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- Jean-Pascal Bassino, Per Ronnas, *Entrepreneurship in Vietnam; Transformations and dynamics*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) and Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2001, xii + 354 pp., Bhargavi Ramamurty (eds)
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In: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 158 (2002), no: 3, Leiden, 535-592

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Book Reviews

Han Knapen, *Forests of fortune?: The environmental history of Southeast Borneo, 1600-1880*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2001, xiv + 487 pp. [Verhandelingen 189] ISBN 90.6718.158.7. Price: EUR 33.00.

MARTIN BAIER

At the beginning of the 1990s Peter Boomgaard, then director of the Royal Institute for Linguistics and Anthropology (KITLV) in Leiden, initiated a major research programme called EDEN (Ecology, Demography and Economy in Nusantara). The aim was to study environmental change in Indonesia over the last several centuries and its influence on human settlement, agriculture and economy. The results were to be published in a series of books, each dealing with a specific major region of the Indonesian archipelago. Now at last the first of these is available: Han Knapen's deep, detailed and meticulous 500-page study of the environmental history of a large part of Borneo, Asia's largest island, over a period of fully 380 years. The term 'Southeast Borneo', it should nevertheless be added at the outset, is not entirely appropriate for the geographical area covered by this book; to make it so, Pasir and Pulau Laut would also have to be included. As it stands, an exacter designation would have been 'southeastern Borneo between the river Kahayan and the Meratus mountains'.

Forests of fortune? is divided into 11 chapters. Following a reader-friendly introduction, Chapter 2 deals with geography and with naturally occurring changes in the environment over time, while Chapters 3-5 deal with changes in the demographic sphere: population growth and decline, migrations, epidemics and their control, mortality, age of marriage, birth control, abortion, cultural factors such as headhunting, and the influences of economic change, agricultural practices (considered in particularly great detail) and natural disasters on population numbers. Chapters 6 to 9 are concerned, broadly speaking, with (economic) botany and zoology: plant resources (both indigenous and introduced species), animal husbandry, hunting and fishing. The final two chapters deal thematically with the topic of risk (including human and plant diseases, economic hazards and political instability) and its historical consequences, and with the interaction between demography and environment.

Thumbing through the book, one's first feeling is one of astonishment. Have

Borneo studies been blessed in Han Knapen with a second Robert Nicholl (1910-1996)? It was Nicholl who, in the 1980s, scoured the museums and archives of Macao, Goa, Rome, Madrid, Valladolid, Seville, Lisbon and Paris in search of the materials which he later incorporated into his (still unpublished) *Sources for the history of Brunei*, thereby taking the first steps towards a properly founded history of that part of Borneo (King and Horton 1995:7). I know of no other Borneo specialist who has immersed himself to such an extent as Knapen in the archives of the Netherlands and Jakarta in order to bring to light the past of one of the most important parts of the island.

And yet, reading through page by page we still come across points on which this study is incomplete in terms of source coverage. On page 25, Knapen already complains of the scarcity of relevant Dutch sources for the period before 1747. But why exactly has he restricted himself to the Dutch sources? If only he had also made use of the primary and secondary material which was produced by Portuguese, Italians and British writers from 1690 onward! By way of illustration: attention to Portuguese references (on p. 543, for example) to a 'Porto de Beagius' (Port of the Biaju/Ngaju) in Bartolomeo Ferro's *Istoria delle missioni de' chierici regolari Teatini* (1704) would have revealed that direct trade with non-Muslim Dayaks was in principle entirely possible. The Ngaju (not the Bakumpai!), according to this source, wanted to become allies of the king of Portugal, offering to help the Portuguese with the construction of an armed *fortezza*. However, only the exertion of influence via Muslim sultanates was compatible with the commercial (and later colonial) policies of 'divide and rule' followed by the European sea powers, and so nothing came of this unique attempt by the Dayaks of the Kapuas-Murong to involve themselves directly in foreign trading and political networks (and at the same time, of course, to secure foreign military support).

Ferro's *Istoria*, it should be said, does at least appear in Knapen's bibliography, but at least one other source which would have provided further clarification on this point does not (Pijnappel 1860:287, 305, 312). This shows that the Ngaju were once excellent seafarers, trading directly with Singapore until well into the first half of the nineteenth century. Knapen's own acknowledgement (p. 168) that in 1691 the Ngaju controlled the estuaries of the Kapuas and the Kahayan, and attacked trading vessels over a much wider area, might also have given him pause for thought, while the fact that on at least one occasion a European trading power attempted to take advantage of the resulting tensions with Banjarmasin would surely have been worth mentioning in this context.

With regard to historical demography, some statistics on early Catholic missionary activities could have helped Knapen to gain an impression of population densities among the Ngaju of the lower Kapuas during the seventeenth century. Gemelli Careri (1732:216) mentions the baptism of 1,800

Catholics in just six months, Valentijn (1862, III:252) and older sources that the number of converts rose from three to some 4,000 within a period of no longer than three years.

It is striking how negatively the 'Biaju' are portrayed in Dutch sources: Van Hohendorff (1862:211), for instance, dismisses them as 'wild mountain folk', and some earlier writers refer simply to 'cannibals'. By contrast the Banjarese, who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were responsible for successive massacres of European traders, often seem to have been handled with velvet gloves. Here too, Knapen's study might have been enriched by greater use of Roman Catholic sources as counterpoints to Dutch accounts.

A similar point can be made regarding what he writes about the 'Bekumpai complex' – actually 'Bakumpai' in the Ngaju language (Bingan and Ibrahim 1997:20) and in most of the literature, but Knapen follows the Banjarese pronunciation. The question is whether it was really the Bakumpai who 'controlled' the Kapuas estuary two centuries ago (p. 73). Schwaner (1853-54, II:4-5) mentions that the area around the Terusan, a natural waterway at the mouth of the Kapuas, was formerly inhabited by a dense population of Dayaks who later migrated north into the Pulau Petak area. In 1840 this area was inhabited by some 15,000 Ngaju Dayaks (Lummel 1882:54). But in no way were these Bakumpai 'Dayaks'. In his interpretation of who the 'Bekumpai' were, Knapen has probably followed Weinstock (1983:89, 92-95) too closely. The term 'Bekumpai War' (p. 177) is misleading; 'Surapati invasions' would have been more appropriate. Surapati was not a Bakumpai but a 'Dusun' Dayak, and the paramount chief of the northern Barito area. Between 1821 and 1839 he led a number of raids along the Kahayan and Kapuas. The biggest of these took place in 1825 and involved 4,000 men including some 'Bakumpai', but Surapati's forces were completely wiped out near the Terusan by the combined forces of the Ngaju of the Kahayan and lower Kapuas. If the lower Kapuas had been 'controlled' by the Bakumpai, such a defeat would hardly have been conceivable. It is interesting to note that when rumours of a renewed invasion (this time involving 'Pari' Dayaks) circulated in the Pulau Petak area in 1842, the German Protestant missionaries working there regarded it as their duty to prepare the Ngaju for military resistance and to lead the defence themselves (Kriele 1915:33-4; Lummel 1882:58, 59).

This brings us to the question at the centre of Knapen's research: why is Borneo so sparsely populated? Or: is Borneo really one of the most fertile countries in the world, as Raffles (1830:275) believed (compare: *Indisch Genootschap* 1914:142-3), a land of 'forests of fortune'? Knapen concludes that it is not, and his judgement, based as it is on almost inconceivably intensive research (at least 2,000 documentary sources inspected!), cannot but command respect. Yet here again, certain apparently marginal omissions of study and analysis are enough to give rise to doubts. In this context I will restrict

myself to two issues: (1) the role of violence, and (2) the influence of social stratification (the presence of slave and aristocratic classes).

(1) Knapen, of course, is well informed regarding the prevalence of violence and war in the history of the lands between the Kahayan and the Meratus mountains. The longest interlude of sustained peace in the whole period between 1600 and 1880, according to his 'overview of wars' (pp. 176-7), lasted from 1835 to 1858. Nevertheless, he believes, all this violence had few demographic consequences since war was a 'generally small-scale affair causing only a limited number of direct casualties', and even the economic disruption due to warfare was 'usually limited' (p. 374). The dimensions of indigenous violence 'were likely overstated by colonial authorities in order to justify their economic and political domination' (p. 167). As far as mortality was concerned, the decisive factors behind the low population density were endemic and epidemic diseases such as malaria and smallpox. Essays by Knapen in separate anthologies (Knapen 1997, 1998) make it clear that he regards this as one of the main conclusions of his study.

Here again, however, it is necessary to weigh up the complete evidence of all sources and eye-witness accounts. Certainly many non-Dutch as well as Dutch observers believed that it was headhunting, political instability and continual violence which kept population numbers down. Many areas were said to have been completely depopulated by war – examples include the west bank of the Barito as a result of the hereditary conflict between the Ngaju and the Dusun/Lawangan (Stöhr 1959:60), and the whole upper Kapuas area of West Kalimantan (Sellato 1994:25). Pijnappel (1860:338-9) describes how hundreds of fighting men took part in expeditions to plunder and burn villages or pallisaded longhouses and massacre their inhabitants. Settlements were besieged for one to two weeks, then stormed. Where practicable and opportune, prisoners were taken for use or sale as slaves. Whole villages were eradicated in this way. Spaan (1918:784) reports that the once densely populated Sangkuliang area of East Borneo was entirely depopulated by Segai headhunting raids. Anyone who reads the travel accounts from the mid-nineteenth century – for instance, the one by Maks (1861) – must doubt Knapen's theory (p. 86) that at that time the predominant settlement pattern was one of dispersed field houses as opposed to fortified longhouses. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century, with the abolition of headhunting, that field huts were routinely used as permanent residences.

(2) The same period brought decisive changes in patterns of social stratification. All forms of slavery (debt-slavery, the purchase of slaves from neighbouring tribes, and the enslavement of prisoners-of-war) were forbidden by the colonial government. The welfare and status of the chiefs had depended

on the ownership and labour of slaves. It was mainly using this form of forced labour that the tall, spacious longhouses, with their surrounding ironwood pallisades, were built. Tichelman (1949:231) reports that as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, 800 slaves were imported annually to eastern Borneo from the Sulu sultanate: the stronger ones for their labour, the less strong to serve as human sacrifices at the great feasts held by Dayak chieftains in the interior. During funeral feasts for a chief named Tundan on the upper Kahayan in 1863, 60 slaves were reportedly slaughtered (Mallinckrodt 1924-25:258). Knapen (pp. 392-5) is surely right to make the point that slaves were held partly as substitutes for children, and to link growing numbers of children (rising fertility) with declining numbers of slaves in the context of economic and political changes which made the former more useful than the latter as providers of agricultural labour. However, the role of slavery in maintaining the prosperity and status of élite groups should also have been considered in a work of (partly) economic history like this. The subject of slavery might also have received more attention here in relation to demographic statistics: one third of the Pulau Petak population, according to Becker (1849: 427), or two thirds according to a Rhineland missionary source in my possession, consisted of slaves. Perelaer (1881, I:33) even notes that at least on occasion, the colonial government employed slave labour in its coal mines.

These, then, were what I would regard as my more serious criticisms of Knapen's ideas. Among the less important amendments I will mention just three. 1) Knapen claims (p. 251) that the technique of terracing wet ricefields was not practiced anywhere in Borneo in historical times, but in fact the presence of this precolonial agricultural technology already impressed the earliest foreign explorers in the Kerayan area (Schneeberger 1979:49). 2) Taking his lead from the rather superficial work of Bernard Sellato, Knapen (p. 283) states that the hunter-gathering Punan practice no animal husbandry, but in 1903 Tehupeiorij (1906:45) observed domesticated pigs and poultry among the Kelai Punan. 3) Knapen attributes the failure of tobacco cultivation in the northern Hulu Sungai region to plant disease and unfavourable weather (pp. 274-5). According to the missionary Sundermann, however, 'the planters maintained that prices in Europe were kept artificially low in order to prevent Borneo tobacco from establishing a place for itself on the market' (*Indisch Genootschap* 1914:159).

Out of view of most established cultural anthropologists, Knapen has produced a standard work which is of significance for the whole of Borneo. Nobody with a serious interest in the area which stretches from Banjarmasin and its hinterland to the Müller and Schwaner mountains will be able to do without this book. The ambitious scope of the study and the enormous wealth of relevant sources have made heavy, perhaps excessive demands on

a single scholar; ideally it would have been better to divide the enormous terrain covered here between at least two researchers.

I would like to conclude this review by suggesting that a continued dialogue between anthropologists and missionary theologians would be fruitful in the Southeast Borneo context. Schärer's *Ngaju religion* (1963) is a flop in this respect: taking his PhD in Leiden, he was obliged by Dutch scholars to squeeze Ngaju culture into the theoretical framework of Leiden structuralism. But as Sundermann said to a meeting of Leiden 'Indologists' almost nine decades ago (*Indisch Genootschap* 1914:159): 'Not everything comes to the ear of the resident in Banjarmasin; but we missionaries live among the people and see at first hand what they do and what they desire'.

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Per Ronnas and Bhargavi Ramamurty (eds), *Entrepreneurship in Vietnam; Transformation and dynamics*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) and Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2001, xii + 354 pp. ISBN 87.87062.89.5 (NIAS) and 981.230116.X (ISEAS). Price: SGD 29.90 (paperback).

JEAN-PASCAL BASSINO

This book provides an introduction and in-depth analysis of the results of two surveys of private manufacturing industry in Vietnam, undertaken in 1991 and 1997 respectively. These surveys result from a cooperative effort between the Asian Regional Team for Employment Promotion of the International

Labour Organization, the Institute of Labour Studies and Social Affairs of the Ministry of Labour in Vietnam, and the Department of International Economics and Geography at the Stockholm School of Economics, with support from the Swedish International Development Authority.

All nine contributors to this volume are or were researchers or post-graduate students at the Stockholm School of Economics (HHS) and were involved in the surveys. They provide a comprehensive description of the development and transformation of the non-State manufacturing sector during (and after) the introduction of economic liberalisation (Doi Moi).

In the introductory section, Per Ronnas emphasizes the job creation aspect by non-State enterprises as a decisive factor to promote economic reform. He also carefully describes the methodology used and the sample assembled for investigation (923 firms were surveyed in 1991, of which 356 resurveyed in 1997). Both urban and rural enterprises in the North and the South of the country have been covered, in Hanoi, Haiphong, and Ho Chi Minh City for urban enterprises, in the provinces of Ha Son Binh, Vinh Phu, Lang An, and Cuu Long for the rural ones. The second section, by Maud Hemlin, presents the salient features of the results. The third section, by Bhargavi Ramamurthy, deals with the origin and development of non-state manufacturing enterprise. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth sections, Maud Hemlin, Carmina Cortés and Per Ronnas investigate, respectively, the linkages with the rest of economy, the payment of taxes and fees, and the conditions of employment, including labour compensation. The seventh by Per Ronnas, and the eighth and ninth section, by Bhargavi Ramamurthy, dissect the transformation of the non-State sector between 1991 and 1997. The co-editors provide a summary and conclusion in the last section. The bibliography or endnotes are somewhat economical on references, but a relatively detailed index is available at the end of the volume.

Entrepreneurship in Vietnam is an eminently readable book; however one may regret that it doesn't include case studies of success or failure and that the comparative dimension (with other Southeast Asian countries or China) is absent. As a result, readers interested in the interplay of technological innovation and institutional change, which must explain to a large extent the rapid development of private enterprise, may feel disappointed by the narrowly quantitative approach adopted in the book. By contrast, scholars specializing in socio-economic reforms in Vietnam or working on the transformation of the industrial structure and labour market in developing Asian countries will be grateful to the authors, both for undertaking these surveys in the first place and for offering a clear and meaningful presentation of the results.

Renske Biezeveld, *Between individualism and mutual help: Social security and natural resources in a Minangkabau village*. Delft: Eburon, 2001, xi + 307 pp. ISBN 90.5166.888.0. Price: EUR 25.00.

ADRIAAN BEDNER

While water and land rights in the Minangkabau are at the centre of Renske Biezeveld's study, this PhD thesis offers more than just an update of the legal-anthropological work done by her promoters Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann in the same area during the late 1970s. Starting out from the question of how important natural resources are for social security in the village of Sungai Kamuyang, Biezeveld looks at processes of individualization and how they impact on the social and economic situation of the villagers concerned. She manages to do this by shifting – seemingly without effort – from anthropological descriptions to political-economic and legal analysis, all the while dotting her analysis with expanded fieldwork notes that ensure lively reading.

The overall argument of the book is that while a trend towards individualization can indeed be discerned, and this has a negative impact on 'high level' social security arrangements, the consequences are by no means as dramatic as portrayed by many of the villagers themselves. Individualization is defined as a reduction in collaboration at the level of the village, nuclearization of kinship ties and a shift from communal to more individualized land rights. Juxtaposing older anthropological sources with villagers' perceptions of the past, Biezeveld convincingly shows that change has been incremental and the past idealized.

This finding is given additional salience by the timing of the field research, which Biezeveld carried out both before and after the start of the current economic and political crisis in Indonesia. As a result she was able to test some of her hypotheses on how social security arrangements would work out under economic stress. In this manner, Biezeveld found that the 'client' partners in what she had originally seen as patron-client relationships tended to disrupt those relationships with surprising swiftness when more advantageous opportunities offered themselves. More generally, it appeared that social security arrangements above the level of close kin collapsed rather readily under economic stress. The adverse effects of the economic situation, however, were to some extent counterbalanced by new opportunities for producing export products, and by the speedy response of villagers to the changed situation. *Between individualism and mutual help* thus shows how in an era of rapid transmission of information, external influences can cause actors to behave in ways which seem at odds with what are perceived as their 'static' cultural values.

The legal-anthropological part of this book, moreover, has much value in its own right. The sections on land rights and water rights are both highly readable accounts of complex use practices at the village level and how these are regulated – or rather, negotiated. A remarkable facet of this section is Biezeveld's account of a rather new phenomenon in the village arena, 'discourse shopping': the ability of (some) villagers to shift nimbly from one legitimizing discourse to another depending on whom they are addressing. When trying to explain to state officials why they are entitled to a piece of land, for instance, they will build their arguments on the state legal system, while *adat* functionaries are addressed with *adat* talk. In a society increasingly marked by diverse normative orders, agility in discourse shopping is likely to become an important asset in the local competition for power.

This part of the thesis also provides an important potential field of application for a longstanding academic debate which recently seems to have entered a new phase: the question of the relationships between *adat*, law, and power. While Biezeveld's account is clear and convincing, she pays only scant attention to the theoretical implications of her findings for this particular debate. That not all of the theoretical avenues opened up by her empirical material are followed should be regarded as a token of the study's richness; it is, moreover, an obvious consequence of her choice for social security as her main research theme. My point about the unexplored links between *adat*, law and power is made here not by way of criticism, but rather to underline the fact that the material which Biezeveld offers is most useful for (comparative) theoretical purposes in this respect as in others.

In summary, Biezeveld's study has many merits and can be warmly recommended to anyone with an interest in the Minangkabau or in any of the other subjects mentioned above.

Alison Murray, *Pink fits; Sex, subcultures and discourses in the Asia-Pacific*. Clayton, Victoria: Monash Asia Institute, 2001, xii + 198 pp. ISBN 1.87692.401.2. [Monash Papers on Southeast Asia 53.] Price: AUD 29.95 (paperback).

LINDA RAE BENNETT

This book collates a series of Murray's recent papers into a coherent and intellectually rigorous volume. Geographically the volume maps the diverse subcultures of sex work and alternative sexualities in the Asia-Pacific region, focusing in different chapters on Indonesian sex workers, lesbians in Jakarta, Thai sex workers in Sydney and images of sex work in Asia – with a particu-

lar focus on discourses of trafficking. The book is divided into three sections, dealing in turn with 'Sexual subcultures' (in Part 1), 'Images of sex work in Asia' (Part 2) and AIDS discourses and practices (Part 3).

Murray's work in this volume is, as usual, explicitly political on multiple fronts – actively critiquing stereotypes and popular attitudes across academic, human rights, HIV/AIDS and development discourses. She critiques the moral prejudice underlying popular constructions of prostitution: 'that prostitution is so horrible that no-one would willingly do it' (p. v). She investigates thoroughly shifts in who has, or has not, got power in different locations, exploring how the marginal is continually redefined in each place. In the concluding chapter, Murray argues powerfully for the recognition of human rights for sex workers, including the recognition of their choice to engage in sex work. The book also has a strong focus on practice in both HIV/AIDS prevention and interventions, and in conducting ethical research with concrete outcomes. The appendices include the 'Declaration of the Asia-Pacific Network of Sex Workers'.

Murray's ability to synthesize complex arguments to ensure the relevance of her work across disciplines is a key strength of this volume. The book is useful to scholars, students, development workers, HIV/AIDS professionals and policy analysts with particular interest in the Asia-Pacific region. Topically the book explores sexuality, sex work, subcultures, HIV/AIDS and human rights in rich detail, drawing upon considerable experience and field research in each of the locations included. Although Murray explicitly situates her theoretical approach within the field of queer geography, or human geography more broadly, her work also embodies significant theoretical contributions that are useful in a variety of academic disciplines including queer studies, the anthropology of sexuality, feminist ethnography, postcolonial studies, critical medical anthropology, discourses on sexual and reproductive rights, and contemporary studies of political economy.

The paperback volume is reasonably priced at AUD 29.95. Stylistically the volume is sophisticated, yet well structured and written in accessible language which makes it appropriate reading for a broad audience. Unfortunately, the book lacks an index, which would be of significant value considering the broad regional and topical content covered in the various chapters. Overall, *Pink fits* is a significant and timely contribution that builds upon Murray's well established reputation and demonstrates further her particular talent for analysis of the nexus between political economy, local culture and sexuality in the Asia-Pacific region.

Laurence Monnais-Rousselot, *Médecine et colonisation; L'aventure indochinoise 1860-1939*. Paris: CNRS Editions, 1999, 489 pp. ISBN 2.271.05657.8. Price: EUR 32.00 (paperback).

PETER BOOMGAARD

Medical history of Southeast Asia is not a field with many players. A new monograph on this topic, therefore, is always something of an event. Laurence Monnais-Rousselot's *Médecine et colonisation*, with almost 500 pages clearly a 'big' event, is the published version of a 1079-page PhD dissertation (*thèse de doctorat nouveau régime*) defended in 1997. It deals with the introduction and influence of Western, and particularly French, medicine in what are now the countries of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. The book covers the period 1860 to 1939, when the component areas of Indochina were governed by the French under various designations (colonies proper, protectorats).

The book consists of four main parts. The first part presents the various contexts with which the reader needs to be familiar – the political developments of the period, the Indochinese disease environment (with emphasis on epidemics), and French medical and sanitary practice on the eve of the colonization episode. The second part tells, in considerable detail, the story of the expansion of the French colonial medical services and their fight against insalubrity and against the important epidemic diseases (smallpox and cholera in particular). In the third part of the book the focus is on the varying fortunes of the medical personnel (physicians, nurses, birth attendants), both French and indigenous. The final part addresses the questions of how the indigenous peoples responded to the introduction and expansion of French colonial medicine, of the results of medical intervention, and of the influence of the colonial experience on the development of medical science.

As might be expected of such a voluminous publication, the book is rich in detail, based on a thorough knowledge of a large number of both published and unpublished (archival) sources. The author is a cautious scholar, not overly fond of the facile generalizations often to be found in recent publications on anything 'colonial'. She stresses the differences in developments between each of the five regions involved (Cochinchina, Tonkin, Annam, Cambodia, Laos), without losing sight of the commonalities.

However, one of the book's main qualities, its richness in detail, is also its main weakness. It might appear churlish to criticise the length of a publication that has already been trimmed fairly rigorously (from over 1,000 to fewer than 500 pages), but it does rather tax the reader's patience to be presented with detailed accounts of the spread of institutions such as hospitals and out-patient stations. This also applies to the veritable flash flood of names of physicians and suchlike, particularly from page 231 onward. At the

same time, given the almost encyclopaedic character of the book, the rather meagre index is somewhat disappointing.

This book is written in French by a French scholar, is largely based on French sources, and describes the influence of French medicine on local people. It does deal with the reaction of local people to this intrusion, but it does not (except on pages 351-64) say much about what is usually called 'indigenous medicine'. Nevertheless, *Médecine et colonisation* is an admirable study, and an important contribution to the field of medical history.

Yujiro Hayami and Masao Kikuchi, *A rice village saga; Three decades of Green Revolution in the Philippines*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000, xviii + 274 pp. ISBN 0.333.72617.0. Price: GBP 57.50 (hardback).

IAN COXHEAD

In the study of economic development, nothing beats a time series of data enriched by a knowledgeable historical perspective. This book brings together research based on repeated observations on the economic life of householders in a Philippine village over three decades, by two deservedly celebrated authors. Yujiro Hayami's prolific career as a student of agricultural development extends over more than three decades, and his published collaborations with Masao Kikuchi span more than two. The village, located in a lowland rice-growing area in the Manila hinterland, was originally chosen to study the impact of the introduction of new technologies based on improved rice varieties and popularly known as the Green Revolution. Over time, however, its history as traced in this book encompasses not only the Green Revolution but many other changes in Philippine economy and society: population growth, landlessness and land reform, the spread of irrigation, agricultural commercialization and mechanization, and rural industrialization. In addition, the indirect effects of crises and transformations in the wider Philippine economy are felt through commodity prices, investments, and the ebbs and flows of labour migration.

This volume synthesizes and substantively extends a series of previously produced papers and monographs, themselves in turn based on eleven rounds of household surveys conducted by the authors and their colleagues and assistants at the Philippine-based International Rice Research Institute between 1966 and 1997. These surveys gathered data not only on rice farming practices, but also on household-level variables such as education, wealth and incomes, and village-level variables such as irrigation, markets and the

structure of production by agriculture and industry. Most of the analysis in the book consists of careful comparisons of village averages (for example, rice yields, technology adoption, or sources of household income) across survey years. Trends revealed in this way are then examined for economic meaning. Of particular interest among many subjects are the authors' documentation of the productivity and distributional effects of the Green Revolution, the introduction and eventual failure of successive land reform and rural development strategies, and the increasing 'globalization' of the village economy first through integration with the Manila economy in the 1970s, then through labor emigration in the 1980s, and finally through inflows of foreign investment capital in the 1990s.

Increases in labour productivity associated with the Green Revolution and labour market integration helped offset the distributional effects of an increasingly unequal ownership distribution of farm land; thus the overall distribution of income remained roughly stable over the three decades from 1966. However, the authors make the deeply disturbing revelation that despite the Green Revolution, rising educational attainment and increasing labor mobility, real (CPI-adjusted) per capita incomes in the village rose by an average of only 0.6% per year throughout the period studied. One important reason for this miserable record is a sustained decline in the real price of rice; as the authors conclude, 'major gains in productivity from the adoption of new rice technology during the Green Revolution period were more than fully transferred from producers to consumers through deterioration in the terms of trade against the rice sector' (p. 231). Another reason, and one which for completeness might have been more deeply explored, is that real income trends (like underlying real wage trends) in the village largely mirrored those in the Philippine economy as a whole over this period. Substantial increases in agricultural productivity only helped income growth in the village to exceed population growth by the slimmest of margins, given decades of mismanagement of the macroeconomy and the consequent chronic underperformance of Philippine industrial sectors.

Hayami and Kikuchi present the above material in a highly accessible and articulate manner. The writing style is rigorous yet informal and free of jargon, and data are introduced, presented and interpreted in an enviably clear manner. The book begins with a detailed historical overview, but subsequent chapters are organized by thematic content, an approach which allows for analytical depth without sacrifice of the historical perspective. Richly endowed with data, analytical clarity and the insights of long experience, this is a landmark book in the literature on Asian agricultural development. Specialists in agricultural development, economic historians of Asia, and all with an interest in economic development will benefit by reading it.

Frans Hüsken and Huub de Jonge (eds), *Violence and vengeance; Discontent and conflict in New Order Indonesia*. Saarbrücken: Verlag für Entwicklungspolitik, 2002, 163 pp. [Nijmegen Studies in Development and Cultural Change 37.] ISBN 3.88156.758.5. Price: EUR 21.00.

ROBERT CRIBB

Violence in Indonesia is a celebrity topic at the moment and this volume is one of four to appear in the half decade since the fall of Suharto ended the apparent certainties of New Order Indonesia.¹ All four volumes are edited collections, partly because violence in Indonesia is so widespread and so varied that no single scholar can yet master the topic, partly because violence as an analytical concept is remarkably underdeveloped. Violence typically involves perpetrators, victims and various kinds of witness and it operates through threats and memories as well as through direct acts. There are also serious problems of information which stand in the way of understanding specific acts of violence. For the moment, therefore, there is no well-articulated agenda for the study of violence in Indonesia and we are still at the stage of juxtaposing intriguing cases in the hope of deeper insights.

This book is just such a juxtaposition – seven chapters and an introduction, all very different in form and focus. The most ambitious contribution comes from Eldar Bråtan, who examines three cases of village violence in rural Java. He argues that exercising violence is an important way of defining who is inside and outside the community. Those outside the community are 'beyond humanity', as he puts it. If they impinge on the interests of the community, they become vulnerable to extreme violence unless they repent quickly and acknowledge community boundaries. Less convincingly, he tries to apply this analysis to the 'mysterious' Petrus killings of 1982-1984. Following Pemberton and Siegel, he portrays the killings as a massive claim by the state to political hegemony (that is, the right to define who is to be accepted as part of the community) and impunity (warning the rest of society that anyone at all could become a victim of invincible state power). To my mind, this reading of Petrus is asserted rather than based in any empirical proof and it downplays the two key instrumental elements in the killings: an intra-élite struggle for power which involved eliminating gangsters linked

¹ The others are: Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhöfer (eds), *Violence in Indonesia* (Hamburg: Abera, 2001), Freek Colombijn and Thomas Lindblad (eds), *Roots of violence in Indonesia; Contemporary violence in historical perspective* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002) and Charles Coppel (ed.), *Violent conflicts in Indonesia; Analysis, representation and resolution* (London: Routledge/Curzon, forthcoming).

with Ali Murtopo, and a populist response to rising crime levels. In fact Henk Schulte Nordholt's chapter in this book deals with Petrus in precisely these terms. Rather than seeing violence as an intricate ideological plot, he sees it as confirmation of a fundamental weakness in the New Order which forced it to resort repeatedly to crude brutality and which made semi-clandestine violence a favoured tool for conflict within the élite. Unfortunately, there is no hint of debate on this topic between the two papers. It is a pity, too, that neither author seems to have used Bouchier's definitive study of Petrus in coming to a conclusion.²

The chapter by Rosalia Sciortino and Ines Smyth echoes Bråtan in some respects in portraying domestic violence against women as an adjunct to the New Order's well-known efforts to define women's roles primarily as wives and mothers: violence against women is part of the complex structure of women's subordination in society. Although it is important to be reminded of domestic violence as an otherwise hidden problem, the chapter is disappointingly thin on details and analysis. There is nothing to tell us about the specific character of domestic violence in the context of Indonesian history and culture. By contrast, Kees van Dijk's chapter, although baldly titled 'Realms of order and disorder in Indonesian life', is actually a detailed and thoughtful study of violence by school children in Indonesian cities. Although the chapter ends somewhat inconclusively, it deftly outlines the scope of the problem and surveys a range of possible explanations, drawing attention to the role of children in earlier violent conflicts, especially the revolution and the aftermath of the 1965 coup.

Stefan Eklöf also juggles with different explanations in his careful analysis of the massive killings of communists in Bali in 1965-1966. He thoroughly surveys the existing literature, weighs up his sources, and points to the likelihood of a wide range of causes. His most intriguing suggestion is that the intensity of the killings in Bali may have been a consequence of the immediacy to the Balinese of a supernatural world in which covert violence is common. He also draws attention to the fact that some killing seems to have been carried out by people in an altered state of mind. It is an intriguing issue. On the one hand, this line of analysis risks mystifying violence, but on the other hand it may be a valuable way of approaching the strange phenomenon that violence – also in the West – sometimes seems to be more a condition than a set of actions.

Finally, one chapter is really out of place in this volume. Jean-Luc Maurer loosely links his chapter on political jokes and puns to the theme of the book

² David Bouchier, 'Crime, law and state authority in Indonesia', in: Arief Budiman, (ed.), *State and civil society in Indonesia*, pp. 177-211. Clayton, Victoria: Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1994.

by suggesting that political humour in New Order Indonesia was a response to the structural violence of the system, but it is an unconvincing gloss. The chapter is simply an engaging compilation of jokes and wordplays as heard during the late New Order.

The juxtaposition of these chapters does not necessarily get us closer to understanding violence as a general phenomenon in Indonesian society, but the contributions are a valuable part of the continuing investigation.

Michael Leifer (ed.), *Asian nationalism*. London: Routledge, 2000, x + 210 pp. ISBN 0.415.23285.6; price: GBP 18.99 (paperback); ISBN 0.415.23284.8; price: GBP 60.00 (hardback).

FRANK DHONT

The book offers the reader a collection of case studies relating to the development of nationalism in several Asian countries. These studies are introduced by a theoretical chapter, and concluded by one on the various forms of Asian nationalism. China is extensively dealt with in three chapters which discuss respectively the Chinese state, the ethnic minorities in western China, and the issue of Taiwan. The remainder of the work focuses on nationalism in Japan, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Chapter 1 provides an informative theoretical overview of the major paradigms in the study of nationalism, as well as views on nations, nationality, ethnicity, and states. The argument is made that nationalism is likely to remain a major force in the world in the foreseeable future. In the next chapter Michael Yahuda uses an historical approach to discuss the way the People's Republic of China came into being and how Chinese nationalism was reflected in the actions of its leaders. In Chapter 3 Solomon Karmel takes up the issue of ethnic nationalism in China, focusing primarily on Tibetan nationalism, but also touching on the cases of other minorities in Western China, and on the decades-long conflict over autonomy. Chapter 4, by Christopher Hughes, deals with the status of Taiwan as a sovereign nation or part of the People's Republic of China, and with how the Taiwanese people and Taiwanese politicians try to balance between the two. Ian Nish (Chapter 5) takes up the subject of the virulent nationalism of Japan before the Second World War and the reaction against military nationalism in the mentality of the Japanese of the post-war era. Chapter 6, by Meghnad Desai, emphasizes communalism as the destabilizing factor in the Indian state and its repercussions for the major political parties in India; while the following piece (Chapter 7) by Athar Hussain explains the creation of the Islamic Republic of

Pakistan against the background of Pakistan's variegated ethnic composition. The editor's own contribution is Chapter 8 on Indonesian nationalism, the main theme of which is how the Indonesian regime demonstrates nationalistic tendencies in its policies. James Putzel's contribution (Chapter 9) argues that seen in historical perspective, democracy and nationalism do not always go hand in hand in the Philippines. The book closes with a final chapter (10) by James Mayall, who recapitulates on the images which have emerged from the various case studies and describes how Asian nationalism is perceived by the international world order.

Asian Nationalism brings together a group of experts, each writing on nationalism in one country. The resulting very diverse picture proves the backbone of the book. The contributions enrich the reader's understanding of the situation prevailing in those countries, although an inescapable diversity of approach between the writers is indeed noticeable. The complexity of the issue of nationalism makes it hard for the contributors to provide a consistent picture in accordance with the theoretical models and definitions explained in the book's initial chapter. Indeed it is exactly this difficulty which is addressed by the final chapter. The fact that each contribution illuminates nationalism in its own particular way is not necessarily a drawback; it can also be seen as a valid attempt to look at nationalism from several different angles. The initial chapter is particularly instructive as it provides a good overview of the theoretical issues surrounding nationalism, states, nations, and ethnicity.

The book as a whole successfully brings out the present situation with regard to nationalism in various countries. However, the selection of a limited number of (albeit important) Asian nations limits the scope of the study and makes it harder to come to theoretical conclusions relating to Asian nationalism. In summary: this book provides a clear insight into the countries discussed and inspires interested readers to explore more deeply the issue of nationalism in Asia.

Joseph Fischer and Thomas Cooper, *The folk art of Bali; The narrative tradition*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1998, xx + 116 pp. ISBN 983.56.0052.X. Price: USD 60.00 (hardback).

DAVID VAN DUUREN

The title of this book is rather misleading. The term 'folk art' conjures up subconsciously images of relatively unimportant or folkloristic local crafts such as decorated village pottery, or colourful woven baskets. But that is not what

the authors mean by folk art. In their view *all* Balinese art, including – indeed particularly – the major traditions, is real folk art; the work of anonymous artists for use in centuries-old communal rituals, it is an expression of the community, of the folk. This art illustrates the narrative tradition – meaning, in the words of Fischer and Cooper, 'that body of ancient Indian and Javanese stories [...], folk tales, and popular stories that have shaped over time the content of Balinese art and performances' (p. vii), including the Balinese versions of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, the Malat, the Calonarang, and the Sutasoma and Tantri tales, the oldest and most important of which are recorded in *lontar* manuscripts. These are the stories, cycles, and episodes that give colour and content to the rituals which, when performed, protect the community against all types of disruptive forces and lead to harmony in life.

Unfortunately, *The folk art of Bali* does not deal with all the major aspects of interpreting and illustrating the narrative tradition. Some forms of temple architecture and the *wayang* masks have been omitted because the authors feel that these have already received sufficient scholarly attention elsewhere. A pity, since the overview in this book is therefore incomplete. However, the subjects which are covered make the book very well worthwhile: shadow puppets, traditional painting, embroidery, and glass paintings.

The chapter on the *wayang kulit*, the shadow play with flat, painted puppets made of cow or buffalo hide, gives a very good overview of all aspects of this art form: the inestimable significance of this sort of performance to the local community; the way the puppets are made; the formal conventions of puppet design, the regional styles and the diverse repertory. Much has already been published on the Balinese *wayang kulit* so the information presented by Thomas Cooper, the author of this chapter, is not entirely new. However, his clear summary and easily understood approach is extremely useful and gives an excellent overall picture of the *wayang kulit* as a living art form, 'a fascinating and sometimes paradoxical combination of tradition and innovation, strict convention and creative invention' (p. 33).

The same can be said of Cooper's chapter on traditional painting, in which he provides a very detailed insight into the materials, techniques, subjects, styles (and their local variants) used in the various ritual paintings on wood and cloth. In this way Cooper dismisses once and for all the generally held belief that there is a uniform style of Balinese painting which is only to be associated with the well-known village of Kamasan.

Joseph Fischer's chapters on ritual embroidery and painting on glass are new and surprising. This is the first time that these almost unknown minor art traditions have been so fully described in accordance with their form and function. Describing the embroidery on ceremonial cloths, which mainly come from Negara and Buleleng, was especially difficult. The history of this fairly recent, yet already dying, type of folk art has yet to be researched

and there are no (documented) museum collections. Glass painting, another twentieth century innovation, is also an art form which struggles to survive. The paintings are sometimes used in family shrines or for house decoration. Due to the type and combination of materials used the paintings are very prone to wear-and-tear or complete decay. There are only a few glass painters left, in the North Balinese village of Nagasepaha, and they mainly work to order. Fischer feels that a commercial approach is necessary to save both glass painting and narrative embroidery in Bali from imminent decline.

In order to give an up-to-date account of the folk art in Bali, the authors interviewed many of the people involved in that field during the 1990: artists, museum curators, shopkeepers, gallery owners, and local officials. The result is a compilation which tends towards an inventory, written for the general reader as well as for those with a special interest in Indonesia. Difficult theories are seldom advanced, and specialists are not heard propounding or defending their viewpoints. An exception is the following quotation (p. 1) from Fredrik Barth's *Balinese worlds* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993, p. 4): 'Local variation in a traditional civilization is not a surface disturbance, to be covered over by generalization, or tidied away by a typology. It is an ubiquitous feature of great civilizations, and we should make it a major component of our description and characterization of these societies [...]. Variation should emerge as a necessity from our analysis'. Cooper and Fischer have shown clearly in their book that this view deserves overwhelming support.

By way of conclusion, I would like to make a comment concerning illustrations. These play a vital role in any book on art, so it is a great pity that in *The folk art of Bali* large ritual paintings of complex mythological scenes are reproduced in small, 7 x 6 cm photographs in which little can be distinguished. The text deserved better illustrations here.

David J. Stuart-Fox, *Pura Besakih; Temple, religion and society in Bali*. Leiden: KITLV Press, xvii + 470 pp. [Verhandelingen 193.] ISBN 90.6718.146.3. Price: EUR 33.00 (paperback).

CASSANDRA GREEN

Pura Besakih is an intensive study of Bali's most important Hindu temple. The complex of 86 temples that make up Pura Besakih is nestled on the slopes of Bali's highest and most sacred volcano, Mount Agung. In this work, Pura Besakih is situated in a field of relations ranging from various core village networks constituting numerous regional alliances, to island-wide relationships. These social relations are shown to span from Pura Besakih's obscure

inception hundreds of years ago, up until the mid 1980s, when Stuart-Fox undertook his ethnographic fieldwork. Integrating his study of textual sources with anthropological fieldwork methods, Stuart-Fox adopts a historical perspective rich in cultural detail, allowing for the temple to be conceived of as pivotal to central religious and political negotiations in the relatively recent history of Bali. In the course of reading this comprehensive study of Pura Besakih, we come to understand that the physical structure of the temple embodies many elements of Balinese religious architecture, and that the activities held therein enact Balinese attitudes to general structures and meanings of ritual (Chapters 6 to 9), while the temple's ever-changing relationship with its supporters (citizens, rulers, and the state), particularly in terms of the financing of its rituals and the social significance of corresponding levels of ritual elaboration, gives us a glimpse of both the recurrent and the novel elements that make up the culture of Bali.

Stuart-Fox's careful study of the temples within Pura Besakih, both public (Chapter 4) and associated with specific descent groups (Chapter 5) is contextualized within the general temple hierarchy in Bali (Chapter 3). The importance of temples in politics, as a sphere in which personal, family, village, regional, and national interests compete, is thrown into relief by a thorough sociological analysis of the historical relationship between temple and society in Bali (Chapters 9 to 11). The identification of Pura Besakih at the pinnacle of social hierarchy is situated in an involved account of the complex, eclectic, and ever-evolving symbolic classification systems that inform so many aspects of Balinese life. Avoiding the misguided search for well-defined historical origins of separable cultural influences, Stuart-Fox instead notes that especially with regards to esoteric number-based classification systems, it is quite impossible to separate ethnological regularities present throughout Austronesian-speaking cultures from Indian Hindu traits in Balinese culture considering their level of synthesis in contemporary times (pp. 5, 59). This perspective leads to the important philosophical point that in Balinese culture 'systems of symbolic classification do not compete; they coexist as parts of an all-embracing essentially mystical understanding of the nature of things' (p. 65).

Although the history of Pura Besakih reveals oscillations of veneration and neglect, Stuart-Fox demonstrates that this major religious sanctuary was the paramount state temple of Bali from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth-century became a symbol of unity for Bali (Chapter 10). In testimony to the enduring importance of Pura Besakih in recent times, Stuart-Fox devotes the final section of this book to an account of the spectacular major purificatory rites of Panca Walikrama and Ekadasa Rudra (Chapter 12).

Pura Besakih is a book which convinces the reader through meticulous schol-

arship that 'no village in Bali is an isolated community. A variety of networks tie the village into its region and ultimately into the island-wide community of Balinese.' (p. 54). Stuart-Fox goes well beyond interpreting the social and cultural importance of the spatio-temporal specificity of one temple, in order to address the social and cultural processes that constitute the history of Bali.

Vladimir I. Braginsky and Elena M. Diakonova, *Images of Nusantara in Russian literature*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1999, xxvi + 516 pp. ISBN 90.6718.127.7. Price: EUR 42.45 (hardback).

HANS HÄGERDAL

Russia has a longer and more distinguished history of Asian studies than most people may be aware of. After all, Russia was among the first early modern European states to expand into Asian territory, and Greek Orthodox missionaries and explorers penetrated the continent from the eighteenth century onward. In modern times Asian studies have been pursued by a strong cadre of researchers: in the mid-1980s, for example, there were almost 1,000 Sinologists in the Soviet Union. On the other hand much of this scholarly work, for obvious political reasons, was done in relative isolation from Western networks of research. For a long time, nevertheless, there has been in Russia considerable interest in things Asian, both within academia and among writers, artists, composers and sections of the public.

But what about the East Indies? Actually there were very few immediate interests in that direction from the Russian horizon. Still, there are in fact a number of references to Nusantara in Russian literature, from medieval up to modern times, and the two authors of *Images of Nusantara* have endeavoured to dig these up and put them into context. The texts uncovered even include some written by celebrities like the poet Alexander Pushkin and the Nobel laureate Ivan Bunin. The book does not cover the image of Nusantara in modern academic texts, or whatever research on Southeast Asia was carried out in Russia and the Soviet Union. Its focus is on 'belle-lettristic' literature, although travel accounts are also included. This is perhaps one point where Braginsky and Diakonova could have improved their argument. The state of academic interest is likely to be somehow related to the literary and artistic output. What was the background of the interest in Southeast Asia in terms of Russian Orientalism? Of this we hear very little in the book. It is perhaps significant that Edward Said is not in the list of references. The authors make no use of the uneven but important body of post-colonial writing that has been produced in the last decades.

The first part of the book (pp. 1-133) consists of a discussion of the literature under scrutiny, in three long chapters. This is followed by translations of relevant texts in both prose and poetry form (pp. 135-383). Finally, three appendices deal with Armenian-Georgian geographical knowledge of Nusantara, materials on the fictive land of Belovodiye, and Nusantara images of Russia (pp. 385-463). The structure of the work is not particularly easy to grasp, since Braginsky and Diakonova wish to do several different things within one and the same study. The first chapter deals with what they call the 'unrecognised Nusantara' in medieval tradition – the legendary or fictitious lands of marvels that supposedly lay somewhere beyond Ganges. From Classical or Arabic sources, often filtered through various medieval texts, came geographical notions that were included in literary works centring around Alexander the Great of Macedonia and his supposed wanderings and exploits. The function of this work in a Russian cultural context is dealt with. One might have wished for at least a brief reference here to the French Alexander novel by Walter de Châtillon from about 1180 and its parallels with the East European texts. But the contents of the texts are compared with a wide array of other sources, such as the Malay *Hikayat Iskandar Dhu'l-Karnain* and ancient Chinese notes on the Archipelago, in order to identify geographical references as far as possible. The reader should be warned that some of these comparisons are rather speculative. Braginsky and Diakonova consider the medieval Russian pieces on the Eastern Isles sometimes in the context of literary criticism, sometimes from the point of view of geographical knowledge. This ambiguity is reinforced by the inclusion of bona fide travel notes by the Russian merchant Nikitin (died c. 1475).

The later chapters, by contrast, are increasingly focused on the use of Nusantara literary motifs, with an emphasis on the late imperial period from Pushkin to the October Revolution. The authors show how a number of stories and emblematic concepts relating to the East Indies, first formulated by West European Orientalists, were increasingly used by nineteenth-century Russian literati too: the poison tree, the *pantun*, the Malay sorcerer, and suchlike. Braginsky and Diakonova point out that the perspective in these literary texts is quite Euro-centric (to be sure, it is hard to see how this could be otherwise given the circumstances). The East Indies are often portrayed as romantic, unchanging, and thus excluded from history. With the 'silver age' of Russian literature at the *fin-de-siècle* a 'philo-Oriental' trend creeps in, with a search for the exotic and distant. Finally, with the establishment of the Soviet Union the blend of magic, poisons and exotic aromas characterizing the Nusantara image inevitably gives way to social realism and an emphasis on uncompromising ideological strife. The Soviet years are given only very limited space in the analysis, little more than two pages. No images of Nusantara in the post-Soviet period are considered.

In the first appendix we are once again carried from the realm of literary studies to that of geography and history, as two Eastern Christian texts of medieval origin are scrutinized and found to include references to the real and the 'unrecognized' Nusantara. Especially interesting is an Armenian itinerary that provides some information on Sumatra in the twelfth century. The last appendix takes up another completely new subject: the image of Russia in traditional Malay literature. Various historical events, such as the Russo-Turkish Wars of the nineteenth century, were recounted in the Malay world, sometimes in extremely confused forms. Actually a glance at the relationship between text and historical events here provides interesting information on how the latter could be transformed in a Malay *hikayat*. This appendix includes long quotations from the various texts discussed, though without English translations.

It should be apparent by now that this book by Braginsky and Diakonova is a somewhat amorphous one which includes four or five disparate themes of study. Furthermore, the question arises to what audience the work will appeal. It can be read by students of Russian literature, as a marginal but certainly interesting case study of the way in which authors through the centuries used Oriental clichés in their output. And it can be read by students of Southeast Asia to see how the lands beyond India were reflected in the literature of a European nation that had no overseas colonial interests of its own. Southeast Asianists interested in history may be able to use the scraps of original information on the region that some texts (the travel accounts) do contain. It is to be hoped that these categories of potential reader will be enough to save the book from obscurity, for it constitutes a truly original piece of work. In the long run the most valuable parts may prove to be the extensive translations of the texts under scrutiny, which may be able to attract readers even from outside the two groups just mentioned.

David Chandler, *A history of Cambodia* (third edition). Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 2000, xvi + 296 pp. ISBN 0.8133.3511.6. Price: USD 35.00 (paperback).

HANS HÄGERDAL

General histories of Cambodia are rare despite the considerable scholarly attention paid to the country by students of both old and contemporary history. In 1914 there appeared a full-length *Histoire du Cambodge* (Paris: P. Geuthner) by the French scholar Adhémar Leclère, a thorough and relat-

ively dull text that was already dated in many details at the time of its appearance. Over the next seventy years or so only shorter histories were issued in French and English. From that point of view the publication of the first edition of Chandler's history in 1983 was more than welcome. Since that time the book has established itself as an authoritative textbook, and the present edition is the third to appear. While the first edition did not cover post-independence history, this has been included in the later versions. The updating for the present edition, which takes events up to 1999, is not limited to compilation from printed materials but is also based on original research, including interviews and recently available archival documents. Some very important work on older Cambodian history has been undertaken since the second edition, notably Michael Vickery's pioneering 1998 study on *Society, economics, and politics in pre-Angkor Cambodia: the 7th-8th centuries* (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko). This material has been successfully incorporated in the text.

Chandler's analysis of Cambodian history presents four major themes. One, crucial for the post-1600 period, is the country's cumbersome geographical position between Thailand and Vietnam, which explains much of the political strategy chosen by successive Cambodian regimes. A second theme concerns the use of history; modern Cambodia's relationship with its past, especially the splendours of the Angkor Empire. A third theme concerns the hierarchical structures that have persisted throughout the course of history, and which are intimately bound to religious-metaphysical concepts. The final and crucial theme is the question of rural 'inertia' and the myth of the changelessness of Cambodian society – a common idea among Western observers as well as among Cambodians themselves. That this is little more than a myth is convincingly demonstrated by Chandler, who points at several major transformations in Cambodian society from the early Christian era onwards.

Two images have pervaded the Western public perception of Cambodia over the years. One is the exotic or orientalist image embodied in the Angkor complex, common before 1970 and probably reappearing to some extent in recent years. The other is the Killing Fields image centring around the infamous Pol Pot regime. The latter was an issue that went far beyond the Southeast Asian horizon. I remember from my own adolescence how Marxist organisations in distant Sweden were involved in violent and antagonistic debates (actually hinted at briefly in Chandler's book, p. 222) on the occasion of the demise of the Pol Pot regime at the hands of Vietnam. Chandler's work is deeply imprinted with this last image even when he is discussing pre-modern history. He never tires of seeking parallels with and antecedents to the apocalyptic years of the 1970s. Jayavarman VII, for example, is said to have 'stamped the kingdom with his personality and his ideas as no other ruler was able to do before Norodom Sihanouk in the 1960s and Pol Pot later on. Like these two figures, Jayavarman may have wanted to transform Cambodia and

perceived himself as the instrument of the transformation.' (p. 59).

In terms of chronological layout the book is somewhat uneven. Almost fifty pages are devoted to the (indeed very important and interesting) Angkorian period, about 800-1300. These chapters give a fairly full reign-to-reign history, with extensive discussions on the economic and cultural foundations of the realm, the symbolism underpinning the kingdom, and so on. By contrast the next four or five centuries, up to the late eighteenth century, are treated in a mere 22 pages. Whereas earlier texts (including Leclère's) gave this 'middle' period a chronological-dynastic treatment, Chandler chooses to discuss it in more general terms (only one king, in fact, is mentioned by name). This he nevertheless does brilliantly; the chapter makes a lot of sense of these neglected centuries, making clever use of law-texts, literary works, the accounts of foreign visitors, and a range of other sources. But in the end I think that Chandler still jumps rather too fast across some important events and themes. For example, the reader might well want to know more about early-modern Vietnamese interference in Cambodia, as treated at length by Mak Phoeun and Po Dharma in 1988 ('La deuxième intervention militaire vietnamienne au Cambodge', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 77: 229-62). After about 1800 the narrative once again becomes more detailed, but even some periods of recent history – including that of the Khmer Republic (1970-75) – are sometimes allotted surprisingly brief coverage.

In terms of scholarly emphasis, too, there is an interesting tension between the first and second halves of this work. The first six chapters are not based only on narrative political sources, but also make use of a wide array of other materials including architecture, art objects, folklore, Chinese reports, missionary texts, and aphorisms. On this basis Chandler is able to discuss several interesting social, economic and cultural issues. The last seven chapters, by contrast, are very much political history. While there is some treatment of economic history in these chapters, cultural developments are indicated rather parenthetically.

These critical points aside, the overall impression which Chandler's textbook makes is a very good one indeed. He makes his points in a clear and analytic way, while the reader is much helped by an introductory chapter laying out the themes of the book and a concluding section which summarizes the main developments in Cambodia's unhappy history since World War II. Not the least important achievement of Chandler's book is to demonstrate the fruitfulness of analyzing Cambodian political history from a Cambodian perspective, a point probably missed by quite a few writers on modern politics in Indochina.

Leo Howe, *Hinduism and hierarchy in Bali*. Oxford: James Currey, Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2001, xviii + 228 pp. ISBN 0.85255.914.3. Price: GBP 45.00 (hardback).

ROBERT W. HEFNER

Bali has long been one of anthropology's favoured subjects of ethnographic investigation. Despite this attention, and despite the high quality of research on specific topics and regions, no anthropologist has stood back in recent years and attempted a theoretical overview of general trends in religion and society. Leo Howe's new book makes just such an effort and does so to impressive effect. A social anthropologist from Cambridge University, Howe focuses his study on three intertwined themes: the social origins and impact of the state-sponsored, standardized Hinduism known as *agama Hindu*; the changing nature of Balinese identity from the late colonial period to today; and the implications of recent changes for social hierarchy.

Howe's analysis draws on materials that he gathered during several periods of fieldwork in different locales in South Bali from 1978 to 1999. Although the author brings his ethnographic materials into the book's ten chapters, the study is written in an experience-distant style, one driven less by native voices or the contextual logic of ethnographic vignettes than by theoretical debates in Bali studies and social anthropology. This approach limits the book's appeal for the general reader, but allows Howe to cover a broad range of topics in a theoretically sophisticated manner. His analysis of social hierarchy in Bali succeeds better than any I know at highlighting the similarities and differences between Balinese and Indian models of kingship, priesthood, and rank. Tracing debates over hierarchy from the 1920s to today, Howe shows that Balinese élites have sought to preserve the link between religion and social hierarchy, while commoner reformers have sought to weaken or break it. The latter struggle has left its mark on religious reform as well, with supporters of state-sponsored Hinduism promoting, with only qualified success, a reduction in ritual expenses and the elevation of doctrine and ethics over ritual orthopraxis.

Initially the *agama Hindu* movement was intended to standardize Balinese religion so as to respond to European criticisms and to an 'expansive and aggressive Islam' (p. 5). In one of the book's most important sections, Howe demonstrates that this effort to 'produce religious orthodoxy and curtail religious diversity' (p. 161) had a deeply unintended consequence. The importation of Indian religious doctrines (themselves products of late nineteenth century India's neo-Hindu revival movement) drove a wedge between official and customary religion. This opened the way for other Balinese intellectuals to seek devotional forms of their own, leading to the importation of

new movements like the Sathya Sai Baba and Hare Krishna. Howe's chapter on Sai Baba qualifies as one of the past decade's best essays on the sociology of religious change in contemporary Southeast Asia.

On the question of ethnicity, Howe argues that the Balinese 'did not conceive of themselves as having an ethnic group identity fundamentally different from that of others' (p. 4) until the great colonial collisions of the mid-nineteenth century. This seems plausible enough for the peasants of South-Central Bali, and is generally consistent with the modern anthropological insight that a neatly demarcated ethnic sense is as modern a construction as the nation state. However, some readers may wonder whether an understanding of the genesis of Balinese identity might not also require a more sustained examination of Bali's cultural borderlands than is attempted here. Particularly important is the question of how Balinese on different parts of the island responded to Muslims, including those who took up residence on the island well before the mid-nineteenth century (a problem addressed in a North Bali setting in Fredrik Barth's *Balinese worlds* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), and those with whom Balinese did battle along pre-modern Bali's most troubled frontiers, the Banyuwangi and Tengger regions of eastern Java. Neither of the latter regions gets much attention in this otherwise exhaustive study.

These small issues noted, Howe's book still remains without peer for anyone interested in religion and social change in South Bali. With its richly nuanced example of how to relate the study of traditional religion with new social movements, the book also deserves to be read by anyone interested in the problem of religion and complexity in contemporary Asian societies.

T.N. Harper, *The end of empire and the making of Malaya*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, xviii + 417 pp. ISBN 0.521.59040.X. Price: GBP 45.00 (hardback).

Margaret Shennan, *Out in the midday sun; The British in Malaya, 1880-1960*. London: John Murray, 2000, xviii + 426 pp. ISBN 0.7195.5716.X. Price: GBP 25.00 (hardback).

RUSSELL JONES

In entirely different ways, these two recent books on the British in Malaya make very useful contributions to the study of Malayan history. I will begin here with some separate consideration of each work in turn, before proceeding to compare the two with respect to their treatment of certain common themes.

The end of empire and the making of Malaya, by T.N. Harper, gives an account of events in the Malay Peninsula and Singapore from the end of the war in 1945 up to the achievement of independence in 1957. It is without doubt a very significant piece of historical writing. The amount of detail collected, and meticulously referenced, is impressive. But the book betrays its origin as a doctoral thesis, and makes few concessions to the uninitiated. The density of this concentrated offering is a challenge to the reader. More than 400 pages of tightly-packed facts, uninterrupted by illustrations or maps, with profuse employment of initials and a fair number of non-English terms, would be daunting for anyone not already acquainted with the subject.

I will begin by outlining the history recounted here with the help of quotations from the work itself. The first chapter, 'On the ruins of Melaka fort', retraces the early history of Malaya, but also devotes much attention to the Japanese occupation and immediate post-war period. Chapter 2, entitled 'The Malayan Spring' and covering the period 1945-1948, examines the British Military Administration and its short-lived successor, the Malayan Union. It outlines what Dr Harper describes as 'an attempt at the close of the Pacific War to rebuild the British presence in Malaya from a defeat that was unprecedented in British imperial history'. Chapter 3, 'The revolt on the periphery', locates the origins of the Malayan Emergency within the post-war crisis. 'Care is taken', explains the author, 'to avoid considering the Emergency as primarily a Chinese problem and to see it in relation to economic change and patterns of social organisation, violence and anxiety in the countryside as a whole'. Chapter 4, 'Rural society and terror', examines 'the experience of violence during the emergency', that is from 1948 to the mid 1950s. Discussing some of the factors which caused the Emergency, Dr Harper very perceptively writes, later historians 'would orchestrate these events into elaborate conspiracies. However, revolutions are not made in this way. Men and women act, politicians react.' Chapter 5, 'House of glass', examines the repercussions of the Emergency beyond the rural fringe and the making of the modern Malaysian state. Chapter 6, 'The advent of the "bumiputera"', examines 'the condition of the Malay economy' against the background of 'the cultivator and fisherman's relationship to commercialised agriculture and wage labour', and the attempts 'to create a Malay stake in commerce and industry'. Chapter 7, 'The politics of culture', shows that 'the 1950s were a period of moral crisis and cultural uncertainty [...]. A "Malayan" nationalism and national culture were promoted through new techniques of collaboration.' Challenged by the Emergency, 'the British attempted to construct a new "Malayan" political community'. This chapter considers the struggle between Malay and English to become the national language. Chapter 8, 'Making citizens', shows how 'social policy, community development and experiments in local democracy were exploited to entrench a distinction between legitimate

and illegitimate forms of popular participation in the political process'. 'The fulfilment of Britain's mission in Malaya', it concludes, 'lay in the establishment of multi-racial politics'.

Thus while the arrangement of chapters shows a broadly chronological progression as one would expect in a conventional history, each chapter is thematic and embodies its own chronology. This leads to some unexpected oddities. For example, one might expect the assessment of General Templer (mentioned below) to come in Chapter 4 or 5, dealing with the Emergency, but in fact it does not appear until Chapter 8.

As regards historical perspective, Dr Harper makes his aim clear: 'This book has been a study of decolonisation as seen from Malaya and not from London [...]' (p. 362). Geographically speaking this claim stands up; but if we perceive the episode of independence as an ingredient in the impact of Europe on Asia, it is difficult to see how the subject could be detached from European (British) influence and perspective. The desired aim, *merdeka* (independence), although known by a word of Sanskrit origin, was a concept imported from Europe. Dr Harper has recognized the nature of the problem: 'The need to reconcile an understanding of the nation that was founded upon the historical and cultural experience of the Malays to an ideological and legal framework of nation-building and citizenship that derived from a European tradition was a profound challenge for Malay nationalism' (p. 6). It is also a challenge to the modern historian, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this is in essence a Eurocentric study of Malayan history.

The list of sources, impressive in its comprehensiveness, consists mostly of published works and archive resources overwhelmingly in English, the remainder being mostly in Malay. Some are written by Malaysians, but one could say by the minority of English-speaking and somewhat Anglicized Malaysians. This is natural and perhaps inevitable when describing a process which is really the imposition of an essentially European concept by an imperial power on an Asian community. This study, as good as it is, is written by a Westerner for Westernized readers. After all, it records the effects of the expansion of European concepts into a part of Asia.

Dr Harper at times sets up stereotypes of the 'expatriate view of events', with a view to correcting them. Sometimes this works well; attitudes changed, and the view he offers is a retrospective one which most would share. Nevertheless, I find it hard to believe that the portrayal of an expatriate by Keris Mas 'beautifully captures the confusion of a colonial civil servant at the transfer of power' (p. 365). Such a caricature is legitimate fiction, but not helpful in illuminating this piece of history. A talented expatriate who does portray the inarticulate Malayan victims of the Emergency with sympathy and understanding is the Asian writer, Han Su Yin. Her book, *...and the Rain my Drink*, is very illuminating. If the intention of Dr Harper was to examine

the achievement of independence 'through the struggle within Malayan society for its soul' (p. xi), or to write a chapter which 'puts the experience of rural terror at the heart of the history of the emergency' (p. 95), then I think Han Su Yin offers much better value than his chosen writer Anthony Burgess.

There is a 'Glossary of non-English terms' on pp. xvii-xviii. However this is disappointing, for very many non-English terms used in the text, and put in italics, are not included in it. For example looking at a thirty-odd page section of the main text (pp. 252-84), one finds eleven terms which are not in the glossary: *berderau* (p. 252), *kuttu* (p. 254), *gotong royong* (p. 254), *surau* (p. 254), *orang kampong* (p. 257), *orang moden* (p. 257), *cari makan* (p. 257), *rulongs* (p. 264), *bangsawan* (p. 283), *sandiwara* (p. 284), and *kebaya* (p. 284). This can be troublesome for the uninitiated reader. Take, for example, the statement 'the *lembagas* were disobeyed in politics' (p. 331). Now *lembaga* is not found in the glossary, and its entry in the index refers to a different sense of the word. The reader who has access to Wilkinson's Malay dictionary can discover that in Negeri Sembilan it has the meaning of 'tribal chief as custodian of the *adat lembaga*', and apparently this is what is meant here. Again, the Chinese word *huaqiao* or 'Overseas Chinese' (p. 333) is found neither in the glossary nor in the index. The proper name 'Nadra' is a rather different problem. It is not in the index, but is mentioned in the text several times before it is explained (on p. 337) that she is Maria Hertogh; Nadra is the name by which this Dutch girl was generally known in Malay. As a valuable work of reference, *The end of empire and the making of Malaya* deserves a more comprehensive index.

The proof-reading of the book is of a very high standard, which perhaps is to be expected in these days of automated spell-checking. But the odd typo has slipped past the spell-checker: 'In a more sense the period [...]' (p. 53), for instance, and: 'It steeped up its campaign [...]' (p. 352). More seriously, a few misspellings are found in Malay terms: examples include *Pertahanan Tanah Ayer (PETA)* (p. 118); *Tengku Makhota of Johore* (p. 332); 'the customary law, the *adat perateh*' (p. 335); and the *Rukanegara* (p. 368). Another instance of misspelling of Malay leads to a more significant point: discussing the literacy campaign in the 1950s (p. 278), Dr Harper writes that 'the first primer – *Membasmi buku* [read: *buta*] huruf – listed only 122 words, insufficient 'literacy' to read a newspaper or a government notice'. The copy of *Membasmi buta huruf* which I used in Kelantan in 1952 (it was published in the previous year) lists in the back 249 Malay words rather than 122. But the whole point was that having learned to read the written letters, the newly literate student would continue to read and learn more words to expand his vocabulary indefinitely. I do not doubt that Dr Harper cites his sources (apart from misspelling *buku*) correctly, but this criticism of the literacy campaign is quite unfounded.

I come now to Margaret Shennan's book *Out in the midday sun; The British in Malaya, 1880-1960*. To those familiar with Noel Coward's 1932 review, the implied title of this book is of course 'Mad dogs and Englishmen'. This alerts us as to what to expect from the book. It is not a serious political history, but rather a lively collection of portraits and anecdotes about the life of 'the British' in Malaya'. In her introduction Margaret Shennan sets out her stall (p. 7): 'This is not an official history based on a study of government records; nor is it an in-depth social analysis. It is an unofficial account, a collage of the British in Malaya [...]'.

What sources has she used for this purpose? While listing at the outset (p. xiii) the library and archive collections in Britain which she consulted, she also notes that many of her sources were living witnesses drawing on their personal recollections of the events covered (p. 406); others were respondents to questionnaires which she organized (pp. 403-5). This is admirable – not only is she drawing on living history, but also putting on record reminiscences which within a few years will be lost for ever. In this respect Shennan's book, and the records which she has accumulated, are an invaluable contribution to the history of the period which she covers.

Many of the topics addressed in *Out in the midday sun* – for example, the social hierarchy and the expatriates' feelings of superiority – are predictable. Discussing the use of acronyms and initials such as D.O. (District Officer) and P.W.D. (Public Works Department), Shennan comments (p. 168): 'Old hands failed to appreciate how baffling such a barrage of acronyms sounded to new civilian arrivals'. I suspect that this in-group language was mostly intentional, and designed to reinforce the prestige of the speaker vis-à-vis the newcomer. Using Malay words in English fulfilled the same function. The most bizarre aspect of this subject is that the competition for seniority in the social hierarchy was in fact at its most extreme within the expatriate community: Shennan (p. 144) cites Katherine Sim's observation that at district level a convention existed that no expatriate officer could have a house as elevated as the district officer's.

The Malayan Civil Service was at the apex of the social system. In some ways this was surprising: as regards academic qualifications, competence and experience most departmental officers (in medicine, education, engineering, forestry, and the like) were well ahead inasmuch as they were invariably university graduates and usually had substantial additional qualifications besides; moreover, they worked as specialists within their chosen fields. M.C.S. administrators, on the other hand, were positively discouraged from becoming specialists (p. 162). Some, to their credit, put their specialism before their careers, but most were indeed rather proud of the variety of jobs they could be called upon to do regardless of their qualifications (p. 161). It says much for the British faith in the ability of a good all-round amateur to tackle any job that the

generalists of the M.C.S. were on top of the hierarchical pile, and it says much for their resourcefulness that they acquitted themselves so creditably.

In reading historical accounts it is easy to overlook the existence of gaps in the data; historians are naturally restricted to the information revealed by their (usually documentary) sources. One thing that strikes me in this case is the paucity of information on informal sexual relationships. In her treatment of what she terms 'the question of sexuality and the male lifestyle' (p. 67), Margaret Shennan does discuss the keeping of mistresses by European men in the early years of the twentieth century. The evidence she uses is documentary, and as she observes, most of that is anecdotal. She returns to the topic with reference to the post-World War II period, but very briefly indeed. Here she writes (p. 336) that 'in many businesses company policy remained unyielding on the matter of liaisons with Asian women, and an offending employee would be swiftly removed from the scene'. I find that surprising. Assuming that we are dealing almost exclusively with liaisons between expatriate men and Malayan women, one can say there was widespread heterosexual interracial rapport. It might take the form of occasional resort to prostitutes, but it ran the whole gamut from passing passions to lasting, often clandestine, affairs. There was much drama, and since it was unusual for such affairs to result in marriage, tragedy was never far away. Moreover, a local woman was not just a 'sleeping dictionary'; she could well be a 'sleeping encyclopaedia', a fund of ethnographic information. These affairs cut through racial and class hierarchies, and brought single expatriate men an intimacy with the people, and an affection for the culture, which their married counterparts could scarcely hope for. After all, as Margaret Shennan notes (p. 196): 'there was a moral obligation on the *mem* to recreate the atmosphere of England in a foreign dwelling'. It is certain that by the mid-twentieth century the arrival of the *mems* inhibited this heterosexual intermingling, or at least its overt expression. It will be a pity if this aspect of the life of 'mad dogs and Englishmen' slides into oblivion, leaving only the caricature of the white man too superior to countenance intimacy with local people.

Out in the midday sun is provided with a useful glossary of non-English terms used in the text. There are a few printing or textual errors: for *tenggini* [kind of fish], read *tenggiri* (pp. 21, 33); for 'Majorie', Marjorie (p. 62); for 'Bishop', Bishop (p. 70); for *tukan ayer*, *tukang ayer* (p. 115); for 'the Officer in Charge of the Police Department' (O.C.P.D.), Officer-in-Charge, Police District (p. 168); for 'Drains and Irrigation Department', Drainage and Irrigation Department (p. 241); and for 'Balit Pulau', (probably) Balik Pulau (p. 315).

Comparing *The end of empire and the making of Malaya* with *Out in the midday sun*, it is evident that although formally focusing on different periods of Malayan history, the two books cover much common ground. But the approaches

adopted could hardly be more different. One is written by a professional historian whose first visit to Malaya seems to have been some 30 years after *Merdeka* (Independence). The other is written by an author (Shennan) who makes no claim to be a historian, but was born in Kucing and brought up in Malaya. Both have a great deal to offer from their different points of view. This can be illustrated with reference to some specific common themes, beginning with the coming of *Merdeka*, the culmination of the events under scrutiny in both books. On this subject the selection of sources by Dr Harper – even those in English – could have moved further towards a Malayan perspective. Harper cites from books on the topic written by Anthony Burgess, whom he admires (he quotes from *Beds in the East* on his frontispiece). Whatever the talents of Anthony Burgess as an entertaining writer, which are many, he cannot be recommended as a dependable source for the Malayan element in Malayan history. For one thing, his own problems affected his judgement. In an obituary of Burgess we learn that '[t]he atmosphere of a declining empire repelled him'. Dr Harper has taken up this theme: writing of the 'literature of disengagement' (p. 365), he observes that 'even the best of it, such as the work of Anthony Burgess, evinces a sense of betrayal'.

Let us pursue this. Perhaps Dr Harper is influenced by Burgess' pessimistic views when he writes (p. 355): 'The British were to discover, as Edward Gibbon had observed, that the end of empire is a melancholy business. The atmosphere of gloom, of course, was not shared by the people of Malaya. *Merdeka* on 31 August 1957 was witnessed by 20,000 people in the new Merdeka Stadium in Kuala Lumpur and celebrated by a crowd of 100,000 on the *padang* in front of the old Selangor clubhouse.' An 'atmosphere of gloom' was perhaps to be expected among the British, but speaking as an eye witness I did not myself perceive it. As a young British expatriate I was one of the 20,000 in the stadium who witnessed the ceremony (an uninspiring event marred by rain and oiled paper umbrellas), and later in Kuala Lumpur I revelled in the friendliness of a very special *hari raya*. For me the coming of *Merdeka* was a time of joy and relief, not at all of melancholy. I could not help contrasting it with the bloody struggle for independence in Indonesia; we had been so fortunate. And although the people of Malaya 'celebrated' it, the impression I noted down rather sadly at the time was that in Kuala Lumpur 'the people did not show much enthusiasm for Independence nor for the Prime Minister who has arranged it all'. I fail to see how the invocation of Edward Gibbon's views of empire can help anyone understand this event two centuries later. Indeed, Gibbon may dispose one to misunderstand it. Here *The end of empire* compares unfavourably with Margaret Shennan's observations on *Merdeka*. She writes that Independence 'was a confusing time for the British. Some welcomed independence; others accepted it reluctantly, as Malayanization brought an end to their careers' (p. 342). And she comments, encouragingly (p. 352): 'The

timing of *Merdeka* and the manner of disengagement indicated British respect for the Malayan people'. Who could argue with that?

The effects of the Emergency should not be overlooked in this context either. Not its dangers and discomforts; by 1957 these had diminished. But it is worth remembering that there were people, in Malaya as in Britain, who lived uncomfortably with the harsh provisions of the Emergency Regulations of 1948. In those tumultuous times of rural unrest it must have been dangerously easy for anyone, especially Chinese in rural areas, to be unintentionally guilty of being found in the possession of forbidden supplies or in the company of a terrorist – offences defined in clauses of the Emergency Regulations which concluded with statements like 'shall on conviction be punished with death' or 'shall on conviction be liable to be punished with death, or with penal servitude for life and whipping'. *Merdeka* offered us an escape from our share of moral responsibility for this.

Margaret Shennan's account portrays many of the colourful personalities who have appeared on the stage of the Malayan story. Dr Harper's rigorous application of historical discipline gives us a somewhat desiccated version of events which leaves little room to celebrate the lives of real people, Malayan or British. Let us consider how he treats one of the most charismatic individuals. No one would question the pivotal role of General Templer during the Emergency. Dr Harper, however, does not share the general admiration for General Sir Gerald Templer, who from 1952 to 1954 held the posts of High Commissioner, Commander-in-Chief, and Director of Operations. Harper writes that Templer 'brought, like the Prime Minister who appointed him, a blustering barrackroom style and ripened language to the war effort, which while it entertained and refreshed many within and outside government, it patronised and bewildered others' (p. 310). For a start, as one who experienced Churchill's leadership during the last war, I find the critical aside about him quite gratuitous. And no one even remotely concerned with the Emergency remained unaware of the inspiring leadership and unswerving resolve of General Templer, the wiry soldier with the darting eyes. It is perhaps significant that in his assessment of Templer, Dr Harper gives prominence to the jaundiced views of Victor Purcell ('his severest critic', and incidentally a Cambridge academic). General Templer's most striking achievement (at least to many of us not directly involved) was that he actually succeeded in galvanizing into action the bureaucratic administration in Kuala Lumpur. And it was no ordinary soldier who concluded: 'The answer lies not in pouring more troops into the jungle, but in the hearts and minds of the people.' Sir Gerald Templer broke new and productive ground. Margaret Shennan cites both critical and favourable views of Templer, observing that 'it was without doubt General Templer who countered the Communist insurgency, galvanized British morale, and steadied Malaya's multiracial commu-

nity in preparation for a new political future' (p. 319). The reader cannot help noticing that in the case of Templer as in that of *Merdeka*, Dr Harper adopts what might be regarded as an unnecessarily pessimistic view by selecting and relying on negative sources.

Another interesting point on which to compare the two books is the role of Chin Peng, leader of the Malayan Communist Party in its armed confrontation with the Federation of Malaya government. Margaret Shennan (p. 400) cites the positive qualities which his war-time ally John Davis saw in Chin Peng: 'He had a captivating personality, was immensely likeable [...]'. His role naturally figures in the account of events by Dr Harper, as an ingredient of the Emergency which had such profound influence on events, but like other key players in *The end of empire* he does not emerge as any clear personality. Neither writer, it is worth adding, hints at the possibility (unthinkable in earlier decades) that this Malayan-born Chinese in the background was a major contributor to the *Merdeka* process in that he and his party impelled Britain to expedite the handing over of power into the 'trustworthy hands' of Malayan nationalists.

Finally, a note on notes. The majority of the notes in both books are source references, but the two publishers handle them differently. John Murray collects them in a separate section at the end of the book so that the reader has to look up each one as it comes in case it contains additional relevant information, an irritating interruption to the reading of the text. Cambridge University Press gives them as footnotes to each page, which is much more convenient and helps the reader concentrate on the text.

Christian Pelras, *The Bugis*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, xvii + 386 pp. [The People of South-East Asia and the Pacific.] ISBN 0.631.17231.9. Price: GBP 50.00 (hardback).

SIRTJO KOOLHOF

Christian Pelras is the principal Western scholar of Bugis culture and society, on which he has written extensively since the 1960s in the form of articles, mostly in French. With this important book in English, published as part of Blackwell's reference series on 'The Peoples of South-East Asia and the Pacific', he has made his findings available to a wider audience. This is the first ever comprehensive study on the Bugis, a major ethnic group of the Indonesian archipelago. Over three million Bugis people live in South Sulawesi alone, and probably as many again live outside the homeland both in Indonesia and in Malaysia.

The Bugis is divided into two parts. In the first, entitled 'The shaping of identity: from origins to the classical age', Pelras presents an overview of the history and prehistory of Bugis culture and society, and of the peninsula of South Sulawesi in general. While basing himself partly on 'hard' archaeological evidence for the prehistory of the region, here he also brings to the fore what are his most controversial opinions concerning the early history of the region. Lacking other 'more reliable' sources for this early period (before the fifteenth century), Pelras decides to take the epic myth *La Galigo* as his main source of information. *La Galigo* is one of the most voluminous literary works, transmitted in manuscripts (which generally each contain only one or two episodes), as well as in oral traditions. Although aware of the dangers of using this kind of epic-mythological materials as a historical source, Pelras is 'confident that at least some part of these reconstructions will be confirmed by further research', not least 'in view of the fact that most of [his] conclusions tally with the opinions of many of [his] elderly Bugis informants' (p. 51). Without going into the specific results presented in the book, I would like to make a few remarks here on the methodology used and the pitfalls that unfortunately were not avoided.

Taking the contents of an epic-mythological work as historical references to actual past events is a hazardous operation, demanding a sound, consistent approach to the material. Pelras does not take such an approach. His analysis of the *La Galigo* is sometimes inspired by a particular point which he wishes to prove or illustrate, and this results in inconsistencies and even straightforward contradictions. On page 33, for example, we read that 'there are variations in wording, composition and important detail from one version of any episode to another'; this statement is made to endorse the author's explanation for the growth of the epic. On page 52, by contrast, he stresses the reliability of the *La Galigo* texts as sacred stories which 'may not be modified at all'. Their 'extreme textual and linguistic conservatism', Pelras declares, 'strongly supports the view that [...] they are referring to an actual past reality'. Likewise, when attempting to reconstruct early Bugis geography he mentions the 'coherence and plausibility' of information from *La Galigo* and oral traditions (p. 61), yet only four pages later we read that the political geography of the region as presented in *La Galigo* 'certainly includes epic embellishments and anachronisms', and is 'in part fictitious' and 'certainly not systematic'.

These (and other) contradictions and inconsistencies could partly have been avoided had Pelras provided a substantial discussion and analysis of the Bugis written and oral traditions, their reliability, and especially the position of *La Galigo* within those traditions. As it is, information on the various genres is scattered throughout the first part of the book. A more critical approach to his sources might have brought Pelras to the conclusion that the

whole *La Galigo*, and not just its obviously mythological introductory sections, is in the end more of ideological than of historical significance.

After a chapter on 'Early civilization' based solely on the *La Galigo* materials, the next two chapters ('The rise of the kingdoms' and 'Contest of powers and faiths') describe respectively the rise and fall of the kingdom of Makassar at the cost of Bugis kingdoms, and the Islamization of the lowland peoples of the peninsula. In Part II, 'Society and culture: survivals and transformations', the first three chapters are dedicated to a detailed description of traditional Bugis society as it existed around the end of the nineteenth century. Besides providing outlines of social structure, religion and ritual, Pelras also pays much attention to material culture and to economic activities. The final chapter, 'The modern world', describes the integration of the traditional Bugis polities, first into colonial East Indies society, and subsequently into the modern Indonesian nation. The second part of the book is definitely the stronger. In it Pelras demonstrates his enormous insight into Bugis society and provides a convincing account, largely based on his own observations during long periods in the field, of the capacity of the Bugis to adapt themselves to changing times and circumstances.

While the author (the abovementioned criticism of some parts of the book aside) has done a great job of describing and explaining the complexities of Bugis history and society, it cannot be said that his professionalism is matched by that of his publisher. The book is edited in an extremely sloppy way, the reproduction of the photographs are of poor quality, references are missing from the bibliography, and the strangely structured index could just as well have been left out altogether. Nonetheless, *The Bugis* is compulsory reading for any serious student of Indonesia and is likely to remain so for many years to come.

Lily Zubaidah Rahim, *The Singapore dilemma; The political and educational marginality of the Malay community*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1998, xviii + 302 pp. ISBN 983.56.0032.5. Price: GBP 31.00 (hardback).

TANIA LI

This book offers a comprehensive review of the interrelated factors at work in the continuing economic, educational, and political marginality of the Singapore Malay community. Dismissing the cultural deficit paradigm which holds Malay values and attitudes responsible for the community's apparent failures, the author offers an account of Malay marginality which

stresses structural factors. Some of these structural factors are generic to the underclass of all ethnic groups, and others are unique to Malays, the direct or indirect outcomes of government policies and institutional arrangements beginning in the colonial period and continuing to the present. The book's theoretical repertoire is avowedly eclectic, and the approach inductive: anything that might help to explain Malay marginality is included. Judicious editing might have shortened the work and sharpened the arguments, but overall the book is well written and merits the attention of scholars and lay readers concerned to understand the past and present of this small but geopolitically very significant community. The book depends upon secondary sources, with the exception of a small survey which asked Malay students about their aspirations and their perceptions of teacher bias, and some interviews with politicians and activists. The author, herself a Singapore Malay, draws upon her own embedded knowledge and understandings to good effect. The downside of an insider account is that the reader is sometimes unsure about how to interpret statements about what Malays think, or how they have reacted to various events, when there is no clarification of the population pool from which such generalizations are being made.

In Part I, 'Identity and ideology', the author describes the Malay view of themselves as the indigenous people of the region, with enduring rights and entitlements distinct from those of immigrant populations. She sets this view against the People's Action Party vision which stresses the migrant roots of all Singaporeans, and emphasizes survival of the fittest. She reminds us of how colonial-era distinctions between ethnic groups were elaborated culturally into the stereotyped 'lazy native' and industrious Chinese, and institutionalized in differential provisions for settlement, education, and livelihood. Over time, such ideas, practices, and policies have perpetuated a cycle of stereotypes and discrimination, absorbed into poor self-image and poor performance, which in turn deepen and confirm the prejudicial premise. Part II, 'Containment of Malay politics', focuses on electoral matters. It discusses PAP strategies to break up Malay enclaves and thereby prevent the emergence of an ethnic-based opposition vote. It also discusses the tenuous position of PAP Malays, who cannot be seen to champion Malay causes when they must win the Chinese vote, yet are expected to gain the confidence of the Malay community and soften it to PAP perspectives. In Part III, 'Education and equality', Rahim traces the raft of educational policies which have been designed to follow through on Lee Kuan Yew's unrepentantly élitist, eugenics-based view that certain sections of the population will never excel, and resources should therefore be concentrated on the meritorious few. This view is racially inflected, as Lee made apparent in his statement that Malays could never achieve the same scores as Chinese in mathematics. Rahim argues that the educational performance of poor Malays is substantially the same as that of

poor Chinese and has the same causes: inadequate incomes and uneducated, non-English speaking, often unstable home environments. Against such structural obstacles, ethnic-based self-help initiatives such as Mendaki, or the Chinese and Indian equivalents, can make only limited headway. Moreover their ethnic formula risks deflecting attention away from underlying class structures and cementing racial divides.

One of the more original contributions of Lily Zubaidah Rahim's book is the tracking of the PAP's retreat from multiracialism, and the contradictions that beset its stance towards the Malays. On the one hand, the PAP has introduced a host of policies designed specifically to meet the needs and interests of the Chinese population by promoting Chinese language and culture. In this context it has fostered Chinese-only elite schools, and permitted the ethnic clumping of students within schools for purportedly 'administrative' reasons. Thus its policies are far from colour-blind, and they have effectively restricted the contexts in which Chinese and Malay students can interact, confirming stereotypes rather than helping to dispel them. On the other hand, the PAP has broken up Malay enclaves and rejected calls for affirmative action measures which take the special needs of Malays into account. Mixing with others is said to be good for Malays and multiracialism demands it; too much special attention would produce a 'crutch mentality' and, it is freely admitted, the Chinese majority would complain so the PAP's hands are tied. The government which engineers so much thus stops short of engineering a fix to the Malay predicament and, in numerous ways, exacerbates it while continuing to hold Malays responsible for their fate.

The author's argument about the class basis of the educational and economic deficits which appear to have an ethnic character could be more clearly demonstrated. Rather than comparing Malay and Chinese educational performance overall, what happens to the numbers when class factors (incomes, parents' education, and proficiency in English) are held constant? If, in fact, there is no difference between ethnic groups when compared in this way, then the analysis can be sharpened and simplified: critique the class structure, exposing its systematic effects across all population groups, and critique discriminatory policies which build and deepen ethnic distinctions, but avoid mixing the two critiques in ways which end up reconfirming the impression that there is a *Malay* problem in education. Similarly for income levels: rather than compare average incomes by ethnic group, it would be useful to compare the trajectory of different percentiles of the population over time. Have Malays in fact been losing ground, say over the past fifteen years, or holding it, in relation to Chinese with similar educational and occupational attributes? Is there in fact a problem of Malay performance, or do the numbers simply show that Malays find their mobility blocked to the same extent as others who share their class position? Is the difference that continues to show up

when incomes are compared on an ethnic basis really sustained by ethnic discrimination and/or real cultural differences between the two groups, or is it mainly the residue of past discrimination which is now being maintained by class-related factors impeding mobility for everyone?

The political problems to which the author's analysis points are several. First, how to modify Singapore's fierce elitism in such a way that lower-class individuals of all backgrounds have more opportunities for social mobility, and are afforded more respect. Second, how to return to the colourblind, multiracial vision of the PAP's earlier years: a Singaporean Singapore in which communication and tolerance are central to the national ethos. Third, how to undo the effects of more than a century of ethnicized policy-making which have resulted in the consignment of a disproportionate number of Malays to lower-class slots, feeding racial stereotypes, obscuring class-based commonalities, and alienating many Malays.

Each of these problems has a significant constituency that would back the necessary governmental action. The poor have an obvious interest in improved opportunities, but, as the author indicates, many in Singapore's middle class also favour a more compassionate society. Poor Chinese have apparently been skeptical about the economic value of Chineseness when English still rules, and many middle-class Chinese are happy with the multiracial premise: only the PAP, it seems, is intent on driving home an ethnic wedge. The third problem is more intractable because its solution seems to contradict the measures required to solve the first and second. Poor Chinese might be expected to resent attempts to elevate poor Malays with whom they share a common fate. Affirmative action reinserts ethnicity into policymaking, the means possibly subverting the ends of a colourblind society. Moreover, as Rahim points out, the equalization effort could only mean the promotion of a Malay élite, important perhaps in changing mass perceptions of Malay merit, but not the solution to the larger structural problems.

To move beyond the impasse, it is necessary to disentangle the layered configuration of class and ethnic inequalities to understand the separate effects of the component parts, as well as the ideological moves which constantly mix them up, reconfiguring a national, Singapore dilemma under the label *Malay*. Lily Zubaidah Rahim's analysis attempts to move in this direction, although it too is sometimes caught up in the contradiction of using ethnic categories as the basis for explanations while simultaneously denying their salience. The analytical and political dilemmas thus begin to coincide. The author comes down in favour of class analysis and multiracialism, hedging on affirmative action. The PAP government could well do the same, removing barriers for all poor Singaporeans (among them a disproportionate number of Malays) and desisting from discriminatory interventions which, directly or indirectly, restoke an ethnic, 'Malay' problem which

in the absence of government interference would be further along the road to oblivion. The surprising finding of two studies cited by the author that Singapore Malays possess a stronger sense of national pride and identification than other groups suggests that many Malays would favour this route. Past and present frustrations notwithstanding, Singapore is their nation and their home, in which they claim no more and no less than a full and even-handed citizenship.

In December 2000 and January 2001, immediately after an earlier version of this review appeared in the *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (73:123-6), *The Singapore Dilemma* became the centre of a heated media frenzy (it was cited in at least 20 articles in five major regional newspapers) and caused a diplomatic upset between Singapore and Malaysia. The furore indicates the continued sensitivity of Malay issues on both sides of the causeway, particularly as regards meritocracy versus affirmative action. It also shows the complex ways in which academic work and public debate conducted through the media intersect.

The book received only modest attention when it was first published in 1998, but in 2000 it was discussed in Singapore at a meeting of Malay leaders attended by Malaysian journalists. At the time, a Chinese faction in Malaysia was arguing for an end to pro-Malay affirmative action policies. The book was picked up and used as grist for the counterargument that Malaysian Malays need to maintain the special privileges granted to them as *bumiputera*, or they will find themselves as marginalized as their Singapore cousins. Articles cited the fact that the author is a member of a prominent political family (niece of the first president, daughter of a former Member of Parliament), making her exposure of the 'myth of meritocracy' in the island state especially poignant.

In response to criticism from across the causeway, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong discussed the book at a public gathering with Singapore Malay leaders and supplied a raft of statistics aimed to demonstrate that Singapore Malays were not in fact marginalized, but had made significant strides in education, employment, and incomes. He noted that on some counts, they were closing the gap between themselves and other groups, while on other counts the gap had widened, and he urged further effort. He then went on to make a comparison between the progress of Malays in Singapore and Malays in Malaysia, and found that Singapore Malays had fared better overall. Since no one could claim that Malaysian Malays are marginalized, he argued, *ipso facto* Singapore Malays are not marginalized either.

The neat and tidy logic of Goh's argument provoked a flurry of further press coverage, and Singapore's High Commissioner to Malaysia was called in: not only was the comparison unfair, since Malaysia continues to have a

significant rural population, but it also amounted to interference in Malaysia's domestic affairs. The proper response to Lily Zubaidah Rahim's critique of Singapore policies should be to look internally at those policies, not take a jab at Malaysia. Singapore journalists pointed out that the initial fuss over the book was caused by Malaysians meddling in Singapore's domestic politics for their own ends.

In this polemic Rahim's argument that class factors are largely responsible for the plight of Singapore Malays was completely lost, as was her critique of ethnic-based social policies. Sadly, the flaws I had pointed out in my review: the subtle reinstatement of the concept of a Malay problem despite her disavowal, her lack of clarity on the issue of class versus ethnicity, and her hedging on affirmative action, came home to roost. Her readers found in the book just what they wanted to find, and ignored the subtleties.

After 11 September 2001 the Singapore government announced a policy forbidding Muslim girls from wearing Islamic head covering to school, and another media frenzy followed on both sides of the causeway. Once again, it is clear that the geopolitical significance of the Singapore Malay community greatly outweighs its modest size. Issues of difference are highlighted even as the government attempts to make every young girl in school uniform look just the same, and the loyalty of Singapore Malays is being questioned once again.

Vincent J.H. Houben, J. Thomas Lindblad et al., *Coolie labour in colonial Indonesia; A study of labour relations in the Outer Islands, c. 1900-1940*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999, xvi + 268 pp. ISBN 3.447.04135.8. Price: EUR 39.00 (paperback).

Zawawi Ibrahim, *The Malay labourer; By the window of capitalism*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998, xvi + 348 pp. ISBN 981.305599.5. Price: USD 32.90 (paperback).

YASSER MATTAR

In *The Malay labourer*, social anthropologist Zawawi Ibrahim looks at the development of proletarianism amongst Malay plantation labourers in Terengganu, a state on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Employing the ethnographic perspective as his main methodology, he turns to the plantation as a site of research where both economic and social lives may be studied as being part and parcel of one another. Ibrahim studies how Malays respond

to industrial class-status authority and waged labour. Phenomenologically speaking, the Malay proletarian moral economy is seen to be articulated with ideas of class (*buruh* or *kuli*), culture, ethnicity (Malay or *Orang Melayu*), and humanity (*manusia*).

The plantation is seen by the author as a 'window' on capitalism, as it seems to have been 'a logical outlet for mobility' (p. 1) for Terengganu Malays who entered the postcolonial era of Malaysia with little economic leverage due to a combination of factors stemming from Terengganu's feudal and colonial histories. The plantation as a society developed in Terengganu in the mid-1960s, when a substantial portion of the jungle in the Kemaman district was transformed into the complex of oil palm plantations referred to in that era as the Terengganu Oil Palm Estate.

Reconstituted as both a class and a community, while on the plantation the labourers constitute in the first place a proletarian stratum within a capitalist mode of production. At the same time, however, the accentuation of the Malay ethnicity in the social structure of the plantation creates a microcosm of the larger society, especially in the sense of its plurality. There is an inherent tension in such 'dual consciousness'.

Amidst this tension between class and ethnicity, the world view of the Malay plantation labourers takes on a syncretic form. Because Terengganu has had no long-standing experience of capitalism and class consciousness, the experiences of the Malays in their role as proletariat are often qualified, modified, and transformed by recourse to a romantic feudal past. Notions of reciprocity, fair trade, justice, and compromise (*semangat timbang rasa*) are culled from ideas of the past to transform what may be seen as a simple case of agrarian labour relations into a moral economy of labour based upon 'human dignity' (*maruah*). In this context resistance to the 'alien' economic system of capitalism may sometimes be apparent, especially in face-to-face relations at work where such feelings 'became personally reinforced and mediated by the dominant actors in the system' (p. 124).

Indeed, the ways in which Malay labourers resist capitalist economics also extend to larger issues. In the first place, class and ethnic consciousness take recourse to different organisations at the political level. While ethnic consciousness is expressed politically through the medium of the United Malay National Organisation (the party currently in power, in coalition with the Malaysian Chinese Association and the Malaysian Indian Congress), the relation between labour and capital is the domain of the National Union of Plantation Workers. Secondly, it may be noted that resistance on the plantations also has implications for the way in which native Malays are popularly viewed in Malaysia. The contrast between the willingness of unskilled foreign labourers to work overtime and on public holidays, and the concern of Malay labourers with working to rule, combined with increasingly high

job aspirations among Malays and their consequent inclination to disfavour plantation labour, has tended to reinforce the stereotype of the 'lazy' Malay inherited from colonial times.

In contrast to Zawawi, Houben, Lindblad and the other contributors to *Coolie labour in colonial Indonesia* look at the lives of Javanese labourers under the system of bonded or indentured labour in the Outer Islands of Indonesia from 1900 to 1940. This system of coolie labour in Indonesia grew out of a model of modern capitalism from the West. The core of the Dutch colonial economy in Indonesia, at least after 1824 when the Dutch definitively regained control of the archipelago, was the island of Java, and the movement of Javanese labourers to plantations and mines in the Outer Islands was part of a process of economic diversification. While Chinese coolies formed the majority of the labour force in the Outer Islands before 1900, in the twentieth century indigenous Javanese labour took over as the numerical majority.

Formally speaking coolie labour was based upon contract, but in practice, according to the authors of this volume, it was based on force, institutionalized through legal statutes which compelled workers to serve out the entire period of their contract (usually three years) and to obey their contractual obligations throughout that time. The authors describe both the material and the non-material conditions under which the coolies worked, the former including wages and living environments, the latter referring to 'the level of well-being among coolies', which 'can be measured by looking at the incidence of violence and frequencies of punishment and desertion'. The picture painted in this book seems neither rosy nor overly bleak. The average coolie had less than one percent chance per year of contracting a fatal disease, a five percent chance of receiving harsh punishment from superiors, and a two to three percent chance of deserting from his plantation or mine (p. 231).

As far as methodology is concerned, the authors of *Coolie labour* refer to quantitative data gathered from the printed annual reports and unpublished inspection reports of the Labour Inspectorate. As historians they seldom make explicit theoretical expositions, but they do provide rich sets of data from which the reader may be informed of historical patterns and accounts of coolies' lives, and from which theoretical meaning may be extracted if desired. In the final analysis, the authors argue, studies of coolie labour in Indonesia should not take that phenomenon as something monolithic and static, for as their book shows, patterns and systems of labour are particularly subject to temporal and spatial variation. This variation, it appears, is dependent on three main factors: governmental macro-economic policies, state legislation, and the characteristics of the commercial organizations that employ the coolies.

Both *Coolie labour* and *The Malay labourer* examine their respective societies at

periods of change in which the agricultural (primary) sector of the economy was transformed into a class-based, proletarian system resembling the manufacturing sector. Making sense of how the labourers themselves made sense of their social world, both books give accounts of the existential realities of proletarian labour, and of the strategies of coping, compliance, and resistance employed by the labourers in their (then) new economic epoch.

One major point of difference between these two books lies in their contrasting conceptions of the relationship between an industrial capitalism imported (as Max Weber has shown) from the West, and economic forms present in indigenous societies. While Zawawi Ibrahim argues for the existence of a synthetic moral economy based on a fusion of proletarian and ethnic concerns associated with a feudal tradition, *Coolie labour in colonial Indonesia* propounds the idea that plantations constituted capitalist enclaves in which all factors of production were imported and bore no relation to the local economy. In other words, the economic system in Indonesia between 1910 and 1940 was characterized by a 'dualism' or 'parallelism' in which a modern economic sector and a traditional economy existed side by side 'without any substantive interaction' (p. 9).

Both books provide good empirical justifications for their respective arguments, but where sociological judgement serves, phenomena neither exist in a vacuum nor are mutually exclusive to one another. In studies of globalization, for example, the 'global' and the 'local' work off and counter each other. In the case of non-industrial capitalist economies too, diasporic trading communities have been known to adopt cultural practices from their host countries while at the same time infusing the local society with elements of their own culture. The argument that local (indigenous) and industrial-capitalist economies are separate and mutually exclusive, then, is one which requires critical testing by future researchers. More thought should be given to how economic activities are 'embedded' within social frameworks.

C.L.M. Penders, *The West New Guinea debacle; Dutch decolonisation and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, viii + 490 pp. ISBN 90.6718.193.5. Price: EUR 28.30 (hardback). Hindmarsh: Crawford House, ISBN 1.86333.205.7. Price: AUD 49.95.

KEES MESMAN SCHULTZ and LEO J.T. VAN DER KAMP

On 27 December 1949, Dutch colonial rule of the Indonesian archipelago officially ended after a period of more than three centuries. The decolonization process, however, turned out not to be finished as the West New Guinea

question was still not solved. The Dutch government was unwilling to transfer this territory to the United States of Indonesia, hence West New Guinea was left out of the Round Table Conference (RTC) agreement.

Penders' aim in *The West New Guinea debacle* is to describe and analyse 'the emergence of a Papuan national consciousness and the fight for Papuan freedom' against the background of United States and Australian foreign policy as well as Dutch colonial politics (p. 1). In the Prologue some general topics are discussed in order to provide a background for the monograph: the basis of Dutch colonial power, the Dutch policy of non-alignment, the Netherlands Indies defence policy, the Japanese invasion, the Indonesian revolution, and the negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia preceding the RTC and leading to the Round Table agreements. The three main chapters of the monograph, covering between them more than 300 pages, deal with the genesis of the West New Guinea question, the processes of decolonization and nationalization during the period 1950-1958, and the internationalization of the New Guinea problem. The author concludes that the real and biggest losers of the conflict were the Papuans, 'who had been betrayed by the United States, and most of the rest of the world, and had been sold against their will as chattels to the Indonesians. As in the heyday of 19th century imperialism the human rights of a subject people had been trampled upon.' (p. 385.)

Although the origin of the Dutch New Guinea problem has been discussed in many monographs, Penders treats this question more extensively by also paying due attention to Papuan anti-foreign and nationalist trends and movements, whether messianic in nature (such as the Koreri and Simson movements), anti-Dutch, pro-Indonesian, or nationalist. All this is set against the background of the the Netherlands East Indies in the 1920s, when a group of persons of mixed blood, the Indo-Europeans or Eurasians, emerged who were considering themselves as different from the native population and at the same time having few ties with the Netherlands. Within this group an idealistic movement was formed which aimed to develop the 'empty' island of New Guinea by means of agricultural colonies. Many attempts have been made to do so, but all to no avail. A section entitled 'The van Eechoud factor' sketches the work done by Jan van Eechoud in West New Guinea both before and after the Second World War as one of the few serious attempts to create an independent Papuan state.

Chapter 3 discusses 'Decolonisation and nationalisation, 1950-1958'. Here the Indonesian reactions and changing attitudes toward West New Guinea come in. Developments in this period led to Indonesian demands for nationalization of West New Guinea, implying the abolition of the Dutch-Indonesian Union. The relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia deteriorated, culminating in the dispatch of a Dutch military mission to West

New Guinea: as if a war against Indonesia could solve the West New Guinea problem. Predictably, this state of affairs led to the internationalization of the West New Guinea dispute. In Chapter 4 the main participants in the international dispute are portrayed against the background of the Cold War, the consequent anti-Communism in the Western nations, and the divergent interests of the USA, Australia and the Netherlands. The result of this end game is discussed in Chapter 5, 'The Papuans betrayed'.

Despite its remarkable detail and thoroughness, some critical comments can be made on Penders' monograph. In his description of the genesis of Dutch policy, the birth and development of feelings of independence and nationalism of (groupings of) Papuans, and the role of the USA and Australia in West New Guinea's decolonization process, many rational and quasi-rational arguments pass in review. As regards Indonesia's role, attention is especially paid to the growing anti-colonialism, the anti-Dutch feelings, and the resulting abuses. Little or no attention is paid to possible rational arguments underlying Indonesian policy. That is a pity because, notwithstanding many gross blunders on the part of the Western countries, it leads to the impression that Indonesia was the main villain of the piece.

Understandably, and probably correctly, the central role in formulating Indonesia's West New Guinea policy is assigned in this book to president Sukarno. But almost invariably Penders mentions Sukarno's name in conjunction with the Communists, even calling him 'a prewar Marxist-tinged anti-imperialist' (p. 16). This is not correct. Undoubtedly Sukarno's peasant and proletarian constituency was by and large the same political target group as the Communists had in mind, and their objectives in terms of improving the conditions of this group were also similar. But Sukarno's ideas about the way to reach these objectives differed too much from those of the Communists to allow them to be classed as part of a single faction (Hering 2002).

The historical accounts provided in *The West New Guinea debacle* are sometimes so detailed that it is easy to lose sight of the relevance or irrelevance of particular events to the West New Guinea problem. This is especially the case when it comes to Penders' description of the development of Papuan nationalism. The chapter on the genesis of the West New Guinea problem is a descriptive summing-up, and also an attempt to analyse the socio-political situation. However, no trends in the emergence and development of Papuan nationalist movements become clear. Possibly an analysis on the basis of the complicated type of government which existed in West New Guinea under Dutch rule would have resulted in a clearer insight into this issue.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, *The West New Guinea debacle* is an absorbing and valuable book. In an entertaining way Penders succeeds in exposing the weak spots in the politics of the Western countries, several of

which can still be recognized today. In this respect the monograph will surely act as a stimulant for further studies: not only for revising the dominant visions represented in such major works as those of Lijphart (1966) and De Geus (1984), but also for the analysis of current issues in international policy and politics.

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Beng-Lan Goh, *Modern dreams; An inquiry into power, cultural production, and the cityscape in contemporary urban Penang, Malaysia*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 2002, 224 pp. [Studies on Southeast Asia 31.] ISBN 0.87727.730.3. Price: USD 18.00 (paperback).

S. MORSHIDI

This book represents an excellent piece of research work in terms of its themes, issues, methodology, scope, and relevance to contemporary Malaysia. It has achieved what it has set out to do. More importantly, it fills a significant gap in knowledge about the evolution and transformation of the cityscape of major cities in Malaysia. It is a scholarly account which provides documentary evidence from Malaysia in support of many assumptions and notions with respect to the inevitability of 'cultural politics of cityscape transformation' through 'a macro analysis of modernization surfaces in Malaysia and a case study and micro analysis of the city of Georgetown', specifically 'a predominantly Portuguese-Eurasian or *orang serani* village' in the Pulau Tikus area of the city (p. 11).

This study on Kampung Serani provides an excellent research framework in which to investigate similar themes and issues in other parts of the city of Georgetown (for instance, the proposal by the Islamic Council of Penang to develop *wakaf* land around the Lebuah Aceh Mosque). Taking this a step further, the analytical research framework could be repeated in many other Malaysian cities experiencing modernization and spatial transformation processes with serious consequences for their urban heritage. Arguably,

similar studies elsewhere could confirm the finding that '[a]s a consequence of [...] specific conceptions of modern life, developers were not only transforming urban space but also polarizing society by inscribing class, status, and cultural differences upon the urban terrain' (p. 197). The role of developers and their respective stakeholders must become very apparent and contentious at a time when Malaysians, irrespective of their ethnic origin, are experiencing a series of unprecedented changes connected with a shift in national goals and priorities.

The book has nine chapters, each attempting to develop in an intricate manner the main argument that 'we can only understand the cultural politics and the accompanying spatial transformations in the Kampung Serani conflict by reference to the larger processes of modernity in Malaysia' (p. 12). In this connection the author's main contention is that 'cultural dynamics rooted in the contest over changing notions of nation, ethnicity, and class connect urban processes to recent restructuring and identity reconstructions in the push to turn Malaysia into a fully industrialized country by the year 2020' (p. 12). Based on a micro-analysis of Kampung Serani, the author argues that 'the Malaysian experience of modernity cannot be understood merely in terms of the transforming power of capitalism nor state hegemonic practices'. Rather, it must be understood in terms of collective struggles by citizens and rooted in social and cultural dynamics that constrain as well as enable them to derive power, class, and cultural status from their positions within the nation-state's modernizing practices'.

In Chapter 2 Beng-Lan Goh elaborates on the theoretical and analytical framework of the study. The adoption of an approach 'that combines power and the practice approaches' (p. 18) is indeed very refreshing and the essence of this approach was elaborated upon 'via a discussion of Bourdieu's concept of the *habitus* and Raymond William's concept of hegemony' (p. 34). In adopting a practice approach, 'practice theorists are primarily concerned with the ways in which the forces of social transformation are internally mediated, not by social structural orders, but also by cultural patterns' (p. 33). Based on the above, in Chapters 3-8 the author proceeds to 'explore how experiences, actions, and cultural arguments of the actors in Kampung Serani conflict were differentiated and dependent on their class location, their ethnic backgrounds, and their access to social, cultural, and political resources'. In addition, Beng-Lan Goh manages to 'establish a distance between the actors' predisposed cultural configurations and their intentions by locating individual and collective experiences as part of larger social and cultural webs' (p. 38).

Gert-Jan Bartstra (ed.), *Bird's Head approaches; Irian Jaya studies – a programme for interdisciplinary research*. Rotterdam: Balkema, 1998, ix + 275 pp. [Modern Quaternary Research in Southeast Asia 15.] ISBN 90.5410.683.2. Price: EUR 61.26 (hardback).

RICHARD SCAGLION

The Bird's Head peninsula of western New Guinea is of great importance to geologists, archaeologists, ethnographers, naturalists, and other scientists. Located in Papua, the province of Indonesia formerly called Irian Jaya, the Bird's Head once formed the northernmost promontory of the Australian continental landmass. Named for its distinctive shape, which today appears to be the head of New Guinea's bird-like configuration, the area called *Vogelkop* in Dutch and *Kepala Burung* in Indonesian lies at the edge of the Australian faunal zone. Wallacea, a set of islands west of the Bird's Head, constitutes a transition zone to the Asian flora and fauna.

During the late Pleistocene, when sea levels were significantly lower than today, New Guinea and Australia were united as the continent of Sahul. Radiocarbon dates from Australia place human entry into Sahul at around 40,000 BP. Although the exact path of the migrants is unknown, a western route through Sulawesi, Sula, and Halmahera into the Bird's Head is plausible. Thus the Bird's Head could hold the key to the timing and source of the earliest human occupation in the region. Because of interactions between early Papuan settlers and Austronesian-speaking peoples who arrived later, the spread of Southeast Asian Neolithic cultures associated with agriculture can also be illuminated by research in the area. These and other issues call for interdisciplinary study of the Bird's Head.

Most of the contributions in this volume narrowly reflect their authors' disciplines, and only about half deal specifically with the Bird's Head. The others, however, provide important regional context. The interdisciplinary character of the work derives from 'Irian Jaya Studies, a programme for Interdisciplinary Research' (ISIR), an organization comprised of about twenty researchers from the arts and science faculties of Dutch universities and research institutes. The composition of the volume reflects the tripartite division of ISIR's scientific ranks: geology, archaeology and botany. Absent from a broader interdisciplinary approach are (for example) linguistic or ethnographic surveys.

Of the papers concentrating on the Bird's Head proper, that by Dam and Wong ably reviews the environmental and geologic setting. Solheim's paper reminisces about the early archeology of the 1970s and provides an introduction to recent reports by Jelsma on Toé, a cave with distinct Pleistocene and Holocene sequences, and by Pasveer on an 8,000-year occupation sequence

in Kria cave. Vink then summarizes Forestry Service surveys of lowland rainforests between 1936 and 1962, providing context for Polak's survey of botanical species of the Ayawasi area of the central Bird's Head. Finally, De Vogel discusses the orchids of New Guinea.

Another set of papers situates Bird's Head research in a broader regional context. Ian Lilley provides a comprehensive review of archeology in Papua New Guinea, the eastern half of New Guinea, that underscores the prehistoric importance of the western end of the island and suggests areas for future study. Based on recent and ongoing research, Veth, Spriggs, Jatmiko, and O'Connor consider the archeological significance of the nearby Aru Islands. Once part of Sahul, Aru might also yield early habitation sites because of its strategic relation to the Bird's Head. Susan Keates reviews the evidence for early hominids on Java and Flores, the likely furthest extent of *Homo erectus* during the middle Pleistocene. The next two papers consider the 'Toalean', a prehistoric culture from the south of Sulawesi, an island lying on a possible migration route to the Bird's Head. Bartstra reviews previous research, and Pasqua and Bulbeck treat Toalean lithics. The collection concludes with an excellent comprehensive review of northern Moluccan prehistory by Bellwood and others. Readers unfamiliar with the Indo-Pacific area could read this paper first, as an introduction to the major issues in the region's prehistory.

Unfortunately, the production of the book is disappointing. The collection would have been much improved by a set of high-quality general maps. Some of the maps and figures, particularly in Dam and Wong's introductory contribution, are reproduced poorly, and the binding on my copy came apart all too easily. These criticisms notwithstanding, this volume brings Dutch scholars together with colleagues from Australia, Indonesia, and elsewhere to provide us with much-needed summary data on an important region.

R.S. Milne and Diane K. Mauzy, *Malaysian politics under Mahathir*. London: Routledge, 1999, xix + 225 pp. ISBN 0.415.17142.3. Price GBP 65.00 (hardback); 0.415.17143.1, GBP 19.99 (paperback).

SIMON C. SMITH

On grounds of longevity alone, Mahathir Mohamad's political career deserves scholarly attention. His two decades as Malaysia's prime minister have also witnessed remarkable change, far more so than his three predecessors. In their study of politics under Mahathir, R.S. Milne and Diane Mauzy do justice to this important subject.

In eight thematic chapters the authors chart different aspects of Mahathir's premiership, from human rights and foreign policy to the economy and ethnic dissent. What emerges is a portrait of a man of bewildering contrasts: a Malay nationalist who has sought to coopt non-Malays; a strident critic of the West who has fostered trade with the United States; and a modernizer who has railed against modern economic trends, especially in the aftermath of the 1997 economic crash in Southeast Asia. Mahathir's ruthless grip on power, and growing authoritarianism, are other prominent features of Milne and Mauzy's study. By clipping the wings of the traditional Malay rulers, undermining the independence of the judiciary, and suppressing all dissent within UMNO (the principal partner in the ruling Barisan Nasional), Mahathir has remained the dominant force in Malaysian politics. The extraordinary circumstances surrounding the demise of Mahathir's deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, receive extensive treatment, as do the mounting violations of democratic norms during Mahathir's period in power. The emasculation of the civil service, the use of the Internal Security Act (ISA) for political purposes, and increasing instances of human rights violations have come to characterize Mahathir's premiership. As Milne and Mauzy remark: 'Mahathir certainly has behaved as if being elected conferred absolute power' (p. 181). Other worrying traits include his liking for grandiose buildings, his failure to stem corruption, and his irrational outbursts during (and eccentric handling of) the 1997 economic crisis.

On the positive side of the equation, Mahathir is portrayed as a man of vision. This is underlined by his commitment to Malaysia's achievement of developed country status, and the replacement of ethnicity with genuine national sentiment, by the year 2020. His period in office has also seen enhanced tolerance and support for Chinese and other non-Malays. As Mahathir himself put it: 'I never was against the Chinese and other non-Malays. I just wanted to correct the imbalance' (p. 166). Part of his drive to correct that 'imbalance' has been expressed through his exhortations to Malays to compete successfully without state assistance. Indeed his concept of the *Melayu Baru*, or New Malay, has been a central feature of his vision for a successful, developed Malaysia free from debilitating ethnic antagonisms.

Milne and Mauzy's study is a well-organized and eminently readable account of Malaysia's longest-serving and most influential prime minister. They are to be congratulated for presenting a balanced overview which juxtaposes Mahathir's undoubted achievements with the more unsavoury aspects of his political career. The impression which is left is that of a complex figure who has left an indelible mark on the politics of Malaysia.

Christine Helliwell, *'Never stand alone'; A study of Borneo sociality*. Phillips, Maine: Borneo Research Council, 2001, xiv + 279 pp. [BRC Monograph Series 5.] ISBN 1.929900.02.3. Price: USD 35.00 (hardback).

REED L. WADLEY

Derek Freeman's research on Iban social organization from the 1950s challenged the established 'descent theory', then championed by Radcliffe-Brown, by showing that a society could be cohesive and stable without segmentary, unilineal, corporate descent groups. His work also had two other profound consequences. On the one hand, though he challenged descent theory, Freeman actually reaffirmed the centrality of discrete, autonomous, enduring, corporate groups through his descriptions of the Iban *bilik*. On the other hand, his version of the Iban *bilik* became the archetype around which subsequent anthropologists modelled their descriptions and analyses of other Borneo societies. Until recently one could not write an ethnography without addressing Freeman's conceptions of Bornean social units, and though some have questioned aspects of his analyses, significant elements have remained unchallenged.

In her book *'Never stand alone'*, Christine Helliwell takes on Freeman's long-standing influence, arguing against the concepts of discreteness, autonomy, durability, and corporateness as necessary elements in Borneo social organization. She focuses on the Gerai, a Dayak people of Ketapang District, West Kalimantan, and shows that at each turn Gerai sociality is built on principles quite the opposite from what Freeman described for the Iban – interdependence, fluidity, and impermanence. She also shows that an important social entity in Gerai society, the rice group, cannot be defined in terms of co-residence, the central criterion in the anthropological concept of households (one which the Iban *bilik* re-enforced). What comes out most strongly in Gerai sociality is the needing and sharing that operates within and between groups.

From the observation that rice 'occupies a position of overwhelming importance within Gerai existence' (p. 62) as the core of both subsistence and symbol systems, Helliwell argues that control over rice production and control over the rice product are not exclusively held by a co-residential rice production unit (that is, the household). Instead a more inclusive 'rice group', made up of closely related people, may comprise different production units. Although each production unit separates its own rice from the others in the storage huts, each is obligated to share with the other units. Indeed, shared rice production is strongly associated with emotional attachment, and this ties into Gerai notions of nurturing rice and nurturing children, and of people's need for each. The nurturing of both ensures continuity, though not the

'endurance' which descent theorists envisioned for corporate groups.

This interdependence and nurturing within and between rice production units in common rice groups further extends 'into the interlocking and interdependent Gerai adat community' (p. 141). Though rice groups are autonomous in some limited respects, they are also bound to each other through their adherence to *adat*, the practice of maintaining moral, social, and natural balance. This protective power extends itself over rice groups, their constituent members, and rice fields through their respective ritual hearths. These hearths are quite literally the actual hearths used for cooking, although they are also bound up with fundamental Gerai notions about sociality. When a new rice production unit forms within a rice group, the source hearth provides the elementary ingredients to constitute a new unit. But this does not represent the formation of a new, autonomous entity, as Freeman argued for partitions of the Iban *bilik*. Rather, 'standing' as a new rice unit 'involves a recognition of the place of one's own group within the wider *adat* hierarchy, and of the associated lines of precedence and deference within which it is consequently enmeshed' (p. 196).

In addition to these connections and interdependencies, the Gerai longhouse is a community of neighbours tied together not only through kinship and marriage, but also in space. The title of one of Helliwell's journal articles sums this up nicely: 'Good walls make bad neighbours'. Indeed, while the ritual hearth places each rice group member under the *adat* authority of the community, the longhouse is where that authority is exercised, and it is through the permeable, nocturnally-lit apartment walls that anyone may hear or see the goings-on of others. It is this 'community of voices' that gives *adat* its social expression.

Helliwell's book, based on her PhD thesis, follows the style of other anthropologists working in Southeast Asia, with Janet Carsten and Monica Janowski springing immediately to my mind – an active interplay of social organization, symbolism, and economy. Any anthropologist proposing to undertake fieldwork in Borneo should read this book, alongside Freeman's work on the Iban. Though there are certainly some differences between Gerai and Iban social organization, such as the stronger 'descent' ideology of the Iban *bilik*, Helliwell's description makes a good deal of sense to me. Despite my own mandatory reading of Freeman's writings prior to my first fieldwork among the West Kalimantan Iban, I came to see more interdependence and less autonomy, both in economic and in ritual terms, than Freeman describes. 'Never stand alone' provides a well-articulated correction to this, not to mention a wonderful ethnographic account from a severely under-studied region of Kalimantan.

Francis Loh Kok Wah and Khoo Boo Teik (eds), *Democracy in Malaysia; Discourses and practices*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2002, xiii + 274 pp. [Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Democracy in Asia Series 5.] ISBN 0.707.1160.0, price GBP 45.00 (hardback); 0.7007.1161.9, GBP 15.90 (paperback).

NICHOLAS J. WHITE

The title of this volume of essays by eight Malaysian scholars might seem distinctly odd. For the past thirty years or more, Malaysia has effectively been a one-party, or perhaps one-coalition, state, and the sacking of deputy prime minister, Anwar Ibrahim, in September 1998 and his subsequent trial and conviction on dubious charges of corruption and sodomy confirmed the control exercised by the prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, over the political system as well as the judiciary and the police. Yet, Malaysia does continue to hold regular elections, a parliamentary opposition is tolerated, and, when this project was first conceived in the early to mid-1990s, a nascent civil society appeared to be developing, evidenced by the emergence of various NGOs and women's groups.

Hence, the big issue is to explain the continuing limits on Malaysian democracy. In the first part of the volume – entitled 'Discourses' – Francis Loh recognizes that the 'politics of ethnicism' restricted liberties in the immediate post-colonial period, but argues that from the mid-1980s communalism was superseded by the 'politics of developmentalism' (p. 21). A particularly original contribution here is Loh's discussion of the ways in which consumerism has anaesthetized anti-establishment views amongst the new middle class. Khoo Boo Teik, meanwhile, traces the development of Mahathir's 'Asian values' discourse in which the prime minister has arrived at the apparently genuine conclusion that 'western liberal democracy is not worth emulating' (p. 66). In the 'Practices' section of the book, the chapters by Zaharom Nain and Mustafa Anuar emphasize how both television and the mainstream press have fallen under the financial and editorial control of the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN), and how draconian media laws restrict public debate anyway. Lim Hong Hai's discussion of the bureaucracy concludes that the problem lies not in an over-mighty, politically biased civil service, but rather in a lack of effective controls on ministers and the political executive – for example, the restrictions on parliamentary scrutiny and widespread ministerial corruption exposed, unwittingly, during the sacking and trial of Anwar. Saliha Hassan focuses on the NGO phenomenon, showing that in the final resort the government has used the Internal Security Act and Societies Act to 'monitor, discipline and curb overtly critical and potentially influential NGOs' (p. 214). Even leaders of the Chinese cultural lobby, the Dongjiaozong,

were detained during the Operasi Lalang crackdown on political undesirables in 1987. On the subject of the women's movement, Maznah Mohamad shows how those at 'the centre' – in the women's wings of the political parties and in the National Council of Women's Organisations – have rarely risked their 'comfortable standing' (p. 227) to help those on 'the periphery', such as the low-paid Malay female labour force in the electronics sector. Patriarchy at the centre is also hard to overcome when to date only ten per cent of Malaysian MPs are women.

Some hope for the future does emerge from this volume, however. Maznah sees the passing (at last) of the Domestic Violence Act in 1994 as pointing to the potential for a liberal-democratic women's movement, even encompassing Islam. Indeed, Syad Ahmad Hussein's excellent and timely essay on Malaysia's Islamist party, PAS, stresses that there is no incompatibility between Muslim politics and democracy. Just like its equivalents in North Africa, Turkey, and Indonesia, PAS has 'consistently expressed [its] belief in democratic procedures and expectations, and [its] commitment to human rights, the independence of the judiciary, universal participation and the rotation of authority through honest elections' (p. 78). PAS's recent electoral alliances with the Democratic Action Party, which is principally supported by liberal-minded urban Chinese professionals, are not as contradictory or opportunistic as they might immediately seem. Saliha points out that the mere existence and operation of NGOs 'is itself suggestive of a measure of democratic participation' (p. 212). Mustafa, on the other hand, hopes that the 'alternative media and the Internet [...] provide the needed democratic space for freedom of expression and democracy to grow' (p. 164).

The editorial postscript anticipates some criticisms of the contributions given the unexpected political and economic developments in Malaysia while the volume was being put together. Political science is indeed a cruel business. The financial debacle of 1997 has undermined the BN's economic legitimacy and, as is admitted, Loh's pronouncements on the 'end of ethnicity' are called into question by the regime's tendency to play on inter-racial rivalries during the November 1999 elections. Furthermore, we are now faced with the prospect of a post-Mahathir Malaysia given the premier's shock announcement that he will resign sometime in 2003. Mahathir's chosen successor is Abdullah Badawi, but this 'Mr. Nice Guy' of Malaysian politics does not even make it into the index of *Democracy in Malaysia*. Another major criticism of this volume concerns the past rather than the present or the future. An obvious limitation on Malaysian democracy arises from the continued legacy of Malaysia's managed decolonization. As the British colonials encouraged democratization in order to defeat Communist insurgency during the 1940s and 1950s, they also imbued the post-colonial state with powers and mentalities to control that liberalization. This is touched on in

the chapters by Khoo, Zaharom and Mustafa, but engagement with Tim Harper's *The end of empire and the making of Malaya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) might have been considered. Even so, this remains a set of well-written and thought-provoking essays which, as the editors themselves conclude, will serve as a useful 'map of the changed political terrain of the 1990s' (p. 242).