this award will receive a return flight to the next edition of ICAS.

PhD Reading Committee & ICAS Fellows Laboratory
From IBP 2011 onwards there will be a Reading Committee for the best PhDs in the humanities and social sciences. We hope that this will stimulate the partcipation of young scholars not only in ICAS but also in the IBP competition. The members of the IBP-PhD Reading Committee are the 2009 PhD prize winners: Birgit Abels (humanities: birgitabels@googlemail.com) and Iza Hussin (social sciences: hussin@post.harvard.edu). Their names, in contrast to those of the IBP Reading Committee, are made public so that they may actively solicit newly promoted doctors to send in their theses for the IBP 2011. Expect them to contact you in the near future! The deadline for sending in PhDs defended between July 2008 and July 2010 is the same as for the IBP, *15 August 2010*. The prize-winning theses will be published in the ICAS Publications Series. We are also investigating possibilities to create an ICAS Fellows Laboratory so that prize winners can work on turning their theses into publications.

Those shortlisted may also be invited to join the ICAS Fellows Laboratory.

For more information on the IBP, its rules and regulations, previous prize winners and editions please visit www.icassecretariat.org

Joint Conference AAS/ICAS
Honolulu, Hawaii
March 31-3 April, 2011

The Association for Asian Studies (AAS, founded 1941) will celebrate its 70th anniversary in 2011 and will hold a commerative conference in close cooperation with the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS, founded 1997). These two largest organisations in the field of Asia studies have chosen Honolulu as the venue – the crossroads of East and West. It promises to be an unprecedented meeting in both size and range but also in terms of topics and themes covering all aspects of Asia. We expect this gathering to draw 3,000 to 5,000 participants, exhibitors and visitors from all over the world.

The joint conference is the result of a fast-growing rapprochement between East and West and at the same time is clear proof of the increasing internationalisation of Asia studies. No wonder, Asia has become an economic, political and scientific player of the first order in world affairs. Understanding Asia is imperative for us all.

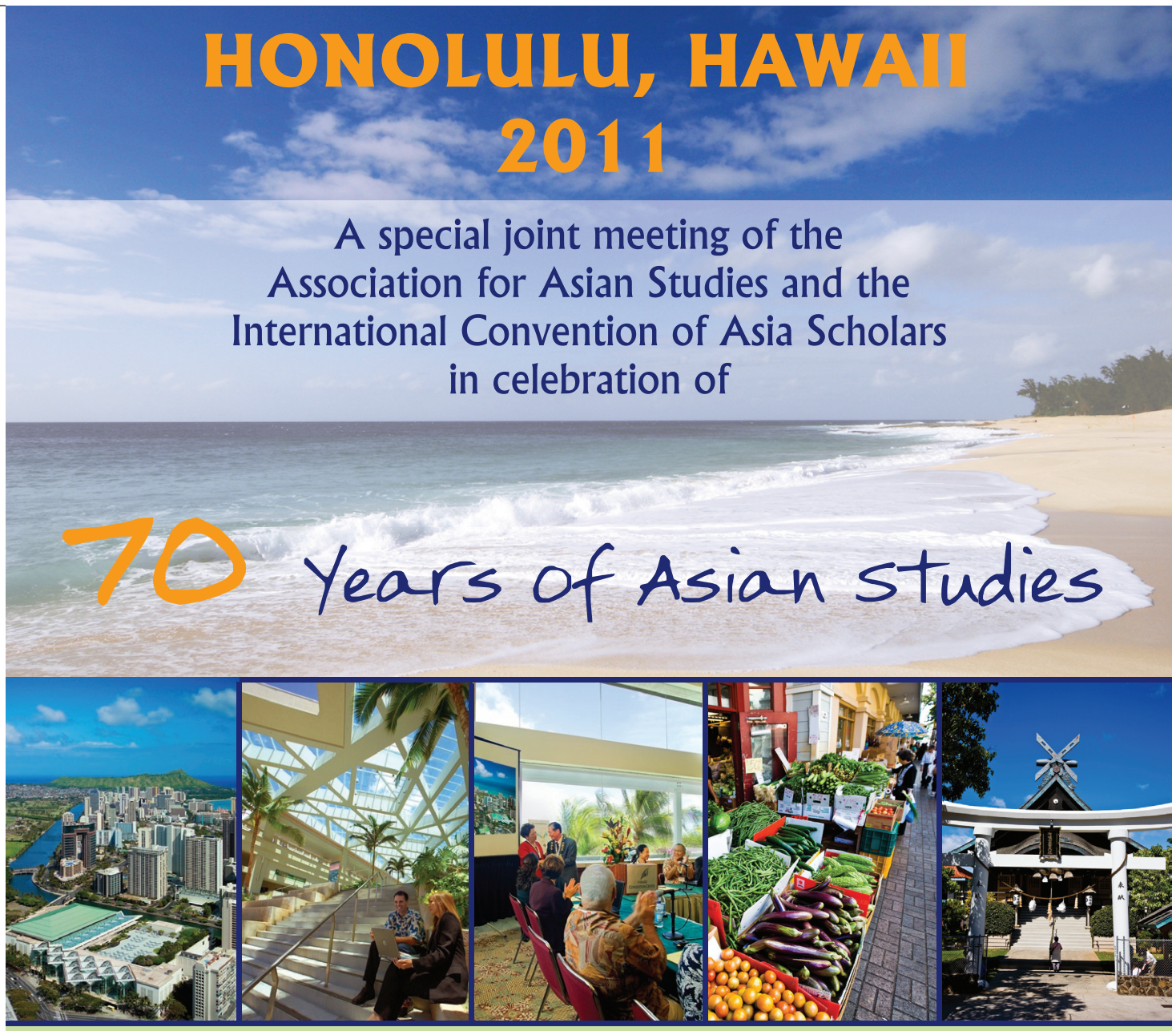
The four day meeting at the Hawaii Convention Center will comprise several hundred events ranging from panels, roundtables and book launches to speeches, film and video presentations, workshops and cultural events. The majority of the interdisciplinary presentations will be made by members of AAS and ICAS who are scholars covering all academic disciplines and regional Asia specialisations. We expect to enhance and broaden these scholarly sessions by including keynote addresses by representatives of civil society organisations, business people, journalists and policy makers from all continents.

The joint conference will also connect with the place where it is being held. In addition to the panels, roundtables and other programmatic elements, an Asia Festival will be organised in close cooperation with the local authorities and cultural institutions. Asian movies, theatre, dance, comics, performances, martial arts and food will be found at various locations in Honolulu and on Oahu.

Of course given the beauty and many attractions of Hawaii, we expect most of the participants and visitors to the joint conference will make time before or after the conference to relax with friends or family and to explore Hawaii and its surroundings.

Information will come online at the end of March. Please note that the deadline for sending in abstracts and panel proposals is *1 August 2010*.

For further information:
www.icassecretariat.org / www.aasianist.org



Photos: David Cornwell, Hawaii Tourism Association(HTA)/Tor Johnson, Hawaii Tourism Japan (HTJ)

Mark your calendar!

March 31–April 3, 2011

Association for Asian Studies

International Convention of Asia Scholars

Call for Papers will be available April 2010. Check www.asian-studies.org for further details.

Korea International Studies Association

RECENTLY, the Korea International Studies Association (KISA) was launched in Korea. The association is open to practitioners as well as scholars and students of International Studies, broadly conceived. Conducting all events exclusively in English and bringing together International Studies scholarship from Korea and beyond, KISA intends to contribute to the ongoing growth and development of International Studies in Korea and beyond.

KISA will be a vehicle to advance International Studies in Korea, aiming to foster International Studies scholarship in Korea. Specifically, its objectives are:

- To promote International Studies in the English language as an independent field of social studies in Korea.
- To construct a flourishing academic and professional community in the field using English medium.
- To foster an active scholarly network, support ongoing research, and contribute to an intellectually stimulating environment for scholars engaged in English language-based research in International Studies in Korea.
- To disseminate knowledge of issues within International Studies to the Korean and international audiences.
- Membership is open to all with an interest in the analysis or practice of international studies in the English medium; the official language of the Association.
- In an effort to encourage the dissemination of knowledge, KISA is endorsing two regularly publications, the *International Studies Review* published as a peer-reviewed academic journal at Ewha Womans University, and Papers, Essays, and Reviews, published at Yonsei University, run by graduate students, and as an outlet primarily for young graduate and post-graduate scholars.

On 8 October, the Inaugural Conference 'International Studies in Korea' and official launch event of KISA was held Ewha Womans University in Seoul. The inaugural conference supported by the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA), the Korean Journal of Defense Analysis, and by the Institute for Development and Human Security of Ewha Womans University. Initially, KISA was an initiative of Profs. Brendan Howe at Ewha Womans University and Matthias Maass at Yonsei University, who can be contacted via bmg.howe@gmail.com and mmaass@yonsei.ac.kr respectively.

From the beginning, KISA had been set up to network people and ideas. International Studies, International Relations, and Political Science associations already existed in the region. However, what might be lacking are two things:

First, the integration of non-Korean and English-language International Studies scholarship into a broader debate in Korea remains incomplete. KISA intends to address this shortcoming and provide English-language International Studies scholarship a forum and scholars a medium to network and cooperate.

Second, Korean International Studies scholarship remains at times insufficiently integrated into regional or global discussion networks. Hence, KISA wishes to link up with other associations that have similar regional and thematic foci in order to deepen Korea's integration into wider academic and professional debates in International Studies.

In this context, the assistance lent by APISA and ICAS to KISA from the very start was very much appreciated. In fact, the enthusiasm shown by either organization was instrumental to getting KISA off the ground. APISA provided financial support and ICAS provided a forum to advertise KISA and promote the upcoming launch conference. In light of this, KISA remains strongly committed to deepen its relationship with APISA and ICAS in order to interface Korean International Studies scholarship with people, networks, and organizations outside of Korea.

Announcements

The Global Forum of Chinese Scholars in Public Administration

May 28th-29th, 2010
Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou, Peoples' Republic of China

CHINA HAS accomplished remarkable achievements in economic reform and development in the last three decades, largely attributable to the leading role of government. Meanwhile, issues in and challenges for government administration in China have become increasingly prominent. How should the Chinese government promote the next round of economic, political and social reform in order to achieve comprehensive, stable and sustainable development objectives? Transformation of governance is an obvious choice. However, many important questions still remain: What is the ultimate goal of the governance transformation? How should government be transformed? They are the issues Chinese scholars of public administration around the world have been working on.

In order to facilitate discussion of these issues, the Center for Public Administration Research, School of Government at Sun Yat-Sen University, School of Public Policy and Administration at Xian Jiaotong University, and China-America Association for Public Affairs will organize and sponsor the Global Forum of Chinese Scholars in Public Administration in May 2010.

Three main purposes of this forum:
- Focus on issues in China, draw on international experience, and address China's issues from a global perspective
- Synthesize wisdom and insights of Chinese scholars in public administration around the world, and provide Chinese government advice on government transformation
- Explore China's issues, and make unique contribution of Chinese scholars to theory and practice of public administration

Organizers
Center for Public Administration Research of Sun Yat-sen University, School of Government at Sun Yat-Sen University, China-America Association for Public Affairs, School of Public Policy and Administration, Xian Jiaotong University

Themes
- Social Transformation and Governance
- Capacity-building in Governance in the Process of Globalization
- Government Functions and Structure
- Local Governance Innovation
- Formulation and Implementation of Public Policy
- Anti-corruption and Administrative Ethics
- Civil Society and Civic Participation

Participants
40 will be invited. 20 are domestic attendees (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), and the other half are international attendees.
Working Language: Chinese

For further information contact:
Ms. Xiaoyin Wang (王晓茵)
Center for Public Administration Research
135 West Xin Gang Road, Guangzhou, Guangdong, 510275
Peoples' Republic of China
E-mail: lpxzgl@mail.sysu.edu.cn
Telephone/Fax: 86-20-84038745

Summer Institute: studies in Japanese popular culture

THE INSTITUTE of Contemporary Asian Studies at Temple University's Japan Campus announces the launch of a new academic program in Studies in Japanese Popular Culture. This unique summer institute program is designed to develop a systematic and focused study of Japanese culture, analyzing how Japanese popular culture is becoming a leading global force of social innovation.

Through qualitative, collaborative research projects, the institute curriculum allows students experiential opportunities to understand Japanese popular culture on its own terms. Taking advantage of TUJ's central Tokyo location and association with popular culture networks and professional organizations, the courses include ethnographic site visits and lectures by noted authorities on Japanese popular culture.

The TUJ Summer Institute is conceived by Temple University as a study abroad program: students register through the university's office of International Programs, and the program is open to all qualified students regardless of academic affiliation. Students enroll in three of the five substantive courses offered for a total of nine or ten credits, all of which transfer to the US university system (Temple University's Japan Campus is the oldest and largest American University in Japan). Courses are taught by distinguished faculty and are conducted in English. Japanese language proficiency or previous Japan experience is not required, but students may begin or continue their study of Japanese as a component of the program.

Curriculum
Anime in Japanese Popular Culture (Asian Studies: 3 credits)
This course critically examines the themes and representations in anime works in relation to the historical and socio-cultural contexts of postwar Japan, in order to gain insights into how and why it has gained global significance as a subculture. Topics to be covered include the historical development of the production and reception of anime, in relation to media, visual arts and technology; the themes, characters and representation in major works; and their symbolic meanings in the Japanese as well as global context.

Manga in Japanese Popular Culture (Asian Studies: 3 credits)
This course will provide a basis for understanding Japanese manga in social, historic and cross-cultural context, reviewing the emergence of manga and the conditions of its development as an art form, commercial industry and cultural commodity. Topics include the art historical origins of manga; the variety of manga characters, genres and their relation to social and technological development; the relation of manga to computer games; and their adaptation in contemporary Japanese TV and cinema. Special attention will be paid to the 1970s and 1980s, when 'otaku' fan culture emerged. The course adopts a hands-on approach to manga, offering guided excursions into areas including Akihabara, Nakano and Ikebukuro. Manga artists and industry insiders will also visit the class to share their experiences and insights.

Problems in Sociocultural Anthropology (Anthropology: 3 credits)
The focus of this course is to develop a nuanced understanding of contemporary Japanese society, by incorporating substantial fieldwork and collaborative research projects addressing social problems facing youth today. Youth issues are of global concern, as they reflect the structural dislocations of late modernity, but, in Japanese society, they are often conceived to reflect 'uniquely Japanese' particularities of the local culture. These issues underlie the production or consumption of popular culture, and in Japan have come to be expressed in social problems facing youth, as they respond to the challenges of social change.

Japanese Youth and Popular Culture (Sociology: 3 credits)
This seminar addresses the convergence of youth and popular culture, highlighting the performative aspects of youth subcultures in contemporary Japanese society. The course looks at the impact of mass media (music, film, television) on Japanese society and youth culture in particular; the intensive communities of on-line cyberculture and digital media networks; racial and political representation in Japanese hip hop and punk music; the style subcultures of Goth[Lolita], Cos-play and their subcultural networks; and examines how youth culture embodies and creates new forms of cultural innovation in these various realms.

Faculty
The faculty for this program have diverse experience and academic expertise which complement each other, so that the courses are integrated into a structured academic program that explores the multi-faceted varieties of Japanese popular culture.

The Institute faculty are:

Roland Kelts (M.A., Columbia University, Fine Arts) is the half-Japanese American author of Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture has Invaded the US and the forthcoming novel, Access (Penguin). He is also a contributing editor and writer for Adbusters magazine and A Public Space literary journal, and a columnist for The Daily Yomiuri. He has taught at New York University, The University of Tokyo and Sophia University, and has delivered speeches on contemporary Japanese culture at numerous institutions across the US, Japan, Australia and the UK. His writing appears in Psychology Today, Animation Magazine, Bookforum, Vogue, The Village Voice and other publications, and he is a contributor to the collections A Wild Haruki Chase, Playboy Fiction, Gamers, Kuhaku, Art Space Tokyo, Zoetrope and others. He is the Editor in Chief of the Anime Masterpieces screening and discussion series and a frequent contributor to National Public Radio.
http://japanamerica.blogspot.com/

Patrick W. Galbraith (Ph.D. Researcher, The University of Tokyo, Information Studies) is a cultural anthropologist whose research focuses on the impact of material conditions on fantasy, specifically how shifts in modes of capitalism and consumption impact otaku culture in Japan. He has worked as a freelance journalist specializing in Japanese popular culture since 2004, which culminated in writing The Otaku Encyclopedia and co-founding Otaku2.com. He contributes to Metropolis and Otaku USA Magazine. He also offers a professional weekly guided tour of Akihabara.
http://www.otaku2.com/index.php

Sachiko Horiguchi (Ph.D., University of Oxford, Anthropology) is an Assistant Professor in Anthropology at Temple University Japan Campus. She is the only anthropologist who has successfully conducted long-term field-based research of hikikomori (socially withdrawn youth), with particular focus on the social construction of the hikikomori problem and changing notions of the "self" in contemporary Japan. She has published in both English and Japanese on hikikomori and has taught at Sophia University and in the exchange program at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Kyle Cleveland (Ph.D., Temple University, Sociology) is the Summer Institute Director, and is an administrator and Associate Professor of Sociology at Temple University Japan Campus. As the founding Director of the university's Institute of Contemporary Asian Studies, he has supervised special programs in Japanese popular culture and visual media studies, organized a lecture series, and produced events and symposia related to contemporary political issues. Through the Wakai Project, he organizes a series of events in which students from various universities, scholars, activists, and media collaborate to address how globalization is affecting youth culture in Japan.

Application procedures and deadlines
For students who reside in the U.S., and who are coming as study abroad students via US-based institutions, see the website for Temple University's Office of International Programs. For more information, please contact Temple University International Programs: 200 Tuttleman Learning Center, 1809 N 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122; 215-204-0720; study.abroad@temple.edu. Application deadline for those non-Japan based students who enroll through Temple University's American-based main campus is February 15, 2010.

Japan-based students (including local TUJ students) and students applying from non-U.S. overseas countries may apply directly to TUJ in Tokyo through TUJ Admissions Counseling at ac@tuj.ac.jp or 0120-86-1026. Application deadline for those Japan-based students is April 1, 2010.

US-Deadline for enrollment: February 15, 2010
Japan-based Deadline: April 1, 2010

TUJ Summer Institute Information:
http://www.tuj.ac.jp/events/2010/0524.html
Summer Institute Director: Kyle Cleveland
cleveland@tuj.ac.jp
Tel. +81-3-5441-9800

Public Management in the 21st Century: Opportunities and Challenges

The 4th International Conference
October 22-23, 2010, Macau, China

THIS CONFERENCE, jointly hosted by the Center for Public Administration Research of Sun Yat-Sen University, the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau of the Macau SAR, the University of Macau and the Macau Foundation, will be held in Macau. The conference serves as a forum for researchers and practitioners from academia and government to present, discuss, and exchange ideas that address real-world cutting-edge issues in public administration. The conference includes, but is not limited to, the research themes listed below:
- Financial Crisis, Globalization and Role of Government
- Social Changes, Risk Society and Social Responsibility of Government
- NGO, Civil Society and Public Governance
- Government Reform in North America
- Government Reform in Latin America
- Government Reform in Africa
- Government Reform in Asia
- Government Reform in the Europe Union
- Government Reform in East Europe
- Economy, Social Development and Public Governance: Experiences from Macau
- Public Accountability: Theories and Practices
- Anti-corruption in the World: Experiences and Examples

Registration and Accommodation
There is no registration fee. The conference organizers will provide presenters from outside Macau with accommodation and local transportation during the conference. Airfares and other travel costs will not be covered by the organizers.

Conference Venues
This conference will be held at the University of Macau.

Other information about Macau
Please go to http://cn.macautourism.gov.mo for more information about Macau.

For further information contact:
Ms. Jane Zheng
Center for Public Administration Research of Sun Yat-Sen University
No. 135, Xingang Xi Road, Guangzhou, Guangdong, P.R.China. Zip code: 510275
Email:macauconference@gmail.com
Tel/Fax: 86-20-84038745

CALL FOR PAPERS
The Sixth Annual Meeting of the Chinese Hayek Society
August 6-7, 2010
Department of Economics and Finance, Shue Yan University, Hong Kong

The theme of the conference is 'The Relevance of F.A. Hayek on China's Economy and Society.'
The conference invites proposals for panels and papers on related topics.
Abstracts are due on March 1, 2010.
For further details about the meeting, please visit: http://fs3.hksyu.edu/~hayek/

For further information contact:
Prof. Yu, Fu-Lai flyu@hksyu.edu and Dr. Yuen, Wai-Kee wkyuen@hksyu.edu,
Department of Economics and Finance, Shue Yan University, Hong Kong.

IIAS research

Programmes

IIAS CENTRE FOR REGULATION AND GOVERNANCE

The IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance in Asia, is engaged in innovative and comparative research on theories and practices and focusing on emerging markets of Asia. The Centre serves as a focal point of collaborative research between European and Asian scholars. Its multidisciplinary research undertakings combine approaches from political economy, law, public administration, crimino-logy, and sociology in the comparative analysis 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 Territoriality and Sovereignty.
Coordinator: Tak-Wing Ngo
t.w.ngo@hum.leidenuniv.nl

SCIENCE AND HISTORY IN ASIA

The complex links between science and history in Asian civilisations can be studied on at least two levels. First, one can focus on the ways in which the actors have perceived those links; how, on the one hand, they have used disciplines that we now categorise as sciences, such as astronomy, for a better understanding of their own past; and, on the other hand, how they have constructed the historicity of these disciplines, giving them cultural legitimacy. Secondly, one can reflect on historiographical issues related to the sciences. How can the sciences be incorporated into historical narratives of Asian civilisations? This question is crucial, given the dominant 19th and 20th century view that science is a European invention, and that it has somehow failed to develop endogenously in Asia, where 'traditional science' is usually taken as opposed to 'Western' or 'modern science', This project will address various approaches to the issue by organising five international work-shops in Cambridge, Leiden and Paris.
Sponsored by: NWO Humanities, Needham Research Institute, Recherches Epistémologiques et Historiques sur les Sciences Exactes et les Insitutions Scientifiques (REHSEIS), and IIAS.
Coordinators: Christopher Cullen (Needham Research Institute) c.cullen@nri.org.uk and Harm Beukers (Scaliger Institute, Leiden University) h.beukers@hum.leidenuniv.nl

GENDER, MIGRATION AND FAMILY IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

Developed from an earlier research project on 'Cross-border Marriages', this project is a comparative study on intra-regional flows of migration in East and Southeast Asia with a focus on gender and family. It aims at studying the linkage between immigration regimes, transnational families and migrants' experiences. The first component of the project looks at the development of the immigration regimes of the newly industrialised countries in East and Southeast Asia. The second component looks at the experiences of female migrants in the context of the first component. To investigate these issues, this project will bring together scholars who have already been working on related topics. A three-year research project is developed with an empirical focus on Taiwan and South Korea as the receiving countries, and Vietnam and the PRC as the sending countries.
Coordinators:
Melody LU (IIAS) m.lu@iias.nl

ZHANGZHOENG

This sub-project of Dr Henk Blezer's Vidi project 'Three Pillars of Bön' focuses on Zhangzhoeng scripts (end of the first millennium A.D., in West Tibet), which later became closely related to the identity of the Bön religious minority group. The researchers in this project study the diachrony of these allegedly old scripts from the perspective of the development of scripts in the wider region and from the perspective of Bön textual sources.
Coordinator: Henk Blezer
h.w.a.blezer@hum.leidenuniv.nl

PLANTS, PEOPLE AND WORK

This research programme consists of various projects that study the social history of cash crops in Asia (18th to 20th centuries). Over the past 500 years Europeans have turned into avid con-sumers of colonial products. Production systems in the Americas, Africa and Asia adapted to serve the new markets that opened up in the wake of the 'European encounter'. The effects of these transformations 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 over the last 200 years. The individual projects focus on tobacco, sugar, and indigo in India and Indonesia.
Institutes involved: University of Amsterdam, International Institute of Social History (IISH, Amsterdam), and IIAS. Coordinators: Willem van Schendel h.w.vanschendel@uva.nl and Marcel van der Linden mvl@iisg.nl

SENSHI SOSHO

This project, funded and coordinated by the Philippus Corts Foundation, aims to translate a maximum of 6 official Japanese publications of the series known as 'Senshi Sosho' into the English language. From 1966 until 1980, the Ministry of Defense in Tokyo published a series of 102 numbered volumes on the war in Asia and in the Pacific. Around 1985 a few additional unnumbered volumes were published. This project focuses specifically on the 6 volumes of these two series which are relevant to the study of the Japanese attack on and the subsequent occupation of the former Dutch East-Indies in the period of 1941 until 1945.
Coordinator: Jan Bongenaar
iias@iias.nl

ASIA DESIGN

This programme consists of individual projects related to graphic design and architectural design in Asian megacities.
Institutes involved:IIAS, Modern East Asia Research Centre (MEARC), Delft School of Design (DSD). Sponsored by: IIAS and Asiascape.

Asia Design: Translating (Japanese) contemporary art
Takako Kondo focuses on (re)presentation of 'Japanese contemporary art' in art critical and theoretical discourses from the late 1980s in the realms of English and Japanese languages, including artists' own critical writings. Her research is a subject of (cultural) translation rather than art historical study and she intends to explore the possibility of multiple and subversive reading of 'Japanese contemporary art' in order to establish various models for transculturality in contemporary art.
Coordinator: Takako Kondo
t.kondo@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Asia Design: The post colonial global city
This research examines the postcolonial cities of South, East and South-East Asia, and how some of them have made the successful segue from nodes in formerly colonial networks to global cities in their own right. This is intended to be an inter-disciplinary approach bringing together architects and urbanists, geographers, sociologists and political scientists, as well as historians, linguists and anyone else involved in the field of Asian studies. The research concentrates on cities that have successfully made the transition from colonial to postcolonial nodes in the global network (e.g. Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai). A key factor in the research is architectural typology. Architecture is examined to see how it can create identity and ethos and how in the postcolonial era these building typologies have been superseded by the office building, the skyscraper and the shopping centre, all of which are rapidly altering the older urban fabric of the city.
Coordinator: Greg Bracken
gregory@cortlever.com

ENERGY PROGRAMME ASIA – EPA

Established in September 2007, this programme addresses the domestic and geopolitical aspects of energy security for China and the European Union. The geopolitical aspects involve analysing the effects of competition for access to oil and gas resources and the security of energy supply among the main global consumer countries of the EU and China. The domestic aspects involve analysing domestic energy demand and supply, energy efficiency policies, and the deployment of renewable energy resources. Within this programme scholars from the Netherlands and China will visit each other's institutes and will jointly publish their research outcomes.
Institutes involved: Institute of West Asian and African Studies (IWAAS) of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). Sponsored by: KNAW China Exchange Programme and IIAS
Coordinator: Mehdi Parvizi Amineh
m.p.amineh@uva.nl

Networks

AGEING IN ASIA AND EUROPE

During the 21st century it is projected that there will be more than one billion people aged 60 and over, with this figure climbing to nearly two billion by 2050, three-quarters of whom will live in the developing world. The bulk of the ageing population will reside in Asia. Ageing in Asia is attributable to the marked decline in fertility shown over the last 40 years and the steady increase in life-expectancy. In Western Europe, ageing populations developed at a slower pace and could initially be incorporated into welfare policy provisions. Currently governments are seeking ways to 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: Réseau de Recherche Internationale sur l'Age, la Citoyenneté et l'Intégration Socio-économique (REIACTIS) Sponsored by: IIAS.
Coordinator: Carla Risseeuw
c.risseeuw@iias.nl

ABIA SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY INDEX

The Annual Bibliography of Indina Archaeology is an annotated bibliographic database for publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. The project was launched by IIAS in 1997 and is currently coordinated by the Post-graduate 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-graphies, published in a series by Brill. The project receives scientific support from UNESCO.
Coordinators: Ellen Raven and Gerda Theuns-de Boer
e.m.raven@iias.nl www.abia.net

CALL FOR PAPERS
15th International Meeting of CHIME
24-28 November 2010, Basel, Switzerland
The European Foundation for Chinese Music Research

The music of China and East Asia: theory versus practice
How does musical theory in China and East Asia differ from musical theory elsewhere in the world? What are its unique contributions to culture and to musical performance? How can we meaningfully integrate theory and practice in the (many) cases where theory and performance practice clash? These questions form the theme of the 15th International CHIME meeting, to be held in Basel in conjunction with the Swiss festival Culturescapes.

CHIME is a worldwide network of scholars and afficionados of Chinese and East Asian music. The annual meetings are open to interested scholars and students in the realms of musicology, ethnomusicology, popular culture, anthropology, and East Asian languages, cultures and religion, but also to anyone else with a professional or private passion for Chinese and East Asian music. The official language of the meeting is English. Presentations in Chinese and in other languages can be accepted if speakers provide a written translation of their presentation in advance.

For the Basel 2010 edition of CHIME, scholarly proposals for individual papers, panels and poster presentations are welcomed. Abstracts of up to 300 words for individual (20-minute) papers and for posters should be sent by e-mail to the Dutch main office of the CHIME Foundation, c/o Programme Committee of the 15th CHIME Meeting, P.O.Box 11092, 2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands, e-mail address: chime@wxs.nl.

In the case of panel proposals we ask for a short description of the panel topic as well as for individual abstracts by the panel participants. Abstracts must have reached us by 15 May 2010.

Possibilities exist for early acceptance of papers for those who need to rely on this for grant applications. As always, we look forward to a lively meeting, including various recitals and concerts of tradtional Chinese music. More news on the meeting and on possibilities for pre-registration can be found on the CHIME website at http://home.wxs.nl/~chime

Buddhism and Nordland 2010

Fourth International Conference of the Estonian Nyingma
23-25 September, 2010
Tallinn University, Estonia

THE AIM of the Conference 'Buddhism and Nordland' is to study the Buddhist history of the Nordic countries and expand upon Buddhism as a cultural phenomenon in historical and cultural contexts. Orientalists, scholars and Buddhists will meet under similar topics from the Nordic countries and beyond, for example Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Finland, Norway, St.Petersburg Russia, Mongolia, Ukraine, China and India.
The main subject of the Conference Buddhism and Nordland 2010 is 'Historical Connections of Buddhism in the Nordic countries'.

Possible topics include:
- Buddhism in a broader sense of schools (Buddhism in Tibet, Mongolia, China);
- Themes related to Buddhism (architecture, art, literature, music, martial arts);
- Buddhist philosophy, psychology, rituals;
- Western Buddhism and local cultures-assimilation, conflict and absorption;
- Contemporary Buddhism in Asia;
- Psychologies of religion, cross cultural psychology

We are soliciting paper proposals on any aspect of the Buddhist tradition. The working language of the conference will be English (simultaneous translation into Estonian). The time for paper presentation is 30 minutes. Presented papers will be published on the conference website.

For more information contact:
Marju Broder
marju.broder@gmail.com
tel: +372 56 56 23 25
http://www.budcon.com

IIAS Fellows

Central Asia

DR IRINA MOROZOVA
Moscow State University, Russian Federation.
Stationed at the Branch Office Amsterdam & Leiden.
Conflict, Security and Development in the post-Soviet Era: Towards regional economic cooperation in the Central Asian Region.
24 Apr 2003 – 31 Dec 2010

East Asia

DR MEHDI P. AMINEH
Stationed at the Branch Office, Amsterdam & Leiden.
Programme Coordinator of Energy Programme Asia (EPA).
Sponsored by KNAW/CASS.
Domestic and Geopolitical Energy Security for China and the EU.
1 Sep 2007 – 1 Sep 2010

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

DR RICHARD BOYD
IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance.
Rent Seeking and Development in East Asia.
16 Nov 2009 – 16 May 2010

PROF. CHISTOPHER CULLEN
Needham Research Institute, Cambridge, United Kingdom.
Sponsored by NWO/NRI/REHSEIS
History of Chinese Science and Medicine.
1 Sep 2008 – 31 Dec 2010

DR. HIKARU SUGAWARA
Associate Professor of Senshu University/Japan, Department of Law.
Sponsored by Senshu University.
Reconsidering the political thought of Japan and the Dutch Learning.
1 Apr 2011 – 31 Mar 2012

DR CATHERINE JAMI
REHSEIS, Paris, France.
Science and History in Asia.
Sponsored by NWO/NRI/REHSEIS.
Circulation of scientific Knowledge between Europe and China, 17th and 18th Centuries.
1 Sep 2008 – 31 Dec 2010

DR MASAE KATO
University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
A comparative Study on Socio-genetic Marginalisation: Japan in 'Asia' in relation to the 'West' as a Reference Group.
1 May 2008 – 1 Apr 2010

MS. TAKAKO KONDO
Leiden Institute of Area Studies, the Netherlands.
Sponsored by IIAS and Asiascape.
Translating (Japanese) Contemporary Art.
1 Sep 2009 – 31 aug 2012

DR YA-PEI KUO
Sponsored by NWO.
Cultural Wars: Conservatism in Early 20th Century China.
1 Feb 2009 – 31 Mar 2010

DR. FRANCESCA DAL LAGO
Leiden Institute for Area Studies. Sponsored by IIAS.
The Drawing of Modernity: European Academic Education and the Making of Chinese Modern Art (1911-1937).
1 Sept - 31 Dec 2010

DR JESSE YU-CHEN LAN
Department of Public Policy & Management, I-Shou University, Taiwan.
Sponsored by NSC and IIAS.
Regulating Medical Profession: The Politics of Health Insurances in Taiwan.
3 months in 2010

PROF. TAK-WING NGO
IIAS Extraordinary Chair at the Faculty of History and Arts, Erasmus University, Rotterdam.
History of Asia.
1 May 2008 – 1 May 2012

PROF. CARLA RISSEEUW
Leiden University, the Netherlands.
Ageing in Asia and Europe.
1 Jan 2008 – 1 Apr 2010

DR MARGARET SLEEBOOM-FAULKNER
University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.
Human Genetics and its political, social, cultural and ethical Implications.
17 Sept 2001 – 1 Sept 2010

ZHILIN TANG
School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University, China.
Sponsored by IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance.
China's central-local government relations and technological innovation: the case of Chinese Science and Technology Industrial Parks (STIPs).
1 Feb 2010 – 30 Apr 2010

PROF. SHUXIAN YE
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
Sponsored by KNAW.
Creation Mythology project.
1 Apr 2010 – 30 Apr 2010

DR HUNIB YIN
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
Sponsored by KNAW.
Creation Mythology project.
1 Apr 2010 – 30 Apr 2010

PROF. YOUNGSOO YOOK
Chung-Ang University, Korea.
IIAS Professor, European Chair of Korean Studies.
Sponsored by the Academy for Korean Studies.
From a Hermit Kingdom to an Enlightened Nation? Fin-de-Siècle Korea As Exhibited at the Paris Exposition of 1900: Revisited.
20 Aug 2009 – 20 Aug 2010

PROF. CHAN-LIANG WU
National Taiwan University.
IIAS Professor, European Chair of Chinese Studies.
Sponsored by IIAS, BICER and the Ministry of Education Taiwan.
Zhu Xi and Sung Neo-Confucianism, Counter-Enlightenment in Modern China.
16 Sep 2009 – 16 Sep 2010

South Asia

DR MANUELA CIOTTI
University of Edinburgh.
Political agency and gender in India. Writing women, Dalits and subalterns into political modernity.
4 Jan 2010 – 1 Apr 2010

MS ELISA GANSER
Sapienza University of Rome, Italy. Sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation
An Annotated Translation and Study of the Chapter on Dance in the Nāṭyaśāstra and its commentary Abhinavabhāratī.
1 May 2010 – 1 Aug 2010

MR KALSANG GURUNG
Leiden University, the Netherlands.
The Founder of Bon: The Birth of a Myth.
1 Jan 2009 – 1 Jul 2009
Affiliated from
1 Jul 2009 – 30 Jun 2010

DR SARAJU RATH
Scanning, Preservation, and Translitteration of Selected Manuscripts of the Taittirya Tradition.
5 Jan 2004 – 1 Jan 2010
Affiliated from
1 Jan 2010 – 1 Apr 2011

DR ELLEN RAVEN
Leiden University, the Netherlands. South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaelogy Index (ABIA).
Sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation.
Art, Material Culture and Archaeology of South and Southeast Asia.
1 Oct 1996 – 31 Dec 2011

MS GERDA THEUNS-DE BOER
Leiden University, the Netherlands. South and Southeast Asia Art and Archaelogy Index (ABIA).
Sponsored by the J. Gonda Foundation.
South and Southeast Asian Art and Archaelogy Index.
1 Nov 2002 – 1 Jun 2011

Southeast Asia

DR JULIANA ABDUL WAHAB
School of Communication, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia.
Reality TV and Quest of Globalization.
16 Jan 2010 – 25 Jul 2010

DR AMANDA ACHMADI
University of Melbourne, Australia.
Sponsored by KITLV and IIAS.
Exploring Bali's Hidden Urban Middle Class Culture and Cities.
1 Jun 2010 – 1 Aug 2010

MR AZHARI AIYUB
Aceh-Indonesia Artist in Residence. Sponsored by Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation, The Ludo Pieters Guest Writer Fund, Poet of All Nations (PAN) Holland and IIAS.
Dec 2009 – May 2010

DR. TOM VAN DEN BERGE
KITLV, The Netherlands.
H.J. van Mook, 1849-1965: Een vrij en gelukkig Indonesie.
1 Jun 2009 – 31 May 2010

MS YETTY HANING
Centre for Studies & Advocation of Human Rights of Nusa Cendana University, Indonesia.
Timor Sea Border Issues.
1 Sep 2008 – 1 Sep 2010

DR DIPIKA MUKHERJEE
Negotiating Languages and Forging Identities: Surinamese-Indian Women in the Netherlands.
1 Dec 2006 – 31 May 2010

PROF. GERARD PERSOON
IIAS Extraordinary Chair, Institute of Cultural Anthropology, Leiden University.
Environment and Development: indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia.
1 Jul 2009 – 1 Jul 2014

DR HADIJAH BTE RAHMAT
Sponsored by NIE/NTU, Singapore
European Relations and Influences on Malay-Indonesian Literary development
15 Sept – 15 Dec 2010

ASSOC. PROFESSOR MINA ROCES
School of History and Philosophy. The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.
A History of Filipino Migration and Identity, 1908-2008
20 Aug – 15 Sep 2010

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

MOUNTAINS IN THE RELIGIONS OF SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA: PLACE, CULTURE, AND POWER

4th SSEASR Conference, Thimphu, Kingdom of Bhutan June 30 - July 03, 2011

A Regional Conference of the IAHR, member CIPSH under the auspices of the UNESCO organised by South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR) hosted and coorganised by Royal University of Bhutan Institute of Language and Culture Studies, Thimphu, Kingdom of Bhutan.

MOUNTAINS ARE ASSOCIATED with the central values, practices, beliefs, and identities of religious cultures and traditions throughout the world. The physical and symbolic geography of mountains has inspired people for millennia with feelings of awe and wonder, as well as of fear and trepidation. In South and Southeast Asia, these experiences have sparked creativity in the realms of both religious discourse and practice. Mountains are perceived and revered in sacred texts, rituals, and practices as markers of both the transcendence and immanence of spiritual power: they are identified as gods or the abodes of gods; they serve as temples or places of worship; they house the ancestors and the dead; and they are sources of inspiration, cultural pride, and local and national identity. As links between nature and culture, mountains occupy a prominent place in the history of the region.

The sacredness of mountains is believed to manifest in two principal ways: mountains embody religious power and are sites for its manifestation. In the first instance, specific peaks are singled out by particular cultures and traditions as embodiments of special sanctity: these sacred mountains have well-established networks of myths, beliefs, values and practices such as pilgrimage, meditation, and sacrifice (e.g. the Himalayas). Mt. Everest is considered the residence of Miolangsangma, the goddess of good fortune; as a result, indigenous peoples have banned the killing of animals (snow leopard, yak, etc) that reside in the higher elevations of the Himalayan zone. In the second instance, mountains that are not revered as embodiments of religious power may nevertheless be the locations of specific religious sites. These sites are subject to reinterpretation and they can become locations of cultural negotiation and conflict. In East Timor, for example, sacred caves, which were once central to local religions, are now linked to the Catholic Church and reinterpreted through a new religious lens. The Cordillera region in the Philippines, which encompasses most of the mountain range of Luzon, provides another instance of partial and selective sacrality. The entire mountain is not a symbol of reverence but its high terrain terraces are believed to be places that sustain life, the environment, and agriculture through ritual and religious practice.

Beliefs about the sacrality of specific mountains often reflect the coexistence of different religious traditions. Some Southeast Asian cultures believe that the ancestral spirits of mountains descended from the mountains in the spring in order to transform into gods of the rice fields; they would then return to the mountains from fall to winter and were once again worshipped as mountain gods. Another example is the peak of Mount Kailasa (in the Tibetan plateau), which is the pagoda palace of Demchog in Tibetan Buddhism and the abode of Siva in Hinduism. In Indonesia, many Balinese believe that there is an inseparable association between the Hindu temple and the mountain, but at the same time, they may continue to practice a form of pre-Hindu worship.

Bhutan is a country of mountains, not only because mountains occupy almost 80% of the country, but also because throughout history, the life, culture and religion of the Bhutanese people have been inseparably related to mountains. Hence, the Royal University of Bhutan and the Institute of Language and Culture Studies, Thimphu are our natural hosts.

The Conference intends to nurture the highest forms of scholarly dialogue among scholars from all parts of South and Southeast Asia but scholars from all over the world are equally welcome. This 4th SSEASR Conference which has been also declared as an IAHR Regional Conference for the year 2011. Session and paper proposals dealing with the study of mountains, religion, and culture through various academic disciplines are invited. The papers can be submitted on the following suggested sub-themes (but not limited to these):

- Rituals and Symbols of Sacred Mountains in South Asia
- Rituals and Symbols of Sacred Mountains in Southeast Asia
- The Topography, Geography of Religions in South and Southeast Asia
- Mountains, Gender, and Power
- Mountain People, Hill Tribes and their Belief Systems: Ethnicity and World Views
- The Himalayas: A Cradle of Religion
- The Overland Silk Route: Interaction of Trade and Religion
- The Representation of Mountains in Global Mediascapes
- Religious Arts, Performances, and Literatures of Mountain Cultures
- Mountains as Iconic and Marginalized Spaces
- Methodology and Theory in the study of Mountain Religions
- Mountains in Cognition and Cosmology
- The Religious Imagination and Imaginaries of Mountains
- Mountains, Displacement, and Transnational Communities
- Mountains as Religious Sites of Negotiation and Conflict
- Mountains and the Ethics of Globalisation, Development, and Environmental Protection
- Conservation, Preservation, and the Politics of Mountain Sites
- Tourism, Historical and Cultural Practice of Pilgrimage and the Politics of Heritage

Other papers are also welcomed covering the study of culture and religion in the region. The requisite visa fee for foreigners visiting Bhutan is likely to be waived for those scholars who would receive the paper's acceptance letter from us.

Note: The SSEASR operates under the policies and principles of the parent body The International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), which seeks to promote the activities of all scholars and affiliates that contribute to the historical, social, and comparative study of religion. As such, the IAHR is the preeminent international forum for the critical, analytical and crosscultural study of religion, past and present. The IAHR is not a forum for confessional, apologetical, or other similar concerns. Some pre and post-conference tours inside Bhutan are being designed for visiting scholars. Details regarding the conference accommodation, and the mode of payment of the registration fees, excursion tours, etc. will be announced very soon.
For details, please visit the website www.sseasr.org or email us at BhutanSSEASR@hotmail.com

Important Deadlines
Registration of Interest: February 15, 2011
Early Registration Payment: April 15, 2011
Last Submission of Abstract: May 15, 2011

Dr Amarjiva Lochan Ven, President, SSEASR
Lungtaen Gyatso, Chair, Organising Committee
Prof Rosalind Hackett, Chair, Organising Committee

Colophon

IIAS Main Office Leiden
PO Box 9500
2300 RA Leiden
The Netherlands

Visitors:
Rapenburg 59, Leiden
T +31-71-5272227
F +31-71-5274162
iias@iias.nl

IIAS Branch Office Amsterdam
Spinhuis
Oudezijds Achterburgwal 185
1012 DK Amsterdam
The Netherlands

T +31-20-525-3657
F +31-20-525-3010
iias@fmg.uva.nl

IIAS Newsletter #53 Spring 2010 ISSN 0929-8738

Editor: Anna Yeadell
Guest Editors: Markus Schleiter and Erik de Maaker
Design: Artmiks, Amsterdam
Printing: Wegener Grafische Groep, Apeldoorn

Advertisements
Submit by: 1 May 2010

www.iias.nl

IIAS
International Institute for Asian Studies

The Newsletter | No.53 | Spring 2010

Siebold's flower garden Botanical paintings of the Siebold collection

The impact Philipp Franz von Siebold made on the garden flora of Europe remains fairly unknown. At the beginning of the 19th century, Siebold returned to the Netherlands from Japan with a collection of 700 (living) plants. He cultivated these specimens in his own garden and planted 30 of them in the Botanic Garden in Leiden, which still features 15 of the original plants today. The introduction of the hydrangea, camellia, Japanese anemone and many other plants into the European garden had become a fact.

Fig. 2

Fig. 1

Fig. 3

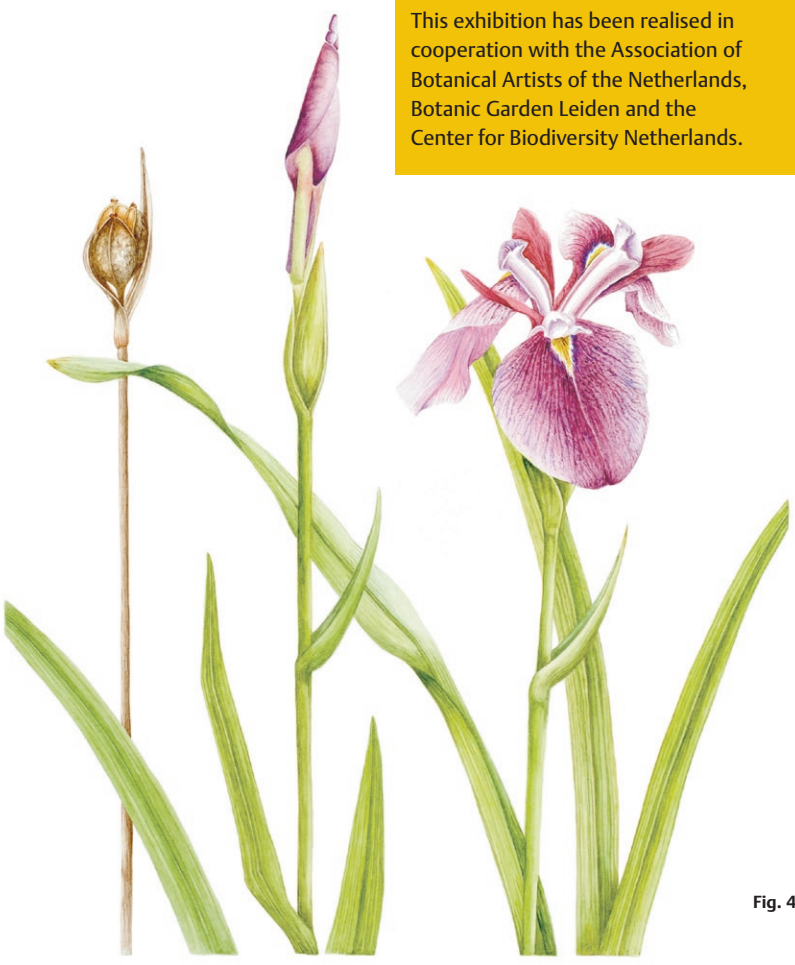


Fig. 4

Fig. 1
Ginkgo biloba, by Dick Smit.

Fig. 2
Wisteria sinensis, by Jacomien van Andel.

Fig. 3
Roze anemoon, Anemone hupehensis japonica, by Anita Walsmit Sachs.

Fig. 4
Iris ensata, by Trisnati Noto Soeroto.

DURING SIEBOLD'S STAY IN JAPAN between 1823 and 1829 he continued the work of his predecessors on the botany of Japan. The German physician Engelbert Kaempfer and the Swedish doctor Carl Peter Thunberg had already written two books that described part of the Japanese flora. Thunberg had also introduced the classification system of Linnaeus to Japan, something Siebold highly appreciated. According to Siebold, these two books encompassed two-thirds of the entire botany; he considered it his mission to make a full description.

With the help of one of his students, Kō Ryōsai, painter Kawahara Keiga and a physician from Nagoya, Itō Keisuke, Siebold collected and made fine botanical drawings of many plants. On his court visit to Edo these three accompanied him and made it possible to add many plants to their inventory.

Back in Europe, Siebold met the German botanist Joseph Gerhard Zuccarini from Munich. Together they formulated a plan to publish the *Flora Japonica* and other botanical works. Zuccarini took care of the description in Latin, while Siebold provided the Japanese and Chinese names, a description of where they grew, their use, cultivation and history in French. It were these last additions that made these publications so valuable. However, when Zuccarini died, the project stagnated. After Siebold's death the Director of the National Herbarium completed five more issues which included a large number of new plants, many of which he dedicated to Siebold and his helpers. Unfortunately, he died before he could complete the task, leaving the *Flora Japonica* unfinished to this day.

Siebold's influence on the European botany, then, is rather important. Still today, there are plants which bear his name, such as *Hosta sieboldiana*, while others refer to their origins in Japan like *Fatsia japonica*. Interestingly, Siebold named the large blue hydrangea, *Hydrangea otaksa*, after his Japanese wife, Otaki. All these plants are now common species in the European garden.

Inspired by this extraordinary individual, the Association of Botanical Artists of the Netherlands created paintings of the best known plants that Siebold introduced to the Netherlands. These unique watercolours form the basis of a new exhibition at the SieboldHouse in Leiden – 'Siebold's Flower Garden'. The exhibition also features volumes of the *Flora Japonica* as well as drawings by Kawahara Keiga and material collected by Itō Keisuke. Together with the original specimens planted by Siebold in the Botanic Garden in Leiden, this exhibition gives a broad account of Siebold's achievements regarding the advancement of Japanese plants in Europe.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue. In addition, a programme of lectures and workshops is scheduled.

Competition

WIN A CHANCE to participate for free in a three day workshop on 'Botanical drawing' by sending your best watercolour to:

Mrs. Anita Walsmit-Sachs,
Nationaal Herbarium,
Postbus 9514,
2300 RA Leiden.

For further information and reservations via e-mail: anitaws@xs4all.nl

This exhibition has been realised in cooperation with the Association of Botanical Artists of the Netherlands, Botanic Garden Leiden and the Center for Biodiversity Netherlands.

PROGRAMME		
April 25	14.00h	**Siebold and botany** Lecture by Carla Teune in the SieboldHuis
May 2	14.00h	**Botanical paintings in Japan** Lecture by Wulan Remmelink in the SieboldHuis
May 9	11.00h & 14.00h	**Workshop Ikebana** in the SieboldHuis, fee €25
May 16	12.00h	**Sunday walk** Siebold and the Hortus, Botanical Garden Leiden
June 6	12.00h-15.30h	**Workshop 'Drawing outdoors' in the Botanical Garden Leiden,** Fee €10 including coffee/tea and drawing material

Please reserve in advance at the SieboldHuis or the Botanical Garden. For further information: www.sieboldhuis.org