

## **Workshop: Violence, Displacement and Muslim Movements in Southeast Asia**

Organizing institutes: Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) and Leiden University Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (LUCIS)  
Date: 15 June 2016  
Venue: KITLV (Reuvenplaats 2, Leiden), Room 138 (conference room)  
Registration: Please send an email to David Kloos ([kloos@kitlv.nl](mailto:kloos@kitlv.nl))

This workshop focuses on how diverse manifestations of violence – such as warfare, enclosure, insurgency, rebellion, and displacement – influenced the construction of Muslim subjects and movements in Southeast Asia, from the mid-colonial period to the early years of independent nation-states.

Covering areas such as Aceh and Java (Netherlands Indies/Indonesia), Mindanao (The Philippines), Patani (Siam/Thailand) and the Thai-Malay(si)an border, contributions to this workshop will pay particular attention to peripheral zones, not fully-incorporated by the state-making projects of expansionary centres. In these areas, state-making took the form of the violent territorial and political enclosure of Muslim peoples. Often, these peoples' religious ideas and practices had not yet been subjected to the regulatory projects involved in incorporation into territorial state structures, although they embodied diverse connections with broader, not-yet-severed, modes of circulation across a "Muslim" global geography.

Across the Southeast Asian region, oppositional Muslim movements emerged in the wake of these territorial enclosures, conquests, and processes of subjection and subjectivation by expansionary states. These states were colonial, such as Malaya, The Philippines, and the Netherlands-Indies; postcolonial, such as Indonesia and Malaysia; or nominally independent and non-colonising Southeast Asian powers such as Siam. The counter-state movements which arose were led by Muslim intellectuals, scholars, mystics, minor rulers and peasants alike, all of whom mobilised varying discourses and practices to stake out visions for reform and revolution. The multitude of forms which these visions took was often related to these movements' location: on the blurry boundaries of state control and the reach of its techniques of power, yet connected to the translocal sources of identity and subjectivity furnished by the global circulation of Islam, and the political grammar which it made available.

This workshop will not search for theological or jurisprudential justification in Islam's textual corpus for acts of violence against colonial rule. Nor will it pursue a typology of Islamic reform movements. Rather, our aim is to consider how the violence and dislocation enacted by expansionary states shaped the conditions for creative political, social and theological challenges to those states from their unwilling, yet increasingly integrated, peripheries.

## Programme

- 09.00 – 09.30 Coffee, Introduction
- 09.30 – 10.30 Women and Gender Dynamics during and after the Five Patani-Siam Wars, 1785-1838 (Francis Bradley)
- 10.30 – 11.30 Exile from Aceh and the Reconfiguration of Late-Colonial Indian Ocean Networks (Joshua Gedacht)
- 11.30 – 12.30 Violence, Ideology, and Changing Spatial Imaginations in Aceh, 1920s-1930s (David Kloos)
- 12.30 – 13.30 Lunch break
- 13.30 – 14.30 Islam, Nation, and Region: Darul Islam's Conflicted Identity (Chiara Formichi)
- 14.30 – 15.30 The Tenth Regiment's Project to Reconstruct Malay Muslim Identity in Malaya/Malaysia, 1949-1989 (Amrita Malhi)
- 15.30 – 16.30 Coffee
- 16.00 – 17.00 Concluding discussion

## Abstracts

1. Women and Gender Dynamics during and after the Five Patani-Siam Wars, 1785-1838

*Francis R. Bradley, Pratt Institute*

This paper examines five wars that occurred between the Patani Sultanate and Siam (today Thailand) in 1785-86, 1789-91, 1808, 1831-32, and 1838 and the deep impact they had upon women's lives during and after the conflicts. I adopt a comparative approach examining the lives of women during the war and in three post-war contexts. Constituting the majority of wartime survivors, some women rebuilt their lives in the wake of war through business and trade in Malaya or southern Siam. Others found a new social place as Islamic teachers on the peninsula or in the Middle East. Less fortunate women who were captured endured an existence as servants, concubines, or slaves in Bangkok. In each of these settings, women encountered new forms of agency and newfound challenges, shifting cultural values that regulated decisions and actions, and evolving perceptions of the qualifications for leadership and the acquisition of social power. Set against the backdrop of Patani's extended period of predominantly female rule, 1584-1718, and a nineteenth-century Islamic textual turn, this paper seeks to examine the shift in gender dynamics over the *longue durée*, by examining the transition of a society that had its elites largely annihilated, its population enslaved and

displaced, and its deepest cultural symbols of power transformed. This study draws from Jawi, Malay, Thai, and British primary sources examined during archival research.

2. Exile from Aceh and the Reconfiguration of Late-Colonial Indian Ocean Networks  
*Joshua Gedacht, Universiti Brunei Darussalam*

In her 2009 work *Networks of Empire*, Kerry Ward highlighted exile as a key coercive tool in Dutch campaigns to direct and re-direct the circulations of the early modern Indian Ocean world, to drive “shifting patterns of connection, dissolution, and reconnection” from the southern tip of Africa to present-day Indonesia. Expulsion, in turn, would persist as a favored colonial tactic well past the 1700s and 1800s through the twentieth century. Yet, historians have often lost sight of exile midst the late-imperial push toward territorialization, boundary-making, and imperial geographies of nationhood. This paper seeks to restore exile as a central component of the late-colonial period by examining the 1908 removal of the last Sultan of Aceh, Muhammad Daud Shah, to the distant Moluccan islands. Although the protracted forty-year campaign to pacify this Muslim kingdom has been the subject of countless histories, the expulsion of Aceh’s Sultan generally constitutes little more than an afterthought, a fitting coda to decades of warfare. However, this decision generated considerable anxiety and emerged as a critical flashpoint. Debate over the Sultan’s removal elicited fears of pan-Islamic conspiracy, undue influence from outside Tamil moneylenders in Penang, and imperial Japanese meddling in Dutch affairs. Drawing from Dutch and Acehnese sources, this paper will examine these controversies over exile as a key episode in the colonial campaign not only to complete violent conquest, but also to enclose and extrude Aceh from its web of regional connections. In so doing, this paper will argue for the need to understand the reconfiguration of extant networks as a key factor in the production of new geographies of colonial control, Muslim subjectivity, and imperial nationhood.

3. Violence, Ideology, and Changing Spatial Imaginations in Aceh, 1920s-1930s  
*David Kloos, Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV)*

An intriguing paradox sat at the heart of Dutch colonialism in Aceh. On the one hand, Aceh was seen as an isolated place, a frontier that was disconnected from the modern, civilized world and populated by conservative, fanatical, and inward-looking Muslims. On the other hand, The Dutch were genuinely concerned about the porous border, and the stream of unpredictable and potentially dangerous elements – itinerant workers, traders, students, adventurers, political activists, religious teachers, mystics, proselytisers – feeding the inherently “susceptible” Acehnese with dangerous ideologies. The goal of this paper is to explain this paradox and to investigate its impact on Aceh’s emerging colonial society. I focus on the West coast, the coastal connections between Aceh and West Sumatra, and the violence – essentially a continuation of the Aceh War – that shook this area in the 1920s and 1930s. Dutch policy in West Aceh combined the use of force with an ambitious plan to connect this “isolated” area, through new roads and improved communication, to the new industrial and commercial activities, the nascent middle class, and the “modern” (arguably more accommodative) forms of Islam emerging in Banda Aceh and on the Acehnese north coast in the early

twentieth century. Looking at local accounts and investigations of anti-colonial violence, the relationship with colonial discourses about the nature of the Acehnese “race,” and the responses to and appropriations of these discourses within Acehnese society, this paper seeks to place totalizing categories of “pacification” and “holy war” in a more ambiguous context of connection, disconnection, and what Harper and Amrith (2012) have called “changing geographical imaginations.”

4. Islam, Nation, and Region: Darul Islam's Conflicted Identity  
*Chiara Formichi, Cornell University*

In Indonesia, the first anti-colonial organization capable of reaching across the archipelago, overcoming ethnic and linguistic boundaries, was Sarekat Islam. This religious group was established in the early 1910s, and by the early 1920s had become the main advocate of anti-colonial demands. Takashi Shiraishi and Michael Laffan have both argued that by 1926 Sarekat Islam, now a political party, had begun its decline as it had internally fractured between communists and Islamists, and externally it was challenged by secular nationalism's increasing support. I have elsewhere argued that the 1930s were instead a crucial decade for PSII, as under the leadership of Agus Salim and Kartosuwiryo it transformed its platform from an Islamo-socialist organization to a party committed to pan Islam (Formichi, *Indonesia* 90, October 2010).

It is from this milieu that in 1947-1948 Kartosuwiryo took the initiative to respond to the Dutch invasion of West Java by transforming the provincial branch of the Islamic party, Masyumi, into the Darul Islam. As Soekarno established the Indonesian Republic as a non-confessional, unitary state, also incorporating regions which had experienced separate political developments, the Darul Islam underwent major developments between 1949 and the early 1950s. It turned from an Islamic anti-colonial nationalist movement headquartered in West Java into an anti-Republican rebellion which lasted over a decade, spreading to Aceh, South Kalimantan, and South Sulawesi, and occasionally calling for a transnational, pan-Islamic, federation.

In this article I focus on three dynamics which, in the long run, shaped Indonesian Muslims' political identities, and eventually – I argue – marked the failure of political Islam in the mid-1950s and the labelling of the Darul Islam as an ensemble of regional separatist rebellions. I first briefly explain the (apparent) contradiction between pan-Islam and religious nationalism in the Islamic anti-colonial movement (1920s-1940s); then, I move on to explain the military and ideological relation between the NII Islamic state and the (non-confessional) Pancasila Republic (1948-1954); on this foundation I reflect on the intertwining of the Islamic, national, and regional aspects of the Darul Islam movement and rebellion.

5. The Tenth Regiment's Project to Reconstruct Malay Muslim Identity in  
Malaya/Malaysia, 1949-1989  
*Amrita Malhi, University of South Australia*

The 1940s and 50s were a time of significant violence and displacement in Malaya, generated by the Second World War and Japanese Occupation, followed by the Emergency and its associated campaign to eradicate the Left and re-enshrine a racial body politic. This same period was also one of far-reaching experimentation with the politics of intercultural solidarity by groups of Malay Muslims in the national liberation

movement. One such experiment was that conducted by the Tenth Regiment of the Malayan People's Army—a predominantly Malay Muslim unit active inside the armed wing of the “Chinese-dominated” Malayan Communist Party from 1949 to 1989. This paper examines selected pamphlets, speeches and periodicals produced by the Tenth Regiment during this period, especially during its decade of underground armed struggle in Malaya before its containment to the Thai border region from 1959. Under extreme pressure due to military pursuit and the risk of starvation, this group of underground fugitives nevertheless developed a revolutionary Islamism which sanctioned cooperation with non-Muslims in the common pursuit of socialist decolonisation. The paper will argue that the Tenth Regiment was a significant project to reconstruct Malay Muslim subjectivity to underpin the formation of a post-racial independent Malaya.

### **Contributors**

Francis R. Bradley is Assistant Professor of History in the Department of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies at the Pratt Institute. His book, *Forging Islamic Power and Place: The Legacy of Shaykh Da'ud bin 'Abd Allah al-Fatani in Mecca and Southeast Asia*, was released by the University of Hawaii Press in August 2015. He has also published recent articles in the *Journal of Asian Studies* and *Indonesia and the Malay World*. Professor Bradley's work has focused on Indian Ocean Islamic knowledge networks, human mobility and agency in maritime contexts, and shifting social and cultural dynamics during wartime. He is currently working on his second book, a cultural and political history of the Patani Sultanate during the era of female rule, 1584-1718.

Chiara Formichi is Assistant Professor in Southeast Asian Humanities at Cornell University. Dr. Formichi's research and publications address the themes of political Islam and nationalism, secularism as a marker of modernity, and issues of sectarianism, orthodoxy and pluralism. Publications include the monograph *Islam and the making of the nation: Kartosuwiryo and political Islam in 20<sup>th</sup> century Indonesia* (2012, KITLV), the edited volumes *Religious Pluralism, State and Society in Asia* (2013, Routledge) and *Shi'ism in Southeast Asia* (2015, Hurst&Co., with R. Michael Feener), and a number of book chapters and journal articles.

Joshua Gedacht is Assistant Professor of History at the Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam. Before arriving in Brunei, he held a position as Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, and completed his Ph.D. at The University of Wisconsin-Madison in December 2013. Dr. Gedacht's research examines the relationship between colonial era war-making, Muslim networks, and the reconfiguration of religious connections in Indonesia and the Philippines. Dr. Gedacht has organized international workshops and produced edited publications on Muslim modernities and Islamic cosmopolitanism. He is currently working on various journal articles and a book manuscript titled *Islam, Colonial Warfare, and Coercive Cosmopolitanism in Island Southeast Asia, 1800-1940*.

David Kloos is a Researcher at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in Leiden, The Netherlands. His main project (supported by an NWO-Veni grant) explores the ways in which female religious authorities in Malaysia

and Indonesia make use of visual images to communicate with their audience. David is co-editor of *Islam and the limits of the state: Reconfigurations of Practice, Community and Authority in Contemporary Aceh* (Brill, forthcoming 2015, with R. Michael Feener and Annemarie Samuels) and two forthcoming special issues, one on female Islamic authority (with Mirjam Künkler) and one on moral failure and ethical formation in lived Islam and Christianity (with Daan Beekers). He is working on a book about religious practice and authority in Aceh, Indonesia.

Amrita Malhi is a Research Fellow at the University of South Australia, where she works across the fields of research, policy development and community outreach for the International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim understanding. Her research is focused on histories of racial and religious identity-production in Malaya/Malaysia, and the hidden legacies of Malay Muslim globalism from recollections of the Ottoman Caliphate to Cold War and contemporary interculturalism. Amrita has published from her research in the *Journal of Peasant Studies* and *The Muslim World*, and in chapters in edited volumes. She is currently drafting a policy paper on principles of interculturalism in Australian engagement with Asia, and with its own increasingly diverse population.