

## **Monash Asia Institute Bulletin** (3/2009)

8 April 2009

### **Contents**

1. Obituary: Robert Rice (b. 17-11-39; d.24-3-09)
2. CSEAS Seminar: Mahathir's engagement with Islam
3. Seminar & Film: Son of a lion
4. CSEAS Seminar: The 'resource curse' thesis in the play of Cambodian politics
5. CSEAS Seminar: Writing a history of the Pamona of Central Sulawesi
6. CSEAS Seminar: South Blitar and the 1968 Trisula Operation
7. Seminar: Lake Toba eco-system
8. Conference: The external relations of the EU
9. Kartomi collection of traditional music arts in Sumatran
10. Melbourne Conference on China
11. 12th Indonesian Postgraduate Roundtable
12. Website of the month: Monash Asian Music Archive

## **Monash Asia Institute and Monash University News**

### **Item 1. Obituary**

**ROBERT RICE** (b. 17-11-39; d.24-3-09)

Associate Professor Bob Rice, one of Australia's leading economists working on Asian development, died suddenly and unexpectedly on February 24. Bob had devoted the bulk of his career to development in Indonesia. Although formally retired Bob continued to work at the Department of Economics where he had taught for more than 30 years and was active in the Monash Asia Institute, which he had helped establish, and in the Centre of Southeast Asian Studies. To his Economics and Asian Studies colleagues, the only unsurprising feature of his passing was that he had just attended a seminar

given by a visiting Indonesian academic.

Bob joined the Department of Economics in 1975, after completing his PhD on Indonesian manufacturing industries at Cornell and teaching in Hawaii. His major roles in the department were teaching the economics of development and economic growth, and supervising a succession of graduate students on economic development topics. Most of his masters and doctoral students were from developing countries, including sub-Saharan Africa, with the largest number being from Indonesia. As a professional, his first loves were working with graduate students and returning to Indonesia to work on development issues. His career at Monash was notable for the large number Indonesian consultancy and training assignments that he managed to fit alongside his on-campus teaching and research.

Bob was one of the foremost authorities on the development of small and medium industries and of regional and provincial economies in Indonesia. Two of his recent notable contributions were his work for the Asian Development Bank on fiscal decentralization in Indonesia, and his valued contribution as an economic reconstruction advisor to the Indonesian Government's agency for post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction in Aceh.

Bob was one of the first economists that any Asia specialist would meet on arriving at the Clayton campus. Pilgrimages to his office not only evidenced widespread respect for his work on Indonesian development issues but also deep admiration for his humility and generosity. Bob was one of the most modest academics one could ever imagine, but despite this succeeded in an era that has demanded increasing levels of self-promotion. To his enduring credit he resolutely resisted that new crassness when others merely struggled to play it down.

Bob's unfailing modesty was all the more remarkable because he was held in such high regard in Indonesia. He was one of the few Australian Indonesian specialists to have sustained close relationships with successive generations of Indonesian cabinet ministers, enjoying such deep trust that they thought nothing of inviting him to sit in on otherwise confidential meetings. Bob's door was always open. He was generous with his time to colleagues, but far more of it was devoted to graduate students, including students in other Asian Studies disciplines. He was known as someone with a special understanding of and sensitivity to the problems that Southeast Asian students face when pursuing graduate studies in Australia. In departmental governance and administration, Bob was always a 'willing horse', yet his contributions were almost always low-key; the one thing that could excite him was the possibility that the difficulties faced by foreign students were not getting sufficient consideration.

Those who worked with Bob as a co-supervisor of doctoral students saw best his unfailing patience and graciousness. Inevitably, anyone else appeared 'tough and pushy' alongside Bob, who never allowed constructive criticism to be delivered in a way that might be perceived as discouraging or confronting,

preferring rather to gently coax out of his students a recognition of where they could improve their work. The same traits were seen when working with him on the many and various international training projects that he was consistently engaged with over the decades. Here he proved to be an invaluable colleague in setting up and delivering projects for Ausaid, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and other agencies. He was always ready to work with colleagues in Economics and other disciplines as a co-lecturer and co-mentor. During the 1980s Bob joined others in their determination to set up the Monash Asia Institute, originally called the Institute for Contemporary Asian Studies.

A true mid-westerner, Bob was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan on the 17th of November 1939, completed his B.A. at the University of Michigan in 1961 and then went on to complete an M.A. (1969) and a Ph.D (1971) at Cornell University. His postgraduate studies took him to Indonesia where he encountered a world that changed his life forever. He met and married Eti and also began an encounter with Islam, a faith in which he continued to find deep meaning and purpose throughout the rest of his life, and which sustained him through Eti's illness and untimely death some years ago.

After moving to Melbourne Bob became a pillar of the Indonesia community and of ISOMER (the Islamic Society of Melbourne Eastern Regime), helping build the Lysterfield Mosque in the late 1970s and the adjacent ISOMER multi-faith retirement home. A large but gentle man, quiet but always approachable, Bob's kindly face and welcoming demeanour drew out the best in people, making him a natural bridge-building and peace-maker. In his own quiet way he became, without any sense of pretension, a wonderful ambassador not only for his own Islamic faith but also for a life of faith in general. It is doubtful that he left behind any enemies but he is certainly missed by many friends and colleagues from Australia, Indonesia, and from all around the world. He is especially missed by his wife Paula and by his sons Fred, James, Umar and Shane. The world is the richer for his time here and the poorer for his passing.

A/Prof Ian Wills (Honorary associate Faculty of Business and Economics, Monash), Prof Marika Vicziany (Director, Monash Asia Institute), Prof Greg Barton (Herb Feith Research Professor for the Study of Indonesia, Monash University)

## **Item 2. Seminar**

Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University

Thursday 9 April 2009, 11.00 am - 12.30 pm  
Manton Room SG02, Ground Floor, Menzies Building (11) South  
Monash University Clayton campus

**A theology of progress: Mahathir's engagement with Islam**  
Sven Schottman, PhD Candidate, Monash Asia Institute

Malaysia's long-ruling Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed (b. 1925) is largely remembered for the transformative effects of his economic policies. His engagement with Islam, however, is equally momentous for Malaysians, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He assumed office in the early 1980s by stating that he desired to "infuse Islamic values into government," and ended two decades later by declaring Malaysia an "Islamic State." Under the Mahathir premiership (1981-2003), Malaysian Islam underwent a significant socio-political transfiguration. This paper proposes that Dr Mahathir's engagement with the religion falls into three distinct and distinctive phases. It will identify the core themes in each of these phases, the external dynamics that influenced Mahathir's changing stances, and examine the former prime minister's continuous objective of articulating an Islamic "theology of progress."

Details: <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/cseas/seminars/index.php>

ALL WELCOME

Enquiries: Dr Jemma Purdey  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow  
Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University  
Email: [Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au)

### **Item 3. Brown Bag Seminar**

Tuesday 21 April 2009, 12:00 - 2:00 pm  
W218/11 (West Wing) Level 2  
Menzies Building (11), Monash University Clayton campus

#### **Son of a Lion**

A Film

Presented by Prof John Baily

Son of a Lion, which has been described as a political discussion, follows the story of a young boy from the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan, who would rather go to school than follow the footsteps of his father into gun-production. The film is a debut by Australian film-maker Benjamin Gilmour, a former ambulance officer who travelled to the NWFP prior to 9/11. Gilmour uses non-professional actors and the script was written in collaboration with Pashtun friends.

John Baily is Emeritus Professor of Ethno-musicology at Goldsmiths, University of London. He and Veronica Doubleday have numerous publications on the music and culture of Afghanistan. They are currently Visiting Academics at Monash University.

About the movie: <http://www.sonofalion.com/>

Enquiries: [sharmini.sherrard@monash.edu.au](mailto:sharmini.sherrard@monash.edu.au)

#### **Item 4. Seminar**

Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University

23 Apr 2009, 11.00 am - 12.30 pm

Manton Room SG02, Ground Floor, Menzies Building (11) South  
Monash University Clayton campus

#### **Anticipating an oil boom: The 'resource curse' thesis in the play of Cambodian politics**

Andrew Cock, Postdoctoral Fellow, CSEAS, Monash University

In around 2010, Cambodia will begin production of offshore oil fields containing an estimated 700 million to two billion barrels of oil. This long anticipated event has prompted considerable discussion of whether oil derived wealth will be a blessing or a curse. Much of the discussion has been framed through the lens of the resource curse thesis. The purpose of this paper is to consider how notions of a resource curse have entered the play of Cambodian politics. What questions has it led Cambodia's elites and external actors to ask concerning the management of oil resources? What questions have been neglected? How will this notion, now almost a cliché, likely shape transparency in relation to the extraction of oil and the capture of rents that the sale of oil will generate?

Details: <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/cseas/seminars/index.php>

ALL WELCOME

Enquiries: Dr Jemma Purdey

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University

Email: [Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au)

#### **Item 5. Seminar**

Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University

30 Apr 2009, 11.00 am - 12.30 pm

Manton Room SG02, Ground Floor, Menzies Building (11) South  
Monash University Clayton campus

#### **Writing a history of the Pamona of Central Sulawesi 1880 – 2000**

Joost Cote, Deakin University

The recent spate of inter-communal violence as well as local interest in regional history and heritage in Indonesia over the last decade (as reported

for instance in van Klinken, *Small Town Wars*, 2007 on the one hand, and Davidson and Henley, (eds), *The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics*, 2007 on the other) indicates a new interest in defining and defending local regional identities. Hastened by political decentralisation legislation, it follows that some of the boundaries which an earlier generation had sought to expunge in constructing the modern post-colonial nation (often the consequence of colonial intervention) are in the process of being redrawn at the same time as nation states themselves are undergoing change. Similar processes are apparent throughout SE Asia. These developments imply a crucial role for history, in particular the need for 'post-national' local and institutional histories to supplement extensive, but typically more anthropologically-oriented, studies of local communities.

In this seminar presentation I will outline a proposed history of the Pamona of kabupaten Poso, Central Sulawesi, (the community recent events have suddenly dragged into the spot light of international attention). The central theme of my projected book (building on earlier research and publications) is a narrative of the history of the development of this Christian community and its political structures, and its integration into the Indonesian state in the course of the *longue durée* that was the twentieth century (1880 - 2000). If narrative structuralist history is somewhat out of fashion these days, I nevertheless want to suggest that an understanding of recent events in Poso needs to be viewed from a broader historical perspective of the political and community structures that were imposed or evolved in response to outside intervention. In this sense, certain identifiable historical periods – late 'pre-colonial', colonial, WW2, Pemesta, New Order – can be seen to have been instrumental in shaping events, social institutions and self-identities.

The presentation will outline planned book chapters and discuss the problems of historical sources when it comes to local and regional history writing – availability, nature, sources and more broadly how these have been determined by the broader processes associated with definable historical periods.

Details: <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/cseas/seminars/index.php>

ALL WELCOME

Enquiries: Dr Jemma Purdey  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow  
Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University  
Email: [Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au)

### **Item 6. CSEAS Seminar**

Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University

7 May 2009, 11.00 am - 12.30 pm  
Manton Room SG02, Ground Floor, Menzies Building (11) South

Monash University Clayton campus

## **Counter-insurgency and the early New Order period: South Blitar and the 1968 Trisula Operation**

Vanessa Hearnmann, PhD candidate, Melbourne University

In the period following the 1965 coup attempt, Indonesian newspapers reported attacks on army and police installations, theft of weapons and munitions, and assassinations of suspected anti-communists. The government blamed these attacks on remaining members and supporters of the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) as part of a communist resurgence. Scholars writing at that time such as van der Kroef and Brackman seemed to have largely accepted the government version. In this context, this paper examines the question of how the post-coup period played out in East Java. In particular, the paper analyses the PKI's establishment of bases in the South Blitar area in East Java following the coup attempt until the end of the Trisula Operation, an operation led by the army's Brawijaya Division in mid-1968. The New Order regime's construction of history portrayed the Trisula Operation as an important military victory, supported by the local people and which succeeded in smashing the last communist bases in South Blitar.

Drawing on interviews with former political prisoners and villagers in South Blitar, as well as on official government and military sources about Trisula and its aftermath, this paper will examine the conduct and impact of the Operation on South Blitar and how it laid down the foundation for future counter-insurgency operations carried out by the New Order regime.

Details: <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/cseas/seminars/index.php>

ALL WELCOME

Enquiries: Dr Jemma Purdey  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow  
Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University  
Email: [Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:Jemma.Purdey@adm.monash.edu.au)

**Item 7. Forthcoming Seminar in May 2009** (For noting in your diaries)

### **Lake Toba eco-system: A sustainable solution for a threatened environment**

At the invitation of a local elder, Lea Jellinek and her partner, Ed Kiefer, have been working on pollution and community development issues in the village of Silimalombu at Lake Toba in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Lea is an anthropologist with thirty years experience in Indonesia. Ed is an ecologist and Permaculture teacher with thirty years experience in Asia.

Lake Toba is a spectacular location: the largest crater lake in the world

created during a huge volcanic explosion about 70,000 years ago. The equatorial mountain climate is near perfect: warm days and cool nights with lake temperatures great for swimming. Except for a few areas around population centres and fish farms, lake water remains quite clean.

But the Lake Toba eco-system is under serious threat. Growing settlements cling to the lake's edge, and waste from humans and livestock finds its way into the lake. Steep, erosion-prone slopes have been cleared. Streams that feed the lake are now dead, largely due to deforestation and agricultural chemical runoff. Swiss-owned fish farms are dumping 200 tons of fish food into the lake each day. Nutrients and contaminants are gradually accumulating in the lake. In many locations, lake water is no longer considered safe for drinking.

Lea Jellinek and Ed Kiefer have put forward a proposal for a model "eco-village" in Silimalombu that includes water quality monitoring, waste recycling, composting, bio-gas production from livestock manures, organic farming, plant nursery and reforestation. Water Watch Victoria has donated children's "water watch kits". Their most significant achievement so far is to stop the dumping of dead fish at the lake's edge where they would rot and wash into the lake during rains. Now fish waste is being properly composted away from the lake. They have successfully started to make biogas from pig and buffalo manure, and have engaged in negotiations with the fish farm company about pollution from their operations.

Enquiries: [sharmini.sherrard@monash.edu.au](mailto:sharmini.sherrard@monash.edu.au)

### **Item 8. A global conference**

hosted by Monash European and EU Centre, the Monash Asia Institute (Monash University, Melbourne), the National Centre for Research on Europe (University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand), the University of New South Wales, Sydney, the European Studies Centre (Sichuan University, China) and the Machiavelli Centre for Cold War Studies (CIMA), University of Florence

**Theme: The External Relations of the European Union: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives**

**Venue: Monash University, Melbourne, \*24-25 September 2009**

Given the changing architecture of global economic and political power, the role of the EU in the world is increasingly the focus of a vigorous debate. As a powerful trade negotiator and a leading player in global issues such as the environment, development aid, social policy and human rights, the EU is increasingly recognized as a new force for global security and welfare. Certainly the EU sees itself as a growing political and strategic presence. But is this perception shared by non-EU countries and organisations? Exactly how is the EU perceived by the international community and how have these perceptions developed since the creation of the European Communities in the 1950s? Has the EU been perceived to be more of an economic actor or a

political force? Is the EU seen as a regional model that could be emulated? Which countries are favourable and which hostile to a growing EU influence in their region or internationally? In particular, the conference aims to promote the collaboration of academics and scholars on the following themes:

- The EU, its origins and evolution from the 1950s to the 21st Century as seen from the perspective of non-EU countries and regions (e.g. China, India, the Asia-Pacific, New Zealand, Australia, the US, Russia, the Middle East, Africa etc)
- The post-colonial heritage in EU external relations
- The EU and its view of the Asia-Pacific
- The EU and international organizations: past and future challenges

Selected papers from the conference will be published a refereed publication and/or a major journal.

Website: + <http://www.monash.edu.au/europecentre>

Enquiries: Ms Patricia Arnold, Event coordinator, Monash European and EU Centre: [patricia.arnold@general.monash.edu.au](mailto:patricia.arnold@general.monash.edu.au) Ph. +61 3 9903 4638.

### **Item 9. Kartomi Collection of Traditional Musical Arts in Sumatra**

The Matheson library recently celebrated an event to mark the inclusion of the **Kartomi Collection of Traditional Musical Arts in Sumatra** in the Library's online ARROW repository. The digitisation of the recordings in this collection, which is the product of 40 years of field work activity by Professor Margaret Kartomi, was made possible by an Australian Research Council Grant dedicated to the cataloguing and preservation of unique music collections.

Called Sound Footings, the aim of the project was to make hitherto inaccessible resources available universally for future research. The project represents external collaborations – between Monash University, The University of Western Australia and the National Library of Australia – and also internal collaborations within Monash's Matheson Library, Information Technology and the School of Music.

Sound Footings continues the aims and pursuits of a previous collaborative project called Preserving Australia's Sound Heritage (PASH) which involved the auditing, cataloguing and digitisation of Australian-produced recordings housed in the Australian Archive of Jewish Music, and which had been funded by another Australian Research Council Grant. The Matheson Library's celebration also salutes the inclusion, in the ARROW repository, of selections from the Australian Archive of Jewish Music collection.

The Kartomi collection can be accessed at:

<http://arrow.monash.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Repository/monash:7740?f0=creator%3a%22Thamrin%22&expert=type%3a%22The+Kartomi+Collection+of+Traditional+Musical+Arts+in+Sumatra%22>

## News from other institutions

### Item 10. 2009 Melbourne Conference on China

hosted by Asia Institute, The University of Melbourne

Call for papers - Due Date: 17 April 2009

Theme: **60 Years of the People's Republic - Transformations and Challenges**

13-14 July 2009, The University of Melbourne

The Asia Institute at the University of Melbourne invites researchers, policy makers and advisers, educators, and specialists working in any area of China studies to spend a cool summer/winter in Melbourne, the recognised capital of culture in Australia and a designated UNESCO "city of literature", to explore the many challenging questions posed by the ongoing and rapid changes that have occurred in China's economy, politics, culture, and society in the 60 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

In traditional Chinese chronological systems the 60-year time unit is one of the key ways of classifying and dividing temporal periods from human lives to historical eras. The 60 years since 1949 provide an excellent framework for examining and analysing China's development, especially in relation to the country's future direction. Despite the profound and accelerating changes taking place in the PRC over the last 30 years of structural reforms, all of the major transformations in Chinese society since the founding of the PRC 60 years ago need to be examined if we are to have a full understanding of the serious challenges that China is currently facing.

Details: <http://www.chinastudies.unimelb.edu.au/conferences/2009/index.html>

Enquiries: Dr Lewis Mayo at [lmayo@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:lmayo@unimelb.edu.au) or Dr Gao Jia at [jia@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jia@unimelb.edu.au)

### Item 11. Twentieth Indonesia Forum Postgraduate Roundtable 2009

hosted by the Indonesia Forum, Melbourne University

Saturday, 9 May 2009, 10am - 1pm (followed by lunch)  
210 Berkeley Street (upstairs)\*

All Indonesian students and students of Indonesia are invited. As places are limited, presenters and participants will be accepted on a 'first come, first served' basis.

While the event is primarily for University of Melbourne postgraduates,

students who are engaged in research related to Indonesia in other institutions are also welcome.

This event brings postgraduate students together in a multi-disciplinary exchange of scholarly interests and information and provides an opportunity for networking. The optional 5-minute presentation describing their research will be in English or Indonesian.

Staff are encouraged to attend to support their students, to hear about the research of other Indonesianists on campus, and offer comments on students' work.

Register by Friday 1 May to Dina Afrianty at [d.afrianty@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:d.afrianty@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au) and provide:

1. your name, email address, your department (and institution)
2. the topic of your thesis or paper
3. whether you wish to give a presentation at the Roundtable, or just attend
4. 200 words (maximum) abstract of your presentation (if you wish to give a presentation)
5. any dietary requirements (all food will be halal).

Indonesia Forum website: <http://www.indonesiaforum.unimelb.edu.au/>

\* Getting to the venue:

From the main University Campus, walk along Grattan Street, past the Alan Gilbert Building to Berkeley Street. The building is almost directly opposite the Garage Café, which is also in Berkeley Street. The walk takes about five minutes. For a map of the location, go to <http://www.pb.unimelb.edu.au/CampusMaps/Parkville.pdf>. 210 Berkeley St is on the grid O13.

## **Item 12. Website of the month: Monash Asian Music Archive**

<http://arts.monash.edu.au/music/resources/index.php>

The Monash Music Archive contains valuable research materials including field recordings (many of which are annotated), rare musical instruments, theses, scores, sheet music, publications, artifacts, maps, memorabilia, photographs and slides from Southeast Asia (especially Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, and the Philippines), South Asia (especially North India and Sri Lanka), East Asia (especially Japan), Aboriginal/Indigenous Australia (especially the Pitjantjara area), and Jewish Asia and Australia. Housed on the ground floor of the Performing Arts Centre (Building 68), its contents include the Sumatra Music Archive, the Australian Archive of Jewish Music, and the Asian Music Archive.

### **About the MAI Bulletin**

The Monash Asia Institute Newsletter incorporates news items from the research centres of the Monash Asia Institute, partner organisations and other groups working to promote Asian Studies in Australia.

For further information about the Monash Asia Institute and this newsletter:  
<http://www.monash.edu.au/mai/>

To unsubscribe, please send an email to: Monash-Asia-Institute Enquiries  
<[MAI.Enquiries@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:MAI.Enquiries@adm.monash.edu.au)>