

人支配」概念を「アメ」(パトロネジ)と「ムチ」(暴力・監視)の配分の態様から捉え直した点は、これまでの権威主義政治の研究になかった切り口である。

同時に、本書は民主化分析に関しても新機軸を打ち出した。これまでのインドネシアの民主化研究はエリート間での利害調整で民主化を説明するものであった。たとえば、Robison and Hadiz [2004]は民主化過程での政治経済エリートのフォーマル・インフォーマルなつながりとその再編を明らかにし、Slater [2004]は政治エリートによるカルテル政治を論じた。これに対して本書は、パトロネジ配分のチャンネルとして体制の安定をもたらしたゴルカルが、経済危機後にはパトロネジ配分偏向に不満を抱く民衆と体制内エリートとのコミュニケーションのチャンネルとしても機能し、皮肉にも体制崩壊をもたらしたとする。体制自体がいわば時限爆弾を内包していたことを新たに指摘したといえよう。

インドネシアに限らず、権威主義からの民主化というレジームチェンジを経た途上国の政治体制を分析する上で、本書は欠かせない一冊である。

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||| Rachel V. Harrison and Peter A. Jackson, eds. *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of the Colonial in Thailand*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, ||| 2010, 268p.

Thirty two years ago Benedict Anderson penned one of the most influential essays in the history of Thai studies: “Studies of the Thai State, the State of Thai Studies.” The essay was published less than two years after one of the most traumatic incidents in Thai political history: the October 6, 1976 massacre of leftist students by security forces and militias with close links to the Palace. This event partly accounts for the essay's iconoclastic tone. In the essay Anderson controversially turns some of the most cherished axioms about Thailand on their head, including the role of colonialism in Thai history: rather than being the only country in Southeast Asia to escape colonial rule Anderson argues that Siam was in fact indirectly colonized, and unfortunately so since it “retarded the development of the Siamese nation”; the monarchy was a “modernizing” force only in the same sense as the European colonial powers in Southeast Asia were modernizers; and the “success” of Siam's leadership, both the Chakri kings during the absolutist era and the military dictatorship under Sarit and his successors, was due to Western “imperial pacification” of SEA during the colonial era and the Cold War.

It was thus with some eagerness that this reviewer received Harrison and Jackson's edited volume of

essays, which promised to revisit the vexed question of Thailand's relationship with the West and the place of colonialism in its history and cultural life. Planning for the book began as early as 2002 at a time when academic discourse and indeed popular culture were full of nationalist resentment at perceived Western neo-colonialism, this time in the form of ruthless currency speculators and the IMF following the currency and financial crisis of 1997–98. It is a little unlucky that the book's publication coincides with an acute economic recession in the West and soul-searching about its relative decline in world affairs, while Asian economies are buoyant and the world is supposed to have entered an "Asian century." Yet anti-Western sentiment in Thailand has flared up once again, this time fuelled by royalists in their defence of the monarchy in the on-going political crisis.

The editors represent the book as a contribution to Thai studies for its use of "postcolonial analysis" as well as for its application of the "critical theoretical perspectives of international cultural studies." The problem the book hinges on is the accepted truth that Thailand was not colonized, which has long been used to make claims for the country's uniqueness and has thus limited comparative studies by which Thailand might be better understood. It is also an article of faith in the country's conservative, "royalist nationalism." The book appears in the wake of a belated boom in post-colonial studies in Thai universities over the last decade (even if its peak in the Western academy arguably passed two decades ago).

The volume consists of ten essays. The editors (rather indulgently in this reviewer's opinion) each include two of their own essays, and each writes their own introduction. It contains an eclectic collection of studies of Thailand's relations with the West (with an emphasis on the cultural). There is much that will be of value to scholars interested in this perennial question. The book opens with a foreword by a key figure of the subaltern studies school, Dipesh Chakrabarty, with some remote theoretical musings on "naming" and "repetition." Jackson's two essays make the case for

postcolonial theorizing of Thailand. Pattana Kitiarsa's essay presents an exhaustive account of the origins and meanings of the term *farang*. Loos, drawing on her research for her book *Subject Siam* (2006), describes the Thai state's own colonizing drive to incorporate the former sultanate of Patani. Harrison's essay critiques popular fiction and a number of movies, past and present, on the theme of Thai encounters with the West. Ingawanij and MacDonald examine the highly original work of the Thai film director, Apichatpong Weerasetakul, acclaimed on the international independent film circuit but largely ignored in his own country. Herzfeld's essay, which explores the "dynamics of crypto-colonialism," is the only comparative study of Thailand and Greece that this reviewer is aware of. Thongchai Winichakul gives a typically feisty and intellectually stimulating account of the "localization of postcolonial studies" in Thai academia; in fact, one of the book's strong points is its examination of the dynamics of Thai academia which, ironically, given the book's theme, is usurping the place of the former Western metropolises as the centre for production of the best quality scholarship in the field. The highlight of the volume for this reviewer is Thanet Wongyannawa's account of the reception of Foucault in Thai studies, which combines rigorous scholarship with the postmodernist's playfulness and moreover is a delight to read.

However, since the book presents itself as a theoretical contribution it should be judged on those grounds, and this is its major weakness. To reverse Jackson's use of the term (p. 40), the book's premise appears to "fetishize" theory and its clunky cultural studies jargon (eg. "hybridities," "ambiguities," "binaries," "subaltern," "dominance," "subordination," etc.) while disparaging the empirical. The oft repeated justification (p. 4, p. 8, p. 9, p. 10, p. 42, p. 48, etc.) that Thai academia neglects the theoretical in favour of the collection of mountains of data, is overstated.

The editors and a number of the contributors waste too much time pondering whether Thailand is "colonial," "semi-colonial," "postcolonial," "auto-colonial," "crypto-colonial," or "neocolonial." Such navel-gazing

is somewhat exasperating when it occurs at precisely the moment when Thailand is freer of Western “domination” than it has been for a century and a half. Indeed, if there is any time that the country ought to be a little more subject to “Western domination” — in the form of the principles of liberty and equality and basic democratic rights — it is now. For most contributors colonialism is one of history’s “Bad Things” (eg. Thongchai: “domination by the West on the global stage must be countered,” p. 150), but as Anderson argued in his essay for the colonial period, Thailand is perhaps unfortunate now, as Siam was then, not to have been more fully “colonized.”

There is a sense that runs through the book that if Thai Studies is to be “sophisticated” it needs to be theoretically dense. It must be said that the more theoretical essays contain some of the most turgid and often vacuous prose that it has been this reviewer’s misfortune to read. Some sentences read almost as a parody of postmodern waffle. For example, Jackson writes,

The structuring principles of power, subordination, autonomy and resistance that underlie the diverse processes of Siam/Thailand’s elite and subaltern cultural hybridities emerge from a politico-cultural system founded upon an historical strategy of changing surface forms to mimic, but never fully reproduce, the external patterns of the superpower of the day . . . (p.204)

Such tortuous gobbledygook should not be inflicted upon an unsuspecting scholarly public. Nor should they be made to feel intellectually inferior if they find it indecipherable.

Even when one invests the time needed in re-reading sentences and paragraphs to decode such language it is difficult to see that this volume has made any important “theoretical” advance on Anderson’s essay over thirty years ago — which was also a model of lucid, incisive writing. While it is a worthy aim to attack the (now largely discredited) Thai discourse of uniqueness, this volume is hardly the first to do this.

Reynolds’ edited volume examining discourses of Thai national identity in 1991 was an early successful attempt at just that, and since the 1990s there has been a large Thai language scholarship on “*khwa-m-pen-thai*,” to the extent that in all but the most conservative political discourse criticism of Thai uniqueness is *de rigueur* (perhaps a correction is even due). The boom in Area Studies in Thai universities over the last decade which is hardly touched upon in this book, has also helped undermine such claims of uniqueness.

One wonders, therefore, whether Jackson’s project to “reinvigorate semicolonialism with theoretical force” (p. 47) is both mistimed and misplaced. Anderson’s revisionist study of colonialism in Thailand’s political history, produced after the Palace’s implication in the October 6 massacre and right-wing backlash, was in fact a full frontal attack on “Chakri absolutism.” While *The Ambiguous Allure of the West* touches on the monarchy it largely escapes the withering treatment meted out by Anderson. This is a pity, because if the energies of Thai studies scholars are needed to uncover forms of domination and subordination in Thailand, they would be more productively directed towards those much pervasive and tangible forms that are orchestrated by the monarchy and its defenders today. Unlike Western colonialism, which for a long time has been an “open book” as far as scholarly access is concerned (one can even get grants from the colonizers’ governments to fund it), research into the monarchy’s political, economic and social control in Thailand is vastly more circumscribed in every way, and thus seriously understudied.

In summary, this volume’s theoretical aspirations left this reviewer unimpressed. Yet that weakness should not discourage the judicious reader from engaging with the remainder of the book which contains much that will stimulate.

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||| Rudolf Mrázek. *A Certain Age: Colonial Jakarta through the Memories of Its Intellectuals*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010, 328p. |||

When embarking upon the research for *A Certain Age*, historian Rudolf Mrázek envisioned quite a different book from the one he ended up writing. From 1992 to 2000, he interviewed over 70 Indonesian men and women who had lived through the changes from Dutch colonial rule to Japanese occupation to independence. He expected to hear first-hand accounts of great transformations: “the transition to modernity, from colonialism to postcolonialism . . . the failed (or unfinished) Indonesian revolution.” However, in the course of these dozens of meandering reminiscences, he “stumbled across a particular landscape” that came to move him intensely. Instead of a conventional narrative of modernization, he offers us a meditation on memory and its vagaries. In addition, by interweaving Indonesian memories with the insights of European avant-garde intellectuals such as Benjamin, Le Corbusier, and Proust, he invites us to reflect on the nature of modernity itself, to reconsider it from the perspective of a coloniality that he sees as often anticipating the metropole.

For this reviewer, ever intruding while reading *A Certain Age* were flashbacks to the interviews in Curtis Levy’s documentary series *Riding the Tiger* (Australia, 1992) on modern Indonesian history; the series gathered reminiscences of the same time span from much the same type of eyewitness as appear in Mrázek’s book (indeed the very same eyewitnesses, in the case of

Roeslan Abdulgani, Sukarno’s UN ambassador, and Father Mangunwijaya, the renowned author). Perhaps Mrázek at first intended to produce what would amount to an expansion in book form of the work of historical recovery that that documentary series was. However, while *Riding the Tiger* argues a clear thesis that Indonesia’s military dictatorship finds its origins in indigenous feudalism, Dutch colonialism, and Japanese militarism, *A Certain Age* by contrast merely suggests or proposes its theses or, better, simply raises questions. The open-ended, ambiguous nature of the work is reflected in the very title: what exactly does the author mean by the phrase “a certain age”? The late colonial era being recollected? The moment of recollecting itself, the last years of the Suharto regime and its immediate aftermath? The physical age of the interviewees themselves, in their seventies and eighties, that particular degree of distance from the world being recalled? Even, a late colonial age of seeming “certainties,” such as the apparent permanence of Dutch domination? The modifier “a certain . . .” itself alludes to imprecision, to the slipperiness of what one is trying to capture.

While the multivalent title does justice to the content of the book, the subtitle, “Colonial Jakarta Through the Memories of Its Intellectuals” hints at a narrower book than Mrázek actually provides. His interviewees recall provincial towns almost as much as Batavia/Jakarta itself; particularly prominent is not surprisingly Bandung, the “Paris of the East,” “more *du jour* than the metropolis,” but even the Boven Digoel prison camp on the New Guinea periphery appears. The term “Intellectuals” suggests that Indonesian equivalents of Benjamin and Adorno will be cited, but in fact the interviewees come from a wide range of occupational backgrounds: aristocrats, officials, generals, businessmen, even a *kroncong* songwriter (Gesang). The book also represents the ethnic diversity of the late colonial milieu, including Chinese Indonesians (e.g. Dr. Ong Hok Ham) and Arab Indonesians (e.g. Hamid Algadri) as well as Dutch who had “gone native” (e.g. Professor G.J. Resink whose family went back two centuries in the Indies and Poncke Prinsen who defected to the Indo-