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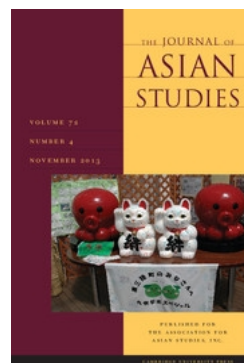
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Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World.
Edited by Zawawi Ibrahim. Kajang: Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia (Malaysian Social Science Association) and Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, 2012. xxxii, 499 pp. \ \$22.40 (paper).

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democracies compared to durable authoritarian ones? While Slater makes it clear that the focus of his theory is to understand authoritarian durability, it seems as though his “protection pact” framework could extend an explanation to when and why some democratic regimes (start to) resemble authoritarian ones.

However, this is a minor point that should not detract from, and actually highlights, the wide range of theoretical contributions and potential applications of the book. Beyond its most useful understanding of variation in trajectories of state institutional variation in Southeast Asia, *Ordering Power* provides students and scholars of Southeast Asia and comparative politics with an illustrative example of how to marry rigorous, systematic political analysis with detailed historical analysis in cross-national comparison.

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Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World. Edited by ZAWAWI IBRAHIM. Kajang: Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia (Malaysian Social Science Association) and Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, 2012. xxxii, 499 pp. \$22.40 (paper).
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In mid-2012 at the Eighth Malaysian Studies Conference held at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, a colleague from an American university and I perused the book exhibit. She proclaimed her enthusiasm for the quantity and quality of publications on display, many of them scarce or unavailable in North America. *Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World*, co-published by the Malaysian Social Science Association (Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia) and the Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, is one such volume, which scholars in the human sciences within and beyond Southeast Asia would do well to get their hands on. It is an impressive book in many ways and, taken as a whole, an important statement about the development of theory in the social and human sciences from the perspective of Southeast Asia.

Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World includes nineteen chapters (plus an introduction) by twenty-three contributors. It is bound together by the authors' critical engagement with concepts of globalization, knowledge production, social science theory, and contemporary trends in Southeast Asian scholarship. What will most immediately catch the eye of an Asian studies expert is the impressive list of authors that the editor has enlisted in this volume, from historian Anthony Reid to sociologists Hans-Dieter Evers and Chua Beng Huat, political theorist Benedict Anderson, cultural theorist Ien Ang, anthropologists Clive Kessler and Victor King, doyen of Malaysian media studies Zaharom Nain, and many others, who will be familiar to scholars working in Southeast Asia.

The book includes authors whose primary locus of thought and research range from Myanmar (Zarni, chapter 12) to Indonesia (Anderson, chapter 16) and Australia (Aveling, chapter 18). The overwhelming majority of contributions are from scholars whose intellectual endeavors are situated primarily in Malaysia (both East and West Malaysia) and Singapore. While a number of the contributions have substantive things to say about the locales from which they draw their inspiration, more importantly and at their best

the contributions demonstrate, in Goh Beng Lan's words, "(theoretical) imaginings arising from specific spatial and historical locations . . . as part of a new universal enterprise of knowledge building" (chapter 4, p. 90).

Given the diversity of topics, sites, and perspectives found in the volume, readers interested in globalization, cosmopolitanism, and sociocultural theory will find many chapters that speak to their own interests and others that are less remarkable or outside their bailiwick. The strongest chapters are those that provide critiques of what we might call the old social scientific universalism associated with Western, liberal, and Enlightenment social theory, while at the same time moving beyond mere critique toward positive demonstration of theorizing from other, mainly Southeast Asian, points of departure. Throughout the volume, authors are adamant that their objective is not to champion a separate, nativist, indigenous realm of social theory apart from "Western" social science. Rather, it is to engage in the sort of diverse, polycentric, grounded yet also outward-looking, if not necessarily "universal," knowledge building Goh proposes.

Among the most powerfully argued of the chapters is the contribution by Zawawi Ibrahim and NoorShah M.S. (chapter 7), who propose that "any attempt towards the indigenisation of knowledge in the social sciences should be constructed at the level of the concrete and not in the realm of the abstract" (p. 195). In other words, scholars need to stop merely calling for non-Western or post-Western social theory and begin actually producing it. They aptly demonstrate their proposition through an analysis of Malayness as constructed in Malay-language sources and scholarship. In a similar vein, Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied (chapter 8) theorizes colonialism through the writings of Burhanuddin Al-Helmy and Christopher Joll (chapter 9) critiques the anthropology of Islam from the perspective of Southeast Asian Muslim traditions. In nicely paired essays, Benedict Anderson (chapter 16) and Marina Roseman (chapter 17) argue for what might be termed "cosmopolitanism from below" by drawing respectively on the situated knowledge and agency of the late colonial-era Chinese-Indonesian satirist Kwee Thiam Tjing and contemporary Temiar spirit medium Ading Kerah.

Other chapters approach the subject of revisiting and critiquing theory from more broadly programmatic and at times rather abstract perspectives. Victor King (chapter 6) questions the value of globalization theory through an extensive discussion of research on Sarawak (East Malaysia). Similarly, and more generally, Clive Kessler (chapter 2) casts a skeptical eye on globalization theory as a "new-fangled discourse"—old wine in new bottles. Chua Beng Huat (chapter 14) lays out a detailed, programmatic case for doing "pop" (in contrast to "popular") cultural studies in Asia. Others address the democratic ethics of social science (Khondker, chapter 3), the effects of Anglo-American institutional dominance in higher education (Reid, chapter 2), the afterlives of area studies (Goh, chapter 4), bibliometric measures of social science output (Evers and Gerke, chapter 5), the specter of Orientalism in Burmese studies (Zarni, chapter 12), and the idea of culture as a site of struggle (Ang, chapter 13).

A third set of chapters are those weighted more particularly to empirically grounded analyses of Malaysian, Singaporean, and other societies, histories, or cultures. Maznah Mohamad (chapter 10) theorizes "gender dissonance" through the experiences of poor Malays in rural Kelantan (West Malaysia). C. J. W.-L. Wee (chapter 11) examines shifting modes of governmentality and cultural management in Singapore. Sharmani Patricia Gabriel (chapter 15) demonstrates how diaspora literature—specifically the Indian-Malaysian writer K. S. Maniam—challenges the homogeneity of nation-states. And Harry Aveling (chapter 18) examines the turn "toward angry community self-affirmation" in Australian Aboriginal poetry.

Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World is somewhat uneven both in terms of content and style—with individual contributions ranging from 10 (or fewer) up to 48 pages. The last chapter, a tribute to the late filmmaker Yasmin Ahmad (1958–2009), while heartfelt, is somewhat incongruous with the rest of the volume. These rough edges should not detract from the book or deter readers from picking up the volume and engaging with the developments in decentered theory building that are well represented in its pages. One hopes, if the buzz of globalization means anything, that this and similar work will find its place in the global marketplace of ideas and be widely available to scholars working outside Malaysia, Singapore, and Southeast Asia more generally.

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