



ASEASUK NEWS

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

No. 48 AUTUMN 2010



ASEASUK NEWS

ASEASUK@SOAS.AC.UK

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Cheque payments should be made out in sterling and posted to Lisa Cader, Aseasuk c/o Centre of South East Asian Studies, SOAS, Thornhaugh St., Russell Sq., London WC1H 0XG.

NEWS**UK Southeast Asianists**

Dr Liana Chua, Research Fellow at **University of Cambridge** is currently writing up the results of ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2007 and 2010 on the experiences of four remote Bidayuh villages involved in a dam-construction and resettlement scheme in Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo. The research project focuses on place, movement, memory and morality within the broader context of minority-state relations. Liana retains an ongoing interest in processes of conversion to Christianity, modes of religiosity and shifting models of moral personhood among rural Bidayuhs; a number of publications and papers on these themes are presently in the works. She delivered the following papers in 2010: 'Speaking of continuity ... religious change and moral dilemmas among Christian Bidayuhs in Malaysian Borneo', Department of Anthropology, Goldsmiths, University of London (13 October); 'The matter of transformation: agency, creativity and the making of a Bidayuh bowl in Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo', at a conference on Things and Spirits: New Approaches to Materiality and Immateriality, Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon (15-17 September); "The Japanese took our chickens, the British brought them in tins." Materiality, affect, and the moral Bidayuh landscape', Faculty of Social Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (15 July); "We are one in Jesus"? Religious change and moral dilemmas among Christian Bidayuhs in Malaysian Borneo', Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (2 July), and University of

Cambridge workshop (17 May) on Religion and Morality in Southeast Asia and Beyond.

Professor Roy Ellen (University of Kent) presented the following papers this year: 'A comparative study of cassava (*Manihot esculenta*) diversity, local knowledge and management in two contrasting eastern Indonesian populations', International Congress of Ethnobiology, Tofino, Canada, 9-14 May 2010; 'Ethnographic and ethnobotanical approaches to the understanding of landscape change in island Southeast Asia', and 'Cassava landrace diversity and toxicity in relation to environmental degradation and food security in the Moluccas' at the Euroseas conference, Gothenburg, Sweden, 26-28 August, 2010.

Dr Karl Hack (Open University) has five ongoing research projects covering 'Conflict memory in Southeast Asia' (joint project with Associate Profesor Kevin Blackburn of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore); 'A peoples' history of insurgency: Malaya; An insurgent's history of insurgency; 'Decolonization in British Asia' and 'Empires: a survey of analytical approaches'. He gave a paper on 'Heritage, oral history and the Malayan Communist Party', at the 'Historical Fragments' conference, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, in June 2010. Karl also co-organised 'Negotiating with the enemy', a joint Open University Ferguson Centre-Institute of Commonwealth Studies workshop, held at ICS, Senate House, on 24 September 2010. Karl gave a paper on negotiating with the Malayan communists, and the papers are now being edited for a special edition.

Dr Rebecca Elmhirst (University of Brighton) is currently completing a three-year EU Asia Link project on Gender and Sustainable Development: Migration, Multi-local Livelihoods and Natural Resource Management with colleagues at the Institute for Social Studies, the Hague, Asian Institute of Technology and Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, and Andalas University in Indonesia. She co-convened a panel on Environmental Crisis, Gender and Migration: The Politics of Knowledge and its Translation into Practice at the end-of-project conference at the Hague in July 2010, with Dr Bernadette Resurreccion (AIT) and Dr Rudi Febriamansyah (Andalas). As part of this project, four postgraduate students from the University of Brighton have undertaken fieldwork in Thailand and Indonesia on migration, environmental hazards and natural resource management. At the same time, the University of Brighton has hosted PhD and Masters level exchange students from Chulalongkorn University and Asian Institute of Technology. Becky gave the following papers this year: 'Methodological dilemmas in migration research in Asia: research design, omissions and strategic erasures', keynote address at the International Conference on Migration Methodologies: Researching Asia, 8-9 March 2010, National University of Singapore, and 'Exploring the linkages between environment and human displacement', expert group meeting on Environment, Disaster and Migration, Asian Research Centre on Migration, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, 17 September 2010.

Dr Annabel Teh Gallop (British Library) produced 'Lasting Impressions: Seals from

the Islamic World', a joint British Library-British Museum travelling photographic exhibition, which is touring Liverpool, Cardiff, Leicester, Birmingham, Lewisham and Cambridge before the final showing at the British Museum in December 2010. The exhibition is accompanied by a leaflet of the same title by exhibition curators Annabel Gallop and Venetia Porter, who also gave a talk on 'Islamic seals: treasures from the British Library and the British Museum' at Highfields Community Library in Leicester on 15 September 2010. Annabel also presented a paper on '*Piagam Muara Mendras: more Malay documents from highland Jambi*', at the 13th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists (EurASEAA), Berlin, 27 September – 1 October 2010, and on 'Seals from the Islamic world' at the World Public Forum, 'Dialogue of Civilisations', Rhodes, Greece, 7-10 October 2010.

Dr Felicia Hughes-Freeland (University of Swansea) spent four weeks in Indonesia (August-September) doing research on her new cultural politics project and launching the Indonesian version *Komunitas yang mewujud: tradisi tari dan perubahan di Jawa* (Gadjah Mada University Press, 2009) of *Embodied communities: dance traditions and change in Java*, <<https://email.swan.ac.uk/exchweb/bin/redirect.asp?URL=http://gmup.ugm.ac.id/buku/detail/396>> The launch on 4 September 2010 in Yogyakarta was coordinated by Didik Nini Thowok and attended by many of the friends and colleagues who had contributed to the research between 1982 and 1999. Speakers included the book's translator, Nin Bakdi Soemanto, K.R.T. Wasesowinoto

(Drs N. Supardjan), and the author. The event closed with a screening of Felicia's film about Yogyakarta court dance, *The Dancer and the Dance*. There were a number of journalists present, and the event was written up in *Bernas Jogja, Harian Jogja, Jogja Metropolis* and *Kompas* (6 September 2010). Felicia was able to distribute copies of the book to the relevant institutions and individuals in Yogya and other parts of Indonesia, and presented both the English and Indonesian copies to HRH Sultan Hamengkubuwana X at the Kraton Kilen on 17 September.

Professor VT (Terry) King (University of Leeds) spent four weeks in June and July in Malaysia working on the ASEASUK-funded project on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Southeast Asia, now in its second year. He visited Georgetown, Penang and Melaka. His related co-edited book (Michael Hitchcock, Victor T. King and Michael Parnwell, *Heritage tourism in Southeast Asia*) has recently been published with NIAS Press and University of Hawai'i Press, 2010.

During his visit to Malaysia Terry led a postgraduate seminar on 'The do's and don'ts of research supervision: learning from experience' at the Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia on 1 July 2010. He also provided a keynote address at Universiti Teknologi MARA in Ipoh, Perak, on 16 July on the theme of 'Culture and identity: social science and modern southeast asia' to mark the launch of a new university journal. He attended the launch of new publications by USM Press at Universiti Sains Malaysia on 26 July. The Press had published David K. Bassett's *The factory of the English East India Company at Bantam 1602-1682*

(based on David Bassett's PhD thesis presented at SOAS in 1955) for which Terry had written a foreword.

From 29 May to 4 June Terry visited Universiti Brunei Darussalam as external examiner for the sociology-anthropology programme. Whilst there he delivered a public lecture on 2 June attended by the British High Commissioner and the French Ambassador entitled '35 years of research in the heart of Borneo'.

Terry is currently co-editing a volume entitled 'The historical construction of Southeast Asian Studies' with Professor Park Seung Woo of Yeungnam University to be submitted to ISEAS Press in Singapore. The book comprises several papers delivered at a conference at Sogang University, Seoul on 19-20 March. Terry's paper has been revised for publication. A much more detailed paper delivered at the conference, although also considerably revised, has been posted on the East Asian Studies, University of Leeds website in the Leeds East Asia Papers (LEAP) series (Victor T. King, *The development of Southeast Asian Studies in the United Kingdom (and Europe): the making of a region*, LEAP, new series No. 3, 2010; <<http://leeds.wreac.org/research/publications/leap>>

Dr Lee Jones (Queen Mary, University of London) has recently completed a book manuscript on ASEAN, sovereignty and intervention in Southeast Asia. He is now moving to two new projects (1) The governance of non-traditional security in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific, with Dr Shahar Hameiri of Murdoch University; (2) A project exploring the impact of international economic

sanctions on targeted societies, which will include Burma/Myanmar as a case study. The first project has attracted £4,000 from the Westfield Trust. The second has attracted a large-scale, three-year grant from the Economic and Social Research Council. Lee delivered the following papers this year: 'Beyond securitisation: explaining the scope of security policy in Southeast Asia', Euroseas, Gothenburg, 26-28 August 2010; 'ASEAN's capacity to play a regional role', at the Expert seminar on ASEAN's Potential as a Stabilising Factor in Great Power Relations with Asia, Clingendael Institute, The Hague, 18 June 2010; 'ASEAN and Burma: explaining twenty years of "constructive engagement"', Southeast Asia Observatory, Sciences Po, Paris, 4 May 2010; and 'The domestic roots of security policy in Southeast Asia', International Studies Association annual conference, New Orleans, 17-20 February 2010.

Lee's PhD student, Boonwara Sumano, is entering her second year of study. Her topic is 'labour liberalisation in ASEAN'. They would be pleased to hear from colleagues and students working on related topics. Lee's email: l.c.jones@qmul.ac.uk

Dr Matthew Cohen (Royal Holloway, University of London) is working with ethnomusicologist colleagues at Royal Holloway on a small project on participatory research and learning in the performing arts, funded by PALATINE. He recently established, and is co-convening, the Asian Performing Arts Forum, a strategic partnership with Royal Holloway, Roehampton University and the University of Reading, and with the support of the Centre for Creative Collaboration, which

brings together UK-based scholars, visiting academics, artists and community members to dialogue on current issues related to Asian performance. He is also the acting director of the Centre for International Theatre and Performance at Royal Holloway for the academic year 2010-11. Matthew presented the following papers in Europe this year: 'An evening of Indies art: performing Indonesia in colonial Holland', International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR/FIRT) conference, Munich, Germany, 28 July 2010, and 'Musical encounters between Indonesia and the Netherlands' symposium, Leiden, The Netherlands, 19 May 2010.

Also from Royal Holloway, **Dr Katherine Brickell** spent July 2010 conducting research in Hue, for a British Academy funded project entitled 'Cooking up change? Housekeeping competitions as gendered development interventions in Vietnam'. Through organisation of a one-day housekeeping event, participatory video and interviews with community members, the research explored whether such competitions could be modified to provide the basis for culturally appropriate development interventions to alleviate intra-household gender inequality. In August, Katherine organised a session at the EUROSEAS conference in Gothenburg called 'Tourism in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region'. Here she presented the paper, 'Host directed photography: visual critiques on tourism in Hue, Central Vietnam'. Katherine is currently organising an international conference for July 2011 on 'Householding in Transition: Emerging Dynamics in "Developing" East and Southeast Asia' supported by the Asia Research Institute at the National

University of Singapore. For call for papers, see <http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1092>

Centre for South East Asian Studies, SOAS

Dr Carol Tan (School of Law) will be the next Chair of the centre in January 2011. She received internal funding from SOAS to conduct fieldwork amongst migrant domestic helpers from Southeast Asia in Hong Kong. For the 2009/2010 year, she introduced a Masters course which looks at migrant workers and the law in Southeast Asia (Migration, Gender and the Law in South East Asia). The course is open to LLM and MA students enrolled at the School of Law as well as taught postgraduate students from other programmes at SOAS. The introduction of this course marks a revival in teaching on South East Asian law at SOAS. Two of the essays on Singapore written by students of the 2009/2010 class are now published in the Working Papers series of the Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC), City University of Hong Kong (papers by Lotta Kivinen and Elizabeth Nehrling): <<http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/searc/index.aspx>>

Carol is also organising a workshop on Law and Orientalism to be held in 2011 which is a development of a panel on the same topic at the 2007 EUROSEAS conference. A number of the papers will be on aspects of law in Southeast Asia. See Call for Papers on the ASEASUK website: www.aseasuk.org.uk

Professor William G. Clarence-Smith is currently researching the 'Syrians' in the colonial Philippines c.1860s to c.1940s

and has been on archival research trips to Washington DC (January- February 2010 and August 2010), Manila (April 2010), and Madrid (September 2010), funded in part by the British Institute in Ankara's collaborative research project, 'Islam, trade and politics across the Indian Ocean'. He is also working on 'Rubber in the Second World War', based on secondary readings in libraries, especially the wonderful holdings of the Tun Abdul Razak Research Centre, near Hertford. William has given the following papers this year and late last year: 'The Second World War and the rise of synthetic rubber: the makings of a myth,' at a workshop on 'Parallel Commodity Chains: substitutes and informal economy,' University of Konstanz, Germany, 11 June 2010; 'Rubber in World War II,' at the German Historical Institute, Washington DC, 13 January 2010; 'The "battle for rubber" and World War II,' at the Transnational History Seminar, St Cross College, Oxford, 25 November 2009; 'Turks and half-Turks: white slaves in early modern Europe, c.1450-c.1850,' at the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation (WISE), University of Hull, 10 November 2009; 'White slaves in early modern Europe, c.1450-c.1850,' at the International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 27 October 2009; 'Implications and consequences of Arab and Indian migratory flows in the western Indian Ocean,' Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy, 20 October 2009, and 'The "battle for rubber" and the Second World War: the impact of a global conflict on a commodity chain, 1931-1945,' at Global Economic History Seminar, London School of Economics and Political Science, 15 October 2009.

Dr Rachel Harrison was in Bangkok in July 2010 for research on recent events in the cultural effects of Thailand's political crisis and on new developments in Thai cinema. She delivered a paper on the 'Monstrous feminine and the horror genre in Thai cinema' at the SOAS Centre for Gender Studies in March 2010, and another on 'Bangkok Gothic: reinventing

Rider Haggard for the audiences of "Victorian Siam", at the Australasian Victorian Studies Association Conference, hosted by Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 25-28 June 2010.

Senior Teaching Fellow, **Dr Susan Conway** has been awarded the Ella Walker Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship at the Bellagio Conference Centre to complete a book. Susan presented a paper on 'Shan ritual practices' at Euroseas Conference, Gotheburg, Sweden, 25-28 August 2010.

Dr Kostas Retsikas was in Java for two months this summer where he attended the 3rd Yale Indonesia Forum conference in Semarang (14-15 July 2010) and presented a paper on 'Doing justice everyday: processes of inter-ethnic communication in East Java'. He received funding from the British Academy Overseas Conference grants scheme. He is also doing research on Ramadan charitable activities in Probolinggo, East Java with a grant from the ASEASUK Research Committee. From January 2011 onwards, Kostas will be on ESRC-funded research leave (RES-062-23-2639) for three years to carry out a project entitled 'Cultivating generosity: Islam, the "gift market", and the middle-class in Indonesia'.

Lesley Pullen is a co-tutor on the Southeast Asian Art module, Diploma in Asian Art. Her field trips in 2010 included Bengal and Andhra Pradesh in January and February for research on current textile production of *kalamkari* and *telia rumal* and Singapore, Central and East Java, South Sulawesi, Bali and East Coast Peninsular Malaysia in July-September on current textile production in ikat, batik and *songket*; and historical representation of textiles on ancient sculptures. She presented the following papers: 'Kain bebal: reviving and sustaining Bali's sacred thread', 2nd ASEAN Traditional Textile Symposium, Manila, February 2009; 'Sustaining textile tradition', ASEASUK Conference, Swansea, September 2009; 'Sculptures adorned: revisiting the carved cloth of East Java', EurASEAA13 Conference, Berlin, September 2010; 'Sustaining textile production: an Indonesian model', Textile Society Conference, Leicester, November 2010.

Dr Elizabeth Moore (Department of Art & Archaeology) spoke on 'New finds from a Bagan period temple in Kyaukse' at the 13th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Berlin, 27 September – 1 October 2010.

In July and August 2010 **Dr Russell Jones** visited Indonesia to deliver a seminar paper in Solo: 'Describing Indonesian manuscripts written on European paper: the watermarks'. He also discussed plans to hold a workshop on the same topic in Indonesia next year. This was funded principally by the Aseasuk Research Committee on South East Asian Studies.

**Aseasuk Research Committee
GRANTS**

Applications are invited to the ASEASUK Research Committee for research grants under the strategic research grant scheme for 2010-2011 (formerly known as the British Academy South East Asia Committee grants). The next deadline is **31 January 2011**.

Awards are normally in the region of £5,000 for research in or about South East Asia. The proposed research should broadly meet the criteria outlined in the ASEASUK strategic research plan (2005/6-2010/11). An application form and the Strategic Research Plan are downloadable from:

<http://aseasuk.org.uk/v2/grants/AseasukgrantApplication>

For further details, contact Becky Elmhirst, Research Committee Secretary (R.J.Elmhirst@bton.ac.uk)

Awardees of Aseasuk grants are reminded that they should keep the Research Committee informed of any publications or other outputs arising from their research.

Awardees also must submit a final report on completion of their research or within 12 months of receipt of their award, whichever is the sooner. A proforma for the final report is downloadable from the url above.

A request to readers
The Ottoman Project

One aspect of the investigation into links between the Ottomans and Southeast Asia is research into manuscripts found in Southeast Asia. Apart from the usual historical references, some curious watermarks have been found with features such as crescents, stars and crowns redolent of the Islamic Middle East. Illustrations can be found on this website:

<http://www.ottomansoutheastasia.org/ottoman-watermarks-in-malay-manuscripts.php>

The Ottoman Project will be grateful for information on such watermarks, and especially on any samples appearing in manuscripts connected with Southeast Asia. Please send information, including details of the manuscript and if possible look-through images of the watermark, to Russell Jones, whose email address is on the web posting.

Abroad

Dr Adam D. Tyson is at **Universiti Utara Malaysia** as Visiting Lecturer at the College of Law, Government and International Studies and Deputy Director of the Centre for International Affairs and Cooperation. His current research projects are 'Leaning on ASEAN's soft pillars: developing a stress test for human rights and community building' and 'The functional role of formative traumas and enduring imagery of Malaysia's May 13 riots'. He presented the following papers this year: 'ASEAN's soft pillars: prospects for a functioning socio-cultural community and human rights commission', at the Asian Studies Association of Australia 18th Biennial Conference, Adelaide, 5-8 July 2010, and 'Being special, becoming indigenous: dilemmas of special rights in Indonesia', 3rd Yale Indonesia Forum, Semarang, Indonesia, 14-15 July 2010.

Dr Marjaana Jauhola is currently a Researcher at the Tampere Peace Research Institute, **University of Tampere**, Finland. She defended her dissertation successfully this summer on the topic of 'Becoming better 'men' and 'women': negotiating normativity through gender mainstreaming in post-tsunami reconstruction initiatives in Aceh, Indonesia' (University of Aberystwyth, supervisors: Dr Milja Kurki and Dr Marie Breen-Smyth).

CALL FOR PAPERS

26th Aseasuk conference

Magdalene College
University of Cambridge

Aseasuk welcomes panel proposals and paper abstracts for its forthcoming conference. All enquiries to Dr Susan Conway (sc66@soas.ac.uk) At this initial stage there is a panel for postgraduates and one for Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia (latter to be convened by Professor V.T (Terry) King: v.t.king@leeds.ac.uk

See Aseasuk website: www.aseasuk.org.uk for updates.

Enriching future generations: education promoting Indonesian self- development

4th International Indonesia Forum
Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta,
Indonesia

28-29 June 2011

Website: <<http://www.yale.edu/seas/YIF-Yogyakarta2011>>

Sponsors: Yale University and Yogyakarta State University. For further information or to send abstracts and CV contact Frank Dhont at <frank.dhont@yale.edu> by 31 March 2011.

Householding in transition: emerging dynamics in developing East and Southeast Asia

Asia Research Institute
National University of Singapore
25-26 July 2011

Deadline: 1 December 2010

<http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1092>

SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

SOAS Centre of South East Asian Studies, B102, Brunei Gallery, Tuesdays, 17.00-19.00
Website: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/cseas/>

Centre Chair: Dr Ben Murtagh
Email: bm10@soas.ac.uk

12 October 2010
Dr Tharapi Than (SOAS)
Prostitution in Burma, 1942-1962: State's jewel or threat to morality?

19 October 2010
Professor Jörn Dosch (University of Leeds)
Who owns Cambodia's peace-building process? Foreign donors and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal

2 November 2010
Ashley Thompson (University of Leeds / Collège international de philosophie, Paris)
Staging Sihanouk

16 November 2010
Dr Chiara Formichi (Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore)
Assessing the impact of Turkey's Kemalism on the Indonesian nationalist movement

30 November 2010
Professor Saskia Wieringa (University of Amsterdam)
A forgotten genocide: sexual politics and the creeping coup of General Suharto in Indonesia.

7 December 2010
Maria Kekki (SOAS)

The sanctity of the male ego and the Oedipus complex – a psycho-historical interpretation of early modern Southeast Asian history

14 December 2010
Dr Mark Hampton (University of Kent)
Hippies, intrepids or travellers?
Backpacker tourism and economic development in Southeast Asia

2 December 2010
Room B111, Brunei Gallery, 17.30
Farouk Yahya
Power on paper: illustrations and illumination in Malay magic and divination manuscripts

LSE
Wolfson Theatre
14 October 2010, 18.30
Donna J. Guest (Amnesty International)
Migrant workers and human rights in Southeast Asia

Public Seminar and Discussion
LSE Asia Research Centre event
Room NAB 214, New Academic Building
25 November 2010, 18.30 – 20.00

Where have all the bad guys gone?
Governance in Indonesia today
Chair: Dr Ruth Kattumuri, Co-Director, Asia Research Centre
Introduction: Dr Roger Montgomery, Visiting Senior Fellow, Asia Research Centre

Speakers:
Dr Claire Q. Smith, Department of International Development, LSE
Aiding the State? Re-evaluating the government of reconstruction in Eastern Indonesia

Dr Javier Gil-Perez, Asia Research Centre,
LSE

The law enforcement agencies and the
Agency Against Corruption in Indonesia,
KPK

Mr Gabor Somogyi, Department of
Anthropology, LSE
Security or health? The new Indonesian
law on narcotics: a problematic paradigm
shift

Dr Roger Montgomery, Asia Research
Centre
Governance: an overview of issues facing
Indonesia. Which way out?

Centre for Creative Collaboration
16 Acton St, London WC1X 9NG, 17.30
5 December 2010

Eddin Khoo (Founder-Director of the
cultural organisation Pusaka)
'So much noise, yet nothing: tradition,
invention and the politics of culture in
contemporary Malaysia'

University of Cambridge
St Catherine's College
Rushmore Room, 5pm
21 October 2010
Dr Matthew I. Cohen
A moveable feast: historical
perspectives on itinerant theatre and
performance in Southeast Asia and beyond

University of Oxford
Department of International Development
20 October 2010, 5pm
Dr Eva-Lotta Hedman (LSE)
Humanitarianism, praxis and refugees in
Malaysia

RECENT PUBLICATIONS



BARNES, R.H.

- 2010. On sense and reference in eastern Indonesian personal names: finding space for a sociology of naming. In Zheng Yangwen and Charles J-H Macdonald (eds.), *Personal names in Asia: history, culture and identity*. Singapore: NUS Press, pp. 224-44.

BRICKELL, KATHERINE

- 2010. Gender, work and poverty in Cambodia. In S. Chant (ed.) *International handbook on gender and poverty*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 458-62.
- (with S. Chant) 2010. The unbearable heaviness of being': expressions of female altruism in Cambodia, Philippines, The Gambia and Costa Rica. *Progress in Development Studies* 10 (2): 145-59.

CHUA, LIANA

- 2010. Eating one's way through fieldwork: reflections on food and (Malaysian) sociality. In J.C.H. Lee (ed.), *The Malaysian way of life*. Shah Alam: Marshall Cavendish, 73-77.
- 2009. A Cambridge anthropologist in Borneo: The A.C. Haddon photographic collection, 1898-1899. *Borneo Research Bulletin* 40:129-46.
- 2009. To know or not to know? Practices of knowledge and ignorance among Bidayus in an 'impurely' Christian world'. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 (2): 332-48.
- 2009. What's in a (big) name? The art and agency of a Bornean photographic collection. *Anthropological Forum* 19 (1): 33-52.

CLARENCE-SMITH, WILLIAM G.

- 2010. L'esclavage et son abolition dans l'histoire de l'Islam, In Alessandro Stanziani (ed.), *Le travail contraint en Asie et en Europe, XVIIe-XXe siècles*. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, pp. 93-116.
- 2010. La SOCFIN (Groupe Rivaud) entre l'Axe et les Alliés. In Hubert Bonin, Christophe Bouneau, and Hervé Joly (eds.), *Les entreprises et l'outre-mer français pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*. Pessac: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine, pp. 99-113.
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BOOK REVIEWS



THEIPPAN MAUNG WA (U SEIN TEIN)
Wartime in Burma: a diary, January to June 1942

Translated by L. E. Bagshawe and Anna J. Allott

Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2009
240 pp. ISBN 978-0-89680-270-4 US\$24

***Reviewed by Kyaw Yin Hlaing
City University of Hong Kong***

Theinppan Maung Wa is one of the most respected literary figures of Myanmar. Although he passed away in the first half of the 20th century, Myanmar citizens still remember him as one of the country's best storytellers and essayists. The new literary style, known as khit-san, which he and his colleagues invented, has influenced several generations of Myanmar writers. Since the 1950s no young Myanmar student would have graduated from high school without studying the essays written by Theinppan Maung in the 1930s. The topics in his essays were mainly culled from his personal experience whilst touring the country as a member of the Indian Civil Service. Despite the fact that he held a prestigious post in the colonial bureaucracy, his essays frequently touched upon the lives of ordinary people in Myanmar. Theinppan Maung Wa's essays vividly describe the scenery and the inner voices of the different characters so much so that readers would feel as though they were personally witnessing the lives of ordinary people in colonial Myanmar.

The diary consists of his observations and experiences following the Japanese bombing of Rangoon in early 1942. In most of the diary, he described the disruptive and depressing scenery caused by the war. He also touched on the suffering of the residents of Rangoon including himself and his own family. As Japanese planes bombed Rangoon, the sounds of siren, plane, anti-aircraft gun fire and bomb explosions were all the people in Rangoon heard. While his beloved Rangoon was reduced to ashes, Theinppan Maung Wa had to perform his duty at the Ministry of Home and Defence Affairs. However, many people, including several of his subordinates, had fled war-torn Rangoon. When the colonial administration was relocated to Mandalay, Theinppan Maung Wa and his family moved there. However, frequent Japanese bombing had destroyed large parts of Mandalay and made it impossible for the colonial administration to function. Thus, Theinppan Maung Wa and his family moved northwards. Although they wanted to go to Myitkyina, the war put a halt to their plans and they ended up taking refuge in a small town, Kanbalu. Theinppan Maung Wa and his family were not there alone. Many of his colleagues in similar positions following the fall of the colonial administration were also taking refuge in Kanbalu. The presence of his colleagues and the difficulties they experienced rendered the accounts in the diary more colourful and interesting. As there was no functioning administration, thieves and dacoit gangs constantly harassed helpless people. Theinppan Maung Wa expressed his fear of unruly dacoit gangs by noting that local criminals were more dangerous than the Japanese. His fear was justified as he was killed by a

marauding dacoit gang in the guesthouse where he had taken refuge.

Readers of the diary should note that Theinppan Maung Wa did not write it for a wider audience. It was simply a private account of that which he went through. Accordingly, sentences sometimes ended abruptly. This diary belies the fact that he was a great storyteller. Indeed, the readers might find certain parts of the diary boring. To me, the war diary is a repository of data for several essays. Theinppan Maung Wa did not get a chance to write. In 1984, I had the privilege of attending the late poet Tin Moe's lecture on Theinppan Maung Wa and his wartime diary. Tin Moe advised us to think of Theinppan Maung Wa's anecdotes as though they had been written for a wider audience.

This diary is more than an account of Myanmar during World War II. It is also a repository of the views of one of Myanmar's most influential literary figures. It covers his opinions of his people, his job, his country as well as the pain he and his countrymen experienced as victims of war. Through this diary, readers are able to see Theinppan Maung Wa as more than an influential writer and intellectual. In his entries, readers are able to discern that he was also a very responsible administrator, a good husband and a good father. Those who wish to learn about the life of a Myanmar intellectual and the suffering of the Myanmar people in the Second World War should read this book.

The review will not be complete without expressing gratitude to the translators. As a person who has read the Myanmar

version of the book many times, I can attest to the accuracy of the translation. Nothing was lost in translation. *Sayagyi* L.E Bagshawe and *Sayamagyi* Anna Allott have done a great service to scholars of Myanmar studies.

CHAO TZANG YAWNGHWE

The Shan of Burma: memoirs of a Shan exile

Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010. 2nd reprint
277 pp. ISBN: 978-981-230-396-7;
pb S\$49.90/US\$39.90

Reviewed by Robert H. Taylor
City University of Hong Kong

The reissue of Chao Tzang Yawnghwe's 1987 book *The Shan of Burma: memoirs of a Shan exile* in 2010 is timely as it provides an opportunity to look at the issues it originally raised in the altered circumstances of Myanmar following the political upheaval of 1988. Like my own volume on the history of the state in Burma published in the same year as *The Shan in Burma*, neither he nor I foretold or perhaps even expected the momentous events which would bring down the socialist regime in Yangon against which he had rebelled in the 1960s and 1970s. This reissue is unchanged from the earlier edition other than for the addition of a brief Foreword by the authority on the ethnic insurgency in Myanmar, Martin Smith, and a note in memoriam of his late brother by the Shan nationalist exiled politician Harn Yawnghwe. Both underscore what a delight Chao Tzang was

and how he is deeply missed following his untimely death in 2004.

The book is essentially divided into three parts, covering a biography of the author from his birth in 1939 as the son of the Sawbwa of Yawnghwe, a version of the history of the Shan States in their relation with the monarchical, colonial and independent regimes which have governed most of what we now consider to be Myanmar for several centuries, followed by a lengthy "who was whom" in Myanmar and Shan politics and administration during the past two hundred years. Three brief appendices on pre-independence agreements, proposals on terminating the opium trade in the Shan State, and information on the film *the Opium Warlords* are also attached.

From 1963 until 1976, when he went into exile in Thailand and eventually Canada, Chao Tzang, also known as Eugene amongst other names, was a leader of the Shan military rebellion against the central government, ruled by the Revolutionary Council and then the Burma Socialist Programme Party, both the inspiration of General Ne Win. Chao Tzang's political interests obviously commenced before then but the 1962 coup, which led to the death of his younger brother by gun fire, and his father subsequently in prison, doubtless convinced him that normal politics would provide no answer to the interests of those who spoke for Shan nationalism and their desire for the Shan state to be essentially autonomous within a very loosely federated state. His personal account of the factionalism, mercenary behaviour, and international intrigues which dogged not only the Shan rebellion against Yangon, but also those of

other ethnic minorities, is the richest and most valuable part of the volume. Its use as an historical document is therefore assured.

The author often criticises foreign scholars (not yet this author whose work was still in an adumbral phase when he wrote) for not seeing the history of Burmese-Shan relations through the lenses of a Shan nationalist. They in turn, could criticise him for mis-interpreting or distorting the nature of that relationship, as well as the relationship between the colonial government and the Shan sawbwas and other indigenous political leadership who the British found willing instruments through which to govern. For example, he asserts repeatedly that the essence, indeed, almost the totality of the relationship between the Shan sawbwas and the Burmese kings, was one of military conflict. This flies in the face of the complex relationships to which other historians have drawn attention. While conflict occurred, it was far from the leitmotiv of the relationship.

Historians would take issue with Chao Tzang's use of the term 'treaty' to describe the legal relationship between the sawbwas and the British administration. The agreements which the British reached when they confirmed the rule of the cooperating sawbwas was a *sanad*, not a treaty. A sanad has no status in international law and was an artefact of British rule in India, from where the term was borrowed for use in British Burma. The last minute efforts by the sawbwas in the 1930s to have their status recognised as parallel to the sultans of Malaya and thus an assured role in the constitutional evolution of British Burma was repeatedly

rebuffed by the lawyers of the India, and then the Burma, Office in London.

The nationalist intent of the author, and his inability to appreciate why the central government of General Ne Win or anyone else could never accept the plans of Shan nationalists, republican or pro-sawbwa, to implement their federal schemes is underscored by his statement that national army would be "subordinate to the state governments". No federal state in the world has such a scheme and a country with the political history of Myanmar would never, regardless who governed, accept such an arrangement. Nearly a quarter century after *The Shan of Burma* was first published, Myanmar has a new, army sponsored, constitution which provides for an elected legislature in the Shan State with very limited powers. Furthermore, the Shan State has been subdivided with autonomous zones created for the Wa, Kokang, Danu, Palaung, and Pa-O and the former sawbwas' state subsumed. The factionalism that he so thoroughly describes has now become part of the official structure of the state, and the ambitions of Shan nationalists doubly frustrated. This book should be read as a reminder of how things were lost.

FUNSTON, JOHN (ed.).
Divided over Thaksin. Thailand's coup and problematic transition
 Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009
 203 pp. ISBN: 978-981-230-961-7, S\$49.90/US\$39.90

Reviewed by Claudia Merli
University of Durham

Beyond referring to the immediate aftermath of the 2006 coup this book's title seizes also the gloominess of the future dramatic events of March–April 2010 when, after staging a gruesome medical-political 'ritual' of mass blood donation, the prevalently pro-Thaksin 'red shirts' occupied several areas of Bangkok and finally engaged the military in actions of urban guerrillas. The problematic transition delayed its solution and the antagonistic forces were stuck in a confrontational atmosphere with no discernible way out.

This engaging collection of 13 essays weighs up Thailand's situation before and after the 2006 coup. The contributors shed light on the intersections between the 1997 Asian economic crisis, the southern conflict, and the crisis of legitimacy culminating in the abolition of the 1997 constitution following the 2006 coup. The crucial moment in this complex dynamic is the 2001 decision of the Constitutional Court to acquit Thaksin of assets concealment and his following landslide electoral success. Did this moment mark a specific crisis of the judiciary? It comes as no surprise that the 2007 constitution contemplates increasing the judiciary's

power in an attempt to embank politicians' rampant corruption, and with a corresponding weakening of the executive. The chapters are organised into three sections; the first focuses on democracy and the constitutions of 1997 and 2007, the second on the southern conflict, the third on the economic policies of the last decade and their effects.

The book opens with Michael Montesano's analysis of the political contests during the year leading up to the coup, identifying the polarisation between Thaksin's insistence on the primacy of electoral mandate and his antagonists' focus on 'a more normative understanding of democratic government' (p. 4), calling for the monarchy's intervention. In his address to the Courts of 25 April 2006 the king aligned explicitly with 'democracy' and defined the national political situation 'a mess' (p. 7). Montesano examines key factors in the political crisis, including the network of the monarchy's prominent figures, the southern conflict and Singapore's economic position (pp. 14–20). As it becomes clear in the following chapters the political polarisation transmuted, leaving exposed before everyone's eyes the ever-increasing gap between urban affluence and rural poverty. Thitinan Pongsudhirak discusses this antagonism together with the related 'crisis of legitimacy' and 'vicious cycle of Thai politics' (new constitution, election, corrupt government) (p. 29). He points out that the 1997 constitution portrayed democracy as entailing people's responsibility and obligation. On the other hand, Chairat Charoensin-o-larn highlights how the 2007 constitution focuses on ethics in politics but dangerously blurring the distinction between judiciary,

legislative and executive powers; it also gives the military a right to declare a 'state of exception' (p.70). Concern for the heightened legislative power of the judiciary is mirrored in Vitit Muntarbhorn's chapter. The final impression is that of a 'directed democracy' rather than a participatory one (p. 82). What goes amiss in the present crisis is the pledge of the rural masses which found recognition in some of Thaksin's populist policies. Suchit Bunbongkarn recognises the possibility of an enduring political polarisation, punctually confirmed by facts, but with the positive note that the rural masses have learnt how to 'articulate their interests' and keep politicians accountable (p. 93). Most affected by the new constitution are the independent institutions of good governance (for example NESAC), as explained by Gothom Arya (pp. 38-48).

The four chapters devoted to the sapped southern conflict emphasise its relevance in the deterioration of the national political climate. Chaiwat Satha-Anand sets out by summarising the work of the National Reconciliation Commission, and highlights how difficult it is to just assess the correct numbers of victims in this conflict. He states that 'all numbers in conflict situations are by and large political. Statistics also become casualties to violence' (p. 97), although I point out Michel Foucault's consideration that numbers and counting are always political (see Appadurai 1996). Chaiwat delineates three causes for the persistence of the problem: a) 'the insecurity industry', with different people gaining from the continuation of violence, b) the prevalence of a nation-security discourse branding the south as a peripheral avenue of global

Islamic terrorism, and c) the persisting discourse enhancing Thailand's successful history of accommodating differences rather than acknowledging the 'domestic colonization' of the south (pp. 101-5). The struggle between security forces and insurgents (or 'bandits') is maintained also through selection and training of the military and paramilitary (Rangers) operating in the region, which ignore the notion of 'human rights' (p. 104-5). This is a cogent point; however, Lesley Gill demonstrates that precisely human rights discourse figures prominently in the U.S. based School of the Americas' training curriculum in order to maintain a façade against mounting evidence and accusation of being, all the same, the schooling ground to many of the most brutal South American military officers (Gill 2004). Since drastic military action, assimilated metaphorically by Chaiwat to cutting the Gordian knot with Alexander's sword, has not resolved the southern Thai conflict, we must untie the knot using a better policy.

Michael Connors follows up analysing the 'cultural policy' of the struggle. Malay culture is promoted by the government as part of a Thai identity (based on a rhetoric of cultural diversity), and resisted by Islamic fundamentalists as remnant of a pre-Islamic period. Connors identifies the formation in the south of a 'stateless nation' antagonistic to 'Thai-centric nationalism', an entity of equal status which is alien to the very ethno-ideology of "Thainess" (p. 112-13). This opposition has been nurtured by the colonising and paternalistic project of developing the south. The attempt to reconstitute the SBPAC dismantled by Thaksin as a new Strategic Administrative Centre presents difficulties if it is not accompanied by, for

example, accepting Malay as the working language and overcoming the government's 'indiscriminate suspicion' against Muslim religious teachers and students (p. 118–19). But an acknowledgment of cultural diversity could potentially lead to the recognition of an existing Malay 'nation'.

John Funston focuses on the Gordian knot of three different proposals of decentralisation, whose dismissal contributed to the deterioration of the situation up to the 2006 coup. Funston describes how a certain degree of decentralisation already operates in the form of special security-administrative structures, administrative and educational arrangements, such as Civilian-Police-Military Task Force 43, the SBPAC (both active since the early 1980s and closed down in 2002 by Thaksin), Islamic courts and *pondok* schools, a National Islamic Council and provincial Islamic committees (p. 127–128). Wan Kadir Che Man suggested that the real difference would be to strengthen local administration (like it was envisaged by the 1997 constitution), with elected assemblies. The solution proposed by the NRC in 2006 comprises interventions at 'individual', 'structural', and 'cultural' levels, including recognition of Malay as a 'working language' (pp. 130–131). The possibility of creating a regional administrative unit by bringing together three or more provinces, a Pattani (or Patani) Metropolis, was voiced by Deputy Prime Minister Chavalit in 2004 but its realisation would be considered by many 'a first step toward southern independence' (p.133).

Joseph Chinyong Liow investigates the multifaceted aspects of Islamic education

in Southern Thailand, a phenomenon usually approached as 'a monolithic entity' (p. 136). Liow exposes the influence of prominent religious figures and international educational networks, from the traditional Malay-speaking *halaqah* in Masjid Al-Haram to the reforms introduced by Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir, Saudi government funding of *madrasah* and the more recent reformism of Ismail Lutfi Japakiya. Lutfi's teaching focuses on the relevance of context (for example in Islamic jurisprudence, or *fiqh*), and is very critical of the contemporary violence in the region. The picture presented is of a complex background which cannot be reduced to a one-dimensional 'Wahhabi extremism', and should include the multiple dynamics between advocate reformists and traditionalists, often summarised locally as the *Kaum Muda* (Young Group)-*Kaum Tua* (Old Group) antagonism.

The third and final section of the book offers economic analyses of the transition from the Thaksin government to the post-coup situation, including its effects on investments. Peter Warr defines as 'stalled recovery' the Thaksin government's hallmark, a broken promise of the 2001 election campaign revolving around overcoming the 1997–1998 financial crisis and poverty reduction. Thailand's Boom period (1987–1996) driven by high and stable domestic and foreign investments in physical capital ended with the most severe and lasting contraction among Asian countries (pp. 153–54). In Thailand poverty incidence is concentrated in rural areas (especially the Northeast) and related to poor education and rate of economic growth. Warr contends that the economic aspect to the southern conflict

should also be taken into account since household income per capita in Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala are in the range of the north and northeast regions with peaks of poverty incidence double the national average (p.168). The Thaksin government's efficiency in reducing poverty, although introducing some important measures, is not relevantly different from previous governments. However, we must say that the rural masses from the north and northeast perceived his successful policies as particularly innovative. Bhanupong Nidhiprabha discusses the effects of the Thai political crisis on economic growth and poor performance compared to other Asian countries, due especially to measures endorsed by the junta towards capital control to tighten foreign investment criteria (p.177-81). Still in 2007 the Thai economy was growing slowly, with a steady decline in the tourism industry. However, the concluding chapter by Glen Robinson claims that taking as a measure foreign direct investment, applications to the Board of Investment and numbers of Australian tourists the negative reaction by foreign investors was more in the media and newspaper headlines than in the real market. This interpretation does not rule out the possibility of higher levels of investment had Thailand not experienced the coup.

This volume offers a rich analysis of multiple antagonisms and polarisations which keep Thailand from embracing a full-fledged participatory democracy and political stability, both at the national and at the local level. For this reason the book is good introductory reading to all those

who want to gain a broader understanding of the Thai entrenched political crisis.

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BUDI P. RESOSUDARMO, and FRANK JOTZO (eds.)
Working with nature against poverty – development, resources and the environment in eastern Indonesia
Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009
384 pp. ISBN: 978-981-230-959-4,
S\$39.90/US\$29.90

***Reviewed by Anna-Katharina Hornidge
University of Bonn***

Working with nature against poverty takes the reader through the socio-political and economic landscape of Eastern Indonesia by paying special attention to issues of natural resource governance and the integration of socio-economic and bio-physical aspects of development. As such, the compilation of chapters is inter- and transdisciplinary in character seemingly guided by the applicability and practical usefulness of the presented research in the sector of development cooperation. This is further reflected by the list of contributors. Besides a wide range of researchers with diverse disciplinary backgrounds from mainly Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand and Malaysia, also

representatives of the Indonesian government sector (i.e. Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Health, National Agency for Development Planning (BAPPENAS) and Statistical Agency (BPS) Indonesia) and the international development cooperation community (i.e. Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), The Nature Conservancy, Indonesia and Defenders of Wildlife, USA) have contributed. The book consequently addresses pressing issues of development and poverty alleviation in Eastern Indonesia through the lens of the overall socio-economic as well as ecological system; a perspective gaining increasing importance due to ongoing environmental and climatic changes affecting the region. As such, the book forms compulsory reading for all those working on development related issues in Eastern Indonesia.

The 14 chapters of the book have been divided into three parts with Part I focusing on economic, social and political realities and their effects on development and poverty alleviation in the provinces of East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku and Papua. Part II assesses aspects of natural resource use and environmental, biodiversity conservation between livelihood provision and exploitation. Here also the theme of climatic and environmental changes affecting Eastern Indonesia as well as possible strategies for mitigating and adapting are discussed. Part III reviews Eastern Indonesia's path out of conflict, discusses an ongoing development programme for poverty alleviation (The Poverty Alleviation and Support for Local Governance Program (PROMIS)) and ends with a chapter on the Healthy Indonesia 2010 Initiative by the Ministry of Health,

Indonesia and its implementation efforts in Papua.

Empirically, most chapters are based on substantial, but nearly exceptionally secondary quantitative data (mainly from the Indonesian Statistical Agency (BPS)). Primary and qualitative ethnographic data form the exception. Similarly, the book also on the conceptual side remains in the realm of policy and development oriented, practically useable and applied research. Locally-embedded or locality-specific conceptual thinking is little discussed. Instead, the book offers rich material on micro-level negotiation processes surrounding natural resource governance, while at the same time upholding the focus on applicable research outcomes in the shape of lessons learnt, policy and process recommendations for measures of poverty alleviation. As such it is located in and positively contributes to the realm of locality specific research for measures of development cooperation in Eastern Indonesia. For further research, and lying outside the scope of the here reviewed volume, it might be interesting to take some of the micro-level case study data, arranged in a comparative framework and embed them into stronger conceptual thinking for locality and culturally specific conceptual development on the symbolic and cultural aspects of human-nature relationships in Eastern Indonesia.

LAURA P. APPELL-WARREN (ed.)
The Iban diaries of Monica Freeman 1949-1951 including ethnographic drawings, sketches, paintings, photographs and letters
Phillips ME: Borneo Research Council Inc., 2009
xlii, 643pp., ISBN 1-929900-13-9, US\$85

Reviewed by V.T. King
University of Leeds

For those of us interested in Borneo Studies Monica Freeman is best known for her exquisite drawings and paintings of Iban life and culture produced when she accompanied her husband Derek to undertake field research among the upriver Iban of Sarawak in 1949-1951. Monica's skills as an artist were presented to the wider world in illustrations in various of her husband's publications and much later in *The Encyclopedia of Iban Studies: Iban History, Society and Culture* (2001).

With the publication of the diaries (six in number written between 7 June 1949 and 4 July 1951) and her letters to her mother in England, Monica establishes herself as a field researcher in her own right in her perceptive and engaging observations of Dayak everyday life in longhouses, farmhouses, swidden fields, and forests. She also tells us much about the ways in which a husband and wife couple conduct fieldwork and the trials and tribulations of living in a remote upriver settlement in intense and constant contact with people of another culture. Laura Warren-Appell who edited the diaries says in her Preface that Monica's 'was an extraordinary voyage for a young woman during the post

World War II era [she was 27 when she first set foot in Sarawak], and she met with opposition, adventure and hardship as she travelled and worked with her husband' (p. xii). More than this the editor affirms that the publication is 'a tribute to a young woman who had to be tough as nails, resilient, flexible, cheerful and adventurous' (p. xii).

Anthropological diaries can do many things; apart from providing a regular record of everyday life, custom and ritual in another culture, they may reveal and frequently do reveal something of the personality and the likes and dislikes of the diarist; their views; their opinions of those with whom they interact; as well as the process of the field research itself. Indeed, the editor notes that, as a personal record, Monica's diaries and letters were never meant to be published. Yet the author has introduced them into the public domain, which might suggest that there was little if anything in them, particularly references to others, that could be considered personally harmful or contentious. And to a large extent this is true although the references to fellow anthropologists engaged in the Colonial Social Science Research Council's socio-economic surveys among various communities in Sarawak suggest a not altogether collegial atmosphere. Stephen Morris is described as a 'rival' of Derek's (during his visit 'Argued with Stephen and went to bed tired', 'slight hostility in atmosphere', 'He [Morris] and Derek have a bad effect on one another', 'The visit was not a success' pp. 51, 54) and Bill Geddes was not merely a 'rival' but Derek's deadly rival' (p. 573).

Interestingly in such substantial diaries Monica rarely reveals her innermost thoughts, feelings and opinions, and, in my view, little of her character comes through. Certainly there is a very clearly identified 'sensitivity' towards the way of life and habits of those she lived with and an 'honesty' in describing what she experienced and observed. Of course she does report on personalities and tensions, gossip and quarrels, but generally her record of the daily round in Rumah Nyala is very positive and uncomplaining. Despite the adversities and the understandably frequent bouts of illness (including, towards the end of her stay, a life-threatening bout of paratyphoid when she was hospitalised, though on balance she seemed to remain much healthier than her husband) her whole experience there is described in overwhelmingly engaged and engaging terms. As she says in summary it was all 'utterly fascinating' (p. xvii). In the first entry on her arrival at Rumah Nyala we have such words as 'delightful', 'beautiful', 'attractive' and 'perfection' (p. 2), and in the first letter to her mother written on 15 June 1949, she says 'It is perfectly beautiful here...' and her house 'exceedingly attractive...I don't think I've ever been so completely absolutely happy before. I feel I should like to live always here like this...' (p. 7). And this is not merely the first flush of excitement, delight and fascination in experiencing something completely new in a dramatically different cultural and environmental setting; her enthusiasm remains largely undiminished throughout the diaries, though there were obviously some low points.

In the division of anthropological labour, Monica was the artist and the diary-writer

(her diary was 'written solely for Derek and myself' [p. xvii] in which she uses their childhood nicknames 'Moc' and 'Bec'). In her passion for drawing everything around her 'Derek was surprised and delighted with my abilities and enthusiasm and set me to work doing ethnographic illustrations' (p. xviii). 'My job was sketching...' 'Derek requires large numbers of people and objects drawn...' (pp. 33, 47). She also studied Iban *ikat* weaving.

Though there is much in the diaries about her fieldwork life with Derek, there isn't a great deal that we can glean from them about the personal character of her early married life with him. She gave up her career as a radiographer in London to join him in Sarawak. She had met him briefly in 1947 when she was with her then fiancé, and then again by chance it seems the following summer whilst leaving from Victoria Station bound for a vacation in Switzerland. It was something of a whirlwind romance during a brief encounter at Lake Como: then three months later they were married and in December 1948 Derek Freeman left for Sarawak. It took some time for permission to be granted for Monica to join him, which she did in June 1949 after a six months separation. She was 'overjoyed' to see him waiting for her at the wharf at Sibul (p. xvii).

It was obviously a devoted and supportive marriage; there are many signs of affection, intimacies and companionship; but the overall impression is one of a business-like partnership in the field. Laura Appell-Warren refers to 'episodes of disagreement and "feuds" with her spouse' (p. xii), but I did not see much of this other

than occasional references to her husband's irritability, moods and tendency to lecture his wife and become 'aggravated by my lack of attention paid to ceremony' (p. 258). ('Bec withdrawn and depressed with the cares of our work' (p. 119); 'Bec suffering from malaise' (p. 219, etc.). The overwhelming impression is one of a dutiful and loving wife, and a devotion which was returned by Derek when Monica was ill and in need of his attention and care.

Derek Freeman was one of the most outstanding anthropologists of his generation, and it is clear from the diaries that he and Monica were enormously hard-working and disciplined; even ill health did not always stand in the way of data collection. Typical entries are 'Bec up early and took notes furiously all day' (p. 27)... 'Went to bed while Bec did fierce preparations for the morrow' (p. 66)... 'Bec photographed and measured everything in sight...' (p. 99). I suppose some of us who have had professional contact with Derek Freeman might be looking for some personal insights into the fieldworker. The overall impression is one of an overpowering single-mindedness for the task in hand and an enormous capacity for hard work, as well as ample evidence of his skills, commitment and organization as a fieldworker. Perhaps what one does capture in their relationship and its focus and direction during their two years together is Monica's cartoon which depicts her arrival in Sibul, being dragged around by her husband at apparent speed on a town tour, whisked at full throttle along the Rejang River and then left in the longhouse surrounded by her belongings whilst Derek charges to the paddy fields (p. xiii).

Laura Appell-Warren has done an excellent job in editing the diaries along with the chronological integration of Monica's letters to her mother and illustrating them with many of her drawings. Not only do we get in concentrated mode detailed ethnographic illustrations (of items of material culture, religious paraphernalia, everyday objects, domestic utensils, textile and tattoo patterns) but also sympathetic portraits of Iban individuals who played an important part in the lives of the Freemans during their sojourn in the Baleh; my favourites are the exquisite, sensuous, androgynous portrait of the Iban youth, Sirai, the boisterous, lively painting of 'Young Iban boys bathing', the drawing of the handsome and composed Adin, and the powerful sketch of Gering, the Freeman's female house help. The volume also contains numerous black-and-white photographs, (most of them taken by Derek Freeman). There are 141 illustrations (or figures), about half of them Monica's drawings and paintings and the other half photographs. There are then 41 colour plates which replicate various of the black-and-white illustrations. It would have helped to have had a separate listing of Monica's drawing and paintings and then the photographs (with more details of time and place), but this is a minor quibble. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the Borneo Research Council for undertaking the task of publishing this valuable and engaging record of Iban culture at a time when it was still robustly traditional and to Monica Freeman for allowing us to read her vivid personal experiences of her early married life in a Sarawak longhouse.

CHARLES E. SHUMAKER

The formative years of Malaysian politics: the MCA and the Alliance, 1950-1954

Bloomington IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2010
242 pp. ISBN 978-1-4500-2623-9, hb
\$29.99, ISBN 978-1-4500-2622-2, pb
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The author of this book, the late Dr Charles Shumaker, served as a Chinese interpreter for the US Navy during the Second World War. Between 1948 and 1959 he was employed as a teacher in Southeast Asia by the Methodist Board of Missions. He was principal of the Anglo-Chinese School in Malacca from 1949 to 1954 when he was transferred to Medan, Sumatra. He later joined the US State Department and held posts in Jordan, Taiwan, and Dar-es-Salaam. During his time in Malacca Shumaker got to know Tan Cheng Lock, a leading *baba* businessman and the founder-president of the Malayan Chinese Association. This friendship, we are told, 'blossomed to the point where they regularly discussed all the pertinent political points of a nation trying to find its birth among racial problems, the Communist Insurrection, and the disintegration of the British Empire'. Such was their mutual trust that Tan gave Shumaker 'the keys to the filing cabinets containing his voluminous personal writings and correspondence'. This account of the formative years of Malaysian politics is based on Tan's archive together with contemporary newspapers.

In the 1920s and 1930s Tan Cheng Lock had been a lone voice in the legislative and executive councils of the Straits Settlements advocating a united, self-governing Malaya. In 1946-48, as the British succumbed to Malay protests and abandoned the Malayan Union, he led the All Malayan Council of Joint Action in a vain attempt to salvage its more liberal provisions, notably the citizenship scheme. In 1949 he founded the Malayan Chinese Association, first as a welfare organization to support Chinese squatters during the Emergency and then reorganized it as a political party to promote Chinese interests in the context of non-communal politics and multi-culturalism. Temperamentally more philosopher than leader of men, this 'sage of Malacca' participated in the futile Communities Liaison Committee and the short-lived Independence of Malaya Party, before joining the United Malays National Organisation in an electoral marriage of convenience which developed into the Alliance of three mutually exclusive parties to which the British would transfer political power in 1957.

This book is something of a work of piety in two respects. First, it is 'dedicated to Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan an architect of Malaysian independence'. Second, because Shumaker's children saw it through to publication after his death (though, understandably, not with all the loose ends tied up), it is 'dedicated to the Shumaker family'. It is not at first clear to the reader when the bulk of the book was composed. Charles Shumaker's brief foreword is dated 1982 but one soon senses that he was writing much closer to the events which he was reviewing. One clue is that none of the published work to

which he refers is more recent than 1952. We find him at the end optimistically looking forward to the first federal election of 1955 and a new era of self-government which 'completely vindicated' Tan Cheng Lock's life-long campaign for inter-communal harmony.

History has moved on and so has its study. Scholars of the period have long since been able to consult Tan's personal papers at the Institute of South East Asian Studies, Singapore and also to research much other primary material that was not available to Shumaker. As a result a considerable literature has added to our knowledge of this subject, reshaped our understanding and revised many judgments that were made at the time. This book is, therefore, very much a period piece. Yet herein lies its value. Shumaker's commentary, particularly on controversial developments in national educational policy which particularly impinged on his own work, has an immediacy. Furthermore, because he benefited from Tan Cheng Lock's confidences, enjoyed exclusive access to his archive and shared his political principles, Shumaker emerges as his chronicler at a crucial moment in his political career.

NICHOLAS TARLING & EDMUND
TERRENCE GOMEZ (eds)
*The state, development, and identity in
multi-ethnic societies: ethnicity, equity and
the nation* London: Routledge, 2010
230pp. ISBN 978-0-415-58691-7, pb
£23.50

DANIEL P.S. GOH, MATILDA
GABRIELPILLAI, PHILIP HOLDEN, & GAIK
CHENG KHOO (eds)
*Race and multiculturalism in Malaysia and
Singapore*
London: Routledge, 2009
242pp. ISBN 978-0-415-48225-9, hb £80

***Reviewed by Graham Brown
University of Bath***

The Routledge Malaysian Studies Series has been publishing original monographs on diverse aspects of Malaysian politics and society – from feminism to privatisation and healthcare – since 2004 but in these latest two offerings, the series focuses on topics with which the country is most widely associated in social science fields: ethnicity, inequality and multiculturalism. These two books, however, are explicitly comparative in their perspective, looking beyond Malaysian shores for insights from Singapore, Sri Lanka and other Asian countries, and even further afield to Europe and the United States.

Ethnicity and inequality have, of course, not only been the focus of much academic interest in Malaysia, but have also been the dominant trope through which Malaysian politics is played out in reality. Both these collected volumes are driven

by dissatisfaction with a prevailing political economy perspective that sees multi-ethnic societies as inherently prone to violence and instability and, consequentially, accept certain forms of political restriction (e.g. limitations on democratic norms) or economic restructuring (e.g. affirmative action) as necessary to maintain stable postcolonial countries. Goh et al. tackle the idea that ethnic diversity is inherently unstable by pointing to the ways in which the discourse of ethnicity is used to promote particular ethnic and individual interests and contribute towards the argument that this is the root cause of ethnic tensions. In a mode following the perspective of Rogers Brubaker and Frederic Cooper (2000), *ethnicisation* rather than *ethnicity* is seen to be the problem. The contributions collected in Tarling and Gomez's volume are driven by similar sets of concerns, but while Goh et al. are primarily anthropological and cultural in their perspectives, Tarling and Gomez focus on political economy explanations. Taken together, these two volumes hence provide a rich range of critical disciplinary perspectives on the relationship between ethnicity, identity and politics in Malaysia and beyond.

In introducing their collection, Goh and Holden set the thematic focus with a discussion of the changing dynamics of 'racial governmentality' in Singapore and Malaysia from independence to the modern era, exploring how the 'official' categorisation of ethnicity serves particular political agenda and excludes or marginalises other cosmopolitan voices. The opening gambit of the book is that a shared experience of racial governmentality under the British in

Singapore and Malaysia has been perpetuated by postcolonial regimes in both countries, but in very different ways. The subsequent contributions bring primarily ethnographic and critical theoretic perspectives to the representation and 'performativity' of identity in artistic venues – literature, film, art, and music – as well in more traditionally political venues, including history textbooks and the discourse of *ketuanan Melayu* (Malay supremacy) and ethnic Indian mobilisation in Malaysia and the 'Confucian turn' and foreign workers in Singapore.

Following the tradition of previous scholars such as Sumit Mandal (2001; 2004) and Joel Kahn (2006), these contributions seek to uncover alternative narratives on and possibilities for multiculturalism and, in doing so, certainly enrich our understanding of the contestation of official categories of race and ethnicity in these two countries. The better contributions weave together expertly cultural analysis with political dynamics and state ideology, for instance Khoo Gaik Cheng's reading of the films of Yasmin Ahmad and Helen Ting's discussion of history textbooks in Malaysia.

As a collection, however, the book suffers from some shortcomings. The first is precisely that many of the contributions do not locate the cultural phenomena they explore within the broader political economic context. In looking for the 'good guys' – social and cultural trends that rail against the ethnicisation of society and contest the 'racial governmentality' of dominant regimes in Malaysia and Singapore – some of these contributions focus on cultural arenas that are largely

invisible in the countries themselves, let alone beyond. Michelle Antoinette's reading of the art of Malaysian painter Wong Hoy Cheong argues that he 'uncovers how experiences of migration, diasporicity, cultural displacement and Otherness are central to Malaysia's history and, consequently ... should be paramount in forging critical multicultural visions for Malaysia's future'. Unspoken in this analysis, however, is the extent to which engagement with artists like Wong is the provenance of a tiny cohort of urban, middle class Malaysians. Given what we know about the more tolerant, pan-ethnic sociology of urban West Coast Malaysia, is Wong simply preaching to the converted? This is not to say that analyses of cultural phenomena such as this are not useful or interesting, but rather that denuded of their political economic context, we may sadly over-estimate the ability of these phenomena to achieve progressive change in social and political attitudes.

Perhaps that criticism belies my own disciplinary leanings, but a more serious omission from this collection could come from within a cultural studies perspective as from without. The editors and authors are clear that they wish to move beyond essentialising 'racial' distinction epitomised in Singapore by the CMIO acronym (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Other). We are hence treated to rich studies of subaltern and hybrid ethnic identities within the two countries. But all the studies relate to the cultural movements of the first three broad categories here: Chinese, Malay, and Indian. Scant passing reference to the *Orang Asli* in Malaysia is made, but there are no studies of other minority communities in either country – Kadazan, Bidayuh and indeed East

Malaysia as a whole is completely missed out in the volume, as are other communities in Singapore, including the large European community that might have been fruitfully examined. Ironically enough, in a book largely concerned with 'Othering' processes, those classified by the states concerned precisely as 'Others' are silent.

Nicholas Tarling and Edmund Terence Gomez's volume takes a very different disciplinary perspective and wider ambit, bringing together broadly political economy perspectives on ethnicity and inequality from a range of case studies including Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Burma in Southeast Asia; and wider perspectives from Sri Lanka, China, New Zealand, Britain and the US. The book grew out of a conference discussing critically the influential book *World on Fire* by Amy Chua (2003), which argued that the combination of 'market-dominant minorities' in many developing countries with free-market economic liberalisation and democratic political structures is a dangerous combination and tends to lead to ethnic hatred and conflict. While Chua's book has generally been well received in many policy circles and popular debate, its reception within academia has been more critical, both in terms of those faulting the book's argumentation as anecdotal and imprecise (Ginsburg 2004; Green 2005) and empirical studies that have rebutted the validity of her claims (Bezemer and Jong-A-Pin 2007). In this book, Tarling and Gomez contribute further to that critical reception by bringing together this wealth of case studies all of which find Chua's thesis wanting.

In contributing to this important debate in a serious manner, this book is a valuable addition, but again the book has some serious shortcomings. The first three substantive chapters in this book – a theoretical account of ethnicity by Tarling; a comparative study of the Chinese community in Britain and Malaysia by Gomez; and, a comparative study of political structures in Spain, Malaysia and Belgium by Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh – are all valuable pieces that bring novel insights to the topics they raise. Yeoh's contribution provides an interesting typology of migrant and minority communities and demonstrating how different regimes have sought to create institutions to manage that diversity with varying degrees of success. But a carefully wielded scalpel might have usefully reduced it somewhat; its analysis is in places meandering and the chapter is replete with maps and graphs of time-series data that are not really well integrated into the discussion.

Later chapters in the book are not so strong, however, and tend towards generic and journalistic accounts rather than carefully weighed and evidenced argumentation. The chapters on Sri Lanka, Burma and New Zealand read rather more like the first draft conference papers from which they clearly derive than substantive contributions to academic debate. Similarly, the chapters on Singapore and the Philippines, although each a competent restatement of mainstream critiques of ethnic politics within these countries, do not bring any real novel analysis. The main contribution of these chapters, one senses, and possibly the main reason for their inclusion, is that they explicitly rebut Amy Chua's thesis.

While both books have their shortcomings, however, taken together they contribute to the emerging body of literature that rejects essentialised notions of ethnicity and ethnic conflict and that highlight the key role of the state in creating and manipulating ethnic categories to serve particular interests and agenda. The argument here is not a novel one, but these contributions certainly strengthen it.

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