

Book reviews

Peter Borschberg (ed.), *Iberians in the Singapore-Melaka area and adjacent regions (16th to 18th century)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004, xi + 192 pp. [South China and Maritime Asia Series 14.] ISBN 3.447.05107.8. Price: EUR 58.00 (hardback).

SYED MUHD KHAIRUDIN ALJUNIED

'Historians interested in late medieval and early modern Southeast Asia usually think that Melaka was the most important port in that region around 1500'. These lines set the tone of an exciting volume on Iberians in the Singapore-Melaka area from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth. Located at the intersection of several fields (history, geography, economics, politics, international relations, security and ethnic studies), most, if not all, the chapters in the book question assumptions and notions that so far have dominated the historiography of early modern Southeast Asia.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One, entitled 'The Outer World', focuses upon interconnectedness between the traders and statesmen who operated within the South China Sea and the Bay of Bengal, and on their roles in linking China, India and Western Europe to the Malay Archipelago. The first chapter is by Roderick Ptak, whose potent lines are quoted above. He questions the widely held perception of Melaka as one of the most important trading centres of sixteenth-century Asia. Ptak argues that such a claim is a product of exaggerated statements in Portuguese sources which sought to justify imperialist aims. Ptak argues that Fujian and the 'China factor', rather than Melaka, were far more important in influencing the trade and even the politics of sixteenth-century Southeast Asia. The second chapter, by Manel Ollé Rodríguez, extends Ptak's assertion of the crucial role of China and the Chinese in shaping Spanish trading and colonialist policies within the Philippine Islands. Peter Borschberg's chapter on 'Security, VOC penetration and Luso-Spanish co-operation' paints a broader picture of Portuguese and Spanish trading and imperial interests in the Malay Archipelago, and of their relentless yet futile attempts to contain growing Dutch influence in the region. This part of the book ends with an exploration by Kenneth McPherson of Portuguese strategies for survival and adaptation in a climate of decline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The second part of the book consists of four essays that examine 'The Inner World', that is, interactions and connections between the Malay Peninsula, the Riau Archipelago, and Sumatra, as well as the Straits of Malacca and

Singapore. Peter Borschberg's second essay in the volume unearths lesser-known cartographical sources which provide different views of Singapore and its strategic importance. Such disparities reflected the security concerns of Portuguese and Dutch trading companies, which propelled the intense need to chart as accurately as possible the maritime routes close to the islands of Singapore. Paula Jorge de Sousa Pinto's illuminating chapter examines the ever-changing relationships between the Portuguese, the Johor sultans, and the Acehnese in the struggle for commercial and political dominance in the late sixteenth century. His chapter is complemented by Timothy Barnard's essay on the Luso-Asian mestizos who acted as middlemen between Malay and European colonial authorities. Radin Fernando's 'Metamorphosis of the Luso-Asian diaspora in the Malay Archipelago' ends the volume with a statistical examination of harbourmaster's records and related VOC sources. These underutilized sources, Fernando argues, provide new insights into lesser-known aspects of Melaka's society and its role in the region.

Although generally well produced, this book contains an editorial oversight. The headings 'The Inner World' and 'The Outer World' have been incorrectly located in the table of contents, causing slight confusion when one reads the excellent foreword by Peter Borschberg. This error, however, does not diminish the importance of *Iberians in the Singapore-Melaka area*, which without doubt will be required reading for scholars and students of early modern Southeast Asia.

Katharine L. Wiegele, *Investing in miracles; El Shaddai and the transformation of popular Catholicism in the Philippines*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005, xi + 207 pp. ISBN 0.8248.2861.5, price: USD 21.00 (paperback); 0.8248.2795.3, USD 50.00 (hardback).

GREG BANKOFF

Ever since Anna Tsing's *In the realm of the diamond queen; Marginality in an out-of-the-way place* (Princeton, 1993) introduced us to a less detached form of academic style that weaves an anthropologist's field experiences into his or her participant observation of a community, the narrator has become a much stronger presence in ensuing studies. Though I have no quantitative evidence to support such a claim, the approach seems one more characteristic of female researchers and their generally better ability to network more successfully than their male counterparts, who seem to prefer a greater sense of detachment. In *Investing in miracles; El Shaddai and the transformation of*

popular Catholicism in the Philippines, Katharine Wiegele takes the reader on a fascinating journey through the *iskinitas* or interior walkways of inner Metro Manila's informal settlements that is both an actual and a personal account of the redemptive power of charismatic religion and the particular brand of prosperity theology marketed by the El Shaddai ministry in the Philippines.

Wiegele guides the reader through a series of thematic chapters that must mirror the researcher's own encounter with the movement, starting with its public presence in Filipino society and progressing through stages to the more intimate, human dimension of its day-to-day practice. Thus the first two chapters give the religious background and national context of the El Shaddai DWXI-PPFI (Prayer Partners Foundation International) ministry founded by 'Brother' Mike Velarde in 1981, and explain its phenomenal appeal based on the notion of prosperity theology and the seed-faith principle of 'investing' in or paying for ('tithing') miracles. The discussion of the ministry's use of the media (it actually began as a radio programme) and its successful transformation of the airwaves into a new form of sacred, mass-mediated space is the subject of Chapter 3. Next we are introduced to the site of the researcher's principal investigation, two inner city *barangays* (localities) together with some of its denizens, from the perspective of how the movement's weekly mass rallies (half a million strong) give 'the poor' a sense of visibility that they had previously not enjoyed in the capital of a country with one of the greatest disparities of wealth on earth. The appeal of El Shaddai is further explored through the issue of class and identity and how the ministry's ideology of self-transformation resonates with so many members of this segment of Manila's population. The last chapters deal with the variability of local practice and how it differs from that professed by Brother Mike and the movement's elders. The role of women, the competitiveness of religious life, the importance of healing, and the focus on 'spiritual warfare' are mainly interpreted through illustrations from the life stories of *barangay* inhabitants as witnessed and participated in by the researcher. A brief epilogue then explains El Shaddai's appeal in terms of its ability to successfully 'marry' native shamanistic traditions with the charismatic 'gospel' of prosperity and yet remain within the legitimacy conferred by the Roman Catholic Church.

While the topic is inherently interesting and long overdue as a focus of serious scholarship, the study's real strength lies in its ability to reveal something of the complexity and multifaceted nature of Filipinos' 'belief world': how it is characterized by a syncretism that allows a 'mix' of the exotic with the native, of technological innovation and the spirit dimension. (I once gave a public lecture in Manila suggesting that the forms and symbols of Christianity had been appropriated and incorporated within a largely pre-Hispanic mythology and tradition rather than the other way round. Far from being offended, the Jesuit priests in the audience largely agreed

with me!) Western social scientists are often oblivious to this dimension or, if aware, too readily dismissive of its import. The problem is compounded by their Filipino counterparts generally choosing to remain silent and avoid addressing a subject that does not merit serious consideration according to an international academic culture that is still mainly derived from Western ontological and epistemological models. This is a pity. In contrast, Wiegele seems to be able to accept a 'faith' whose adherents keep their radios or televisions on all day tuned to El Shaddai programmes so as to keep away the evil spirits that cause arguments within families or who are responsible for the distribution of illegal drugs in their neighbourhoods (pp. 49-50). It is her understanding of this hybrid belief world that allows her to explore so well the draw of this form of tele-evangelism and how it can appeal to as many as nine to eleven million people.

In a sense, though, Wiegele does not go far enough: While the reader is made aware of this other dimension to Filipino life, the extent to which it alters people's perceptions of reality and governs their actions is implicitly intimated rather than explicitly explored. How does El Shaddai's use of the media to 'extend the sacred and ritual space', the idea that blessings can travel through the airwaves, interrelate with the spirit world of *albularyos*, *hilots*, *spiritistas* and *yakals*, all forms of indigenous intermediaries and healers? So, too, does the movement's leader, Mike Velarde (surely pivotal to understanding El Shaddai), remain a rather shadowy and insubstantial figure. The author claims to have interviewed him on several occasions, but his personality and purpose remain surprisingly vague and he hovers in the background of the text like some potentially sinister *éminence grise*. Perhaps the literature on 'big men' and charisma might have added an interesting dimension to the discussion, especially as *Asiaweek* has apparently declared Velarde one of Asia's 50 most powerful men. There is also a certain unevenness in the material presented here. Despite the author's assertion that she carried out fieldwork in four provincial chapters (Roxas City, Baguio, Pangasinan and Batangas), there is almost no evidence of this research and certainly no sense of any regional or ethnic differences. The study is mainly confined to a discussion of urban settlements in Metro Manila, and should have been more appropriately identified as such rather than conferring on it the wider claims suggested by the volume's present title.

All in all, though, this is a very engaging book, one that is as informative as it is readable. It deals with an enormously important aspect of modern Filipino life that is too often overlooked. As such, it will be of interest not only to a wide number of readers with an Asian focus but also to those with specializations in comparative religion and cultural studies. You may still not believe in miracles after reading this book, let alone be inclined to 'invest' in them, but you will certainly be much the wiser about them.

Jean Gelman Taylor, *Indonesia; Peoples and histories*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2003, xxi + 420 pp. ISBN 0.300.09709.3, price USD 45.00 (hardback); 0.300.09710.7, USD 21.00 (paperback).

PETER BOOMGAARD

What kind of book can one expect from a title such as *Indonesia; Peoples and histories*? The author herself describes it as 'a social history more than a political one' (p. 2), and so it is. The title also conveys the suggestion of plurality: it is not *the* history of *the* Indonesian people that is being told. Jean Taylor, who made her name with a study of the VOC elite in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Batavia, apparently likes storytelling, and now she has chosen a much broader canvas for her narrative talents: Indonesia's past as far back as the sources will take us.

This is done in 12 chapters, of which the first deals with Indonesia's pre-history (a far from easy task given the scarcity of data). Chapters 2 to 4 bring us from the fifth to the sixteenth century, emphasizing Hindu-Buddhist and Muslim features, while the arrival of the Europeans, including the Dutch and their VOC, and particularly the way their activities became enmeshed with those of the various Indonesian peoples, are dealt with in Chapters 5 to 7. The period during which the colonial state engulfed ever-increasing parts of the Archipelago is the subject matter of Chapters 8 to 10, the Japanese period and the Indonesian struggle for independence are covered in Chapter 11, and the last chapter deals with the Republic of Indonesia.

The study is structured as a textbook, with no footnotes and almost a hundred 'capsules' – vignettes printed in frames throughout the book – on topics which include: 'graves as history', '*kakawin*: poetry and princes', 'winds and wives', 'mosque', 'pepper and lifestyle', 'VOC: the Company', 'Shaik Yusuf, denouncer of the Occidental other', 'Kartini: national heroine or creature of the Dutch?', 'Sudirman: pesantren in arms', and 'Killing squads in Bali'. For the advanced student and the specialist the lack of footnotes is of course to be lamented, and the bibliographies per chapter are but a poor substitute.

This is a remarkable book in more than one sense. Six chapters – roughly half the book – are dedicated to the period 1600-1942. For a textbook that is a courageous choice, given the strong emphasis on twentieth-century history in many history departments today. It is also courageous in the sense that it takes issue with many widely accepted views of Indonesia's past, not least those held by Indonesians themselves.

For a history textbook, *Indonesia; Peoples and histories* contains remarkably few dates, at least in the chapters dealing with the period prior to 1900. The study deals from time to time with dateable events, such as battles and

the deaths of key historical figures, but even when doing so it often tries to recapture the lives of the 'common people', describing how their daily lives were structured and what they must have experienced in periods of sudden change. Occasionally the lack of dates can lead to confusion, particularly in chapters dealing with fairly long periods, leaving the reader guessing as to when precisely a particular development, or even event, took place.

The book has been written in what could be called a *parlando* style, and for the most part it is a pleasure to read. Occasionally, however, there are formulations that may baffle readers who are not native speakers of English. And although Taylor is a master of pithy phrases and felicitous characterizations, sometimes the reader feels that too much has been crammed into one sentence. ('Killing and the rounding up of communist sympathizers removed citizens with secular solutions to problems of hunger, unemployment, and religious conflict', p. 359.)

Taylor has attempted to do justice to the enormous variety, in space as well as time, that is to be found in Indonesian history. This is far from easy, as the sources are heavily biased in favour of Java, particularly (but certainly not exclusively) after 1600. She has also tried to compensate for the fact that a disproportionate share of the written sources were produced by, and therefore reflect the actions and views of, Europeans – particularly the Dutch, who were strongly involved in Indonesian histories after 1600. She is also very aware that the sources are biased in favour of Indonesian kings and aristocrats, and in favour of males.

Generally speaking, Taylor pulls off her balancing act quite elegantly and successfully. There is, however, one area where she appears to be overcompensating, at least in the eyes of this reviewer, and that is when she writes about Islam, admittedly a topic that in the older literature is not always dealt with fairly. Here her tone often turns apologetic, defensive. A few examples follow. On p. 73 Taylor writes: 'In the scholarly literature, much has been made of the connection between trade and conversion to Islam in the archipelago, to the extent of explaining conversion by the eagerness of archipelago rulers for greater profits from trade. Such emphasis degrades the religious appeal of Islam for the individual [...]'. Apart from the fact that we do not know why rulers converted to Islam, it is striking that Taylor apparently does not think that a similar emphasis on the utility of a conversion to Hinduism or Buddhism for Indonesian rulers a number of centuries earlier (pp. 15-22), degrades the religious appeal of Hinduism or Buddhism for the individual. Strangely enough, Taylor herself appears to be stressing the non-religious appeal of Islam a few pages further on when she writes (p. 76): 'Port residents most in contact with Muslims converted: wives, their extended families, children, and people who perceived Islam as denoting prosperity, divorce from manual labor, and urban status'. On p. 84 the circumcision of sons is

mentioned, but nothing is said about (the incision of) daughters. Perhaps we do not know much about it, but an author who champions the equal representation of women in Indonesian histories should not have avoided this – admittedly sensitive – topic entirely. Finally, I was struck by the following sentence on p. 256: 'Padri women living in their husband's house and reliant on their husband's income perhaps felt the gratification of living a life more closely reflecting Muhammad's teaching'. I rest my case.

As the past can never be reproduced in its entirety, historians have to make choices, and an author is entitled to his or her own accents. Taylor's social histories have a distinctly cultural flavour, as opposed to an economic or an anthropological one. Although these aspects are certainly present, the (changing) daily lives of 'tribal' peoples or the social consequences of economic change are not major themes in her book. This is not something to be held against the author; she has written socio-cultural histories of Indonesian peoples, and someone else should write socio-economic and socio-anthropological histories.

Finally there are of course always the little errors the reviewer is supposed to detect. On p. 8 there is a mention of broadcast sowing of seeds of root vegetables, but roots and tubers are usually propagated vegetatively (from cuttings). On p. 55 she states that birds of paradise were almost extinct in the 1920s, for which there is no evidence. The term 'wild pepper' (p. 120) for Sunda around 1150 is strange, as pepper was introduced to Java from India in its domesticated state. It is not true that the Dutch introduced cloves in Seram and Ambon in the seventeenth century (p. 132), and rifles on board VOC ships (p. 148) are an anachronism.

But these are minor details. Taylor's book is a well-written and challenging study that deserves a wide audience, both among the untutored who are looking for an introduction to Indonesian history, and among specialists who think they have seen it all.

Clive Moore, *New Guinea; Crossing boundaries and history*.
Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003, xiv + 274 pp. ISBN
0.8248.2485.7. Price: USD 50.00 (hardback).

HAROLD BROOKFIELD

It has long been the habit to write the history of New Guinea, whether of the whole island or of its politically separate parts, from the perspective of the Pacific and Australian regions. Except in the field of prehistory, few attempts have been made to attach discussions of issues concerning this island to those

of Southeast Asia. In this book, Clive Moore quite deliberately reverses this strategy and seeks new insight by recognizing that for all but the last two centuries of New Guinea history, the approaches from the west, from the Indonesian archipelago, have been of overwhelmingly greater importance.

In an ambitious survey that begins with environment and archaeology, Moore starts with the peopling of the Sahul continent (Australia and New Guinea) from the west, and the derivation of at least most of its food crops also from the west. Well after New Guinea finally became an island, there was a further major surge of seaborne people from Asia, and as regional trading systems grew, they became linked with the easternmost fringes of the Asian trading system, through the Maluku islands. While the direct contacts of this system have not, in historical times, extended further east than the Bird's Head, Onin and Cenderawasih Gulf, trade in slaves and goods meshed into reciprocal gift systems that extended east of the Gulf and the trading system was the vehicle of the earliest European contacts, well ahead of the nineteenth-century contacts in the east.

The core of the book is concerned with the period from the seventeenth to the end of the nineteenth century. A persistent theme is the manner in which the people of New Guinea were brought into contact with agents who included Malay traders, European explorers, whalers and *bêche-de-mer* traders, escaped convicts, beachcombers, castaways, labour recruiters, general traders and planters, and only finally administrators. The larger political context of the colonial forward movement is not ignored, but the emphasis is on the local forces of demand for resources and labour and on the interpersonal interactions through which colonialism arrived. Some of these interactions were violent, and depth is provided in Chapter 7 by analysis of information on 584 violent incidents up to the 1890s, in which more than 1,400 Europeans and their employees died, together with many times that number of New Guineans. This information is used selectively, with a small number of incidents recounted in considerable detail to illustrate how each side sought to exploit the other, leading ultimately to the emergence among the colonized of middlemen adept at dealing with two cultures. Rather less satisfactorily, this same theme is carried in a more sketchy review of twentieth-century inland penetration.

The period of full colonialism, the Second World War, and the attainment of independence is not, however, central to this book. It receives only a single whole chapter, properly critical of both the Australian and the Dutch record, but without the analysis in depth given to the earlier period, especially in the west. The colonial intrusion was, after all, an interregnum of less than a hundred years, and it is early days to select which of the post-colonial trends will dominate. Although the strong emergence of socio-economic classes in modern Papua New Guinea is mentioned, it is not subjected to closer analy-

sis. Nor is the post-colonial continuation of the colonial economy. Moore puts final emphasis on the fact that over one-sixth of the population of the whole island, more than a million people, consists of recent migrants from the western islands of Indonesia. This ongoing Indonesianization of western New Guinea must, he believes 'eventually, during the next century or two, affect the whole island' (p. 202). All the history of New Guinea has been the absorption of change brought by those who have passed through, mainly from the west.

Enough has been said to show that this is an unusual history of New Guinea. Not all specialists on the island will like it, but all can learn from it, provided they get beyond the standard 'then and now' illustration on the amusing dust-jacket. Its maps are inadequate, but the illustrations are well chosen. Moore's excursions outside history are cautious and tactful, although some will think he could profitably have taken his forays into political economy further. This is an attractive book, well written and never boring, and this reviewer recommends it to all who would like to know more about New Guinea without getting bogged down in the monumental detail of a large literature.

Nathan Porath, *When the bird flies; Shamanic therapy and the maintenance of worldly boundaries among an indigenous people of Riau (Sumatra)*. Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 2003, x + 260 pp. [CNWS Publications 124.] ISBN 90.5789.088.7. Price: EUR 29.00 (paperback).

CYNTHIA CHOU AND MARTIN PLATT

This monograph takes us on an inspiring journey to the world of spirits to experience the powers of transfiguration and healing. The focus of the book is on the healing processes and techniques of the upstream Mandau people of Riau (Sumatra), and our attention is directed towards the question: 'How do shamans heal?' Porath takes us on a journey through ecstatic trances to show us the therapeutic processes of healing. In this case, it is one that reconstructs individual and group identity in relation to indigenous concepts of consciousness and selfhood. It is a movement from an initiatory phase of illness and identity disintegration, through painful self-reconstruction, and on to rebirth as a full-fledged member of the local group. The issue of healing is of crucial relevance both in spiritual terms and in terms of positioning of the upstream Mandau people in the politics of the Malay world.

This book is an important contribution to Malay world, and in particular Orang Asli, studies. It is never an easy task to penetrate into the often tightly

guarded and protected realm of oral and shamanic traditions. Porath's adeptness as a fieldworker is to be lauded. Through his ability to gain the trust and confidence of the upstream Mandau people, we have the privilege of gaining access and insight into their shamanic practices. One of the book's strengths is its incorporation of the text of traditional verbal arts used in shamanic practices. There is a wealth of material here on the aesthetics of healing expressed through language-song and the semantics of tropes, quatrains, phonological icons and ribaldry, and kinaesthetics.

Porath's empirical study and observation of the Mandau people in terms of the general topic of 'people's ill health and non-wellbeing' (p. 11) and related themes of ritual and healing performances is also of much relevance to medical anthropology and performance studies. Further research can be pursued on the general topic and the varied themes as discussed in the book.

While the book has numerous strengths, there are also aspects which, had they not been neglected, would have helped the work to come up to its full potential. Certain concepts central to the argument of the book are fuzzy, as the following quotation shows:

The upstream Mandau people perceive their shamanic complex as embodied knowledge about the world and its embodiment [...]. What we call 'Sakai culture' is not merely embodied practices but is a 'culture of embodiment' that is harboured in peoples' bodies but periodically materialised and extemporised. (p. 13).

Throughout this paragraph, the word 'embody' in its various forms is used repeatedly. A detailed explanation of this concept right from the start of the book would have provided a clearer framework to enable Porath to formulate and communicate his ideas better. Similarly, Porath's use of the word *dikei* in discussing shamanic practices confuses the reader with its unexplained variations. Sometimes it implies a practice – 'shamanic practices called *dikei*' (p. 8), '*dikei* is a technique' (p.11) – but on other occasions an event – 'a healing session *dikei*' (p. 8), 'event like *dikei*', (p. 11) – and even a 'shamanic complex' (p. 7).

There are also certain editorial problems. The spelling of names is inconsistent, such as 'Tenas Effendi' (p. 63) and 'Yousouf' (p. 70), which appear as 'T. Effendy' (p. 236) and 'Yousuf' (p. 246) in the bibliography. There are also references, such as that to Heryanto 1987 (Chapter 2, footnote 11), which cannot be found in the bibliography. Misspellings and mistranslations of Malay and Indonesian words, too, should be corrected. Examples include *terrasing* instead of *terasing*, the translation of *dapet/dapat* as 'to catch' rather than 'to obtain/get', and the glossing of *ilmu batin* as 'body of knowledge' (p. 7). The Introduction begins with 'three short legends that taken together reflect the underlying theme of this monograph'; a footnote to tell us where these legends came from, who told them and under what circumstances, the language used and how they were collected, would definitely enlighten the reader.

These flaws could easily be corrected without tarnishing the value of this work which offers a stimulating, vivid, and fascinating contribution to the study of shamanic practices, oral traditions, Malay identity, and related issues.

Paul van der Grijp, *Identity and development; Tongan culture, agriculture, and the perenniality of the gift*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004, x + 225 pp. [Verhandelingen 213.] ISBN 90.6718.215.X. Price: EUR 35.00 (paperback).

H.J.M. CLAESSEN

In this important book, Van der Grijp presents 'a record of Tonga's increasing participation in the modern global economy, and provides anthropologists, economists, and historians with a detailed case study that bears heavily on major issues of the day, both practically and theoretically'. In these words in the Foreword Alan Howard summarizes the main qualities of the book. Van der Grijp begins with a summary of theories about development and development aid in the Pacific, and spends the rest of the book testing them with respect to evidence from Tonga. All the theories are found wanting. He criticizes especially the MIRAB Model, which holds that the island societies of the Pacific base their economies on (M)igration, (R)emittance incomes, (A)id dependency, and (B)ureaucracy, and which predicts the absence of an indigenous private sector.

Van der Grijp bases his discussion on sound ethnographic knowledge. He begins with a description of the village of Taoo in Vava'u, the northernmost group of the Tongan archipelago, where vanilla is grown for export. Taoo and the surrounding land is the hereditary estate of Tupouto'a, Tonga's crown prince, who administers his holding via two lower-ranking chiefs (*matapule*). Enterprising Taoo does not fit the MIRAB model.

In superficial accordance with the model, there has been considerable migration from the Tonga Islands and a considerable income has been remitted by emigrants. There has also been foreign aid, and there is some bureaucracy. However, remittances in money have now been largely replaced by a wide variety of second-hand goods. These has led to the emergence of (flea)markets where the goods are sold. A lively commerce has developed – private enterprise – from which many small entrepreneurs, contrary to the predictions of the model, are able to profit. The Tongan government has received foreign aid, with the help of which sanitation projects have been set up, agricultural projects supported, and road and harbour facilities built.

But, as so often, only a happy few have profited from this aid.

The Tongan Islands are fertile and traditional Tongan agriculture, as Van der Grijp notes (although his quotation from Tasman on p. 74 has an incorrect page number), was sophisticated. Much traditional farming expertise, moreover, is still in existence. Cash crops such as vanilla, squash, and bananas are grown and successfully exported to New Zealand, Japan, Australia and other countries. For a time the producers formed export cooperatives, but after some years most of these failed. Now the export of cash crops is in the hands of a number of privately owned corporations. It is especially here that Tongan entrepreneurship comes to the fore. Enterprising Tongans organize and finance production, handle transport and preparation of the products, and finally ship and sell their products on foreign markets. These entrepreneurs usually have academic degrees, have spent some time abroad, have had some experience in governmental organizations, and own large plantations themselves. Such developments differ markedly from the stagnation and poverty predicted by the MIRAB model. It is possible that participation by the royal family in commercial activities has influenced Tongan developments, but as entrepreneurial activities in a wide variety of forms are encountered everywhere in the kingdom, this does not seem a sufficient explanation. Perhaps Tongans were already competent businessmen of old: comments by eighteenth-century visitors on their bargaining abilities certainly seem to suggest this (H.J.M. Claessen and P. van de Velde, editors, 1991, *Early state economics*, p. 314).

According to Van der Grijp (p. 155) a traditional system of gift-giving, like those described by Mauss in *The spirit of the gift*, still exists in Tonga. One gives something as a gift, then immediately demands a specific counter-gift in exchange. The unfortunate presentee cannot refuse to reciprocate. The role of money is also becoming more and more important, although since Van der Grijp gives all transactions in Tongan currency without indicating dollar or euro equivalents, it will be difficult for most readers to assess from his text just how important monetary exchanges are. The accumulation of wealth is to some extent impeded by the (moral) obligation to share: rich people are expected to contribute heavily, albeit in return for prestige, to the church and to feasts of various kinds (p. 163).

In the final chapters Van der Grijp examines the search for a new identity against a backdrop of globalization, anticolonialism, and tradition. Several 'traditions', he observes, have been invented recently. All in all, Van der Grijp feels justified in stating that the Tongans have succeeded in incorporating capitalism in their own culture – capitalism the Tongan way.

This is an important book. Its importance lies not only in its penetrating analysis of a Pacific culture in transition, but also in its well-founded critique of current development theories, a critique which helps to explain the many observed failures of development aid. *Identity and development* is a well-writ-

ten book which should be read by many.

Tim Bunnell, *Malaysia, modernity and the multimedia super corridor; A critical geography of intelligent landscapes*. Abingdon: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, xxi + 203 pp. [Routledge Pacific Rim Geographies 4.] ISBN 0.415.25634.8. Price: GBP 65.00 (hardback).

BEN DERUDDER

In this book, Tim Bunnell carefully analyses the way in which Malaysia's so-called Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) can and should be understood. Malaysia's MSC is a fifty-kilometre corridor of land extending southwards from Kuala Lumpur, and has been designated by the government as a special zone for the development of multimedia technology. The gist of Bunnell's argument is that the development of MSC-like projects 'cannot be adequately understood as either an expression of a paradigmatic shift to a new techno-economic era or in terms of the "expansion" of a modern "west" into a "non-Western" periphery' (p. 3). The author's main aim, therefore, is to provide a critical examination of both the processes and systems of evaluation which underlie 1. the emergence of typical modernity projects (such as 'intelligent landscapes') and 2. their socio-spatial outcomes. As a result, this book does not engage in a detailed (but theoretically neutral) description of the main features of Malaysia's MSC, but focuses on the way human geographers and ancillary social scientists should frame such phenomena. This fine-grained theoretical rationale has an important consequence, since it implies that despite this book being largely on Malaysia's MSC, it is most certainly not about Malaysia's MSC. According to the present reviewer, this is a laudable approach, but I am afraid it may very well catch some readers by surprise, on which more below.

Bunnell's argument proceeds in four parts: an introductory chapter, two substantive parts, and a concluding chapter. The introduction presents the general rationale of the book (Chapter 1), and is followed by a two-chapter section that presents a theoretical and geo-historical framing of Malaysia. Chapter 2 discusses how the concept of 'modernity' has evolved in the social sciences, whereby Bunnell argues for a conceptualization of modernity (Malaysia's as well as others) as a multiplicity that should be understood in terms of dynamic, relationally constructed rationalities of government. Chapter 3 sketches Malaysia's post-colonial transformation, with a specific focus on how this culminated in processes and politics which rationalized investment in Silicon Valley-like intelligent areas in the 1990s. The second part engages in an analysis of the material spaces of Malaysia's MSC development,

and consists of three chapters that can be read as a southward journey along the imaginative transect of the MSC: Kuala Lumpur's city centre with the Petronas Towers as activators of the 'global' orientation of Malaysia (Chapter 4); the new MSC cities Cyberjaya and Putrajaya, the functions and representations of which provide insights into the different rationalities underlying MSC development (Chapter 5); and the socio-spatial divisions associated with the construction of a new highway and Kuala Lumpur's international airport at the southern tip of the MSC (Chapter 6). The concluding chapter (7) discusses how this deconstruction of modernity in a specific spatio-temporal setting can produce a human geography with a wider scope or application.

The whole rationale of the final chapter, I believe, reveals both the merits of this book and a potential pitfall for anyone merely interested in a surface-level overview of the main characteristics of Malaysia's MSC. As a human geographer, I am thoroughly impressed by Bunnell's careful deciphering of Malaysia's modernity project. Consequently, for those researchers interested in recent advances in the conceptualization of (Southeast Asian strands of) modernity and its most remarkable projects, this book is not to be missed. At the same time, however, Bunnell's attempt to contribute to recent debates in human geography involves a conceptual apparatus which will be decidedly unfamiliar to the average *BKI* reader. Admittedly, this 'criticism' has nothing to do with the inherent merits of the book; I merely fear that some readers may be misled by a book that features Malaysia in its title. To be sure, there is tons of information on this prime example of Malaysia's modernity project, but this information is presented in a manner that explicitly aims to serve a more ambitious goal, that of decoding present-day narratives of 'modernity' and 'development' in the non-Western world. Taken as a whole, I am convinced that Bunnell has done a great job: this book is a well-written and engaging read that will undoubtedly contribute to fundamental theoretical debates in human geography, and to the way in which we understand MSC-like projects. I would therefore like to encourage *BKI* readers to pick up this book and work their way through the sections that unravel the complex ways in which social scientists have come to understand modernity. It may be a struggle, but it is well worth the effort.

L. Fontijne, *Guardians of the land in Kelimado; Louis Fontijne's study*

of a colonial district in eastern Indonesia, edited and translated by Gregory Forth with the assistance of Han F. Vermeulen. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004, xiii + 266 pp. [Translation Series 27.] ISBN 90.6718.223.0. Price: EUR 30.00 (paperback).

MARIBETH ERB

The centrepiece of this book is a translation of a Dutch colonial government report written in 1940 by Louis Fontijne; apart from this translation (129 pages of the book), the book includes one of the original appendices to the report (9 pages), plus a historical introduction (58 pages) and an afterword (52 pages) both written by the editor, Gregory Forth. Fontijne, the colonial administrator who wrote the report, had a considerable interest in anthropology, and according to investigations carried out by Forth with the help of Han Vermeulen, he was planning to pursue a postgraduate degree in anthropology after World War II. The original report that Fontijne had written on Kelimado, in Central Flores, with several other appendices that included maps, diagrams and genealogies, disappeared during the war. Fontijne managed later to obtain a typewritten copy of the report from Indonesia – without, however, the other appendices – and revised it in 1951. Forth justifies the English translation of this work both on historical grounds, it being the earliest extensive study of Nage society and culture, giving readers an opportunity to make comparisons with later work on Nage done by Forth himself, as well as on the basis of the quality of the work. Forth makes a case for the sophisticated nature of Fontijne's account, suggesting that theoretical approaches such as Durkheim's analysis of the social nature of religion, Dumont's arguments about 'hierarchy' and 'encompassment', and recent work on 'precedence' and 'origin structures' pursued by students of J.J. Fox, can be found foreshadowed in Fontijne's recounting and analysis of Nage myth, ritual and social organization.

This work will be of interest to researchers dealing with the ethnography and colonial history of eastern Indonesia, and especially those studying Flores. However for those interested in the details of Nage culture and society, it is recommended that they turn first to the voluminous ethnographic work of the editor, Gregory Forth. Some of the meticulously detailed information here, both from the original report and in the editor's afterword, will not be that intelligible to those who are not already familiar with the area. Nevertheless, the matters of general concern that this report deals with, the question of immigrant groups and indigeneity, the issue of rights and authority over land, and the concern over policy and governance, are especially salient ones at this juncture in Indonesia's history.

There is a delicious irony in the fact that this report has been published at

a time when increasing numbers of Florenese villagers reminisce about the colonial period and long for a Dutch return to Indonesia. Given that Fontijne himself was considerably critical about the effects of Dutch rule on the previously autonomous Nage domains, this nostalgia says a lot about government and governance under the subsequently independent nation-state of Indonesia. Precisely at a time when Indonesia is experiencing moves towards greater regional autonomy, with most recently the democratic elections of regional heads, the recommendations made by colonial administrators of an earlier period, such as Fontijne, deserve revisiting. It seems particularly insightful of Fontijne to point out that the Dutch administrative organization had not only undermined and distorted the power of the traditional leaders (such as the 'land guardians'), but also upset the way in which justice was administered: the Dutch, fundamentally, 'put [...] the traditional *structure* out of joint' (p. 185, emphasis in original). Conflicting systems of power and justice are precisely of the greatest concern on the island of Flores today, and there have been considerable disputes over land in the past several decades. One reason for this is that the Indonesian national system of adjudication that succeeded the Dutch colonial one did not resolve the problems of misfit between the systems that Fontijne had identified. At a time when people are increasingly looking to the past and to past structures of governance and justice as a means of redeeming a chaotic present, it is salutary to return to the ruminations of early, perspicacious observers such as Fontijne. Indeed Fontijne's questions about Nage people's future, in relation to their past, are precisely the kinds of questions that people on Flores are asking themselves today: 'whether, if they were restored in their outward forms, the traditional communities could be transformed into communities of interest in the modern legal sense, which are capable of operating for the benefit of the land and people and are also capable of further, organic development' (p. 187). For those interested in Flores and its future, a look at the past through this book deserves reflection.

Karl-Heinz Golzio, *Geschichte Kambodschas; Das Land der Khmer von Angkor bis zur Gegenwart*. München: Beck, 2003, 198 pp. ISBN 3.406.49435.8. Price: EUR 12.90 (paperback).

VOLKER GRABOWSKY

Golzio writes in his preface to this history of Cambodia that the country is known for epochs of 'cultural expansion of power' (*kultureller Machtentfaltung*) and 'cultural bloom', but also for bloody internal conflict and oppression: on

the one side, the temple city of Angkor; on the other, the terror of the Khmer Rouge regime under its infamous leader Pol Pot. Works on Cambodian history produced during recent decades have tended to focus either on the bloom or on the terror, but not both. A notable exception is David P. Chandler's *A history of Cambodia* (1983). One of the few balanced general works on Cambodian history written in a Western language, Chandler's book is nowadays also the most frequently quoted.

Golzio's work, published in German, should be reviewed according to the standards set by Chandler. This convenient paperback edition is part of a series produced by Beck Verlag on the histories of individual countries. The requirements set by the publishers are to write a state-of-the-art history in roughly 200 pages for a broad readership, and to limit footnotes and annotations to a minimum.

The author is an Indologist with expertise in comparative religious studies and the history of oriental art. This explains why the book concentrates on the history of the Khmer kingdom of Angkor. Golzio manages to give quite an accurate and vivid picture of Cambodian society, economy, religion and culture during the pre-Angkorean and Angkorean periods. This well-written book discusses the results of research by eminent scholars in the field, such as Michael Vickery, Claude Jacques, Ian Mabbett and Hermann Kulke. However, Golzio has achieved much more than that; he also summarizes his own studies, based on a new reading of Cambodian inscriptions (written in Sanskrit and in Old Khmer), on the founding of Angkor, the genealogy of early Angkorean kings, and on the meaning of the *devaraja* cult.

In this excellent first part of his book, Golzio discusses the importance of Cambodian inscriptions as a historical source, devoting to them a special section entitled 'The epigraphical evidence' (Das Zeugnis der Inschriften). He points out that though most of the inscriptions deal primarily with religious activities, mostly donations of slaves and land to monasteries, they also provide a lot of information on agriculture, handicrafts, daily life, and trade. Archaeological evidence, such as Angkor Wat, the Bayon and many other ancient Khmer monuments, is drawn on, along with contemporary Chinese chronicles and reports.

The same high standard has not been fully realized in the second part of the book, which deals with Cambodian history after the 'fall of Angkor'. Golzio observes that Cambodian chronicles of the nineteenth century, depending mostly on Siamese (Thai) chronicles, are hardly reliable and, unlike the earlier inscriptions, should not strictly speaking be considered as primary sources. However, for the nineteenth century we have Siamese and Vietnamese administrative reports that are contemporary sources of high quality and have been used, for example, by David Chandler and Michael Eiland in their respective dissertations on Cambodian history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centu-

ries. Neither of these works is listed in Golzio's bibliography.

Depending mostly on Chandler's *A history of Cambodia* for the colonial and post-colonial periods, the book would have benefited if Golzio had also used more specialized studies such as those of Alain Forest (for the colonial period) and Milton Osborne (for the Sihanouk era). The Khmer Rouge period is discussed quite inadequately in just five pages, without mentioning the ideological background or the political aims of the radical communist movement. Relevant literature by Michael Vickery on this period is missing. Golzio seems to recognize this prolific American historian only as an expert on ancient Cambodian history, though Vickery has in fact written a lot on modern Cambodia as well.

In this second part of the book I noticed a number of inaccuracies and omissions. Saloth Sar (alias Pol Pot), for example, was not a schoolteacher (p. 140), but studied engineering in France. And though it is true that the Khmer Rouge were confronted by a 'government offensive' in 'early 1968' (p. 142), it should have been mentioned that this military campaign was a response to the Khmer Rouge leadership's decision to initiate an armed struggle against the government in Phnom Penh (the founding of the so-called Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea in January 1968). Golzio mentions the first internationally supervised elections of 1993 following the Paris peace agreement (p. 157). The result of this election was a coalition government comprising the royalist Funcinpec party, which won the election, and the ex-Communist Cambodian People's Party (CPP). However, the author should have mentioned that this 'grand coalition' was formed after CPP elements forced the hand of Prince Ranariddh by seriously threatening to establish an autonomous zone comprising all the provinces east of the Mekong.

The volume as a whole would have benefited from the inclusion of relevant secondary literature on modern Cambodian history (fewer than one tenth of the works listed in the bibliography deal with that period). If the author had limited his scope to the history of Cambodia prior to the fifteenth century, and had expanded his thoughtful analysis of that period into a volume entitled *A history of Cambodia up to the end of Angkor*, it would have been an excellent work. One is tempted to speculate that this was indeed the author's original intention, and that the second part of the book was added purely to comply with the publisher's requirement for a 'complete' history of Cambodia.

Its shortcomings notwithstanding, Golzio's *Geschichte Kambodschas* is a very useful introduction for German readers and is highly recommended, at least for its coverage of Cambodia's pre-colonial history.

Une bureaucratie à l'épreuve (1820-1918). Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2004, 355 pp. [L'Asie en Perspective.] ISBN 2.706.81710.0. Price: EUR 34.00 (paperback).

MARTIN GROSSHEIM

One of the most important issues on the agenda of the Vietnamese government today is the fight against corruption and for a more efficient administration. 'Good governance' and administrative reform are also keywords of many programs sponsored by international donor organizations in Vietnam. The origins of rampant bureaucratism (*quan lieu*) and corruption are often located in Vietnam's feudal past, and in a mandarin system that is usually regarded as having been conservative, inefficient, and hostile to reform. Emmanuel Poisson's new study of the development of that system from 1820 to 1918, however, undermines such stereotypes, and presents Vietnam's pre-colonial administration as surprisingly innovative and dynamic.

Poisson's eight chapters, ordered chronologically, and several appendixes reflect the richness of the sources. The first two chapters discuss the administrative structure under the Nguyen dynasty, and highlight several reforms launched by mandarins even prior to the arrival of the French. The following chapters focus on the transformation of the administrative system during the French colonial period, and on the role of mandarins in this process. Poisson forcefully questions stereotypes of backward-looking mandarins as an obstacle to reform and 'modernization' of Vietnam's administrative system. He emphasizes that many of the administrative reform issues current in Vietnam at the end of the nineteenth century had been raised in pre-colonial times, and were actively propagated by mandarins in their discussions with the colonial power. In other words, Poisson stresses the dynamic character of Vietnam's 'traditional' administrative structure. He also challenges the view in nationalist Vietnamese historiography that mandarins of this period were either 'patriots' who participated in the anti-French resistance, or 'collaborators' who were completely manipulated by the colonial power. Poisson argues that, far from being passive agents within the colonial administration, many mandarins actively contributed to reform of the administrative system and were involved in modernizing endeavours such as the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc (Free Tuition) movement. To further illustrate the dynamic and innovative character of the mandarin system in the early twentieth century, Poisson describes in detail how administrative manuals and the civil examinations were increasingly influenced by 'modern' ideas. The final chapter shows how the administrative system worked in practice at the district level, and highlights the role of the district chief.

Poisson's is a truly impressive study. It makes use of a wealth of previ-

ously untapped French and Vietnamese sources, including the more than a thousand *curricula vitae* of mandarins kept at the Vietnam National Archives in Hanoi. It presents a fresh *longue durée* analysis of Vietnam's administrative system and is a major contribution to Vietnamese studies.

The only obvious criticism is that the short conclusion (two pages) seems inadequate considering the wealth of information and argument presented. It is also striking that the development of village administration is only briefly touched upon, in spite of this becoming a major issue during the colonial period. Hopefully, Poisson will soon publish an English version of his monograph so that his path-breaking study can reach an even broader readership.

Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, Volume 10, 1737-1743, edited by J. van Goor. 's-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 2004, xii + 1160 pp. [Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie 250.] ISBN 90.5216.133.X. Price: EUR 76.00.

GERRIT KNAAP

The other day an Australian colleague told me that every time he came to the Netherlands to do research, Leiden's railway station was being dug up. However, last time he was a bit startled as no such undertaking was in progress. Upon arriving at the National Archives in The Hague, however, he saw that the idiosyncratic Dutch habit of digging up railway stations was still very much alive, so that his feeling of 'coming home' to the Netherlands was restored. This reminded me of my own most recent visit to the National Archives, a few months earlier. It entailed considerable inconvenience as the building that houses the Archives was itself being renovated, turning such minor undertakings as getting a cup of coffee or washing one's hands into time-consuming expeditions.

The purpose of my visit was to double-check a few facts in the VOC archives to complement research which had actually been done many years ago. I started out with the usual procedure of looking for the numbers of the required documents in the general inventory as well as the overview of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Company. Having done so, I entered the numbers in the computerized system for ordering documents. This resulted in a message on the screen that the original document cannot be consulted; instead the user is referred to a form of self-service, which appears to be a set of microfilms in a remote section of the reading room. These films have

their own system of numbering, making it rather complicated for the user to find the film needed. After having acquired the desired reels, I put the first one on a microfilm reader, only to discover that the machine was not working properly. After moving to another machine, I was finally able to locate the pages I wanted. Finding the right pages in these long films is not an easy task. Moreover, the legibility of the films is often sub-standard. It took me an hour and a half to see what I wanted to see – a marked deterioration in service compared to the 1980s when the user could still consult original documents directly. The number of hurdles to be taken before the VOC researcher obtains the desired information increased in the 1990s. Now, in 2005, low-quality microfilms are still being offered even though three years ago, at the commemoration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the VOC, great sums of external funds were spent by the National Archives on the various surviving VOC archives worldwide. It seems that a great deal of effort went into preservation, while the conditions of access at home in The Hague were overlooked.

With access to primary sources faltering, hopefully only temporarily, it is a happy coincidence that in the provision of secondary sources the Netherlands is continuing a long tradition. This tradition, which includes colonial (and hence also elements of non-Western) history, is mainly kept alive by the Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis (ING). Source publications are expected to become more important in the future to history teaching at Dutch universities. As students, by government decree, must complete their academic curriculum in an ever shorter period, there is little room left for lecturers to require their students to work with primary materials. For this reason the publication of a new volume of one of the most prestigious ING series, the *Generale Missiven*, is most welcome. This series covers the lengthy reports of the VOC's High Government in Batavia to its Directors in the Netherlands, and was initiated by the late W.Ph. Coolhaas. The present volume, Number 10, covers the period 1737-1743. At over 1,100 pages, it is the most voluminous so far. The editor, Jurrien van Goor, launched the book on the occasion of his retirement from Utrecht University. Once more Van Goor has done an admirable job; mistakes in this meticulous piece of work are hard to find.

This volume of the *Generale Missiven* cover the terms of office of two governors-general, Adriaan Valckenier and Johannes Thedens. A highly significant event during these years was the massacre of the Chinese in Batavia in 1740. However, because some of the passages relating to this massacre are included in another source publication of some 125 years ago, coverage of the subject here is not as extensive as one might have expected. If the editor had chosen to include much more about this event, which would have been a convenient choice for users, the volume would have had to be split into two parts.

All other major issues of the years 1737-1743, however, have found their way into the pages of Volume 10. I will mention only a few of them. In the first letter written during Valckenier's term of office there is a long deliberation about the VOC's finances and how to improve them, a discussion which was to last until the end of the Company. A recurring topic in Valckenier's term was the situation in South Sulawesi. The status quo established here in the late 1660s by Cornelis Speelman and Arung Palakka was threatened. Anti-Dutch forces in 1739 had even attacked the local VOC headquarters, but after the enemy had been repelled, the Dutch went on the offensive again. Another area which demanded great attention was Malabar, nowadays Kerala in India, where the VOC was at war with Travancore and where there was rivalry with the French. During Thedens's term of office, the VOC struggled with the aftermath of the massacre of the Chinese in Batavia. After the capital had been secured, fighting between the Dutch and the Chinese was displaced to the realm of Mataram. There the ruling *susuhunan*, Pakubuwana II, made a bet on the Chinese, which proved to be a terrible mistake. In the end he had to be restored to his throne by the Dutch, whose demands left him a puppet in their hands.

Aris Ananta and Evi Nurvidya Arifin (eds), *International migration in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004, xvi + 374 pp. ISBN 981.230278.6, price SGD 69.90 (hardback); 981.230279.4, SGD 25.90 (paperback).

SANTO KOESOEBJONO

This book contains revised papers presented at the workshop 'International Migration in Southeast Asia: Impacts and Challenges' held at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore in 2002. Discussions on all aspects of migration make this book indispensable for those working in the field of international migration: policy makers, government organizations, NGOs, the private sector, and researchers. This book is also suitable for graduate courses on migration and population studies.

The contributions inspire reflection on the notions of nation and state in an increasingly globalizing world, where flows of people across borders are essential demographic, economic and social phenomena. The editors situate international migration within the context of a world economy that is increasingly integrated in terms of flows of trade, services, capital, commodities, technologies, and diverse categories of workers.

The volume gives a comprehensive view of the socio-economic and politi-

cal impacts and challenges of international migration, particularly within and from Southeast Asia. Its analysis of the history of migration and of increasing migration flows since the 1970s provides a deeper understanding of migration and migrants in the region. The links between migration, foreign investment, and economic development are explored. Countries with a real per capita annual income below USD 500 export more labour than they import, while receiving a net inflow of capital. A turning point occurs in the per capita income range USD 1,500-2,000, above which countries show a net outflow of capital and a net inflow of labour.

The value of remittances sent by migrant workers to their home countries is enormous: USD 80 billion worldwide in 2002, according to the World Bank. The editors of *International migration in Southeast Asia* recommend that national and local governments develop ways to channel this vast inflow of remittances into more productive investments. If remittances are used only for conspicuous consumption, they may result in further migration.

The book also discusses the well-known and sad stories of vulnerable migrants who are victimized by numerous shady labour agents. The desire to have a decent life and the lure of better earnings abroad makes people receptive to the sales talk of brokers. Irregular (illegal) migration is flourishing, and the labour trade is a booming business (estimates vary from USD 10 to 12 billion worldwide). In destination countries the private sector commonly benefits from access to low-wage immigrant labour, and governments turn a blind eye as long as irregular (illegal) workers do not cause political disturbances. Migrants are welcome when things are going well but easily blamed when tensions rise. This is illustrated by recent developments in Malaysia concerning migrants from Indonesia and the Philippines, the two main labour-exporting countries in the region. Singapore seems to be the sole country in the region to have reasonably good control over irregular migration, although abuses are straining relations with neighbouring Indonesia.

The implications of international migration for national policy-makers are also discussed. Each country commonly formulates a migration policy, although lack of political will frequently prevents its successful implementation. Migrants, for their part, will head for wealthier destinations as long as an economic imbalance prevails. The experience of the European Union, where individual member countries are not eager to relinquish their authority over immigration, does not bode well for international cooperation on this issue in Southeast Asia, where migration is even more complex than in Europe. For instance two of the countries covered in this book, Malaysia and Thailand, are countries of both origin and destination for migrants. Migration issues are of great importance within ASEAN not only for economic reasons, but also with respect to political and societal stability in the region. *International migration in Southeast Asia* is therefore relevant for policy-

makers and researchers both within Southeast Asia and elsewhere, including EU countries. It can make an important contribution to maintaining a balanced view of this highly charged subject.

Vladimir Braginsky, *The comparative study of traditional Asian literatures; From reflective traditionalism to neo-traditionalism*. Richmond: Curzon, 2001, xii + 351 pp. ISBN 0.7007.1240.2. Price: GBP 70.00 (hardback).

G.L. KOSTER

If it is already a rare thing for comparative literature to move outside the narrow confines of Western literatures, Braginsky's book is nothing short of unique. He sets out to develop and trace a macro-dimensional model of the Asian variant of reflective-traditionalist (occasionally also called 'medieval' by the author) literature. It does so by establishing ideal conceptions of reflective-traditionalist literature as formulated by poetic treatises of its various key literatures. It also strives to establish a meta-language for typological comparison, avoiding the pitfalls of Western-centrism that usually beset comparative studies. In endeavouring to do so Braginsky leaves the Western Middle Ages, as well as much modern Western theory, out of consideration. In this way he hopes to make visible the systemic unity, specific rules and practices of the Asian literatures of the epoch of reflective traditionalism (pp. 7-9, 196).

In the introductory chapter, Braginsky declares his allegiance to the orderly structuralism of Lotman and the controlled hermeneutics of Ricoeur to be more congenial than other literary theories to his materials, and opts for the Russian Historico-Typological School of Comparative Literature for the basic contours of the 'reflective-traditionalist type' and some of his methods of analysis. Considering religion, rather than politics or sociology, as constitutive of reflective traditionalism, he prefers to follow Coomaraswamy, Florensky and others with 'a good ear for the music of religious topics', and makes it his main task to view reflective-traditionalist literature 'in its relation to the theological – that is reflective-religious "picture of the world" inherent in the epoch in question', while eschewing the 'more and more politicized and sociologized approaches found in contemporary literary scholarship' (pp. 11-5).

In Chapter 2, 'Literary aggregations', Braginsky describes the Asian cultures in their reflective-traditionalist phase as consisting of three 'zonal aggregations': one Arabo-Muslim; a second Indo-Southeast Asian; and a third Sino-Far Eastern. At the centre of each he locates a 'zone-shaping litera-

ture' (Arab, Sanskrit, Chinese) around each of which are clustered a number of 'integrated literatures', drawing on them for much of their religious canon (Turkish, Tamil, and Japanese literatures, for instance). In China the reflective-traditionalist 'zone-shaping' tradition formed between the second and sixth centuries AD, in India between the third and seventh centuries, and in the Arab Muslim world between the seventh century and the ninth or tenth.

Each 'zone-shaping tradition' developed its own religious canon, its sciences of hermeneutics elucidating the correct way of interpreting and maintaining the canon, and its growing body of fine literature, identifying with and emanating from (the central concepts of) the religious canon (Muhammad-Logos; Brahman; Dao). Within each zonal aggregate may be seen the process of latching the 'integrated cultures' onto the 'zone-shaping' cultures. Braginsky then moves on to an examination of the ties between the zonal aggregations, concluding that 'there existed a certain form of an all-Asian literary process'. Finally, in 'Illustration 1', he shows how the history of the literatures of Southeast Asia illustrates in miniature the workings of this process.

Tracing the connection of literature with each culture's central domain – its concepts of the Absolute and its canon – in Chapter 3, 'Self-awareness of zone-shaping literatures', Braginsky presents a comparative analysis of what 'average', 'mainstream' treatises on the poetics of the three zone-shaping literatures say about how a work ought to be created, what its nature and structure should be, how it should affect the reader, and what its purpose should be. He singles out for comparison: for India, writings from the stage preceding the *dhvani-rasa* doctrine (fifth to ninth centuries) as well as that doctrine itself; for China, mainly the Confucianist poetics of Liu Xie (completed 501?) but also those of some other (also Taoist) authors; and for the Arabo-Muslim world the classical Arab poetics of the ninth to eleventh centuries, the science of eloquence as exemplified in the work of 'Abd al-Qahir Al-Jurjani in the eleventh century, philosophical theories of literature from the tenth century onwards, and Sufi thought about literature from the twelfth century onwards.

Braginsky concludes that at their reflective-traditionalist stage the three traditional literary doctrines have quite similar ways of conceiving the process of writing and reading literature. The receptive phase of creation – acquiring the correct inspiration for writing – is seen as the upward movement of a beam of intuition to union with the Absolute through poetic meditation. Its agentive phase – the proper writing down of the literary work – is perceived as the descent of a beam of intellectualized emotion, which is objectified, via genre, style, and the mental and verbal structures of the work, into a material replica of the ideal image in the form of a work of belles lettres, which is pervaded by the energy of the Absolute.

As for the perception (reading) of literature, he finds that the three tradi-

tions of literary scholarship agree in viewing its agentive phase as the ascension of the beam of intuition of the reader to identification with the text, and its receptive phase as the conveying to the reader of the energy of the Absolute. Literature thus instils correct behavioural patterns, and – fulfilling the ultimate goal of literature as a *sui-generis* mystical path – sometimes also conveys the mystical experience of being part of the noumenal unity of the Universe. From this model of literary creation and perception Braginsky derives as concepts for his meta-language such terms as meditation, memorization, energeticism of literature, intellectualized emotion, and genre structure (p. 196).

Braginsky admits that the Arab tradition does not seamlessly fit the pattern of reflective-traditionalist monocentricity. Whereas Chinese and Indian reflective-traditionalist culture are ‘continuous’ in that all through that phase they are anchored in only one Absolute, Arab tradition is ‘discontinuous’. Transplanted out of ancient oral Arab tribal culture, it only fully attains the reflective-traditionalist model after going through several centuries in which two Absolutes clash – Arab classical poetry, and the Holy Koran. It is Sufism, an Arabo-Muslim synthesis with Hellenistic philosophy and rhetoric and with Eastern Christian thought, that finally establishes the religious Absolute as the centre of the literary system, conceiving of literature as an instrument that aids the reader’s progress along the spiritual, religio-mystical path.

On the basis of the treatises discussed above, as well as myths and religious writings, Braginsky argues in the fourth chapter, ‘The anthropomorphism of literary systems’, that reflective-traditionalist literature is perceived as isomorphic to the Universe and man. This anthropomorphism turns literature into an effective instrument for ‘moulding’ the type of individual ideally required by a given culture. Seen from a diachronic perspective, traditional literatures constitute a system of texts which conveys a certain type of personality, as it is embodied by the culture’s founding father (Confucius, Buddha, Muhammad).

The functional spheres of the literary system are hierarchically arranged around its centre, the canon, in three concentric circles, the content of which diminishes in value with distance from the centre. Each functional sphere corresponds on the one hand to a particular plane in the hierarchy of the Universe, as a bodily-spiritual phenomenon, and on the other hand to a distinct level of the human psychosomatic constitution.

The space in the first circle is occupied by writings drawing on, and intended to influence, intuition and the spiritual heart, as embodied in the religious canon and adjacent works; the second circle by writings concerned with rational perception, as embodied in learned treatises and philosophy; and the third circle by writings connected with sensory perception by the soul, and *belles lettres*. Thus the literary system is based on the principles of

unity, centredness, hierarchy and functionality. These prescribe the place to be occupied by a genre and work within it, and the specific features of each genre's poetics.

In 'Illustration 2', a case-study of an anthropomorphic literary system, Braginsky gives a detailed model of the spheres and genres forming the system of classical Malay literature. As context he takes the notion of the Sufi Path, with its stages anthropomorphically seen as areas of the human mind. Like the Path, the spheres of the literary system represent a spiritual ascent in stages: from the sphere of beauty, by way of the sphere of benefit, to the sphere of spiritual perfection. Each sphere fulfils its own task, doing so through a number of genre-structures, including genre forms which may convey diverse contents.

Traditional culture exists, for Braginsky, so long as tradition and innovation – in other words, centripetality and centrifugality – are in balance. A pronounced prevalence of either of these two poles results in cultural decline, that is, in ossification or disintegration. In the final chapter, 'Epilogue: neo-traditionalism', he looks at attempts to revive traditional values in the literatures of Asia, and discerns different phases and manifestations of this impulse, as well as a variety of motives – from nationalism to philosophical quietism.

Unlike the unreflecting residual traditionalism of early modern literature, Braginsky argues, neo-traditionalist writings examine the principles of traditional and modern literary forms individually, comprehending and transfiguring them through a modern consciousness and inventing them where they are lacking. In 'Illustration 3' Braginsky traces neo-traditionalism's manifestation in Indonesian and Malaysian literature, discussing the existentialist novel *Ziarah* by the Indonesian writer Iwan Simatupang and some Sufi-inspired poetry by the Malay poets Kemala and Baha Zain.

At the heart of Braginsky's book is a certain nostalgia for reflective traditionality's – in a European context, medievality's – now 'discarded image', and not only in its Asian form. This nostalgia is evident in his statement that 'glancing back at the European experience [of detraditionalization since the Renaissance], we cannot but wonder how and to what extent traditionality ought to be overcome; what are the inevitable losses on the way, and what, if anything can compensate for them' (p. 274). Braginsky's nostalgia, and his single-minded determination, seem to be the sources of his work's strengths as well as its weaknesses.

The book's strengths are especially manifest where Braginsky writes Asian literary history, in the second and fifth chapters. His grasp of that difficult and complex field is indeed impressive, and his analyses make use of effective concepts and methods. In the third and fourth chapters – on the synchronic dimension of reflective traditionality – there is also much to appreciate. Here he convincingly demonstrates the dominant role of religion

in the poetics he has examined.

Whether the poetics he has chosen to analyse really all represent the mainstream of reflective-traditionalist theorizing on literature in their day may, however, be questioned. A case in point is Liu Xie's *Wen-hsin Tiao-lung*. This treatise has been made much of, especially by Western Sinologists in love with its almost Aristotelian, but rather un-Chinese, completeness and systematic quality. It was produced by a low-ranking lay scholar attached to a Buddhist temple, who was totally out of tune with the literary practices of his time, which were determined by the great aristocratic salons. The *Wen-hsin Tiao-lung*, which is known often to project a picture of order and system more to satisfy the demands of its own inner rhetoric than as an accurate description of actual practice, gained some influence in traditional Chinese literary thinking only at a very late period (Owen 1992:183-6).

Braginsky's decision to construct his model of what constitutes the type of reflective-traditionalist literature only on the basis of prescriptive poetics, and leave the study of the literary works themselves out of consideration (pp. 12-3), is also problematic. In my view it is a risky enterprise, comparable to trying to determine how traffic flows work purely on the basis of manuals of traffic regulations. Or it may be likened to trying to construct a *langue* entirely from its 'ideal' formulations without taking into account its *parole*, that is the full range of its actual use. This may draw the reader into confusing ideology with practice and taking the attitude that 'once poetics has spoken, the matter is settled'.

True, Braginsky is not unaware of the possible divergence between theory and practice. He justifies his decision to study only the poetics of the literary traditions, and not the literary works themselves, with the argument that 'in the epoch of traditional literature with its normative poetics [...] theoretical works determined practice in a relatively complete way' (pp. 12-3). Here it may be objected that while in the West the medieval and renaissance handbooks of rhetoric did indeed reflect writing practice fairly closely, traditional Chinese poetics were as a rule not interested in providing concrete guidance on how to write, but only in helping the reader to cultivate himself as a gentleman. To develop his actual writing practice, the Chinese writer could only turn to the anthologies of the best texts and learn by imitating them.

Anyway, as a result of Braginsky's decision to restrict himself to treatises on poetics, rarely going to the texts themselves, his 'invariant of the type of the reflective-traditionalist' in culture and literature does not to my mind have the character of a model constructed to help account for a living, observed reality. Instead it remains an unwieldy, unmoving *mandala* created by Braginsky on the basis of 'ideal systems': impressive, it is true, and very reflective-traditionalist (not to mention 'medieval'), but probably not the window on the actual rules and practices of traditional literatures which

Braginsky claims it is.

Another problem is that although Braginsky defines tradition as a balance between the centripetal and the centrifugal (p. 277), in his discussion of the values instilled by literature he only attends to the centripetal. And had he more often descended to ground zero – the literary texts themselves, and what they have to teach about their actual poetics – he might have doubted that the traditions he examines were quite as monocentric in practice as the treatises on poetics make them out to be. He might then have noticed that in Chinese literature at precisely the period when the reflective-traditionalist phase began, there were also powerful anti-Confucian countercurrents. Associated with mysticism, drugs, and eccentricity, these centrifugal forces – driven by Buddhism and Taoism – inspired a wave of ‘poetry of retreat’, the theme of which was getting away from the dirt of the world and away from assisting the ruler in his mission of spreading virtue.

Furthermore, although in Malay traditional culture and literature Islam conquered the religious centre, toppling the earlier Hindu canon, that did not mean the immediate or total disappearance of pre-Islamic ideologies and practices: elements of Hinduism, as well as of oral archaic culture, lingered on. Braginsky is of course well aware of this when he discusses the Hindu-Islamic synthesis in Malay literature, which is his own field. In discussing the literary self-awareness of the Malays, however, by overemphasizing the Islamic elements in Malay manuscript culture, and by neglecting pre-Islamic and oral elements, he gives the misleading impression that what he presents is ‘the’ system of Malay literature in its totality.

The greater part of those traditional Asian literatures whose reflective-traditionalist character Braginsky tries to establish actually consist of ‘court’ literature. Of course even rulers needed the religious centre, to legitimate their power by invoking its higher values. But the courtly milieu was also one of the major focal points where countercurrents rallied to oppose religious seriousness, and toward the end of the reflective-traditionalist period the same can be said of the urban milieu. The countercurrents present in courts and cities put a premium on playfulness and increasingly tested, overstepped, and shifted the boundaries of propriety, bringing about a gradual emancipation of the signifier from its subservience to a transcendental or immanent signified.

Braginsky tends to view reflective-traditionalist literature’s didactic function only as that of creating in the reader’s personality a replica of his culture’s religious founding fathers (p. 276). This tendency is overly reductive. How can it fully explain, for instance, the eleventh- and twelfth-century Ghaznavid court poetry of Iran, in which the ruler is praised not only for his Islamic virtues, but also for a heroism worthy of the great heroes of the pre-Islamic past, and as an untiring participant in feasting and drinking bouts

(De Bruyn, Idema and Van Oostrom 1986:149-66)?

Another problem is that, while one can only agree with the centrality of religion as argued in Braginsky's model, the notion of the creation and reception of literature as an ascent by meditation towards (and consequent descent of) the Absolute is just as central to Western medieval literature as it is to its 'Eastern' reflective-traditionalist counterpart. In the West, where those in power were just as much bent on grounding their particular values in an unassailable Archimedic point beyond the reach of competitors, we find the same conception of literature reflected in the idea that writing and reading were properly acts of commemoration – an assumption that was of vital importance to medieval hermeneutics as an *ars recte legendi* (art of reading correctly) stabilizing tradition (Vance 1979).

Braginsky's neglect of Western comparisons is understandable in view of the vastness of the Asian field of research. But it brings with it the risk of establishing an 'Oriental' literary ghetto. Intentionally or not, it may also lead to the perpetuation of an 'Occidentalist' vision: that of a pure, 'spiritual East'.

In point of fact, Braginsky's 'Eastern' treatises on poetics frequently invite comparison with Western literary theories, both traditional and modern. Arab and Sufi thinking (pp. 161-71) concerning *lafz*, *ma'na* and the centrality of the religious Absolute link up directly with the tradition of Western semiotic thought that leads from Augustine via Rousseau to the deconstruction of Derrida (Gellrich 1985:29-50; Norris 1987:30-96; Vance 1979:374). And 'Abd al Qahir al-Jurjani (p. 163) discusses notions quite close to what Lotman has called the 'semantization of form' (Fokkema and Kunne-Ibsch 1977:41).

Hoping to abstract an unadulterated and 'correct' meta-language for describing his purely Asian model, free of foreign interferences, Braginsky seems to suggest that like the reflective-traditionalist Asian reader, the modern researcher too should obey the culture's *ars recte legendi* and avoid the West's ideology-critical modes of reading. Thus he talks about the need to 'eliminate the interference from contemporary mentality', reminding the researcher in almost Rankian language that 'each variant is inherent in a specific epoch' (pp. 8-10).

It is true, of course, that Braginsky also shows a Bakhtinian stance where he writes that in their 'attempt to comprehend the "cues" of the dialogue, [researchers] must avoid silencing other "voices" but engage in colloquy with the "strange word" which means something different at every period of time and at every point in space' (p. 10). Here, however, it may be wondered whether the elimination of contemporary Western readings is not precisely that silencing of voices that he says should be avoided.

Whatever the case may be, the language in which Braginsky speaks of his Asian literatures is far from a meta-language, an objective speaking from

outside one's own cultural practice. However useful and apposite they may be, the terms he mentions as examples – meditation, memorization, energeticism, genre structure – remain Western terms, and spring from the researcher's inevitable need to find a set of common denominators in a plethora of Chinese, Arab and Sanskrit metaphors. Western voices, too, are sounding where Braginsky speaks of the genres and forms of 'classical' (a Western and non-Malay notion) Malay literature. There the language of long-dead Dutch and British colonial scholar-administrators is still loudly and exclusively audible, whereas more recent research is unfortunately not granted a voice.

In spite of its overly one-sided and 'idealist' approach, Braginsky's book deserves praise for its daring and its originality. It makes very worthwhile and thought-provoking reading for all those who are interested in the history of Asian mentalities, and in the comparative poetics and literary history of Asia. It thoroughly demonstrates its main point: the vital importance – so often unjustly neglected – of religion for our understanding of reflective-traditionalist as well as neo-traditionalist writings. It is a demanding book, to be sure, but once the reader has gone some way into it, he or she will find that it leads into a veritable treasure-trove of new ideas, fresh questions, and challenging areas of research.

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Fiona Kerlogue (ed.), *Performing objects; Museums, material culture*

and performance in Southeast Asia. London: Horniman Museum and Gardens, 2004, xiv + 188 pp. [Contributions in Critical Museology and Material Culture.] ISBN 1.903338.01.8. Price: GBP 25.00 (paperback).

JENNIFER LINDSAY

When working in Jakarta in the early 1990s, I once had to escort some Australian museum experts to the National Museum in Jakarta to discuss preparations for yet another workshop in the seemingly endless series of training workshops that provide embassies and foundations with targets for funds and museum officials with both sporadic relief from boredom and credit points so they can move up to a completely different department. The 'foreign expert' walked around looking at the dusty display cases and ethnographic exhibits and finally uttered, bemused, 'this place is a museum of a museum. We should just put a glass dome over it and leave it at that.'

Fiona Kerlogue's edited volume discusses collecting and display in and of Southeast Asia, particularly in relation to the colonial world in which collecting often first took place and in which exhibitions like the National Museum in Jakarta were initially conceived. In this, the book sits squarely within writing in museology and anthropology over the past three decades. The innovation of this book, though, is to include writing on other kinds of display and contact between objects and their viewers in Southeast Asia such as puppets, parades and performance. This juxtaposition invites links with recent writing in cultural studies and performance studies, and is also more sensitive to Southeast Asian ways of seeing and experiencing things. The emphasis on 'performing objects' suggests new ways of thinking about objects for display in general, rather than in tired and often irrelevant categories such as 'material' (or tangible) and 'nonmaterial' (or intangible) culture.

Along with Kerlogue's introduction, the volume contains eleven essays, by Christina Kreps, Katharine McGregor, Nicole Tarulevicz, Laurens Bakker, Antonio Guerrero, Sudeshna Guha, Geneviève Duggan, Poh Sim Plowright, Matthew Cohen, Laura Noszlopy and Andy West. Six of the essays deal with Indonesia, one with Kunming, China, two with Malaysia, one with Singapore, and only one (Plowright on string puppets) more broadly with Southeast Asia. The essays can be broadly grouped as: those that discuss collections, display and collecting, and display practices (Kreps on *pusaka*, McGregor on Indonesia's National Museum, Tarulevicz on the Singapore History Museum, Bakker on museum displays of Nias); studies of collectors and their collections (Guerreiro on Jacques de Morgan, Guha on Ivor Evans); and field reports of site-based display and performance (Duggan on Savu weaving, Cohen on *wayang kulit*, Noszlopy on *ogoh-ogoh* in Bali, West on the modern city in Kunming).

The essays in the volume were presented at the twentieth conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Studies UK (ASEASUK) in 2001, and as is common with post-conference publications, the book suffers a little from unevenness, some repetition between the essays, and a lag of publication time so that some essays have been overtaken by events. Tarulevicz's essay on the Singapore History Museum, for instance, describes in the present tense an entire museum exhibition which, since the Museum closed for total overhaul in mid 2004, no longer exists. The stronger essays in the volume, however, such as Bakker's essay on museum displays of Nias, which compares displays of Nias within Nias itself, in Jakarta and abroad; or Guha's essay on Ivor Evans's photographs that documented his ethnographic collection among *orang asli* in the Malay peninsula, and which have since become exhibits in their own right, suggest exciting new directions for further study. They also suggest ways of reading across the other more single-focus essays in the volume.

The book is beautifully presented, and well supported with photographs. The Horniman Museum and Gardens has done a great job here. It is certainly a most welcome addition to teaching material on cultural resources in Southeast Asia, and offers many points of departure for further reading which will be extremely useful for students. I do question the 'Southeast Asia' of the title, though, when the volume is so heavily biased towards Indonesia, and mainland Southeast Asia is barely represented. Nor is Southeast Asia represented even among the contributors. An edited volume about Southeast Asian culture could surely include some writing by Southeast Asian scholars. Dealing as it does with the colonial framework of museums and postcolonial display, the book does not mention ongoing colonial and postcolonial relationships of museum training, study and seminars in which it is also inevitably placed.

Th.C. van der Meij, *Puspakrema; A Javanese romance from Lombok*.
Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 2002, 230 pp.
[CNWS Publications 110.] ISBN 90.5789.071.2. Price: EUR 22.70
(paperback).

JULIAN MILLIE

Recent years have seen academic priorities evolve away from concentrated attention on literary texts. Against this background, it is indeed satisfying to come across a very complete documentation of a literary product emanating from a cultural empire that no longer exists and is woefully understudied, namely, the cultural umbrella that stretched from Java to so many areas in which Javanese was not the vernacular language.

In this volume, the author presents a Javanese text composed and disseminated in Lombok, an island lying to the east of Java in which the Sasak language is prominently spoken (alongside other vernaculars); Javanese is spoken only by the island's Javanese minority. Nevertheless, Javanese has been a literary language of importance to the Sasak people. In this book, which was the author's doctoral thesis, the Javanese text is presented in transliteration from a manuscript written in Javanese-derived script on *lon-tar*, alongside an elegant English translation. The book includes a wealth of information about the text and the Sasak writing tradition, along with some reflections on the reading process.

The story relates the exploits of the son of the Kingdom of Puspakrema, who is displaced from his home into a second kingdom, but only after being granted supernatural powers by a dervish. In the second kingdom, Sangsyan, he is charged with the task of curing the king's inability to father children, and this quest forms the narrative structure for subsequent amorous and martial adventures. Islamic convention sits lightly upon the text; Allah is invoked only once as having supremacy over worldly events (stanza 197). Furthermore, the appearance of Arabic words is limited to toponyms and to Islamic cosmological icons such as the *lohul mafud* (inscribed tablet). Like so many romances written in Nusantara languages, the text is rich in formulaic descriptions of battles, celebrations and lovemaking.

I agree with a methodological decision made by the author in response to what he aptly describes as the 'philological economics' in which the work is encountered. Van der Meij found no fewer than 193 manuscripts of the work available, and so decided to concentrate his efforts on the presentation of one text. Nevertheless, this decision also has a negative consequence, namely that he is working with a sample of one, and is therefore denied the tool of comparison for identifying the conventions characteristic of the work. Despite this, the volume provides high-quality data for scholars wishing to work this material in that direction.

It was also a wise decision to define two contexts as foundations for the analytical discussion. This acknowledges the plurality of possible approaches for interpretative analysis. The first context examined by the author is the one relating to performance of the work. Unfortunately Van der Meij was able neither to attend a ritual reading of the work nor to contact a ritual specialist with knowledge concerning this tradition, but the discussion provided is nevertheless illuminating. The scenario for the performance of this Javanese work is intriguing; it involves the singing of the Javanese text by a performer, followed by translation into Sasak by his collaborator. Noting that the cultural practice in which this text is involved closely follows the contours of ritual performance, the author makes the important statement that it has 'proved impossible to find information about whether or not literary merit

is attributed to texts or whether or not these texts are considered in terms of aesthetics' (p. 193). I feel this statement could have been taken by the author as an indication that the inquiry should be reoriented away from the cumbersome and restrictive concept of 'literary merit'.

The second analytical context is the characterization of the encounter between a modern reader and the Puspakrema as an 'exotic' encounter. I feel the author has set himself a difficult task here, especially when he makes clear that the text itself is not being considered as a representation of the 'exotic'. I would expect this latter possibility to be a promising one; after all, the romance of Puspakrema does not actually describe Lombok at all, but unfolds purely within an imaginary universe. The exoticism proposed by the author is to be found in the modern reader's encounter with the text. But, we may ask, does exoticism not rely upon strategies of representation by the receptor? That is to say, exoticism is not inherent in a text such as the one under observation here, but becomes manifest in interpretative practice. But the Puspakrema, judging by Van der Meij's work, has not been subjected to any process of 'exoticization'. Accordingly, in this section the author is forced to work with little material, and to hypothesize a purely abstract encounter on the part of a putative 'modern reader'.

These doubts I have about the analytical approach used by the author are perhaps symptomatic of the present moment in the evolution of scholarship. His task is essentially philological – the presentation of an otherwise inaccessible text – and although this task is difficult and requires years of training, it is breathtakingly simple in its methodology. Yet in his analytical section, Van der Meij has attempted to break loose from the simple methodological framework of the philological project, which is a step not often taken by scholars of older Indonesian literatures. In doing so, however, the discussion arguably loses in stability in the face of the overwhelming number of analytical possibilities to choose from. This is a problem faced by many of us whose training was received within educational structures primarily oriented to philological practice.

None of this detracts from the essential value of the book, which lies in the care and thoroughness expended in presenting the text in a high-quality edition. It would be truly beneficial if the author, who has unusual capabilities and experience in the field of Indonesian literary studies, could add to the value of this volume in the future by producing further research on this text, or on the subject of the former Javanese cultural dominance over many regions of Indonesia.

and Indonesian textile exchange. Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2003, viii + 216 pp. ISBN 0.642.54113.2. Price: AUD 62.10 (paperback).

Jasleen Dhamija, *Woven magic; The affinity between Indian and Indonesian textiles*. Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 2002, 108 pp. ISBN 979.523567.2 (paperback).

SANDRA NIESEN

During the past two or three decades, renewed interest in ancient trade relations between India and Indonesia has resulted in several publications examining correspondences between the textiles of the two regions (for instance, Barnes 1991; Gittinger 1982; Guy 1998; Laarhoven 1994). Robyn Maxwell's *Sari to sarong* (2003) and Jasleen Dhamija's *Woven magic* (2002) are two such contributions. Both are catalogues, the former accompanying an exhibition of the same name at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (11 July-6 October 2003), and the latter an exhibition at the Festival of India in Indonesia (October 2002).

Both catalogues are in full colour. This does credit to the numerous textiles depicted. In both cases, visual information is the primary strength of the volume. Catalogue publications are limited in the depth and scholarliness of their approach by the necessity of having to appeal to a broad audience. For general public and scholar alike, however, the colourful depictions of the textiles themselves are worth more than the proverbial thousand words. Most of the textiles depicted in these publications are unusual for their high quality. Through these publications, they have been made available for posterity and future reference. In the case of *Sari to sarong* the exhibition was partly inspired by the desire to focus attention on new museum acquisitions, particularly from the Holmgren and Spertus and Abbott and Abbott collections. *Woven magic* also depicts cloths from exceptional private collections.

The juxtapositions of Indian and Indonesian textiles having similarities in design or technique are compelling demonstrations of the kinds of information transfer that probably took place between the two regions. Dhamija uses textile techniques as the leitmotif to organize her data. In addition to an introduction about the history of relations between the two regions, her chapters focus on printed and painted textiles (Chapter 2), gold supplementary weft (Chapter 3), and embroidery (Chapter 4), with a final chapter on a range of other techniques. From time to time she points to similarities in the ritual roles of the textiles as further evidence of plausible historical links. Her explorations are understandable to a non-specialist readership.

Visual information also serves as the central theme of Maxwell's work. That

Maxwell goes a step further in integrating the social role and cultural meaning of the textiles is exemplified by Chapter 1, 'Maritime silk routes; Introduction to Indian and Indonesian exchanges'. She juxtaposes, in a suggestive way, the textiles of South Sumatra depicting ships, with her text summarizing historical trade relations between India and the Southeast Asian archipelago. The result is a seamless merging of textile iconography, local meaning and symbolism, with historical events that may have inspired them.

In Chapter 2, 'Mandala and Mahabharata; The lasting impact of Indian religious and philosophical imagery', Maxwell uses the historical evidence of esoteric Indian influence in the form of archaeological and social remains as her central theme, arguing that this is found in homologous imagery on textiles from the Hinduized regions of the archipelago, especially Java and Bali. The result thematically pulls together textiles of a variety of techniques, iconography and regions in unusual and thought-provoking juxtaposition. The same is the case in Chapter 3, 'Gold, glory and glamour', in which Maxwell emphasizes the high-status gold-decorated textiles of the empires that thrived on the proceeds of lucrative trade within the archipelago, shaped by Indian and later Islamic concepts.

Chapter 4, 'The fabric of trade', reviews Indian textiles that have become part of the store of sacred and inspirational cloth in the Indonesian archipelago. Chapter 5, 'Creative exchanges', reviews Indonesian cloths that appear to have been inspired by Indian trade cloth.

Maxwell's great strength as a leading scholar of Indonesian textiles is her ability to discern dominant, regional themes in detailed, local information. This ability is very much evident in *Sari to sarong*. The downside of Maxwell's skill at generalization is also evident, however. Generalizations need to be supported by specific referencing and detailed argumentation that are lacking here, perhaps deemed beyond the scope of a catalogue.

Neither author appears to have developed a clear methodology for comparing the textiles from the two regions. This is problematic on two fronts. First, the grounds for the selection of the textiles used to illustrate the theme of inter-regional interaction are undefined, and appear to be unsystematic. The selections are suggestive, evocative, and intuitive – an initial step in the development of explicit comparative strategies that certainly presents tremendous scope for further careful, scholarly attention.

Second, while comparing textile look-alikes (in either technique or iconography) is a powerful methodological tool for positing early inter-regional contact, this strategy requires systematic honing for the purposes of testing and evaluation. This is especially important with respect to the problematic issue of primacy of invention and direction of influence. Both authors use the word 'exchange', indicating a two-way flow of information between the two regions. Given that Indian textile manufacturers responded to the tastes

and needs of textile buyers in Southeast Asia, such an exchange must indeed have taken place. Especially in the context of a two-directional flow in which regional design boundaries most likely became blurred and blended, assigning primacy of design and technique becomes problematic and complex. The issue is made more complex by the ancient influences that made their way to both of these regions from the Far East and also the Arab world. The crucible of design, technical, and other kinds of information flow is in fact much larger than just the two regions being compared. In these volumes India, as 'the source', is given more emphasis than the 'back-and-forth' of the exchange, to such an extent that at times the word 'exchange' becomes contradictory to the points being made. The full title of the fifth chapter of *Sari to sarong* is a case in point: 'Creative exchanges; Indian textiles and Indonesian responses'. Ironically, while there has been more scholarly research on Indonesian textile traditions, and less is known about the textile traditions of India, the emphasis on Indian sources of inspiration generates a sense that the Indonesian textile traditions are derivative, despite claims about the integrity and originality of the Indonesian textile arts. Until the bodies of textile information become more balanced, the potential for skewed understandings of kinds and directions of information flow will be strong. In this regard, both catalogues show that comparative studies between the two regions are still in their infancy.

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SEIJE SLAGER

This reader brings together 84 pieces of political writing from Indonesia, many of which are available in English for the first time. It covers the period since 1965, continuing where Herbert Feith and Lance Castles's classic anthology *Indonesian political thinking 1945-1965* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1970) left off.

Feith and Castles's 1970 text was divided into three parts: readings were organized chronologically in the first section, according to five main 'streams of thought' in the second section, and around several 'areas of controversy' in the last section. Although this produced some overlaps, it worked well for reference purposes.

Bourchier and Hadiz retain a structure roughly equivalent to Feith and Castles's, but unfortunately they do so in a more ambiguous way. Their book is divided into four parts, covering different time periods. The readings in the first two parts discuss the New Order up to 1988, from the perspective of three important ideological currents. In separate chapters we are introduced to the fortunes of organicism (the official discourse of the New Order ruling elite), pluralism (espoused mainly by the secular intelligentsia), and Islam. The third part, on the last decade of the New Order, introduces a fourth current, radicalism, but drops the other three in favour of chapters on issues that were topical in the 1990s, such as human rights and democratization. The last part contains some writings from the 1998 turmoil that marked the end of Soeharto's rule.

The four ideological currents discerned by Bourchier and Hadiz are not wholly convincing. Organicism and pluralism are certainly useful concepts for structuring the discursive landscape of Indonesian politics, but it remains unclear where 'pluralism' ends and 'radicalism' begins – the latter seems to be a hodgepodge of feminists, environmentalists and legal aid activists, but surely these had also been active before 1988?

Moreover, why is so much attention devoted to Islamic thought in the 1970s and 1980s – the first two parts both contain chapters filled with more or less interchangeable laments on the political marginalization of Islam during this period – whereas the remarkable comeback of conservative Islam in the 1990s is all but ignored. Perhaps a more thorough discussion of Islam in the 1990s, when the state patronage enjoyed by some Islamic modernists re-ignited old antagonisms between them and traditionalist Islamic groups, would have made clear that it makes little sense to treat Islam as a unified ideological current.

This neglect of the debates within Islam points to a more serious flaw in

the volume, for which *The New Order state and its discontents* might have been a more appropriate title than *Indonesian politics and society*. All themes and writings covered share an obsession with the role of the state; there is a lot of very narrowly conceived politics and hardly any society in this volume. And sometimes the woolly legalistic arguments that as a consequence make up the bulk of this book can get a little tedious.

Of course no study of Soeharto's Indonesia could neglect the issue of state power, but what has happened here is that some of the New Order's conceptions of what legitimate politics is have unwittingly been incorporated into the framework of the book. The four streams of thought prioritized by Bouchier and Hadiz are only conceivable from the perspective of the New Order state. In fact, they show an eerie resemblance to the political party system created by New Order ideologue Ali Moertopo: organicism corresponds to Golkar, pluralism to the PDI, and Islam to the PPP. Radicalism, then, is a residual category whose common denominator is that it challenged the political boundaries that were set by the state.

Such limitations notwithstanding, we should be grateful to the editors for compiling this book, because there is a lot to learn here. There are good chapters on human rights and on federalism, and the treatment of the early New Order period is excellent. The role of Westernized intellectuals in legitimizing Suharto's military takeover is well documented, and the pieces that document the gradual transformation of the New Order from a makeshift coalition harbouring hopes for democracy and socialism to an unyielding military dictatorship using corporatist mechanisms of control are fascinating to read. As a history of the New Order state, then, this book is a valuable resource. Just don't let its title deceive you.

Howard Dick, Vincent J.H. Houben, J. Thomas Lindblad and Thee Kian Wie (eds), *The emergence of a national economy; An economic history of Indonesia, 1800-2000*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, xvii + 286 pp. ISBN 90.6718.192.7. Price: EUR 25.00 (paperback).

HEATHER SUTHERLAND

This thought-provoking and useful work examines the interaction between globalization, state formation, and economic integration in Indonesia. The risk of teleology is apparent, although Dick is quick to state (p. 7): 'Our focus on (nation-)state and national economy is not intended as the meta-narrative for Indonesian economic history, but as a consistent perspective on a remarkable two centuries'. Although a theme like integration inevitably does tend to

become a meta-narrative, actually the book is all the better for this. After all, it is not intended for those primarily interested in grappling with epistemological issues, but for those seeking a clear overview of economic change, including its political dimensions. The 'consistent perspective' proves its worth, and *The emergence of a national economy* will prove a boon to teachers.

The authors have not restricted their accounts of politics to matters of economic policy, but include lucid surveys of political expansion, the development of infrastructure and of such essential institutions as the bureaucracy. The only other recent major study is Ann Booth's *The Indonesian economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; A history of missed opportunities* (London: Macmillan, 1998), which is an excellent book, but geared to somewhat more experienced students with a basic knowledge of economics. Dick and his co-authors were also able to include the economic crisis of 1997 and the 1998 fall of Soeharto, so the book feels up-to-date.

The seven chapters are divided among the authors, with Dick writing three chapters ('Introduction'; the excellent Chapter 1, 'State, nation and national economy', and Chapter 6, 'Formation of the nation state'), while Houben assumes responsibility for Chapter 2, 'The pre-modern economies of the archipelago', and Chapter 3, 'Java in the nineteenth century; Consolidation of a territorial state'. Thomas Lindblad covers a lot of ground (and water) extremely effectively in his surveys of 'The Outer Islands in the 19th century' (Chapter 4), and 'The late colonial state and economic expansion, 1900-1930s' (Chapter 5). Thee Kian Wie ably brings the account up to 2000 with Chapter 7, 'The Suharto era and after: stability, development and crisis, 1966-2000'. The aim is to provide a clear and comprehensive narrative, but since there are always unresolved issues and debates, most chapters are followed by several short appendices outlining differences of opinion or summarizing complex arguments. This is a clever way of providing accessibility while avoiding the worst excesses of simplification. Chapter 4, for example, concludes with a few pages on 'The Outer Islands in historiography', 'Statistics in 19th-century trade' and 'Debates about Dutch imperialism', while Chapter 6 is followed by 'The multiple exchange rate debacle' and 'Pitfalls of estimating growth rates'.

All authors are experienced teachers, and this is clear from the confidence of their narratives. This is perhaps less apparent in Chapter 2, where Houben relies heavily on work by Reid and Lombard, as well as earlier authors, while avoiding the often contentious, but fundamental, debates inevitably associated with a period with limited sources and contrasting interpretations. Perhaps here historiography might have been usefully integrated into the text, rather than relegated to brief appendices, perhaps leading to a more nuanced view of the influence of the VOC outside Java.

Since *The emergence of a national economy* is essentially a synthesizing survey,

there is little point in summarizing individual conclusions or opinions. Suffice it to say that the work as a whole is balanced in its judgements and a mine of information. Every effort is made, with much success, to include the less well-documented (that is, Indonesian) sectors of the economy, and to weigh social and political costs as well as economic benefits. For example, Lindblad concludes that economic growth during the late colonial period 'reinforced the high degree of segmentation in ethnic, sectoral and regional terms', while Dick joins Booth in seeing some growth during the Old Order (p. 191). Thee notes that the New Order laid the foundations for an integrated state and economy, but that this centralized state was both authoritarian and violent (pp. 240-1).

The relationship between writers and their subjects is always informed by the spirit of the times. J.S. Furnivall wrote two classic works on politics and economics in Indonesia: *Netherlands India: a study of plural economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944) and *Colonial policy and practice; A comparative study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957). He was so struck by J.H. Boeke's condemnation of the 'seven devils' characteristic of the ruthless capitalism of the Dutch East Indies in the 1930s that he quoted it in both books (on pages 452 and 312 respectively).¹ Furnivall adds: 'In the first half of the nineteenth century economists eulogised economic man, in the last half they said he was a myth. Unfortunately they were mistaken. When cast out of Europe he found refuge in the tropics, and now we see him returning with seven devils worse than himself. These are the devils which devastated the tropics under the rule of *laissez-faire* and which it is the object of modern colonial policy to exorcise' (*Colonial policy*, p. 312). How these devils will conduct themselves in the post-Soeharto period remains to be seen.

Few now would share Furnivall's optimism about the possibility or desirability of having officials manage an economy. Dick and his fellow writers place their faith in broader historical processes rather than specific government action. Nonetheless they also express a wish that good governance might benefit the long-suffering people of Indonesia, but by allowing markets to work positively. On p. 245 they conclude: 'At the beginning of the 21st [century] there is new hope, mixed with fear and uncertainty. The fear that the *nation* itself may fragment is probably exaggerated. [...] The problem is more the evolution of the *state* and civil society, and here world history is on the side of hope.'

¹ Boeke wrote: 'There is materialism, rationalism, individualism, and a concentration on economic ends far more complete and absolute than in homogenous western lands, a total absorption in the exchange and market; a capitalist structure with the business concern as subject, far more typical of capitalism than one can imagine in the so-called "capitalist" countries, which have grown up slowly out of the past and are still bound to it by a hundred roots'. Furnivall is unclear on the exact source of this quotation.

Roderich Ptak, *China, the Portuguese and the Nanyang; Oceans and routes, regions and trade (c. 1000-1600)*. Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2004, ix + 304 pp. [Variorum Collected Studies Series 777.] ISBN 0.86078.923.3. Price: GBP 60.00 (hardback).

HEATHER SUTHERLAND

This is the third volume of essays by Roderich Ptak to be collected and published in Ashgate's Variorum Collected Studies Series of anthologized reprints. The others were *China and the Asian seas* (1998) and *China's seaborne trade with South and Southeast Asia* (1999). Ptak himself (on p. vii of the work reviewed here) describes the first two books as containing articles on 'Zheng He's voyages, commodity flows, smuggling and banditry along the coasts of southeastern China, Ming ethnographical accounts of maritime Asia, and Chinese views of the other'. Although the new volume does touch on similar themes, there are differences in emphasis in time and space. Both earlier and later periods are covered, while the geographical focus is less on the Indian Ocean and more on the South China Sea and the Sulu Zone. As is usual with the Variorum series, the original pagination and layout are retained; eleven pieces are republished here.

Part A of the book is entitled 'Structural issues and trade', and consists of four articles. The first two ('Ming maritime trade to Southeast Asia, 1368-1567', 34 pages, and 'Sino-Portuguese relations circa 1513/14-1550s', 18 pages) are surveys that also differentiate between interest groups and regions. As always with Ptak they are learned and interesting, although the density of information could make them difficult for a newcomer to the field. The third piece, 'China's medieval *fanfang* – a model for Macau under the Ming?' (24 pages), considers the extent to which early Macau could be seen in terms of the traditional 'foreign quarter' of a Chinese city. 'Camphor in East and Southeast Asian trade, c. 1500; A synthesis of Portuguese and Asian sources' (24 pages) is a valuable commodity study, comparable to Ptak's earlier essays on sandalwood, coral, tortoiseshell, horses, ebony and cloves, all of which were reprinted in the 1999 collection. These combine economic, ecological, social and linguistic data, and their unravellings of individual trade-circuits are extremely helpful in tracing complex connections.

In Part B, 'The perception of space and sailing routes', the emphasis lies on geography. The first essay republishes a section from Angela Schottenhammer's edited book on *The Emporium of the world; Maritime Quanzhou, 1000-1400* (Leiden: Brill, 2001). 'Quanzhou: at the northern edge of a Southeast Asian "Mediterranean"' (32 pages) attempts to locate patterns in Song and Yuan geographical classifications. Ptak concludes that 'we are left with ambiguous impressions', so readers looking for unequivocal con-

clusions should be warned. The following piece, 'Sudostasiens Meere nach chinesischen Quellen (Song und Yuan)' (25 pages), shows how perceptions of space depended on safe sailing routes. Ptak's work on trading routes is well established, and is continued here in the third article in this section: 'Jottings on Chinese sailing routes to Southeast Asia, especially on the eastern route in Ming times' (24 pages), which includes a helpful map.

The final part of the collection, 'Islands and regions', contains work on Chinese perceptions and knowledge of four specific areas: the Paracell and Spratley Islands (22 pages), Hainan (24 pages), Barus (28 pages) and Kerala (13 pages). Since scholars who have the skills and motivation to tackle these sources are few and far between, anyone interested in the early history of these regions will make grateful use of Ptak's data.

This is a collection for the specialist researcher rather than for the student. Although Ptak makes every effort to summarize his material, it is not always easy going. The index is very helpful, and the diagram comparing the broad movements of trade in Fujian and Guangdong (1368-1567) is both courageous and enlightening. However, too few maps are provided (and no illustrations). The articles are all of recent origin (between 1997 and 2001), but are not always easily accessible, as places of publication include Paris, Wiesbaden, New Delhi, Leiden and Lisbon. The depth of knowledge and range of interest displayed is impressive; it is no doubt unfair to want more, but an accessible synthesis by Ptak (with many maps!) of early China's knowledge of its maritime world would be very welcome indeed. Roderich Ptak is one of the few scholars who could even contemplate such a daunting task.

Stephen C. Headley, *Durga's Mosque; Cosmology, conversion and community in Central Javanese Islam*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004, 605 pp. ISBN 981.230242.5. Price: USD 50.00 (hardback).

ROBERT WESSING

'What,' Stephen C. Headley asks in his introduction, 'is in the *umma*'? This question runs through the fifteen chapters of this exploration of the Islamization of the Krendawahana-Kaliasa area of Central Java. The reader is taken on a wide-ranging journey that in the first three chapters deals with the sociology of village life, the founding of communities, and the cult of female divinities (including the rice goddess, the goddess of the Indian Ocean and, of course, Durga) and in Chapter 4 looks at changes brought about by the switch from the old apinage system to sharecropping after 1909. The second

part of the book, Chapters 5 and 6, reconstructs the religious history of the Kaliasa area by looking at two kinds of lineages, the Javanese *trah* and the Islamic lineages that have their own particular ties with Kaliasa. The weakening of the royal apauage system brought about by land reform allowed a restructuring of the religious landscape of the area by both Islamic and aristocratic lineages. The author looks at how Muslim lineages encompass the area through a network of mosques and Islamic schools. Part Three, Chapters 7 through 11, looks at this religious landscape through the rituals and prayers offered at Durga's shrine in Krendawahana and in the mosque at Kaliasa, and through an analysis of the integration of Muslim and Javanese village cults. Chapter 7 details the Indian materials that are the basis for the cult of Durga in Java. This is continued with a discussion of the sacrifice of a buffalo in Durga's forest in Chapter 8, which explores the links between the Mahabarata, the tale of Durga's defeat of the demon buffalo, and Durga's son, Kala. Chapter 9 examines the Islamic and Javanese mantras that are part of the sacrifice, noting the difference in scope between the formulae used to address local deities (that is, tutelary spirits), and Islamic prayers that are not tied to a particular locality. This is continued in Chapter 10, which explores Islamic cosmographies and Javanese cosmogonies. Chapter 11 looks at the development of *salat*, the prayers said in the mosque. *Salat* is seen as a marker that distinguishes the Muslim from the unbeliever, and the sameness of these public prayers is a way for the local mosque community (*jemaah*) to create the illusion of being at one with the Muslim world. If the cosmographies discussed earlier illustrate the development of an Islamic space, the five daily prayers structure time.

The final part of the book, Chapters 12 through 15, considers cosmology and community in Central Java on the basis of post-1998 ethnography. Chapter 12 looks at the effect of the recent economic and political crisis on the religious landscape of Central Java, showing how *jihad* (struggle) has permitted a reinterpretation of Islam in Java as an image of society even though few Javanese see *jihad* as representative of Islam. Chapters 13 and 14 look at social healing rituals in and for the city of Solo after the chaos following the fall of ex-president Soeharto. Headley sees in these rituals an application of rural values in an urban setting. Chapter 15, finally, asks how Islam has appropriated modernity through an accommodation with an individualism that would previously have been impossible in holistic rural Java, but was promoted by changes that came with colonial policy and post-independence development. Even so, this individualism continues to be limited by Javanese custom (*adat*) as the emphasis is once more on the values that allow the coexistence of different ethnic and religious groups.

It is impossible within the scope of a brief review to fully discuss the fascinating data and challenging ideas presented here. I limit myself to a few

observations. First, I wonder how representative of rural Java the villages under discussion are, as they seem to be part of the Surakarta courts' sphere of authority, especially since the author writes that Krendawahana and the Kaliasa area have become 'sub-urban' (p. 204) or even urban neighbourhoods (p. 474). Might an analysis of more truly rural villages have presented a different picture?

Second, the author at times goes into considerable detail about matters that are afterwards not touched upon again. An example is the matter of spirit siblings as a link between the person and the cosmos, and the alleged incest committed by the rice goddess Sri and her brother Sadana. Since Sri and Sedana do not actually marry, at least in the versions of the myth discussed by Rassers and Hidding, there can be no question of incest. Indeed they are said to separate, which is appropriate given a preference for uxori-local post-marital residence. The rape of Sri/Tiksnawati by her *foster* father (p. 115) is not strictly a matter of incest either. Rather, it is a generationally inappropriate relationship and thus a disorderly act. Elsewhere the relationship is thwarted by the goddess's premature death.

In his discussion of lineages, the author emphasizes the *trah* and Muslim networks, the latter often used for trade as well as the dissemination of religion. Although kinship in Java is said to be cognatic, the stress here is on male-oriented structures: *trah* have a patrilineal tinge (p. 71) and the Islamic networks are focused on venerated male religious teachers (p. 204). Furthermore, both are closely allied with the Javanese aristocracy (p. 205). While bilaterality is recognized, the female aspect, important as an integrative focus in loosely integrated local communities (pp. 82, 88, 92), is hardly dealt with, perhaps because female lines are not specified as such in Javanese kinship. Yet, a preference for uxori-local post-marital residence can lead to *de facto* local matrilineages: as the Javanese say, girls like to remain close to their mothers. However, the idea of 'close' is now being redefined as a result of the popularity of motor scooters, though this has not generally released people from local ties (p. 60). Thus, *trah* can be made up of scattered males (p. 227) while 'locally' we find undefined but structurally embedded lines of women. The only descent line in a village that kept its male children close by is that of the founder, from which the village leadership used to be drawn.

Lastly there is the difficult question of the definition of the *umma* or *umat* in Java. It is broader than the *jemaah*, the group that worships at the local mosque (p. 518): the *umat* encompasses all Muslims, everywhere. Yet there are considerable differences between Muslims, even in Java (p. 446). The question is, therefore, how to define the *umat* other than very generally as people who adhere to the Koran and, ideally, fulfil the requirements of the Islamic faith (p. 475). While the local congregation is part of the *umat*, it is so in terms of its own local understanding of the faith and this can vary

significantly between different communities and over time. Rather than being fixed entities, communities are in continual flux as the outcome of the interactions of their members. Thus, while Islam as a religion defines the generalized *umat*, local practice specifies the *jemaah* and not the local *umat* (p. 477). Clearly, then, we cannot generalize about the Javanese, either in terms of Islam or in terms of *adat* (custom), which varies from locality to locality as well. Urban life, away from the obligations inherent in village life, makes individualism easier, as the author points out. Yet there are limits to this freedom as many, if not most, reaffirm their ties to the village, the ancestors, and the local tutelary spirit each year during the holidays.

One final comment about the book itself, which is marred by numerous errors of spelling (including authors' names) and grammar. References mentioned in the text also did not always make it into the bibliography, something that a bit of care on the part of the publisher could have prevented. However, these doubts and quibbles aside, the analysis presented here is a challenging one and raises questions that will long be debated. For this Dr Headley is to be congratulated.

BY WILLIAM PESEK- The South China Sea dispute is a complicated and multifaceted saga. It hardly helps that the history of distant, largely uninhabited places with names like the Paracels, Spratleys and Scarborough Shoal differs from nation to nation. The intensifying proxy war being waged in the South China Sea can be boiled down to one number: five. That's how many trillions of dollars of global trade flow annually through waters deep with oil, natural gas, hydrocarbon and fish stocks. Whoever controls these shipping lanes rules this Asian Century. Toss national pride and ambition into the mix and you have the makings of a perfect geopolitical storm.

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Sa 1937 Sa, Shiwu è-@â£«æ|. æMing Chenghua Jiajing jian Fujian shibo si yizhi Fuzhou kaoæ æZæ^âE-â%oé- é-“ç!â»°â,è^¶â,ç\$»ç½@ç!â·žè€f (An Evidential Study of Fujian Maritime Trade Office Relocating in Fuzhou during the Chenghua and Jiajing Reigns in the Ming Dynasty).