



# ASEASUK NEWS

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ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
STUDIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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# ASEASUK NEWS

ASEASUK@SOAS.AC.UK

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## **ASEASUK COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Chair: Professor V. T. King (University of Leeds)  
Email: v.t.king@leeds.ac.uk

Secretary: Dr Susan Conway  
Email: susanmconway@hotmail.com

Treasurer & Membership Secretary: Pauline Khng (SOAS)  
Email: pk2@soas.ac.uk

Dr Matthew Isaac Cohen (Royal Holloway, University of London) – contact for performance and culture and on Aseasuk research committee  
Email: matthew.cohen@rhul.ac.uk

Dr Becky Elmhirst (Brighton University) – on Aseasuk research committee  
Email: R.J.Elmhirst@bton.ac.uk

Dr Annabel Teh Gallop (British Library) – on RAE panel & South East Asia Library Group  
Email: annabel.gallop@bl.uk

Dr Monica Janowski (University of Sussex) – on Aseasuk research committee  
Email: M.Janowski@sussex.ac.uk

Dr Ben Murtagh (SOAS) – Aseasuk conference development  
Email: bm10@soas.ac.uk

### **Co-opted members**

Professor Vladimir Braginsky (SOAS)  
Email: vb1@soas.ac.uk

Dr Susan Conway (SOAS)  
Email: susanmconway@hotmail.com

Dr Felicia Hughes-Freeland (University of Swansea)  
Email: F.Hughes-Freeland@swansea.ac.uk

Dr Nicholas White (Liverpool John Moores University)  
Email: n.j.white@ljmu.ac.uk

## **NEWSLETTER EDITORS**

Pauline Khng and VT King; email: pk2@soas.ac.uk

## **INSTITUTIONAL HOST**

School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.  
**Contact:** Justin Watkins, Department of Southeast Asia, Faculty of Language and Culture,  
SOAS, Thornhaugh St/Russell Sq., London WC1H 0XG;  
email: aseasuk@soas.ac.uk

**ASEASUK RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

Chair: Professor Robert Taylor  
Email: [r\\_h\\_taylor@btopenworld.com](mailto:r_h_taylor@btopenworld.com)

Secretary: Dr Tim Harper (University of Cambridge)  
Email: [tnh1000@cus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:tnh1000@cus.cam.ac.uk)

Professor Graeme Barker (University of Cambridge)  
Email: [graeme.barker@mcdonald.cam.ac.uk](mailto:graeme.barker@mcdonald.cam.ac.uk)

Dr Matthew Isaac Cohen, ( Royal Holloway, University of London)  
Email: [matthew.cohen@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.cohen@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Becky Elmhirst (University of Brighton)  
Email: [R.J.Elmhirst@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:R.J.Elmhirst@brighton.ac.uk)

Professor Mike Hitchcock (London Metropolitan University)  
Email: [m.hitchcock@unl.ac.uk](mailto:m.hitchcock@unl.ac.uk)

Dr Gregg Huff (University of Glasgow)  
Email: [w.g.huff@socsci.gla.ac.uk](mailto:w.g.huff@socsci.gla.ac.uk)

Dr Monica Janowski ( University of Sussex)  
Email: [M.Janowski@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:M.Janowski@sussex.ac.uk)

Dr Justin Watkins (SOAS)  
Email: [justin.watkins@soas.ac.uk](mailto:justin.watkins@soas.ac.uk)

**WEB SITE**  
[www.aseasuk.org.uk](http://www.aseasuk.org.uk)

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## NEWS

### UK Southeast Asianists

**Dr Matthew Isaac Cohen (Royal Holloway)** received the 2008 Harry J. Benda Prize of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) for his book, *The Komedie Stamboel: popular theater in colonial Indonesia, 1891-1903* (co-published by Ohio University Press and KITLV Press, 2006). This prize is given annually to an outstanding newer scholar from any discipline or country specialisation within Southeast Asian Studies.

Matthew was also awarded an American Council of Learned Society Fellowship, which will allow him to complete his book on Indonesian interculturalism. He is continuing research on the history of Indonesian transnational performance in the first half of the twentieth century. He received a British Academy overseas conference grant which allowed him attend the UNIMA Congress and World Puppetry Festival in Perth, Australia, where he spoke on traditional puppetry in the modern world, participated in shadow puppetry workshops and attended talks and performances. Since January 2008,

Matthew has delivered seven papers: 'Asian dance in 1930s North America: from exotica to ethnology', Dance Ethnography Forum, De Montfort University, Leicester, 26 January; 'Devi Dja goes Hollywood', Public lecture at the Asian Studies Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford University, 7 February; 'Exoticism, appropriation and cultural internationalism: Asian performing arts in the academy', at the Palatine Symposium on Asian and African

Theatre in Higher Education, University of Reading, 13 February; 'Greater India: dance drama inspired by Java and Bali on South Asian stages, 1927-1945', Dance Research Seminar, Roehampton University, 21 February; 'Traditional and tradition-based puppetry in global contexts', 20th Unima Congress and World Puppetry Festival, Perth, Australia, 6 April; 'Devi Dja goes Hollywood', University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 14 April ; 'Global markets and Southeast Asian traditional and popular theatre', ASWARA, Kuala Lumpur, 15 April.

**Lee Jones (Oxford University)** has been appointed Rose Research Fellow in International Relations, Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford, from October 2008. Lee's research is on ASEAN and intervention in Southeast Asia, and democratisation and foreign policy. He recently conducted fieldwork in the region. He was convenor, chair and discussant for panels at the European Consortium of Political Research 6<sup>th</sup> Pan-European Conference on International Relations, Turin, 2007. Lee also presented a paper on 'ASEAN's albatross: Burma, ASEAN's "image" and the emergence of a "regional interest"'.

**Dr Juliet Bedford** is Postdoctoral Associate of the School of Anthropology, **Oxford University**. She moved back to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in January 2008 to continue research and establish her own research consultancy 'Anthrologica'.

**Dr Mandy Sadan (Pitt Rivers Museum and Wolfson College, Oxford University)** is currently doing research on 'Economies of ethnicity: material, visual and oral cultures and the

formation of ethnic identities in the Burmese colonial and postcolonial state'. She is spending the current year (Oct 2007- Oct 2008) in Thailand as Visiting Research Fellow & Special Lecturer at Chiang Mai University, Research Centre for Sustainable Development (RCSD), Faculty of Social Sciences. In 2007, Mandy received the Beit Fund Senior Members Research Grant (University of Oxford) - for archival research in the UK on photography and ethnic representation in the national press in Burma in the 1950s. She has also obtained an ESRC grant (2008 - 2009) for 'Optical allusions: photography, ethnicity and ideologies of ethnic conflict in Burma' for research in Thailand, Burma, Yunnan and Arunachal Pradesh. She received a small grant (2008) from the ASEASUK Research Committee for fieldwork in Thailand and Burma on 'Economies of ethnicity - transnational contexts in Burma and Thailand of Burmese minority identities'. The James Green Trust is also funding her research (2007-2009) on Kachin textiles as cultural and heritage industry in Thailand, Burma, Yunnan and northeast India.

Mandy has been involved as planning committee member in the Asian Borderlands Research Network (Anthropology Department, University of Leiden; Department of History, University of Amsterdam; Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, Assam

<<http://www.asianborderlands.net/>> which organised the Conference on Northeast India and its Transnational Neighbourhood, IIT, Guwahati, Assam, 16-18 January 2008. She was a discussant for the panel on 'Religious change in Northeast India' at this conference. She

was also the discussant for two papers: 'Reassessing hill/plain binary: from a maritime Southeast Asia perspective' (Dr Noboru Ishikawa, CSEAS, Kyoto University), and 'Cultural change and adaptation of the Hui People in the Yunnan Dqingzang Region' (Professor Li Zhinong, Yunnan University Southwest Borderland Ethnic Minority Research Centre, Kunming) at a seminar on 'Revisiting the Frontier in the Southeast Asian Massif', National University of Singapore, December 2007.

**Dr Hiroko Kawanami (University of Lancaster)** spent February and March 2008 in Nondwin, Upper Burma, where Manning Nash conducted his fieldwork in the 1950s to investigate the changes in the village social structure, rural economy and communal relationships. Hiroko's research on religious themes focuses on death and dying in Burma, and she has been visiting morgues, and interviewing monks and undertakers. She will be giving a public lecture in May on 'Moral leadership in Burmese Buddhism' at FOCUS ASIA, Lund University, Sweden; in June on 'Construction of gender in Asian religions', at the Summer School, Siena University, Italy; in July she will be participating in a session on Globalization and Religious Cultures: Anthropological Perspectives at the 16th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Yunnan University, Kunming, China, and in November a paper as part of a panel on Buddhist Feminism and the Future of Buddhist Nuns, at the Annual Conference of American Association of Religion, University of Chicago.

**Professor Robert Barnes (Oxford University)** was in Singapore as Visiting

Senior Research Fellow, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore from January to April 2008. Bob's research is on regional history of Eastern Indonesia with a focus on the Flores and Timor area. He gave the following papers recently: 'Results of genetic sampling in relation to language distribution between Flores and East Timor', International East Nusantara Conference, Universitas Nusa Cendana, Kupang, Timor, Indonesia on 3 July 2007; 'A temple, a mission, and a war: Jesuit missionaries and local culture in East Flores in the 19th century', Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies, School of Social Sciences, Seoul National University, Korea on 24 October 2007, and Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 8 April 2008; 'The grooming of a raja: Don Lorenzo Diaz Vieirra Godinho of Larantuka, Flores, Indonesia' to the Bristol Archaeology and Anthropology Society, 29 November 2007; 'Murder island' to the Indonesia Study Group Seminar, National University of Singapore, 1 February 2008; and 'On the margins of the middle class: becoming middle class in rural Eastern Indonesia' to the Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore, 3 April 2008.

**Professor Jonathan Rigg (University of Durham)** is currently working on two projects. The first, on 'The challenges of the agrarian transition in Southeast Asia', runs from 2005-2009. It includes a large multi-sited re-study, tracing agrarian transformations in 18 villages or groups of villages across mainland and island Southeast Asia. The project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of

Canada. For further details see <[http://www.caac.umontreal.ca/en/chatsea\\_intro.html](http://www.caac.umontreal.ca/en/chatsea_intro.html)>. The second is a more modest British Academy-funded research project on mobility and disconnection in Sri Lanka, undertaken in collaboration with the University of Ruhuna.

**Dr Dimitrios Konstadakopoulos (University of the West of England, Bristol)** has recently undertaken two fieldwork visits in Vietnam (September 2007 and April 2008). He surveyed the environmental conditions prevailing in three small-scale enterprise clusters in the Red River Delta as a part of the project entitled 'Locating Environmental Innovation Networks in Small-Scale Enterprise Clusters in the Red River Delta of Northern Vietnam', which has been supported by the ASEASUK Research Committee. The survey attempts to identify the existence and contribution of environmental innovation networks that influence the behaviour of clustered enterprises and measures the extent of the enterprises' exposure to regulatory, market, and community pressure, as to government initiatives, aimed at persuading them in adopting ecological and clean technologies. Dimitrios presented a paper entitled 'Cooling the earth? The changing priorities of EU-Asia technology cooperation' at the conference on EU-Asia Relations: A Critical Review at the Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence, University of Melbourne, 27-28 March 2008.

**Dr Becky Elmhirst (Brighton University)** is working with colleagues from the Institute of Social Studies (The

Hague), Andalas University (Padang, Indonesia), Asian Institute of Technology and Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok) on a three-year EU-Asia Link project entitled 'Gender and Sustainable Development: Natural Resource Management, Migration and Multi-Local Livelihoods'. Project activities include the joint development of policy-oriented postgraduate training on themes relating to gender, migration and natural resource management in each institution, involving a series of staff and student exchanges. In February 2008, Becky was at Andalas University to take part in a curriculum development workshop with colleagues from AIT, Andalas and various local non-governmental organisations, and to discuss future collaborative research activities on the project theme. The project is also providing exchange visits for students between AIT and Brighton University to support postgraduate field research and library work this summer.

Becky's co-edited book, *Gender and natural resource management*, includes several chapters with Southeast Asian contexts, including Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Lao PDR.

**Dr Janet Cochrane (Leeds Metropolitan University)** is currently involved in a joint research programme with University of Colombo, funded by Stockholm Environment Institute on 'Vulnerability assessment and resilience-building in post-tsunami Sri Lanka'. Janet is also responsible for tourism marketing in Lao PDR (funded by EU through SNV Netherlands), Tourism Master Plan for Lower Kinabatangan River (for WWF-Malaysia). She has also obtained a grant from IUCN's Tourism &

Biodiversity programme for an Indonesian NGO (Kaliandra Sejati) to develop small-scale, community-focused tourism around Mt Arjuna, in East Java.

In August 2007 she led a volunteering programme of 20 students and staff from Leeds Met to Kaliandra Sejati, community and environmental NGO in East Java, Indonesia. In 2007 the students built two playgrounds in local schools, taught English, and developed tourism products and a marketing strategy for Kaliandra. In 2008 plans are to build a 'special needs' playground, install renewable energy hot water generators in ecolodges, and further develop a tourism programme.

**Dr Alexandra Winkels (University of East Anglia)** has just returned to the UK from a visiting fellowship at the Department of Political and Social Change at the Australian National University. Her research examines the migration and development nexus by focusing on the vulnerability and social protection of migrants and their families. Linkages between migrant livelihood vulnerability and globalisation are examined through a study of coffee-farming migrants in Vietnam. She pays particular attention to the vulnerability of family members who 'stay behind' at migrant origin. In collaborative work with Hallie Eakin and Jan Sendzimir, Alexandra has been involved in examining the global linkages - or tele-connections - of coffee-farming livelihoods in Vietnam and Mexico. This resulted in the presentation of a paper on 'Nested vulnerability: exploring cross-scale linkages and tele-connections in

Mexican and Vietnamese coffee systems' at the recent GECAFS Conference in early April 2008 in Oxford.

**Dr Nick White (Liverpool John Moores University)** working on his research on 'Liverpool and the end of empire: the Guthrie Dawn Raid'. For the latter, he was in Malaysia in November 2007 as Visiting Fellow at the International Institute of Public Policy and Management (INPUMA), Universiti Malaya (UM). This joint project with Dr Shakila Yacob (UM) is on the take-over of the Guthrie Corporation by PNB, the Malaysian government's investment agency, in September 1981. Nick presented the following papers on his research: □'The Guthrie dawn raid: a Malaysian nationalistic coup?' at the European Business History Association Conference, Geneva, September 2007 and in revised form at Nottingham University Malaysia Campus's Fifty Years of Malaysian Independence Conference in November 2007; 'Liverpool shipping and the end of empire: The Ocean Group in East and Southeast Asia, c. 1945-73', Economic History Society Conference, Nottingham, March 2008.

**Dr Annabel Teh Gallop (British Library)** curated 'Art and the Man: the Raffles Family Collection', a small display in the British Library, 18 April - 3 August 2008, of drawings and illuminated Malay letters from the Raffles Family Collection acquired by the British Library in 2007. She also presented the following papers: 'The art of the Qur'an in Brunei' at Seminar Sejarah Borneo organised by the Brunei History Centre, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 3-5 December 2007, and 'From

Caucasia to Southeast Asia: Daghestani Qur'ans and the Islamic manuscript tradition in Brunei and the southern Philippines', Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, SOAS, 31 January 2008.

**John Okell** (retired from SOAS) has been involved in teaching intensive Burmese language courses in Thailand, Burma, UK, USA and in language examining.

**Dr Laura Noszlopy** has been appointed Honorary Research Associate at **Royal Holloway**, University of London as of March 2007. She is on the editorial board of *Inside Indonesia*. Laura is currently working on the biography of John Coast. She was recently awarded an ASEASUK Research Committee (ARC) grant to carry out research on Coast's time in POW camps in Thailand and in Indonesia, where he worked in Sukarno's revolutionary government and managed the Dancers of Bali tour of 1952. This will be followed later in 2008 by further ARC-funded research trips to New York to visit Coast's widow and to Leiden for archival work. In September 2007 she presented a paper on John Coast and the 1952 Dancers of Bali tour at the South Bank International Gamelan Symposium. Laura is co-convening the Southeast Asian Arts in Transnational Perspective panel with Dr Matthew Cohen at this year's ASEASUK conference in Liverpool.

**Dr Felicia Hughes-Freeland (Swansea University)** gave a seminar paper, 'Rasa: embodied perception in Javanese performance', to the Anthropology and Ethnomusicology Research Seminar, Queen's University, Belfast and the Anthropology Seminar, University of Wales Lampeter. In November 2007 she

presented a screening of film material on the theme, 'Bali in the ethnographic imagination', to the symposium 'Imagining Bali on Film' organised by the Centre for Media and Film Studies, SOAS, and the Royal Anthropological Institute. Meanwhile, her films, *The dancer and the dance, Tayuban: dancing the spirit in Java*, and uncut footage about *jathilan* were selected for the international exhibition, 'Visual Vocabularies: Engaging the Mind's Eye' at UCLA, California, October to December. In January 2008 Felicia spent a week in Jakarta interviewing women film directors for a new documentary project. She then took up a three-month appointment as Senior Visiting Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore as a member of the Cultural Studies cluster. At ARI she has been writing two journal articles on different aspects of gender and performance. She also presented a short paper, 'The aesthetics of hybridization: performance culture in Indonesia after 1998' to the Cultural Studies round table, and is currently preparing a seminar on women's contribution to recent trends on Indonesian cinema. And finally, after 25 years of research, her book, *Embodying communities: dance traditions and change in Java* is in press, and will be published by Berghahn Books later this year. Felicia is also director of the Southeast Asia network at Swansea University, and will be organising the ASEASUK conference for September 2009.

#### Centre for South East Asian Studies, SOAS

**Professor William Gervase Clarence-Smith** presented the following papers recently: 'British diplomats and the 19th-century Islamic debate over slavery,' at workshop entitled 'Whitehall and the slave trade: an enduring commitment to human rights,' Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, 17 October 2007; 'A global disease of livestock: *Trypanosoma evansi* from Africa to Paraguay and the Philippines,' HEDG annual workshop, SOAS, 6 November 2007; 'Researching and writing global history: the example of commodity chains,' History Department, University of Iceland, Reykjavík, 9 November 2007; 'The fall and rise of global history,' Institute of History, University of Iceland, Reykjavík, 10 November 2007; 'Islam and homosexuality in South East Asian history,' at South East and East Asian History seminar, SOAS, 13 November 2007; 'The Isma'ili contribution to the Islamic rejection of slavery,' Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, The Aga Khan University (International) in the UK, London, 14 November 2007; 'Hadhratim as agents of religious change in the Indian Ocean world,' British-Yemeni Society, London, 15 November 2007; 'Slaves in the Islamic world: a tentative census,' at a workshop on 'Crossing continental borders: a comparison of the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds,' Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 23 November 2007; 'Islam and slavery in Africa,' Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften, Humboldt University, Berlin, 28 November 2007. 'Approaches to slavery and its abolition in Islamic jurisprudence,' at a panel on

'Islam, slavery, and human trafficking: what remains to be done?' Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, New York, 5 January 2008; 'White Muslim slaves in early modern Europe,' SOAS History Society inaugural session, 23 January 2008.

#### PhDs

The following PhD candidates have successfully defended their dissertations:

**Juliet Bedford (University of Oxford)** on 'Gombak and its patients: provision of healthcare to the Orang Asli (indigenous minority) of Peninsular Malaysia' (supervisor: Professor Robert Barnes), **Syed Muhd. Khairudin Aljunied (SOAS)** on 'The aftermath of the Maria Hertogh riots in colonial Singapore, 1950-1953' (supervisor: Professor William G Clarence-Smith); **Albert Salamanca (University of Durham)** on 'Kangkong (*Ipomoea, Convolvulaceae*) and the geographies of interstitial urban spaces in Southeast Asia' (supervisor: Professor Jonathan Rigg).

#### Abroad

After 22 years at the Victoria & Albert Museum **Dr John Guy** has left to join the Asian Department of the **Metropolitan Museum of Art**, New York, as the Curator of South & Southeast Asian Art. His new email  
 john.guy@metmuseum.org

**Dr Vatthana Pholsena** (Institut d'Asie Orientale, CNRS-ENS, University of Lyon, France) is researching two collaborative projects: 'Beyond hills and plains: rethinking economy, state and

society in the Southeast Asian massif' in collaboration with Stan B-H Tan (National University of Singapore), Andrew Walker (ANU), Yun Nan Institute of Geography, National University of Laos, and Hanoi National University of Vietnam; 'Emergence of an infra-regional space? Study of movements and social change along Road N. 9, across the Lao-Vietnamese and Lao-Thai borders' with Duong Bich Hanh. Vatthana presented the following papers: 'War behind the Front Line. Education in communist zones during the Indochina Wars', Association for Asian Studies, Atlanta, 3-6 April 2008, 'State territorialization and local mobility in the Khe Sanh-Sepon border area between southern Laos and central Vietnam', at the Workshop on Revisiting the Frontier in the Southeast Asian Massif, co-organised with Stan B-H Tan (NUS) and Andrew Walker (ANU), 12-13 December 2007; "'Minority women" and the Vietnam War. Personal narratives and war experience', ICAS, Kuala Lumpur, 2-5 August 2007; 'Disciplining the body in late socialist Laos and Vietnam: preparing the population for the global age? at the workshop. 'Les identités corporelles au Vietnam: métamorphoses et diversités', Institut d'Asie Orientale, Lyon, 14-15 May 2007; 'The other side of the Lao Revolution' as guest speaker, International Conference on Lao Studies, Arizona State University, 3-6 May 2007.

## CONFERENCE REVIEW

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Shan Buddhism and Culture  
SOAS  
8-9 December 2007

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*Reviewed by Susan Conway*  
SOAS

This conference was particularly important in highlighting current scholarship in the area of Shan studies. Delegates came from Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, USA, Canada, Sweden, Sri Lanka and UK, including the Venerable Khammai Dhammasami and monks from the Shan monastery in Oxford. The conference with some 80 participants had panels on Sociology and Anthropology, Language, Music and Culture, History, Literature and Material Culture.

An evening of entertainment entitled 'Shan New Year Performance' was provided in the Brunei Gallery Theatre Hall. The performance featured Sai Kham Leik, Sai Htee Seng, Nang Kham Nwei Leik and members of the Shan Cultural Association, UK. It had an appreciative audience of more than 200 people.

### Panel 1: Sociology and Anthropology

**Nicola Tannenbaum** (USA)

Being Shan on the Thai side of the border: continuities and transformations in Shan culture and identity in Maehongson, Thailand

**Nancy Eberhardt** (USA)

Negotiating Shan identity in Northern Thailand

**Klemens Karlsson** (Sweden)

Tai Khun Buddhism and ethnic-religious identity

**Pannavamsa Sengpan** (Sri Lanka)

Recital of the Tham Vessantara Jataka: a socio-economic phenomenon in Kengtung, Eastern Shan State, Myanmar

**Siraporn Nathalang** (Thailand)

Khamti Buddhism and culture: an observation from a visit to Khamti Land in Arunachal Pradesh in 2006

**Khun-Hti Laikha** (Canada)

Being an urban Tai/Shan in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: challenges and solutions

**Khammai Dhammasami** (UK):

Growing, but as a sideline: an overview of modern Shan monastic education

**Chit Hlaing** (USA) The Shan role in the constitute of the Wa Kingdom of Ban Hong, Burma-China border

### Panel 2: Language

**Aggasena Lengtai** (Thailand)

'*kon to nung le ma song kaw*' (one man-animal and two dog-persons): a study of the importance of a noun classifier in the Shan language

**Sittichai Sah-iam** (Thailand)

Basic kinship terms in Tai Yai and in Kham Muang: comparative study in ethnolinguistics

### Panel 3: Music and Culture

**Amporn Jirattikorn** (USA)

Shan noise, Burmese sound: crafting selves through pop music

**Jane Ferguson** (USA)

Rock your religion: Shan merit-making ritual and stage-show revelry at the Thai-Burma border

**Monthip Sirithaikhongchuen**

(Thailand)

The celebrations of Shan/Tai New Year: history and revival

**Panel 4: History**

**Susan Conway** (UK)

The politics of inland Southeast Asia:  
Shan tribute relations in the nineteenth  
century

**Pimmada Wichasin** (Thailand)

Stupa worship: the early form of Tai  
Religious tourism

**Panel 5: Literature**

**Suchitra Chongstitvatana** (Thailand)

The Princess of *Saenwi*: the tragic  
romance of a Shan princess

**Arthid Sheravanichkul** (Thailand)

*Pu Khwan Khao*: worship of Tai Yai in  
Yunnan: fertility and Buddhist felicity

**Nanthariya Sah-Iam** (Thailand)

A study of Tai Yai proverbs

**Panel 6: Material Culture**

**Elizabeth Moore** (UK)

Buddhist archaeology on the Shan  
plateau: the first millenium CE

**Jotika Khur-yearn** (UK)

Richness of Buddhist texts in Shan  
manuscripts: a report of work in  
progress on the seven Shan versions of  
the *satipatthana sutta*

**Catharine Raymond** (USA)

Shan Buddhist art on the market: what,  
where and why?

**Sao tern Moeng** (USA) [in absentia]

Shan particles

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

ICAS 6

Daejon, Korea

6-9 August 2009

The International Convention of Asia  
Scholars (ICAS) will be hosted by hosted  
by the Chungnam National University  
(CNU), the Center for Asian Regional  
Studies (CARS) and Daejeon  
Metropolitan City. For further  
information see:  
<http://www.icassecretariat.org>

**LECTURES, SEMINARS &  
WORKSHOPS**

**Public Lecture** 22 May 2008

18.30 -19.45

New Theatre, East Building, LSE

**Professor James Scott**

Why civilizations can't climb hills: a  
political history of statelessness in  
Southeast Asia

**Roundtable** 28 May 2008

13.00-15.00

Chatham House

10 St. James's Square

London SW1Y 4LE

Lunch - 12.30 (£10)

**Charles Humfrey**, UK Ambassador to  
Indonesia (2004-2008)  
Indonesian elections 2009

To register for this event please reply to  
[asia@chathamhouse.org.uk](mailto:asia@chathamhouse.org.uk) with the  
following information:

NAME:

AFFILIATION:

- I am able to attend the Indonesia Forum meeting and will have lunch (£10)
- I am able to attend the Indonesia Forum meeting and will not have lunch

Please note that advanced registration is required and will not be acknowledged.

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[www.chathamhouse.org.uk/research/asia](http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/research/asia)

**Workshop: A decade after the Asian economic crisis: implications, lessons and the future**  
Department of Political Science and International Studies  
University of Birmingham  
15 May 2008

**Bali Unmasked - Topeng workshops and performance**  
16-18 May 2008  
Dartington, Devon

Sherman Theatre, Cardiff  
21-23 May  
followed by a Topeng performance and storytelling evening on Saturday 24 May at the Sherman Theatre. Places are limited and early booking is advisable. For further information see the website: <http://www.lunarproductions.org> and: <http://www.shermancymru.co.uk/performance/workshops/baliunmasked/>

## CONFERENCES

### 24th Aseasuk conference

Liverpool John Moores University  
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BOOK REVIEWS



TOM KRAMER

*The United Wa State Party: narco-army or ethnic nationalist party?*  
Washington DC: East-West Center  
Washington, Policy Studies no. 38.  
Singapore: ISEAS, 2007, i-vii, 94 pp, ISBN  
978-981-230-491-9

Reviewed by Ronald D. Renard

Programme Manager, UNODC Wa Project  
2006-2007

The Wa, a Mon-Khmer group totalling about 600,000-700,000 people, live in such a remote and rugged area of Myanmar and China that the border was not delineated until 1960. Although the Wa on the Chinese side have been encompassed by Chinese national development policies, quite a different situation exists in what is now called Wa Special Region 2.

This isolation continued well into the 1990s partly because of Wa headhunting and visitors fearing it, and because of insurgent warfare. After the Communist Party of Burma took control of the region in about 1970 to further their rebellion against the national government, they convinced (sometimes forced) the Wa to abandon the taking of heads. This ban has continued to the present.

The CPB's control of the Wa Region did not last as Wa leaders, exasperated with CPB corruption and disregard for the Wa who were often treated as cannon fodder, expelled the CPB command in 1989. These Wa leaders then established the United Wa State Party followed by a ceasefire agreement with the government which then recognised the area as a Special Region (the second, after Kokang, which was another CPB constituency). In return for pledging to remain within the Union of Myanmar forever, the national government granted them considerable autonomy. This allowed the Wa Region to become the biggest opium-producing area in Myanmar in the 1990s and the Wa to maintain an army of some 20,000 troops. Although Wa leaders have dismissed disarmament attempts by the national government, the Wa Authority did declare an opium ban in 2005.

These strict controls on access to the Wa Region by the national government only began to loosen after 1996, when UNDCP (now UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) started a project for alternative cultivation to help Wa farmers break their dependency on poppy cultivation as income from opium sales bought rice. At the same time, the government, the authorities of adjacent areas (such as Special Region 4 - east of the Wa Region) and the Wa themselves, have improved roads so considerably that one can now reach the Wa Region from the nation's capital in a single day. As of 2007, a paved road (except for around the Salween where it is badly eroded) reaches from Lashio to the Wa capital of Pang Kham and also from Kengtung to within about 30 km (approximately one

hour's driving time) from the Wa border in the east.

The tightly restricted access to the region enforced by the national government on foreigners was a primary cause for most outsiders greeting the Wa declaration that they would ban opium with scepticism. One manifestation was Andrew Marshall's cover story in *Time* referring to the Wa as a narco-army. Another was the fact that one Wa expert, Magnus Fiskesjö, told the author of this review in 2006 that there were no significant differences between the Chinese Wa and those across the border. Although he may have been referring to the indigenous culture of the Wa people, so many new developments have occurred in the Wa Region since 1989 that the Wa in the two countries follow markedly divergent ways of life.

This is clear even from a cursory reading of Tom Kramer's book. The book of course deserves much more than a quick scan since it is the most comprehensive and authoritative review of the Wa Region's intricate political dynamics and local ways of life, ever carried out. (An index would have been useful here given the range of proper nouns). The uniqueness of this place was affirmed at a meeting in 2007 of the Thai-Burma Border Consortium to consider assistance for education and which was also attended by various representatives of UN agencies operating in the country. After I had explained the educational situation in the Wa Region (multiple curricula, multiple languages, lack of funding, low attendance, high teacher and student attrition), most luminaries present, such as Australian Burma

expert Alex Smith, said (with considerable common sense) something to the effect of 'Well, the Wa is not representative of anything so we should pattern our approach on other areas.'

Kramer knows the literature of the Wa Region well, although his erudite (Western language) bibliography somehow fails to include Marshall's article in which the phrase 'narco-army' is linked to the Wa) which he has indeed read. Adding to this scholarly base, he also has been fortunate enough to be able to travel to the Wa a number of times (but not for the last three years due to reduced access to border areas by writers after Khin Nyunt, the former prime minister, was 'allowed to retire'). This has made it difficult for him to assess the impact of the Wa opium ban and the entry of many new development agencies in the Wa Region. He has compensated for this somewhat by obtaining information from development workers who are implementing projects there.

However, this is not the same as being able to go to the region and judge for oneself whether the opium ban (which has indeed reduced poppy cultivation by at least 99%), caused the 'misery' (p. 64) he predicts. It would also have given him a chance to assess other recent significant changes, such as the considerable recent impact of development agencies in the Region. Besides UNODC, the World Food Programme, UNICEF, FAO, and such international NGOs as Malteser International, Aide Mèdicale Internationale, German Agro Action, and CARE International are all now working in the region.

Even more importantly, going to the Wa Region would have enabled him to see the massive changes brought about by various Chinese interests. Not least has been the expansion of rubber cultivation to hundreds of square kilometres in most of the lowland areas in the region (the rubber species grown here do not do well at altitudes over 1,000 metres). In 2005 and 2006 he would have seen strings of lumber trucks carrying wood from the Wa Region (and apparently from further inside Myanmar) to China until it was stopped by a government request to China and the Wa's own ban in March 2006. Other forms of Chinese investment as well as many Chinese workers are entering the Wa Region (and neighbouring Special Regions) while the Chinese government hopes this border area remains peaceful. At the same time, many of the Wa elite are sending their children to be educated in the Chinese system leading a large proportion of them to enter the Chinese business world rather than joining the Wa Authority as local leaders.

However, tension remains high. The Wa, although reluctant to renew armed conflict, show no intention of laying down their arms, which they claim is the reason the area is peaceful. Rumors abound - one being that the government is calling for the return of Mong Pawk District (largely populated by Lahu and which was seized by the Wa during the BCP era) as another requirement for total reconciliation. When, in January 2008, Chairman Bao learned (incorrectly in fact) that UNODC, in the face of severely reduced funding, might only extend its work one year, he threatened to have the Wa people resume poppy cultivation (a threat he had also made to

me in 2006 out of fear that there would be insufficient international support to keep his people from starving). Although the work of UNODC and its partner organisations have contributed to the peace process it remains fragile. Were it to collapse, considerable suffering would result for the peoples of the Wa Region and those nearby.

We look to Tom Kramer to keep abreast of the situation and continue producing level-headed and well-substantiated reports on this volatile region.

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JUDITH L. RICHELL

*Disease and demography in colonial Burma*  
Copenhagen: NIAS Press; Singapore: NUS Press, 2006. viii, 327 pp. ISBN 87-91114-70-5, NIAS edn £15.99; 9971-69-301-1, NUS edn

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*Reviewed by William G. Clarence-Smith*  
SOAS, University of London

Judith Richell tragically passed away a few weeks before she was planning to submit her University of London doctoral dissertation, leaving her husband to bring the project to completion for publication as a book. Inevitably, this reads very much like a thesis, but it is a great contribution to the historical literature on Southeast Asia and tropical demography, and NUS and NIAS are to be warmly congratulated for publishing it. Despite the title, this is a study of lowland Burma from 1891 to 1941, give or take a few exceptions, as the statistical record for upland zones is dreadful, and figures before 1891 are patchy and unreliable.

The sources are essentially metropolitan, although the author was able to make one brief visit to Burma.

The early chapters contain much dense demographic theory, which makes for heavy reading. The overall growth of lowland Burma's population works out at just over 1% a year from 1891 to 1941, a relatively low figure and one seemingly in line with earlier decades in the 19th century. Traditionally, slow growth has been explained by late marriage, infrequent remarriage of widows, a high proportion of unmarried adults, low levels of births outside wedlock, and a general Buddhist distaste for marriage and children as phenomena of this world of suffering. While not denying that these factors affected birth rates, the author seeks supplementary explanations in terms of mortality.

Infant and child mortality are explored in chapters 3 and 4, although the infant mortality discussion unfortunately has to be based largely on backward projections of materials posterior to 1941. Maternal diets were deficient, as mothers sought light babies with small heads, to ease childbirth. Tetanus infections in babies at birth were relatively high, for reasons of poor hygiene. After birth, the colostrum from mothers' breasts was discarded as being bad for babies, a prejudice which spread far beyond Burma, and one that lowered chances of infants surviving. Negative views of certain foods for young children, notably pulses and eggs, also affected nutrition. The spread of machine-milled rice made the problem worse, especially as parboiled rice was unpopular. Death among older children

was due to more obvious disease factors. However, the speculation that the 1918 influenza pandemic hit children particularly hard is not supported by evidence from other areas in the world, where this peculiar form of 'flu' was especially lethal among young adults. There were British attempts to counter all these problems, but they were vacillating, under-funded, over-reliant on charity, and weakened by prejudices against women doctors.

In terms of adult mortality, the focus of chapters 5 and 6, Judith Richell stresses exaggerated colonial fears of the 'big three', cholera, plague and smallpox, and a corresponding neglect of malaria, the 'insidious disease'. Between 1900 and 1940, mortality from the 'big three' fell from 10% of regular deaths to 2%, in part reflecting colonial campaigns of public health, inoculation and vaccination. Nevertheless, a plethora of health schemes remained still-born, due to lack of funds. The worst mistakes were made with malaria, as British officials assumed that mosquitoes bred in stagnant water. In reality, *Anopheles minimus*, the chief vector in Burma, preferred lightly-shaded, slow-moving clean water, which was what British irrigation schemes provided them with. Only at the end of the colonial period did this fact begin to dawn on officialdom, a delay that entailed disastrous consequences.

The conclusion places the blame for high mortality on colonial rule, although Judith Richell might have nuanced this notion, had she lived to revise the text before submission. In reality, her story reveals the usual mixed pattern of good intentions and a strong belief in material

progress, partially undermined by parsimony and prejudice, some of the latter stemming from Burmese cultural norms. The really worrying conclusion is perhaps that independent Burma and international organisations have not sufficiently learned the lessons of history. With the appearance of this fine book, they no longer have any excuse.

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R.A. CRAMB

*Land and longhouse; Agrarian transformation in the uplands of Sarawak*  
Copenhagen: NIAS Press 2007. 422 pp.  
ISBN 978-87-7694-010-2, £25

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*Reviewed by Monica Janowski*  
University of Sussex

This is a detailed and extremely valuable book on the history of agricultural land use and land tenure among the Iban of Sarawak, focusing on case studies from the Saribas area. Cramb is an agricultural economist who worked for the Sarawak Department of Agriculture from 1977-83 and is now at the University of Queensland.

In his introduction, Dove points out that the uplands of SE Asia have been an extremely important site for academic exploration of the nature of agrarian society but that this has been from a synchronic perspective; Cramb contributes a vital diachronic perspective which allows a much more nuanced analysis of the nature of such societies. It is arguable that the synchronic nature of work to date has contributed to the implicit (if not explicit) acceptance among the academic

community of a conceptual divide between 'uplands' and 'lowlands', which has left upland peoples somewhat 'fossilised', inhabiting an unchanging space, people without history - or living, as it were, in ancient history.

This placing of upland peoples in a space without history has led to a perception that they are not able or willing to change and that they do not want to engage with the outside world. Cramb, by contrast, shows how over the past 150 years the Saribas Iban have shown a desire and ability to be adaptive to the changing social and economic environment in which they find themselves - both their immediate environment and the broader world stage. He describes their approach as 'adaptive' rather than 'sustainable', moving away, in effect (and usefully!), from an evolutionary approach to the nature and position of the swidden cultivation which was their traditional mode of livelihood.

Swidden cultivation, like the upland peoples who practise it in SE Asia, has been treated as a fossilised, unchanging form of relationship with the environment. Although the rationality of its practice in the natural environment has been repeatedly highlighted in recent years by scholars including Michael Dove, this is still rejected by most governments and by many international policy makers. This is related to the fact that the lack of diachronic studies like Cramb's has meant that the ability of swidden cultivation (and swidden cultivators) to integrate cultivation for the market and to adapt over time - sometimes very

rapidly - in response to market forces has been relatively invisible. Swidden cultivation has appeared to most policy makers as a subsistence-based form of cultivation which needs to be replaced if cultivation for the market is to be introduced. Cramb shows how wrong this perception is; in the Saribas case studies which he examines, there has been a keen perception of market needs and an ability to move back and forth between swidden cultivation of rice and cultivation of different types of crop for the market (including tree crops like rubber and crops like pepper which need replacing after seven years) depending on changes in the broader market. Swidden cultivation of rice has provided a fall-back, safety valve which has, in fact, probably encouraged greater experimentation with cash crops. This recalls the analysis made by Roy Ellen of the role of sago for the Nuaulu, and that made by James Fox of the role of the *Borassus* palm in Roti. These cases, like swidden cultivation of rice among the Saribas Iban, are examples of the importance of an ability to rely on fall-back subsistence patterns in engagement with the market.

This analysis of the role of swidden cultivation in the development of cash crops and a more mixed type of economy in the uplands should stimulate more thought about policies which promote the replacement of swidden cultivation of rice with cash crops. Swidden cultivation is not only ecologically appropriate in the upland environment; its combination with cash-cropping means that smallholders are cushioned from the impact of changes in market prices. Cramb's analysis clearly shows how it has played this role

among the Iban. If smallholder cultivation of cash crops rather than plantation agriculture is to be promoted in the uplands of Southeast Asia, this should probably incorporate support for continuing reliance on swidden, which can be expanded and contracted depending on the nature of the market. Many cash crops grown in Southeast Asia are extremely vulnerable to boom-and-bust cycles, as is pepper, the main cash crop currently grown by the Saribas Iban.

Cramb sees the Saribas Iban as an example of the potential for community-based systems of land management to play a role in negotiating what he describes as a 'balanced' form of development in upland areas in Southeast Asia, suggesting that community-based systems balance individual with community needs. Here he refers to the philosopher John Ralston Saul, who emphasises the importance of placing equal value on common sense, ethics, imagination, intuition, memory and reason. He argues that what James Scott has referred to as the philosophy of 'high modernism', practised by the governments of Southeast Asia, which elevate reason over other values, is not, by contrast, 'balanced'. Whilst one would not disagree with this latter point, it seems to me that Cramb perhaps runs the danger of reifying and attributing too much ethical force to the notion of 'community'. What he describes in the different case studies is actually ways in which different individual and group needs (rather than 'community' needs) are negotiated, via the personal face-to-face pressure of a close-knit rural community and drawing on *adat* customs developed in a less fast-

changing environment. As Cramb himself shows, it is important not to place too much emphasis on the purely benevolent nature of communal land tenure arrangements; in a context where opportunities present themselves, these may be utilised and subverted by powerful families, groups and individuals. As he demonstrates, this is particularly true where such individuals are no longer under pressure from their peers, as is the case with high levels of migration to town and the persistence of land rights among town-based Iban.

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NORDIN HUSSIN

*Trade and society in the Straits of Melaka;*

*Dutch Melaka and English Penang, 1780-1830*

Copenhagen, NIAS Press; Singapore

NUS Press 2007, ISBN 978-87-91114-47-2,  
hb £50; 978-87-91114-88-5, pb £15.99, 388  
pp., 13 maps, 7 pls., 17 figs., and 49  
tables.

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*Reviewed by Janice Stargardt*

*University of Cambridge*

Let me begin by situating myself as an archaeologist who has worked on the Straits of Malacca and the maritime trade of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea from the 3rd century BCE to the end of the 15th century for some 30 years, work to which the reasoning and sources of the historians of the period 15th-18th centuries are as indispensable as our material evidence of earlier periods, where written evidence is sparse indeed. I thus approached the book under review with a mixture of anticipation and hesitation, appreciating

the importance of the topic but wondering what it would add to our knowledge of two relatively well-studied ports in the Straits of Malacca. I am delighted to find that it contains unrivalled monographic studies of the trade reaching each town, based on such thorough studies of the respective records that, in addition to no fewer than 49 tables included in the book, NIAS has had to relegate the full set of Nordin Hussin's appendices as PDF files to their website:

<<http://www.niaspress.dk/extras/>>

The author then turns his attention to comparative chapters on the urban morphologies, contrasting administrative structures and societies of the two ports. Not content with an extremely accomplished and convincing treatment of these subjects, he never loses sight of major over-arching questions such as the changes, at precisely this period, in the relative power of the British and Dutch empires. He goes well beyond that to assess the lasting influence of Melaka's pre-colonial origins, followed by 300 years of settled colonial administration and construction under the Portuguese and Dutch and to contrast it to Penang, with its shallow, entirely colonial history under [English] East India Company rule, its ad hoc administration and unstable levels of funding for both construction and administration. Another great question considered by Nordin Hussin is whether it is valid or fruitful to classify these as *colonial* port cities, thereby isolating them in colonial history, against the benefits to be gained from looking at them in the economic and social context of all port cities of their time. The author is to be

complimented on his sophisticated analyses of the respective roles and impacts of heterogeneous societies in the profit-driven world of these ports where local and far-flung networks intersected and sometimes clashed. I find the book a mine of precious data framed by thoughtful and thought-provoking theoretical appraisals.

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JOEL S. KAHN

*Other Malays: nationalism and cosmopolitanism in the modern Malay world*  
Singapore: Singapore University Press;  
Copenhagen: NIAS Press 2006. 228 pp.  
ISBN 978-87-7694-007-2, pb £14.99

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*Reviewed by Becky Elmhirst*  
University of Brighton

Reverberations following the country's recent elections are a reminder, if one were needed, of how struggles over identity and entitlement continue to resonate through almost all aspects of life in Malaysia. At the time of writing this review, opposition-controlled Penang had just announced it would no longer support the central government's New Economic Policy of favouring ethnic Malays over other citizens: a policy that has increasingly been on the receiving end of vocal challenges from other groups. In this book, author Joel S. Kahn shares a profound sense of disquiet with the racialised national narrative that has produced a particular construction of Malay identity and has served to justify exclusionary practices of citizenship that suppress the role of other Malaysians – Chinese, Indians, Orang Asli and various tribal groups in

Sabah and Sarawak. In this narrative, 'Malayness' is envisaged as static, ethnically homogeneous, subsistence-oriented, and rural; the image is of a 'traditional' Malay kampung-dwelling people marginalised by colonialism and foreign immigration which populates the conservative nationalist imagination. Kahn's question, however, is how such constructions of Malayness have come to be so hegemonic, and were/are there alternatives? This book is the result of Kahn's exploration of this question, and his investigation and recovery of other narratives of Malayness, insofar as these were apparent in the late colonial period between the 1920s and 1950s. Kahn's endeavours lead him to open up the possibility of a very different version of Malayness, as he puts it, a *peranakan* culture par excellence: hybridised, cosmopolitan, entrepreneurial, in a state of cultural flux. Kahn's 'other Malays' are the early 20th century industrious, urban and mobile merchants, or those from Sumatra, parts of the Philippines and southern Thailand (the transnational Malay world) interlinked through regional and international Muslim networks: cosmopolitan in the sense that they hold no particular territorial or communitarian allegiance. His focus is on the various milieux in which these 'other Malay' narratives were apparent, and how they were supplanted as a more conservative version of Malay peoplehood became implanted in the popular imagination.

The historical focus of the book is on the decades between the late 1920s and early 1950s when the emergence of a particular nationalist narrative of Malayness emerged on the Malay peninsula. Kahn extends his analysis

beyond the nationalist texts that were being scripted at this time, reaching instead into other dimensions of the performative history of Malayness: popular film, urban planning and the geographies of regional development policy, each of which contributed to ruling out other possible interpretations of Malay identity. The book opens with a discussion of the construction of Kampung Melayu in Singapore in the late colonial period: the constitution of an exemplary Malay community in terms of its social and built environment. This experiment in community-building was not the brainchild of the colonial government but of the leaders of the Kesatuan Melayu Singapura, founded in 1926 as the forerunner of the organisations that led Malaysia to independence, and through this particular case, Kahn shows how their concept of Malay peoplehood, expressed in Kampung Melayu, was both racialised (true Malayness can only be carried by Malay bodies) and spatial (attached to a particular territory). At the same time, he outlines the ways this imagining of Malayness embraced a wider notion of a Malay world. This is explored further in chapters that deal with commerce, migration and settlement in the late colonial period: a Malay world of cultural and religious dynamism, movement, commerce and cosmopolitanism in relations with other racial, religious and cultural groups from the region and beyond (p. 43). Chapters on 'popularising nationalism' and on 'race, nation and the spatial order of modernity' are where Kahn outlines a hardening or racialisation of the boundaries between Malays and non-Malays, and the fading of any

vision of a cosmopolitan 'Greater Malaya' uniting Muslim peoples across the region (p.108), through the popular films of the actor and director P. Ramlee, and through policies devised by the postcolonial government.

This is a complex story, but one which is well told in this book. For readers versed in the literature on ethnicity, identity and nationalism in Malaysia this is a provocative and stimulating read, which evidently invites further debate. However, the book's resonance also extends beyond the realm of Southeast Asian scholarship: Kahn makes an important contribution to understandings of 'cosmopolitanism' in the social sciences more generally, demonstrating how a 'cosmopolitan orientation' - a selfhood that is not constituted or forever tied to particular cultural milieux - pre-dates our contemporary world of transnational social networks. As Kahn remarks, situating the Malaysian case in this broader context opens up scope for considering the cosmopolitan possibilities in Southeast Asia now and in the past. Kahn's book provides an intriguing guide towards such an undertaking.

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BAULCH, EMMA

*Making scenes: reggae, punk, and death metal in 1990s Bali*

Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2007. xiii + 226 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-4115-4, £11.99

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*Reviewed by Matthew Isaac Cohen*

*Royal Holloway, University of London*

The diverse popular music scenes of Southeast Asia, while well documented in journalism and omnipresent on youtube and other internet sites, have attracted little attention from scholars until recently. Baulch's ethnography of underground music in Bali in the 1990s is a significant contribution to the field. Baulch lived in south Bali between 1996 and 1999, during which time she attended and organised concerts, interviewed and hung out with band members, wrote English-language journalism on Balinese youth culture and co-edited two issues of an underground music 'zine titled *Tikus Got* (Gutter Rat). Her book is grounded in Birmingham School cultural studies and attendant to cultural politics in Bali, with a fine ear for distinctions among the various styles and sub-styles that emerged in Indonesia at the time, such as black metal, death metal, thrash metal, grindcore, grunge, *punk anarki*, *punk chaos* and *punk moderen*.

Punk and metal arrived in Bali in the 1990s via Java (the Jakarta Alternative Pop Festival of 1996 was a watershed event), Malaysia (where bootleg cassettes were more easily available), Balinese cruise ship workers and a

variety of other avenues. Well-heeled Balinese with access to studios and equipment organised bands that covered songs by Green Day, Nirvana and Rancid. Aspiring musicians saw themselves as opposed to the reggae bands primarily catering to the tourist industry. There were few venues for punk or metal bands, however, as it was difficult to get a permit in the three years after a riot at a Metallica concert in Jakarta in 1993. Restrictions eased in anticipation of Reformasi and a full-blown underground scene developed. Musicians took on some of the sartorial and behavioural styles of punk and metal. Punks sported 'mohawks, chains, jackboots, and leather accessories studded with metal spikes' while 'the death metal style featured jeans, long hair, and black T-shirts with illegible band names' (p. 1). Fans would headbang and pogo at concerts, but interestingly Balinese punks did not brawl nor did they see themselves as actively opposing the Indonesian state or Balinese culture. Musicians interviewed by Baulch insisted that they went to temple and were good Hindus whose musical activities were supported by their parents as a form of self-expression. The underground scene was limited to a number of distinct locales in the mid-1990s - including a radio station that broadcast local bands and a handful of houses and shops. Balinese punks would go to shopping malls and play loud punk music on ghetto blasters to antagonise *anak gaul* (rich, privileged kids) and *satpam* (security guards) - though never to the point where actual blows were exchanged. The scene expanded as the decade wore on and musicians and fans took to wearing

punk and metal attire as their daily wear.

Baulch is insistent that reggae, punk and metal music was not directly related to indigenous Balinese culture, despite efforts of Balinese academics and journalists to find connections between the hard sounds of Balinese gamelan and punk, and the macabre imagery of death metal and Balinese ritual drama. The musicians were 'gesturing elsewhere' through sartorial signs (Union Jacks and Confederate flags), English language lyrics and English band names. The divorce from traditional Bali was not total. Some bands quoted *angklung* melodies and notoriously, Balinese black metal groups killed and ate live animals on stage, contributing to Islamist fear mongering that heavy metal fronted devil worship. Baulch interprets stage violence on animals as a reversal of the Balinese practice of *caru* (ritual sacrifice), quoting the vocalist of black metal band Ritual Crypt: 'Balinese people have the ritual sacrifice where they kill a chicken to appease the evil, unseen forces. But when we do it, we don't mean to appease the evil forces but to celebrate them' (p. 161). Baulch even views Eternal Madness' death metal *etnik lunatik* (crazy ethnic) album *Offerings to Rangda* (1997), with its Balinese Hindu imagery, as lacking in local resonance as it engages universal themes rather than specific local issues.

The foreignness and outsider status of the underground seems to me a sign of its newness in the 1990s. Bali has a long history of integrating other exogenous cultural forms into complex web of culture and it is not surprising that

today, less than a decade after Baulch's research concluded, punk bands play the Bali Arts Centre, the prime public stage for traditional performance, and heavy metal is performed at temples and hybridised with gamelan. The Balinese punk band Superman is Dead, adamantly anti-commercial in the 1990s, is represented by Sony Indonesia and tours internationally.

Baulch's study is strong in its clear articulation of the habits and desires of underground musicians. She does not seem to have spoken much to Balinese intellectuals or traditional artists, musicians' relatives or the much-demonised *anak gaul* or reggae artists. This deep submersion in the underground scene means that the social position of the musicians is sometimes hard to gauge. Baulch's prose also is somewhat uninviting, e.g. 'diverse discursive contexts will always forbid cultural forms from remaining intact when they cross cultural boundaries' (p. 178). The insights she offers into a pivotal moment of Balinese musical history are unique, however, and the book can be thoroughly recommended to all Southeast Asianists interested in popular culture, music and social change.

DAVID SHAVIT

*Bali and the tourist industry: a history,*

1906-1942

Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2003. vii +213 pp. ISBN 078641572. £25.94

Reviewed by **Matthew Isaac Cohen**

Royal Holloway, University of London

Some academic studies come in below the radar, escaping the notice of critics and scholars. This is true in even the highly populated field of Baliology. Shavit's book on Western travellers and sojourners in Bali is an able compendium and summary of first-hand accounts written in travel literature, popular magazines and a variety of other publications. Shavit is an emeritus professor of library studies at Northern Illinois University in Dekalb, and his book is valuable as a bibliographic resource on literature in European languages, rather than a brand new picture of Balinese history. The argument that Shavit offers is familiar from Adrian Vickers and Michel Picard – which is likely why his book has received so little academic attention to date. After the conquest of South Bali by the Dutch, western travellers in search of a new tropical paradise imagined Bali as a new Tahiti, enabled by the anti-modern colonial policy of *Baliseering* (Balinisation), which attempted to preserve traditional custom and ward off technology and western education. The Balinese embracement of art was caused in large part by the populace's severe poverty in the wake of the worldwide depression and facilitated by western middlemen. Shavit provides concise portraits of

dozens of the western artists, scholars, writers, adventurers and people of leisure who visited Bali; able descriptions of the hotels and guest houses in Denpasar, Kuta, Kintamani and elsewhere; insights into the experience of the daytrippers who came to Bali on round-the-world cruise ships; and revealing economic information, with a stress on the profits made by KMP, the Dutch steamship line. The illustrations, including cartoons, promotional materials and erotic images, are also evocative.

Many of the pervasive stereotypes that developed with tourism in this period – all Balinese are artists, Balinese are tolerant of homosexuality, premarital sex is common in Bali, religion dominates Balinese life – are still with us today, and it is important to go back to the primary documents where these tropes were formed and honed if we are to get beyond these blinders in intercultural communication. The Balinese themselves and the Dutch colonial officers are unfortunately not as visible as they could have been in Shavit's account, nor is there much information about non-western visitors to Bali. Stereotypes and even spelling mistakes are repeated from his sources without correction or amendment. There are occasional repetitions and missing references. But the book is an easy and quick read and deserves a place on the shelves of anyone interested in the history of tourism in Southeast Asia.

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ALESSANDRA ROYO Y LOPEZ (convenor)  
*Interpreting & (re)constructing Indonesian  
dance & music heritage*  
*From Jayaprana to the abduction of Sita:  
Tari Bali meets Bharatanatyam*  
AHRC, produced at SOAS for the SOASIS  
DVD series, 2007

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*Reviewed by Laura Noszlopy*  
Royal Holloway, University of London

This DVD is an outcome of Project 4 – Interpreting & (re)constructing Indonesian dance & music heritage – within the larger endeavours of the AHRC Research Centre for Cross-cultural Music and Dance Performance. The centre was an academic collaboration between the Department of Music at SOAS (University of London), the Department of Dance Studies at University of Surrey and the School of Arts at Roehampton University, funded by a five-year grant (2002-2007) from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. This DVD project was convened by Alessandra Lopez y Royo, between 2003 and 2006.

According to the documentary's narrator, Vikram Iyer, the function of the DVD is 'documenting Balinese dance in a cosmopolitan urban environment' as well as recording the artists' approach to cross-cultural performance. The project involved the joint residency in London of four very talented Asian performers, two of whom are UK residents. Ni Made Pujawati and Chitra Sundaram are both highly trained and accomplished dancers of international repute, in *tari Bali* (Balinese dance) and *bharatanatyam*, respectively. Both have

performed extensively on international stage as well as in the UK. Professor I Wayan Dibia is one of Indonesia's best known exponents of Balinese dance and is particularly highly regarded as a *topeng* (masked) dancer. He studied in the US and holds a PhD from UCLA, and is known for his work in training foreigners in Balinese dance technique and philosophy. He is also a senior faculty member at the Indonesian Institute for Performing Arts in Denpasar. The Balinese musician and composer I Nengah Susila is increasingly well-known for his teaching and composition. He has worked intensively with London-based gamelan groups and has toured in the US with Ni Made Pujawati. In short, the project participants are ideal exemplars of successful transnational performers working together within and beyond their own genres, and in a range of international contexts.

The DVD is divided into two main parts: a 25-minute documentary and four excerpts from the performances produced during the collaborations – Alarippu, Ashtadigpala, and versions of Jayaprana and Abduction of Sita. The documentary portion provides a brief introduction to the project's aims and the way the artists in residence worked together to produce the performances. That the project was 'process based' is important, though it does not fully explain the overall emphasis on chronological documentation over analytical documentary and discussion. The narrator gives detailed information on the dates and locations of the project's workshops and performances but relatively scant analysis of these crucial creative, negotiated processes or

concluding ideas about cross-cultural performance more generally.

For example, during the documentary, the section about *kecak* seems somehow superfluous and does not lead to any particular point about cross-cultural performance or the rest of the material. Rather it offers a basic historical and visual description of the genre – in relation to Professor Dibia's energetic revival of the genre as a contemporary dance form and the fact that he taught it to mixed groups of non-Balinese in some of his London workshops – played over footage from the Bali Arts Festival. The next scene is edited directly into the Jayaprana rehearsal material, which does not benefit from a similar degree of descriptive background introduction.

The footage pertaining to the creative and rehearsal process for the Abduction of Sita performance is by far the most complete and coherent. Here we are offered explanations of the creative process in the form of interviews with the artists, footage of both the initial discussions surrounding the development of the composition and choreography, footage of rehearsals, as well as useful voice-over explanation of the process. Of course, the shared heritage of the Ramayana story from which it is derived offers fertile ground for collaboration and innovation. In particular, the small differences in way the story is recited in Bali or India give material for debate and negotiation of choreographic details. Here the narrator points out that the project was intended to provoke a different approach to cross-cultural collaboration in dance and music, to create a new performance without resorting to the typical 'gelling'

of disparate cultural elements with inserts from western music. And it is wonderful to see Professor Dibia, Ni Made Pujawati and Chitra Sundaram working through their movements and ideas together, and working out the accompaniment with Nengah Susila and his London students and members of the Lila Cita gamelan group.

One of the aims of the research project outputs from the AHRC Centre was to 'bring Asian and African performing arts the attention it deserves from an international audience while also developing academic understandings and study techniques'. I am not entirely convinced that this DVD fully achieves either. As far as I understand, it is not available on general release and would not therefore garner attention from a viewing public beyond those who would order a copy from the Arts and Humanities Data Service for non-commercial and educational use only. This is unfortunate as it could be more educational to an interested lay-audience or gamelan/Asian dance enthusiasts than an academic audience. That said, parts of the DVD – particularly the documentary section pertaining to the Abduction of Sita development process and the performance excerpts – should prove to be a useful teaching tool in ethnomusicology or Asian dance classes.

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JAMIE DAVIDSON & DAVID HENLEY (eds)  
*The revival of tradition in Indonesian politics: the deployment of adat from colonialism to indigenism*  
London: Routledge, 2007. 400 pp. ISBN: 9780415415972 (hb £95)

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*Reviewed by Laura Noszlopy*  
Royal Holloway, University of London

This timely collection of essays investigates the sudden revival or redeployment of *adat* (an Indonesian term, broadly meaning 'custom' or 'tradition') in Indonesian politics since the fall of President Suharto in May 1998 and the subsequent decentralisation of power. Specifically, the book deals with the ways in which selected elements of *adat* or *hukum adat* (customary law) are being 'publicly, vocally, and sometimes violently' (p.1) demanded and implemented by various communities and ethnic groups in their home territories across the archipelago. Typically, each of these movements has unique local ways of appealing to and designating their *adat* but, notably, many have brought together their disparate but shared goals under the lobbying body of AMAN (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara or Archipelagic Alliance of Adat Communities). AMAN held its first congress in 1999 and draws parallels with other international groups supporting minority and indigenous communities. So far, AMAN and certain other *adat* groups have had some limited success in securing local land tenure claims and creating a kind of legal pluralism that incorporates both national and customary law. However, as many of the authors in this volume

point out, one way or another, *adat* revivalism in its more violent and exclusive forms risks nurturing domination over protection, ethnic cleansing over ethnic rights, and escapism over pragmatism. While the people power behind the movement has reclaimed appropriated ancestral lands, it has also been the force behind some of Indonesia's most bloody internal conflicts. This volume aims to assess the extent to which *adat* revival is a constructive contribution to Indonesia's new political pluralism or a divisive, reactionary force (p. 38).

The book is based on a series of papers presented at an ARI (Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore) sponsored workshop organised by the editors, and their colleague and co-contributor Greg Acciaioli, in Batam, March 2004. It is laid out semi-chronologically; the four earliest chapters deal with the historical origins of *adat* revivalism under Dutch legal systems in the colonial period to provide the theoretical context for the more contemporary discussions and case studies towards the end.

Bridging the historical analyses with the contemporary case-studies, Gerry van Klinken's fascinating piece (chapter 7) discusses the 'return of the sultans' and other pre-republican symbolic positions to Indonesian local politics in the regional autonomy era. Carol Warren (chapter 8) offers a detailed account of the new assertiveness in Balinese *adat* politics, and its role in challenging the economic hegemony of big business. She also notes the apparent increase in village level *adat* conflicts or *kasus adat*. Similarly, Renske Biezeveld's piece

(chapter 9) on the emerging 'return to the village' (*kembali ke nagari*) movement among the Minangkabau communities of West Sumatra notes the shifting ground underlying the new 'traditional' power bases.

The remaining chapters deal with current issues facing more marginalised *masyarakat adat* communities and groups, including ethnic violence between Dayak and immigrant Madurese in Kalimantan (Jamie Davidson) and *adat* in relation to Catholicism in the Manggarai area of Flores (Maribeth Erb). Sandra Moniaga (chapter 12) offers an overview of the development of the Indonesian indigenous people's movement (primarily AMAN) and asks whether the current situation under decentralisation is a 'beautiful tapestry or an ugly mess' (p. 289).

The remaining chapters address theoretical and practical issues pertaining to AMAN and the struggle to accurately define and delineate indigenism in Indonesia. These form a tidy conclusion to the volume as all three refer primarily to the on-going troubles in Central Sulawesi, where 'dilemmas in the *adat* rights movement are not unique ... but arise there in especially concentrated forms' (p. 338). Greg Acciaioli (chapter 13) analyses the conceptual and terminological shift undergone by '*adat*', from customary law to indigenous sovereignty. Arianto Sangaji's piece (chapter 14) offers an 'insider's view' of how well-meaning NGO assessments and policies often fail to reflect the needs of communities and fail to engage appropriately with the *adat* rights movement. Finally, Tania M.

Li offers a thorough examination of *adat* revivalism in Central Sulawesi, pulling together the disparate and often confusing cultural, political and economic threads.

Overall, this is a very useful volume. The editors have done a fine job preparing the papers and putting them together in a coherent and reader-friendly order. Unlike many volumes composed of selected conference papers, this one can 'stand alone' due to the well-conceived and thorough introductory section, which contextualises and analyses the key issues, rather than just listing the contents. Although the authors do not speak with one voice, all sensitively note the tension between the positive benefits and changes wrought by the *adat* rights movement in terms of securing land tenure for disempowered communities and formal recognition of indigenous peoples and more violent flip-side of *adat* revivalism: Indonesia's many 'ethnic' conflicts. This is advised reading for scholars and students of contemporary Indonesian and Asian studies and politics, as well as activists and NGO workers in the field.

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ADAM J. YOUNG

*Contemporary maritime piracy in Southeast Asia: history, causes and remedies*

Leiden: International Institute of Asian Studies; Singapore: ISEAS, 2007. 158 pp.  
ISBN 13 978 981 230 407 0,  
S\$39.90/US\$29.90

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*Reviewed by Nick Ford*

*University of Exeter*

This book has been published within the IIAS/ISEAS Series on Maritime Issues and Piracy in Asia, which seeks to 'catalyse research on the topic'. The subject matter is one of those themes that are both of international significance and the potential for fascination.

The introduction, following a standard outline of working definitions of piracy, notes an again fairly obvious typology of contemporary maritime piracy in Southeast Asia from 'sneak thieves' to the hijacking of ships, here termed low-end and high-end. The chapter then concludes with a note on approaches to piracy in terms of the policy-history nexus. Here Young notes that his book 'seeks to contribute to bridging the gap between historical context and policy analysis' (p. 15), a laudable aim of interest to Southeast Asianists. Central to the policy dimension are questions of state control capabilities.

The second chapter reviews (in the sense of selective collation rather than critically) literature on historical piracy in Southeast Asia. Reflecting the primary focus upon the Indonesian archipelago with brief (thumbnail?) historical case studies of piracy by the

Bugis, Malay, Iban and Iranun, but Vietnamese/Chinese is also touched upon. The concluding section discusses the core theme of piracy and changes from local power, to the emergence of modern state structures.

The third chapter, which at some 57 pages comprises nearly half of the main text, explores the causative factors of contemporary piracy in the region. This is approached with respect to three aspects, the marginalisation of maritime peoples, gaps in the political hegemony of states, and tools/tactics and technology. In one of the few references to theory low-end piracy in the region is linked (but later qualified) to Hobsbawm's notion of social banditry, and changes in kinship organisation and social structures. The chapter collates a range of factors that 'taken together have created an environment that provides motivation, rationalization, means and opportunities in which piracy can exist and flourish' (p. 101). I suspect that to anyone with a solid grounding in Southeast Asian studies these factors will seem rather obvious. However Young *has* fleshed out their bearing upon and implication for engagement in piracy.

The final chapter, quite logically turns to 'the way forward', in terms of international cooperation, policing and structural development. Young's central notion of political and economic development to complement policing to reduce piracy, fails to adequately acknowledge that these are the core developmental goals of the states of Southeast Asia. With respect to engagement in low-end and the staffing of high-end piracy it is necessary to go

beyond noting motivating factors, to answer the question of why some individuals and communities in very similar circumstances engage in aspects of maritime piracy and others do not? This kind of core and unanswered question probably demands more micro level psycho-cultural research. Given the hidden nature of piracy, in-depth interviewing of those imprisoned for piracy would seem to be an obvious, but potentially useful, research strategy.

Young has drawn together a substantial literature upon the subject and writes with clarity. However, maybe an alternative (and to this reader more attractive) strategy would be for the author to have used this material as a basis for a research proposal, and then only after some years of primary research which has more directly engaged with the communities concerned, to attempt to compose a general text such as this.