

# Indonesia Art: the Creation of a National Identity

*Helena Spanjaard's thesis, which was defended last year at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands, is a lengthy work on modern Indonesian painting. Spanjaard divides Indonesian developments in the modern visual art into different periods, starting from the beginning of this century. On many occasions, the political situation has exerted an influence on the artistic scene. The rise of Indonesian nationalism, the fight for independence, and the ensuing process of de-colonisation have caused major cultural changes. Spanjaard distinguishes four phases.*

Originally, Indonesian painters followed the Western standard of the 'Beautiful Indies' (Phase 1, 1900-1942). During the fight for independence (Phase 2, 1942-1950), the character of Indonesian painting changed.

A socially engaged realism replaced the 'holy trinity' of the ricefield, the misty volcano, and the palm tree. The self-taught pioneers of modern Indonesian painting chose a realistic, impressionistic, or expressionistic style to manifest their revolutionary ideals.

After official independence from the Netherlands (December 1949), the two official art institutes, the ASRI (Akademi Seni Rupa Indonesia) art academy in Yogyakarta, and the art academy in Bandung, were the most influential bodies (Phase 3, 1950-1965).

The ASRI was a product of the struggle for independence. The painters from Yogyakarta continued the socially involved traditions till 1965. The art academy of Bandung, derived from a Dutch school for teachers of drawing and painting (1947), was more internationally orientated. The artists and art critics of Yogyakarta who ironically labelled Bandung 'the laboratory of the West' did not appreciate the inclination towards abstract art, shown by the Bandung painters.

The political changes of 1965, when the Orde Baru of President Soeharto was established, opened up new directions in the field. The socially involved, realistic art gave way to more abstract-decorative and aesthetically-inclined art. Hand in hand with this, there was a conscious effort to use traditional Indonesian motifs in modern Indonesian art (Phase 4, 1965). This process of 'Indonesianization' evolved from two circumstances: firstly, some Indonesian painters, who had been studying abroad, started to see their own culture through different eyes; secondly, the Indonesian government promoted an art in which the 'Indonesian character' should be clearly

pronounced. Nowadays, motifs borrowed from many different local cultures are an intrinsic part of Indonesian art. The position of artists today is often double-edged. On the one hand, there is a bond to be continued with disappearing

traditions, but on the other, the same traditions stand in the way of new developments in society as a whole.

As Helena Spanjaard states, contemporary art can no longer be divided geographically and the artificial, colonial differentiation between East and West is no longer valid. The art-historical term 'non-Western' for any art that is produced outside the West is an example of the colonial model of a centre (the West) and a periphery (the East). This model follows the hierarchy that has been used by the West for ages to document the art of other cultures measured against 'dominant' Western culture. An analysis of modern Indonesian

art, therefore, can only be valuable if taken from a pluralistic view point, in which Western and Indonesian norms and values can co-exist. For Spanjaard, the formulation and spreading of a knowledge of Indonesian modern art could correct the dominant role of the Western judging 'non-Western' art. And in such way the Western imagination about 'the Other' can be corrected and eventually lead towards a more balanced international dialogue.

*By Karin Starrthof  
Published in IAS Newsletter No. 17*

Helena Spanjaard. *Het Ideaal van een moderne Indonesische Schilderkunst 1900-1995: De creatie van een nationale identiteit*, 1998, 276 p.



## Southeast Asian Archaeology

*Report on the 7<sup>th</sup> EurASEAA Conference, Berlin, 1998*

The European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists (EurASEAA) held its 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference at the Museum für Völkerkunde, Dahlem, Berlin between 31<sup>st</sup> August and 4<sup>th</sup> September 1998. The organiser of the meeting was Dr. Wibke Lobo, the International Secretary of EurASEAA and Curator of Southeast Asian Art at the Museum.

Approximately 170 people attended the conference and about 70 papers were presented (see below). The conference was divided into two concurrent panels because of the number of papers: the one primarily prehistory and new results from field archaeology, the other mainly art historical; so that those with strong regional interests could attend all sessions in the one panel, the organiser had thoughtfully grouped together papers on Angkor and Khmer culture, on Cham art and archaeology, and on Indonesia.

In addition, delegates were invited to a reception hosted by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut; were able to see the reserve ethnographic collections from Southeast Asia in the museum; and viewed a historic film made some fifty years ago by the French archaeologists Jean-Yves Claeys - to honour the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EFEO (Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient).

The majority of the papers presented at the conference will be published, within two years, either in a special volume by the Museum für Völkerkunde or in the series published by the Centre for South-East Asian Studies, University of Hull, UK.

### Programme for the 1998 Berlin conference

#### **Monday, August 31 - Panel I Vietnam**

**The pre- and protohistory of the Southern Vietnam**  
Pham Duc Manh

**Excavations at Ba Tho/Co Eo complex (Viet Nam):  
A preliminary report on the 1998 campaign**  
Pierre-Yves Manguin

**Recent research at Trakieu, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam**  
Ian Glover

**The political geography of Central Vietnam during the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium A.D.**  
William Southworth

**An overview of the early historic ceramics from the Thu Bon river valley - with particular reference to Tra Kieu, Central Viet Nam**  
Ruth Prior

**The inscribed vessel of Champa: new publications and historical perspectives**  
Anne-Valerie Schweyer

**The kosa masks of Champa: new evidence**  
John Guy

#### **Panel II Cambodia**

**Gods and kings in the Khmer spiritual system according to epigraphy**  
Saveros Pou

**Epigraphic evidence of Pasupata Saivism in Bengal and Cambodia**  
Gouriswar Bhattacharya

**The royal square of Angkor Thom and Jayavarman VII.**  
Claude Jacques

**The changing environment of Angkor: the NASA/JPL AIRSAS mosaics**  
E. Moore, A. Freeman & S. Hensley

**Nang Kanhing Brah Dharani, a preliminary survey**  
Elizabeth Guthrie

**Money in 14<sup>th</sup> century Singapore**  
Brigitte Borell

**The unknown Pre-Angkorian site of Sri-Ampil**  
Son Soubert

**Tuesday, September 1 - Panel I Indonesia, Thailand**

**The archaeology and early history of the Bugis Kingdom of Luwuq, South Sulawesi**

I.A. Caldwell

**The shop syndrome: Identifying the archaeological evidence for intrusive economic activity at subsistence sites of maritime adapted communities**

Pamela Rumball Rogers & Richard Engelhardt

**Chinese ceramics found in the French-Indonesian excavations of Barus**

Marie-France Dupoizat

**Middle-Eastern ceramics found in Barus (Lobu Tua): a preliminary study**

Daniel Perret

**Update on Ban Chiang dating**

Joyce White

**Trade in ancient Bali**

I Wayan Ardika

**New discoveries at Braholo Cava, Gunung Sewu**

Harry Truman Simanjuntak

**Panel II Cambodia, Laos**

**Rising from the ashes: Reflections on stupas and statues in post-Angkorian times**

Ashley Thompson

**Perpetual recreation**

Ang Choulean

**Iconography of a Khmer Bayon style bronze mandala of God Hevajra**

Thierry Zophir

**Les voies de communications du Cambodge ancien. Essai sur les relations entre Angkor et la province**

Bruno Bruguier

**Conservation of the Apsara and Devata reliefs at Angkor Vat**

Hans Leisen

**The use of drawings for the making of the reliefs from Angkor Wat**

Vittorio Roveda

**Results of 1998 fieldwork in Vat Phu area (Champassak Province, Laos)**

Marielle Santoni

**From the Mekong to the Ganga: a carved rock near Vat Phu (South Laos)**

Christine Hawixbrock

**Wednesday, September 2 - Panel I Cambodia, Laos**

**Angkorian settlements in the Champasak district**

Oscar Nalesini

**Zoning and environmental management plan for Wat Phu, Laos**

Patrizia Zolese

**Geophysical prospecting: a tool for decision makers in preservation of archaeological remains. The Zemp project of Wat Phu, Laos**

Mauro Cucarzi

**Circular earthwork krek 62/52: recent research on the prehistory of Cambodia**

Miriam Haidle

**Pottery making in Kampong Chhnang: a prehistoric technic still used in Cambodia nowadays**

Sirik kada

**Wednesday, September 2 - Panel II**

**Central Javanese motifs on East Javanese temples: possible implications**

Marijke J. Klokke

**Candi Kendalisada at Mount Penanggungan in East Java - its reliefs presenting Panji, Arjuna and Bima**

Lydia Kieven

**Skulls, Fangs and Serpents: a new development in East Javanese iconography**

Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer

**The religious function of temple-reliefs in the Majapahit period**

Hariani Santiko

**Reinventing Majapahit terracotta art. Fakes and faking industry in Trowulan, East-Java**

Brigitte Khan Majlis

**Thursday, September 3 - Panel I Philippines, Indonesia**

**Underwater archaeology of the Pandanan wreck - a mid 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. vessel, Southern Palawan, Philippines**  
Eusebio Dizon

**Ceramic sourcing in social context: an ethnographical example from the Philippines**  
Mark A. Neupert

**Spotting early state formation in Southeast Asia through ethnoarchaeology**  
William Longacre

**Fibres and dyestuffs in early Java and Bali** Jan Wisseman  
Jan Wisseman Christie  
Petra Martin

**Material culture of Enggano Island (West Indonesia)**  
Pieter ter Keurs

**Objects from Java, Borneo and Sumatra in the Castle Friedenstein in Gotha/Germany**  
Falk Reitz

**Looking back to the ancestors: museum politics and practices in Indonesia**  
Fadjar L. Thufail

**Thursday, September 3 - Panel II Indonesia, Thailand**

**Maya's dream in Borobudur (First Terrace): Indian origins and variations on the theme**  
A.M. Quagliotti

**Mahapratishara images in Java and their iconographic links with South, Central and East Asia**  
Gerd Mevissen

**Role and status of women in ancient Java**  
Titi Surti Nastiti

**Raden Saleh Bustaman, 1811-1880: Artist, archaeologist, palaeontologist**  
Werner Kraus

**Balinese painting - reflection of a mystical world**  
Monika Rohrbach

**Newly discovered collection of the Siamese sculpture at the Hermitage, its history and research results**  
Olga Deshpande

**The Chiang Saen Historic Park: Some considerations for planning**  
Sawang Lertrit

**Phu Phrabad: An archaeological site in North-eastern Thailand**  
Nandana Chutiwongs

**Friday, September 4 - Panel I Thailand**

**A late pleistocene-holocene human environmental sequence from Southern Thailand: The phutolith evidence from Nong Thalee Song Hong, Trang**  
Lisa Kealhofer

**The Mac Cham Site, Chiang Mai Province, North Thailand. An open-air Hoabinhian site with special implement features**  
Per Sorensen

**Upland-lowland interaction and collapse in North Western Thailand A.D. 1000-1650**  
Peter Grave

**Production of earthenware and stoneware ceramics**  
Louise Cort & H. Leedom Lefferts

**Pottery technology studies in Southeast Asia: A review**  
Brian Vincent

**Sawankhalok Ceramics - the integration of later production and transportation**  
Don Hein & Ian Edwards

**Excavations of kilns near the old city of Sisatchanalai, Thailand prompt redevelopment of pottery production**  
Karen Randolph

**Friday, September 4 - Panel II Myanmar, Thailand**

**The life of Shakyamuni on the murals of Pagan - the Indian connection**  
Claudine Bautze-Picron

**The secularization of Burmese mural painting? A preliminary study of a narrative tradition**  
Alexandra Green

**A note on the Mahabodhi temples at Pagan**  
Tilman Frasch

**La grandiose pagode de Shwe Dagou a Yaugou**  
Francoise Legendre

**Recent researches in the cemetery of Ban Wang HI, Lamphun Province, Thailand**

Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Patricia Mornais, Toana Doy-Asa

**The great inscribed silver reliquary from Sri Ksetra: the oldest Buddhist art in Burma**

Janice Stargardt

**Early coins from Burma - A contribution towards unriddling the history of the Pyu and of the Mon at the Gulf of Martaban**

Dietrich Mahlo

**Publications**

We would also like to call readers' attention to some recent publications of previous conferences in this series:

**Southeast Asian Archaeology 1992, in the Rome Oriental series No. LXXVII**, R. Chiarla & F. Rispoli (eds) 1997, (the 1992 Rome Conference).

**Southeast Asian Archaeology 1994 vol. 1 P.-Y. Manguin (ed) 1998**. This is the first volume of the 1994 Paris EurASEAA Conference.

**Southeast Asian Archaeology 1996, 1998** M. Klokke and T. Bruyn (eds) 1998, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hull, HU6 7RX. (the 1996 Leiden Conference). The first volume should be ordered from ISIAO, via Merulana 248, Rome 00185, and costs Lira 110,000 (about US\$40,000 and last two are available from the Secretary, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hull, HU6 7RX for US\$20.00 including surface postage. The second volume of the 1994 Paris Conference should also be out about the end of the year, also from Hull, and probably at the same price as the volume 1. Enquiries and orders for this should be sent to the same address.

Some copies of **Southeast Asian Archaeology 1992 (the 3<sup>rd</sup> EurASEAA, Brussels conference)** are still available from the Hull Centre but we believe that Southeast Asian Archaeology 1986, (the 1<sup>st</sup> EurASEAA, London Conference) is now out of print.

Finally I should mention that seven of the papers presented at the 1996 Leiden EurASEAA conference (as well as three other archaeological papers) were published in The Journal of the Siam Society 85 for 1997, and copies of this can be purchased for US\$16.00 plus postage from The Siam Society, 131 Soi 21 (Asok) Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok 10110, Thailand, fax +662) 258-3491, e-mail <siams@telecom.scb.co.th>.

**Future EurASEAA conference**

Eighth Archaeological Scientific Conference of the Association of Indonesian Archaeologists was held between 15 and 18 February, 1999 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The theme of the conference was "The Dynamics of Scientific Dialogue in terms of Theory, Approach and Application". Dr. Patrizia Zolese, the EurASEAA National Secretary for Italy, generously offered to host the next EurASEAA Conference in 2000, and it will probably be held at Cortona, Arezzo, Tuscany in October of that year. Enquiries should be made to Dr. Zolese at ISIAO, via Merulana 248, Rome 00185, who will be sending out a first announcement sometime in 1999. Dr. Zolese informed us that on account of the large numbers of tourists and pilgrims expected in Italy in 2000, those wishing to attend should make their travel bookings as early as possible. Accommodation may also be limited and last minute bookings may be difficult. The possibility of holding the 9<sup>th</sup> EurASEAA Conference in London is being investigated.

Dr. Ian Glover,  
Ruthall Cottage, Ditton Priors,  
Shropshire, WV16 6TN, UK  
Tel. (44) 0 1746 712 462 (phone only)  
Fax/answer machine (44) 0 1746 712 070 (For fax and to receive voice messages)  
e-mail: <ian.glover@ucl.ac.uk> and <trakieu@hotmail.com> (when overseas).