

Editorial Foreword

OUR COVER

Abdul Djalil Pirous (b. Meulaboh, Aceh 1932), *Meditasi* (Meditation), 1998, marble paste, acrylic, and gold leaf on canvas, 75 × 70 cm. Private collection at Serambi Pirous, Bandung, Indonesia. Courtesy of the artist.

MEDICAL HISTORIES, MEDICAL REGIMES

Understanding regimes of medical knowledge and practice in Asia means delving into their histories to examine the political and social routes by which medical ideas, policies, and institutions were brought into being. In our opening essay, DAVISAKD PUAKSOM looks at how Pasteurian medicine entered the lives of Thai citizens and played a part in the medicalization of the Thai state between 1850 and 1950. Using a Foucauldian approach that connects medical knowledge to governmentality, Davisakd shows how Pasteurian medicine supplanted earlier pre-Pasteurian discourses, challenged traditional Thai medical practices, and captured the interest of the Siamese court. Ultimately, Pasteurian medicine became an instrument of Siamese state hegemony—the control of germs proved to be yet another means of disciplining the nation’s citizens.

Colonial India is the focal scene for JAMES H. MILLS, who endeavors to deepen our comparative understanding of drug markets in Asia. Like opium in China, cocaine enjoyed broad use in late colonial India and was transformed from a popular medicine into an intoxicant. Despite regulations prohibiting its use, Indians of all walks of life proved determined consumers of cocaine and turned South Asia into one of the world’s principal markets for the drug. As Mills argues, the Indian case shows that “supply-and-control-side” dynamics associated with the colonizers and colonial states were not the driving force in creating Asia’s drug markets. Rather, the drug’s broad and diverse appeal and its absorption into the rituals of *paan* consumption indicate that “demand-side” dynamics gave the market for cocaine its resilience.

Our third essay turns to Tibetan medical history and the movement of medical goods and knowledge along paths of cultural and economic exchange in Eurasia. FRANCES GARRETT gives her attention to the Tibetan historians of the past and their classificatory methods of writing medical histories, histories that give us images of Tibetan medicine as a tradition and of Tibetan medical historians as scholars. Garrett finds that medical histories from the thirteenth through the seventeenth centuries emphasized the cosmopolitan reach of the imperial period and put medicine in tension with the political and ideological

forces of Buddhism. In revealing a taxonomy of knowers and knowledge, Garrett shows that Tibetan medical history depicts medical knowledge both as an object of imperial domination and as fundamental part of Buddhist history.

ISLAM IN ASIA

The Islamic reawakening in Indonesia during the 1980s and 1990s led a vast number of Javanese Muslim women to adopt new forms of veiling. NANCY SMITH-HEFNER gives us a glimpse of the cultural politics surrounding the veil in Java, pointing out that young, well-educated members of the urban middle class have particularly embraced the practice. For most of these women, the new veiling is not a relic of religious tradition so much as an outward sign of piety and modernity. But piety and modernity are not settled concerns, and neither are the meanings attached to veiling. Smith-Hefner shows that women use the veil to maneuver their way—purposefully and pragmatically—through the shifting terrain of class affiliations, political reform, and public culture while professing a commitment to Islam. A rich array of interview and life-history materials illustrates the ways in which the veil affords some young Javanese women a feeling of security as they negotiate the tensions, threats, and freedoms of urban living.

READING CHINA'S PAST

Our final three articles deal with the interpretation and writing of Chinese literary history and pre-history. EVA SHAN CHOU considers a short story by realist author Lu Xun (1881–36) titled “A Story about Hair,” in which the writer offers reflections on the queue—the hairstyle that was imposed by the Manchus in 1644—and its rejection by reformers during the pre-Republican years. Chou takes a biographical approach, placing the short narrative in tension with Lu Xun’s life story. Tacking back and forth between the two, she teases out insights and surprises. The discrepancies and parallels between Lu Xun’s rejection and reattachment to the queue and his fictional reflections offer a partial social history of the queue and its political meanings.

Just as the queue was an outward symbol of Manchu dominance and hegemony throughout China, so, too, was the bronze vessel (and its associated ritual practices) a symbol of the elite culture that emerged at Yanshi Erlitou during the early second millennium and spread beyond the boundaries of Erlitou political authority to cover the entire Chinese continental region by the Shang dynasty. Comparing bronze vessels unearthed at Erlitou with those found elsewhere in China, SARAH ALLAN reasons that, regional cultural diversity notwithstanding, Erlitou’s elite culture “laid the foundation for a common [Chinese] culture ... defined in terms of shared rites.”

In our closing essay, YANG XIAO finds that Confucius’s *Analects* provides a blueprint for its own interpretation. The Confucius of the *Analects*,

argues Xiao, takes a pragmatic approach to interpretation and emphasizes the importance of intention, in contrast to the literalist approach taken by the Sage's student, Gongxi Hua. Understanding the difference and tension between these two approaches, Xiao observes, helps us to understand nuance and diversity in the history of Chinese classicism.

—KMG

Forthcoming Essays in *JAS* 66:3 (August 2007)

The Cultural Politics of Song

The Trinh Cong Son Phenomenon

JOHN C. SCHAFER

The Dual Career of “Arirang”: Korean Resistance Anthem, Japanese Pop Hit

E. TAYLOR ATKINS

Placing Southeast Asia in the World circa 1900

“Another Andalusia”: Images of Colonial Southeast Asia in Arabic Newspapers

MICHAEL LAFFAN

Curious Modernities: Three Turn-of-the-Century Balinese Textual Explorations of the World

HELEN CREESE

Legacies

Owen Lattimore, Asia, and Comparative History

WILLIAM T. ROWE

Trends in Research

The Printed World: Books, Publishing Culture, and Society in Late Imperial China

TOBIE MEYER-FONG
