

Recent Books from NIAS Press on Asia – Nov 2018

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Anthropology

A Meeting of Masks : Status, Power and Hierarchy in Bangkok /

Sophorntavy Vorng

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xii, 194p.

Includes Index ; Bibliography

9788776941970

NIAS Monograph Series No. 135

\$ 25.00 / PB

312gm.

Book Details:

A fresh understanding of the ongoing Thai political conflict is offered by this highly accessible ethnographic study, which explores the connections between status, space, and social life in Bangkok. The author argues that the notion of the 'urban-rural divide' popularly used to describe the conflict obscures a more complex reality in which city and countryside are linked by reciprocal relations within both urban and national systems of status and class. This is clearly discernible in the nature of everyday interclass relations in Bangkok, which have been exacerbated by diminishment and marginalization of upcountry Thais by the urban middle classes. It is an incendiary dynamic that has been exploited to tremendous effect in the current political power struggle. The author further explores how middle-class culture and identity are drawn in large part from their understandings of status practices of elites. Structural constraints and the societal privileging of wealth and connections are constant challenges to middle-class aspirations for upward mobility. This disenchantment has been channeled into a churning politics of resentment with demonstrably explosive potential. Ultimately, however, the author argues that this discontent will contribute little to reform

while the majority of individuals feel their only avenue for social mobility is to negotiate a pre-existing system that many perceive as unjust.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435456>

Art / Art History

Catalogue Of Persian Manuscripts : Codices Persici, Codices Eyseriani,
Codex Persicus Add / Irmeli Perho

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xiv, 706p.

9788776942168

COMDC Series – Volume 8.2

\$ 235.00 / HB

2910gm.

his catalog describes two collections of Persian manuscripts at the Royal Library, Copenhagen: 143 manuscripts originating mainly from India, 13 manuscripts collected by Johan S. Eyser in Turkey and one manuscript acquired by the Library in 1956. A large part of the Cod. Pers. collection is connected with India (the texts were copied in India or authored by Indian scholars or by Persian scholars who had settled in India). The manuscripts include poetry, history and medicine. The Eyser collection consists of classical Persian literature in prose and verse. Designed especially as an essential source of reference for scholars working in all aspects of manuscript studies, the catalog includes over 370 full-page illustrations (many in color) that help to identify the texts and give a glimpse of the calligraphic styles and decorative elements of the manuscripts. A companion volume to an earlier catalogue of the Royal Library's Persian holdings, this will be an essential reference work for many scholars, curators and other professionals working in Iranian and Islamic art history and/or manuscript studies.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=248145>

History

Asia Through Nordic Eyes : Fifty Years of Nordic Scholarship on Asia /
(Ed) Geir Helgesen & Gerard Jackson

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xii, 340p.

Includes Index

9788776942724

NIAS Studies in Asian Topics No. 60

\$ 29.00 / PB

514gm.

Contact between Asia and the Nordic countries goes back at least 500 years. Scholarly interest and exchange between the two regions took time to develop, however; for many years Nordic scholars were more focused on the Biblical world than on the Far East or Subcontinent. The explosion in academic learning from the 1960s dramatically changed this picture and by the end of the decade Asia was studied at more than 100 institutions scattered across the Nordic region. In response, an institute was established now known as NIAS, tasked to support and provide focus to this fragmented scholarly environment. The institute opened its doors in 1968.0An integral part of NIAS's work in the past five decades has been to encourage publication of Nordic Asia scholarship. Since 1968, about 500 different works have been published out of the institute. A few had a huge international impact (deciphering the inscriptions of the Indus Valley Civilization was a major linguistic and historical breakthrough, for instance) while other works have had impressive political/societal effects. Indeed, as a whole, it is agreed that the publishing work carried out at NIAS over the decades has boosted the global profile of Nordic scholarship on Asia beyond all expectations. In celebration of 50 years of publishing at NIAS, this volume offers a selection of Nordic writing on Asia. The excerpts span the decades and the myriad fields within Asian Studies, with context and relevance offered by commentaries from present-day scholars. Readers from all areas and disciplines will find much to tempt them in this smorgasbord of Asia learning.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435441>

Mapping Cultural Nationalism: The Scholars of the Burma Research Society, 1910-1935 / Carol Ann Boshier

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2018

xxii, 346p.

Includes Index

9788776942069

NIAS Monograph Series No. 136

\$ 27.00 / PB

540gm.

Despite the proscription of public political debates under colonial rule in Burma, boundary-crossing ventures like the Burma Research Society (founded in 1910) allowed those from different racial and cultural backgrounds to engage in debates about national belonging and identity. At the same time their scholarship generated new historical and cultural knowledge. Such social and intellectual interactions sowed the seeds of nascent nationalism in Burma, not least a unifying Burmano-Buddhist hegemony as promoted by BRS members like J.S. Furnivall and his circle. This was contested by the regional nationalism of San Shwe Bu, with Leslie Fernandes Taylor also warning of the consequences of neglecting the ethnic and linguistic diversity of Burma's many races. With the rise of Rangoon University and popular culture and militant nationalism coming to dominate the social and political landscape by the mid-1930s, the influence of the BRS began to wane.

This detailed study of the BRS and its membership, together with an analysis of its published output, contextualizes the Society within its metropolitan and regional setting, as well as drawing on a broader, transnational intellectual landscape. This timely work on the Society's intellectual legacy has the potential to inform current debates in Myanmar at a time when the activities of ultra-nationalist groups threaten other religions and ethnicities' rights as citizens.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=334598>

Engaging Asia : Essays on Laos and Beyond in Honour of Martin Stuart-Fox / (Ed) Desley Goldston

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2019

xxiv, 478p. ; 27 illustrations & 4 maps

Includes Index

9788776942540

NIAS Studies in Asian Topics No. 67

\$ 42.00 / PB

726gm.

Long regarded as a peripheral state in mainland Southeast Asia, Laos has attracted far less scholarly attention than richer and more powerful neighbours like Thailand and Vietnam. This has meant, however, that in Lao studies there is a greater potential for individual scholars to make significant contributions to their field. One such scholar is Australia's Martin Stuart-Fox, in honour of whom this festschrift has been produced with contributions from colleagues, former doctoral students and friends. The volume is more than a hagiography, however. Its chapters on Laos all make significant contributions to Lao studies. These range from the writing of Lao prehistory in Laos, to early Lao–Thai relations, from French colonial archaeology to medical practices and gun-boat diplomacy, from the 'invention' of Laos as a modern state to its revolutionary transformation and present politics. Though the main focus is on the history, politics and national identity of Laos, essays also point 'beyond' Laos, both geographically and metaphorically. In the first instance, the volume provides a welcome comparative perspective, from precolonial relations between Southeast Asian polities and European courts to colonial policies within French Indochina, to the structure of communist power in Vietnam. Three concluding essays point beyond Laos in a metaphorical sense in directions indicated by Professor Stuart-Fox's wider intellectual interests – to cultural legitimation and identity, to Buddhism and Buddhist meditation, and to how the principles of Darwinian evolution apply to historical change. *Engaging Asia* is thus a volume that will stimulate and satisfy, while at the same time honouring a scholar whose unusual career took him from marine biologist to war correspondent to respected scholar of Southeast Asian politics and history.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435442>

Mathematics

The Continuation of Ancient Mathematics : Wang Xiaotong's Jigu Suanjing, Algebra and Geometry in 7th – Century China / Tina Su Lyn Lim & Donald B. Wagner

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xii, 220p.

Include Index ; Bibliography

9788776942175

NIAS Report No. 51

\$ 25.00 / PB

562gm.

Lim and Wagner's in-depth study of Wang Xiaotong's Jigu suanjing, Algebra and Geometry in 7th-Century China brings this work to an international audience unfamiliar with the history and particulars of Chinese mathematical knowledge.

After the collapse of Roman civilization, knowledge of mathematics dwindled in Europe. In the Arab world, however, the works of ancient mathematicians like Euclid were preserved and built upon by new thinkers like al-Khwarizmi, who became instrumental in spreading Indian mathematics and numerals to the West. Little known to Western historians, a parallel development of mathematical knowledge was happening in China. A rare glimpse of this world is offered via a translation and elaboration of one of the canons of classical Chinese mathematical education. Wang Xiaotong's Continuation of ancient mathematics shows us a stage in the development from the 1st to the 14th century CE of the Chinese traditional algebra of polynomials. Here in the 7th century, columns of numbers used in root-extraction procedures are recognized as equations that can be solved numerically, but these equations cannot yet be manipulated. Wang Xiaotong arrives at numerically solvable polynomials through a variety of ad hoc techniques, including geometric constructions and rhetorical algebra. In the 18th century, it would be shown that all of his problems could be solved by straightforward algebraic manipulation of polynomials using 14th-century Chinese methods. Lim and Wagner's in-depth study of the Continuation brings this work to an audience unfamiliar with the history and particulars of Chinese mathematical knowledge. Their worked examples also illuminate the text and invite comparison with the work of medieval mathematicians in the Middle East and Europe. The work will appeal to historians of mathematics especially but anyone interested in the evolution of Chinese science and technology will also find this very informative.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=248169>

Politics

Afghanistan Beyond the Fog of War : Persistent Failure of a Rentier State
/ Michael Fredholm

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2018

9788776942519

NIAS Monograph Series No. 143

\$ 35.00 / PB

700gm.

Book Details:

This is the first book to scrutinize the root causes of problems today with Afghan reconstruction. It begins in 1880 with the coming to power of Emir Abdur Rahman and departure of an occupying British army. On the northern border, Russian forces were also poised. Determined to preserve Afghan independence, Abdur Rahman devised a nation-building project grounded on centralized, autocratic rule and based on security, modernization and economic reform.

Though continued by his successors, this project ultimately failed. A key reason for this was that, even as Abdur Rahman implemented policies that might be understood as 'Western' and 'rational', the great powers of the day took their cue from traditional institutional relationships in Afghanistan; local patronage relations were extended to the international level. In the process, Afghanistan became a rentier state, Abdur Rahman's model abandoned in favor of foreign subsidies increasingly diverted from security and economic development. Successive foreign powers, especially the Soviet Union and United States, have upheld this centralized, rentier model of governance and development despite it consistently failing over the years.

This work explores dynamics seldom covered in other studies of Afghanistan, including conflict between state-imposed pashtunization and multiple local/ethnic identities, likewise contradictions between the clericalism and secularism deployed in the nation-building process. It explores the largely overlooked ebb and flow of institutional development in Afghanistan, at all levels, in the context of international interest in the country, with special attention to Soviet and US/Coalition strategies and their effects. It also focuses on the power of patronage relations in establishing and retaining control in Afghanistan, and how the extension of such relations to the international level transformed Afghanistan into a rentier state that struggles to unite its people.

Described by one Afghanistan expert as an excellent piece of work, very well documented with close attention to detail, this study offers sober analysis and critical insights. It will interest scholars and students of

Afghan affairs plus policy-makers, diplomats, soldiers, international organizations and NGOs, businesses, journalists and many others engaged with Afghanistan and issues of political, military and economic power, democratization and civil-military relations in the region.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435440>

Debating the East Asian Peace : What it is. How it came about. Will it last?

/ (Eds) Elin Bjarnegard & Joakim Kreutz

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xii, 316p.

Includes Index

NIAS Studies in Asian Topics No. 60

9788776942205

\$ 27.00 / PB

490gm.

East Asia used to be the world's deadliest battleground but since the 1980s there has been a sudden and marked reduction in battle deaths. This phenomenon, which has become known as the East Asian Peace, has spurred much debate. This volume reflects on some of the most prominent of these debates. Here, it focuses more on presenting and evaluating a variety of themes in relation to each other rather than offering simplistic answers to a complex question.

While the chapters of this volume obviously discuss processes and events in East Asia, its contributions also offer insights to the core general questions for understanding peace and conflict. What is peace and how can it be studied? How can we characterize the East Asian Peace? What limits and conditions are associated with this peace? Can insights from East Asia explain overall regional trends of political violence? Does the way in which peace come about impact on the quality of peace? Is the East Asian peace under threat? If so, then why is this and where is the threat coming from?

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435458>

Khaki Capital : The Political Economy of the Military in Southeast Asia /
(Eds) Paul Chambers & Napisa Waitoolkiat
Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017
xiv, 352p.
Includes Index
9788776942250
NIAS Studies in Asian Topics No. 61
\$ 27.00 / PB
536gm.

Book Details:

Although Southeast Asia has seen the emergence of civilian rule, the military continues to receive a large chunk of the national budget and, with significant assets and economic activities, often possesses enormous economic clout – enhancing its political power while hindering democratization or civilian rule. The political economy of the military in less developed countries is thus a crucial subject area in terms of democratization. This study examines such 'khaki capital' in seven Southeast Asian cases – Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines and Indonesia. Each chapter analyses the historical evolution of khaki capital in the given country case; the role of internal and external factors (e.g. military unity and globalization) in this trajectory; and how the resulting equilibrium has affected civil-military relations. This work is important for understanding how and why military influence over parts of the economy in Southeast Asia has remained an impediment to achieving civilian control and democratization. Ultimately, this book tells the story of how militaries in Southeast Asia have benefited economically and the extent to which such gains have translated into the leveraging of political power.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435460>

Energy, Governance and Security in Thailand and Myanmar (Burma): A
Critical Approach to Environmental Politics in the South / Adam Simpson
Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xxii, 272p. ; 1 map, 4 b&w illustrations

Includes Index

9788776942076

NIAS Monograph Series No. 137

\$ 27.00 / PB

454gm.

The worldwide search for new and secure supplies of energy is especially visible in Asia where rapid industrialization in states such as China and India has fomented a scramble for energy resources. Due to entrenched societal inequities and widespread authoritarian governance, however, the pursuit of national energy security through transnational energy projects has had a devastating impact on the human and environmental security of local populations. This is especially so in Thailand and Myanmar, countries that are increasingly engaged in the cross-border energy trade. Based on extensive fieldwork and theoretical analysis, this ground-breaking book proposes a new critical approach to energy and environmental security. It also explores the important role that local and transnational environmental movements play, in the absence of effective and democratic governments, by providing 'activist environmental governance' for energy projects throughout the region. By comparing the nature of this activism under two very different political regimes, it delivers crucial theoretical insights with both academic and policy implications for the sustainable and equitable development of the South's natural resources. First published in hardback in 2014, this new, updated paperback edition offers much to scholars, professionals, policy-makers, NGOs, businesses, journalists and others working or concerned with energy issues.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=248162>

Explaining the East Asian Peace: A Research Story / Stein Tønnesson
Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xx, 264p.

Includes Index

9788776942236

NIAS Asia Insights No. 9

\$ 23.00 / PB

420gm.

The fascinating and controversial (but also personal) story of a 6-year research program based at Uppsala University that, instead of explaining conflict, has sought to explain peace, and to gauge its quality and sustainability. Specifically, the program has sought to understand the dramatic drop in battle deaths in East Asia (including Southeast Asia) from the 1980s, just as warfare worsened in the rest of the world. The book recounts heated discussions to explain this 'East Asian Peace'. Was it due to a changing power balance? The ASEAN Way? China's 'peaceful development' doctrine? Growing economic interdependence? Or, as the author contends, a series of national priority shifts by powerful Asian leaders who prioritized economic growth and thus needed external and internal stability? The book also deals with civil as well as international conflict, and discusses why Thailand, Myanmar and the Philippines have not yet achieved internal peace. The author recounts his debates with colleagues who find it difficult to accept that a region with unresolved disputes, rising arms expenditure, massive human rights violations, and high domestic violence can be called 'peaceful'. East Asia, they say, has just a 'negative peace' or relative absence of war. Though he holds that a 'negative peace' has tremendous positive value, Tønnesson does ponder its future. For instance, can China keep peace with its neighbors? A rare combination of detached analysis and personal narrative, the book examines developments in the world's most important region while also telling the story of how researchers with different assumptions develop rival theories and predictions. A companion volume to the main output of the Uppsala peace research program, *Debating the East Asian Peace*, this study will be of especial interest to not only scholars and students but also policy-makers, NGOs, businesses, journalists and many others engaged with the peace, stability and prosperity of the East Asian region.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435459>

Religion-Buddhism

Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism / (Ed) Paul T. Cohen

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xiii, 266p.

Includes Index

9788776941956

NIAS Studies in Asian Topics No. 57

\$ 27.00 / PB

418gm.

Lanna Buddhism is a variant of Theravada Buddhism that evolved between the 13th and 16th centuries in northern Thailand and spread to neighbouring areas of the Upper Mekong region. A salient feature is the belief in charismatic monks, some of whom are renowned for their asceticism, supernatural powers and strivings to recreate a utopian 'Buddha-land'. Issues highlighted in the book are the relationship of these charismatic monks to the state and state-controlled monkhood (sangha), the tendency for religious construction to spill over into economic development activities, and the diversity of lowland and highland devotional communities from Thailand and Myanmar. The book also explores contemporary influences on this religious tradition: the continuing marginalization of highland minorities and consequent devotion to messianic leaders, the incorporation for Lanna holy men into a national constellation of popular charismatic monks, the commercialization of Buddhism, and the patronage of wealthy urban elites. Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism will appeal to scholars within the fields of Buddhist studies, Thai studies and the anthropology of religion as well as to those with an interest in the study of contemporary religious change in Thailand.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435454>

Sociology

Caring for Strangers : Filipino Medical Workers in Asia / Megha Amrith
Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xiv, 226p.

Includes Index

9788776941932

NIAS Monograph Series No. 134

\$ 27.00 / PB

358gm.

Today, the Philippines has become one of the largest exporters of medical workers in the world, with nursing in particular offering many the hope of a lucrative and stable career abroad. This timely volume narrates their stories in a multi-sited ethnography that follows aspiring migrants from Manila's vibrant nursing schools where they dream of glamorous, cosmopolitan lives abroad but find a different reality in Singapore's multicultural hospitals and nursing homes. It also tracks their private lives in shopping malls and churches, and online, as they search for future jobs elsewhere, in places like Texas, Ontario or northern England, and connect with friends and family around the world; finally bringing them back home on a visit to a Filipino village. In so doing, the book offers anthropological insights on the lives and expectations of Filipino medical workers who care for strangers in another Asian city and the everyday encounters, anxieties and boundaries they face. It locates their stories within wider debates on migration, labour, care, gender and citizenship, while contributing a new and distinctive perspective to the scholarship on labour migration in Asia.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435455>

Travel Guidebooks

In The Land of Pagodas : A Classic Account of Travel in Hong Kong, Macao, Shanghai, Hubei Hunan and Guizhou / Alfred Raquez (Ed & Translated)

William L. Gibson & Paul Bruthiaux

Copenhagen: Nias-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017

xxxvi, 494p.

Includes Index ; Bibliography

9788776942021

NIAS Exploring Asia Series No. 1

\$ 33.00 / PB

764gm.

China, 1898: a time of war, intrigue and growing foreign power. Onto the scene comes a Parisian fugitive with a gifted pen and a journalist's eye. Alfred Raquez, a self-proclaimed "explorer without a mission", drifts from Indochina to Hong Kong, Macao and Canton before falling in with a group of shady entrepreneurs in Shanghai with interests far up the Yuan River. In short order, Raquez sets off on a rollicking voyage into the heart of the lawless Miao-country, pen and camera in hand, far beyond the reach of Peking's court and its ruling Empress Dowager. The result is a richly recorded adventure through fin-de-siècle China told from the perspective of a wandering French boulevardier and in a startlingly fresh voice. The first English translation from the French of a long out-of-print and sorely neglected work, In the Land of Pagodas offers scholars and students new and unexpected historical insights into the ferment of 1890s China. In its narration it also reveals much about the derring-do and startling hypocrisy of the colonial enterprise. At the same time, this is a tale that will fascinate all readers, taking them on a picaresque journey that is as much Moulin Rouge as it is Heart of Darkness.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=435457>
