specialist occupations, and there is also a separation between all of the workers and the middlemen who provide raw materials and have control of finished products.

The author argues that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the east coast handloom business had the characteristics of a proto-industry. She cites the work of several scholars, notably Peter Kriedte, Hans Medick, and Jurgen Schlumbohm in support of this view. She also points out the similarities between proto-industrial conditions in Europe and Malaya. The intriguing question is: why, unlike Europe, did the proto-industry in the Malay peninsula not develop into full-fledged textile manufacturing with mechanization and centralization of production?

Much of the book is focused on answering this provocative question. The author examines political, economic, and sociocultural elements in a historical context in seeking an answer. One of the most important contributing problems appears to be the dependence on imported materials such as silk and cotton. Drawings of looms and photographs of weavers at work—on the simple warp-reed or the more complex treadle-loom—and their products as well as numerous tables and charts support the text. There are also case studies of women who perform the various weaving roles. While these are informative, they are far too brief.

In her conclusion, the author argues that handloom weavers have many characteristics in common with factory-based textile producers. Thus they have been ill-served by being lumped with handcraft workers by government agencies. She urges rethinking of the place of handloom weavers in development planning.

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Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War. By EDWIN E. MOÏSE. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. xviii, 304 pp. $39.95 (cloth).

President Lyndon B. Johnson's counselor Walt Rostow assured a student in my Vietnam War class in 1985 that on 4 August 1964, North Vietnamese torpedo boats repeated an attack staged two days earlier on U.S. destroyers in the Tonkin Gulf. Edward J. Marolda and Oscar Fitzgerald supported his claim the next year in a U.S. Navy publication that surveys the war's early history. Edwin E. Moïse's meticulous and dispassionate account exposes the official study as replete with "errors and omissions" (p. xii) and Rostow as a prevaricator. Thorough, careful, and probing analysis backs his conclusion that "the weight of the evidence is overwhelming: no attack occurred" (p. 204). Despite Hanoi's "very convincing" (p. 203) charge that "the Johnson administration knowingly faked the incident of August 4," however, an "enormous conspiracy . . . did not exist" (p. 101). Johnson initially was convinced that a second attack had occurred, ordering "on short notice" (p. 224) bombing of North Vietnam and securing the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. Confirmation of doubts emerged quickly, but Johnson already had jumped on a "phantom streetcar" (p. 254) to defend an escalation that was almost inevitable but became much harder to justify.

Moïse begins with brief coverage of South Vietnam's internal weaknesses, explaining that because "the guerrillas were winning the war" (p. 1), the "Americans felt they had to do something" (p. 25). Reductions in defense spending required adoption of an inexpensive strategy to force the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) to abandon its goal of reunification. Despite pessimistic expectations, the Joint

Chiefs of Staff (JCS) insisted early in 1964 on expanding OPLAN 34A, a failing program under U.S. control of South Vietnamese raids on North Vietnam's coast. For Hanoi, DeSoto surveillance patrols also were provocative; the North's leaders perceived the mission of the U.S. destroyers as "intimidation, support of the vessels making the raids . . . , or actual shelling of the coast" (p. 67). DRV torpedo boats attacked the *Maddox* on 2 August after failing to receive a recall order. Having intercepted the attack message, the *Maddox* outmaneuvered the DRV ships, initiated fire, and forced their retreat. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's report denying provocation and claiming three sinkings "was false in almost every detail" (p. 87). Hanoi exaggerated its military performance, but the U.S. Navy did pull back from the coast.

Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War makes its most significant contribution in providing a detailed description of the events on 4 August. "The night was very dark, cloudy and moonless" (p. 141) when the *Maddox* returned with the *C. Turner Joy* for the purpose of "showing the flag" (p. 55). Moïse insists "that only circumstantial evidence exists" (p. 103) of deliberate planning to provoke a fight. An enormous number of "random and intermittent" (p. 132) radar sightings on the *Maddox* were neither enemy ships nor torpedoes, but propeller generated "noise spokes" and "Tonkin Spooks." Operators "were mistaking the radar images of aircraft for PT boats" (p. 193) and "God intervened" (p. 141) to prevent the *Maddox* from firing on the *Turner Joy.* Eyewitness accounts were "figments of the imagination of over-excited men" (p. 179) who were tired and in combat for the first time. Not waiting for verification because "the Pentagon preferred instant retaliation" (p. 212), "lack of coordination characterized the Pierce Arrow airstrikes" (p. 253) against North Vietnam. Press accounts encouraged enthusiastic public support, "presenting a classic John Wayne image for American behavior" (p. 233).

Interviews with American and North Vietnamese participants add authority to exhaustive research in both U.S. and Vietnamese newspapers, numerous archival collections, government documents, and secondary sources. Two maps are superb, but eleven figures that postulate angles of attack, reproduce track charts, and plot radar targets and sonar bearings are of mixed quality and value. Moïse directly refutes erroneous assertions of previous writers, notably Joseph Goulden and Douglas Pike. Far more important, he systematically shows how the Navy's "chronology is preposterous, . . . demonstrably inaccurate in detail and grossly implausible overall" (p. 154). Not only the sonar evidence, but the "aerial photography was negative. The reports of the pilots—both those who were over the destroyers during the night, and those who searched for wreckage and oil slicks the following morning—were powerfully negative. The lack of detections of enemy radar use, or convincing communications intercepts—was negative. The . . . interrogations of DRV naval personnel captured during the next few years were very powerfully negative" (pp. 204–5).

A weakness of Moïse's study is skimpy historical background. Casual readers also may have trouble processing the statistical information regarding the capabilities of weapons and electronic monitoring equipment. Moïse assesses a seemingly endless series of possibilities relating to happenings in the Tonkin Gulf during 1964, causing repetition and uncertainty about some conclusions. Crystal clear is proof that the Johnson administration purposely misrepresented events on 4 August to justify escalating the war. Top U.S. officials began "pressing for information and evidence" (p. 208) after retaliation but "did not want negative reports" (p. 177). The sonar expert on the *C. Turner Joy* who had "heard nothing" (p. 173) was ignored. After an immediate investigation, the JCS withheld compelling evidence from Johnson

discounting an attack. The Navy "smoothed" the record, resulting in the "very substantial adjustment of data" (p. 147). Falsely accused, Hanoi became "stronger, better prepared, and better supplied" (p. 253). Ironically, Moïse observes, the Gulf of Tonkin incident "really had begun with an honest mistake" (p. 255). Many Americans would find truth in saying the same about the entire Vietnam War.

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Sjahrir: Politics and Exile in Indonesia. By RUDOLF MRAZEK. Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1994. x, 526 pp. $24.25 (paper).

Sutan Sjahrir was and remains one of the great enigmatic figures of modern Indonesian history. Born in West Sumatra in 1909, he was one of a group of Minangkabau nationalist leaders and politicians who was to play major roles in Indonesian politics in the two or three decades around the Second World War. He studied law in the Netherlands, was active in the nationalist movement in Indonesia on his return, and for his troubles was exiled by the Dutch to the notorious prison camp at Boven Digul in what was then Netherlands New Guinea, and then to the island of Banda Neira. During the Japanese occupation, almost alone of the nationalist leaders, he stood outside the occupation administration, leading the closest thing that Indonesia had to a resistance movement. The central figure in George Kahin's *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia,* he seemed to many liberal western scholars in the early 1950s to have emerged from the 1945–49 revolution as a powerful political leader and one who was likely to lead Indonesia in the direction of democracy and stability. His supporters in the Socialist Party of Indonesia (PSI) were amongst the best educated people in Indonesia, at least in western terms. But at Indonesia's first general elections held in 1955, Sjahrir and the PSI suffered a massive rebuff, securing just 2 percent of the popular vote. In 1962 he was imprisoned by the Sukarno government on political charges; falling seriously ill, he was released in order to seek medical treatment in Switzerland but died soon after arrival, in 1996.

For all this, though, Mrazek's is the first full biography of Sjahrir to appear. Working with a massive array of sources—colonial archives, nationalist and postwar newspapers, reminiscences of colleagues, interviews with those who knew him, and Sjahrir's own writings—Mrazek has produced an exhaustive account of Sjahrir's life and work. He says that one of his objectives in writing the book was to produce a "sort of autobiography of Sjahir" (p. 2); to unearth this "autobiography" in its entirety, he says, and to read it with concern—"this was the principal ambition with which this book was written" (p. 2). This is probably an impossible task, but Mrazek has certainly gone a long way toward achieving it. Few stones can have been left unturned in his search for Sjahrir. We learn of Sjahrir's interest in soccer and in the stage, his taste in clothes and music, as well as his ideas about Indonesian independence, and his evaluations of writers and scholars ranging from Marx to Feith. As might be expected, the picture of Sjahrir that emerges is a complex one. He appears as an intellectual who is uneasy in his personal relationships, uncomfortable with political power, and happier at the periphery of politics than at the center. Indeed, Mrazek presents Sjahrir as being unable to cope with life at the political center. He links this attitude to Sjahrir's Minangkabau heritage, one in which the male members of a family are expected to leave the family home and seek their fortune in the outside world.