Monash Asia Institute Bulletin

October 2014

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From the MAI Director’s Desk

MAI’s inaugural Research Day was very successfully held on 12 September. Around sixty people from various disciplines, schools, centres and faculties joined together and more than twenty people made a brief presentation about their research projects. It was a great occasion that showcased various researches conducted within Monash and facilitated intellectual conversation among researchers working on Asian regions. MAI will continue to organize this kind of gathering next year. Thank you for your continued support.

October will be a hectic month. There will be many intriguing events. They include two trans-Asia as method seminars on gender inequality and violence and beauty work and Asian body aesthetics, two important lectures on Islam in Java and Kashgar research project and the Monash Mitsubishi Seminar 2014. Please check all the details in the bulletin and the MAI web page.

Prof. Koichi Iwabuchi

The next MAI Bulletin is scheduled for Monday 3 November 2014. If you have news on any events or other announcements that you would like us to include, please forward this to MAI-Enquiries@monash.edu, by Wednesday 29th October 2014.

MAI SEMINAR/FORUM

MAI International Conference

Asian Cultural and Media Studies Now

Date: 6 & 7 November 2014
Venue: Lecture Theatre HB39 Monash Caulfield Campus

Program has been uploaded and registration is now open. Please see the details at:

Trans-Asia as Method

Masculinity and links to gender inequality and violence in Timor-Leste and Indonesia

Date & Time: Tuesday 7th October 2014, 5.00-6.30pm
Venue: ACJC Seminar Room Building H, 8th Floor (H8.06 H8.05)

Jointly organized with the Anthropology Program, School of Social Sciences

Internationally, it has been shown that there is a strong link between various gender related norms including notions of masculinity in a society and gendered violence. How
masculinity and gender norms are linked to inequality and violence against women is key to programs of prevention. A panel of academics will explore cultural-religious elements of masculinity that contributes to violence in Timor-Leste and Indonesia and strategies of promoting non-violence masculinity in both contexts. These ideas and concepts will be explored particularly in relation to the work of men in prevention programs such as the Asosiasaun Mane Kontra Violensia (AMKV) or Association for Men Against Violence in Timor and the Gerakan Laki-Laki Baru (LLB) or New Men’s Movement in Indonesia.

Panel includes:

Marito de Araujo, Visiting Academic from Timor-Leste

Mario Araujo is a founding member of the CSO Association for Men Against Violence in Timor-Leste, and a long-term social activist. He has worked for Oxfam CAA Australia as an advocacy officer and programme co-ordinator. He is committed personally and professionally to promoting greater gender and social equity, particularly at the community level. He currently teaches at one of Timor’s top two Universities, Universidade da Paz (UNPAZ) and works as a gender consultant to government and international and local organisations.

Mira Fonseca, Research Assistant and Honours Student, International Community Development, Victoria University. Mira has worked for the Alola Foundation in East Timor. Currently she studies and works as a researcher with the University of New South Wales into the association between experiences of abuse and injustice and explosive anger amongst women in Timor, and the impact of anger on women’s health, family relationships and ability to participate in development.

‘Iyik’ Wiyanto, PhD candidate, Monash University. Iyik’s research is on women’s empowerment in urban poor communities in Indonesia. She is also a coordinator for the Indonesian team of the research project: “When and Why do States Respond to Women’s Claims: Understanding Gender-Egalitarian Policy Change in Asia, a comparative study on India, Indonesia, and China” with the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

Rachmad Hidayat, PhD candidate, Monash University. His research into Muslim men and masculinity began at Monash, where an AusAID scholarship allowed him to focus his master’s research on domestic violence in Indonesia with the Men’s Program of Rifka Annisa, a women’s support NGO in Yogyakarta. His current PhD research is on how Southeast-Asian Muslim migrants in Australia renegotiate their gender roles and religious identities.

Panel Convenor: Dr. Sara Niner is an interdisciplinary researcher and lecturer in Anthropology at Monash. In 2013 she undertook research with young men in Timor-Leste and their attitudes to gender roles, relationships and violence, which informed a gender-based violence prevention campaign. This seminar continues this research in the field of masculinity in the post-conflict environment of Timor-Leste.
Beauty Work and “Asian” Body Aesthetics: Beyond “Global Whiteness”

Date & Time: 1-5pm, 31 October (Fri) 2014

Venue: ACJC Seminar rooms, Building H, 8th floor (H8.06), Monash University Caulfield Campus

This international seminar will consider the growing beauty work in East Asia. It will discuss how we make sense of the commercialization of feminized desire for modifying body and facial featuring without simplifying the phenomenon as the manipulation by beauty industries or the global spread of the “White” beauty norm. We will also discuss the possibility of developing a trans-Asian research project.

<Program>

1:00-1:15 Welcome and Introduction by Koichi Iwabuchi (Director, Monash Asia Institute)

1:15-2:45 “De-racialising Asian Australians? Korean Cosmetic Surgery and the Question of Race in Australian Media”

Presenter: Jane Park (University of Sydney) with Jo Elfving-Hwang

Discussant: Jessica Walton (Deakin University)


Presenter: Jo Elfving-Hwang (University of Western Australia)

Discussant: Nao Tanimoto (Kansai University, Japan)

5:00-5:30 Towards Trans-Asian collaborative project

<Abstracts>

“De-racializing Asian Australians? Korean Cosmetic Surgery and the Question of Race in Australian media”

Jane Park (University of Sydney) (with Jo Elfving-Hwang)

This paper examines the ways in which race and technologies of the body appear in totalising media discourses in Australian media, which consistently posit South Korean cosmetic surgery practices as examples of Korean and other Asian subjects internalizing the Western gaze. We discuss how Korean cosmetic surgery is represented in Australian news media, highlighting the importance of understanding social, cultural and historical contexts when reading ‘race’ onto the modified non-western and/or non-white body. We argue that failing to take these contexts into account reproduces hegemonic and (falsely) homogenous notions of Australian beauty and normativity — one that serves to misrepresent Asian-Australian aesthetic preferences, motivations and concerns in ways that serve to reinforce assumptions of Caucasian beauty ideals. More importantly, our
paper seeks to highlight how the Asia-Australian subject in these media representations are allowed only two positions; that of an ‘authentic’ (unmodified) Asian body, and the Asian body that seeks to conform through undergoing surgery. Ultimately we argue that this continued media approach to Korean cosmetic surgery and Asian Australian patients demonstrates a lack of space in the national imaginary for popular representations of somatic subjectivity for non-white subjects. This absence of symbolic representation is significant because it means that there is no space at all in the dominant culture of contemporary multicultural Australia for representing a subjectivity that allows for hybrid (as opposed to ‘authentic’ or ‘Whitened’) Asian subjectivity.


Jo Elfving-Hwang, The University of Western Australia

While young Koreans’ presumed willingness to go under the knife has recently prompted much media interest in the West, the bodies of elderly have featured in Korean public discourses for a range of different reasons. As traditional familial and social support networks are rapidly weakening as the primary means to support the elderly, a significant percentage of Korean elderly people are now living in relative poverty with the government struggling to find long-term solutions to address the issue. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, the bodies of the elderly are discussed primarily in relation to the ‘elderly problem’ (noin munjae) discourse, in which the elderly are represented as a drain on the state’s resources and a ‘problem’ that is in need of urgent solution. Within this context, the ageing bodies of the elderly persons are rarely represented as anything other than objects of care and an impending burden to the national economy. This paper seeks to juxtapose this discourse of the ‘burdensome’ ageing body with elderly women’s own narratives of their bodies and how that body is experienced and performed through everyday beauty work. Drawing on early findings from recent interviews with elderly Korean women in the Seoul metropolitan area where participants were invited to reflect on their relation to beauty practices, this paper will discuss how women relate to and utilise beauty work in a social context in which the ageing body is increasing perceived as a non-normative one (and perhaps seen no longer worth ‘investing’ in). Finally, this research aims to assess the extent to which beauty practices are utilised by elderly persons in empowering ways in a social context where beautiful appearance is increasingly defined in very narrow terms.

Centre for Southeast Asian Studies Seminar

‘Rediscovering Islam in Javanese history’ - Professor Merle Ricklefs

Date & Time: Thursday 9 October 2014, 1.00-2.30
Venue: Isaac Brown Seminar Room, Building 55, Ground Floor (next to busloop), Monash Clayton Campus

Speaker: Professor Merle Ricklefs

Important developments in our understanding of Javanese history have transformed a previously influential paradigm about the role of Islam in Javanese society and culture. The view that Islam was marginal to mainstream Javanese society was exemplified in Van Leur’s description of Islam as ‘a thin, easily flaking glaze on the massive body of
indigenous civilization’ and Geertz’s observation that ‘It is very hard … for a Javanese to be a “real Moslem”’. This paradigm implicitly posited an authentic Javanese culture which was essentially pre-Islamic in origin into which Islam came as an alien intrusion. Islam’s progress was then limited by the strength of that authentic culture. In this paradigm, abangan nominal Muslims and the upper-class priyayi were the continuing representatives of that authentic culture and a barrier to increasing influence by Islam. Stereotypes of both Javanese culture and of Islam underlay this paradigm.

More recent research has shown the historical paradigm to be false and the stereotypes to be unsustainable. The abangan have proved to be a historically contingent phenomenon of significance for something over a century (from roughly the mid- to later 19th until the later 20th centuries), not an ongoing representation of a resistant pre-Islamic culture. Geertz and others formed their views during the period ofabangan prominence, but developments in Javanese society since then, along with new historical research, have led to a rediscovery of the role of Islam in Javanese history.

**Professor Merle Ricklefs** is Professor Emeritus of the Australian National University, where he was formerly Director of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. He was also Director, Melbourne Institute of Asian Languages and Societies at The University of Melbourne before resigning from that position in January 2005. Amongst other roles, has held positions as Visiting Fellow of All Souls College (Oxford University), Professor of History at Monash University and, most recently, Professor of History at the National University of Singapore. He is a former member of the Australian Foreign Affairs Council and the Australian National Commission for UNESCO.

His research focuses on the general history of Indonesia since the coming of Islam, with particular reference to Java since the seventeenth century; and more recently on cultural history and the history of ideas, notably the role of Islam in Javanese society. In 2003 he was awarded a Centenary Medal by the Government of Australia for service to Australian society and the humanities in the study of Indonesia. In 2010 he was elected as an Honorary Member (erelid) of the Netherlands Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde. He has published widely.

**Japanese Studies Centre**

**Mitsubishi Seminar 2014 - Interactive Futures, Glimpses from Japan**

**Date & Time:** Monday, 27 October 2014, 10:00 am - 6:30 pm

**Venue:** Monash Law Chambers 555 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

Free Public Event **Registration required, please click here**
Registration closes at COB on 13 October 2014
After this date please contact Shimako Iwasaki with attendee and registration details.
Please note that spaces are limited and we may not be able to accommodate all late registrations.
Franco Purini once claimed that Tokyo, and by extension Japan, provided “an enthralling vision of the future’s future.” Despite prolonged economic and political challenges as well as catastrophic disasters, Japan continues to make stimulating advances that provide inspirations and cautions globally. As such, the final iteration of the Monash Mitsubishi Seminar ends with an orientation to future developments and consideration of changing forms of interactions. The seminar examines evolving interactions between people and their social, technological and physical worlds considering various modes and scales of interactions in and between Japan and Australia. Stressing interaction, the seminar will be organized as a series of discussions fostering dialogues between academics, practitioners and audiences about tomorrow’s possibilities seen from Japan today.

Schedule

10:00-10:30 ON SITE REGISTRATION

10:30-1:00 MORNING SESSIONS

Opening remarks
— Rae Frances, Dean of Faculty of Arts, Monash University
— Marie Turner, General Manager, Corporate Affairs, Mitsubishi Australia
— Carolyn Stevens, Director, Japanese Studies Center, Monash University

Panel Discussion 1: Shifts in interaction precipitated by changing technologies
— Panelist 1: Hideaki Kuzuoka, University of Tsukuba
— Panelist 2: Fumihide Tanaka, University of Tsukuba
— Panelist 3: Daniel Black, Monash University
— Moderator: Shimako Iwasaki, Monash University

1:00-2:00 LUNCH

2:00-5:30 AFTERNOON SESSION

Panel Discussion 2: Shifts in interaction with the built environment
— Panelist 1: Kazuhiko Kojima, CAt & Yokohama Graduate School of Architecture
— Panelist 2: Kazuko Akamatsu, CAt & Hosei University
— Panelist 3: Julian Worrall, University of Adelaide
— Moderator: Ari Seligmann, Monash University

Open Discussion: Future Trajectories
— Discussant 1: Takefumi Tanabe, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan
— Discussant 2: John Warwicker, Monash University
— Discussants: and more…

Closing remarks
— Koichi Iwabuchi, Director, Monash Asia Institute, Monash University

5:30-6:30 RECEPTION
Opening remarks Consul-General Keiko Haneda
Special Lecture of Monash’s Kashgar Research Project

Yingpan Man on China’s Ancient Silk Road: The mystery of who he was and what his discovery means.

Date & Time: Tuesday 14th October 2014 6.00pm – 8:30pm
Place: 30 Collins St, Level 7, Seminar Room 3 Monash Conference Centre, Melbourne VIC

Monash’s Kashgar Research Project is part of the research agenda of the NATIONAL CENTRE FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES.

YINGPAN MAN was found in the abandoned, ancient city of Yingpan, some 300 kms from the contemporary town of Korla in Xinjiang Province, western China. 2,000 years ago Yingpan was a prosperous town on one of the many silk roads that connected China to the Mediterranean through central Asia. Today, the ruins of Yingpan are one of the many in the middle of the Taklamakan desert. The decline of the city and the remains of Yingpan Man are mysterious. Professor Yu has undertaken extensive research on Yingpan Man’s burial site, his famous gold mask and magnificent clothing.

Professor Zhi Yong YU is one of China’s most distinguished archaeologists, a fluent speaker of Japanese, and as the Director of the Institute of Archaeology in Urumuqi, the custodian of the 600 + desert mummies that have been found in the Taklamakan Desert in the past decades.

Welcome refreshments provided RSVP to: Marika.Vicziany@monash.edu

Book Launch

Visiting the Neighbours: Australians in Asia by Agnieszka Sobocinska (NewSouth, 2014)

Date & Time: Wednesday 15 October, 6pm-
Venue: Readings Book Store Carlton (309 Lygon St.),

To be introduced by Professor Rae Frances, Dean of Arts, Monash University and launched by Paul Ramadge, Director of Australia-Indonesia Centre and former Editor-in-Chief of The Age.

Please RSVP by October 8 to: agnieszka.sobocinska@monash.edu

About the MAI Bulletin

The Monash Asia Institute Bulletin 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, this Bulletin and our events: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/mai/ To unsubscribe, please send an email to: Monash-Asia-Institute Enquiries, MAI-Enquiries@monash.edu