

theoretical perspectives, etc.) are particularly suitable to account for the university ranking phenomenon in Taiwan. Accordingly, this conceptual-driven argument relies too heavily on the top-down approach of power interpretation on university ranking, but rather overlooks much of the folk history and ethnographic analysis (bottom-up approach), such as the reason why academics and students in Taiwan either reproduce or resist against this disciplinary system of university ranking. Third, in terms of an inferential perspective, the author could further elaborate on the dialectical relations between empirical evidence, social facts and generative mechanism. For example, what kinds of empirical evidence quantitatively or qualitatively underpin the objective formation of social facts and in what way the empirical evidence and social facts could retroactively infer the existence of generative mechanism that dominates the subjectivity of higher education development in Taiwan. To conclude, this book is indeed well-structured and useful for those who would like to explore and capture the elusive university ranking phenomenon in Taiwan within the context of global capitalism and post-colonialism.

**Ming-Lun Chung**

*Department of Sociological Studies, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK*

**Les Indes et l'Europe. Histoires connectées XVe-XXIe siècles (India, Southeast Asia and Europe. A New History from 15th Century to 21st Century). Maps, chronology, glossary, bibliography, notes and index**

*Margolin Jean-Louis and Markovits Claude*

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**India, Southeast Asia and Europe**

This book covers a vast region currently divided in two macro-regions, South Asia and “Oriental India” or Southeast Asia, between the fifteenth and twenty-first centuries.

Seen from Europe, this huge tropical region is “a very large open trade space” (p. 9).

The two authors published original historical books on this region. Markovits is an Emeritus Director of Research at the CNRS, specialist in colonial and contemporary India. Margolin is teaching at the University of Aix-en-Provence and also a Researcher at the CNRS (IrrAsia). He is a specialist of Southeast Asia who, among other research, clearly analysed the complex question of communism.

Evidently colonial oppression and imperial nostalgia existed too much. This book presents a new historical vision. Margolin and Markovits’ new study courageously tries to put in relationship between Europeans academics and South and Southeast Asian scholars and intellectuals.

There are many European studies of this particular Asian region, but very few local studies of the Europeans seen by Asians (p. 737). Asian and European academic visions were not compatible. This study covers a new synthetic colonial history.

Here, the Indochina study is less developed because there are more good publications in French on Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos than on the other part of Southeast Asia.

The aim of the European was initially too much oriented to find “Christian and spices”. Societies, colonialism, culture and the complex relationship between West and East were not explained in a synchronised manner.

The first to reach this distant Oriental India were the Portuguese, well-detailed in this easy-to-read publication. John II (1481-1495) was responsible for the rapid expansion of the Portuguese empire. In 1497, Vasco de Gama, the future vice-king of Portuguese India, discovered the direct maritime road to Portuguese “India”, Kerala (Cochin) in particular, Spice Islands and the Indian Archipelago. Economic motivations were essential, but the Portuguese empire aimed to be universal and messianic. In 1501, Portuguese were the first in the race to buy spices from Cochin (kept until 1663) to Portugal by the Cape of Good Hope. Portuguese, though conversion to Catholicism was visible, did not want to transform colonised people, on the contrary; “no promotion of European triumphant capitalism” (pp. 738-739). The authors prefer to describe a dominant Lusitano-Venetian spice trade structure than a pure Portuguese capitalism.

In the beginning the Europeans were established in Goa, Malacca, Batavia and Manila. Goa was controlling Portuguese Timor in the past. Margolin – editing with Markovits – described in detail the smallest country of Southeast Asia. East Timor’s early Portuguese history, end of colonialism, the period 1975-2000 with the annexation by Indonesia, United Nations electoral role (referendum) and its independence in 2002 (not exactly mentioned in the chronology) are well-detailed. European “connection” for Tetum, the national language with its Portuguese vocabulary is sealed. It marks a difference with Indonesia which sometimes seems to forget Dutch, the colonial language, still very useful to study the past history and archives (p. 755). Useful monographic descriptions appear such as: the “slow progression of knowledge” (cartography, study of political systems) (pp. 206-216), or “natural resources and nothing else?” (pp. 399-402). The economic development in Southeast Asia was locally organised by Chinese, Indian Chettiars or Chettys, and Eurasians (pp. 401, 472). Before the twentieth century, Europeans were “birds of passage”, but often risked their life in tropical Asia. Both communities, colonisers and local people, did not really try to understand each other. “Connection” between Europe and Asia was “limited, and discontinuous, in space and time”. Immigration of Asians to Europe really started after the Second World War (pp. 702-710). British and Spanish colonisation of India and the Philippines, Dutch’s domination of Java in the eighteenth century showed a new type of imperialism in the region. Intensive economic colonisation and important revolutionary transfer of population to Assam, Ceylon (tea), Malaysia (rubber), the Philippines (sugar cane), from Tonkin (Northern Vietnam) to Cochin China had certainly created a “complete disruption” (p. 741). In fact, intensive production constituted a turning point in colonisation. A case in point is given by British Burma which became the first exporter of rice in the world before the Second World War, thanks to the Indian Chettiars who replaced the deficient banking system.

Especially after the mid-eighteenth century, occurred dangerous “binary constructions”: dividing “them and us” (Asians and Europeans). Consequently racial conflicts appeared in India at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1900, a good counterexample, was the French education system in North Vietnam which was more balanced to preserve traditional education (p. 746).

Markovits’ “European domination and Indian resistance, in India, between 1765 and 1947” and Margolin’s economic foundation, actors and institutions in Southeast Asia are among the best parts of this study. It is a useful book for historians and readers who want to know more about the past and present influence of Europe in India and Southeast Asia.

**Jean A. Berlie**

*Center for Greater China Studies,*

*The Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China*