

Abstracts of Articles

“Hugo Grotius, East India Trade and the King of Johor” by PETER BORSCHBERG

This article examines various aspects of the formulation of the Dutch East India Company's treaty and alliance system, based on published and unpublished papers written by, or in the possession of, Hugo Grotius (1583–1645). In particular the study draws on his commentary on the Sultan of Johor in *De Jure Praedae*, and his submissions to the Indies Conferences of 1613 and 1615.

“The Auction Lease System in Lower Burma's Fisheries, 1870–1904: Implications for Artisanal Fishers and Lessees” by PETER REEVES, BOB POKRANT and JOHN MCGUIRE

The Fisheries Act of 1875 altered the leasing arrangements for Burma's most valuable inland fisheries, the *inn*. It withdrew leases from the “*innthugyis*” who had traditionally handled these fisheries, and instituted a system of five-year auction leases. Expectations that local fishermen would secure these leases were never realised, and the fishing industry came to be dominated by capitalist interests, which made extortionate profits by subletting the fisheries.

“In the Eyes of the Beholder: Discourses of a Peasant Riot in Java” by RADIN FERNANDO

Peasant uprisings in Java under colonial rule are usually seen as precursors of the nationalist struggle for freedom. This view needs a radical revision in light of numerous small incidents of rural protest that did not have any political agenda as such. Instead, conflicts of interests among villagers over agricultural resources appear to have led to mutual recrimination and to denunciation of some individuals as rebels against colonial state. The colonial bureaucracy caught up in such incidents found it difficult to disentangle the truth from fabricated information and sought an easy way out by depicting villagers as rebels.

“Seductive Mediators: The *Nuuraa* Performer's Ritual Persona as a Love Magician in Kelantanese Thai Society” by IRVING CHAN JOHNSON

The actor-dancers of the Kelantanese Thai *Nuuraa* theatre are often seen by Kelantanese as practitioners of love magic. Theoretically, the *Nuuraa* can be viewed as an ongoing process of mediation between cultural symbols. A *Nuuraa* performer inhabits an ambiguous and power-filled socio-ritualistic universe associated with unbridled magical know-how.

“Palace Women at the Margins of Social Change: An Aspect of the Politics of Social History in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn” by HONG LYSA

The reign of King Chulalongkorn, conventionally regarded as the turning point in Thailand’s political development, is also understood as offering a paradigm for social history. In particular it set down standards for appreciating courtly female behaviour which entailed political submission and passivity — attitudes championed by conservative elements during the 1970s. This article argues that palace women in fact did have their own understanding of the changing world and made efforts to better their lives by moving beyond what was prescribed for them.

“Voyages Across the Web of Time: Angkarn, Nietzsche and Temporal Colonization” by MARC WEEKS and FRÉDÉRIC MAUREL

To compare the twentieth-century Thai writer Angkarn Kalayanaphong and the nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche may seem absurd. Yet both reveal a particular concern with time, responding to the unprecedented acceleration of their respective cultures. Their numerous points of similarity and divergence raise broader questions concerning global capitalism’s domination of time, and efforts to resist that domination.

“The Indochinese Congress (May 1936–March 1937): False Hope of Vietnamese Nationalists” by SUD CHONCHIRDSIN

During May 1936 and March 1937 there were attempts by different political factions in Cochin China to form an Indochinese Congress. The congress was planned as a people’s assembly in which the Vietnamese could negotiate colonial reforms with French authorities. Such attempts revealed competition among different political factions and also reflected a genuine French effort to introduce reforms and liberalize the Indochinese colony. The congress movement was eventually suppressed by French authorities, but it provided the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) with access to the masses and helped the Party expand its political activities into the Mekong Delta during the latter half of the 1930s.