

Tradition as an ‘instrument for managing society’ (p. 258) is clearly traced to recent invention. Royal ‘ceremonies regularly put the sovereign in contact with his subjects’ which ‘runs against the practice related by Pigafetta [Venetian travelling with Spanish fleet], in which the sovereign only communicated with his subjects by means of a bamboo’ (p. 258). Intensified Islamisation in recent years, in the form of stricter controls on alcohol, Islamic dress codes and imposition of Shariah law is understood to be undertaken to undercut the appeal of radical Islam and in Brunei, is clearly subordinated to and not a challenge to the absolute rule of the Sultan. De Vienne seems convinced that despite the prevalence of rhetoric that might alarm the uninformed, ‘a genuine rule of law’ prevails in Brunei (p. 277). While it appeals to imagined continuities, the regime clearly understands that the only real one that matters is the longevity of the welfare monarchy.

Specialisation is inevitable if history is to have depth, but over-specialise and what was meant to be complementary become competing methodologies and worse still, dogma. More than just a much-needed update in a field with few book-length scholarly works, de Vienne’s apparently neo-Rankean approach to Brunei’s history challenges both ‘short durée’ historians who view Malay world states as largely modern constructs and *longue durée* scholarship that tend to overstate the influence of the regional substratum on which such constructs were erected. Largely populated by contesting approaches that risk presenting part of the picture as a whole, Malay world studies could do with more histories that assess across current schools of thought.

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## Indonesia

*Being Malay in Indonesia: Histories, hopes and citizenship in the Riau Archipelago*

By NICHOLAS J. LONG

Singapore: Asian Studies Association of Australia with NUS Press; Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2013. Pp. 298. Maps, Tables, Illustrations, Bibliography, Index.

doi:10.1017/S0022463416000138

On 1 July 2004, Provinsi Kepulauan Riau (Riau Islands province) officially came into being as the thirty-secondth province of the Republic of Indonesia. This legislative proclamation of significant political and economic devolution was part of a larger decentralising wave sweeping post-Suharto Indonesia. Post-New Order central government legislation granted regional governments a bigger share of revenue generated by the province and greater authority over local affairs. This blossoming (*pemekaran*) of autonomous political units across Indonesia was officially trumpeted as promoting greater democratisation across a culturally diverse and geographically behemoth archipelago. Provinsi Kepulauan Riau came into existence as an autonomous region

explicitly created 'for Malays' (p. 3). While provincial autonomy was long coveted by many Riau island leaders and their followers, its achievement thereof set off a multitude of reactions, responses and discussions. The latter took place at manifold levels of society, public and otherwise, with emphasis on the contours and implications of nascent autonomy for its inhabitants. Nicholas Long was an early witness to Tanjung Pinang-based Riau islanders' reception, engagement and negotiation of this new-fangled configuration. He conducted fieldwork in Tanjung Pinang, the newly established provincial capital, for about thirty months beginning in July 2005. *Being Malay in Indonesia* represents Long's epistemologically innovative effort at recording and making sense of a rich variety of phenomena related to incipient decentralisation.

In providing historical and contemporary context and engaging several strands of extant social theory in chapter 1, Long is informative, clear and nuanced. The next chapter discusses regional political economy and national politics and provides detailed population statistics along ethnic lines for Tanjung Pinang. It brings to attention how significant changes in these three areas over the last thirty years have disturbed the relative tranquillity of Tanjung Pinang's Malay identity. This structural, political and demographic information helps the reader better grasp the themes and episodes discussed in the following chapters. A minor quibble with the demographic information in chap. 2 is that Long does not explain why reliable population statistics are only available for 2010 (p. 43) and not 2005 to 2007 — the bulk of his sojourn in Tanjung Pinang. Chapters 3 to 6 discuss how 'diverse understandings of Malayness play out ... in various aspects of daily life' (p. 28), each respectively dealing with historical consciousness; economic activity and the perception that Malays are bad at commercial activity; domicile in multiethnic urban and suburban centres; and encounters with other-worldly beings and happenings. In relation to notions of Malay backwardness and increased provincial economic autonomy, chap. 7 deals with the role of governmentality in instilling an 'achieving mindset' in the islanders (p. 29) while chap. 8 discusses participant and audience reactions and responses to 'cultural contests' that place Malayness 'at the centre of efforts to promote human resource development'. The concluding chapter articulately summarises how the theoretical and ethnographic dimensions of this work come together to inform discussions of the contested content and ambit of Malay identity, and the privileges such an identity may have in a polity created for Malays.

A particular merit of Long's effort is his attempt to devise a 'conceptual framework for the study of nascent autonomy' (p. 4), which could illuminate instances of decentralisation elsewhere. Long's framework pays particular attention to the epistemological advancements associated with the 'affective turn' in social scientific inquiry. Moving beyond structural and constructivist approaches to decentralisation, Long seeks to understand the impacts that an instance of ethnically inflected autonomy has on 'the conditions of everyday life and the states of being' (p. 4) of residents of Tanjung Pinang. The author notes widespread public interest in the notion of 'Malayness' with islanders seeking to make sense of what that term entailed and who could be deemed a Malay.

In a provincial capital with a simple Malay majority of 29.9 per cent in 2010 (p. 43) with significant concentrations of Javanese, Chinese, Minangkabau, Batak, Sundanese and Bugis, the contours of interrogations and inquiries into Malayness were varied, and the responses thereof veritably cacophonous. Unnerving to some

islanders, and a source of ebbing happiness to others, a range of affective states in flux were detected. While connecting the variety and dynamic quality of affective states to broader contextual currents — public and personal, Long also takes the trouble to show how these dispositions ‘are also productive in themselves’ (p. 4) in altering social connections and germinating fresh cultural discourse, rendering being Malay in this anthropological context fluid, and an ongoing challenge.

Long is able to detect the ever-shifting range of affects by bringing to bear adapted Sartrean and Freudian insights to his carefully documented participant observation and ethnographic interviewing. The astute use of Sartre’s ‘bad faith’ and Freud’s ‘uncanny’ allow Long to argue that ‘feeling “normal” or “comfortable” within one’s actions is in fact highly precarious, and always able to give way to bliss and anguish’ (p. 250). This leveraging of existential and psychoanalytic illumination allows Long to put forward a compelling body of evidence that eschews the extremes of autonomy and reductive determinism in theorising ‘affect’. Long thoughtfully points out that while the affective states of Tanjung Pinang islanders in the early years of provincial autonomy are to be understood with reference to wider constellations of power and meaning, this nexus is not deterministic. It is Long’s hard-won insights and observations of the complexities of everyday life of the residents of Tanjung Pinang that allows him to track the impact of nascent ethnically infused regional autonomy on these islanders and to meaningfully make sense of how ongoing shifts in public and private contexts allow for a transient plurality arguably better iterated as *Being Malay(s) in Indonesia: Histories, hopes and citizenship in Tanjung Pinang*.

Long’s concrete engagement of the ‘affective’ turn is a must read for all those interested in keeping abreast of significant epistemological shifts. It is hoped that others will build on or be inspired by Long’s efforts to strengthen the epistemological foundations of humanistic and social scientific inquiry; or more simply put, inductive human inquiry.

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*The open door: Early modern Wajorese statecraft and diaspora*

By KATHRYN ANDERSON WELLEN

De Kalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014. Pp. 217. Maps, Figures.

doi:10.1017/S002246341600014X

A serious study of South Sulawesi history in English is a rare event. This fascinating borderland of civilised Eurasia found its own unique way to states, writing, genealogy and performance, stimulated but never overwhelmed by the myriad foreign traders, preachers and buccaneers who came that way in search of Malukan spices. The linguistic promise and challenge of Bugis literature, written in a unique if Indic-derived script on palm-leaf rolls (*lontara*, or for Wellen *lontaraq*, meticulously