

de, um die zivilisatorische Überlegenheit europäischer Wissenschaft zu demonstrieren. Dies freilich hätte im Beitrag herausgestellt werden müssen.

Insgesamt präsentieren die zusammengestellten Beiträge höchst interessante Forschungsfelder, und der Sammelband stellt sie in angemessener Form vor. In der Tat handelt es sich um teilweise recht spezielle Aspekte, die aber aufzeigen, auf welcher vielfältigen Weise der Kolonialstaat in Britisch-Indien aktiv oder aber inaktiv war und welche deformativische Konsequenzen aus seinen weitreichenden Entscheidungen erwachsen sind. Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass die künftige Forschung weiter in die Materie einsteigt und neue Erkenntnisse gewinnen kann. In jedem Fall ist der Band ein Muss für Studierende der Geschichte Südasiens und seiner Medizingeschichte.

*Michael Mann*

ANNA JÜSCHKE / KATJA KREUZIGER / KATJA MEINKE, *Myanmar – Gesellschaft in Bewegung. Demokratisierung, Entwicklung und Migration im Fokus*. Berlin: Regiospektra, 2010. 148 pages, € 19.90. ISBN 978-3-940132-19-2

The book features three papers on aspects of societal change in Myanmar, with a foreword by Uta Gärtner. Written prior to the 2010 elections, the papers precede the recent developments under Thein Sein's government. Nevertheless, the authors draw a number of conclusions that have not only been validated by recent events, but continue to be relevant for future developments.

Katja Kreuziger analyses the strategies of Myanmar's political elites and how they affect the prospects for political change. Applying agency theory models, she suggests leaders will accommodate political change when they perceive the costs of suppressing opposition to be higher for them than the expected costs of change. The transition process causes great uncertainty for all parties involved, and only reliable agreements between the regime and the opposition can ensure sufficient stability and certainty to allow for lasting change. The success of a transition then depends on a rapprochement between ruling elites and opposition, leading to political accords that are acceptable for both sides. Moderates from both sides will have to convince their respective hardliners to agree to, or at least accept, them. Kreuziger's useful historical overview highlights the factors that led to the regime's self-image as "guardians of the union", protecting it against the threat of chaos and dissolution posed by separatists and other "troublemaking" citizens. While the demands of the National League for Democracy (NLD) for an immediate, complete hand-over of power and prosecution of State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) members may have been morally justifiable, they made the cost of transition impossibly high for the regime. Finally, Kreuziger argues that while the 2008 constitution by no means fulfils the requirements of a liberal democratic system, the only chance

of breaking the 20-year deadlock is to work with the military within this framework for further democratization – a prophetic statement indeed.

Katja Meincke's paper highlights communication problems as the main obstacles to collaboration in interactions between international aid organizations, donor agencies and local NGOs. Meincke stresses the importance of local NGOs in an emerging civil society and as providers of local knowledge and expertise essential to the acceptance and sustainability of aid. Collaboration between international NGOs as providers of technical know-how, management skills and financial resources and local NGOs as providers of local and cultural knowledge is highly desirable. However, such working relationships are complicated by asymmetrical power relations, the migration of skilled experts from local to better paying international NGOs, and the failure of international NGOs to recognize and acknowledge the importance of local knowledge. However, the main problem, Meincke opines, is not the frequently cited cultural differences, but communication problems between local and international NGOs. "Akteure schaffen durch ihre Handlungen Kultur und werden nicht von ihr determiniert" (Through their actions agents create culture, they are not determined by it), says Meincke (p. 85).

Anna Jüschke studies internal migration in Myanmar and examines young people's reasons for choosing to migrate from rural areas to Yangon. Most of her interviewees cited education and life experience rather than economic necessity as the primary motivators for their decision. Some saw Yangon as a stepping stone for a period of study or work abroad, but ultimately most wanted to return to their regions of origin. Many said they were not at home in the city, and also felt a responsibility to ensure that what they did in Yangon would ultimately benefit their home community. If these findings can be further substantiated, they could have profound implications in that they suggest that development aid should focus more on capacity building and continued collaboration with trained people who have returned to their places of origin!

One weakness of the papers is their attempts to match empirical evidence to the grand theories of sociology and political science, thereby downplaying culturally conditioned perceptions, concepts and values in order to demonstrate the applicability of global theories and models. From my own observations of day-to-day interactions in Myanmar society I cannot agree with Kreuziger's statement that traditional concepts of power and authority are moribund and play, at most, a marginal role in contemporary politics. Nor can I accept Meincke's position that communication is the obstacle to collaboration between local and international NGOs, whereas cultural differences were irrelevant: most communication problems appear to be based on differences in habitus (socio-culturally conditioned values, dispositions, expectations and preconceptions). In fact I suggest that international NGOs' lack of cultural competence makes them incapable of communicating effectively with their local counterparts, while power relations allow them not to care.

Despite these criticisms, I believe the papers are all good starting points for further research. Drawing on both secondary literature and empirical findings, they provide valuable insights for both researchers and practitioners in development aid and policy making.

Georg Noack

JAJAT BURHANUDIN / KEES VAN DIJK (eds), *Islam in Indonesia. Contrasting Images and Interpretations*. (ICAS Publication Series, Edited Volumes, 16). Amsterdam: ICAS / Amsterdam University Press, 2013. 279 pages, € 49.95. ISBN 978-90-8964-423-7

Before the turn of the millennium, Indonesian Islam rarely attracted the attention of Western scholars. Important exceptions include several Dutch scholars and Clifford Geertz, Greg Barton, Robert Hefner and Mark Woodward, to mention just a few. However, their important studies were only on the sidelines of mainstream Islamic studies. Even worse, Indonesia was often not acknowledged as an Islamic country at all. Instead, Islam was perceived as something alien, as something not really part of Indonesian culture and society. This reception changed profoundly after the resurgence of political Islam following the resignation of Suharto in 1998, and especially after 9/11 and the Bali bombings. Interest in Indonesian Islam skyrocketed, but this time narrowly focused on radical Islam and security issues. Fortunately, this picture has been changing for some time.

Indonesia is a predominantly Islamic country which is changing rapidly and in which all segments of society participate in a lively debate about the future orientation of state and society. The diversity of this discourse reflects how deeply embedded Islam is at the regional and national levels. Adherents of Islam in Indonesia include not only conservatives, but also modernists, neo-modernists, liberals, fundamentalists and jihadists. To analyse and depict this discourse is a challenging task for both Indonesian and foreign scholars. This book is an example of this effort. A conference volume, it consists of several articles which cover a wide range of topics arranged according to a well-structured concept. The book consists of three parts.

The first part is dedicated to general questions and evaluations. Here the reader finds valuable information about the peculiarities of Indonesian Islam that goes well beyond long-established preconceptions. Kees van Dijk ("Comparing different streams of Islam – Wrestling with words and definitions") sheds some light on the approaches of Western scholars defining or analysing Indonesian Islam, taking Snouck Hurgronje and Clifford Geertz as examples. He deplores the fact that the focus is almost always on *santri* Islam, ignoring the so-called *abangan* Islam and its important role in state and society. Ahmad Najib Burhani ("An examination of the construction of the national Islamic