

ASEASUK NEWS



NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM

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- ANTHONY REID: *A History of Southeast Asia: Critical Crossroads.*
- VANIA BOUTE AND VATTHANA PHOLSENA (Eds.): *Changing lives in Laos: society, politics and culture in a post-socialist state*
- PAUL T. COHEN (Ed.): *Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism*
- MEGHA AMRITH: *Caring for Strangers: Filipino Medical Workers in Asia*
- LISANDRO E. CLAUDIO: *Liberalism and the Postcolony. Thinking The State In 20th-Century Philippines*
- VEDI R. HADIZ: *Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East*
- ROSS KING: *Heritage and Identity in Contemporary Thailand: Memory, Place and Power*
- MANDY SADAN (ed.): *War and Peace in the Borderlands of Myanmar: The Kachin Ceasefire, 1994-2011*
- SOPHORNTAVY VORNG: *A Meeting of Masks: Status, Power and Hierarchy in Bangkok*
- MAJ NYGAARD-CHRISTENSEN AND ANGIE BEXLEY (eds.): *Fieldwork in Timor-Leste: Understanding social change through practice*
- ANDREW COCK: *Governing Cambodia's Forests: The International Politics of Policy Reform*

EDITORIAL

The very sensible decision has been taken by the Executive Committee of ASEASUK to introduce changes in the ways in which we report our news. A twice-yearly newsletter cannot meet the current demands of our membership and our wider international audience for up-to-the minute news. Therefore, this will be the last issue in the current format. Henceforth the Association will move to a blog platform where book reviews, conference reports, op-eds, and news items that arise from Executive Committee and other Association meetings will be posted as they are received on an on-going basis rather than twice-yearly. It is likely that short news items will be posted on the Facebook page. The Association will be seeking to appoint a blog editor from November after the next Executive Committee meeting.

Perhaps a brief reflection on the history of the newsletter is appropriate at this time to recognize those who have worked hard in the service of the Association. The first issue of the newsletter appeared in November 1984 following a decision by the Annual General Meeting of ASEASUK in March 1984 that we needed a vehicle to report what was going on in Southeast Asian Studies circles in the UK. Tony Stockwell, the then Secretary of the Association, took on the task and edited three newsletters to February 1986, modestly produced on rather attractive green pages, stapled together.

With British Academy support and funding from 1986 we then became more ambitious. The production of the newsletter was moved to the then Centre for South-East Asian Studies at Hull, co-edited by Jan Wisseman Christie and me. The first issue appeared in the Spring of 1987; the newsletter remained in Hull for 16 years. Issues became more substantial, the green turned to orange/gold, still stapled, and after six years Pauline Khng took over the reins from Jan Christie; I carried on.

Pauline remained in post from 1993 until the autumn of 2014. During that time the responsibility for the production of the newsletter moved from Hull to SOAS (the last issue at Hull was Spring 2003, and SOAS produced the Autumn 2003 issue), following the demise of the Southeast Asian Studies programme at Hull, and Pauline's move to London. The format of the journal also changed with Number 15, Spring 1994; the staples went as did the coloured paper; pure white paper was introduced, bound, double-column format, enclosed by card-covers, the front cover illustrated with Southeast Asian postage stamps; we also introduced book reviews.

The postage stamps had had their day by the Autumn issue 36, 2004, and the new ASEASUK logo (the encircled map of Southeast Asia) was introduced on the front cover in the Spring issue 37, 2005. In Autumn 2005 the newsletter became available electronically for the first time. By 2011 the front cover map was clearly failing among the membership to generate the necessary level of excitement, and in the Spring issue Number 51, 2012, coloured images of Southeast Asia appeared for the first time; and, with the appropriate symbolism in mind, sheaves of rice were displayed.

After her long service on behalf of the Association and the newsletter Pauline Khng stood down (after the Spring issue 2014) to be replaced by Tamara Aberle who has done admirable work for us in producing six issues of the newsletter up to the final issue in this format in Autumn 2017. The three formidable co-editors, Jan, Pauline and Tamara, have enabled me to continue as co-editor for 30 years. With their support there was very little for me to do. They deserve our sincere and heartfelt thanks for ensuring that the newsletter has maintained its high standards and has appeared regularly since 1987. Following the production of this issue Number 62 we enter a new and exciting phase in the life and work of the Association.

Prof. VT King, co-editor ASEASUK

NOTES FROM ASEASUK'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee recognises the huge effort Terry has put into compiling, publishing and sustaining the Newsletter since he became involved with it many years ago. The Newsletter has been an essential element of the Association and we really value the contributions he has made to our success. Terry has been a true stalwart of the organisation in this role and we look forward to his continuing involvement as a member of the Research Committee. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I would like to express our deepest gratitude for the work Terry has put in contributing to and compiling ASEAS(UK) News over the years.

Dr Deirdre McKay
Chair, ASEAS (UK)

New Executive Committee Members

The Executive Committee of ASEASUK has seen changes recently due to members standing down for various reasons, in some cases because they have done sterling work for us over the last few years and feel it is time for others to step forward, and in other cases because they have taken up academic posts outside the UK. Although we are delighted to welcome increasing numbers of

regular members to ASEASUK who live elsewhere in the world, our Executive Committee members all reside in the UK because of the need to attend twice-yearly meetings.

We therefore thank Professor Mike Charney, from SOAS, very warmly for his hard work on the Association's behalf, and particularly for facilitating our 2016 conference at SOAS. Dr Matt Walton, of the University of Oxford, has taken up a post in the abroad and again, we are very grateful to him for his support, especially in helping ASEASUK maintain a high profile at the EuroSEAS conference in Oxford in August this year. Dr Kirsten Schulz, from the LSE, has also decided to step back due to other commitments: amongst other aspects during her time on the Committee, she played a key role in organizing our postgraduate seminar in 2015.

Their places have been taken by Dr Mulaika Hijjas from the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at SOAS, Dr Kevin Fogg from the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, and Dr Catherine Allerton from the Anthropology Department at LSE. We welcome them to the ASEAS ExComm and look forward to seeing them at our next formal meeting in November. You can find profiles of all ExComm members at this link - <http://aseasuk.org.uk/4/a/about-us>.

Research Impact Awards

ASEASUK made several Research Impact Awards earlier this year to members. Early Career Awards of £1500 were made to Eva Bentcheva, of London's Tate Gallery, for her project "Mapping process-based art in the Philippines, 1960s-80s", and to Tallyn Gray (University of Westminster), for his work on "Narrating justice in Cambodia". Postgraduate awards of £1000 each were made to Ruji Auethavornpipat (Australian National University) for "US-ASEAN engagement on human trafficking", Jessica Rahardjo (University of Oxford) for her research on "The Royal funerary material culture of Bima", and to Sarah Windred (University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia) for research into "The experiences and perspectives of child domestic workers and their employers in Indonesia". We look forward to reading their field reports, and the resulting publications

NEWS

UK SOUTHEAST ASIANISTS

Dr Fiona Kerlogue (Horniman Museum) is currently working on the new permanent gallery at the Horniman Museum, including displays on Thai narrative and Indonesian batik. Researching a collection made in Indonesia in the 1930s by Czech author Ruszena Charlotta Urbanova, she gave a presentation on 'Dayak cultural heritage: The material legacy of early migrations, kingdoms and trade routes' at the 'Bornéo-Dernière Terra Incognita?' study day organised by Museo delle Culture de Lugano and Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, held at Musée du Quai Branly on 8th September 2017. From 6th to 8th January 2017, she was present at the event 'Islamic Occultism in Theory & Practice' at the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, where she talked about 'Calligraphic batiks'.

Professor Susan Bayly (Cambridge University) is currently working on a British Academy funded project entitled 'Beyond "propaganda": Images and the moral citizen in late-socialist Vietnam'. Fieldwork periods were in March-April 2017 and forthcoming November-December 2017. She presented related papers at the National University of Singapore in February 2017; at

the National University of Social Sciences, Hanoi and the Vietnam National Museum of Fine Arts, Hanoi in April 2017.

Dr Janet Cochrane (Leeds University [Visiting Fellow] and Leeds Beckett University [Research Associate]) researched and co-authored a report on 'Risk and Crisis Management in the Tourism Sector in OIC countries', through Tourism Development International, for the Standing Committee for Economic & Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, including field trips to South Africa and Turkey (Jan-Sept 2017).

Dr Ben Murtagh (SOAS, University of London) is now Head of the newly formed School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at SOAS.

Seb Rumbsy (University of Warwick) is working on his ongoing PhD research on political and economic dynamics of mass Christian conversion among the Hmong of Vietnam's highlands. He presented his paper 'Alternative routes to development? The political economy of Christian conversion among a marginalised ethnic minority group in Vietnam' at ASEASUK (August 17) and Salzburg University (September 17).

Professor Matthew Isaac Cohen (Royal Holloway, University of London) is on leave from Royal Holloway in the autumn of 2017 to work as a Visiting Senior Fellow in the Indo-Pacific department of the Yale University Art Gallery, where he is researching and curating the Dr Walter Angst and Sir Henry Angst Collection of Indonesian Puppets. This is the largest wayang collection in the world, comprising approximately 15,000 puppets and thousands of related artefacts. In June, he undertook a three-week research residency at the Institut International de la Marionnette in Charleville-Mézières, France, to study archival sources on wayang and shadow theatre globally. He also performed with the Institut's museum puppets in a lecture-demonstration on Javanese shadow puppet theatre, with simultaneous interpretation into French. In May, the Centre for Asian Theatre and Dance hosted two visiting artists from Indonesia, Dr Lili Suparli and Bapak Achmad Farmis. Together with Matthew and a group of international postgraduate students, Dr Suparli and Pak Farmis created a practice-as-research performance entitled Not Just a Collaboration (Bukan Sekedar Kolaborasi), which was performed at Royal Holloway's Handa Noh Theatre on 25 May. This production enquired into different understandings of collaboration across cultures, and how artists might listen, move/dance, puppeteer, act and play music together while at the same time retaining autonomy and authenticity. This was followed up by an academic symposium hosted by the Centre for Asian Performing Arts: Collaboration and Exchange on 30 May, which involved the creators of Not Just a Collaboration framing their project in relation to other collaborations and exchanges in Asia and internationally. In 2016/17 he gave the following papers and presentations:

- 'Indonesian Arts Diplomacy as Form of Argument'. 9th EuroSEAS Conference, University of Oxford, 17 August 2017.
- 'Discovering Wayang Kulit'. Lecture-performance with shadow puppets from the collection of the Institut International de la Marionnette, TIM (Theatre), Charleville-Mézières, France, 22 June 2017.

- 'Change and Continuity in Wayang as a Performing Art: Historical Perspectives on Indonesian Puppetry from Museums and Collections'. Presentation to the Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art, SOAS, University of London, 5 June 2017.
- 'The Practice of Appropriation: Indonesian Puppets as Found Objects'. Presentation at TAPRA Interim Event - Asian Performance and Diaspora Group: Locating Practice in Research. University of East London, 2 June 2017.
- 'Tradition in Modernity: The Concept of Performing Arts in Southeast Asia'. Keynote address at the seminar *Changes in Action: New Technologies, Media and Transformations in Contemporary Southeast Asian Performing Arts*. SOAS, 15 May 2017.
- 'Wayang in Museums: Why I am No Longer Sad'. Invited presentation at *'Still in the Game': The State of Indonesian Art History in the 21st Century*. Cornell University, 21-23 April 2016.
- 'Southeast Asian Shadow Puppets in Performance'. Gallery talk at the British Museum, 8 December 2016.
- 'Wayang in Museums and Collections: Some Preliminary Considerations'. 29th ASEASUK Conference, SOAS, London 17 September 2016.

Professor Victor T. (Terry) King (Universiti Brunei Darussalam [UBD], SOAS, University of London, and University of Leeds) is currently Professor of Borneo Studies in the Institute of Asian Studies, UBD. His contact email address there is victor.king@ubd.edu.bn. He continues as Senior Editorial Advisor for the Research Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD) at Chiang Mai University. There are now two series in process under the general title 'Critical Perspectives on Regional Integration' directed to the publication of about 50 research Masters dissertations, one series undertaken in RCSD and the other under the auspices of the Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia (CDSSEA), which comprises Masters development programmes at Chiang Mai University, Chulalongkorn University, and the Asian Institute of Technology. It is anticipated that the first volumes in the series will begin to appear at the end of this year. He visited Chiang Mai University in April-May to work on the series and then to assist in the development of the Asian Journal of Tourism Research published by the University. He visited Chiang Mai again from 11-22 July to continue this work and to attend the 13th International Conference of Thai Studies (15-18 July) where he chaired three panels on tourism studies and delivered a paper entitled 'Tourism and Leisure in Thailand: Development, Mobilities and Encounters'.

With co-compilers Professors David Harrison and Jerry Eades he has recently submitted a 4-volume reader on Tourism in East and Southeast Asia for publication with Routledge in 2018. He is also currently working on another 4-volume reader for Routledge with Professor Ooi Keat Gin under the provisional title Southeast Asian Studies: Critical Thinkers to be completed in 2018.

Dr Susan Conway (SOAS, University of London) visited Bangkok archives for the commencement of her research project 'Village textiles as gifts to Thai royalty'. In addition, she chaired two panels at the conference 'Globalised Thailand? Connectivity, Conflict and Conundrums in Thai Studies' held at Chiang Mai University, Thailand, July 2017.

Dr Annabel Teh Gallop (British Library) brought 16 Malay manuscripts on loan from the British Library to Singapore for display in the exhibition 'Tales from the Malay World' at the National Library of Singapore, 17 August 2017 - 25 February 2018, and also gave a public lecture

at the National Library of Singapore on 18 August 2017 on 'Art and Artists in Malay Manuscript Books'. She also attended the Workshop on 'Mechanical copying in multilingual and multiscript manuscript cultures: xylography and lithography in relation with manuscript production' at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, Hamburg University, 30 June - 1 July 2017, and presented a paper on 'Beautifying the book: ornamental elements in early Malay lithographs'. Furthermore, she attended the Workshop on 'Islamicate networks in the early modern world: global and regional impact' at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, 17-18 September 2017, and presented a paper on 'Migrating manuscript art: Sulawesi diaspora styles of manuscript illumination'.

Professor William G. Clarence-Smith (SOAS, University of London) currently researches Middle Eastern and South Asian migrants in the Philippines, manufacturing in the in the 19th-Century Philippines as well as pearling (1815-1945).

He gave the following papers:

- 'The breeding of mules in Islamic law,' Workshop 'Sharia in motion, II' Pembroke College and CRASSH, Cambridge, 14-16 July 2017.
- 'Moralising commerce in the long nineteenth-century: the example of pearling,' Conference 'Moralising commerce in a globalising world: multidisciplinary approaches to a history of economic conscience, 1600-1900,' German Historical Institute in London, 22-24 June 2017.
- 'The concept of diasporas,' PSL Iris Project 'Global Studies,' Paris, 12-13 June 2013.
- 'Modern industry in the late Spanish Philippines, 1830s to 1898,' Convenio CSIC-NHCP, 'La modernización de Filipinas en el siglo XIX,' CSIC, Madrid, 1-2 June 2017.
- 'Equids in Mozambican history,' International Conference, 'José Capela e a história de Moçambique: 45 anos depois *O vinho para o preto*,' Faculdade de Letras, Universidade do Porto, Oporto, 29-30 May 2017.
- 'Pearling: global marketing, processing and consumption, 1815 to 1945,' Global History Seminar, Magdalene College Cambridge, 25 May 2017.
- 'Ottoman military camels, 1516-1918,' SOAS Camel Conference, SOAS University of London, 29 April 2017.
- 'Sayyid Wajih al-Kilani, Palestinian *shaykh al-Islam* of the Philippines: mission to America, 1915-1916,' Conference, 'American and Muslim Worlds circa 1500-1900,' University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 30 March - 1 April 2017.

Dr Tilman Frasch (Manchester Metropolitan University) gave two lectures. In May 2017, he spoke about 'Buddhist Mobilities in Early Southeast Asia: Bagan and Angkor Reconsidered' as part of the Lecture Series "Rivers, Megacities and Mobilities in Southeast Asia" at Hamburg University and, in the same month, gave a presentation on "Medieval temple economies and the 'Buddhist Rate of Growth' – Lessons from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries" at the Hallsworth Conference 'Road to Wealth' at the University of Manchester. He also met with SEA curators at the Hamburg Ethnographic Museum regarding their Myanmar collection. This is to be continued. In July 2017, he visited the library at the University of Liverpool to catalogue Myanmar manuscripts.

Dr Margaret (Jiggs) Coldiron (East 15 Acting School/University of Essex) presented 'Hippolytos: A Case Study in Collaborative Performance Making' at the Asian Performing Arts,

Collaboration and Exchange Conference, Royal Holloway University of London. This was an analysis of the production she directed in 2015-16 of Euripides' *Hippolytos*. The production reformulated this Greek tragedy into an Indonesian-style dance drama incorporating West Javanese Jaipong and Balinese Topeng. It was a collaboration between Thiasos Theatre Company and UK-based Indonesian choreographers and featured the Balinese actress and dancer Aryani Willems (now living in Germany) in a leading role. The production toured to the Gardzienice Centre for Theatre Practices and the Polish National Theatre in Warsaw, and was also performed at Indonesia Kontemporer at SOAS in London. In August 2017, she was panel organiser and chair at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, for 'Spectacular! Incorporating Asian Performance into the traditional theatre curriculum'. Jiggs has become External Examiner for the BA in Acting and Global Theatre at Regent's University, London.

Lesley S Pullen (SOAS, University of London) is a PhD Research Student at Department of the History of Art and Archaeology, 2010-2017. Thesis title: 'Representation of Textiles on Classical Javanese Sculpture'. Lesley submitted her PhD thesis on 15 December 2016, viva voce examination was on 12 May, amended thesis submitted 4 September, doctoral award pending. Lesley gave the following papers at conferences:

- Early Textile Study Group 15th Conference, 'Precious Cloth and Court Culture', University of Cambridge, 16 and 17 September 2017. Paper titled 'Evidence of luxury textiles in the Singhasāri court of king Kṛtanāgara 1258-1292'.
- EuroSEAS 9th Conference, University of Oxford, 16 to 18 August 2017. Panel Convenor 'Reappraising Figurative Ornamentation: mid-10th to mid-20th century'. Paper titled 'Case Study: Mañjuśrī 13th century east Java: clothed in a textile patterned with roundels'.
- Specialist Art Course, SOAS University of London, 10 to 13 July 2017. Course Convenor 'Textiles and Motifs through Asia'. Lectures titled 'Introduction to Textile Motifs', 'Sacred and Secular Textiles of Bali', 'Gold Textiles of Sumatra' and 'Textiles represented on Southeast Asian Sculpture'.
- Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art, Southeast Asia Module, SOAS University of London, April to July 2017. Lectures titled 'Indo-Javanese Bronzes', 'East Javanese Sculpture', 'Introduction to Austronesian Culture', 'Indigenous Arts of Indonesia: Ikat and Ornaments' and 'Pre-Colonial Gold of the Philippines and Java'.
- Victoria and Albert Museum, Arts of Asia Year Course, Southeast Asia, 13 February to 27 March 2017. Course Convenor. Lectures titled 'Ikats from Indonesia: from Sumatra to Bali', 'Batik Kraton, batik Jambi and batik Belanda' and 'The Spanish in the Philippines 17th to 19th centuries: Gold and Santos'.
- Jnanapravaha, Mumbai, India, Certificate Course, Southeast Asian Art and Architecture, 8 and 9 February 2017. Lectures titled 'Java: Textile Arts of the Medieval Period' and 'Bali: Architecture and Ceremonial Arts'.

SOUTHEAST ASIANISTS ABROAD

Dr Gorიაeva Liubov (Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences) is working on a translation of the *Hikayat Abdullah* into Russian (text, research article, comments, indexes, maps). 2015-2020. Estimated volume, 400pp. Furthermore, she is head of the seminar 'Textology

and Source Studies of the Orient' at the Written Sources Department at the Institute of Oriental Studies conducted every fortnight. She is also Chairman of the annual international conference 'Written monuments of the Orient: Problems of Translation and Interpretation'. The VIIth conference will take place in October 2017 at the Institute of Oriental Studies.

Joseba (Jos) Estévez (University of Münster, Germany) is executive board member of the Thailand, Laos and Cambodia Studies Association. He has been working on a variety of research projects over the last few years. These are:

- 'The Lanten Oral (Hi)Stories', in cooperation with the National Library of Laos, financed by BEQUEAL-Laos Innovative Funds (BEIF; 2017-2019)
- 'Daoism, Chinese imperial power and borderland local society: The case of the Lanten Yao in Laos' in cooperation and financed by the University of Hong Kong (2017-2018)
- 'A Digital Library of the Lanten Textual Heritage', in cooperation with the National Library of Laos and the University of Hong Kong, financed by the British Library's Endangered Archives Programme (EAP791; 2015-2017)
- 'The Role of the Lanten Ritual Experts among the Lanten (Yao Mun) of Laos', financed by the German Research Foundation (2011-2014)

Dr. Alfred Gerstl (University of Vienna, Austria) is currently conducting research in the area's South China Sea Dispute; One Belt, One Road and its impacts on Southeast Asia; terrorism and counter-terrorism. He chaired the panel 'The South China Sea Dispute: A Shift to a More Proactive Role in ASEAN's Discourse and Concrete Policies since 2012?' at the 9th EuroSEAS conference in Oxford, 16–18 August 2017. At the East Asia Net Workshop in Madrid (21/21 April 2017) he gave a paper on 'The Southeast Asian Notion of Sovereignty'. At the event 'Regional Variations and the Role of Local Actors in Chinese Cultural Diplomacy: Taking Central Asia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Central Europe as Case Studies' held at the Oriental Institute, Academy of Sciences, Prague (Czech Republic) on 23/24 February 2017 he spoke about 'China's One Belt, One Road Initiative: Effects on and Perceptions in Southeast Asia'.

Valerie Mashman (University Malaysia Sarawak) has submitted her PhD thesis with the title 'A History of *Lun Tauh*, Our People at the Borders of the Kelabit Highlands: From Warfare to the Life of Government to the Life of Christianity'. She is currently researching peace-making in Sarawak as Research Fellow at the Sarawak Museum Campus and Heritage Trail Project, Sarawak Museum, Jalan Barrack, Kuching, Sarawak East Malaysia. In April 2017 at the Southeast Asia PhD Workshop held at McGill University–Université de Montreal (27-28 April 2017) she talked about 'Oral Narratives: Definitions and Underlying Values'. In the same she also presented a paper at the ICOSH-UKM, Bangi 2017 titled 'Becoming like us – from nomads to settled padi-farmers at Long Beruang, Sarawak East Malaysia'. In December 2016 at the 5th Asia Borderlands Network Conference in Kathmandu the topic of her talk was 'The story of *Lun Tauh*, Our People : narrating ethnicity in the Kelapang, the Kelabit Highlands'.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

The **Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA) Conference 2017** holds its conference 'Unity in Diversity: Transgressive Southeast Asia' from **16-17 December 2017** in Bangkok, Thailand. For more information: <https://seasia-consortium.org/call-for-seasia-2017/>

The East-West Center invites graduate students from around the world to submit abstracts for the **17th International Graduate Student Conference on the Asia Pacific region**, taking place from **15-17 February 2018** in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. For more information: <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/education/student-programs/current-ewc-students/international-graduate-student-conference>.

The **Southeast Asian Studies Symposium 2018 "What is Southeast Asia? Exploring Uniqueness and Diversity"** will be held from **22-24 March 2018** at Universitas Indonesia. For more information: <http://projectsoutheastasia.com/academic-events/sea-symposium-2018>.

The **Association for Asian Studies 2018 Annual Conference** will be held from **22-25 March 2018 in Washington, D.C. – Register by 1 December 2017**. Conference pre-registration and housing now open (including lottery for FREE grad student conference registration!). For more information: <http://www.asian-studies.org>.

The next **ASEASUK conference** will be held at Leeds University from **5-7 September 2018**. Conference themes are: Sustainable and Equitable Development; Social Change and Good Governance; Cultural Heritage and Cultural Production. The Call for Panels is now open. Please send your proposals to J.E.Cochrane@leeds.ac.uk. For more information: <http://aseasuk.org.uk/4/>.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

ALLERTON, CATHERINE

- 2017. 'Contested Statelessness in Sabah, Malaysia: Irregularity and the Politics of Recognition'. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies. Special Issue on Statelessness, Irregularity, and Protection in Southeast Asia*, edited by Marie McAuliffe. 15(3): pp. 250-268.

BAYLY, SUSAN

- 2016. 'Colonialism/Postcolonialism'. In the *Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Anthropology* (eds.) F. Stein et al. online: <http://preview11.admin.cam.ac.uk/article/colonialismpostcolonialism>
- 2018. 'Anthropology and History', in Candea, M. ed., *Schools and Styles of Anthropological Theory*. Taylor and Francis, in press.

CLARENCE-SMITH, WILLIAM G.

- 2017. 'Migrantes del sur de Asia en Filipinas a lo largo del siglo XIX', in María Dolores Elizalde and Xavier Huets de Lempes, eds., *Filipinas, siglo XIX: coexistencia e interacción entre comunidades en el imperio español*, Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, pp. 363-92.
- 2017. 'Arab Muslim migrants in the colonial Philippines: the Hadhramaut connection', in Noel Brehony, ed., *Hadhramaut and its diaspora: Yemeni politics, identity, and migration*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2017, pp. 124-41.

COHEN, MATTHEW

- 2017. 'Wayang in museums: The reverse repatriation of Javanese puppets'. *Theatre Journal* 69 (3), pp. 361-381.

- 2017. 'Playing with shadows in the dark: Shadow puppet theatre and performance in flux'. In: *Theatre in the Dark: Shadow, Gloom and Blackout in Contemporary Theatre*. Edited by Adam Alston and Martin Welton. London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 195-220.
- 2017. 'Puppets, puppeteers, and puppet spectators: A response to the Volkenburg Puppetry Symposium'. *Contemporary Theatre Review* 27 (2), pp. 258-265.
- 2017. 'Global modernities and post-traditional shadow puppetry in contemporary Southeast Asia'. *Third Text* 31 (1), pp. 188-206.
- 2016. 'Teaching puppet plays of the historic avant-garde'. *Puppetry International* 40, pp. 16-19.

COLDIRON, MARGARET

- 2017. 'Foreign Females in Traditional Asian Arts: Rebecca Teele and Cristina Formaggia' (Chapter 9) in *Women in Asian Performance: Aesthetics and Politics* (Arya Madhavan, editor), Routledge, pp. 124-141.
- 2017. 'Kathy Foley'. *Asian Theatre Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 1 Spring, University of Hawaii Press, pp. 188-205.
- 2017. 'Stunning Males and Powerful Females: Gender and Tradition in East Javanese Dance'. *Dance Research*, Vol. 35, No. 2, Winter, Edinburgh University Press, in press.

COLE, STROMA

- 2017. Water worries: An intersectional feminist political ecology of tourism and water in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia. *Annals of Tourism Research* Volume 67, pp. 14-24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2017.07.018>

CONWAY, SUSAN

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ESTEVEZ, JOSEBA

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BOOK REVIEWS

ANTHONY REID

A History of Southeast Asia: Critical Crossroads.

Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, The Blackwell History of the World series, 2015.

Xxv+450pp., ISBN: 978-0-631-17961-0 (pbk.), US\$ 39-95.

Reviewed by Victor T. King, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, University of Leeds, and School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

The review has been somewhat delayed since the publication of the volume in 2015 as a previous reviewer had to withdraw through pressure of work, and I stepped in at the last moment. I am pleased that I did; Anthony Reid, as a senior scholar of Southeast Asia, deserves the attention of ASEASUK. But looking at the title of the book, my immediate thought was "Not another history of Southeast Asia"; Reid must have been supremely confident to attempt a project which would bring something new to this field. During the past sixty years there have been a surprising number of 'new histories'; I wish the same could be said of the sociology and anthropology of Southeast Asia. Yet Reid does not engage directly with most of these other histories in his recently published volume, which style themselves "modern" or "new". It would have been instructive for the reader if he had situated his volume in this substantial historical literature. My immediate question was "How does the student new to this region choose what to read?" Reid does not really enlighten us because he does not relate his work to what has gone before, and some significant contributions are not referred to in his bibliography.

A brief overview of this literature (not exhaustive) is necessary. Daniel George Edward Hall produced *A History of South-East Asia* over 60 years ago, and he assembled a prodigious amount of material, amounting to over 1,000 pages; it made a fourth edition in 1981; Brian Harrison published his *South-East Asia: A Short History* at about the same time in 1955. John Bastin and Harry Benda wrote *A History of Modern Southeast Asia: Colonialism, Nationalism and Decolonization*, which was published in 1968, and then their *History of Modern Southeast Asia* as a second edition in 1978. David Joel Steinberg and his collaborators produced a major edited compilation *In Search of Southeast Asia* in 1971 with a revised edition in 1987 *In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History*. This then morphed into the edited volume by Norman G. Owen as *The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia: A New History* in 2005. In passing I should mention Lea A. Williams who published *Southeast Asia: A History* in 1976, which received very little attention. Nicholas Tarling then gave us *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* in 2001, which was

somewhat ‘traditionalist’ in its approach. It is worth noting that Tarling had already edited his two-volume *magnum opus* *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia* in 1992.

More recently the contribution to Southeast Asian history has burgeoned. Indeed, we are spoilt for choice. There is Milton Osborne’s enormously successful and best-selling *Southeast Asia: An Introductory History* (I have lost count of its numerous editions, I think it is now in its twelfth edition, 2016, and first published in 1979). Peter Church has edited *A Short History of Southeast Asia* now in its sixth edition, 2017, and then there is Arthur Cotterell’s *A History of Southeast Asia* which appeared in 2014. There is more in this prodigious Southeast Asian historical enterprise; Craig A. Lockard’s *Southeast Asia in World History*, 2009, in the New Oxford World History series, Merle C. Ricklefs’ edited volume, with Bruce Lockhart, Albert Lau, Portia Reyes and Maitrii Aung-Thwin, *A New History of Southeast Asia* published in 2010; and then there is D.R. SarDesai’s *Southeast Asia: Past and Present*, in its seventh edition in 2012, and his *Southeast Asian History: Essential Readings* in a second edition in 2013. In early history, there is also Kenneth R. Hall’s *A History of Southeast Asia: Maritime Trade and Societal Development 100-1500* published in 2011 and Lynda Norene Shaffer’s *Maritime Southeast Asia, 300BC to AD 1528/ Maritime Southeast Asia to 1500* which appeared in 1996. I think I have only scratched the surface of the texts and materials available. But, there is a real dilemma here; in recommending history texts to my undergraduate students would I choose Anthony Reid or Milton Osborne, for example?

It is interesting that Reid does not mention most of these contributions in his “Further Reading” under “General Southeast Asia Histories” (he refers to George E. Dutton’s, *Voices of Southeast Asia* (2014), Victor Lieberman’s two-volume, *Strange Parallels* (2003/2009), Norman G. Owen (already mentioned), James C. Scott’s *The Art of not Being Governed* (2009), and Nicholas Tarling’s Cambridge history and his modern history (also already referred to); in my view, Lieberman and Scott do not provide us with general histories. Several of those authors who do, are not included D.G.E. Hall, Brian Harrison, John S. Bastin and Harry J. Benda; surprisingly Milton Osborne is omitted, as is Peter Church, Arthur Cotterell, Craig A. Lockard, Merle C. Ricklefs, D. R. SarDesai, Kenneth R. Hall and Lynne Norene Shaffer. There must be good reasons for these omissions, and it would have been instructive if Reid had given his views on, at least, some of these contributions. Clearly some are now very dated, and perhaps this explains their omission. But others have been published relatively recently or are offered in new editions, like Osborne’s introductory history.

As always with Anthony Reid’s work this is a substantial and significant volume and it will undoubtedly become a standard reference work for historians and Southeast Asianists; it demonstrates amply his command of the historical materials and his direct engagement in the major debates involved in the interpretation of Southeast Asian history from the early classical period through to the colonial and post-colonial periods.

Reid examines and, in some cases, re-interprets the settlement of the region, the livelihoods of these early populations, and their environmental context; the character and formation of “Indic states” (Mahayana Buddhist and Hindu) and Sino-Dai Viet relations through to the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries; Asian trading networks (Austronesian, Indian, East Asian, Islamic) up to the early Iberian interventions and the founding of “gunpowder empires” based on trade and firearms; the sixteenth century “Age of Commerce”, specifically from 1490 to 1640 (when the region “played its most central role in world history as a crucible for the birth of modernity and

the unification of world markets", p.74); with the expansion and export of commercial agricultural products – pepper, cloves and nutmeg, along with benzoin, cane sugar and cotton, and also tin – and the development of substantial cosmopolitan cities, port-states and the necessary supporting commercial organization; and then religious revolution and early modernity, 1350 to 1630 (Theravada Buddhism, Islam and Christianity).

Reid devotes considerable energy to an examination of Asian-European encounters from the Portuguese seizure of Goa (1510), Melaka (1511) and Hormuz (1515), through to the Dutch (VOC) seventeenth century, the Spanish occupation of what was to become the Philippines from the 1560s, and the Dutch founding of a base at Batavia from 1619, with the progressive securing of "aggressive" Dutch monopolies, and then the mid-seventeenth century crisis in Southeast Asia which began to pave the way for increasing European dominance in trade and production and the establishment of strategically situated and defended European enclaves.

Importantly Reid moves between an examination of Southeast Asian and wider Asian activities, roles, interests, agency and their political structures, economic organizations and cultural innovations, to their relations and encounters with Europeans and their responses to European intervention; in these Asian-European interactions he sets out the progressive consolidation of local ethno-linguistic identities in the eighteenth century (Burman/Bama, Thai, Khmer, Vietnamese, Acehnese, Bugis, Javanese, Balinese) and the replacement of "gunpowder empires" by political formations ("exemplary centres") based on religion and culture; the landward expansion of the Sinicized Viet from the fifteenth century and the consolidation of the Dai Viet state in the nineteenth century; the commercial expansion of the Chinese between 1740 and 1840; the development of plantation economies based on commercially produced export crops and on such staples as rice, cotton and sugar from the late eighteenth century and the more economically dynamic environment which replaced Dutch and Spanish monopolies, though also replaced by the British monopoly of opium production and the Dutch "forced cultivation" system in Java; "the last stand of Asian autonomies" from 1820 to 1910 and the creation of territorially demarcated political units; "Around 1900 the world-system represented by steamships, railways, banks, and telegraph would become inescapable, whether through force of arms, economic pressure, or cultural emulation" (p. 213), accompanied by "a modern understanding of sovereignty" based on the principle of establishing "the boundaries between one sovereignty and another" (pp. 240, 241) and the creation, in Geertzian terms, of "peasantization", "agricultural involution" and "shared poverty", and following Boeke, "dual economies", and the increasing evidence of gender inequalities.

Reid provides a powerful conclusion to his chapter 13: "Looked at overall, the high colonial era created the infrastructures for ten states in Southeast Asia, and for a sophisticated system of export agriculture. But by discouraging labour-intensive manufacture, hardening economic dividing lines into racial ones, and monopolizing the state-related utilities in European hands, this phase of European rule produced stagnant economies which trapped most of the indigenous rural majority into a culture of poverty" (p. 275). He then addresses what for me, is one of the most interesting excursions into the processes and consequences of modernity which comprises the changing patterns of consumption from the mid-nineteenth century in cuisine, clothing and fashion, the media and film. His later chapters are then devoted to what are rather established narratives of anti-colonial responses, nationalist movements, competing political ideologies, the

emergence of an educated indigenous elite, the Japanese occupation and the Pacific War, and post-war decolonization, independence and nation-building deploying different methods to exercise political control and generate economic development. Reid's chapter on "the military, monarchy and Marx" is especially absorbing. We end with a careful consideration of post-1965 economic growth in the region, expanding educational systems, the development of middle classes, and the construction of a regional voice and identity through ASEAN. Reid's concluding thoughts on "the Southeast Asian region in the World" returns us to the theme of the definition and identity of Southeast Asia which he sets out in his introductory chapter.

In this regard Reid returns to his robust defence of Southeast Asia as a region. In this volume, there is an interesting turn; he embraces geology and geography and the issue of environmental crises and processes, which, for me, is an important addition to historical analysis; we hear of forests, water, and people, typhoons, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions: "Both the diversity and the coherence of the Southeast Asian story begin with its geology" (p. 1) and what is more, he is now defining Southeast Asia "largely in terms of a humid tropical environment" and that Southeast Asians become Southeast Asians "only as they enter that environment on their movement southward" (p.26). So, we are taken on an excursion into the characteristics, demands and opportunities of the humid tropics as a means of distinguishing Southeast Asia from India and China. A reference to Charles Fisher's monumental geography of Southeast Asia and his preoccupation with the properties of the humid tropics might have been apposite here.

But the sub-section of chapter 1 entitled "Not China, Not India" seems a little unfortunate in relation to Reid's championing of the positive virtues, genius and character of Southeast Asia. In this juxtaposition and contrast we then must engage with the problem of defining what is "India" and "China". This is all highly problematical. Indeed, Reid says "the region has its own distinct environment that produced many common features of material culture and social structure, and preserved political and cultural diversity by limiting the extent to which foreign models could assimilate what had gone before" (p. 26). But he acknowledges that the region received "most of its modern gene pool and language stocks from the north, in the Asian mainland now occupied by China, and its religions and written cultures (except the Viet) from the west" (p. 26). Up until the formation of ASEAN and the consolidation of a regional identity and the development of "a common front" against China in particular, I for one continue to struggle with claims for a Southeast Asian distinctiveness. Leaving aside Reid's geographical focus, he acknowledges the region's diversity: imperial divisions, linguistic complexities, religious-cultural pluralities, social and national inequalities, and the artificial nature of political boundaries between Southeast Asia and its neighbours. His other defining features of Southeast Asian regionalism are gender ("a 'Southeast Asian' pattern of relatively balanced roles and economic autonomy for women and men", and "the complementarity of male and female principles", p. 24), and the "softness" of Southeast Asia's nation-states (pp. 421-422). I continue to entertain a degree of scepticism with these attempts to seek definitions of a Southeast Asian region distinct from China and India (which are in themselves relatively modern constructions), but, as Reid indicates, undoubtedly the region has gained a coherence and solidity with the development of ASEAN.

What impresses me about Reid's book is that it exemplifies the importance of addressing the view from below, from Asia, from a "domestic" or "indigenous" perspective, and the ways in which this can aid our understanding of the main trajectories of Southeast Asian history. But I suspect that

Reid has had to meet the demands and constraints of the Wiley Blackwell series, in that his volume does not really address conceptual and historiographical debates. For example, he does not refer to the discussions arising from the more radical Dutch sociologically-driven historians: Jacob van Leur, Bernard J. O. Schrieke, W.F. Wertheim; nor do we have reference to Harry J. Benda's important work from a Euro-American perspective; or even James C. Scott's "moral economy" thesis and his follow-up "weapons of the weak", and some of the responses; Samuel L. Popkin's "rational peasant", for example. References to the "domestic" or "autonomous" history approach of John Smail, Sartono Kartodirdjo, David R. Sturtevant, and Michael Adas, among many others are not addressed, though Reynaldo Ileto gets a mention; J. H. Boeke's dual economic theory gets one reference in the index; John S. Furnivall's "plural society" concept is not separately indexed, though Furnivall appears in "Further Reading". There also seems to be a lack of engagement or acknowledgement of some of the important work of Dutch historians (Jan Bremen, Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, G.W. Locher, Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, Bernard H. M. Vlekke), British contributors to the debates (Charles Boxer, C.D. [Jeremy] Cowan, Hugh Tinker, Ralph Smith), and Australian scholarship (John Legge, Milton Osborne [whose best-selling introductory history is not mentioned in the "General Southeast Asia Histories" section], and Heather Sutherland [with Dutch connections]) :

As we would expect of him, Reid's historical narrative and analysis is dense, embracing a range of literature which is not specifically referred to in the text; at times it is complex, and is ambitiously comparative in scope. Therefore, it was a little disappointing that we did not have a more detailed and comprehensive index to the book. Perhaps this was a result of word limits imposed by the publishers. But, in some instances, the index was not as helpful as it might have been. It comprises primarily the names of personalities and places; within some of the places, Aceh, Banten, Batavia for example, and under the various nation-states of the region, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia and so on, and in religions, there are more detailed subdivisions. But in terms of subjects, I found the referencing frustratingly minimal. Given Reid's arguments about the main elements in the identity and definition of Southeast Asia as a region and the transformations in political arrangements with the foundation of nation-states, then there is some guidance: "agriculture" and "cities", "birth rate", "crisis", "democracy", "education", "environment", "gender relations", "globalization", "languages", "literacy", "middle class", "poverty", "sovereign space", "statelessness", "trade", and "women", but there is no index reference to biological diversity, or ethnic/cultural diversity ("ethnicities" in the index gives us four pages of text, but it certainly does not exhaust this as an important theme in Reid's argument, nor does it embrace cultural and linguistic change: it occurs to me that Reid should have devoted much more thematic attention to ethnicities, identities and the construction of ethnic categories and groups and the whole problem of boundary formation in Southeast Asia); "gender relations" is there, and "women" (but not "men", though I very much liked Reid's discussion of women as "cultural mediators"); Clifford Geertz is there in the index but not Victor Lieberman, Peter Bellwood, Oliver Wolters, George Coedès or Sheldon Pollack. I think Lieberman's "strange parallels" would have merited an index entry. I found myself struggling with this lack of attribution in the narrative. But Albert Winsemius and Alfred Russel Wallace get a mention. As we might anticipate Reid does address Lieberman's thesis of mainland Southeast Asian territorial consolidation and integration; he accepts and qualifies Lieberman's argument about the "centrality of states" (pp. 143, 175-176). But again, it provides me with evidence that the

definition of a Southeast Asian region in the “Age of Commerce” is problematical. I am, however, convinced by Reid’s argument of a “seventeenth-century crisis”.

Reid argues, in his Preface, that with reference to nation-states, “there is a seductive pressure to use these known contemporary boundaries to describe locations in an earlier period, thereby encouraging the inappropriate reading-back of national units into the past” (p. xx). He prefers to deploy geographical features such as the “Irrawaddy”, “Chao Phraya”, “Mekong” and “Red Rivers”; and instead of “Malay Peninsula” he prefers to use “Southeast Asian Peninsula” or “the Peninsula”. However, the Mekong is given brief references in the index but the other rivers are not, other than a reference to the “Irrawaddy Flotilla Company”. Thus, for the reader wishing to navigate the historical, geographical, ethnic and political complexities which Reid addresses in such admirable detail, then they will not find their way using the index; invariably it is organized in terms of the nation-states of Southeast Asia and not the innovative geographical features which Reid wishes to draw to the reader’s attention.

There is another observation in that Reid acknowledges that ethnic terms shift their meaning and therefore he has used “language labels where these are known to express both specific groups and large language families such as those of Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian) and Tai” (p. xx). He also chooses to use the terms “Viet” for the lowland speakers of Vietnamese, and “Bama” for the lowland majority language in Burma. Sadly, again Austronesians and Malayo-Polynesians are not indexed; in one reference Australo-Melanesians are; there are two references to Tai, but then the reader is asked to “see also” “Shan” and “Thai”. “Viet people” are briefly referred to in the index, “Bama” rather more so.

Finally, I am assuming that The Blackwell History of the World series requires the book to be “lightly referenced”. Presumably there is a publication template and word-limit for this series. Reid duly acknowledges this and “the mountain of observation, insight, and scholarship” contained in the book which has not been specifically cited (p. xxi). Authors must struggle with the stringent demands of modern, global academic publishing which often results in difficult choices in selecting, presenting and conveying material. Indeed, in Reid’s narrative very few authors are directly cited which does make it difficult to locate and explore arguments and evidence.

You will recognize that this is a reviewer’s nit-picking. I have enormous admiration for Anthony Reid’s achievement. He skilfully weaves a complex historical, cultural, economic and political Southeast Asian world. His book will serve to encourage students of Southeast Asian history and Southeast Asian Studies to learn more and embrace the excitement that the study of Southeast Asia brings to us. His scholarship overwhelms us with his command of the material; many of his arguments and interpretations are compelling. But I am not a historian and I suppose the main point of this review, from a sociological-anthropological perspective, is to ask for more conceptualization and more involvement with the major debates in historical interpretation. Indeed, as I have already indicated, I would have liked Reid to have engaged more decisively in debates with senior historians, and particularly embark on a more sustained conceptualization of ethnicity, identity, culture and cultural change. Reid constantly refers to the construction of identities, the drawing of boundaries, the problematical shifting of the boundaries of political centres, the operation of cross-boundary networks, hybridisation, mediation, and cultural and

biological diversity, yet I remain uncertain how this fits together if we do not attempt a conceptualization of ethnicity and culture and the ways in which identities are constructed, engaged, negotiated and transformed. Perhaps a more intense dialogue within Southeast Asian Studies between sociologists-anthropologists and historians might help.

Leaving all this aside Anthony Reid's book is a triumph. I have learned much from it and long may he continue to enlighten us.

VANIA BOUTE AND VATTHANA PHOLSENA (Eds.)

Changing lives in Laos: society, politics and culture in a post-socialist state

Singapore: NUS Press 2017

457 Pages, ISBN: 978-981-4722-26-1 Price: SGD \$42.00

Reviewed by Phill Wilcox

Goldsmiths, University of London

This new edited volume on Laos is an ambitious project. Recognising that few edited volumes on Lao studies exist, and even fewer have been published particularly recently, the editors set out to present essays that speak to at least one of three central themes: political power, agrarian change and migration and finally social interactions. This works well, as these thematic areas are broad enough to engage essays on a range of topics. Some might wonder at the extent to which other themes might be relevant, including something focused specifically on the Lao economy, but in any event this is a topic that underpins many of the essays in the book. That aside, I would argue that almost all the essays in this volume are– one way or another – about movement. This is in a broad sense: Laos being at a time of change, people migrating, movement of resources and so on. To some extent, this is reflected in the title and although some may disagree at the use of the term “post-socialist” without qualification, the parameters of the book make for a fascinating discussion and one that will appear to anyone with an interest in Lao studies.

Regrettably, it is beyond the scope of this review to comment on each essay individually in any detail. The volume is divided into four sections. The first, comprising six chapters considers state formation and political legitimation. For me, highlights of this section are an extremely detailed chapter on the history and evolution of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party by Martin Rathie, a fascinating consideration of what is and what is not included in nationalist discourse by Oliver Tappe, as well as chapters that shed light on under-researched areas of Lao culture, history and society by Patrice Ladwig, Vatthana Pholsena and Nicole Reichert. These all speak to a central question of how the current political status quo came into being and is maintained.

The second section comprises three chapters on natural resource governance and agrarian change. Here, Olivier Evrard and Ian Baird consider how upland areas of Laos are desired, rejected and then desired again as the political and economic landscape and associated priorities change over time. This is followed by an excellent chapter by Michael Dwyer, which considers how perceptions of security play a key role in shaping the agrarian landscape and agrarian business of the country. Finally, Vania Boute provides a fascinating overview of rural to urban

migration and the networks formed and utilised by those who migrate. This section demonstrates the close connections between the rural and the urban that continue despite rapid urbanisation.

The third section considers the changing situation of ethnic minorities in Laos as they engage with modernity. Gregoire Schlemmer considers the changing nature of ethnic belonging in Laos. This is then followed by two chapters by Guido Sprenger and Chris Lyttleton and Yunxia Li respectively. Both of these consider how ethnic minorities engage with modernity. I found the latter particularly fascinating as it considers the relationship between Laos and China specifically, which is something I was somewhat surprised to find not to feature particularly prominently in other essays in this volume given China's growing prominence in Laos.

The final section considers mobility explicitly. Sverre Molland considers what migration means in Laos and how it shapes the country. Molland also makes an interesting observation. Namely, rather than thinking of Laos as isolated, in an increasingly mobile world it would be better to view it as connected and increasingly so. Following this, Kabmanivanh Phouxay considers the patterns and consequences of migration from Laos to Thailand. Sadly, this is the only essay from within Laos itself, and while this essay is somewhat hard to follow in places, Phouxay's "insider" voice is an important one. Finally, Annabel Vallard considers the changing nature of textile economies. This is an investigative chapter, which considers how textile economies are not homogeneous, often feminised and how they are changing. All these chapters consider how migration and mobility is negotiated, who the various actors are and what the consequences of these movements are. Given that it seems to me that movement is an underlying theme of this volume, these essays spell this out explicitly.

The strength of this book lies in its broad nature and indeed, it is clearly essential reading for anyone seeking a detailed overview of contemporary Laos. The division into these four areas works surprisingly well and is pertinent to considering central thematic areas of contemporary Laos.

Undoubtedly, the book illustrates clearly how and why lives are changing and does so by presenting a range of mainly qualitative material from all over Laos. My only real suggestion is that what is perhaps missing is further consideration of the direction of that change. What will Laos look like in two decades and how might those changes come about? Is there likely to be any sort of clash between Laos and China? Will there be tension between the nominal socialism practiced by the Lao political establishment and increasing access to consumer goods and modernity? The book talks of urbanisation and increased mobilities, and I would have been interested to hear more direct engagement with questions about what these changes are for, and what the consequences of these changes could be. The book also speaks of the establishment of a new social order in Laos, which is itself fascinating. Overall, I wanted more engagement with this because after all, Laos is an under-researched country and this volume is a rare opportunity for eminent scholars to engage with these questions of change. This is meant not so much as a criticism than as a recognition of the value of this book. This volume is perhaps a brilliant access point into further questions. I hope that further scholarship on these points and more will be forthcoming.

PAUL T. COHEN (ED.)

Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism

Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2017

xiii+266 pp.; ISBN 978-87-7694-194-9 (hbk), GBP 50.00;

ISBN 978-87-7694-195-6 (pbk), GBP 18.99

Reviewed by Angela Chiu

Independent Researcher

This volume focuses on the northern Thai monk Khruba Siwichai (1878-1938) and the ‘holy men’ (‘persons of merit’; Thai: *ton bun*) who over the past few decades have followed the model of his career in Lanna, the cultural area historically centered in northern Thailand and extending to parts of southwestern China, Laos and eastern Myanmar. Khruba Siwichai is held in immense esteem today in northern Thailand, where statues and photographs of him are enshrined in temples across the region. He was an ascetic monk known for leading devotees, of multiple ethnic groups, in the construction and renovation of numerous temples, stupas and other structures across the region. He famously resisted attempts by the Siamese state to replace northern Thai monastic practices with those promulgated by Bangkok. Today he is regarded as the guardian of northern Thai Buddhism and tradition against central Thai state hegemony and as a symbol of social justice.

At the outset of the Introduction, Paul T. Cohen writes, “The aim of this volume is to explore the distinctive characteristics of Lanna Buddhism.” (p. 1) With all but one of the book’s contributors anthropologists, the distinctive characteristics discussed are the social positioning and milieux of these holy men (as opposed to aspects of Lanna Buddhist ritual, liturgy, art, etc.) The eight chapters provide interesting ethnographies that highlight the social circumstances and networks through which the charisma and other qualities which elevate the holy men are developed not only by the holy men themselves but through the active agencies of devotees of various ethnic and economic backgrounds. The chapters show how the life of Khruba Siwichai has provided a model for the holy men that is legitimizing but not rigid, with each holy man accruing his own symbolisms, repertoires of activities and modes of material and spiritual exchange which fulfill various needs of their followers, including, often, serving as an alternative to the state; most of the chapters focus on devotion by politically and economically marginalized minority ethnic and/or migrant communities.

Chapters 1 by Katherine Bowie and 2 by Paul T. Cohen both focus on Khruba Siwichai’s career. Mining northern Thai and Western archival materials and oral histories, Bowie illuminates the relationship of the northern Thai monkhood to local communities and concludes that Khruba Siwichai’s denial of state authority was not a unique act but consistent with the expected role of northern Thai monks. As Bowie well observed, “Whether Siwichai should be seen as the last monk to represent the northern tradition of political independence or the first of the modern charismatic monks of northern Thailand remains open to debate.” (p. 53) In Chapter 2, Cohen compares the model of ‘holy man’ represented by Khruba Siwichai with the purist tradition of his contemporary Achan Man, the northeastern Thai monastic leader, highlighting the uniqueness and significance of Siwichai’s building and repair of religious structures intended to transform Lanna into a sacred realm. In Chapter 3, Anthony Lovenheim Irwin considers the building

activities of Khruba Kham La Sangwaro and Khruba Intha, who together constructed or renovated over twenty temples from 1953 to 1979 around Chiang Rai province. In this fascinating chapter, Irwin explains how the production of religious buildings and objects was fuelled by the conception of *barami* (Pali: *parami*; “a spiritual quality of power and perfection” (p. 88). This focus on *barami* leads Irwin to interesting insights into Buddhist construction projects and the “hyper-local” nature of a holy man’s hagiography. In Chapter 4, Mikael Gravers discusses Wat Phra Bat Huai Tom in Lamphun province, a Karen settlement founded by Khruba Wong, a northern Thai monk, as a refashioning of Lanna Buddhist cosmology and Karen tradition in the face of modernization and globalization. In Chapter 5, Kwanchewan Buadaeng provides an interesting look at different types of followers, including both billionaires and migrant workers in Thailand, of the Karen charismatic monk U Thuzana, describing how each is drawn to different aspects of U Thuzana’s vision. In the next chapter, Sean Ashley explores the relationship between Khruba Thueang and his Dara’ang (Silver Palaung) devotees who fled to Thailand to escape violence in Myanmar during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Their relationship with the holy man, Ashley well observes, indicates that charisma must be understood as not only a personal quality but in the specific contextual terms in which the holy man addresses the needs of the group of devotees. In Chapter 7, Amporn Jirattikorn discusses the transnational and diverse devotees of Khruba Bunchum, a Thai monk with a large following of Shans living in eastern Shan State who in 2013 began to attract devotion from many wealthy and middle-class Thais. Amporn’s thought-provoking work considers this new audience in view of the de-territorialisation of the sacred realm and the unfettered media and ease of travel that have enabled free circulation and interpretation of the monk’s image. Chapter 8, by Tatsuki Kataoka, turns to consider the worship of Khruba Bunchum by Lahu highlanders in Myanmar and Thailand, providing an interesting description of the group’s long history of devotion to charismatic monks.

The essays in this volume raise issues of morality, modernity, commercialism, state hegemony, and ethnicity, among others, which come into play with the themes of asceticism, independence, identity and social justice that are invoked by Khruba Siwichai’s hagiography. It is a collection of ethnographies valuable for not only anthropologists but also historians and scholars of Buddhist Studies and Thai Studies.

MEGHA AMRITH

Caring for Strangers: Filipino Medical Workers in Asia, Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2017

xxiv + 226 pp., hp ISBN 9788776941925, GBP 18.99

Reviewed by Sin Yee Koh

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From 1981 to 2015, it was estimated that there were 2.192 million registered Filipino emigrants worldwide (CFO, 2017). During 2010-2014, the top three destinations for deployed land-based overseas Filipino workers were Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Singapore (Appendix A). During this same period, the top two occupational categories were household service workers and nurses professional (Appendix B). Given this broader context of global Filipino emigration, what does it mean to be a Filipino medical worker in Singapore? More importantly, what does an ethnographic understanding of Filipino medical workers’ lives in Singapore tell us about the

emotional politics of Filipino emigration, transnational (care) migration, and migrants' aspirations?

In *Caring for Strangers*, Megha Amrith offers an account of 'the everyday encounters, anxieties and boundaries that relate to the care for others at an Asian crossroads of global capital, medical care and transnational migrant labour' (p. 6). In addition to offering a sensitive and considered anthropological account of individual migrant's motivations, aspirations, and struggles, the more significant contribution of this book is in the way it exposes the multi-layered ambiguities, tensions, diversities and complexities of Filipino (care) migration that would have otherwise remained obscured underneath the oft accepted binary images of the confident and successful Filipino migrant, on the one hand, and the exploited contract labour migrant, on the other hand.

Four issues raised in this book particularly fascinate me. The first is the question of 'care' – and perhaps, more specifically, the question of the *boundaries* of care. The second is Singapore as a transit site in Filipino medical labour migrants' migration imaginaries. The third is Amrith's interlocutors' deliberate and essentialised distinction of themselves from 'other' Filipino domestic workers in Singapore. The fourth is a question about where to situate individual migrant's stories in the broader context of shifting migration knowledge, politics, institutions, and policies. I will elaborate these four issues in turn.

While this book centres on Filipino medical workers providing professional medical and old age care work in Singapore, it highlights multiple inflections about the fundamental issue of care. Who (should) care(s) for whom, and where? What kinds of care are involved? What are the ethical, philosophical, economic, and legal boundaries of care? Where does informal (unpaid) care end, and where does professional (paid) care begin? Where are the lines of inclusion and exclusion to care drawn, and why? Furthermore, the question of care, as Amrith shows in this book, is not just centred in the professional lives of the Filipino medical workers. Care also contextualises her respondents' migration lives in the way they 'care' for their and their family's future lives, as well as in their struggles with, and against, the stereotype of Filipino migrants as 'care' workers (especially the dominant image of the Filipino domestic worker) in Singapore.

In this book, Singapore emerges as a transit node for Filipino medical workers who are on their path *to somewhere else*. Moreover, Singapore is a site where multiple tensions play out and are negotiated, and where boundaries are drawn and enacted in material and immaterial ways. Many of Amrith's respondents embarked upon a nursing career because of its symbolic power in their individual and collective imaginaries – it is simultaneously a professional career, a sense of calling, a means towards better salary and a better life, and a promising source of social status for themselves and their family members back home. However, their imaginaries are rudely shaken as they arrived in Singapore and found themselves being viewed as 'care workers' without the same sense of social and professional respect they have been accustomed to in their original habitus in the Philippines. Singapore's strict citizenship and residential policies also accentuate their sense of temporariness and anxiety about their transient lives there. Their time in Singapore becomes one that is characterised by waiting in-transit – waiting for visa applications to third countries to come through; waiting to accumulate sufficient economic and professional capital before moving on.

It is interesting, although perhaps not that surprising if one thinks more critically about it, that Amrith's respondents actively distinguish themselves from Filipino domestic workers in Singapore. Coming from the same origin country and sharing similar socio-cultural practices does not mean that the two groups of Filipino migrants readily mix and associate themselves with each other socially and spatially. On the one hand, the Filipino medical workers are keen to assert their professional identity and social class status from the domestic workers. On the other hand, the nature of their work schedules and daily routines in the city means that they rarely have the opportunity to interact meaningfully. In Lucky Plaza, a shopping centre in Singapore popular with Filipino migrants, there is 'a marked *absence* of nurses' (p. 133). While Filipino domestic workers are highly visible en masse in public areas on their off days, Filipino medical workers are not because they tend to retreat to private spaces where they socialise with small circles of friends. In this way, 'the Filipino community exists for some Filipino migrants and not for others' (p.135). This highlights the need to pay attention to diversities and fissures within migrant communities in each host society.

Finally, this book highlights the richness and complexities of migrant lives. In Singapore, there are localised politics of care and care work that the Filipino medical workers may not be fully aware of before they embarked upon their nursing career and migration lives in/through Singapore. Through the respondents' narratives, we see migration dreams that are ruptured, derailed, or prolonged due to unforeseen circumstances. Some are successful in re-writing their migration pathways; others not so. This calls attention to the way in which individual migrations sit uncomfortably in the constantly shifting assemblage made up of international and national policies, global flows of capital, labour, media, opportunities and constraints, as well as internalised aspirations. This book reminds us that migration is not simply a straightforward story about the pursuit of a better life elsewhere, because life happens in-migration, often unexpectedly.

Overall, this is an elegantly written ethnography of Filipino medical workers' migrating lives while they are in-transit in Singapore. Beyond the specific empirical case study, this book raises questions to many intersecting issues that would intrigue readers who are interested in transnational migration, transnational care labour, gender and migration, intra-Asian migration, and migration aspirations.

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LISANDRAO E. CLAUDIO

***Liberalism and the Postcolony. Thinking The State In 20th-Century Philippines.* NUS Press, 2017. 248 pages, 17 b/w photos, ISBN: 978-981-4722-52-0, Paperback, SGD \$38.00**

**Reviewed by Kimberley Weir
University of Nottingham**

Lisandro E. Claudio's *Liberalism and the Postcolony* is a particularly timely examination of the state of liberal values in the Philippines following the global rise of what the author terms "illiberal populism". This trend has seen increased support for right-wing and centrist parties across Europe, the propulsion of Donald Trump to the highest office in the United States, and in the Philippines itself, the election of "The Punisher" Rodrigo Duterte. Through an exploration of the liberal approaches of four mid-twentieth century Philippine "scholar-bureaucrats", *Liberalism and the Postcolony* argues for a reinvention of liberalism to a 'decolonised' liberalism, which Claudio asserts would enable a more nuanced approach to political rule.

Within the larger framework of the book are organised four main chapters, examining a tenet of liberalism as espoused by a particular Philippine "scholar-bureaucrat", together following a rough chronology from the 1920s to the 1970s. The first chapter looks at the nationalist ideas and educational work of politician and senator Camilo Osias (1889-1976). The second discusses the post-war economic proposals of politician and businessman Salvador Araneta (1902-1982). The third chapter examines the writing and speeches of 'Third Worldism' proponent Carlos P. Romulo (1899-1985). Finally, the fourth chapter analyses the University of the Philippines (UP) Presidency (1969-1975) of Salvador P. Lopez (1911-1993) during the early years of the Marcos martial law era.

The Introduction begins with a discussion of the current "crisis" in liberalism, which Claudio deems is due to the rise of "populist illiberalism". He then proceeds to an interesting discussion of the evolution of liberalism in twentieth century Philippines, which the author asserts was informed by nineteenth century *Ilustrado* nationalism and American liberalism. He contends that these produced a new sense of nationalism during colonial rule, which was premised "not on struggles against a colonizer but on the peaceful building of a new nation-state". However, Claudio argues that it was this combination of American and European influences that propelled liberalism's decline in the face of 1960s Philippine nationalism, which sought to build a national identity outside of foreign influence.

The Introduction successfully establishes the context for the first chapter's discussion of Camilo Osias' international approach to nationalism. The chapter opens with a useful appraisal of Philippine nationalism today, which the author perceives has returned to the inward-looking nationalism of the 1960s. Claudio calls for a reappraisal of Osias' work, which he argues was "mis-read" in the new nationalist framework of the 1960s as a product of colonialism. The chapter draws on Osias' experiences, both in the Philippines and during his time at Columbia Teachers College in the U.S., to demonstrate that his nationalism or "nationalist internationalism" was instead multifaceted, the consequence of a multitude of influences. Indeed the subsequent analysis exploring Osias' application of this perspective to the *Philippine Readers*, prescribed school reading during U.S. colonial rule, similarly calls for a more nuanced understanding of the colonial educational system.

Chapter Two explores the challenges faced by businessman and self-taught economist Salvador Araneta when he proposed New Deal inspired expansionist economic policies to aid a struggling 1950s Philippines. Claudio opens his discussion with a useful overview of early twentieth century global economics, which saw the collapse of many liberal free-markets and the introduction of America's New Deal as a way out of the country's Great Depression. This background, together

with a look at Araneta's business experience prior to his rise to government, enables a greater understanding of his managerial approach to the economy. Similarly, Claudio's assessment of the politics of the Central Bank, explains Araneta's inability to successfully convince the government to adhere to his proposals.

Chapter Three examines the writing and speeches made by diplomat and parliamentarian Carlos P. Romulo, which advocated for 'Third Worldism' and Asia's strategic position on the global political stage. Claudio opens his analysis of Romulo in the context of the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, Indonesia. The chapter gives some useful background to the liberal anti-communist movement prior to the conference, but perhaps a closer look at the wider proceedings of the conference would have been helpful to understand the rise of 'Third Worldism' that took place. However, the chapter's analysis of Romulo's speeches within and following Bandung, successfully convey his argument that Asia was uniquely positioned to overcome both imperialism and communism. The chapter is an interesting reassessment of Romulo whose work under the Marcos Dictatorship has undermined this early liberalism and campaign for human rights.

The fourth chapter is constructed rather differently from the preceding three, forming a linear narrative, which tells the story of Salvador P. Lopez's UP Presidency from 1969 to 1975. Similarly to the previous chapters, it opens by placing the discussion within a national and international context. In this case: the decline of liberalism in 1960s Philippines. It then moves to a discussion of Lopez's liberal values and influences before looking at his first years at UP, his work to advance student activism and his responses to the oppressive restrictions placed on the university under Martial Law. The chapter finally examines the events that eventually led to Lopez's dismissal from UP, primarily his open critique of the Marcos regime during a speech he gave at the University of Hawaii in 1974.

The final chapter is the most successful in examining the application of liberal values to a political agenda and the earlier chapters would have benefited from a similar narrative structure. In his chronological appraisal of Lopez's tenure at UP, Claudio is better able to draw the connections between Lopez's liberalism and his governance of UP, a connection that is sometimes tenuous in the preceding analyses. As the author himself says, "it is only in the life and actions of the liberal that we see liberalism as a method and as ethics".

The book's conclusion draws together the various global and national contexts that informed the liberal values of the four "scholar-bureaucrats", emphasising the importance for the Philippines to understand itself within a global and not simply Asian context. Claudio argues convincingly this can only be done through a liberalism that is distinctly postcolonial and thus continuously evolving, its success or failure, like "illiberal populism", contingent on society's grassroots.

In the wake of President Duterte's absolutist approach to domestic affairs and his pursuit of an independent foreign policy, *Liberalism and the Postcolony* is a pertinent and necessary appraisal of liberal values in the Philippines. There has been much written on the impact of the country's colonial past, however *Liberalism and the Postcolony* confidently situates the Philippines both within its colonial heritage and outside it, specifically the liberalism of the four "scholar-bureaucrats", which was also shaped by both.

VEDI R. HADIZ

Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

228 pp. ISBN 978-1-107-12360—1, \$28.98

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In his most recent book, Hadiz wants to explain the different trajectories of Islamic populism in Indonesia, Turkey and Egypt. All three countries have in common that politics in recent years have seen “the mobilisation and homogenisation of a range of disparate grievances of the ‘masses’ against identified ‘elites’” (p. 3) couched in Islamic terms.

The three countries differ, however, to the degree this Islamic populism has gained access to formal politics. Unlike in Turkey, “representatives of Islamic politics” have remained confined to the margins of the political arena in Indonesia. In Egypt, meanwhile, politicians pushing an “Islamic agenda” have been vocal and visible in society for decades but failed to maintain power after they had gained access to the state in the context of the Arab Spring.

Hadiz puts forward two interrelated arguments for why this is the case: One, Islamic populism is a reaction by certain groups to their political and economic marginalization as a result of capitalist advancement. Two, Islamic populism has followed different political trajectories because cross-class alliances underpinning it vary in both degree and composition from one country to another.

These arguments are discussed in more detail throughout the book, which is structured as follows: In Chapter 2 Hadiz argues that Islamic populism is no different from other forms of populism to the extent that it is “very much connected to social contradictions intimately related to participation in the processes of neoliberal globalisation” (p. 4). In other words, the spread of capitalism triggers different class alliances, which subsequently shape political trajectories of Islamic populism. Chapter 3 examines the roots of Islamic populism in Indonesia, Turkey and Egypt. In Chapter 4, the main argument is presented in more detail, comparing the social bases of Islamic populism in the three countries. Chapter 5 looks at the different strategies and political vehicles employed by Islamic populists, including political parties, mass movements and “terrorism.” Chapter 6 provides a description of the Darul Islam, which is one of the oldest Islamic movements in Indonesia. How the Darul Islam movement has adapted to changing political contexts since it emerged in 1945 over time therefore contributes to our understanding of how Islamist populism is shaped by social forces, Hadiz argues. Chapter 7 examines the relationship between Islamic populism and electoral democracy while Chapter 8 wants to identify the circumstances under which Islamic populism accepts and rejects market forces. Chapter 9 discusses avenues for future research on Islamic populism.

Hadiz reaches three main conclusions: One, Islamic populism is a *modern* phenomenon, despite its portrayal in popular media and some of the academic literature as a backward-looking, inward-oriented political force. Two, the political trajectories of Islamic populism vary to a great degree between countries. Hadiz therefore disagrees with works on post-Islamism, “which is

generally presented as political adaptation in a single direction: towards ‘a more rights-centred and inclusive outlook that favors a civil/ secular state operating within a pious society’” (Bayat 2013: 29 cited in Hadiz 2016, p. 5). Three, economic structures are important determinants of Islamic populism and should therefore be given more prominence in analyses of Islamic politics around the world.

Mainstream political science based on quantitative data analyses has failed to predict populist revolts as diverse as Donald J. Trump’s victoryⁱ in the presidential elections in the USA in 2016 and the Arab Spring in 2011.ⁱⁱ

Quantitative studies’ weak explanatory power has shown the need for theoretically innovative, qualitative in-depth research on the conditions that facilitate political populism. While Hadiz’ research is therefore timely, the book unfortunately offers neither a sound theoretical framework nor much in terms of empirical insights that would help readers to better understand Islamic populism. The first two findings of the book are not particularly original or profound while the evidence presented in support of the third finding is rather confusing. One, scholars have shown some time ago for both Indonesiaⁱⁱⁱ and other Muslim-majority countries^{iv} that Islamic politics are a modern, forward-looking phenomenon. Two, scholars have also pointed out before that Islamic politics do not necessarily move in the direction of support for a secular nation state^v and that variance in Islamic politics exists both *between*^{vi} and *within* countries^{vii}. Three, and most problematic about the book under review here, the Marxist theoretical framework on which Hadiz relies does not align with most of the empirical evidence presented throughout the book.

Remember that Hadiz’s first argument said that Islamic populism is triggered by “advances of capitalist economies,” and “contradictions intimately related to participation in the process of globalization” (p. 4), while his second argument was that trajectories of Islamic populism are shaped by different cross-class alliances. Hadiz’ book provides ample evidence that “the exclusion of the ummah from taking part in the process [of capitalist accumulation] on a larger scale” (p.38) and a “perpetual inability to make use of the formal institutions of politics and the market as effective arenas of contestation” (p. 116) triggered populist movements under the banner of Islam in Indonesia, Egypt and Turkey.

While this is in line with Hadiz’ theoretical framework, Hadiz then presents evidence for his second argument that seems to be more in line with classic movement theory and its core argument about how states, that is, *political* conditions, shape movements, not anonymous social processes associated with *economic* change identified by Hadiz as the main reason for different trajectories of Islamic activism around the globe.

For instance, Hadiz shows how in Indonesia, Egypt and Turkey “modernization” and “state-building” was led by “states under the control of secular nationalist elites that sometimes made room for but at other times resolutely peripheralised social interests claiming to represent the ummah” (p. 79). Furthermore, Hadiz explains that a revolution under the banner of Islam did not occur in Indonesia, Egypt and Turkey due to the fact that there are no powerful clergies in any of these three countries. In addition, the state was able to prevent alliances between leftist and Islamist forces (p. 80). The state, in other words, has been “a major impediment to the advancement of the ummah [in Indonesia]” (p. 110). At the same time, “when repression against

the social agents of Islamic politics reached its height in the 1980s, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was starting to immerse itself in the Mubarak-era system of electoral politics. At the same time, some of the political precursors of the AKP in Turkey were starting to benefit from the 'highly controlled opening to religious groups' that was then being initiated by a state controlled by military Kemalists and some of their technocratic allies..." (p. 110).^{viii} Similarly, Hadiz writes that the variety in Islamic activism in Indonesia is "...partly attributable to the social effects of New Order suppression – leading to the requirement that its activists develop strategies, sometimes highly localised, to cope with a harshly authoritarian regime..." (p. 117). In a similar vein, explaining the absence of a central command structure in many Islamic movements, Hadiz states: "The reason is simple: these organisations developed in relation to nationally defined battles..." (p. 144). There are numerous other passages in the book that suggest the importance of *political*, not *economic* conditions as the decisive factor in shaping the contours of Islamic populism.

In contrast, Hadiz presents insufficient empirical material in support of his claim that economic conditions account for the variance in Islamic populism. For instance, claims that the Islamization of former Communist areas in Central Java was made possible by "profound changes in the conditions of material life in the locality" (p. 129) or that Islamic populism is shaped by "the specific kinds of social interests that have converged, albeit with inevitably varying levels of internal coherence, within the multi-class alliances that sociologically enable the new Islamic populism" (p. 138) are not supported by empirical evidence.

In short, while Hadiz claims that *economic conditions* matter for our understanding of variance in Islamic populism, the evidence he presents throughout his book suggest that *political factors* determine why and how Islamic populism gains political salience and influence. Rather than relying on Marx to explain variance in Islamic activism in the context of neoliberal globalization, Hadiz' argument seems to be closer to scholars such as Kimmeldorf, who, in his account of why labour unionists in the United States of America became fierce ideologues on the West Coast while labour unions on the East Coast became politically conservative rackets, has shown that the *political environment* explains for differences in social mobilization triggered by capitalist advancement.^{ix}

ⁱ Hailed as the "most influential political-science book in recent memory" by The Economist in 2016 (The Economist, "Pushback" 5th March 2016), Martin Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel and John Zaller's *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations before and after Reform* (Chicago: Chicago Studies in American Politics, 2008) claimed that political parties guide voters away from populist politicians and towards "acceptable nominees."

ⁱⁱ Jeff Goodwin. "Why we were surprised (again) by the Arab Spring," *Swiss Political Science Review* 17, 4 (2011): 452-6.

ⁱⁱⁱ R. Michael Feener. *Shari'a and Social Engineering: The Implementation of Islamic Law in Contemporary Aceh, Indonesia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

^{iv} Charles Tripp. *Islam and the Moral Economy: The Challenge of Capitalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

^v For Indonesia, see, for instance, Masdar Hilmy. *Islamism and Democracy in Indonesia: Piety and Pragmatism* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2010). A similar argument has been made more recently by Jeremy Menchik. *Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016). For other Muslim-majority countries, see Gunes M. Tezcur, "The moderation theory revisited: The case of Islamic political actors," *Party Politics* 16 (2010): 69-88.

vi Alison Pargeter "Localism and Radicalization in North Africa," *International Affairs* 85 (September 2009): 1031-44.

vii Christine Fair "Islamic Militancy in Pakistan," (July 2009) Available at <http://tinyurl.com/coeyqu6> (Accessed 21 June 2017).

viii For other empirical evidence in Hadiz book that suggests the importance of political, not economic conditions, for our understanding of varying trajectories of Islamic populism, see, for instance, pp. 64, 117, 139, 144.

ix Howard Kimmeldorf. *Reds or Rackets? The Making of Radical and Conservative Unions on the Waterfront* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988).

ROSS KING

Heritage and Identity in Contemporary Thailand: Memory, Place and Power

Singapore: NUS Press, 2017

Xiii+319pp. ISBN 978-981-4722-27-8, SGD \$38.00

Reviewed by Daniel Whitehouse, Durham University

The intersection of memory, power and heritage is assuredly fertile, though no means untrodden, ground for a monograph on contemporary Thailand. Nidhi Eosewong, Maurizio Pellegi, Thongchai Winichakul and Craig Reynolds have demonstrated the importance of these elements in understanding contemporary Thai identities in their historical analyses. *Heritage and Identity in Contemporary Thailand* approaches this vast subject from the perspective of architecture and tourism studies, bringing together a diverse collection of case studies ranging from the economics of an Isaan village handicraft market to the entirety of the Bangkok khlong system. The book is divided into four parts; an introduction, a section of six chapters on heritage and memory, a section entitled heritage, memory and inequality (also six chapters) and a conclusion. The majority of the book comprises the 12 case studies found in the "internal chapters" of the book. Often containing, great hunks of evocative descriptive writing, they validate King's assertion that 'heritage is not always about grand monuments and national treasures' (p. 3).

A standout chapter about the Japanese colonization of Thailand concisely brings together several themes central to the entire volume. The role of memory, and of course forgetting, are explored in relation to the sites of WWII. The vexed question of heritage ownership is also discussed. Whose heritage is the death railway of Kanchanburi, or the bridge over the river Kwai? Thailand's, Japan's, Australia's, the *romusha* of Java's? Can adventurer Yamada Nagamasa be considered a *lieux de mémoire*? How has Japan's modernization affected the physical and cultural landscape of Bangkok? Some wonderful description is also to be found. A thought provoking chapter about the changing character of Sukhumvit has a wonderful digression on the informalisation of formal places. Describing a now-'slum building' on Sukhumvit 71; 'clearly this is "formal" in that its developers would have had some form of development approval (however obtained and from what "authority")', it is owned and it pays taxes and enjoys municipal connections. It is also *informal* as poor occupants have adapted its space and extended outwards from its façade in a *mélange* of new screens, residual wreckage, old signboards of either surviving or departed enterprises and other tactics to seize on a modicum of privacy and additional space' (pp. 167-8).

However, this chapter—like others in the collection—have a tendency to romanticize anterior aspects of Thai life over modernized forms. After a snuffy account of the gentrification of Phra Khanong, the author remarks that the market sells 'clothing better and cheaper than anywhere

in Bangkok'. I have been to this market many times and can vouchsafe that the clothing is the same Chinese-factory fare as to be found in any number of Thai outlets. Elsewhere, delivered with an entirely straight face is the sentence, 'the modern coffee shop, franchised food outlet and shopping mall, the new, commercialized places of meeting and assembly from which all but those who pay can be restricted...mark the death of the idea of community' (p. 77). The commercialization of urban space is a fascinating subject that impacts social cohesion, community building, ideas of public propriety and, of course, the exercise of power. But these places are not considered worthy of analysis; they are 'modern', which here reads *inauthentic, corrupting, bad*. While the admirably broad definition of heritage that the collection embraces feels innovative, the execution is, at times, conservative. Other chapters feature more familiar heritage sites. Democracy Monument, King Rama V Equestrian statue, Three Kings Monument, Wat Phra Kaeo, Wat Arun, Wat Preah Vihear and the Mae Nak Phra Khanong shrine are all invoked, though too passingly to augment what has already been written by other scholars.

The principle failing of this book is that its stated objectives—its lines of enquiry— seem to morph throughout the work and are consequently insufficiently addressed. This is almost certainly due to the collection's idiosyncratic structure. In King's words, the 12 "internal data chapters", which comprise 257 pages out of the total 293 pages (excluding prefaces, index, glossary etc), are 'based at least in part' (p. 29) on the doctoral theses of students he supervised at University of Melbourne and Silpakorn University. He describes his role as that of a 'heavy-handed editor— indeed, in some cases heavy to the point of effectively re-writing' (p. 4) though he claims that throughout the editing process he has 'tried to retain the voice, ideas and approach of co-authors' while ensuring narrative consistency. King preempts potential criticism of the volume 'being neither a collection of thesis excerpts nor a coherent narrative on a selected theme' by stating that it is 'likely to please no one' (p. 4). His aim, he explains, was not to please, but to provoke. It certainly provoked me. King is in some pretty murky ethical waters here, not helped by his assertion that 'it must be conceded that at one level this is a single-author book (p. 29). The only acknowledgement for the contribution of each supervisee is the appearance of their name (after King's) on the heading of the chapter for which they provided (some of? all?) the data. There is also a short profile of each contributor at the back. A generous rationalization would be that King means to increase attention to supervisees' otherwise under-read works, though this is undermined by the fact that some of the contributors have already published journal articles on the same topic, while three as-yet-unpublished contributors get no citation of their original thesis title at all. A less magnanimous accusation is that the work of these early scholars, all of whom are Thai, has not been sufficiently acknowledged. The names of these scholars will be lost in citations of this work, which seems appropriate.

If King's decision not to publish the volume as an edited collection was swayed by a desire to ensure thematic or theoretical consistency, then he is only partially successful. Inserted throughout the collection is the theory of Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (sites/realms of memory) and the analysis of the range of places, both physical and intellectual, wherein the memories of a nation might be constructed, contained or contested. Central to Nora's argument, King explains, is that *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) are compensation for a profound loss. In the modern age people no longer live in *milieux de mémoire* (environments of history) in which history is a real part of everyday experience, and so we construct *lieux de mémoire* as a means of coming to terms with and alleviating that loss. King intends to question Nora's generalization

by suggesting that the chapters present cases where milieus of memory seem to persist and where sites of memory take on an 'anchoring' role in the face of changing milieus. He relates the peculiar evolution of the geo-body of Siam/Thailand to the ambiguity of its heritage and proposes that a further two French thinkers, Deluze and Derrida, are required to unpack the complexity of Thai heritage. Working from Deluze, King explains that heritage is constituted of *assemblages* that are always unstable and ambiguous *lieux de memoire*. It always consists of folded multiplicities. Interpretation, then, is 'the task of explicating the production of heritage object as assemblage: it is the task of revealing the process of the fold' (p. 255). This is a potentially very fruitful interpretive approach that feels more like an afterthought when appended to a truncated PhD thesis that has its own theoretical approach and objectives. Moreover, Ross' chapter conclusions, which are undoubtedly written in his voice, have a tendency to be couched in pedantic post-modernism. A charming chapter 'co-authored' by Rathirat Khewmesuin, depicts by adroit description the local *lieux de memoire* (in this case markets, wooden shophouses, temples) of a small, seemingly unremarkable town, and offers various ways of viewing the town; as a mirror for cultural and economic divisions in wider Thai society; a manifestation of hybrid (Mon, Lao, Chinese and Thai) architecture and identity; an ambiguous case of who 'owns' heritage. These are interesting ideas, but they splutter to a halt under the satire-proof argot of continental theory; 'Photharam as a place is similarly to be seen as an assemblage, in the eye of the beholder, of diversities of elements and associations....[it] is an assemblage of which each community, itself an assemblage of an assemblages, is an assemblage' (p. 254). Similarly equivocal language threatens to undermine one of the stated central objectives of the volume, which is to distinguish *lieux de memoire* from *milieux de memoire* and demonstrate the persistence of the latter in contemporary Thailand. When defining these two concepts, the differences between them are described as 'being forever imprecise— porous and arbitrary' (p. 29). King doesn't elaborate on the implications of these two categories for memory and identity, which leaves the reader to consider why such prominence has been granted to the concept and such efforts exercised in identifying this supposedly arbitrary distinction.

While often engaging, the breadth and idiosyncratic approach of the collection constantly defies the narrow theoretical confines King allows for the material. As an edited volume with a mosaic of case studies around a central theme, it is a provoking and, at times, insightful window on modern Thailand. As a 'single authored' work, it feels less than the sum of its parts.

MANDY SADAN (ED.)

***War and Peace in the Borderlands of Myanmar: The Kachin Ceasefire, 1994-2011*, NIAS Press, 2016.**

500pp, maps + illustrations, ISBN 978-87-7694-189-5 (pbk) £25

Reviewed by Robert H. Taylor, SOAS, School of Oriental and African Studies

As one would expect from the scholarship of Mandy Sadan, *War and Peace in the Borderlands of Myanmar* is a very cleverly edited and highly informative focussed collection of essays. The focus is on the subtitle, the temporary ceasefire agreement reached between the Myanmar army and the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and its armed wing, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) reached in 1994 and broken soon after the coming to power of the new constitutional order under its first president, former General Thein Sein, in 2011. The breaking of the ceasefire

agreement, and the renewal of armed hostilities between the Myanmar army and the KIA and its allies, including the Arakan Army, the Ta'ang (Palaung) National Liberation Army, and Kokang Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, is the cause of much continuing distress along Myanmar's northern border with China. At the time of writing this review (24 May 2017), members of the Lisu minority were protesting KIA violence directed against members of their ethnicity, an accusation the KIA claimed was instigated by the Myanmar army.

In a context where accusations and counter-accusations are frequently bandied about, hard evidence is difficult to find. *War and Peace in the Borderlands of Myanmar* is a valuable account of what has been lost as a consequence of the renewal of warfare. Growing out of a conference held in 2013 in London, 14 various essays give the reader a wide view of the changes that were possible during the 17 years the ceasefire between the KIA and the Myanmar army lasted, as well as four essays on ceasefire agreements with two other ethnic armed groups and experiences of comparable situations in neighbouring India. In a valuable introductory essay by editor Sadan, she notes not only the resignation of many Kachin people at the renewal of armed conflict, but the hardening of support for the KIO cause particularly among the urban population who identified themselves with the organisation and its cause, but who are, of course, protected from dangers of war. Whereas one can speculate that the Myanmar army government when it entered into the ceasefire believed that a period of peace would wane support for the cause of ethnic autonomy, the opposite appears to have been the case.

The second essay, by Dr. Sadan and Robert Anderson, a professor of communications, provides an historical perspective on the Kachin conflict about which some might differ. Unusually, they date the beginning of the battle for Kachin autonomy not, as is normally the case, in 1961, but during the fighting that took place in northern Burma during the Second World War when the American Office of Strategy Services and army, along with the British, raised volunteer forces to assist in their fight with the Japanese for access to the Chinese border. However, it is not made clear how this shaped subsequent events. Though the fighting in the area was briefly intense, it had no effect on the outcome of the war or the eventual decision, then unforeseen, for Britain to organise an early independence process for Burma.

This is followed by a lengthy set of reflections by Martin Smith, one who knows the KIO/KIA position intimately, and then two fascinating essays on the economics of conflict and ceasefire. The economic basis of the conflict in Myanmar is too often overlooked, so the essays by Lee Jones and Kevin Woods are especially welcome. This is followed by reflections on what is referred to as cross border diplomacy with China by Enze Han and Ho Ts'ui-p'ing and then three essays on cultural aspects of the ceasefire dealing with popular beliefs (Laur Kiik), women in the conflict (Jenny Hedstrom), and graphic medium (Helen Mears). Those analyses are followed by three first person accounts recorded and transcribed by the editor in what in some ways might be described as examples of the 'long-distanced nationalism' that Ben Anderson once wrote about. Patrick Meehan's account of the Palaung ceasefire is particularly valuable for little is written on this subject, while Michael Gravers, a long time student of the Karen National Union (KNU), reflects on the still successful ceasefire which led the KNU and the KIO to go separate ways in their relationships with each other and the central government in Naypyitaw. The final three essays deal with the situation in Northeast India (Reshmi Banerjee) and the long lasting ceasefire and its

consequences for the Mizo in that region (Joy L. K. Pasnuau and Mandy Sadan) with a concluding essay by Matthew Walton.

A brief and necessarily discursive review of this type cannot do justice to the richness of the volume. A particular strength is the great effort the editor has obviously made to link the argument of the various chapters together, providing numerous indications of supporting and otherwise relevant material to be found in other essays. Such effort is too rare in edited volumes. The great distress that the renewal of conflict in northern Burma has wrought since 2011 is obviously a source for much hard thinking on all sides of the conflict. The end of the ceasefire with the coming into effect of Myanmar's new constitution was perhaps inevitable. As former President Thein Sein said in a major speech in March, 2014, the new government was willing to work with those who accepted the new constitution, such as the National League for Democracy led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, but not with those who did not. The KIO's rejection of that offer has resulted in a renewed war for which there appears to be no end.

SOPHORNTAVY VORNG

A Meeting of Masks: Status, Power and Hierarchy in Bangkok, NIAS Press, 2017.

194 pp., ISBN 978-87-7694-197-0 (pbk) £19.99

Review by David J.H. Blake, Independent Scholar, Taunton, Somerset

Bangkok's glitzy shopping malls along the Siam-Ratchaprasong-Sukhumvit Road central axis form the main arena for investigating Thailand's class divisions and identity constructions. These consumption-driven urban spaces and the diverse middle classes that frequent them are placed squarely under the spotlight in Sophorntavy Vorng's study that purports to explore the connections between inequality, spatiality and social life in contemporary Bangkok. What emerges is an analysis of the shifting understandings from an emic perspective of what it means to be an 'urban middle class' Thai and how its members are endlessly preoccupied with concerns about status, power and prestige, expressed through 'mall culture' and its elaborate celebration of conspicuous consumption and material wealth markers. Drawing strongly from Richard O'Connor's (1995) concept of 'indigenous urbanism' in Southeast Asian cities, Vorng stresses that modern urbanism is not opposed to ruralism, but rather incorporates the countryside into a hierarchical relationship, whereby the ruling regime concentrates power and dominance in the capital city, thus toppling the myth that such cities are "alien impositions", while "the real" Southeast Asia is found in the rural backwaters. This perspective has relevance to the book's analysis of the (periodically) intense and violent political struggles in Thailand over the last decade or so, that have frequently been represented in the media as a rural peasant uprising against the urban elites. As Vorng contends, "the core struggle is about inclusion in the benefits of capitalism and development, rather than about challenging the system itself" (p. 116). Those that hoped that the Red Shirt movement and bouts of open conflict post-2009 represented a genuine grassroots uprising against the deeply entrenched hierarchical system itself, may be disappointed by the book's slant on this moment in Thai history.

As a confirmed country bumpkin and researcher of Mekong region rural phenomena who invariably feels like an alien from another planet on the few occasions I find myself within a

Bangkok mall, I could both sympathise with some of Vorng's Isaan subjects fresh to the city who are attracted in by gaudy hype and the cascading cool air at their entrances, only to encounter a brand name conscious, status obsessed and socially judgmental world within, yet simultaneously the social scientist within me can feel a sense of morbid fascination about the cultural mores, deep-set racial prejudices, elaborate linguistic cues and constant subtle power plays routinely enacted in these spaces. For example, I learned that *hi-so*'s (and *hi-so* hopefuls) strive to adorn themselves in the latest genuine designer *furniture* (Bangkok slang for accessories such as watch, jewellery, sunglasses, handbag, etc.) if they want to consider themselves as part of the tribe and earn the intensely peer-reviewed "face", respect and prestige that accompany the ostentatious display of such essential accoutrements. In this sense, perhaps Bangkok is little different from many other Asian and Western cities, but perhaps it is somewhat distinct in the degree to which class, ethnicity and wealth-based measures still define who can progress, be accepted and flourish within the prevailing system. Hence, the low paid cleaners and other service personnel in the malls are often regarded as little more than *dek* (children) by management and some customers, who are expected to keep themselves as invisible as possible from the clientele, unless called upon to directly serve them. Thus it was little surprise to read that some of the author's respondents expressed their ingrained fears, prejudices and insecurities when coming into contact with their fellow countrymen and women in other everyday arenas away from the artificial "safety" of the malls, hinting at the growing social divisions unfurling in the kingdom.

Vorng reasons that Bangkok's shopping malls have in many ways supplanted more traditional communal nodes of Thai social interaction of the past, such as temples, villages and fresh markets to evolve into "one-stop complexes" that accommodate every need, function and desire under a single roof. She describes these in great detail and rather casually mentions that "malls even offer convenience in terms of merit making, where one can place money in donations boxes...or buy baskets....to offer them at the temple" (p.61). While she notes the proximity of the popular Erawan shrine and Wat Pathum Wanarum to the Central World Plaza and notorious Ratchaprasong Intersection, she misses the wider fact that the contemporary shopper no longer has to leave the comfort of the mall to pray to the Hindu gods or make merit in temples, as the designers have thoughtfully brought the sacral into the mall for the convenience of all, completing the list of needs fulfilled. I was reminded of this recent phenomenon in a free map and list of places for shopping and sightseeing in Bangkok (sponsored by the Tourist Authority of Thailand and the Central Group, amongst others) picked up in a hotel I recently stayed in, which described malls as "places of worship". Besides listing the Erawan shrine, the leaflet informs tourists that they can simultaneously shop to their heart's content and make merit at the following locations: Trimurati and Ganesh Shrines (Central World shopping complex); Goddess Lakshmi Statue (4th floor of Gayorn Plaza); Narayana Statue (in front of the InterContinental Hotel) and Indra Statue (Amarin Plaza) – helpfully telling the reader what offerings the deities prefer. This aspect of space, power, hierarchy, religion and culture could have been explored in far more depth I felt.

The author does a reasonable job in converting what was her PhD thesis into an engaging account of power, status and class in these multifunctional spaces, drawing on a wide range of idioms, expressions and material markers to illustrate the complex dynamics at play when actors step inside a mall. She claims that one of her aims was to "problematise taken-for-granted categories such as 'urban elite' or 'urban middle class' and to shift understandings of how people view society as divided, and how they see others as 'higher' or 'lower' relative to themselves, like a

modern-day sakdina of wealth, education and influence" (p. 171), rather than provide a conclusive argument concerning Bangkok's class and status differentiation; a task in which she has succeeded in my view.

If I had any minor niggles about the book, it was probably that the author tended to over-labour some points concerning status-related terminology, leading to a sense of repetition in places. For example, the key terms *kalathesa* ("time and place"), *khaorop sathan thi* ("to respect the place") and *ru thi sung thi tam* ("to know the high and the low"), couched as "discourses" are initially defined on page 39 and then expanded upon in more detail on pages 50-53. Their meaning is repeated on pages 64-5 and then again on page 114 the reader is reminded that *kalathesa* means "time and place", just in case he/she had forgotten or had overlooked the fact there was a glossary of terms in the front notes. As a reasonably proficient non-fluent Thai speaker, I found that the system of transliteration from Thai to English was rather off-putting with a number of words or phrases, relying in the main upon the "Royal Thai General System of Transcription" (RTGS) revised rules, although the author claims to "have adhered to widely known English transliterations of common Thai phrases and proper nouns" (p.viii) in part. For instance, "poor" (จน) is transliterated as *chon* (p. 26), which could easily be confused with the word for "people" used in the phrase for "social class" *chon chan* (ชนชั้น) (p. 25); rather than distinguish the *for jan* (จ) consonant in "poor" which could then be transliterated as the more distinctive *jon*. Another word that jarred slightly was "money" (เงิน), transliterated in the book as *ngen* (p.26), as opposed to the more vowel cognitive transliteration of *ngeun* or *ngern*. While recognising no system of transliteration between Thai and English is ever going to be perfect, perhaps some deliberation with several bi-lingual speakers prior to publication might have avoided such issues. Lastly, the author could have been rather more imaginative with the figure labels, which tend towards the banal and descriptive (e.g. "Crowded restaurant floor in Siam Paragon") and add little analytical insight to the text or photos.

Ultimately, I found *A Meeting of Masks* to be a highly accessible, revealing, coherently argued, and solid addition to the NIAS Press Monograph Series, that will act as a useful primer for new researchers to the region, postgraduate students interested in understanding some of the dynamics of class divisions, status relations, consumption markers and social contestation in modern Bangkok and those interested in contemporary urban Thai society more generally.

MAJ NYGAARD-CHRISTENSEN AND ANGIE BEXLEY (EDS.)

Fieldwork in Timor-Leste: understanding social change through practice, NIAS Press, 2017
272pp., ISBN 978-87-7694-208-3, £65.00

Reviewed by Janet Cochrane, Leeds University

This edited volume provides a series of anthropological field studies in Timor-Leste over five decades, from 1966 to 2013. In the earliest period, less acculturated villages could only be reached by several hours' journey on horseback, while by 2013 "informants become Facebook friends and, increasingly, read publications written about them" (p. 23). The articles roughly follow the progress of the fledgling state under Portuguese occupation, Indonesian occupation

from 1976, the independence referendum in 1999 and separation from the Indonesian state, through the first turbulent decade or so of independence. Not surprisingly, there is a large gap in research during the Indonesian occupation because of the prohibition on foreign researchers entering the territory during that time.

An intriguing aspect of the book is its exploration of evolving approaches to anthropology, with earlier investigations focusing on village-level communities as the unit of study, rather than the broader examination of historical and political processes of later chapters, which are set in the context of a country whose national identity was - and is - by no means firmly established.

A common theme throughout the chapters is their account of how different foreign administrations imposed on the country both exacerbated existing tensions concerning national identity and had a legacy for the current political landscape. For instance, there has been disagreement since independence over the choice of national language: Portuguese, English and Tetum are the official languages, even though many younger Timorese grew up speaking Indonesian, having been educated under the Indonesian system. In many cases this generation has also adopted Indonesian cultural attitudes. Angie Bexley's review of how and why the national languages were chosen and the implications of the choices for different groups in the emerging nation, Judith Bovenspien's detailed examination of personalities and kinship ties and Pyone Myat Thu's account of the tensions caused by competing claims to land and other resources help to explain the continuing fragmentation of Timorese society.

Several other chapters too help to understand the modern nation of Timor-Leste, including explaining how indigenous attitudes to former colonial powers are more nuanced than external observers often appreciate, and how "the centrality of the resistance in external imaginaries of the country" (pg. 9) has often resulted in an over-simplistic analysis of the political landscape. The authors' findings give insights into why the country appears to be heading for the unwelcome status of 'failed state'. Further insights come from discussion of the role of development agencies in Timor-Leste as they filled the vacuum left by the departing Indonesian bureaucracy (and military) and attempted to build the country's institutions from scratch. As Maj Nygaard-Christensen explains, "the practices of revelation and concealment so often described as characteristic of local political dynamics in the post-conflict society are also characteristic of at least the more informal practices relating to aid work" (pg. 197), while Guteriano Soares Neves' chapter gives an insider perspective on the landscape of donor aid and projects and how they have fueled corruption.

One of the book's key strengths is its depiction of the practicalities and challenges of fieldwork, for instance the interesting reflections by Angie Bexley and Pyone Myat Thu on positionality during their respective research, and Andrew McWilliam's fascinating - almost forensic - account of how he was drawn to carry out his ethnographic research into the Fatulaku people of Western Timor, as well as his discussion of the complex role of key informants. The extensive timespan covered means that shifts in attitude amongst the population are reflected. When David Hicks began his fieldwork in the mid-60s, negative opinions of non-Christians were widespread while practitioners of 'lisan' (customs / customary law) "had been forced onto the defensive" (p. 45). By the time of the later fieldwork, however, such practices had achieved greater recognition.

This is an edited collection of papers on Timor-Leste, and for people wishing to learn about the country generally it is less useful; there are significant gaps which mean that we do not get an especially rounded picture. For instance, information on its history, society and culture arrive only as the occasional nugget, revealed almost as asides to the main focus on reflections on field research. Including a chronology of key events in Timorese history would have been helpful. There is nothing about the challenges of managing a state with part of its territory (Oecusse) embedded as an enclave within the Indonesia region of West Timor, completely separated from the rest of Timor-Leste and accessible only by a land or sea-journey of several hours or a short flight. Also missing is the significance of the crocodile to Timorese culture, even though a ban on culling them since 2002 due to their sacred status has resulted in increasing numbers of attacks on humans by the reptiles - and in many beaches being declared off-limits, thus undermining the fledgling tourism industry.

Overall, this work is likely to be of interest principally to anthropological researchers, especially ethnographers, because of its illustration of a range of methodological approaches to fieldwork.

ANDREW COCK

***Governing Cambodia's Forests: The International Politics of Policy Reform*, NIAS Press, 2016
xx-302 pp. ISBN: 978-87-7694-166-6 (hbk), £50**

Reviewed by Neil Loughlin, SOAS

Studies of the exploitation of Cambodia's forests have been the site of some of the most important work on Cambodia's current political and economic regime.^{ix} This book by Andrew Cock deserves to be read among that work. In *Governing Cambodia's Forests*, Cock writes elegantly on the linkages between international reform agendas, the country's post civil war reconstruction and state and elite formation. Its focus on how international reform agendas were interpreted, manipulated or rejected by the "ruling elite" in Cambodia is timely, as that elite is currently kicking back against and reinterpreting the fundamental international norm introduced in Cambodia during the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) from 1991: multiparty democratic elections.

In his book Cock advances two main arguments. First, that domestic elites are able to manipulate international reform agendas with consequences unintended by the international reformers and falling short of their intended policy outcomes. In Cambodia this was evident when logging declined from its 1997-1998 peak, which "may have been influenced by the inducements of renewed provision of foreign aid" but continued beyond agreed sustainable levels as the hunger for agro-industrial concessions in forested areas "remained unsated." (p.6-7) Second, and paradoxically, forest reform agendas in Cambodia "channelled the ruling elite towards practices of forest governance that enhanced the political and economic integration of Cambodia's forested hinterland," which nevertheless supported larger external reform objectives of state and institution building. (p. 6-7). The consequence was that Cambodia's forests were integrated with the economic and political centre, a more "fundamental" reform aim (p.7).

Cock's work is influenced by his time working for NGO Forum, a leading Cambodian development NGO network. This raises issues of positionality and impartiality, which Cock readily

acknowledges. However it may also be the source of one of the books strengths: it is not only a strong theoretical study of forest governance by an academic who has spent significant time on the ground, it also has important practical implications for development practitioners in Cambodia and elsewhere, as Cock's insights in Cambodia provide important "lessons learned" for future policymaking.

Cock grounds his work in the concept of neo-patrimonialism, which has come to dominate recent scholarship on Cambodia's political economy. As in much of the neopatrimonial scholarship on Sub-Saharan Africa where it is most commonly deployed, in Cambodia neo-patrimonialism is understood as a middle ground within a Weberian dichotomy of rule-based versus patronage and/or kinship based regimes. Thus relying on "patron-client and kinship alliances" (p. 70) to characterise a "highly personalised, authoritarian but insecure, conservative and patrimonial regime," Cock paints Cambodia's elite politics and state-society relations in broad strokes within that dominant viewpoint (p.71).

More thought provoking is Cock's depiction of Cambodia's ruling elite as approximating a "ruling class". In his view, this is due to its "emerging self-conscious identity, and the barriers of entry to this class seem to be growing" (p. 61). He argues that his ruling class "blurs any distinction between an economic and political elite because their values, power and economic base stems from their relationship with the state." (p. 61). This is an interesting point, but invites further definition. Are economic and political elites therefore all state elites to the same extent and with the same possibilities for utilising the state in service of their private interests? A greater exploration of this would have enriched the book's contribution as it is central to his argument. Who makes up Cambodia's ruling elite/class and why? Who is excluded and why? Are there some in this class who benefit more, or do all benefit horizontally under Hun Sen? These are areas for future research.

Cock is particularly fluent in Chapter 6 when he demonstrates how centralised control over forest concessions played a major part in the shift from a weak state to a more centralised stronger state, which mirrored and fed into a larger process of consolidation of power by the ruling elite. Agricultural plantations took prominence over the controversial forestry concessions, intertwined with the externally imposed and rationalised reform and development agendas, with the result that plantations facilitated control over rural populations to "be regularly turned out to vote" (p. 220)

In the closing chapter Cock makes the case that international organisations pushing their reform agendas must be cognizant of the "rationalities of forest governance" to include not only their preferences, but the ways in which forest-dwelling communities as local agents might be crucial in attempts to define and achieve "the national and global common good" (p. 228). This is of course not an easy task to achieve and problems associated with the realisation of Collective Land Titles (CLTs) in Cambodia are evidence.^{ix} All the more important then Cock's point that broad stroke international policy pronouncements can be readily captured and manipulated.

This impressive book contains many new insights and areas for further research. In addition to its contribution to international policy formulation it goes some way to suggesting new ways to understanding Cambodia's elite politics. It deserves a wide audience of practitioners and academics alike.