

your opponent's rally tomorrow, as long as you create that sense of a large group. There is a lot of dressing up and theatre. In one unfortunate case in Taiwan, a public relations bid to rid the DPP of its 'sorrowful' image involved dressing its candidates up as a pirate and a prince, and then 'sailing' them around the country in a vehicle shaped like a ship. Sadly, this did not go down well, and the PR effort backfired. They are still the sad party.

The third distinctive feature of the cases is, of course, how central popular culture is to the messages that are crafted, and how they are disseminated: the I Love Taiwan and I Make My India Shine campaigns among the least pretty. There are some lively accounts of politicians and filmstars building each other's careers, swapping careers, propping each other up. The mass media is the crucial vehicle. This is interesting, first, because, as the author of the Indonesian case points out, political elite control of the mass media signals 'elite intrusion on popular live performance practice', and thereby into the culture of the masses (p. 56). It is also interesting because the new technologies and approaches come across as democratic, in the sense of being widely or commonly shared. An interesting question is whether the message also changes once it comes in as an SMS through your handset.

An underlying tension that makes these accounts so valuable remains somewhat in the background, never fully resolved here. This is the question of whether elections, however popular the modes of participation, actually deliver power through this exercise of aggregating the popular will. This volume approaches this with an analogy with carnival — an event when the poor and disenfranchised get to stick two fingers up to the establishment, say their piece, have their fun and maybe set some new rules for what kind of governance they will put up with until next time. But other cases show this overstates the space for transgression. Elections ultimately restore elite order, more like puppet-shows than theatre. Is electioneering then just elite theatre, or do the masses make a difference? It is a serious question, as recent events in Asia show. Perhaps, after all, genuinely popular participation requires that elections become the stripped-down boring events that the mature democrat Japan dutifully holds.

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Cambodia

Cambodge: The Cultivation of a nation, 1860–1945

By PENNY EDWARDS

Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007. Pp. 349. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index.

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Historical scholarship on Cambodia has tended to focus on either the Khmer empire or the far more recent period of Democratic Kampuchea (1975–78). While this tendency can be easily explained in light of Angkor's monumental legacy and (conversely) the Khmer Rouges' genocidal regime, it resulted in the neglect of other

periods in Cambodian history, including the nine decades of the French protectorate (1863–1953). This historiographic lacuna has now begun to be filled by a younger generation of scholars such as Penny Edwards, as well as John Tully and Anne Hanson.

In this *tour de force* of a book based on her doctoral dissertation, Edwards contends that the Protectorate's cultural policy was decisive for the cultivation of a Cambodian national consciousness by means of the intellectual and material interventions of both French scholar-officials and Cambodian royal and intellectual elites: 'Cambodian nationalism was shaped ... in colonial offices, schoolrooms, research institutes, and museums' (p. 8). The domestic and metropolitan locales of Franco-Cambodian interactions (Angkor, Phnom Penh, Marseilles and Paris) formed a network for the circulation of knowledge and representations of Khmer culture, as a result of which Cambodia acquired a firm place in the French imagination but contemporary Cambodians were discursively relegated to an irreclaimable past grandeur that only colonial rule could adequately preserve and revive. In fact, it was precisely the idea of the exceptionality of the Khmer cultural heritage avidly promoted by the French authorities that nurtured nationalist sentiments among the Cambodian elite.

Besides the Introduction, the book includes 10 chapters, which unfold chronologically but alternate between the two central themes in the formation of the proto-national Cambodian identity during the protectorate: the transformation, through scholarly and curatorial practices, of the Angkor monumental complex – and specifically of Angkor Wat – from remote place of worship to the nation's prime site of memory; and the formalisation, through scriptural and ecclesiastic reforms, of a national, 'Khmer' Buddhism. Chapters 1, 2, 5 and 6 deal with the first theme, discussing the initial 'discovery' of Angkor by the French, its elevation to model for the Cambodian 'national style' pursued by colonial artistic and architectural revival, its physical conservation by French scholars and symbolic rehabilitation by local intellectuals, and its tourist consumption *in situ* as well as vicariously in the metropolitan museums and exhibitions where fragments and replicas of Angkorian art were displayed. Chapters 4, 7 and 8 deal with the second theme, by considering the authentication of a national Buddhism through the printing of scriptures, the institutionalisation of the monastic community (*sangha*), and the furthering of Khmer Buddhism by colonial educational institutions. (The protectorate's promotion of religious modernism is similarly the subject of Anne Hanson's monograph, *How to behave: Buddhism and modernity in colonial Cambodia 1860–1930*, also published in 2007 by the University of Hawai'i Press). Chapters 3 and 9 deviate slightly from these parallel narratives by examining the literati and the cultural organizations that first participated in the colonial project of cultivating a Khmer identity and then animated the Cambodian nationalist movement. The last chapter brings the book to a close with a meditation on the reproduction of colonial constructs of Khmer artistic and religious heritage in the period since Cambodia achieved independence in 1954 — a theme that would deserve a full-length treatment in itself.

This is a masterful work: researched in libraries and archives in France, Cambodia, Myanmar, Australia and the UK; underpinned by a cross-disciplinary methodology that guides the examination of a wide range of cultural practices and artefacts; and written in an engaging style that makes it a compelling read despite its length. *Cambodge* is major contribution to not only the cultural and intellectual history of

modern Cambodia and Southeast Asia in general, but also the literature on nationalism and on colonial modernity. Admittedly, Edwards is not the first one to illuminate the intellectual exchanges and ideological affinities between European and Asian elites in colonial contexts or to debunk nationalist fantasies about the rescue of the nation's soul from foreign degeneration; yet, her detailed narrative reveals the contradictory intertwining of political and cultural loyalties at the same time that it recovers the stories of individuals such as the Cambodian intellectuals Son Diep and Thiounn Sambath and the French Orientalist Suzanne Karpelès, besides better-known figures such as Pavie, Delaporte, Finot, Marchal, Cœdès and others. Worthy of note are also the parallels that the protectorate's cultural policies bore with those of Cambodia's neighbour and former 'protector', Siam, which in a 1907 treaty agreed to the retrocession of the western Cambodian province where Angkor lies, under Siamese control since the eighteenth century. Although the protectorate's promotion of reformed Buddhism openly aimed at severing the relationship between the Siamese and Cambodian *sangha*, it was ironically moulded on the reformation initiated in Siam by King Mongkut (the creation of the Pali Institute at Bangkok's Wat Mahathat in 1890 was however due to King Chulalongkorn, not – as erroneously stated on p. 110 – the already deceased Mongkut).

In conclusion, one can only hope that Penny Edwards' erudite yet engrossing book will be read and discussed well beyond the circle of historians of Southeast Asia; scholars of Buddhism, Asian art and archaeology, museology, cultural nationalism and cross-cultural exchanges will also profit from reading it, as its narration of the mixed origins of modern Cambodian identity underscores not only western colonialism's idiosyncratic agenda but also the current preoccupation, expressed by UNESCO's World Heritage, with historical conservation and globalisation's threat to the survival of 'national' cultures.

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Indonesia

Worshipping Siva and Buddha: The Temple art of east Java

By ANN R. KINNEY with MARIJKE J. KLOKKE and LYDIA KIEVEN

Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003. Pp. 303. Illustrations, Glossary, Bibliography, Index.

Violence and serenity

By NATASHA REICHLÉ

Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007. Pp. 289. Illustrations, Notes, Select Bibliography.

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There is strong circumstantial evidence that Sumatra and Java played important roles in the development of esoteric Buddhist art and theology, but almost all