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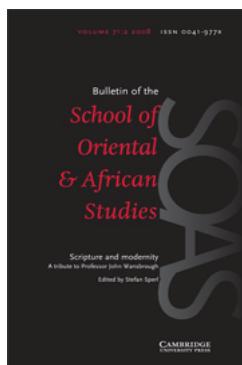
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**Penny Edwards: *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945*. (Southeast Asia: Politics, Meaning, and Memory.) viii, 349 pp. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007. \$62. ISBN 978 0 8248 2923 0.**

Michael W. Charney

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especially those indicating playing techniques (p. 53). Figures to explain the musical structure appear again in chapter 3, “*Chiokka*/hell song – the afterlife, gods, ghosts and belief”, but here the focus is less on the music and more on the ways in which the rituals and the instrumentalists relate to the afterlife. It is an important chapter that explains in great detail how, according to the “*Chiokka*” piece the dead are allocated to one of ten hells. Included are charts of the sexagenary system, since some of the songs transcribed make references to them.

Chapter 4, “*Samojang* – learning ritual music”, begins with a description of the music and accompanying text of the *Samojang* part. Mills then (p. 78) moves to a section in which he relates the learning process of instrumentalists. Although the transition here is fairly seamless, I wondered why the ritual sections are not discussed in a separate chapter. In the final fifth chapter, “*Ōtch’ōngbae* – from the past into the future”, Mills looks at the influence and the future of East Coast shaman ritual practice. He describes what measures ritualists have taken until recently to ensure employment and the survival of their art, and notes that it has become increasingly hard for the clan to find young women to take on the profession. Much to his regret he concludes that in a few decades the practice will have transformed into a secular form of entertainment, performed only in non-ritual settings (pp. 101–2).

*Healing Rhythms: The World of South Korea’s East Coast Hereditary Shamans* is an important and unique document detailing the life and work of Mills’ two main informants. Those interested in South Korean shamanism and folk music will appreciate the fascinating and useful examples and anecdotes; unfortunately Mills does not indicate exactly when particular comments were made, making further referencing rather cumbersome. The recordings on the CD are fantastic, and could easily have been brought out as an album on their own (I played the funky first track, *Tūrōnggaengi*, over and over while writing this review). The editing and the layout could nevertheless have done with a little more attention. I found inconsistencies in names (e.g. *kae-gū-rū-gaeng*/*kae-gū-rū-gae-gaeng*: 51, 53; Park Jung Hee/Park Junghee [Chung Hee]: 12) and typos in the romanization (e.g. *chaesa* [*chesa*]: 9; *chōmchangi* [*chōmchaengi*]: 20), as well as quite a number of terms that are not explained. The map given on page 3, for example, uses a different romanization system from that used elsewhere in the book and does not offer an explanation of the words *buk-do* and *nam-do* (north/south province). Some of these issues are partly the responsibility of the publisher, however, and I hope Ashgate will do what they can to ensure that a revised edition comes with a better layout and overall design. It is certainly worth it.

**Roald Maliangkay**

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## SOUTH-EAST ASIA

PENNY EDWARDS:

*Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945.*

(Southeast Asia: Politics, Meaning, and Memory.) viii, 349 pp.

Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007. \$62. ISBN 978 0 8248 2923 0.

This is a fascinating book. Penny Edwards, assistant professor at the University of California Berkeley, provides an intellectual history of

colonial-era Cambodia (Cambodge or Kampuchea) and the emergence of the Khmer nation. Cambodia, indirectly ruled by the French as part of French Indochina, was considered a colonial backwater. Although scholars were eager to cover the glorious past of Angkor, the charismatic Sihanouk, or the terrible years of the Khmer Rouge, only a handful of scholars have published works that have touched on the colonial era. As Edwards points out, this was by no means an external phenomenon. Khmer during the colonial era and after considered the colonial years outside of Khmer history, something not worth studying, or otherwise simply left a gap in the historical narrative between 1863 and 1954. As Edwards explains, after independence “this version of history gained a mysterious credibility among Western audiences”. As a result of the paucity of research on the period, incorrect “truisms” have been tossed about, in a process Edwards calls “leapfrogging”, leading to misunderstandings of Khmer society (p. 9).

With gusto, Edwards demonstrates that the colonial period was one of fundamental transitions (indeed, “radical deviations”) in how the Khmer were viewed and how they would view themselves (that is, the production of Khmer-ness) and imaginings of the country (pp. 11–12). The national and colonial archives Edwards has used contain rich materials on the period, more than sufficient for the study at hand. Whether examining the identification of the ruins of Angkor as a “Khmer national monument” (first chapter), the generation of new meanings to Khmer words in the production of a French–Khmer dictionary (p. 81), in reconstructing lengthy biographies of Khmer intellectual collaborators with the French, such as Son Diep (pp. 65–7), or even in identifying French and Khmer concerns about the appeal of the Cao Dai (a religious sect usually discussed only in historiography on Vietnam) among the Khmer, Edwards has shown what can be done with the period – colonial Cambodia need not be a historiographical backwater.

One of the most interesting subjects of the book is the impact of the introduction of Western media, be they maps, photographs or printed texts, on indigenous society. While a number of scholars have examined this impact for other areas of Buddhist South-East Asia (Thongchai Winichakul for Siam, for example), Edwards, in addition to providing a new case study for Cambodia, takes the discussion deeper, locating tension not simply in the form, but in the aesthetics of the representation. In Edwards’ discussion of the transition of literary Khmer from traditional manuscripts to printed form in the late nineteenth century (after Khmer typographic characters were first cast in Paris in 1877), for example, she draws attention to the peculiar aesthetics of both forms; Khmer contemporary to this transition saw in printed text a “mechanical, soulless copy” of the originals (pp. 105–6).

Edwards’ approach to the conflict between traditional attitudes to manuscripts and European “modernity”, with its “emphasis on purity and authenticity” which “interpreted changes from any original in the negative and carried its own damning lexicon”, a product of the “fixity of print” (pp. 106–7), opens up room for discussion. Certainly, in the pre-colonial, Theravada Buddhist world, exact material facsimiles were impossible because of the technological limits of the time. The scholars quoted here as being critics of Khmer copyists were, I think, worried about changes in the transcription process. This was as important to indigenous scholars, monks and a good number of laymen alike, as it was to these angry Europeans, whether in terms of historical texts (late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century scholar-monks in Burma, for example, took changes in texts very seriously) or in copies of Buddhist texts, in which there was indeed an emphasis on the accuracy of the

transcription that would have surpassed the demands of most European scholars.

Now that Edwards has made possible a comparison of colonial-era Cambodia with its Theravada Buddhist counterparts, we may begin to break down groupings of “European scholars” and “indigenous scholars” in intellectual transformations. In other areas of pre-colonial Buddhist South-East Asia (even today), for example, there is a wide spectrum regarding indigenous scholarship, from those relying strictly on original manuscripts, focusing incredible attention on very minute changes in wording, to the everyday, local scholar who mixes textual sources with oral traditions and then binds them together with self-produced assumptions and speculation. Sometimes “indigenous” and “European” identifications did not mean very much in colonial-era scholarship. Instead, we find on closer examination more complex scholarly groupings that crossed over these lines in the colonial years. Likewise, European historical traditions were diverse and are not easily wrapped up under the single head of “colonial” or the vanguard of “modernity”. French colonial scholars in Indochina, for example, were far more attentive to the necessity of examining original manuscripts than their British counterparts in Burma. Indeed the latter’s careless acceptance of later generations’ texts as originals has opened them up to substantial criticism for maintaining myths created by pre-colonial indigenous scholars. As Edwards points out, she is writing about “exchanges in ideas and images between Cambodians and Europeans” (p. 18). Edwards has opened a very wide door for more research on the intellectual history of the country. This reviewer wonders whether with more digging in the archives, the process of intellectual exchange could be considered instead as “among Cambodians and Europeans”.

*Cambodge* is an insightful and thought-provoking book. It is a very strong contribution to the literature on colonial South-East Asia and fills a major gap in the historiography on Cambodia. It will be necessary reading for specialists on the region, but will be a useful text for undergraduate and postgraduate courses as well. The book is especially recommended for those working on intellectual transformations in Buddhist South-East Asia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

**Michael W. Charney**

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## AFRICA

MARK LEOPOLD:

*Inside West Nile: Violence, History and Representation of an African Frontier.*

(World Anthropology.) x, 180 pp. Oxford, Santa Fe and Kampala: James Currey, School of American Research Press and Fountain Publishers, 2005. £16.95. ISBN 1 930618 65 4.

Inspired by fieldwork in Arua District (1997–98), western Uganda, and by a close reading of archival materials and anthropological classics, notably by John Middleton, *Inside West Nile* takes us on a journey that profoundly