



8th Southeast Asia Update

Program & Book of Abstracts

Thursday 16 June | 9.15 am – 17.45 pm
Faculty of Social Sciences | Leiden University | Room 1A20
Wassenaarseweg 52 | 2300 RB Leiden



Universiteit
Leiden



**Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (CADS)
Leiden University**



In Leiden, we study the everyday practice of individuals, groups, and communities worldwide to situate them within the complex processes of social and global change. We specialise in the impact of globalisation on environment, equity, and economy, and the ethnographic analysis of visual and material culture.

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Program 8th SEA Update,

June 16th, Leiden, 9.15 am-17.45 pm

Location: Faculty of Social Sciences, Leiden University

Wassenaarseweg 52, Leiden, Room 1A20 (on the 1st floor)

The Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (CADS) of Leiden University organizes this year's annual Southeast Asia Update in cooperation with the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS). The Southeast Asia Update offers scholars and those interested in the region a platform to meet colleagues and to discuss current issues and new trends. The Update offers especially a platform for young researchers in the Netherlands and neighboring countries to present their work to larger audience.

This year we will also organize a number of round tables on themes that in their urgency have a serious impact on the region, including the topics of Climate Change and Environmental Prospects for Future SEA, Pluralism, Violence and Religious Renewal, and Urban Mass Culture in Colonial Indonesia. In addition, other speakers will present an update of their ongoing research projects.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to get a quick update on new research on Southeast Asia and to meet new colleagues and old friends!

09.15 Registration, tea / coffee

10.00 Welcome, Bart Barendregt (anthropology, Leiden University)

10.05 Round Table I: 'Pluralism, violence & religious renewal'

- A conversation with Amrita Malhi (University of South Australia), Joshua Gedacht (Universiti Brunei Darussalam), Francis Bradley (Pratt Institute), Chiara Formichi (Cornell University), and Marieke Bloembergen (KITLV). Moderated by David Kloos (KITLV)

11.00 Paper presentations (10 minutes each, plus 20 minutes discussion)

- Dominik M. Müller (Goethe University Frankfurt), 'Bureaucratizing the Sharia: Islamic governance and its supernatural counterforces in Brunei Darussalam'
- Elisa Fornale (Marie Curie Researcher RU), 'Regional migration governance and social protection in ASEAN'
- Ward Berenschot and Charlotte Wagenaar (KITLV), 'Incumbency, pluralism and democratization: The consolidation of Indonesia's political class in 2015'
- Annemarie Samuels (University of Amsterdam) & David Kloos (KITLV), book presentation *Islam and the limits of the state*

12.00 Asian Lunch

13.30 Round Table II: 'Governance of climate change adaptation in Southeast Asia'

- Gerry van Klinken (KITLV, moderator), 'Researching the governance of climate change adaptation in SEA: Local vulnerabilities and national states'
- Richard Tol (University of Sussex), 'Climate change in Southeast Asia: Economic effects when institutions are fragile'
- Eren Zink (Uppsala University), 'The politics of climate change science in Vietnam: Hot science, high water'

14.30 Paper presentations (10 minutes each, plus 20 minutes discussion)

- Maxime C van der Laarse (Leiden University), 'Green consciousness in Indonesia'
- Yukari Sekine (Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research), 'Buddhist repertoires in Burma's environmental movements: Local rituals, practices and construction of legitimacy'
- Annet Pauwelussen (Wageningen University), 'Cyanide delight: Affective lifeworlds of dive fishing in the Makassar Strait'

15.30 Coffee/tea break

16.00 Round Table III: 'Urban mass culture in colonial Java, 1900-1940'

- Henk Schulte Nordholt (KITLV, moderator), with short presentations by Tom Hoogervorst (KITLV), Arnout van der Meer (Colby College), Dafna Ruppin (Utrecht University) and Henk Schulte Nordholt

17.00 Paper presentations

- Paul Bijl (KITLV, University of Amsterdam), 'Legal self-fashioning: Empathy, will and the colonial history of rights'
- Hoko Hori (KITLV/Van Vollenhoven Institute), 'Child marriage in Indonesia and a plurality of norms'
- Friederike Trotier (Goethe University Frankfurt), 'City promotion in decentralized Indonesia: Palembang's new image as a 'sport city'

17.45 End Update and drinks

Abstracts

Round Table I: 'Pluralism, violence & religious renewal'

A conversation with Amrita Malhi (University of South Australia), Joshua Gedacht (Universiti Brunei Darussalam), Francis Bradley (Pratt Institute), Chiara Formichi (Cornell University), and Marieke Bloembergen (KITLV). Moderated by David Kloos (KITLV)

This roundtable looks at the tension between the image of Southeast as a cradle for religious diversity and pluralism on the one hand, and the apparent rise, in recent years and decades, of conservative forces and exclusivist discourses. The leading question is how forms and expression of religious revitalization have affected Southeast Asia's ethnically and religiously diverse societies and how current historical research may help us to understand developments that are taking place today.

At the basis of the tension between religious inclusivism and exclusivism lies, among others, a profound and ongoing reconfiguration of religious authority. Who is able to speak, today, for religious traditions? Who are excluded? Who are listening? These answers to these questions depend both on changes occurring within religious traditions (such as the reformulation of religious doctrines or the emergence of new religious practices and institutions) and processes taking place in society and the world at large, including (but not limited to) globalization, urbanization, technological change, mobility, and the rise of the Asian middle class.

The roundtable brings together a group of historians working on religion in Southeast Asia. They will engage in a conversation about three specific issues related to the theme of religious revitalization and authority in Southeast Asia, namely: 1) The surge, across the region, of violence against religious (and other) minorities; 2) The impact of transnational religious flows, connections, and movements – including interreligious or “interfaith” connections and networks – on Southeast Asian societies; and 3) Religious and scholarly encounters, changing processes of (religious) knowledge production and our own role as academics and “specialists” of religion in Southeast Asia. In each of these cases, we ask ourselves: What is new? How far do we need to go back in time to understand what is going on today? And where do we look?

Single paper presentations I

Dominik M. Müller (Goethe University Frankfurt), Bureaucratizing the Sharia: Islamic Governance and its Supernatural Counterforces in Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam is the only country in contemporary Southeast Asia that has unambiguously been defined by its government as an “Islamic State” since Independence, and, more specifically, as a “Malay Islamic Monarchy” (*Melayu Islam Beraja*, MIB). In the absence of democratic institutions or an influential civil society, a state-sponsored Islamic bureaucracy has become one of the most powerful political forces outside the royal family. In the course of its expansion since the 1980s, the Islamic bureaucracy has effectively monopolized Islamic discourse and pursued various strategies to

“purify” Muslim beliefs and practices of “deviant” (*sesat*) and “superstitious” (*khurafat*) elements. The government has outlawed the public expression of alternative interpretations of Islam, as well as heterodox Malay traditions such as the worshipping of “powerful places” (*tempat keramat*) and the services of Malay supernatural healers and exorcists (*bomoh / orang pandai*).

Based on a book manuscript that I am presently working on, I will first briefly outline my conceptual approach to the bureaucratization of Islam and its socio-legal dimensions in Brunei, before describing the project’s empirical focus. I will then illustrate some of the Islamic bureaucracy’s activities to fight “deviant”-declared magic practices, and explain how these measures contribute to a re-actualization, rather than disenchantment, of popular beliefs in the omnipresent powers of spirits and magicians, albeit discursively reframed within state-controlled parameters.

Elisa Fornale (Marie Curie Researcher RU), ‘Regional migration governance and social protection in ASEAN’

The access of social protection for migrant workers at global level raises several tensions and it is emerging as a problematic issue in the current implementation of free movement regime at regional level. This paper suggests to relate the concept of regional migration complex to the unsolved problem of social security regimes, their origins, present and future prospects, to explore how different regulatory layers interact. To this end, the paper will focus on the current legal development in the ASEAN context where international instruments are almost absent, to identify the most appropriate approach to develop a ‘solidified social protection floor’ (Harkins, 2014). The interest of this case study is to explore if the regional integration process and the progressive liberalization of the movement of highly-skilled migrant workers is playing a major role in the progressive protection of social rights by facilitating the adoption of bilateral agreements or whether states will opt for new forms of unilateralism to deal with contemporary legal gaps.

Ward Berenschot and Charlotte Wagenaar (KITLV), ‘Incumbency, pluralism and democratization: The consolidation of Indonesia’s political class in 2015’

Observers of Indonesian politics hold contrasting views about the direction of Indonesia’s democratization process. ‘Oligarchy-theorists’ argue that due pervasive economic inequalities democratization is not leading to a more even distribution of power. A second group of ‘pluralist scholars’, however, points to the emergence of new leaders and various policy initiatives to argue that slow progress is being made. So which side is right? This paper addresses this question by analysing the results of the simultaneous local elections that took place on 9 December across 260 districts and 9 provinces. Combining ethnographic fieldwork with a database on election results and backgrounds of candidates, we argue in this paper that the outcomes of these elections suggests that local power remains relatively strongly concentrated in the hands of a narrow political class. Furthermore, the high rates of incumbency wins suggest that control over state resources is providing incumbents with a strong advantage.

Annemarie Samuels (University of Amsterdam) & David Kloos (KITLV), book presentation *Islam and the limits of the state*

This book edited by Kloos and Samuels together with Michael Feener, examines the relationship between the state state implementation of Shari’a and diverse lived realities of everyday Islam in contemporary Aceh, Indonesia. With chapters covering topics ranging from

NGOs and diaspora politics to female ulama and punk rockers, the volume opens new perspectives on the complexity of Muslim discourse and practice in a society that has experienced tremendous changes since the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. These detailed accounts of and critical reflections on how different groups in Acehnese society negotiate their experiences and understandings of Islam highlight the complexity of the ways in which the state is both a formative and a limited force with regard to religious and social transformation.

Round Table II: 'Governance of climate change adaptation in Southeast Asia'

Gerry van Klinken (KITLV), 'Researching the governance of climate change adaptation in SEA: local vulnerabilities and national states'

Richard Tol (University of Sussex): Climate change in Southeast Asia: Economic effects when institutions are fragile

Eren Zink (Uppsala University), 'The politics of climate change science in Vietnam: Hot science, high water'

Climate change represents the biggest challenge of our time, and it is happening already. So why are so few students of Southeast Asia researching it? This panel will open up some of the many urgent questions that social scientists can help to answer. It will focus on the way decisions are being made about the best way to *adapt* to global warming. Southeast Asia's dependence on agriculture and fisheries means the impact of climate change will be large. Yet state capacities in many ways remain as 'soft' as they were when Gunnar Myrdal coined the term.

Single paper presentations II

Maxime C van der Laarse (Leiden University), 'Green consciousness in Indonesia'

"Environmentalism is the story of people, not of nature." – T. O'Riordan

Even though Indonesia is still being called among one of the biggest polluters, wasters, deforesters, and emitters in the world, alongside of being called 'the lungs of the earth' and having among the highest levels of biodiversity making of this a serious problematical issue, several interesting sustainable developments show a change might be on its way, if it is not already prosecuting. Since the 1970s, the environmental movement rapidly grew in Indonesia, resulting in political, social, technological, and environmental developments. The Ministry of Environment was created in 1978, and ENGOs (Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations) were mushrooming. Especially since the end of the 1990s, and continuing in the 2000s, sustainability and the environment are placed higher on the political agenda of Indonesia, which can be seen in the adoption of international sustainable concepts such as 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle), REDD+ (Reducing Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation), and the recently implemented policy that forces customers to pay for plastic bags. We also see that there exists a care for the environment, leading to developments initiated by individuals or communities, such as the establishment and spread of the Waste Bank concept (Bank Sampah) and the creation of 'green communities'. In this small presentation I focus on the arrival and development of the environmental movement, and the recent 'green' developments in Indonesia. With a 'green consciousness', I mean a

greater care for and awareness of human impact on the environment coming from individuals, who in turn initiate developments, contribute to and join in on collective 'green' practices, and change their lifestyle, so to be more sustainable. I focus mainly on the visibility of this green consciousness online, via the social media platforms of Facebook and Instagram, to give an impression of this and to create awareness about that this is indeed happening in Indonesia right now.

Yukari Sekine (Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research), 'Buddhist repertoires in Burma's environmental movements: Local rituals, practices and construction of legitimacy'

The political and economic liberalization in Myanmar/Burma has been in the spotlight since the victory of the opposition party National League for Democracy (NLD) in the general elections of November 2015, after decades of military rule. Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi's close confidant, Htin Kyaw was chosen as the country's new president, to take power in April 1st 2016, indicating a new political direction in the country. Although reforms had begun since president Thein Sein took power in 2011, the new optimism is also seen with caution in a country permeated by crony businessmen and a military elite that still maintains considerable power.

In the countryside, Myanmar's 70% rural population has experienced differentiated impacts of the new wave of liberalization. The economic opening to foreign and domestic investment, the turn toward industrialization and the establishment of new land laws, including the Farmland Law (2012) and the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Lands Management Law (2012) have created new institutional frameworks to formalize land property, facilitated transfer and sale of land and encourage investment in agricultural lands. As experienced in other countries globally, this process is not without its discontents, as small-holding farmers and villagers with customary land use practices become vulnerable to land-grabbing and displacement.

In one case study to be investigated in depth by my research project, the Dawei Special Economic Zone and surrounding areas, in the southern Thanintharyi region of Myanmar/Burma, rural populations are experiencing such threats to land tenure security, livelihoods as well as environmental and cultural impacts. The establishment of the Dawei SEZ through the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Thai and Myanmar governments in 2008 - and more recently with Japan in 2016, has set the agenda for the development of large industrial and transport hub, with deep seaport and roadlink to Thailand. The previously established communities of ethnic Tavoyan, Mon and Karen are contesting such developments on the grounds of environmental sustainability, ethnic minority rights, livelihood security and land tenure security.

The research seeks to investigate the repertoires of contestation used in resistance movements that seek to contest, mitigate and demand accountability for the social and environmental impacts of the development projects; in a country where political freedoms for protest and contestation had been suppressed since 1962. As activists, in alliance with farmers, volunteer lawyers, farmers and international organizations test the new political opportunities for collective action and participation; the formation of a new protest culture, awareness of local identities in relation to the state and the wider society are also forming. Buddhist ethnic Tavoyans are claiming ethnic differentiation from the majority Bamar and utilize their cultural heritage as repertoire for contestation. Local protests are also

permeated by local cultural practices, rituals and symbolic meanings. The leadership of monks and religious leaders in the opposition resemble prior democracy and nationalist movements in Burma, but with distinct local tones. The research would like to investigate the formation of such cultural repertoires in the context of a transitioning country that has opened a window for contestations at a time when the local engages with transnational activism and the threats linked to globalization.

Annet Pauwelussen (Wageningen University), Cyanide delight: Affective lifeworlds of dive fishing in the Makassar Strait

Cyanide fishing is a practice by which divers capture live fish by stunning them with sodium cyanide. Although officially illegal, the practice thrives in Indonesia, where it supplies the international live reef fish trade to Asian capital cities. Whereas much has been written about the destructive effects of cyanide on coral environments, often criminalising those involved in live reef fisheries, less attention has gone to the practice itself and the affective relations that it involves and generates. Drawing from ethnographic research in the Indonesian Makassar Strait maritime region, I explore cyanide fishing as an assemblage of affective human and non-human relations. This sheds light on how the practice sustains in these relations, producing danger as much as delight. The presented paper is part of an anthropological (PhD) research project in which I investigate how maritime people in Indonesia organize and enact their sea-based lifeworld(s), and how this relates to recent marine conservation measures.

Round Table III: 'Urban mass culture in colonial Java, 1900-1940'

Henk Schulte Nordholt (KITLV Leiden), Mass culture and modernity: The emergence of new urban middle classes in colonial Indonesia

Tom Hoogervorst (KITLV Leiden), 'Being modern in colonial Java: What language should we use?'

Dafna Ruppin (Utrecht University), 'Gender, spectatorship and the emergence of modern movie theatres in colonial Java'

Arnout van der Meer (Colby College), 'A performance in contrasts: Fairs, commodities, and the production of difference in late colonial Java'

At the start of the 20th century, Indonesia's emerging middle-class became increasingly central to the maintenance of colonial rule. This interdisciplinary panel explores the consumption patterns, mass culture and new lifestyles of this group. Indonesian middle-classes have long been excluded from the historical record, which prioritized dominant colonial categories ("peasants", "aristocrats", "Chinese") and – in post-independence times – nationalists. As a result, the crucial role of these middle-classes within the colonial system remains poorly visible. In redressing this imbalance, Henk Schulte Nordholt examines the visibility of this new mass culture as reflected in advertisements aimed to help shape new lifestyles. Tom Hoogervorst focuses on the language they adopted and argues that vernacular Malay was the pre-eminent vehicle to articulate modernity.

A concomitant development was the rise of a new mass audience for moving pictures. Dafna Ruppin explores what brought women from all levels of society to spend their leisure time at the cinema, the films they watched, and to what extent they were (or were not) at liberty to attend movie theatres on their own. She argues that women's experiences of movie-going in colonial Java differed in accordance with their ethnic and/or class affiliation. Late-colonial Indonesia also witnessed the proliferation of fairs, where the colonized were the main participants and observers. Arnout van der Meer examines the character of these fairs as sites of legitimization of colonialism. For instance, the juxtaposition between Western merchandise and traditional Javanese commodities was intentionally produced. Crucially, these fairs did not merely reflect the broader shift in colonial discourse, but were particularly aimed at and constitutive of a nascent Indonesian middle-class.

Single paper presentations III

Paul Bijl (KITLV, University of Amsterdam), Legal self-fashioning: Empathy, will and the colonial history of rights

Rights are not a Western invention to be exported to African and Asian countries, but instead have complex, relational histories in which indigenous imperial subjects living in the European colonial empires were actively involved. Focusing on the writings of the Javanese woman Kartini (1879-1904), living in colonial Indonesia as part of the Dutch empire, it will be shown how she engaged with conceptions of rights that were globally circulating in the early twentieth century. The central concept of this paper is that of "legal self-fashioning" which I develop in order to discuss how Kartini's writings constructed an emphatic, willful inner life that made her part of what was at the time considered humanity and therefore "ready" for individual rights.

If, as Samuel Moyn and other have argued, eighteenth century citizen rights talk looked to the nation-state for guarantees and post-WWII human rights talk precisely confronted state power, where can we position the calls for rights of an early twentieth-century imperial subject like Kartini who was not a citizen of any nation-state? As Kartini's writings are full of considerations on humanity and rights, they point out how the conceptions provided by the 1940s human rights discourse are in fact one answer to an older problem with which she and other imperial subjects also struggled. It was as a part of the global women's rights movement, namely, that Kartini rethought the European, Javanese and Islamic legal projects in colonial Indonesia and was writing a self through which she could reach her goals: getting educated and not ending up in an arranged, polygamous marriage. Just like anthropologists have started to trace the "social life of rights" in contemporary societies, I argue that historians need to start digging up the experiences of indigenous imperial subjects, often put down in their own writings, to make visible the roles of Asian and African authors in the international history of rights.

Hoko Hori (KITLV/Van Vollenhoven Institute), Child marriage in Indonesia and a plurality of norms

My research projects examines the case of child marriage in Indonesia in order to understand the plurality of norms in various sphere of the society. While international human rights standards suggests states to set 18 as the minimum age of marriage, local contexts in each country and in each region varies significantly. In fact, our previous study

shows that at a rural village and nearby city in West Java, child marriage are often practiced, using different norms, including religious law and customary law. For example, judges in religious courts grant marriage dispensation to underage marriages by referring to Islamic law and customary law. They do so to protect girls from social stigma of “*zinah*”, premarital sexual intercourse. It seems to me that this sort of judgement is the outcome of their efforts to accommodate the plurality of norms existing in modern states in rapid transition, such as Indonesia. Our ongoing research project will further study the practice in other areas and spheres of the Indonesian society. We will investigate the practice and norms applied at KUA(the Office of Religious Affairs), and the ongoing discussion and ideologies on the issue at government/legislators level. At the same time, we also will expand our research area to non-Muslim areas of Indonesia(Bali), so that we will be able to see how religion plays a role in constructing those norms.

Friederike Trotier (Goethe University Frankfurt), ‘City promotion in decentralized Indonesia: Palembang’s new image as a ‘sport city’

In Indonesia, the process of decentralization following the fall of Suharto has fundamentally changed the situation of cities in the country. The increased competition between the urban hubs entails the growing importance of an attractive city image and of place promotion strategies. Hence, in order to understand the development of autonomy in Indonesia, one has to investigate into the strategies of competitiveness among Indonesian cities. This research focuses on one specific tool of city marketing, namely the hosting of sporting events. Worldwide, an increasing number of city governments perceive the hosting of international sporting events as an opportunity to promote a variety of agendas such as boosting development, inculcating a feeling of pride among the citizens, securing political legitimacy and loyalty, or conveying a positive image of the host city to the national and international audience. This thesis draws the attention to Palembang as an example for an active designer of its city image with the strategy of regularly hosting sporting events. Since entering the ‘event circuit’ in 2004, Palembang has successfully attracted national and international sporting events with the highpoint of the 2018 Asian Games. The analysis covers the narrative of success in Palembang, the strategies of local actors to improve the image of the city, and the role of leadership in this process.

So far, sporting practices and events have attracted little attention in Southeast Asian Studies and the few existing analysis on sporting events mainly focus on the national level. Yet, sport is an essentially urban event and thus provides insights into city governance policies. The findings show that Indonesian governments display an increasing interest in event marketing. The case study underlines the opportunities of a city to utilize sporting events as a strategic tool for place promotion to gain attention and to establish a positive image.