Book Reviews

- Matthew Amster, Jérôme Rousseau, *Kayan religion; Ritual life and religious reform in Central Borneo*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1998, 352 pp. [VKI 180.]
- Atsushi Ota, Johan Talens, *Een feodale samenleving in koloniaal vaarwater; Staatsvorming, koloniale expansie en economische onderontwikkeling in Banten, West-Java, 1600-1750*. Hilversum: Verloren, 1999, 253 pp.
- Wanda Avé, Johannes Salilah, *Traditional medicine among the Ngaju Dayak in Central Kalimantan; The 1935 writings of a former Ngaju Dayak Priest*, edited and translated by A.H. Klokke. Phillips, Maine: Borneo Research Council, 1998, xxi + 314 pp. [Borneo Research Council Monograph 3.]
- Peter Boomgaard, Sandra Pannell, *Old world places, new world problems; Exploring issues of resource management in eastern Indonesia*. Canberra: Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University, 1998, xiv + 387 pp., Franz von Benda-Beckmann (eds.)
- H.J.M. Claessen, Geoffrey M. White, *Chiefs today; Traditional Pacific leadership and the postcolonial state*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997, xiv + 343 pp., Lamont Lindstrom (eds.)
- H.J.M. Claessen, Judith Huntsman, *Tokelau; A historical ethnography*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996, xii + 355 pp., Antony Hooper (eds.)
- Hans Gooszen, Gavin W. Jones, *Indonesia assessment; Population and human resources*. Canberra: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1997, 73 pp., Terence Hull (eds.)
- Rens Heringa, John Guy, *Woven cargoes; Indian textiles in the East*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1998, 192 pp., with 241 illustrations (145 in colour).
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- H.M.J. Maier, David T. Hill, *Beyond the horizon; Short stories from contemporary Indonesia*. Clayton, Victoria: Monash Asia Institute, 1998, xxxviii + 201 pp.
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- Remco Raben, Paul van Beckum, *Adoe Den Haag; Getuigissen uit Indisch Den Haag*. Den Haag: SeaPress, 1998, 200 pp.
- Cornelia M.J. van der Sluys, Colin Nicholas, *Pathway to dependence; Commodity relations and*

- the dissolution of Semai society. Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994, vii + 130 pp. [Monash Papers on Southeast Asia 33.]
- David Stuart-Fox, Herman C. Kemp, *Bibliographies on Southeast Asia*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1998, xvii + 1128 pp.
 - Sikko Visscher, Lynn Pan, *The encyclopedia of the Chinese overseas*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999, 399 pp.
 - Sikko Visscher, Jurgen Rudolph, *Reconstructing identities; A social history of the Babas in Singapore*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998, 507 pp.
 - Edwin Wieringa, Perry Moree, *Met vriend die God geleide; Het Nederlands-Aziatisch postvervoer ten tijde van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1998, 287 pp.
 - Edwin Wieringa, Monique Zaini-Lajoubert, *Limage de la femme dans les littératures modernes indonésienne et malaise*. Paris: Association Archipel, 1994, ix + 221 pp. [Cahiers d'Archipel 24.]
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Book Reviews

Jérôme Rousseau, *Kayan religion; Ritual life and religious reform in Central Borneo*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1998, 352 pp. [VKI 180.] ISBN 90.6718.132.3. Price: NLG 60.

MATTHEW AMSTER

Kayan religion presents an in-depth study of two closely related religious systems – one described as 'traditional', and the other a 'reform' movement – which coexisted in a single Kayan community in the Baluy area of Sarawak in the early 1970s. Based on anthropological field research conducted between 1970 and 1974, this work looks at the emergence of a reform-oriented religious movement known as *adat Bungan*. The *Bungan* movement first appeared among the Kayan around 1950, and has since undergone a number of transformations.

The Kayan, at the time of Rousseau's study, were swidden agriculturists who lived in longhouses along the interior rivers of Sarawak and had a well-defined system of social stratification. In the early stages of the *Bungan* movement, which was spearheaded by commoners, the movement de-emphasized traditional notions of social class and attempted to provide a more egalitarian approach to ritual life in what was a highly stratified society. However, as the movement began to be embraced by upper class Kayan, it soon re-incorporated many of the social distinctions that it originally sought to transcend. In other ways the reforms offered by *adat Bungan* prevailed, with the general effect of simplifying the more onerous, expensive, and complex rituals and beliefs of *adat Dipuy* – the term Rousseau uses to refer to the 'traditional' Kayan religion. The *adat Bungan* movement, as meticulously illustrated in this study, did not replace *adat Dipuy*, but rather both systems coexisted, allowing people to pick and choose between them.

The main strength of this book is that Rousseau documents both *adat Bungan* and *adat Dipuy* and, for this reason alone, it is essential reading for anyone interested in indigenous religious systems, religious change, or the ethnography of Borneo. It stands as a clear case study of how forces of continuity and change intermingle and can result in religious innovation. While Rousseau makes little attempt to relate this material to a broader anthropological literature, or to use it to speculate about psychological or sociological motivations, readers are given ample details with which to draw conclusions

of their own. Indeed, the author claims a 'reticence to provide explanations' (p. 4) and asserts that this work is intended solely as ethnographic description. Nonetheless, *Kayan religion* delivers a number of valuable theoretical insights and illustrates how two closely related systems of belief and ritual activity can emerge in a single community as a result of sociocultural change.

The first part of the book provides an overview of Kayan beliefs regarding omens, taboos, dreams, sorcery, and magic, and a discussion of how religious beliefs relate to social stratification, notions of causality, and head-hunting (Chapter 3). Rousseau then offers an overview of Kayan cosmology and belief in spirits (Chapter 4) and the role of ritual specialists (Chapter 5). The two longest and most in-depth chapters (6 and 9) are devoted respectively to the rituals of the annual cycle (focused on the agricultural system) and the life cycle (pregnancy, birth, marriage, death, and mourning). The remaining ethnographic chapters focus on the *dayong* ritual (Chapter 7), an 'all-purpose propitiatory and purificatory ritual carried out on behalf of a domestic unit' (p. 215), and healing and protective rituals (Chapter 8). These core chapters succeed in presenting a complete inventory of Kayan ritual life, while also making comparisons between *adat Bungan* and *adat Dipuy* throughout.

This book is a welcome and useful resource, covering all the major ritual structures of Kayan religion from a particular place and time. The material is coherently organized, allowing the reader to grasp the internal logic of Kayan ritual and belief, as well as serving as an authoritative source for those interested in any particular aspect of Kayan religion. To his credit, Rousseau does not treat Kayan religion as either uniform or stable, and considers how it continued to undergo profound changes even as it was being observed. Rousseau offers only a brief consideration of the effect Christian missionaries had in the region, and how this may relate to the emergence of the Bungan movement; it may be that the contestations embodied in Kayan religion in the early 1970s were even more diverse and complex than this account suggests.

While *Kayan religion* does not attempt to break new theoretical ground, it should prove to be an invaluable source of data to Borneo researchers and students of religious change in years to come. It offers substantial insight into processes of religious change, innovation, and reform, and constitutes a solid contribution to the ethnography of Borneo, where there have been remarkably few studies of either traditional religious systems or religious change.

Johan Talens, *Een feodale samenleving in koloniaal vaarwater; Staatsvorming, koloniale expansie en economische onderontwikkeling in Banten, West-Java, 1600-1750*. Hilversum: Verloren, 1999, 253 pp. ISBN 90.6550.067.7. Price: NLG 57.30.

ATSUSHI OTA

This book is a published version of the author's PhD thesis of the same title, defended at Utrecht University in 1997. This research is noteworthy because it is the first attempt to analyse the Banten sultanate beyond 1682, the year in which the VOC obtained the monopoly of trade in the sultanate. Previous studies have generally regarded 1682 as a watershed in Banten history, and have stated that Banten went into a complete decline after this date. Through a detailed examination of the VOC sources, Talens attempts to reinterpret the meaning of the events of 1682 for Banten. Although he does not explain why he chooses the year 1600 as a starting point for his analysis, in all likelihood it is because intensive Dutch contact with the sultanate began around this date. The end point of 1750, according to Talens, was chosen because this was when a great rebellion broke out against the political regime of the sultanate, and against the VOC.

In Chapter 1, Talens discusses various views and debates on the history of Banten, the character of Southeast Asian states, and the definition of feudalism. He adapts Michael Mann's method for the analysis of state formation in Banten, and analyses economic, military, ideological, and political systems on this basis. Chapter 2 investigates the economic sphere: environment, land use, industry, population, trade, and court income. High previous estimates of the population of Banten (100,000-200,000) are rejected; Talens argues that its real size was no larger than 12,000-15,000. Analysis of land utilization and the system of taxes on international and domestic trade gives him ammunition with which to argue that Banten society was 'feudal'. The sultan and the élite levied taxes on trade, and exploited the surplus of agricultural products such as pepper and sugar, while the poll tax deprived peasants of their freedom of movement.

Chapter 3 examines the military power of the sultanate, which suffered from fragmentation between the sultan, his relatives, and his officials, and was also much less organized, and consequently less effective, than the VOC force. After 1682, the VOC supported not only the military, but also the economic position of the Banten court by helping it to control trade with its overseas territories, Lampung in South Sumatra and Landak in West Kalimantan. Thanks to the assistance of the VOC, the authority of the court grew rather than waned after submission to the Dutch.

In Chapter 4, the role of Islam as a court ideology is examined. Islam in

Banten, Talens concludes, functioned not as an emancipatory and egalitarian force, but as a legitimization of the existing political system. The Shari'a did not play an important role, and veneration of the sultan remained highly significant. Contact with the Arab world was maintained after 1682, and the *sharif* family of Arab origin, backed by the VOC, increased its power in court circles. However, the support of the VOC, an explicitly non-Islamic power, undermined the legitimacy of the court, and led ultimately to the revolt of 1750-52.

The main theme of Chapter 5 is the balance of political power in the sultanate. Having discussed theories of 'Oriental despotism', Talens concludes that the sultans of Banten were too weak to be described as despots. Both before and after 1682, the formation of a strong centralized state was precluded by the inability of the court to intervene effectively in local affairs. Since the influence of the VOC was also limited, the power balance did not change significantly after the Dutch takeover.

In Chapter 6, Talens departs from Mann's model to give additional interpretations of the course of socio-economic development in Banten. Because there was plenty of tillable land, he argues, the increase in cash crop exports did not bring about a profound social change, since peasants could produce both pepper and subsistence crops concurrently. Given the limited dimensions of the internal market, the role of merchants was restricted. A monetary economy, now based on VOC currency, nevertheless continued to exist, which tells against the ideas of Anthony Reid. Talens concludes that VOC policy did not bring great changes in the feudal system, and that 1682 was not a decisive moment in the socio-economic history of Banten.

The greatest asset of this research is that its author has undertaken a detailed examination of the contemporary sources. His refutation of previous estimates of the population of the capital is therefore entirely convincing, and he is able to give lively and fascinating descriptions of developments such as the destabilizing political interventions embarked upon, despite the disapproval of his superiors, by the VOC envoy dispatched to Banten in 1733. His analysis is faithful to the historical sources, and for the first time he goes beyond the 1682 limit where past researchers, such as Guillot, Kathirithamby-Wells, and Colombijn, left off. However, it is regrettable that despite his extensive knowledge of archival material, Talens draws two important conclusions which are not supported by empirical data, and indeed which are contradicted by the data which he presents himself: The first of these conclusions is his exaggerated emphasis on continuity. Talens argues, for example, that 'the power balance in the sultanate did not undergo any significant change after 1682' (p. 203), and that 'the policy of the VOC did not bring great changes in the feudal system' (p. 234). But while other authors may well have overestimated such changes, some small but significant new developments

are evident from his own descriptions, and tracing these might perhaps have been more fruitful than placing such consistent stress on invariability.

The second dubious point is Talen's characterization of Banten society as 'feudal'. He explains that 'peasants were forced to hand over a part of their economic surplus to members of the élite', and that 'peasants on whom the poll tax was imposed, just like praedial serfs in Europe, had restricted freedom of movement, which may be interpreted as a form of territorial bondage' (p. 83). But while it is true that the obligation to deliver produce was officially regulated by charters issued by the sultan, the existence of a regulation and its execution are two very different things. According to a report by a Dutch merchant who visited the Banten dependencies in Lampung in 1682, the weakness of the court meant that peasants could delay their deliveries or even evade the sultan's pepper monopoly (*Dagh-Register* 1682, II:1049-58). In the case of the poll tax, likewise, it remains to be demonstrated that this was actually imposed, and that it bound the peasants to a particular plot of soil.

Talens defines feudalism, after Mark Bloch, as 'a social system made up of the relations between the élite and a great number of peasants', and emphasizes that the role of merchants was limited, implying that a key 'feudal' characteristic of this society was the absence of a 'middle class'. His analysis, however, focuses principally on those 'political merchants' who maintained special relationships with the court; if more attention had been paid to another type of merchant, a different picture would have emerged. The autobiography of one pepper trader in eighteenth-century Lampung, for instance, portrays a level of speculative and entrepreneurial behaviour which is hard to fit into the framework of a 'feudal society', and shows that wealth could be translated into political influence, as well as vice versa (G.W.J. Drewes, 1961, *De biografie van een Minangkabausen peperhandelaar in de Lampongs*, VKI 36).

In conclusion, this book contributes a great deal to the study of Banten history by shedding light on a neglected period, and providing much detailed descriptive information. The conclusion that Banten was an unchangingly 'feudal' society during this period, however, is not supported by the facts presented by the author himself.

A.H. Klokke (ed. and transl.), *Traditional medicine among the Ngaju Dayak in Central Kalimantan; The 1935 writings of a former Ngaju Dayak Priest*. Phillips, Maine: Borneo Research Council, 1998, xxi + 314 pp. [Borneo Research Council Monograph 3.] ISBN 0.9629568. 7.2. Price: USD 20.

WANDA AVÉ

This monograph contains an extensive list of the traditional medical practices of the Ngaju Dayak, as compiled in the 1930s by Johannes Salilah, one of the foremost functionaries of the Kaharingan religion and an expert in diverse aspects of Ngaju Dayak culture. Salilah was also a source of information for Ngaju Dayak specialists such as Schärer, Baier, and Schiller. The text, in Ngaju Dayak, has been provided with an English translation by a Dutch doctor with many years of experience in the Ngaju area and an excellent knowledge of Ngaju language and culture. The preface is authored by an American anthropologist, Anne Schiller, who gives a clear account of the background and history of the Ngaju religion, known as Kaharingan. An appendix identifies the plants and animals mentioned in the text, and is followed by a bibliography.

Comparisons with the traditional medical practices of other Indonesian peoples yield interesting analogies. The Ngaju, for instance, rub ginger into all joints of the body (p. 13), and among the Ayawasi of the Bird's Head in New Guinea, I found the same practice in connection with a belief that joints are a source of life force. 'Pain in the groin', among the Ngaju, is treated with the heated haft of an axe – literally, 'the handle of an axe-stone' (J.B. Avé, personal communication), which is subsequently thrown away at some distance from the patient (p. 23). But with what is the haft of an axe associated, and why must it first be warmed? Does turmeric (*Curcuma domestica*), used for the treatment of 'yellow skin' (p. 35), have particular symbolic associations, and is this a reference to jaundice? The use of *sawang* (*Cordyline fruticosa*) leaves (p. 47) is certainly symbolic, and has parallels in many other parts of Indonesia. Salilah describes a treatment for leprosy which involves the patient crawling into the stomach of a slaughtered buffalo (p. 49); again, one wonders whether this practice does not have identifiable symbolic origins.

At one point (p. 91) the text mentions a rice pounder made from the wood of the *balawan* tree, identified in Klokke's appendix as *Gluta renghas*. This, however, causes skin irritation, and the *balawan* mentioned by Salilah is more likely to have been *Vitex altissima*. A medicinal use (p. 115) is specified for flowers of the *jajangkit* tree, which according to Klokke is a species of *Ficus*; trees of this genus, however, have no recognizable flowers.

Many of the botanical names provided by Klokke, both in the appendix and in the footnotes at the end of each chapter, are obsolete, and a large num-

ber of the classifications are erroneous. Some examples follow. Judging by the its characteristics and applications, *Jambu* (p. 15), identified as *Eugenia aquea*, should be *Psidium guajava*. *Pasak bumi* (p. 25) is *Eurycoma longifolia*. *Kangkawang* (p. 37), better known as *tengkawang* or *tangkawang* (*teng* or *tang* means 'fruit'), refers to a number of *Shorea* species. *Baloh asip* (p. 56) is *Lagenaria siceraria* (Indonesian: *labu air*), and not *Cucurbita moschata* (Indonesian: *labu merah*). *Rais* is classified as *Borassus flabellifer*, a palm which, to my knowledge, does not occur on Borneo. *Jawau* is cassava (*Manihot esculenta*), not *Ipomoea batatas*. The *bengkel* tree is now known as *Neonauclea*, and *Arenga saccharifera* has become *Arenga pinnata*. *Kujang* (Indonesian: *keladi*) is *Colocasia esculenta*. *Sahang rubit* (Indonesian: *cabai rawit*) is *Capsicum frutescens*. *Mangkahai* (*Artocarpus integer*; Indonesian: *cempedak*) has nothing to do with the fruit of the *tungkoi*. The *dayuhan*, *paken*, and *tungkoi* are all species of durian (*Durio sp.*). *Rahong* is the red durian (*Durio dulcis*). The *handipe panganen* (pp. 76-7, 121), moving on to fauna, is no *Boa constrictor* (a snake found only in South America), but a species of python. These are only a few of the incorrect names and identifications. The botanical and zoological data here, in fact, are in need of complete revision. The best procedure would be to include the Indonesian as well as the scientific name of every plant and animal.

It was an extremely good idea to publish Salilah's work on the traditional medical practices of the Ngaju Dayak. This work not only shows how much the Ngaju know about flora and fauna, medicine, and their own culture, but also indicates how much natural and cultural wealth has been destroyed over the last decades, and continues to be destroyed, as a result of the massive and merciless logging operations which have robbed Borneo of the greater part of its rich forests. We can thank Klokke, then, for making Salilah's text accessible, and particularly for publishing it in its original form as well as in translation, so that the reader can verify any ambiguous details.

Sandra Pannell and Franz von Benda-Beckmann (eds), *Old World places, New World problems; Exploring issues of resource management in eastern Indonesia*. Canberra: Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University, 1998, xiv + 387 pp. ISBN 0.86740.506.6. Price: AUD 30.

PETER BOOMGAARD

The title of this edited volume is a bit misleading. It is not about Eurasia, often called the Old World, versus the Americas (the New World). The message the title attempts to convey is that the articles in this volume deal with

a region with a long history, a region that is now being confronted with 'modern' problems, just like the rest of Indonesia. Neither does the book cover the whole of eastern Indonesia. It is restricted to the Indonesian province of the Moluccas (Maluku). It is, indeed, mostly a book about resource management, although it contains two articles mainly concerned with other matters, oddly enough the two articles authored (or co-authored) by the editors of this volume.

However that may be, it is a good thing that we now have a volume dedicated to the problems of resource management in the Moluccas, past and present. This is an area of Indonesia that is quite different from the big islands. It is sparsely populated, it is largely covered by primary and secondary forests, and hunting, gathering, and slash-and-burn agriculture are still to be found here. Arboriculture is an important feature of local agriculture. For its staple food, the area depends partly on sago, while rice is less important than elsewhere in the Archipelago. In many places fish is one of the main elements of the diet.

These typical features are neatly reflected by many of the contributions. There is an entire article dedicated to sago (Arie Brouwer), while two contributions are mainly or partly concerned with the exploitation of marine resources (Sandra Pannell, Hermien Soselisa). There are four articles dealing with trees and tree crops, namely the contribution of Kyle Latinis and Ken Stark on prehistoric arboriculture, that by Vincent Loth on nutmeg and mace, William Clarence-Smith's article on cocoa, and the one by Nils Buband on timber estates. There are two articles with a somewhat encyclopaedic character, one by Roy Ellen and the other one by Xenia Wolff and Margaret Florey, that run the whole gamut of hunting and gathering, slash-and-burn agriculture and permanent agriculture, arboriculture included.

The emphasis of most articles is on change, and the general impression one gets from this collection is that many of these changes are not improvements. Forest cover is rapidly disappearing, people have to work harder to meet the demands of church and state, and a heavy reliance on sago and cassava has taken the place (locally?) of a more varied diet. As the contributions to this book had been sent off to the publishers before the effects of the crisis of 1997-98 made themselves felt, one can imagine how the authors of this collection would have judged the situation in the Moluccas at the moment their book was published (late 1998). It is a pity that no figures are published to support this pessimism, and one wonders whether it is entirely justified. In this respect one would also like to see more evidence for one of the more intriguing arguments of the article by Wolff and Florey, namely that the consumption of rice used to be more important (when?), whereas that of sago and cassava has increased. This runs counter to the notion of 'rizification' of eastern Indonesia.

There are large differences in quality and quantity between the contributions, and the editors were apparently not put out by contributions of over 50 pages, of which there are two. There is something to be said for such a 'liberal' attitude. More difficult to defend are the absence of an index, and the presence of a considerable number of printing errors. Nevertheless we can be grateful for the information presented here, even if we will not always like the jargon in which it is wrapped or the conclusions drawn from it.

Geoffrey M. White and Lamont Lindstrom (eds), *Chiefs today: Traditional Pacific leadership and the postcolonial state*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997, xiv + 343 pp. ISBN 0.8047.2851.8. Price: USD 18.95 (paperback).

H.J.M. CLAESSEN

Chiefs today is a collection of articles on the situation of traditional chiefs in modern Pacific states. Most of the island societies are included in this book; missing, however, are the Hawai'i islands, and the islands of French Polynesia. In terms of comparative analysis this is to be regretted, since these two regions might have given some counterweight to the views presented. The book opens with an introductory chapter by the editors which, in my opinion, is not the most felicitous one. It contains some arbitrary references to the present situation of African chiefs which should either have been accompanied by more details, or left out. A serious shortcoming is, that in a book on chiefs today, no effort is made to elaborate on the background of the traditional chiefs. Without knowledge of their position in the past, it is difficult to assess the position of the 'modern' chiefs in the regional chapters. Why, for instance, did the authors not use the detailed model of traditional chiefship developed by Nicholas Thomas (*Marquesan societies*, 1990, pp. 28-33)? The contributors correctly emphasize that traditional leaders were in many cases 'upgraded' by colonialists and missionaries, who looked for 'powerful leaders' for purposes of trade, assistance, or protection. As there was a wide variety of political leaders in the Pacific islands, a good definition of a 'chief' would have been welcome, if only to distinguish chiefs from bigmen as was done by Sahlins (1963). Here, however, this distinction is discarded as no longer valid, and as a consequence the advocated definition of 'chief' has become meaningless: 'a political leader who draws his authority and influence from a discourse of local tradition' (p. 10). No reference is made to Nicholas Thomas, to R. Carneiro (1981, *The chieftdom; Precursor of the state*, 1981), or to T. Earle (ed., *Chieftdoms; power, economy and ideology*). With the help

of these more general approaches, it would have been possible to characterize present-day Pacific political leaders better. The political scientist Peter Larmour wrote the final chapter, an evaluation of the book. He counterposes 'the chief' to 'the state', and admits that this is a contentious comparison, for the chief is 'a person', whereas the state is an organization that claims impersonality (p. 277). So why not compare chieftdom and state, or chiefs with state functionaries? The chapter contains a survey of types of power, and Larmour tries to indicate which types of power are exercised by chiefs. In his opinion neither chiefs nor state governments ever succeeded in fulfilling the expectations of their people.

The ethnographic chapters present interesting descriptions and observations. It is tempting to present these in detail, but I am obliged to limit myself to short remarks. Regarding Chapter 2, on Western Samoa, I wonder if the traditional chiefs here were really so powerful as Macpherson suggests; his own chapter contains data contradicting this. In Chapter 3, on Tonga, Terry James concentrates on the nineteenth-century background of the present élite, but leaves the eighteenth-century situation obscure. Robert Franco, in Chapter 4, posits close precolonial relations between Tonga and Samoa, but while there were certainly contacts, I am not convinced that Tonga ever conquered the Samoa Islands (see my article in *BKI* 144, 1988). In Chapter 5, Toon van Meijl, having first given a convincing historical background, discusses the problem of Maori kingship. Stephanie Lawson, in her chapter on Fiji, does not entirely succeed in keeping her own political convictions out of the narrative; this is more the discourse of a partisan than an exercise in objectivity. Howard and Rensel, in Chapter 7 on Rotuma, discuss the problem of reciprocity between chiefs and commoners (labour and material support in return for welfare). These authors doubt that the provision of welfare was based on supernatural powers, although this would conform to the Polynesian pattern (p. 120). Eve Pinsker (Chapter 8) surveys the Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Truk/Chuuk, Ponape/Pohnpei, and Kosrae). Though there are many reasons to cooperate, the differences between the four states are great (p. 156). She gives a short historical ethnography of each state, and remarks that 'social actions extend beyond discourse' (p. 300) – a warning not misplaced in the context of this book. The four states could not agree on the institution of a 'Chamber of Chiefs' to watch over matters of custom. Petersen, in Chapter 9, concentrates on the background of this decision, and emphasizes that the role of the chief lies not on the national, but on the local level. The chapter on the Marshall Islands, by Laurence Carucci, has much to recommend it, containing a perfect summary of the traditional, sacred position of the chiefs (pp. 200-1) and an analysis of how, and in what ways, this position has now changed. The chiefs are still powerful, even rich, while the mass of the commoners are impoverished, and reciprocal obligations are no

longer fulfilled. American dollars are allotted to the chiefs for distribution, but since this wealth is not produced by the commoners, its redistribution is no longer felt to be an obligation (pp. 208-9).

Lindstrom (Chapter 11), White (Chapter 12) and Keesing (Chapter 13) discuss the situation of the chief in present-day Melanesia. The problem here is that this region had in the past but few chiefs, and many bigmen. Colonial government and missionaries, however, eagerly elevated local leaders to 'chieftainship'. Everywhere in Melanesia, chiefs now play a role as guardians of custom – even though some of them have reached this position as leaders of Christian churches. It is the chiefs who represent traditional values and local interests *vis-à-vis* the state. In view of the recent creation of many of the chiefly positions, this pretension is somewhat disputable. The state, however, certainly needs the chiefs to reach the commoners, and for this reason the new functionaries have a rather stable position in Melanesia. In Chapter 14, Kathleen Adams discusses the position of traditional Toraja élite. This position is no longer uncontested, as she illustrates with an analysis of a funeral during which the relatives of the deceased refused to give the notables the traditional buffalo head.

Critical comments aside, this is a good and useful book. It contains a number of interesting case studies on the problems of present-day chiefs in the Pacific, and although the individual contributions vary in quality, the overall impression is positive. It is a pity, however, that the theoretical chapters are not the strongest.

Judith Huntsman and Antony Hooper, *Tokelau; A historical ethnography*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996, xii + 355 pp. ISBN 1:86940.153.0.

H.J.M. CLAESSEN

In this book Huntsman and Hooper present what can be considered the definitive history and description of the Tokelau Islands, a group of three Polynesian atolls they have researched since 1967. Although at first sight the cultures of the three islands – Fakaofu, Nukunonu, and Atafu – seem more or less identical, the researchers soon discovered that there were important differences between the islands. These differences developed in the course of a complex history, which had to be analysed in order to explain them. Before presenting their views, the authors pay much attention to the theoretical differences between history and anthropology. While some of their comments on these differences are certainly interesting, this section seems somewhat

overdone. The integration of historical findings with ethnographic data is admittedly not easy, but still not that difficult; in this book, in fact, Huntsman and Hooper have succeeded very well in overcoming the theoretical difficulties which they initially paint in strong colours.

The first part of the book is the ethnography. Here data are presented on the geography of the atolls, the living space (a number of tiny islets), the villages crammed together, the food supply, and the differing positions of men and women. As in so many Polynesian cultures, the place of women is the house, and men, in principle, dominate the world; that this differentiation is not always so strictly maintained in practice is also quite Polynesian. Kinship is organized in the *kaiga*, 'the cognatic descent group with exclusive rights to an estate jointly exploited' (p. 109). As in the nearby Tonga islands, the father's sister is important; it is she who divides food. The relation between brothers and sisters is surrounded by *tapu* (p. 119). These similarities notwithstanding, a closer look at the three villages (islands), each with about 500 inhabitants, shows that there are also great differences. There are different forms of political organization, and also different religions: Nukunonu is Roman Catholic, Atafu is Protestant, and Fakaofo is somewhere in between. These differences have their roots in the past.

In former times (the eighteenth century), Fakaofo was the main island. It was here that the *aliki* (ruler), and the main god, Tui Tokelau (represented by a large stone idol) resided. Tui Tokelau was not a forefather; the *aliki* family did not trace its descent back to him (p. 177). In contrast to the customary situation in Polynesia, there are no indications that the rulers were sacred. Nearby Nukunonu was defeated by Fakaofo, and its inhabitants became exploited by the victors (p. 136). The then uninhabited atoll of Atafu was colonized by Fakaofo, which sent a Fakaofo man there who was married to a Nukunonu woman. Atafu's island chronology 'is a more or less straightforward account of population increase through the issue of the seven children of the founding couple' (p. 178). In this way, Atafu fell under the sway of the Fakaofo leaders. The 'colonies' were obliged to send large offerings to Tui Tokelau each year (p. 151). The *aliki* was elected from the brothers and sons of the deceased ruler (p. 157). Whereas in Fakaofo there was clearly one notable descent line, in Nukunonu there were four separate 'houses', each associated with specific tasks and islets. The genealogy (p. 179) shows that the leaders of Fakaofo and Atafu married a mother's brother's daughter, who always came from Nukunonu; the possible consequences of this type of marriage in terms of rights and obligations are not elaborated by Huntsman and Hooper.

The nineteenth century brought great changes in the Tokelau Islands. Various visitors came along, some with good intentions. In 1852, for instance, a Roman Catholic missionary evacuated some 500 people from Fakaofo to

Uvea because of a famine; most of the displaced persons, however, perished in Uvea. In the 1860s, Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries competed for the souls of the islanders; as a result, Nukunonu became Roman Catholic, and Atafu Protestant. The leaders of Fakaofu succeeded for some years in keeping the island free of Christianity. A second disaster befell Tokelau in 1863, when Peruvian slave traders visited the islands, taking more than 200 of the inhabitants to the guano mines in Peru (p. 204). Gradually the population recovered, so that after some years more than 1,000 people could be counted. Some time later the office of *aliki* was abolished. In its place, a council of elders was installed in Fakaofu; Nukunonu already had its own brand of council, and Atafu developed a different form again.

In the remaining years of the nineteenth century, the islands remained a battlefield between the two Christian denominations. Several traders also settled here, and fierce competition over the limited island resources played a role in the increasing chaos. Great Britain felt that it was somehow responsible for the administration of the islands. For many years, therefore, Tokelau fell nominally under colonial officers situated in Samoa. Finally it became a New Zealand protectorate. Regarding the situation of the Tokelau Islands in recent times, Huntsman and Hooper state that the three islands, separated by different internal political organizations and different religions, 'were still bound to one another by much of what had brought them together in the first place. Their relations were transformed by their own actions, but their cultural order persisted.' (p. 327.)

Tokelau is an important book. It makes clear that even tiny islands have a complex past that lives on in the present, and demonstrates that a picture of the present alone, however detailed, is insufficient for the real understanding of a culture. The book is well written, based on long years of fieldwork, and thoroughly documented. Numerous maps and illustrations enliven the analyses. Huntsman and Hooper are to be complimented on such an achievement.

Gavin W. Jones and Terence H. Hull (eds), *Indonesia assessment; Population and human resources*. Canberra: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1997, 373 pp. ISBN 981.305574.X. Price: AUD 30.

HANS GOOSZEN

This volume is based on the Indonesia Update Conference of 1996. Since 1998, Update Conferences have been organized annually by the Indonesia Project of the Australian National University. In 1996, 'Population and

'Human Resources' was chosen as the conference theme.

In their introductory chapter, Gavin Jones and Terence Hull state that the purpose of the volume is to examine Indonesia's demography and human resource development against the background of the economic progress which the country has made in the last thirty years. They also present an overview of important demographic and human resource parameters, by province and for Indonesia as a whole.

The next two chapters, designated as Part A of the book, deal with recent developments in political and economic conditions. In his description of the political climate of 1995-96, Greg Fealy sketches the prelude to the turbulent year 1998, while Anggito Abimanyu gives an insight into the key economic issues of the early nineties. Although I found both contributions interesting in themselves, I would have welcomed some more long-term views as a background to Part B of the book, which is dedicated to population issues between 1961 and the early 1990s.

John Caldwell opens Part B with an assessment of Indonesia's performance in the global demographic transition, the process of change from a situation in which birth and death rates are high to a situation in which both are low. Compared to other Asian countries in the years 1965-95, Indonesia has done very well in fertility reduction, an achievement which is due to its successful family planning programme. Mortality levels have also been reduced, but the improvement in health has been less impressive.

The remaining 16 chapters are divided into four sections: 'Population mobility and urbanisation', 'Aspects of human resource development', 'Public health, mortality, fertility and family planning', and 'Looking to the future'. In the first section a wealth of data on various types of migration is presented by Graeme Hugo, Tommy Firman, and Peter Gardiner. Hugo explains, among other things, how the major flows of interprovincial migration, which had been from Java to the Outer Islands in the 1960s and 70s, showed a reversal in the 1980s: the dominant flows are now towards the Jakarta conurbation (Jabotabek). Gardiner highlights the growth of this giant metropole, and also analyses population growth in the other three metropolitan areas (Bandung, Surabaya, and Medan) in terms of natural increase, net migration, and reclassification of land from rural to urban. Firman contends that the rapid growth of urban areas requires skilful management, in which the private sector and the urban communities themselves should partake alongside the government, since 'the government alone obviously does not have enough resources to meet the demands for urban development'.

In the second section, Mayling Oey-Gardiner elaborates on the theme of education. In the course of the 1980s, nearly universal primary school enrolment was attained. Attendance in secondary and higher education, however, leaves much to be desired, presumably because parents cannot afford the

expenses involved. The 'poverty gap' in education, according to Oey, is wider than the 'gender gap', although women have not yet attained a position equal to that of men. In the next chapter, Yulfita Raharjo highlights various other aspects of the position of women, making it clear that women's contribution to economic development is undervalued. The last chapter of this section is devoted to the ageing of the population. Aris Ananta and his colleagues attempt to assess the consequences of the fact that the 'baby boom' of 1950-70 will be the 'old person' boom of 2010-30. The main challenge will be to keep elderly people healthy, and also willing and able to contribute to economic life, so that they will be an asset rather than a burden to society.

The authors of the third section make it clear that despite the reductions in fertility and mortality rates, many improvements in family planning and health care are still needed. Sri Moertiningsih Adioetomo and Firman Lubis both cite international and domestic critics who claim that in past years, the family planning board has been too authoritarian. The existing approach is characterized as too much 'supply-oriented' and 'target-driven'. In future, women's – and men's – wishes, needs, and motivations should be placed centre stage. More attention should also be paid to 'non-users' of family planning. After a very thorough analysis of mortality and health care Meiwita Iskandar concludes, among other things, that 'poverty remains a serious health problem', pointing in particular to problems of inadequate access to clean drinking water, densely-settled slums, and increasing numbers of working children. Iskandar and Gouranga Lal Dasvarma both highlight the still inadequate level of maternal health care and the high maternal mortality rates. In the last section, various participants in the conference try their hand at forecasts and projections. The tone is set by Aris Ananta, who lucidly points out the usefulness of projections as a guide to policy.

I enjoyed reading this volume, and considering the impressive amount of data which the authors have analysed and presented, it seems rather ungrateful to ask for more. Nevertheless, I would have liked to learn more about regional variety. Gardiner and Hugo give some information on this subject in the context of the demographic transition, but it is not elaborated any further elsewhere. The impact of cultural factors on family planning and health is another area about which I would have liked to learn more, although I realize how difficult research into this theme, if only for want of appropriate data, would be. This brings me to a last remark about Terence Hull's contribution to the final section of the book, in which he explains the inadequacy of Indonesia's population registration and the pitfalls connected with data from sample surveys. Reading his skilful analysis, my appreciation for the book as a whole was further enhanced: clearly, the authors have done a very good job with rather inadequate data.

Ruth Barnes, *Indian block-printed textiles in Egypt; The Newberry collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Volume 1 (text): xiv + 138 pp., with 32 b/w illustrations and 43 colour plates; Volume 2 (catalogue): 379 pp., with 1226 b/w illustrations. ISBN 0.19.951364.3. Price: GBP 29.

John Guy, *Woven cargoes; Indian textiles in the East*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1998, 192 pp., with 241 illustrations (145 in colour). ISBN 0.500.01863.4. Price: GBP 29.95.

RENS HERINGA

Textiles have long been recognized as a principal commodity in the Indian Ocean trade to markets in Europe, the Arab world and Asia. Scholarly interest in the tangible evidence of the trade – the actual textiles – has produced a voluminous body of art-historical studies since the beginning of our century. An increasingly coherent picture has emerged, in particular concerning the heyday of the European trading companies from the seventeenth century onwards. Although written evidence bears out earlier contacts, the remaining textiles have generally been dated to this period on the base of stylistic comparisons. Among the many kinds of cloth, painted and block-printed cottons generally referred to as chintz have generated particular interest. Recent manifestation of this interest are two publications based on British collections, which are among the most comprehensive Indian textile holdings in the world.

Ruth Barnes' meticulous *catalogue raisonnée* is the final offshoot of an extensive project which included accession and conservation. Aimed at a scholarly audience, it focuses upon the collection of block-printed Indo-Egyptian textile fragments in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, with reference to textiles of this type in other collections. The collection, acquired in the early decades of our century by the Egyptologist Percy E. Newberry and his wife from dealers in Cairo, is unique in size and variety and offers ample opportunity for comparative analysis, for instance with textiles found in Asia. John Guy's visually pleasing publication can be read as a complement to Ruth Barnes' study. Addressing an informed general public, it concentrates upon the holdings of Indian textiles in the Victoria and Albert Museum, augmented by examples from other collections. The addition of Indian textiles of unfamiliar design, uncertain antiquity, and – it may be added – somewhat indefinite provenance, that appeared on the Indonesian art market some fifteen years ago, stimulated the author to elaborate upon Mattiebel Gittinger's groundbreaking study of the Asian trade in *Dyers to the world* (1982). Both authors, after more than a decade of research and several publications

on the topic to each of their names, open up novel paths in the enquiry on Indian textiles. A central innovation here is the radiocarbon testing of a selection of Indian textiles from Egypt and Indonesia, which for the first time offers solid ground for dating and comparison.

Ruth Barnes' study is primarily concerned with a precise definition of historical Indian printed textiles. Recognizing that the provenance and chronology of the so-called 'Fustat' textiles are still far from firmly established, she first defines the issues involved. Stylistic evidence, she argues, is inconclusive as proof for the survival of textiles predating the involvement of Europeans in the Indian Ocean. The allegation that the Newberry textiles came from medieval graves, at Fustat or elsewhere, is invalidated by a reassessment of the published reports of excavations carried out between 1902 and the 1980s near the site of the old Egyptian capital of Fustat. Among thousands of textiles discovered, firstly, only one single fragment has been identified as likely to be Indian. Since the late thirteenth century, secondly, the site is known to have served as a refuse disposal area for the new capital to the north, a situation verified by contemporary photographs (Ills. 3, 4). The choice to let the textiles 'speak for themselves' is particularly appropriate in view of the fact that the technical aspects of textiles have rarely been clearly determined, even by experts in their fields (p. 9). Differences in colour, decided upon as the most obvious indicators for classifying the fragments, made it possible to distinguish between genuinely Indian and as yet unidentified non-Indian fragments in the collection, as did a dye analysis of 34 fragments. A survey of the current terminology of dye methods shows the need for a clear distinction between resist- and mordant-dyeing techniques. The detailed definition of the technical composition of the textiles has led to more exact conclusions on provenance, design, and function. The origin and history of cotton, details of spinning technology, a useful classification of design types, and in particular a stimulating discussion of the development of organic forms into abstract designs, are topics of interest to general textile studies. Parallels and distinctions between the Indo-Egyptian textiles and Indian cloths found in Southeast Asia, and their respective roles, introduce comparisons on a broader scale.

The selection of 15 Newberry fragments, out of more than twelve hundred, for two radiocarbon tests was partly guided by their close design correspondence to the 68 datable Indian cotton fragments found during the recent archeological excavations in the Red Sea port of Quseir al-Quadim. The test results mostly support dates ranging between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries, validating the archaeological analysis and also part of the conclusions previously reached by stylistic comparison. More significantly, two of the samples produce previously unthought-of early dates between the mid-tenth and early eleventh centuries (pp. 34, 39), sustaining the suggestion

of an eleventh-century date for the single Indian textile recovered from Fustat (p. 29). In addition, the continuity of particular designs over a considerable time span is shown to be the norm rather than the exception. The single additional sample – a large Indian trade textile with a related design from the collection of the Ashmolean Museum, collected recently on Sulawesi – gives a surprisingly early fifteenth-century radiocarbon date. These results not only validate the historical evidence for early trade, but also initiate comparison on a wider scale.

In early 1997 (Barnes, personal communication, 30 November 1999), a private collector offered funding for a third test to be organized by Barnes. The sample included a further choice of nine Newberry fragments and a group of eight mostly figurative textiles of Indonesian provenance from the private collection, to which John Guy added three cloths from the Victoria and Albert Museum. Among the Indonesian textiles, two reconfirm a fifteenth-century time frame; while two others produce even earlier, fourteenth-century dates. The figurative designs range between the fourteenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries, again confirming the continuity of design types. The most inspiring result is the late ninth-century date for No. 241 from the Newberry collection; this, indeed, is 'the earliest date established for an Indian export textile' (Guy, p. 42). The ninth-century date came too late to be mentioned in the illustration captions of fragment No. 241 in the Newberry catalogue (Barnes, I, Pl. 39; II, p. 69). It is, however, included in the list of tested fragments of Egyptian provenance in Guy's publication (p. 186), without clear information on when the test took place.

Apparently, Guy took the rather questionable decision to incorporate the unpublished Newberry date in his publication although it has no relevance for the further exploration of the shared origins of the Indonesian and Indo-Egyptian textiles. The analysis was undertaken through comparisons not only between similar designs on dated textiles, but also between a dated Indo-Egyptian fragment and the design of a skirt-cloth depicted on a Javanese stone statue of the same period. While the design of undated Newberry fragment No. 1092, known in Java as *karung*, is indeed similar to that on the skirtcloth of a thirteenth-century East Javanese Ganesha statue (Barnes, III. 32; Guy, III. 74), the thirteenth-century radiocarbon date mentioned in the caption (Guy, p. 62) actually refers to another, quite dissimilar dated design. Of particular interest is the suggestion of three consecutive phases of increasing stylization in the figurative design type showing female dancers. An alleged continuity of design 'spanning nearly a millennium' (p. 59), adduced by a comparison of a few rather recent, tentatively dated textiles from Indonesia and Thailand, to supposedly 'similar' early Javanese, Burmese and Cambodian designs on stone reliefs and murals, would seem to require more solid corroboration.

The backbone of the book's vivid narrative consists of an abundance of art-historical and historical materials. Stylistic analogies are based more upon Indian examples than upon comparisons with local Southeast Asian expressions. Well-chosen visuals provide the backdrop, while extensive reference to the textiles' varied economic, social, and ritual roles among different ethnic groups and social strata aims at sketching in the ethnographic dimension. First the general context and the available sources are introduced, followed by a description of techniques and production centres, including a section of Ruurdje Laarhoven's unpublished thesis (1994), her translation of the earliest-known Dutch description of chintz painting. The elaborate detail of the early seventeenth-century Dutch description does not quite tally with the observation that 'dyeing was an artfully guarded professional secret' (p. 19), or with the suggestion that European interest in Indian textile technology only arose shortly before the industrial revolution (p. 178, note 2). Insufficient insight into textile techniques results in the misinterpretation of otherwise interesting illustrations. The 'close resemblance between the metal Indian drawing pen and the Javanese *canting*' (p. 22), for instance, has neither visual nor technical ground. In the section on the trade to Egypt, the allusion to 'great quantities of fragments retrieved from the burial grounds of Fustat' (p. 47) is misleading in the light of Barnes' arguments. As to the Indo-Egyptian textiles' role in medieval Muslim society, a 'shroud of fine linen or cotton dipped in holy water' (p. 47), brought home from Mecca by Muslim pilgrims, would not have been a block-printed fabric, but rather a length of plain white kafan cloth of the type also mentioned in a description of a contemporary Muslim funeral ritual in Indonesia (p. 74). The central focus of the book is directed at the circumstances and preferences in five separate markets, covering the Malay world, Indonesia, Siam, Japan, and China. The chapter on China does not feature any actual textiles, but brings together hitherto scattered, widely varied historical and art-historical data. Although the Philippines appear on the map, they are only mentioned as a link in the trade to South China.

The chapters on the Malay world and Indonesia in particular abound with instances of linguistic and ethnological inaccuracy. To point out a few examples: *peralinnan* should be *persalinnan*, change (not set) of clothing (p. 71); *hong*i means war fleet rather than canoe (p. 79); a headcloth, in Javanese, is *iket kepala* rather than *kepala*, head (p. 81); *ikat pinjang* should be *ikat pinggang* (p. 82); *pustaka*, book, obviously stands for *pusaka*, heirloom (p. 84); *jelamprang* is spelled as *jlamrang* (p. 93); and the Javanese term *dodot* appears inappropriate for textiles encountered in Sulawesi. Evidence for the conclusion that Indian *dodot*-style textiles were once used as ceremonial skirt-cloths by the nobility on Java (pp. 98-9), it should also be said, is tenuous at best. Several earlier studies have related the origin of the talismanic power of patchwork

(pp. 75, 77, 105) to Buddhist concepts, so it obviously did not blend into Islamic symbolism until much later. *Tape*, said in the glossary to 'come from' *tapih*, skirt-cloth (p. 187), is actually one of the (mis-)spellings used by the foreign traders. The same term also occurs in the glosses *Tape kankenia* (p. 81) and *Tapy serassas* (p. 163), where, surprisingly, it is identified as referring to textiles 'from the Tapti River area in Gujarat'.

Clearly, Ruth Barnes has succeeded in her purpose of providing a tool for further detailed and comparative work. Direct connections can now be made between material traded to opposite parts of the globe, establishing links of similarity but also quite important differences (Barnes, p. 123). John Guy, in undertaking this daunting task for Asia singlehandedly, has only partly reached his goal of adding a new dimension to our understanding of the history of Indian textiles and of their role in Southeast Asia and Japan. Disappointingly, linguistic imprecision and lapses in anthropological perception, compounded by less than punctual proofreading, detract from the impact of the end result. The dating results from the test organized by Barnes form the most inspiring result of Guy's book, although a more balanced choice for the radiocarbon tests would have included some of the earlier textiles from Thailand and Japan.

David T. Hill (ed.), *Beyond the horizon; Short stories from contemporary Indonesia*. Clayton, Victoria: Monash Asia Institute, 1998, xxxviii + 201 pp. ISBN 0.7326.1164.4. Price: NLG 37.50.

H.M.J. MAIER

'*Beyond the horizon* is a collaborative project', its cover tells us, 'bringing together a range of translators-colleagues, teachers and students to make the works of contemporary Indonesian writers more accessible to readers of English'. A book of translations, generated in a complicated project of cooperation, in short, and as such exemplary for the act of translation in general: substitutions and transformations are never made on a one-to-one basis, and they always take a long time. Perhaps a translation should never be finished.

In his introduction, Hill suggests that the readership is restricted to Australians for whom 'Indonesia lies just beyond the horizon geographically and metaphysically: alluring, but illusively out of reach'. Only Australian readers are apparently entitled to be provided with this selection of short stories. As if there are only Australians and Indonesians in this world. And as if Indonesia is a never-never land.

The great majority of the selected tales first appeared in the Jakartan jour-

nal *Horison*, 'a monthly magazine of literature in the broadest sense', here presented as a beacon in modern Indonesian literature. Ever since its emergence in 1966 shortly after the fall of Soekarno, *Horison* has had difficulties staying alive, and yet it managed to acquire a central place in the canon of Indonesian literature that was developed in Jakarta in the wake of Soeharto's military takeover. The journal was important because leading authors in the metropolis were willing to attach their names to it; for an author, a publication or two in *Horison* was enough, so it seems, to be appreciated as important and successful. Perhaps after thirty years of canonization, that rule has now been broken. The canon seems more unstable than ever, and *Horison* can certainly no longer claim to be a leading literary journal – or even, for that matter, to be in the vanguard of modern Indonesian literature. The times are changing indeed: even the 'universal humanist values' that it allegedly propagated for more than a generation are no longer the prominent force they once were in Malay literature and Indonesian intellectual life. *Beyond the horizon* could perhaps best be read like a rhapsodic retrospect, a witness of times passed.

The introduction to the tales is long and informative. It tells 'English readers' about *Horison*'s birth and life, the conflicts among its editors, and its character and ideology. By doing all this, Hill succeeds in embedding the journal in the cultural-political life of Soeharto's New Order. This context is further extended by the addition of short biographies of the Indonesian authors and the Australian (or should we say: English) translators, together with a very personal and, therefore, intriguing description of the translation process that should make us aware of the problems and pitfalls in which people become involved once they take the task of the translator as seriously as Hill does.

Interestingly enough, the anthology does not aim at presenting its Australian readers 'with the pinnacle at the heights of Indonesian literature' of the past thirty years. Rather, it wants to shed some light on Indonesian culture and society; at the end of the introduction the aim of the anthology is described as providing 'a useful introduction to contemporary short fiction in Indonesia, with works which are entertaining and insightful of social, political, and cultural changes beyond our horizon'. Certainly not all the selected tales are breathtaking in form or content, but they all do indeed provide the Australian readers with insight and entertainment, if only because they deal explicitly and concretely with societal situations in the New Order.

Beyond the horizon should at least make us aware of the fact that the task of the translator reaches beyond the struggle with language: it also has to do with choice and selection of materials. Literature as a testimony of society, a witness of the community, the nation-state, the country, the local culture – is that not another way of saying that non-Australian (or should we say: non-English) literature should be read in terms of the society it was created in? It

is an unfortunate proposal in that it tries to limit and restrict the reach and the power of these stories by leaving some central questions out: what makes these stories literary rather than, say, journalistic in the first place? What should make us stop reading them as 'literature' and start thinking about 'Indonesian culture' or 'Indonesian society', or about ourselves, instead? Perhaps such questions should be posed the other way around: what should make us stop thinking about Indonesian society, and start reading these stories as 'literature', and why are some of these stories not examples of bad journalism?

To Australians and non-Australians who know English, the translations appear to read easily and smoothly, and that is both a compliment and a criticism. It is a compliment because every act of reading is served by smoothly-running and non-obstructive strings of words. It is a criticism because hardly anything is left of the strangeness that must inevitably have emerged in the interaction between English and Malay (or between Australian and Indonesian, perhaps). The exuberances and deficiencies of the two 'languages' involved are silenced, so it seems. Too smooth, perhaps. Too easy.

It may have been a conscious choice of the translators and their editor to translate the tales in terms of the target language and make the 'Malay' of canonic authors like Gerson Poyk, Wildan Yatim, and Putu Wijaya as familiar as possible to the Australian reader. As a result, we are hardly ever reminded of the Malayness of Malay; instead, we are steered towards the Englishness of Malay. We are reading English or Australian stories, in other words – and we are hardly made aware of the strangeness of 'Malay', of the heterogeneity that the clash between Malay and English must have given rise to in the (no doubt heated) discussions and dialogues among writers and translators in Perth, Australia. The linguistic strangeness is lost, in short, apparently to comply with the book's aim of offering some pictures of Indonesian reality – but then it does so in Australian terms. Domesticated tales they are, whereas they could or should have been alienating and defamiliarizing. In spite of its 'Englishness' (or 'Australianness'), the book was published by an academic press and not by a commercial publishing house. As such, it is another sad example of the fate of so many translations of Southeast Asian tales and poems: they hardly ever make it to the commercial market for literary work – and if they do, they are greatly domesticated as well. The fact that this anthology was published by a University Press, usually more tolerant toward alienation and shock, could have been used to foreground the strangeness of Malay and the tensions between English and Malay – and that may have been a missed opportunity.

However, let us be grateful that some Malay tales from Indonesia are available to a public of outsiders. They are a good and informative read, embedded in an excellent introduction. Gerson Poyk's gorgeous sentence 'I'd

been wearing a pair of dark glasses which I purposely bought, not to keep out the sun, but to keep out the speeches' is now part of English or Australian, ready for a smile and an emulation. And the tales of authors such as Putu Wijaya and Wildan Yatim are very effective indeed in making us think about fragments of Indonesian society again.

Helena A. van Bommel, 1994. *Dvarapalas in Indonesia; Temple guardians and acculturation*, 1994, xvii + 249 pp. Rotterdam: Balkema. [Modern Quaternary Research in Southeast Asia 13.] ISBN 90.5410.155.5. Price: NLG 135.

JOHN N. MIKSIC

As Dr. Nandana Chutiwongs notes in her Foreword, the statues of temple guardians are by design striking and impressive images. They were symbolically meant to exclude invisible evil influences from the temple compounds, and psychologically they no doubt instilled additional piety into the worshippers who dared submit themselves to their gaze. Dr. Chutiwongs then poses the question of the extent to which the attributes of these statues were determined by convention as opposed to individual artistic creativity. As Van Bommel notes (p. 58), experts also differ on whether changes in South Indian dvarapala depictions had any symbolic significance, or were purely stylistic. This book does an adequate job of classifying these images, and provides an excellent survey of their architectural, symbolic, geographical, and historical context. Questions of cultural theory receive less attention than do standard concerns of the art historian.

Chapter One begins with the obligatory consideration of cross-cultural contacts. The author approaches this problem from the standpoint of the concept of 'acculturation', here defined as 'change under the influence of another culture' a definition adopted from a 1964 source. Other interpretations of cultural change have arisen during the intervening thirty years. This book does not challenge the theoretical assumptions of what is now a previous generation of scholars. Readers should not expect a reconsideration of the question of Indianization such as that recently undertaken by R.L. Brown in *The dvaravati wheels of the law and the Indianization of South East Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

On the other hand, it should be said that this book contains a rigorous, thorough, competent application of standard art historical methods to a well-defined and important topic, and the data thus summarized and explicated

can be put to use by other scholars and applied to such theoretical topics as the precise nature of Southeast Asia's artistic development, and the internal relations between various Southeast Asian cultures. Since the range of data collected is sufficiently comprehensive, and the underlying theoretical assumptions do not bias the data, the book must be accounted a worthwhile addition to the literature.

This volume suggests several avenues for comparative research. In particular, it would be interesting to examine the direction of evolution of *dvarapala* in Chinese Buddhist temples. North Indian art was influential in China between the fifth and eighth centuries. As in northern India, Chinese *dvarapala* of this era had one hand in *abhayamudra*, while the other either rested on the hip, or held a club and staff. At Bharhut (100-80 BC), Kubera already appears as a *dvarapala*. In Tang-dynasty caves in western China, Kubera sometimes appears as a door guardian (painted, rather than sculpted). Much more frequently, however, one finds Manjusri and Samantabhadra fulfilling this function. The sixth-century Gupta Buddhist cave temples at Maharastra, such as Ellora, utilize *bodhisattva* as *dvarapala*: Avalokitesvara on the right, Manjusri or Maitreya on the left. Interestingly, in Indonesia Candi Mendut is unique among Buddhist shrines in displaying something similar to the Indian and Chinese practice: carved beside the entrance are images of Samantabhadra and Sarvaniviskambin.

Pre-nineteenth-century Bali is excluded from this study due to the stringent application of the condition that only *in situ* *dvarapala* can be used for analysis, whereas Bali contains no such examples. Thus a potentially important source of information is not exploited despite the potential for enlightenment which the images there still possess. Even in Java, the number of *dvarapala* images still *in situ* is very small. Some loose Balinese *dvarapala* are used as comparative material, however.

In India, *naga* and *yaksha* images were carved to guard entrances in *torana* (gateways) and *vedikas* (railings). The oldest *in situ* date from the first century BC. By the second century, in Maharastra, *naga* and *yaksa* *dvarapala* are found in rock-cut temples. When stone temples began to appear, during the Gupta period, in South India *dvarapala* were placed at the entrances to the main shrine (*garbha-grha*), at entrances to *mandapa*, and at *gopura* in outer walls. The *dvarapala* in constructed buildings usually assumed human form, unlike those in the earlier stupas and rock-cut temples. The *naga* *dvarapala* appeared in Sri Lanka quite early, for example at Abhayagiri. Although it is known that Abhayagiri influenced Central Javanese architecture, especially at Ratu Boko, this form of *dvarapala* seems to have had no impact on Indonesia. Four-armed deities, river goddesses, *yaksha*, and anthropomorphic figures in military or royal attire were some of the other alternatives available in India. Thus Indonesians must have employed some specific criteria to

select their motifs from among the vast quantity available in South Asia. What these criteria were still remains to be elucidated, but studies such as this one are beginning to point out ways in which such criteria might eventually be isolated and extracted from the mass of data which is gradually accumulating.

An interesting difference marks the treatment of *dvarapala* in Buddhist as distinguished from Hindu architecture in Indonesia. In Javanese Saivite complexes of AD 730-1300, *dvarapala* are always found in the form of pairs of standing figures carved in high relief set in niches beside the entrance to the main shrine. In Buddhist complexes, kneeling *dvarapala* in the round (rather than standing figures in relief) were placed at the entrances to compounds; in the late classic period, they were also positioned at entrances to interior courtyards. At the beginning of the ninth century standing *dvarapala* are also found in either high relief or shallow niches at entrances to Buddhist shrines. 'With a few exceptions, however, these standing Buddhist figures do not appear to have been specifically designed as *dvarapalas*' (p. 7).

According to the sixth-century *Brhat Samhita*, the bottom quarter of the jambs of doorframes should be decorated with *dvarapala*. Other texts, such as the *Agni-Purana*, specify that deities named Nandin (also called Nandiswara) and Mahakala should accompany the river goddesses Ganga and Yamuna at the doors of Sivaite mandalas. These texts then give specific attributes to Nandiswara and Mahakala. None of these texts appears to have been used specifically as a guide by the designers of the Javanese *dvarapala*.

After the ninth century no Buddhist shrines in Indonesia have relief *dvarapala* with the single known exception of Bahal 1, Padang Lawas, North Sumatra. Standing *dvarapala*, carved in the round, and the kneeling type in the round, are found in all complexes after the thirteenth century in Java, and possibly even earlier in Sumatra. Even an inclining *dvarapala* type appears. *Makara* and *kala* framing entrances 'can be considered to have a *dvarapala* function' (p. 7). Only those which are clearly distinct from types framing niches or windows are dealt with in this book. Significantly, these occur mainly where the motifs were not used at niches (for instance, in Sumatra and East Java).

The author comes to very specific and somewhat surprising conclusions regarding the precise origins of the Indonesian *dvarapala* motifs. She believes, for example, that the kneeling and sitting *dvarapalas* in Indonesia may derive from friezes of dwarfs or *ganas* found as early as the first century BC in both Hindu and Buddhist contexts. Similarly, a seated dwarf-like figure carved nearly in the round found in Ravana Phadi Cave, Aihole, Karnataka, 'is probably the most likely source of the first kneeling *dvarapala* carved in the round in Indonesia' (p. 13). While both these hypotheses are plausible, the specificity of the models postulated, and the gap in time

between the appearance of the model in India and the presumed derivation in Indonesia, should be discussed. It would also seem that the Orissan examples (discussed on pp. 17-18) of differentiated standing guardians which appear in the sixth or seventh centuries, with those on the right possessing benevolent aspects and those on the left more demonic, might equally be considered as more proximate possibilities. According to Vinnot (cited on p. 31), standing male *dvarapala* pairs only become differentiated in India in about 750. By 900 they had lost their differentiated characters (p. 32).

Another possible party involved in the origin of the Indonesian *dvarapala* are the early western Chalukya temples of Karnataka, South India. The Chalukya ruler converted to Sivaism in 660. Around the same time images of Agastya and a young man, supposedly the *rsi* who spread Sivaism in South India, appear and are used as *dvarapala*. For a short period in the mid-eighth century, the Chalukya adopted the use of Nandisvara and Mahakala as *dvarapala* from North India.

The Indonesian scholar Poerbatjaraka suggested that the Indonesian Nandiswara/Mahakala pair developed from a slim Agastya and Ganesha. Van Bommel argues convincingly (p. 36) that the Chalukya provided the direct models for Nandiswara/Mahakala.

Around 730 AD. at the entrances to the first definite Sivaite sanctuaries (Dumarçay 1986), it was probably a pair of *rsis* who were the first *dvarapalas*, and also the propagators of Sivaism. Subsequently, the more crystallized pair of Nandisvara and Mahakala were depicted as the guardians of the entrance. The Chalukya have similar examples for both pairs [and by implication are the most likely sources for the Javanese examples too].

Only five *dvarapala* pairs are still located *in situ* in Central Java. One of these, at Gedong Songo, includes a figure on the right who carries an Indian ascetics' waterpot in his left hand. He also wears a caste cord, necklace, earrings, and bracelet – attributes of Agastya. At Lara Jonggrang, one of the *dvarapala* carries a flywhisk. This presents a striking contrast with India, where no *dvarapala* carry flywhisks. In Indonesia, flywhisks were used by ascetics, whereas in India they were used by royalty, and were never connected with Siva. Furthermore, Indian regulations say that one of Nandisvara's main attributes is a club, but he never carries this weapon in Indonesia. Nandisvara in Indonesia has more ascetic attributes. In India, snakes are used to suggest that *dvarapalas* possess a Sivaitic nature; this motif is not employed for this purpose in Java (p. 45). All this data is interesting raw material which could be exploited in order to obtain a more detailed understanding of the ways in which Indonesian artists utilized South Asian motifs in order to convey Indonesian messages.

In Chapter Four, 'Development of *dvarapala* in South India, influence on

Indonesia, 1c BC – 10c AD', the author concludes that Indonesia drew on three different South Indian models for her dvarapalas, which were made in differentiated (complimentary) pairs: a Pallava type, a Chalukya type, and a Chola type. But this three-model system, as she notes, is insufficient to describe all the examples found in Indonesia. Thus she is forced to create numerous interstitial categories. For example, one group of '[f]ull-frontal figures, feet slightly apart, one hand on the dagger or sword, and the other on the club' does not fit easily into any of these three categories. In order to resolve this problem, the author suggests that 'these standing figures can perhaps be related back to Pallava examples, with possible influences from Chalukya and Pandya' (p. 62). Furthermore, the dvarapala in kneeling position found in Buddhist sites during the Early Classic, and in Sivaite sites of the Late Classic, cannot easily be linked to any of these South Indian ideal types (p. 64). Another subgroup, comprising non-differentiated standing dvarapalas, cannot be connected to any Indian types, but parallels can be found in Vietnam and Cambodia.

This complicated and somewhat uncertain hypothesis demonstrates how hard it is to create a typology for these artifacts, and to link them to specific Indian sources. The typological approach is necessary in archaeology and art history, but sometimes the number of categories created to fit a certain group of artifacts is so big, with so few examples found in each category, that the usefulness of the effort is diminished. Such a phenomenon seems to lead to the conclusion that Javanese sculptors possessed a great deal of freedom to create and adapt, a conclusion which can also be drawn from other categories of classical Indonesian art. The diversity of references in Indonesian sculpture to various parts of South Asia suggests that the main conclusion to be drawn is a very general one: that Indonesians knew a lot about many parts of India, not just one or two; they were not dominated by, or restricted to; just one or two contacts.

When we come to Late Classic dvarapala, the situation is if anything even more complex. The author defines six groups based on geography (Central Java, Malang, Blitar, Kediri, Surabaya, and Lawu) and compiles lists of various attribute states. The sequence of teeth, for example, has nine different possible variations; hairstyle, 12; noses, 11; eyebrows, 4; snake ornaments, 7; and skull ornaments, 6. This set of data is quite valuable. Van Bemmelen then analyses this data using Vogler's chronology of the *monsterkop*, or 'kala head', based on tooth sequence, as a possible linked set of data, but without much success. The traits which seem to be of use in separating *kala* heads into types with some chronological validity seem to combine in different fashions for dvarapala. Some dvarapala in Blitar and Surabaya, for instance, have a combination of sideways upper fangs associated with central Javanese *kala*, and lower fangs associated with cast Javanese *kala* (p. 86). The hairstyles of dvara-

pala show few links to *kala* heads except for the floral hairstyle of a *kala* from Kalicilik, but the comparison here is with dvarapala of Gambar Wetan which are a full hundred years later. Neither noses nor eyebrows provide any meaningful bridges between the art of the *kala* sculptures and that of the dvarapala carvers.

A survey of dvarapala or dvarapala-like sculptures from Cambodia and South Vietnam (Champa) yields yet more variation, but little clarity. There seem to be many distinctions, but no real differences, in the sense that all the images seem to perform much the same functions despite a wide diversity in form. Many paragraphs in this section of the book give the impression of being little more than summaries of reading notes. What, for example, is the significance of the fact that snake ornaments appear in Champa but not Cambodian dvarapala, while Cambodian dvarapalas rest their attributes on ground, which the Cham examples never do? These comparisons beg for further analysis.

Kneeling dvarapala in the round, resembling many from Indonesia in this respect, only appear in Cambodia. In Indonesia, no standing dvarapala were carved in the round before 1300, whereas the Cham already had this type by the end of the ninth century. Kneeling dvarapala are common in Indonesia, sporadic in Cambodia, and there is one example in Champa. One can marshal this evidence to draw the conclusion that that Late Classic Java was influenced by Champa and Cambodia (p. 107); in historical context, however, this chain of events seems very unlikely. It is more probable that what is being observed in these cases is no more than random stylistic variation, without any substantial external causation.

The book's final conclusion once again demonstrates the author's aversion to attributing much originality to the Indonesian sculptures:

Foreign frameworks (southern Indian, southern Vietnam, Cambodia) initially determine the form and the place of the Indonesian dvarapala, both stylistically and chronologically. In the subsequent process of acculturation local developments gradually began to play a more significant role. (p. 129)

It seems strange that the quality of the carving is never mentioned. In this respect Indonesian dvarapala, particularly those of Central Java, stand out from all others. This characteristic alone should be considered a signal of originality. In fact, many other arguments could be advanced to support the conclusion that from the earliest period Indonesians were impressing their own conceptions upon the (admittedly imported) idea of the temple guardian. One should also consider the hypothesis that the prehistoric ancestor figures found in various parts of Indonesia prefigured the dvarapala, and predisposed the Indonesians to certain preferences for dvarapala styles and

locations. This book contains no reference to the common Indonesian practice of erecting guardian statues at villages, for example in North Sumatra. Why should Indonesians have imported ideas from other parts of Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Champa) during the periods when these civilizations were in terminal phases of cultural and political decline, while Indonesia was experiencing culturally fertile periods?

This book does have some very strong points. It provides a good survey of the data, thanks partly to the author's significant degree of familiarity with India, and a thorough and systematic review of the many Indonesian images belonging to this category. It also provides a sobering indication of the speed at which Indonesian temples are being despoiled. The catalogue of dvarapala statues lost in recent years is an impressive, sad testimony to the problems of archaeological preservation in Indonesia.

Other strengths of this book consist of thorough description and data collection, but leave room for more theoretical studies. Future scholars can exploit the data contained here to pursue research along lines laid down by Robert Brown in the work mentioned above. The focus on 'acculturation', here defined in terms of the dissemination of motifs, seems to have hindered the author of this work from making more progress in that direction herself. In earlier decades it was assumed that links between art styles demonstrated the diffusion of influence, even people. This assumption is no longer prevalent. Most art historians would agree that this information is relevant, but for other purposes than those of simply charting connections. New paradigms emphasize such concepts as cross-cultural flows of information, and communication processes, rather than assuming a simple one-way transmission of ideas. One could also ask why seemingly rigid differences, which have no connection with the specific religious imagery of either religion, are found between the Indonesian Hindu and Buddhist dvarapala. How did the evolution of the dvarapala in other parts of the world, such as Cambodia or China, differ from that in Indonesia, and why?

Further analysis of this material can also be accomplished by employing such techniques as seriation and analysis of variation, to determine which attributes may be valid to use in the formation of typologies and chronological stages. The author does not specify whether she is claiming that her typology is 'found' – that is, is assumed to correspond to some mental structure in the minds of the sculptors, as opposed to being created by the art historian herself for heuristic purposes, without any assumption that the original sculptors would have recognized it. As an example of the type of insight which might be obtained from such an inquiry, one can observe that Indonesians do not seem to have formulated concrete rules about what was a dvarapala and what was not. One can however observe that over time, the dvarapala image evolved in the direction of increasingly pronounced differ-

entiation of dvarapala by nature, while the number of attributes used to depict dvarapala decreased (p. 43). Phrasing this observation in another way: standardization increased. This obviously tells us something about the general nature of stylistic variation in this artifact type, and by inference about the socio-political situation in Indonesia too. Indeed, one could say that in this as in other matters, the Indonesians employed an Indian artistic vocabulary to express certain local statements. The differences between India and Southeast Asia themselves become keys to decoding certain messages, couched in terms of assumptions regarding the rightful place of these icons in a larger cosmography.

In general, the style of the translation from Dutch to English is adequate. There is one noticeable flaw: the word 'pendant' is often used where the English term 'companion' would be correct. This mistake seems to be due to a misunderstanding about the overlap in meaning between superficially similar Dutch and English vocabulary; due to the subject matter of this book, it occurs frequently.

In summary, while this is a useful book, it does not preclude further advances in the analysis of this form of artistic expression. New discoveries are certain to require revision of the ideas presented here. For example, the Suaka Peninggalan Sejarah dan Purbakala in West Sumatra recently obtained a bronze image about 15 cm high from the west coast of the province, which portrays a standing dvarapala in late Classic style. The discovery of this image raises yet more complications for anyone seeking to create a valid typology for these multi-variate objects.

Paul van Beekun, *Adoe Den Haag; Getuigenissen uit Indisch Den Haag*. Den Haag: SeaPress, 1998, 200 pp. ISBN 90.73930.20.0. Price: NLG 29,50.

REMCO RABEN

The Hague has been an *Indische* town from at least the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Until 1945, its Indies quality consisted mainly of returnees, who resettled in Holland after a career in the East Indies. Only after 1945 did the social make-up of the Indies' migrants changed dramatically. In the years following the Pacific and decolonization wars, thousands of Indies Dutch arrived in the Netherlands, many of whom were born in the Dutch East Indies and had never seen the Netherlands before. Many of them ended up in The Hague, attracted by relatives who had already settled there, and the renown of The Hague as an *Indische* town.

Paul van Beckum interviewed about twenty people from the Indies, including some well-known exponents of *Indische* culture like actress and television entertainer Wietke van Dort, rock artist Johnny Lion, and Ellen Derksen, organizer of the annual Indies festival Pasar Malam. Although a Hague journalist, Van Beckum knew little about the Indies culture, which gives the book a strange tinge of naïvety, if not ignorance. Meant as an impressionistic group portrait, it is just that, and it would be unfair to measure the book along academic standards.

Van Beckum takes a meandering approach through Indies life in The Hague. He does not try to explain or analyse the constituent elements of the *Indische* identity. Nor does he attempt to distinguish the differences between several categories of Indies people, either in origin, or in experience. Intricate issues such as complexion or the strongly developed Indies social hierarchy are only touched upon in passing. Of course, there is a set of joint experiences that binds the Indies migrants together. There are memories, of course, of life in the Indies: its climate, nature, sounds, smells, and food. Even more prominent are memories of the Pacific War, which forms a major element of a communal memory. Many Indies Dutch, whether *totok* or Indo-European, were interned by the Japanese forces; others had to make a living under strained circumstances, eyed distrustfully by the Japanese and often derided or pestered by Indonesians. Strange enough, the time immediately following the Japanese capitulation, the so-called *bersiap* period of rampaging bands of Indonesian revolutionaries, is scarcely touched upon in these pages, whereas in reality the events in this period were much more startling to many of the Indies Dutch than the previous years of Japanese occupation.

There is little new to learn from the interviews about the struggle of the Indies people to accommodate to Dutch society. These interviews give evidence of many canonized self-images held by the Indies Dutch. One is that they had to start their careers anew, study harder, and work harder than Dutch-born people to get ahead in life. It was not Paul van Beckum's intention to assess these characterizations, and as the book advances, we notice him adopting the clichés. On the other hand, he does not attempt to disentangle the many contradictions. He leaves *Indisch*-ness as it was presented to him in the stories of this small and haphazardly selected group of interviewees: elusive and highly contradictory.

Identity is not only upheld by memory; it acquires a geography of its own, it attaches itself to places in the new country. It is a pity that we do not read much about the specific life of the Indies people in the Hague. What did *Indisch* The Hague look like, where did the Indies migrants meet, what did they think about the first public *Indische* festivals in the Hague zoo; which were the societies, the bars and the 'dancings' where the famous *Indische* youth gangs met? The 'widow of the Indies', as The Hague was called,

remains a sketchy background to the personal tales.

In short, the book contains too few topographic details on *Indische* life in The Hague to tickle the imagination or memory, and reveals too little about the intricacies of the *Indische* identity. It will certainly cater to the taste of *Indische* readers in The Hague, but certainly not beyond.

Colin Nicholas, *Pathway to dependence; Commodity relations and the dissolution of Semai society*. Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994, vii + 130 pp. [Monash Papers on Southeast Asia 33.] ISBN 0.7326.0562.8. Price: AUD 15.

CORNELIA M.J. VAN DER SLUYS

In this interesting book, the author presents an analysis of the changes that have taken place, particularly since the 1950s, in the economy of the Semai, who form one of the indigenous populations of peninsular Malaysia. Numbering about 20,000, they are located in the provinces of Perak and Pahang. Nicholas conducted his research as part of the requirements for a Master of Science degree in Resource Economics at the Universiti Pertanian (Agricultural University), Malaysia. His theoretical framework relies heavily on neo-Marxism, especially on the discussions prevalent in the 'new economic anthropology' of the French Marxist school.

The main argument of the book is that since the 1950s, the Semai have lost much of their economic autonomy through the influence of two parties: the state on the one hand, and merchant capital on the other. These caused a transition from a 'natural economy', or a subsistence-oriented mode of production (production primarily for consumption), to a form which became dominated by the production of simple commodities (production for exchange). However, Nicholas maintains that the Semai mode of production is still greatly different from economies in which land and labour themselves take on the character of commodities, as in the so-called capitalist societies.

The author argues that until the beginning of the twentieth century, the Semai had a nomadic lifestyle based mainly on hunting and gathering. Their long-standing trade relations with 'outsiders' did not dominate their economy. Although the introduction of cassava and hill *padi* (rice), soon after 1900, led to a more sedentary way of life, this did not change the Semai's economy fundamentally until the 1950s, because the creation of exchange value was not a significant aspect of their 'natural economy'. Nicholas shows how several aspects of the Semai worldview, such as their ideas regarding the importance of sharing, provided for the reproduction of this type of eco-

nomy. From the early 1950s onward, however, a number of processes eroded the Semai's 'natural economy'. The first of these were associated with the events of the Emergency (1948-60), the insurrection of communist guerrillas against the British colonial government. After their first defeat, the communists retreated into the deep jungle where they sought the assistance of the indigenous populations. Consequently these groups began to play a crucial role in the efforts of the colonial government (Malaysia became independent in 1957) to defeat the insurgents. Initially, under the Briggs plan of 1950, the government tried to resettle the so-called Orang Asli (Malay: 'Original People') in areas outside their homelands, where they could be closely monitored. This plan, however, failed, and in mid-1953 another policy was tried out: the development of forts in the deep jungle, which provided some medical and other facilities.

From 1960 onward, the indigenous populations were placed under the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, later called the Department of Orang Asli Affairs (Malay: Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli). In 1973, the Malaysian government gave instructions to set up a total of 25 'Regroupment Schemes' to be established during the next fifteen years. These aimed at concentrating different groups of Orang Asli in specially allocated areas, where they would receive help from the government to develop themselves into full-fledged members of the mainstream of Malaysian society. At the same time this policy was meant to safeguard national security by controlling the movements and activities of the indigenous peoples.

The Regroupment Schemes included all Semai, who were to be allocated the permanent use of plots of land for housing and subsistence gardens which were much smaller than their traditional lands. The Semai were also to be encouraged to undertake income-generating activities, such as the cultivation of rubber and other cash crops, as well as animal husbandry. Nicholas maintains that where it has been applied, this policy has led the Semai into associating their progress and development increasingly with the consumption of modern manufactured goods.

Fieldwork was conducted from mid-August 1983 until January 1984. For his research, Nicholas selected two settlements which were subject to different degrees of governmental influence. The first, Kampung Sungei Buntu (139 people), was a 'traditional' community not yet affected by the regroupment schemes. It was located in the traditional territory, where the Semai still practiced the cultivation of hill rice and continued to be engaged in other subsistence activities such as hunting and fishing. Through trading of forest products, they were also actively engaged in the money economy. The second community, Kampung Kuala Tuak (103 people), was already part of the Batau Regroupment Scheme, although its inhabitants were still allowed to return to their original settlements when they pleased.

Informal probing interviews and participation-observation were used as research methods. Among other things, Nicolas compared the manner in which the members of selected households from each settlement utilized their labour time, the amount of income they generated through the collection of forest products, mainly rattan and petai (*Parkia speciosa*), and how they spent that income. The aim was to compare the influence of state and mercantile capital in both settlements. In Kampung Kuala Tual, the Tribal Welfare Department largely controlled economic activities, for example by granting licences to selected traders. Its population, as a result, was much more vulnerable to exploitation than the Semai of Kampung Sungei Buntu, where there was no such control.

Nicholas argues that despite recent developments, the Semai of both settlements still did possess a 'simple commodity production' economy – that is, an economy which is still based on subsistence in the broad sense of the word. The means of production were still owned by, or easily accessible to, the Semai themselves, and the trade products were irregularly produced. It is also clear from the analysis, however, that all Semai were in an extremely vulnerable position, being totally powerless and deprived of their autonomy by the government's regroupment policy.

Although the period of research was limited and the samples rather small, this proves to be an interesting analysis. One question which it raises is: how will the cultural identity of the Semai, which is largely based on communal use of land and on sharing, develop in the future? In the regroupment plans, Kampung Kuala Tual is allotted 91.1 hectares of land, whereas the *nenggerik* (original common land) of its inhabitants comprises 7,000 hectares; Kampung Sungei Buntu is allocated 109.6 hectares, while its old *nenggerik* measured 25,000 hectares. In both cases, then, less than 2% of the original land area is now available; clearly, the economy will have to change drastically if the Semai are denied any access to their traditional lands.

Nicholas gives various recommendations for a better policy that will safeguard Semai self-determination, especially with regard to the manner and extent to which they are to participate in the wider Malaysian society. He calls, for instance, for a recognition of the inalienable right of the Semai to retain their traditional territories, and recommends that all lands which they have already been deprived of should be returned immediately. He calls for the establishment of a Commission for Orang Asli rights, which should largely comprise representatives from the various sub-ethnic groups.

Nicholas' book consists of seven chapters and a preface, and also contains several maps, an appendix with notes, and a bibliography. It is written in clear language and there are only a few minor flaws. On page 29, the author speaks of 'animal hunts' where he clearly means 'hunting with the help of animals' (dogs). A few of the references mentioned in the text, such as Hill

1977 (Chapter 7, note 4) and Nabudare 1975 (p. 76), are missing from the bibliography. This book will prove to be a valuable addition to the Monash Papers on Southeast Asia series, well worth reading for anyone who is interested in economic change among indigenous peoples. It gives a good example of a comparative analysis of two groups showing different paces of development. The theoretical framework also stimulates further discussion.

Herman C. Kemp, *Bibliographies on Southeast Asia*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1998, xvii + 1128 pp. ISBN 90.6718.121.8. Price: NLG 175 (hardback).

DAVID STUART-FOX

This is a major reference work, both in terms of its importance to scholars of Southeast Asia, and in its sheer size: 5,380 entries, plus various indices, covering a total of 1,128 pages. Anyone who has compiled a major bibliography may well wonder at anyone doing a second one. But Herman Kemp has done just that. Following his *Annotated bibliography of bibliographies on Indonesia* (1990), he has now brought out *Bibliographies on Southeast Asia*, although he was able to incorporate important segments of the former into this new one.

Kemp provides a brief introduction where he discusses method and sources, the internet and electronic publications, annotations, selection criteria, and arrangement, besides providing a range of statistics such as the number of titles in each subject group and for each country. Besides Southeast Asia proper, Papua New Guinea is also included.

No doubt after careful considerations (a point I return to later), Kemp has opted to organize his bibliography in broad subject groups, 34 in all, arranged alphabetically, the same groups used in the KITLV's *Excerpta Indonesia*. Within each group, titles are arranged chronologically, which has the advantage of immediately informing the reader (or should I say user, for this is hardly a book to read in the normal sense of the word) which bibliography is most recent and up-to-date. Kemp provides each entry with succinct annotations (structure, presence of indices and number of items), libraries whose catalogues or databases have been checked, and sometimes cross-references. What the annotations do not provide, and cannot realistically be expected to provide, is information as to what extent recent bibliographies supersede earlier ones.

The listing of libraries where a work is available is a useful tool. Only a very few large libraries will have more than a selection of the bibliographies

cited. Even a specialist library like the KITLV itself has less than 50%, which meant, as Kemp carefully noted, that he had to rely heavily on printed and electronic catalogues of other major libraries. The reader should note, however, that the location annotation in Kemp's work is not always complete, even for the dozen or so libraries whose holdings have been consulted.

There are three important indices: author index (37 pages), subject index (40 pages), and title index (154 pages), the last being arranged first by country and then alphabetically by title. These indices are not just supplements to the main body of the work, but are the very keys through which the bibliography can best be utilized. And this brings me back to the arrangement of the book itself. There are, of course, several ways in which such a bibliography can be arranged, and that chosen by Kemp has, as they all do, advantages and disadvantages. An arrangement by country would have duplicated to varying degrees already existing country bibliographies. Kemp's arrangement by broad subject groups facilitates and encourages a regional perspective, but makes it more difficult to search for that combination of subject and country which is often what the reader wants. Country divisions within each broad subject group, I think, would have been the most handy for the user. Let me again stress, however, that by using the indices, one can search for all manner of combinations.

The most obvious solution to this matter of arrangement is, without doubt, an electronic publication in which searching is easier, quicker, and more specific than in a print bibliography. Perhaps in the future the KITLV might publish its fine bibliographic series in both print and electronic versions, or even put them on its web site.

Let me conclude this review by recommending this *Bibliographies on Southeast Asia* as a major work of bibliographic endeavour. Herman Kemp has given all researchers on Southeast Asia an invaluable research tool.

Lynn Pan (ed.); *The encyclopedia of the Chinese overseas*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999, 399 pp. ISBN 0.7007.1122.8. Price: USD 59.95.

SIKKO VISSCHER

Lynn Pan has done a great job editing this encyclopaedia. In a comparatively short period she has successfully completed what is definitely the most thorough overview of the story of the Chinese overseas. Credit for taking the initiative to compile this volume goes to the Chinese Heritage Centre in Singapore. Generously endowed with donations from ethnic Chinese business leaders in East and Southeast Asia, the Centre wants to be the first

organization in the English-speaking world to develop and collate research on overseas Chinese communities worldwide.

The central theme of the encyclopaedia is really migration, and the questions running through all texts are these: how, when, and why did the Chinese emigrate to their overseas homes, and what did they do there? Rather than adopting the customary alphabetic encyclopaedia format, the editor chose a combination of a topical and a geographical approach. The first four parts cover origins, migration, institutions, and relations respectively, while Part 5 introduces the Chinese immigrant communities in different parts of the world. This structure is interspersed with vignettes of specific events and persona, as well as a beautiful collection of illustrations.

The index and extensive bibliography make this work a real treasure trove that is both accessible and practical to use for those interested only in parts of this extensive story, yet also invites and facilitates deeper delving into topical and geographical cases.

Again, this work is by far the best repository of knowledge on the Overseas Chinese currently available. However, no academic endeavour is without room for improvement. The task of the general editor, who had to combine the work of more than fifty contributing authors with widely differing interests, backgrounds and skills, is hardly to be envied. One unfortunate result is that the current work barely addresses or analyses the imbalances in the current interest in or knowledge on the Overseas Chinese.

There is also an underexposure of cultural and religious activity among migrants in the country studies, as well as a lack of attention for specific local political and business activity, both within the Chinese communities and in interaction with the non-Chinese environments. Immigrants are 'bridgers' with a stake in two or more 'worlds', so that understanding their migratory patterns, organizational behaviour, or social, cultural, economic, and political actions depends as much on knowledge of the receiving as of the sending society. It is in this respect that the encyclopaedia falls just a little short. A future revised edition in which these angles and issues were also addressed would be even more complete and balanced.

This work is indeed a great addition to the field of Overseas Chinese studies, and will be welcomed by those researching or teaching the subject. It also deserves the attention of all academics interested in migration because of its holistic approach, practical format, and sound academic basis.

Jurgen Rudolph, *Reconstructing identities; A social history of the Babas in Singapore*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998, 507 pp. ISBN 1.84014.357.6. Price: GBP 50.

SIKKO VISSCHER

What is identity and what is culture? Any academic interested in these questions will benefit from reading Jurgen Rudolph's social history of the Babas in Singapore. The Babas are the descendants of early male Chinese migrants to the Malayan peninsula who intermarried with local Malay women (called Nyonya) and developed a distinct language as well as a set of customs, practices, art forms, and material culture. After the advent of modern Singapore in 1819, they settled there as well, and were, and are still, a distinguishable social group there in comparison with later Chinese migrants. Rudolph's book centres on a seemingly simple question: 'who is a Baba, who is a Nyonya?' This question leads him to write 'a social history of the Babas in Singapore which describes and analyses social, political and cultural aspects of their identities by taking into account the conceptual history of Baba designations'. With this last phrase he means that instead of trying to define who is Baba, he will describe and analyse the evolution of the concept of Baba-ness through the eyes of the Babas over more than two hundred years of their history.

To achieve this, Rudolph uses an impressive quantity of historical sources which he not only examines in the normal way, but also scrutinizes through an etymological, text, and discourse analysis. As a counterpoint to the historical sources, he makes extensive use of narrational and expert interviews with Baba informants, and of participant observation. This provides him with a running commentary from within the Baba community on its own history and the development of its identities. His combined approach leads to a social and historical 'thick description' of who is a Baba.

Chapters 2 and 3 give a detailed overview of the social and political history of the Babas in the period up to and after 1941 respectively. Rudolph debunks a number of myths and theories about Baba origin and the early period up to the seventeenth century for which few sources exist. He then continues to present and analyse the documented history of the changes in social composition, political organization, and activity of the Babas, as well as their relative position in Singapore society. The opportunities which the colonial system provided to the Babas as go-betweens, on account of their English language abilities and education levels, account for their élite status up to the Second World War. Their 'golden age' lasted from the turn of the century until the 1930s. The Japanese occupation and the fierce social and political changes during the decolonization that followed left the Babas

devoid of a political role to play. After a number of quiet decades, interest in Baba cooking, architecture and art has enjoyed a revival of sorts since the mid-1980s.

Chapters 4 and 5 concentrate on cultures and languages respectively, thereby extending and further elaborating the social and political analysis in the realm of identities, boundaries, and markers. Through detailed description, Rudolph shows that the history of the development of Baba cultures and languages follows a similar principal of change and redefinition. He concludes that current views of what constitutes Baba-ness are based on an idealized recollection of the period of their greatest bloom, from 1900 to the 1930s. He argues that if this essentialized and static notion of Baba-ness is accepted as the only standard, the argument that Baba culture is dwindling and on the verge of extinction is indeed true. However, if the evidence for continuous change and adaptation in Baba identities is acknowledged, new forms and customs of Babas today are as genuine and relevant as ever.

Chapter 6 provides a clever case study of a leading Chinese persona from Singapore, Dr Lim Boon Keng, whose Baba identity was unquestioned at certain times and yet debated at others, thereby underlining Rudolph's argument that we not only have to contend with the fact that identities themselves are multiple and changing, but also with changing perceptions of past identities. A useful 22-page glossary and an extensive 55-page bibliography are exemplary of the book's impressive thoroughness and attention to detail.

On almost all accounts, Rudolph convincingly delivers on his promises in the introduction and Chapter 1, following his theoretical models and methodological outline meticulously. With regard to his self-declared goal to set Baba identities in the context of the encounter with other groups in Singapore society, however, he misses a number of opportunities to reinforce his argument in a wider context. Indeed, just as the Baba identity was not static, neither was that of the China-born Chinese, which made up the majority of the Singapore Chinese community and form the largest 'contrast group' for the Babas. Changes in the attitudes of the China-born to the Baba could have received more attention, especially considering the important examples of partnerships between the two groups (for example, in the first rubber and banking endeavours of the early twentieth century) and the inclusion of Babas in China-born organizations and causes. In the social and political arena Rudolph should have addressed the fact that in the post-war period of decolonization and Baba decline, two of the top Baba leaders served as vice-president of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the very influential organization which stood at the apex of the China-born power structure. They provided this organization with invaluable access to the British rulers, and sat as its appointed representatives on the Municipal and Legislative Council. Certain Babas, and definitely others beside Dr Lim Boon Keng

(highlighted in Chapter 6), were economic, social, political, and perhaps even cultural brokers, living the boundaries of Baba identities and bridging the divides to the China-born community. Elaboration on this role could have made a meaningful addition to an already masterful account.

Rudolph has done all those academics interested in identity, culture, and ethnicity, whether historians, sociologists or anthropologists, a great favour in writing this book. Its theoretical and methodological underpinnings provide a shining example and a model that will hopefully be followed to produce equally interesting social histories.

Perry Moree, *'Met vriend die God geleide'; Het Nederlands-Aziatisch postvervoer ten tijde van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1998, 287 pp. ISBN: 90.5730.012.5. Price: NLG 49,50.

EDWIN WIERINGA

This study, concerning the postal traffic between the Dutch Republic and Asia during the era of the Dutch East Indies Company or VOC (1602-1799), is a PhD thesis defended at the University of Leiden in 1998. The author describes the history of the Company's overseas postal service chronologically, dealing in turn with: (1) the earliest period (1602-1652), during which a rudimentary system was applied in which postal traffic by sea, sometimes with postal stones or the help of the indigenous population at the Cape of Good Hope, was combined with an overland route via the Middle East; (2) the phase of consolidation (1652-1788), during which the aforementioned practice was strengthened, taking advantage of the now permanent establishment at the Cape as 'oceanic post office', and also using the overland route via Aleppo on a regular basis; (3) the innovative years (1788-1799), during which the Company liberalized its postal traffic, formed an organization of fast packet boats, and created a network of post offices in the Dutch Republic and its South African and Asian territories.

In the preface the author points out that the present book grew out of his MA thesis on the Company's packet boats in the late 18th century. This is probably the reason why so much attention is paid in this study to the final years of the Company: Chapter 3 is devoted to the establishment of the packet boat service (pp. 75-112), Chapter 4 to the way in which this functioned (pp. 113-154), and the bulk of the appendices (pp. 161-249) to primary source materials on the packet boat system, including the details of 28 voyages down to the names, ranks, places of birth, and wages of the crews (pp.

179-235). The special emphasis on the packet boat service reduces the discussion of the preceding years (1602-1788) to a mere prologue (Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 17-74).

Despite this imbalance, the elaborate discussion of the packet boat service sheds light on a less studied period which, in the words of the eminent historian Boxer, 'marked the change from the twilight of the maritime power of the V.O.C. to the darkest night'. Moree argues that the Fifth Department of the VOC chamber of Amsterdam, led by members of the Patriot party, played a crucial role in establishing the packet boat service, thereby refuting the general opinion that this Department was of little significance. Furthermore, the creation of a new intercontinental postal service employing fast sailing boats with telling names like Haasje ('Young Hare') and Snelheid ('Speed') proves that the later directors of the Company were not opposed to modernization, and that not all initiatives taken by the declining VOC during the years of 'maritime twilight' (1780-95) were doomed to failure. It is unclear to Moree why the Company did not decide to use regular fast mailboats much earlier, but in fact he hints at a possible answer when he explains that after the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-84) the situation had changed dramatically. New competitors had arrived in the East Indies, and tighter control of the Asian part of the Company was needed. Innovation requires an incentive.

Monique Zaini-Lajoubert, *L'image de la femme dans les littératures modernes indonésienne et malaise*. Paris: Association Archipel, 1994, ix + 221 pp. [Cahiers d'Archipel 24.] ISBN 2.910513.02.5.

EDWIN WIERINGA

In this book the author chronologically describes images of women in modern Malay literature as written in the region of present-day Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore from the middle of the nineteenth century until the 1980s. From the first phase (mid-nineteenth century to 1920) she selected four works: Tan Tjeng Nio's *Sair tiga sobat nona boedjang di eret oleh Baba pranakkan Tangerang* (1897), Tirtò Adhi Soerjo's *Cerita Nyai Ratna* (1909) as well as his *Membeli Bini orang* (1909), and Haji Mukti's *Hikayat Siti Mariah* (1910-12). According to the author the first text was far ahead of its time, drawing a progressive picture of the protagonists, three Chinese girlfriends, as independent women who prefer to remain celibate. In the other three stories which deal with *nyai*, however, women are portrayed as victims of male and racist oppression.

For the second period (1920-42) the author discusses seven Indonesian

and four Malaysian novels: Marah Rusli, *Siti Nurbaya* (1922), Syed Sheikh Ahmad al-Hadi, *Hikayat Faridah Hanom* (1925-26), Ahmad bin Haji Muhammad Rashid Talu, *Lakah Salmah?* (1928), Selasih, *Kalau tak untung* (1933), Hamidah, *Kehilangan mestika* (1935), Hamka, *Di bawah lindungan Kaaba* (1936), Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, *Layar terkembang* (1937), Abdullah Sidek, *Iblis rumah tangga* (1939), Armijn Pane, *Belenggu* (1940), Suwarsih Djojopuspito, *Buiten het gareel* (1940), and Abdullah Sidek, *Nasib Hasnah* (1940). On the basis of these works, Zini-Lajoubert distinguishes two types of women which may be summed up as (1) the dependent and servile woman, oppressed by her family or a victim of circumstances; and (2) the more assertive woman who struggles for her own individuality.

The corpus of the third period (1942-1960s) consists of five Indonesian and eight Malaysian novels: Achdiat K. Mihadja, *Atheis* (1949), Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Keluarga gerilya* (1949), Mochtar Lubis, *Tidak ada esok* (1950) and *Jalan tak ada ujung* (1952), Nh. Dini, *Hati yang damai* (1961), Wijaya Mala, *Mata intan* (1951), A. Samad Said, *Salina* (1961), Hamidah Hassan, *Meniti pelangi* (1964), Hasan Ali, *Tugu* (1965), Shahnnon Ahmad, *Sepanjang jalan* (1966), Khadijah Hashim, *Badai semalam* (1968), Salmi Manja, *Sayang Ustazah sayang* (1968), and Adibah Amin, *Seroja masih di kolam* (1968). Broadly speaking, the women in the aforementioned novels can be categorized into two groups: (1) those who are involved in the dramatical national events; and (2) those who are occupied with themselves and their own problems.

The fourth period (1970-1980s), in which at last more female writers come to the fore, warrants a more detailed discussion. Now the author is able to distinguish two separate literatures, one written by men and the other by women. In the Indonesian novels written by men – Ramadhan K.H., *Keluarga permana* (1978), Bustomi S.A., *Atikah* (1979), Muhammad Ali, *Ibu kita Ramin-ten* (1982), Sori Siregar, *Wanita itu adalah ibu* (1982), and Umar Nur Zain, *Bu Guru Dwisari* (1982) – women are depicted mostly as dependent beings, and in the rare cases where they are independent they cannot escape their destiny – that is, marriage. In the Malaysian novels written by men – Marwiliis Hj. Yusof, *Janda seribu kirai* (1979), Ali Zulfadli, *Tirai senja* (1986), and Shahnnon Ahmad, *Tok guru* (1988) – no independent women exist. In the Malaysian literature written by women – Rosmini Shaari's *Isteri* (1988) and *Ku ingin kasih mu* (1982) – we likewise encounter dependent women, but also dynamic and autonomous ones, as in Fatimah Busu, *Ombak bukan biru* (1977), Zaharah Nawawi, *Sebelum berhujungnya musim bunga* (1972) and Siti Hawa Mohd. Hassan, *Perempuan di lereng* (1984). Finally, the author discusses the novels written by the Indonesian female writers La Rose and Nh. Dini. La Rose is a pop novelist who writes about women of all walks of life, specializing in married women leading unsatisfactory, monotonous lives. Nh. Dini, the author's favourite, is the only example of a writer who addresses feminist

topics. The author concludes, a bit condescendingly to my mind, that one still has to wait a long time before one may speak of a feminist literature written in Malay.

The value of the findings of a survey like this is to a large extent dependent upon the examined corpus of texts. We therefore have to ask ourselves whether a realistic cross-section of modern Malay literature has been studied here, and I am afraid that this is not entirely the case. To begin with, the discussion of the first period is based upon four (Indonesian) works only. The author explains that she has excluded older pieces of literature, such as the *Syair Siti Zubaidah* and the like, because their dates, contexts, and authorships are generally insufficiently known. Nevertheless, in the very same same period in which so-called modern works began to appear, *syair* featuring strong heroines dominated the 'top ten' of printed works. In my opinion this fact should have been reason enough for their inclusion in spite of their allegedly 'traditional' character. Moreover, the author departs from an élitist Western notion of literature for all periods, thereby narrowing her discussion down to novels. In modern Malay literature, however, the novel is a marginal phenomenon; poems, short stories, novellas and serials, published in journals and newspapers, are far more important. Perhaps one could argue that studying this mainstream literature would not have substantially altered the general picture, but that is begging the question. For the last period the booklet *Sri Sumarah dan Bawuk* (1975) by Umar Kayam, containing two short stories about the eponymous heroines, is probably omitted because of its (lack of) length. Apparently, or so I assume, Linus Suryadi's *Pengakuan Pariyem* (1981) did not fit in either due to its poetic form, and Ahmad Tohari's *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* (1982) may have been excluded because it first appeared as a serial in a newspaper. But what about a novel like Arswendo Atmowiloto's *Canting* (1986)? All four aforementioned works, displaying a distinctly Javanese perspective, would have presented interesting material for comparison. These caveats aside, the author presents us with a well-documented and well-researched study (apart from an understandable mistake on p. 17 where E. Douwes Dekker (pen name Multatuli), the author of the famous Dutch novel *Max Havelaar*, is confused with his namesake and distant relative E.F.E. Douwes Dekker). Zaini-Lajoubert's book is an important reference work for all those who are interested in literary representations of women in modern Indonesian and Malaysian novels. Researchers seeking a concise, accessible and reliable overview of its history would do well to start here.