

## **Buddhist-Muslim Tensions in the Bay of Bengal**

Tempe Campus  
West Hall 135

**9 October, 2014**

9:00 - 9:15    **Welcome**  
George Justice  
Dean of the Humanities

**Introductions**  
Juliane Schober  
Center for Asian Research

9:15 - 10:45    Panel 1: **Local Histories of Conflict and Resolution**

### **Politics in the Bay of Bengal: Curbing Violence, Enhancing Harmony**

Chandra Muzaffar  
President of the International Movement for a Just World (JUST),  
Professor Emeritus of Global Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang

### **Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma: Why Now?**

Min Zin, Political Science, UC-Berkeley

Discussant: Yasmin Saikia  
Professor of History, Hardt-Nickachos Chair in Peace Studies  
Arizona State University

10:45 - 11:00 Coffee/Tea Break

11:00 - 12:30 pm    Panel 2: **Constructions of Regional Belonging**

**The Localized Identities of Buddhists and Muslims in Arakan/Rakhine State (Myanmar): calls for exclusion and competing for power at the regional margins**

Jacques Leider  
Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient

**Interlinked Buddhist-Muslim Violence in the Bangladesh-Burma Borderlands: the Chittagong Hill Tracts conflict, forcible expulsion of the Rohingyas and destruction of the Ramu temples**

Shapan Adnan  
(Affiliation)

Discussant: Richard Eaton  
Professor of History  
University of Arizona

12:30 to 1:45 pm Lunch

1:45 to 3:15 pm Panel 3: **Buddhist Nationalism and Religious Minorities**

**A Religious Grammar to Sectarian Violence in Sri Lanka**

John Holt  
William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of the Humanities in Religion and Asian Studies  
Bowdoin College

**Social Difference and the Buddhist Discourse of Violence in Myanmar**

Juliane Schober  
Professor of Religious Studies

Discussant: James Rush  
Professor of History

3:30 to 5:00 pm: **Summation and Discussion**

Yasmin Saikia, James Rush, Richard Eaton,

## Participants

**Shapan Adnan** (PhD, University of Cambridge, 1984) is currently an independent academic who has taught in the South Asian Studies Programme of the National University of Singapore, as well as in the Universities of Dhaka and Chittagong. He was a visiting research fellow at the University of Oxford and continues to be an Associate of its Contemporary South Asian Studies Programme. His research and publications cover topics in political economy, sociology, politics and development, including agrarian structure and capitalist development, land grabs and primitive accumulation, peasant societies and village studies, power structures and resistance, indigenous peoples and ethnic conflict, forced migration and human fertility.

**Richard Eaton** is Professor of History at the University of Arizona. His research focuses on the social and cultural history of pre-modern India (1000-1800) and especially on the range of historical interactions between Iran and India, and on Islam in South Asia. He published monographs on the social roles of Sufis (Muslim mystics) in the Indian sultanate of Bijapur (1300-1700), on the growth of Islam in Bengal (1204-1760), and on the social history of the Deccan from 1300 to 1761. Most recently, he co-authored a forthcoming book entitled *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-16*. These historical monographs employ as analytical tools, respectively, Weberian social thought, Annales School methodology, biography, and architecture.

**John Clifford Holt** is the William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of Humanities in Religion and Asian Studies at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. He is author or editor of ten books focused on Buddhist religious culture in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. He is currently finishing a book on ritual cultures in the Theravada Buddhist world and beginning a study of Buddhist/Muslim tensions in Sri Lanka and Burma.

**Jacques P. Leider** is a historian of Arakan and early modern Southeast Asia. He is a past Director of the research center and library of the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO, French School of Asian Studies) in Chiang Mai (2008-2012) and the founder of EFEO's center in Yangon, where he lived from 2002-2006. He has done research on early modern Myanmar history and published extensively on the pre-colonial and colonial history of Rakhine/ Arakan. He is currently based in Bangkok and a counsellor with the Embassy of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

**Min Zin** is a PhD candidate in Political Science Department at University of California, Berkeley. He is also a regular contributor to The Foreign Policy's Transition Blog. He serves as country analyst of Burma/Myanmar for several research foundations including Freedom House. He took part in Burma's democracy movement in 1988 as a high school student activist, and went into hiding in 1989 to avoid arrest by the junta. His underground activist-cum-writer life lasted for nine years until he fled to Thai-Burma border in August 1997. His writings appear in Journal of Democracy, Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, The Foreign Policy, The Irrawaddy, The Bangkok Post, Far Eastern Economic Review, Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, and other publications.

**Chandra Muzaffar**, Professor of Global Studies at Universiti Sains Malaysia (2007-2012), is the President of the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), an international NGO based in Malaysia that seeks to critique global injustice and to develop an alternative vision of a just and compassionate civilization guided by universal spiritual and moral values. He is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Malaysia Foundation and serves on the board of a number of international NGOs concerned with social justice and civilizational dialogue. Chandra is the recipient of a number of international awards related to his scholarship and social activism. He has published extensively on civilizational dialogue, international politics, religion, human rights and Malaysian society and is the author and editor of 29 books in English and Malay. His most recent publications, *A World in Crisis: Is There a Cure?* and *Whither WANA? Reflections on the Arab Uprisings*, can be accessed at [www.just-international.org](http://www.just-international.org).

**Yasmin Saikia** is the Hardt-Nickachos Chair in Peace Studies at the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict and a Professor of History in the School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies. She is author of *Fragmented Memories: Struggling to be Tai-Ahom in India* (Duke, 2004) and *Women, War and the Making of Bangladesh: Remembering 1971* (Duke University Press, 2011). Her research and teaching interests invoke a dynamic transnational and interdisciplinary dialogue situated at the intersection of history, culture, and religion. With a specific focus on contestations and accommodations in South Asia between local, national, and religious identities, she examines the Muslim experience in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and the discourse of nonviolence alongside the practice of violence against women and vulnerable groups.

**Juliane Schober** is Director of the Center for Asian Research and Professor of Religious Studies at Arizona State University. As an anthropologist of religion, she works on Theravada Buddhist practice in Southeast Asia, especially Burma/Myanmar with a thematic interest in material culture, ritual, modernity, postcolonial theory, sacred biography, and religion and politics. She authored *Modern Buddhist Conjunctures in Myanmar* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), edited *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia* (U. of Hawai'i Press, 1997) and co-edited *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures* (Routledge, 2008).

**James Rush** is a historian of modern Southeast Asia whose work explores issues of colonialism and religion in 19th and 20th century Indonesia. His books include *Opium to Java: Revenue Farming and Chinese Enterprise in Colonial Indonesia, 1860-1910* (Cornell University Press, 1990), *The Last Tree: Reclaiming the Environment in Tropical Asia* (Westview Press/The Asia Society, 1991), *Java: A Traveller's Anthology* (Oxford in Asia, 1996) and *Hamka's Great Story: Islam for Indonesia* (forthcoming). From 1987-2008, he led the biography project of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (Manila, Philippines), conducting oral-history interviews with over one hundred Magsaysay Awardees and editing six volumes of biographical essays, including his own essays on thirty-five Asian laureates, among them Pramoedya Ananta Toer, Abdurrahman Wahid, Ravi Shankar, V.E. Sarachchandra, and Fei Xiaotong.