

for the ethnography of the making and unmaking of a border community from the pioneer settlers until contemporary times.

This book thus does a wonderful job in depicting the subjectification and disciplination of people into citizens without losing the focus on the concrete experiences, agency and practices of the villagers. In writing a case study of a community divided by a border, Ishikawa notes that there are myriad cases that could be fruitfully compared with his community study. Yet the author does not seem to be interested in the growing field of borderland studies and does little to point out the value that his study contributes to the study of borderlands elsewhere.

While it is not possible to cite anybody working on borders, the reviewer feels that more could have been done to integrate salient work on borderlands in anthropology and geography in order to direct the rich material that the author collected and to put it more firmly into a comparative perspective. Further, the author could have done more to use the work of, for example, Heyman and Kearney to theorize his material for an innovative perspective on borderlands. We need to theorize borderland studies beyond a mere referral to the location and cultural work of the villagers. While the author collected sufficient material to demonstrate his case, he largely leaves out this opportunity to make a theoretical contribution to the study of borderlands. Despite this small deficit, this book can be widely recommended not only for readers interested in Southeast Asian Studies, but also in border studies and for readers interested in the transformation of community and nation in the capitalist periphery more generally.

Max Planck Institute, Göttingen, Germany

ALEXANDER HORSTMANN

ASEAN'S MYANMAR CRISIS: Challenges to the Pursuit of a Security Community. *By Christopher Roberts. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010. xxii, 268 pp. (Tables, figures, B&W photos.) US\$49.90, paper. ISBN 978-981-4279-37-6.*

In this welcome addition to the literature on ASEAN's relations with Myanmar, Christopher Roberts discusses in considerable detail the challenges that he argues Myanmar poses for the establishment of a security community in Southeast Asia. According to Roberts, these challenges, which are primarily linked to the longstanding political conflict and instability in Myanmar, undermine the association's security environment and impede the formation of an ASEAN-wide collective identity.

Roberts devotes two chapters to the security community concept and his framework for analysis. Taking issue with the existing literature, he defines security community as a "transnational community of two or more states whose sovereignty is increasingly amalgamated and whose people maintain

dependable expectations of peaceful change.” Roberts adopts a broad understanding of security, as he believes the concept should accommodate both traditional and non-traditional security issues.

For Roberts, Myanmar’s internal consolidation is essential for the construction of an ASEAN security community. In chapter 3, he briefly explores manifestations of the country’s domestic instability, such as child soldiers, forced labour, internal displacement, mass rape and extrajudicial killings. As Roberts notes, however, “[m]ore than anything else, a history of ethnic tension and insurgency continues to contribute to the domestic instability in Myanmar today” (69). Chapter 4 presents Myanmar as a source of various non-traditional security challenges: human trafficking, refugees and illegal migrants, HIV/AIDS and, particularly, illicit narcotics smuggling. Roberts argues that the SPDC’s “involvement with narcotics production within the country, and its indifference to the transnational consequences of this, renders it difficult to consider the actions of Myanmar as reflecting an appropriate sense of an *ASEAN wide community*—now, or in the foreseeable future” (87). He also examines how Myanmar-Thailand and Myanmar-China relations challenge the formation of an ASEAN security community. Regarding the former, he maintains that the border conflict has prevented “a situation of actual and anticipated peace” (91). Concerning Myanmar-China ties, Roberts holds that “their mutual identification with each other has been at the expense of Myanmar’s capacity to identify with ASEAN collectively” (97).

The implications for the formation of an ASEAN security community in mind, the remaining chapters examine the evolving relations between Myanmar and the other ASEAN states. Here, Roberts stresses that dealing with the question of Myanmar’s chairmanship became “the biggest challenge to elite-level solidarity and collective identity formation since the Asian economic crisis in 1997” (122). He also argues that by late 2006 the relationship between Myanmar and the other members “had deteriorated to a point most accurately defined as ‘mutual disengagement’” (152). Roberts claims that Myanmar’s disregard for ASEAN’s interests was most clearly demonstrated by its response to the so-called Saffron Revolution in 2007.

Roberts offers a broadly positive assessment of ASEAN’s response to Cyclone Nargis and hopes that the approach adopted towards Myanmar on that occasion might also be applied to other areas (for example, poverty, health, education). Interestingly, he does not dismiss the 2008 Constitution out of hand. To him, it may provide sufficient space for future legislative acts that can improve the quality of governance in Myanmar. In his conclusion, Roberts calls for a policy of critical engagement towards Myanmar.

The strong points of the book include the attempt to advance the conceptual literature on security communities as well as the fine level of detail in some of the empirical chapters. There are, however, two points I would raise. First, Roberts suggests that Myanmar represents the single

most significant obstacle to the formation of an ASEAN security community. However, this is ultimately more asserted than proven, as the book lacks broader comparisons. Instability or ethnic conflict in Southeast Asia is evidently not limited to Myanmar; and it is quite clear that ASEAN's problems in developing a collective identity extend beyond the specific dynamics and issues that have shaped Myanmar's ties with other ASEAN countries. Second, Roberts attributes the festering of the crisis in Myanmar in part to "the operative norms of ASEAN." While political and ethnic conflict within members has indeed normally not been collectively addressed by the grouping, it seems to me that the ASEAN states have with reference to Myanmar opted for so-called "enhanced interactions" that have not previously been pursued vis-à-vis other members, and Roberts perhaps makes too little of this in relation to the argument in question. To be sure, ASEAN has wielded little if any influence with Myanmar's leadership, but as Roberts recognizes himself, the more hard-edged policies of Western powers towards Naypyidaw have failed to yield superior results. Notwithstanding these points, Roberts offers a well-developed and important argument about how Myanmar matters in relation to ASEAN's efforts to build a security community.

London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK JURGEN HAACKE

DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES OF A WHITE AUSTRALIA: Representing Aboriginal Assimilation in the Mid-twentieth Century. *Studies in Asia-Pacific "Mixed Race," v. 3.* By *Catriona Elder*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2009. 257 pp. (Illus.) US\$68.95, paper. ISBN 978-3-03911-722-2.

Dreams and Nightmares of a White Australia: Representing Aboriginal Assimilation in the Mid-twentieth Century is an analysis of the production of assimilation discourse, in terms of Aboriginal people's and white people's social relations through a small number of popular fiction texts from the 1950s and 1960s. Together these texts produce the white Australian story of assimilation. Elder's work illuminates sites of anxiety in assimilation discourses: interracial sexual relationships, the white family, people of "mixed" heritage, stolen children, violence and land ownership. Fictional stories of assimilation were a key site of Aboriginal representation. They produced discourses of "assimilation coloniser."

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg writes: "Novels ... have certain advantages that political speeches, legal documents and court decisions lack. They can play with the forbidden and momentarily indulge in the fantastic" (30). Elder's work explores the schism between such fantasies and Australia's perception of itself through the 1950s and 1960s as a white nation and the place of Aboriginal Australians in this discourse.