

antry uses Islam against the dominating class. The politics of ethnicity in Malaysia is therefore complex and articulated as "the ethno-class consciousness of racially clustered class fractions, and also as the ethnic ideologies of the dominant class, which seeks to unify the class-divided Malays by asserting and institutionalizing Malay-Chinese rivalry" (p. 257).

That the state and its activities somehow play a role, indeed a major one, in influencing ethnicity is not a new finding. But what is original about Brown's study is that he has explored the relationship between ethnicity and the state in Southeast Asia systematically. Furthermore, he explains the nature of ethnicity and ethnic attachment in a most provocative and complex manner: "(...) it is not the cultural attributes themselves which define and generate the ethnic attachment, but rather the variable patterns of status, power and economic insecurities in the social environment. Ethnic consciousness is indeed 'irrational' in the sense that it is a response to emotional needs for identity, security and authority. But it fulfils these needs in part by providing an ideological myth of continuity and permanence which facilitates the adaption of individuals to changing situations of insecurity. If the contemporary state intervenes in society sufficiently to influence the cultural attributes, political options, and security threats with which members of the multicultural societies are faced, then it becomes clear that the form, political manifestations and political consequences are not fixed, but depend to a significant extent upon the variations in the character of the state." (p. 265)

Brown thus shows that it is not the multiethnic character of each of the selected Southeast Asian societies *per se* that crucially influences ethnic politics and ethnic tensions, but above all the character of the state. This is certainly true not only for Southeast Asia but also for countries in other regions of the world. As Brown puts it, "the characterizations of ethnicity and the state which are explored here might, with equal validity, be employed as the starting point for examining ethnic politics elsewhere" (p. xxi).

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JÜRGEN RÜLAND (ed.) *The Dynamics of Metropolitan Management in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996. 220 pp., \$ 25.00 (pb.), ISBN 981-3055-28-6; \$ 39.90 (hb.), ISBN 981-3055-29-4

This is a timely book that addresses a pressing topic: The management of Southeast Asia's rapidly growing megacities is a daunting task. The eco-

conomic boom in many of the region's countries has not eradicated widespread urban poverty. Monstrous traffic jams, noise, pollution, water shortages, and inadequate sewerage and garbage disposal systems are threatening to overwhelm the political, professional and financial capacities of city administrations. As Jürgen Rüländ makes clear in his "Introductory Note", the task is no less daunting for the researcher studying metropolitan dynamics and political responses: "Nowhere else is such a broad set of actors, operating from different government levels, involved in decision-making: the spectrum ranges from the national government with its complex bureaucracy and sectoral agencies to parastatal enterprises, special purpose committees, political parties, private sector interest groups, foreign donor organizations, regional, provincial, local, and sublocal government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other organized groups" (p. 5).

Rüländ's introduction provides an excellent starting point for taking up this challenge; I agree with Paul Wheatly that it "cannot but become a standard text for all who embark on such studies" (p. xiii). In a careful review of the literature (the references can well be used as a bibliography), Rüländ points at the weaknesses of the conventional legal-institutional approach and discusses alternative research frameworks. He identifies four key areas for the analysis of metropolitan policy making: leadership recruitment, the budgetary process, infrastructure development, and low-cost housing (p.18). These issues along with a historical dimension and an actor-oriented approach are the common denominators of the contributions.

In the first case study "Managing Metropolitan Bangkok" (Ch. 2), Jürgen Rüländ and M.L. Bhansoon Ladavalya analyse the changes of metropolitan government in the past thirty years. The city administration has been strengthened and become more professional; at the same time, decision making is now a much more open process than in the times of Riggs' "bureaucratic polity". Professionalism, institution building and acquisition of legitimacy are however inhibited by supralocal political interventions: "In a parliamentary system driven by patronage, Bangkok, as the hub of the country's economic activities, is simply too important for all political players to be left alone" (p. 62). Mere technocratic reforms are thus insufficient.

The case of Hanoi is discussed by Dean Forbes and Le Hong Ke in "A City in Transition" (Ch. 3). The peculiarities of socialist planning had led to a "city" with a large majority of the population living in rural areas, the village or commune being regarded as a strong unit of administration (p. 83). The reorganisation of management in the 1990s went along with a realignment of power: Tight bureaucratic control of the city is challenged by economic forces, among them foreign investment. There is, however, no clear trend towards pluralism but rather "an unsettled period in which a vacuum

of sorts has been created" (p. 96), making predictions about further developments difficult.

In "Queen City of the East and Symbol of the Nation" (Ch. 4), Manasse Malo and Peter J.M. Nas analyse the special position of Jakarta in Indonesian society which is deeply rooted in colonial history. Like Bangkok, Jakarta is too important for the unification and development of the country to be left alone; strong influence by the national government allows for only limited autonomy and citizen participation. Against this background the authors identify "strategic groups" whose competition and co-operation determine administrative affairs and urban planning. Despite their lack of power resources, the common people influence the future of Jakarta by occupying niches not covered by master plans and their implementation (p.130).

According to Phang Siew Nooi, Kuppusamy S. and Malcolm W. Norris, the "Metropolitan Management of Kuala Lumpur" (Ch. 5) has been relatively successful in dealing with rapid urban growth in the course of economic development. Among the factors facilitating this success is the fact that Kuala Lumpur is not a classical "primate city", which leads to a more balanced urban system with other cities serving as alternative centres of population and development. Moreover, this is an administration capable of implementing its plans. On the basis of a "paternalistic bureaucratic culture imbued with a strong sense of developmentalism and professionalism" (p.163), the decision-making process is quick and largely rational. Whether the lack of democratic procedure and public participation will lead to problems on the way to an industrialised society remains to be seen.

In "Managing Metropolitan Manila" (Ch. 6), Ton van Naerssen, Michel Ligthart and Flotilda N. Zapanta make a distinction between "structure" and "system". The results of restructuring of urban government (e.g., decentralisation under Aquino and Ramos) are limited if the underlying system remains unchanged: "The improvement of urban management in Metro Manila depends to a large extent on the pace of change in old-style patronage politics in the country" (p.200). The chances for an "urban management from below" and increased participation of community-based and supporting organisations have to be seen in this context.

Beng-Huat Chua's rather brief chapter on Singapore describes the "Management of a City-State in Southeast Asia" (Ch. 7). The fact that Singapore is not just a city but also a nation poses analytical problems (p. 207), though it is also a unique advantage as it allows control of rural-urban migration: "Many of the serious problems of metropolitan management are ... alleviated, if not eliminated, simply because the size of the population is tractable" (p.208). A general dilemma of urban planners - the better they

solve the problems, the more migrants are attracted - is thus avoided. Singapore's achievements in terms of traffic control, mass housing and provision of collective consumption goods have to be seen against this background, but they are nonetheless impressive. Maintaining this performance in face of increasing social differentiation is, however, a complex task (p. 222).

In "Urban Management in Myanmar" (Ch. 8), Mya Than and Ananda Rajah venture into the fairly unexplored field of urban development in Yangon. The lack of available data and the secretive nature of the military regime precluded an analysis as detailed and rich in material as the other contributions to this book. The account is mainly historical, analysing urbanisation in Burma/Myanmar since the beginning of British rule. The description of recent developments is a little "thin"; one wonders, for instance, whether the effects of marketisation policies are as unambiguously positive as indicated by the authors (p. 250).

The book is a substantial addition to empirical understanding of metropolitan dynamics in Southeast Asia. Unlike the usual compilations of loosely connected conference papers it is the outcome of a genuine cooperation which dates back to the late Kernial Singh Sandhu's initiative in 1989. Jürgen Rüländ has largely succeeded in binding the contributors to a common research strategy, making the results comparable by highlighting contrasts as well as similar problems.

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KLAUS H. SCHREINER, *Politischer Heldenkult in Indonesien. Tradition und moderne Praxis*. (Veröffentlichungen des Seminars für Indonesische und Südseesprachen der Universität Hamburg, Vol. 21). Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1995. 333 pp., DM 84,-. ISBN 3-496-02557-3

Klaus H. Schreiner's study, *Politischer Heldenkult in Indonesien (Political Cult of the Hero in Indonesia)*, vividly illustrates - without the author so intending - Jan Assmann's reflections on the development and function of cultural memory. According to these, so-called "memory figures" transport the central traditions, symbols, values and norms of a society. Renewed and updated regularly in festivities, they strengthen and reproduce the feeling of unity among the members of a group. Heroes are ideal memory figures, and it is not only in Indonesia that the cult surrounding them serves to create traditions, to establish identity or to provide governments with a basis for legitimization. Fledgling states in all parts of the world have to master the