



**Dr Shahar Hameiri**  
**Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University**  
**Dr Lee Jones**  
**Queen Mary University of London**

**Murdoch International: The ‘Murdoch School’  
in International Relations**

**Working paper No. 178**  
**December 2014**

The views presented in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Asia Research Centre or Murdoch University. Working papers are considered draft publications for critical comments by colleagues and will generally be expected to be published elsewhere in a more polished form after a period of critical engagement and revision. Comments on this paper should be directed to the authors at [s.hameiri@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:s.hameiri@murdoch.edu.au); [l.c.jones@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:l.c.jones@qmul.ac.uk)

Copyright is held by the author(s) of each working paper: No part of this publication may be republished, reprinted or reproduced in any form without the permission of the paper’s author(s).

National Library of Australia.



ISSN: 1037-4612

# **Murdoch International: The ‘Murdoch School’ in International Relations**

**Shahar Hameiri and Lee Jones**

[s.hameiri@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:s.hameiri@murdoch.edu.au); [l.c.jones@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:l.c.jones@qmul.ac.uk)

Paper first presented at the First AIS/SEARC-Murdoch/Asia Research Centre Conference, ‘The Politics of Asia under “Multipolarity”’, City University of Hong Kong, 20-21 November 2014

## **Abstract**

This paper surveys the growing application of the ‘Murdoch School’ (MS) approach to domestic politics and political economy to address issues of international scope. The origins of the MS are in comparative politics. As such, although it has always had some engagement with international dynamics – e.g. the Cold War, the Asian Financial Crisis – this has mostly entailed a limited evaluation of their impact on domestic power relations. More recently, however, scholars concerned with questions emanating from International Relations (IR) and International Political Economy have begun adapting MS approaches for their purposes. A small number of studies sought to explain how domestic relations are expressed internationally, but without theorising the international level. A relatively recent research agenda has aimed to more directly explore how international dynamics are filtered through domestic relations. For some, this has entailed only limited engagement with the intervening agents, maintaining a focus on how local power relations shape outcomes. Others have focused far more explicitly on the intervening agents, and their interrelations with domestic power structures. This has led to the realisation that interventions blur the line between domestic and international politics, which underpins the ontology of both the MS and much IR theory. A consequence has been a research agenda dedicated to the study of state internationalisation and transformation, requiring additional theoretical resources, drawn mainly from state theory and political geography, to supplement the MS’s emphasis on local power relations and IR’s study of interstate relations. Thus, the MS, for the first time, directly engages, and extends, IR theory.

## **Introduction**

The so-called ‘Murdoch School’ (MS) is a critical political economy approach, originating in the Asia Research Centre of Murdoch University in Perth, Australia. It focuses on social and political conflict in the context of capitalist development to explain institutional and political outcomes. Since the 1980s, the MS has had considerable impact on the study of Southeast Asian politics specifically and the politics of newly industrialising countries more broadly, and its work has been widely cited and debated (e.g. Pepinsky 2014; Kuhonta et al. 2008;

Rasiah and Schmidt 2010; Ford and Pepinsky 2014; Carroll and Jarvis 2014; Hadiz et al. 2013). By contrast, its impact on the study of International Relations (IR) has been rather limited, even within the Southeast Asian region. This is despite the fact that very notable IR and International Political Economy (IPE) scholars, such as Richard Higgott, Amitav Acharya and Mark Beeson, have taught at Murdoch University or received their doctorate there. For example, Acharya's well-cited *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia* does not cite even *once* any of the major MS authors in its three editions (2001, 2009, 2014). The same applies to the recent edited volume by Acharya and Richard Stubbs (2013), *Theorizing Southeast Asian Relations: Emerging Debates*, or to Richard Higgott's influential (2000) 'The Asian Economic Crisis: A Study in the Politics of Resentment'. Similarly, although the *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Politics* (Robison 2012a) contains extensive MS contributions, the *Routledge Handbook of Asian Regionalism* (Beeson and Stubbs 2012) contains only one, by Hameiri and Jayasuriya (2012), despite being co-edited by Murdoch's Mark Beeson.

That the MS is ignored even by IR scholars familiar with its work is perhaps not surprising. Reflecting its origins as a critique of modernisation theory, the MS has for the most part remained preoccupied with the concerns and questions of comparative politics and political economy. For example, Richard Robison (2012b: 5), the MS's founding father, recently identified the three core questions defining debates about Southeast Asian politics as: why has liberal politics proven so fragile and authoritarianism so durable in the region?; what is the relationship between market capitalism, political institutions and ideas?; and, what are the effects of decentralisation, new social movements and democratic reforms? These questions are clearly focused on domestic politics and regime forms.

This is not to say that international dynamics have been entirely ignored by MS scholars. Early work emphasised the impact of colonialism and the Cold War upon Southeast Asian social structures and regime types (e.g. Robison 1986; Rodan 1989; Hewison et al. 1993; Rodan 1996). This engagement with international dynamics has been reinforced over time by the undeniable and apparently growing significance of international factors such as the Asian Financial Crisis (Robison et al. 2000; Rodan et al. 2006), neoliberalism (Robison and Hadiz 2006; Hadiz 2006) and the US-led 'war on terror' (Rodan and Hewison 2006). Nonetheless, engagement with these has mostly remained limited to evaluating their impact on domestic relations, with MS authors emphasising local power relations and social conflict as the crucial causal factors determining the effects of external dynamics within Southeast Asian states.

This focus remains evident in the most recent work that has sought to explore how international dynamics are filtered through domestic socio-political relations. A burgeoning literature on development, aid, good governance and economic statecraft has extended the MS analysis to include not only domestic actors and power structures, but also intervening agents like the international financial institutions and Western donor agencies (Robison and Hout 2009; Hutchison et al. 2014; Carroll 2010; Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007; Rodan and Hughes 2014; Rosser 2009; Jones, forthcoming). This literature retains an overwhelmingly domestic focus, however, as well as the emphasis on how local power relations shape the outcomes of international policy initiatives.

However, more recently, international phenomena have become a more explicit object of concern. Some scholars have begun using the MS approach to explain the international behaviour of states, focusing essentially on how domestic power relations are expressed internationally (Jones 2012a, 2012b; Gerard 2014; Beeson 2006). These studies essentially deploy a 'two-step' analysis (see Legro and Moravcsik 1999: 51), first using the MS to understand how domestic power relations shape international policy preferences, and then examine the interstate interaction that ensues. The MS thus 'goes international', but without really theorising the international level. The MS's most significant engagement with international dynamics has its origins in the work of Kanishka Jayasuriya (2005, 2006). The chief insight has been the recognition that international intervention and economic globalisation increasingly blur the line between the 'domestic' and the 'international', which underpinned the traditional distinction between the subfields of comparative politics and IR. Consequently, the scope of social conflict, as well as the social, political and institutional setting in which it occurs, can no longer be taken for granted, but need to be reconceptualised and theorised. By eschewing 'methodological nationalism' (see Wimmer and Schiller 2002), these studies have had to rely upon additional theoretical resources, drawn mainly from state theory and political geography, to supplement the MS's emphasis on local power relations. The result has been a research agenda dedicated to the study of state internationalisation and transformation, as well as the associated emergence of regional modes of governance, in the context of deepening economic integration and transboundary security flows (Hameiri and Jones, 2013, forthcoming; Hameiri 2010; Jayasuriya 2009; Hameiri and Jayasuriya 2011; Carroll and Sovacool 2010; Carroll 2012). This has not only modified the MS but also constitutes a direct critical engagement with, and extension of, IR theory. Thus, unlike the earlier MS scholarship, this more recent output is not ignored by the IR community; it is published in IR outlets and cited by IR scholars.

Below, we begin by outlining the core premises of the MS and how it has traditionally engaged international dynamics. We then discuss the small number of works that straightforwardly employ the MS method to explain international politics. In the next section, we evaluate efforts to develop the MS's 'inside out' approach by examining how international dynamics are filtered through domestic relations. We also explain why it is essential to supplement the MS with the theoretical insights of state theory and political geography to analyse political outcomes in a context where the distinction between 'domestic' and 'international' is increasingly blurred. We conclude by discussing future directions, and specifically, what we think a new edition of the MS's seminal series, *The Political Economy of South-East Asia*, should look like.

### **The Murdoch School's Traditional Domestic Focus**

This section provides a schematic overview of MS scholarship. It identifies the MS's distinctive contribution as its emphasis on socio-political conflict, rooted in material power relations, for understanding the evolution of political regimes. MS authors have long recognised that, in any given country context, this conflict and its material underpinnings are articulated within broader political and economic patterns that transcend national boundaries. For convenience, we suggest the MS has evolved in three phases, each paying increasing attention to international phenomena.<sup>1</sup> However, even as the importance of these transnational influences has apparently intensified, much of this scholarship has continued to emphasise the way these are fundamentally mediated through local power relations – such that the latter practically 'trump' the former. The emphasis remains on explaining the trajectories of domestic regimes, rather than explaining the drivers or outcomes of international phenomena.

The MS's distinctive contribution to critical political economy is to understand political institutions and outcomes as being shaped by social conflict. Specifically, it focuses on struggles for power and control over resources between coalitions of social and political forces – particularly classes and class fractions – whose relative power and interrelations are heavily conditioned by material political economy relations, i.e. by capitalist economic development. Although for pragmatic reasons it was termed the 'social conflict approach',

---

<sup>1</sup> As will be obvious, this is at best a rough approximation for analytical purposes, as is the subsequent division of literature applying the MS to international problems; in reality there is considerable overlap between the different strands, reflecting the ongoing dialogue and development of a dynamic body of work.

this is essentially an analytic framework rooted in the Marxist state theory of Nicos Poulantzas (1973) and Bob Jessop (1990, 2008), notwithstanding the importance of works by non-Marxist scholars Barrington Moore (1966) and Alexander Gerschenkron (1962) to early theory development (see Hewison et al. 1993).<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Poulantzas and Jessop's state theory is explicitly cited in the introductions to the three editions of *The Political Economy of South-East Asia* (Rodan et al. 1997, 2001, 2006), the authoritative compendia of MS treatments of the region. Accordingly, Murdoch scholarship is typically oriented as a critique of other conceptualisations of the evolution of domestic political regimes, notably modernisation theory and neo-institutionalism. These approaches are seen to over-estimate either the progressive impact of capitalist development on basic social relations, or the influence of new institutional arrangements on the course of political development. It has also served as a critique of neo-Marxist approaches, most notably dependency and world systems theories, which underplay the significance of domestic class struggle for explaining development beyond the West (see Brenner 1977).

Thus, in a first phase, MS approaches sought to expose the flaws of modernisation theory's expectations in relation to Southeast Asia. This work had an explicitly domestic focus, seeking to puncture the myths surrounding the development of individual societies and economies. Thus, for example, Robison's ground-breaking *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital* (1986) explicated different ways of understanding Indonesia's development, then carefully demonstrated empirically the superiority of the 'social conflict approach' for explaining Indonesia's peculiar trajectory. This work had a limited transnational aspect: it recognised, for example, the remarkable latitude granted to the Suharto regime in the context of the Cold War, and external attempts to influence Indonesia's development through the World Bank. However, Robison's emphasis was on demonstrating how the influence of liberal, foreign-trained economists like Suharto's so-called 'Berkeley boys' was massively constrained by coalitions between politico-bureaucrats, entrepreneurial generals and ethnic-Chinese crony capitalists, whose interests profoundly shaped the contours of economic policy. Indeed, by the 1980s, Robison argued, Indonesian capitalists were increasingly outgrowing their bureaucratic sponsors and capturing state apparatuses directly, using them for their own purposes. Similarly, Rodan's (1989) seminal treatment of Singapore's remarkable economic development debunked the myth of a technocratic, market-enabling elite merely steering the

---

<sup>2</sup> Essentially, the Cold War context in Australia made it impossible to attract necessary research funding for explicitly Marxist scholarship. The fact that this label continues to be used today (e.g. Jones, forthcoming; Hameiri and Jones, forthcoming) suggests a similar bias continues to be evaded.

city-state to climb the international value-added chain. Rodan showed how a power struggle between the People's Action Party and other social forces – notably the political left and the incipient ethnic-Chinese bourgeoisie – had concentrated power in party-state hands, fusing political and economic power in ways that sustained one-party rule but also generated new social, political and economic contradictions. This first phase of Murdoch scholarship thus rebutted modernisation theorists' expectations that rapid economic growth would be associated with supportive and 'enabling' state apparatuses and generate liberal and progressive political outcomes. It also rebutted in advance the later theorisation-celebration of East Asia's so-called 'developmental states', which was premised on the flawed notion that states were autonomous from their societies and were therefore able to 'steer' economic development without regard to powerful domestic interests (e.g. Wade 1990; Amsden 1993). This approach has proven a powerful explanatory framework that has continued to generate insight into the trajectories of Southeast Asian states, including those emerging from 'socialist' dictatorships (Hughes 2003; Jones 2014).

In the early and mid-1990s, the second phase of Murdoch scholarship maintained this fundamentally domestic orientation and its emphasis on debunking liberal analyses, turning its attention to democratisation. Again, in some limited sense, this was a local exploration of a global phenomenon, since the so-called 'third wave' of democratisation was supposedly occurring worldwide as the Cold War ebbed and ended and 'globalisation' became the new *Zeitgeist* (Huntington 1993). Initially, some saw this as a vindication for modernisation theory's expectations that economic growth – even if under authoritarian tutelage – would generate social groups (notably a large middle class) that would eventually demand economic and political liberalisation. Events like the collapse of the Marcos regime in 1986 and Thailand's democratisation from 1988-1993, were seen to instantiate this thesis in Southeast Asia (Anek 1997). Murdoch scholars, however, were adamant that the social, political and economic power relations built up under decades of authoritarian rule would strongly condition the trajectory of political change. The *New Rich in Asia* book series<sup>3</sup> admitted the emergence of new social forces issuing new demands in some Southeast Asian states. However, it emphasised that, as a product of authoritarianism, Southeast Asia's middle classes were often illiberal in orientation, seeking political power for themselves but resisting its extension to the lower orders. Moreover, the state-business compacts underpinning state power were capable of surviving and even steering political liberalisation (Robison and

---

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/Research-capabilities/Asia-Research-Centre/About-the-Asia-Research-Centre/Publications/Centre-Publications/The-New-Rich-in-Asia/>.

Goodman 1996; Rodan 1996; see also Rodan *et al.* 1997). By contrast, although globalisation might create some opportunities for activist intervention, organised labour had been crushed during the Cold War and could not play the progressive role anticipated in Euro-centric modernisation theory (Hutchison and Brown 2001; Rodan 1996). Thus, the MS's second phase was largely devoted to explaining why a supposedly global 'wave' of liberalisation and democratisation would founder on the rocks of Southeast Asia – a fact belatedly recognised by other theorists, who are left mindlessly classifying the region's democracies as in various ways defective (cf. Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007). MS proponents were instead able to *explain* why even formally democratic regimes did not facilitate more widespread political liberalisation, with reference to their 'social foundations' (Rodan and Jayasuriya 2012).

A third phase of Murdoch scholarship essentially maintained this domestic focus, even as it was forced to grapple with the rising influence of international factors on Southeast Asia's trajectory. This was very notable following the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which graphically revealed the region's exposure to transnational economic flows, led to the direct involvement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in steering post-crisis economic and political reform in several countries (notably Indonesia and Thailand), and precipitated widespread social unrest and demands for political change. In addition to efforts to explain the crisis, this led to a new focus on externally driven neoliberalism as a potentially transformative force in Southeast Asia's domestic politics and regional governance (Robison *et al.* 2000; Rodan *et al.* 2001; Jayasuriya 2003; Robison and Hewison 2006). Similarly, a linked concern with the impact of US imperialism followed the designation of Southeast Asia as a 'second front' in the 'war on terror' after 2001 (Hadiz 2006).

However, reflecting the MS's basic orientation towards explaining domestic regime trajectories, the focus remained on exploring how these external developments were mediated through local socio-political conflicts to produce specific outcomes – which often diverged from the intentions and expectations of foreign interveners. Essentially, although potentially quite dramatic institutional changes might ensue, local power relations continued to dictate how these transformed institutions would operate, allowing dominant socio-political coalitions to continue dominating Southeast Asian societies. The MS thereby evolved from predominantly critiquing liberal and modernisation theoretical approaches to an explicit critique of neo-institutionalism, which inverts Marxist approaches by expecting institutions to guide social agency, rather than being produced and shaped by it. Thus, Robison and Hadiz (2004) showed that, despite the IMF's extensive involvement in Indonesia and the country's ostensible democratisation, the oligarchic forces established under the Suharto regime had



successfully reorganised themselves to rescue their business empires and capture Indonesia's new institutions. Similarly, contrary to institutionalist expectations and World Bank intentions, decentralisation had not brought power closer to the masses; instead, second- and third-tier New Order elites had been best placed to seize new local government apparatuses (Hadiz 2010). Indeed, Carroll's (2010) study of World Bank interventions in Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia comprehensively debunked the expectations of neoliberal 'new institutionalist economics' that foreign intervention could transform states into market-enabling regulators. Projects to reconfigure states were subject to 'wrenching social struggles', such that they 'never fully realise their idealistic intentions. What emerges in reality... is considerably more messy' (Carroll 2010: 75 [quoting Chaudry 1997], 184). This analysis has recently been extended to a wide range of development and market-making interventions across the region (Carroll and Jarvis 2014; Hutchison *et al.* 2014), as well as efforts to promote 'good governance', including more participatory modes of government and enhanced accountability mechanisms (Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007; Rodan and Hughes 2014).

Thus, although international phenomena are recognised as increasingly important by many MS adherents, analysis largely remains focused on their implications for domestic social, economic and political change. The MS's basic theoretical underpinnings, which foreground local power relations and particularly their impact on national states, generate an instinctive scepticism towards claims that international dynamics can easily transform local ones. While this is a vitally important corrective, it nonetheless involves an implicit marginalisation of the international, rather than an attempt to engage with it directly. However, another group of scholars has more recently sought to change this, and it is to their work we now turn.

### **The Murdoch School Goes International**

The use and development of the MS to address questions originating in IR and IPE displays two basic methods. The first maintains the broad approach delineated above, either asking how international interventions are mediated through domestic social power relations, or conversely how the latter are expressed in international relations. These approaches, while valuable and innovative, have tended not to theorise 'the international', instinctively treating the 'national' or sub-national scales as the 'real' locus of political struggles where ostensibly international outcomes are determined. A second, related stream has tried to rectify this relative neglect of the international by engaging in multi-level theorising. This has

necessitated going beyond the basic tools and concepts of the MS to incorporate insights from IR, IPE, political geography and state theory.

*The domestic-international relation*

The first body of work is fundamentally interested in how domestic socio-political struggles condition international outcomes. In a continuation of the dominant MS focus explored earlier, one strand is concerned to explain how outcomes that IR and IPE theorists are concerned with are shaped by domestic social conflict. This includes Carroll's (2010) aforementioned work on international development interventions, Carroll and Sovacool's (2010) study of the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline project and Jones' studies of international statebuilding (2010) and international economic sanctions (forthcoming). The emphasis here is in showing how externally driven attempts to transform societies, regimes and states always encounter local contestation, which fundamentally shapes political outcomes, leading to outcomes that are often far from what was originally intended.

A second strand essentially flips the problematique around, asking how domestic power relations condition international relations. This follows the maxim of Antonio Gramsci, whose reflections on state power were the original basis for the Marxist state theory informing the MS:

Do international relations precede or follow (logically) fundamental social relations? There can be no doubt that they follow. Any organic innovation in the social structure, through its technical–military expressions, modifies organically absolute and relative relations in the international field, too (quoted in Jones 2012b: 346).

Accordingly, this strand basically follows a two-step approach (see Legro and Moravcsik 1999: 51), first using the MS to understand how evolving domestic power relations shape international policy preferences, then examining the ensuing interstate interaction. This approach has been used to explain the policies of regional states towards free trade (Jayasuriya 2003; Nesadurai 2003), sovereignty and intervention (Jones 2012a) and civil society participation in regional governance (Gerard 2014).

The merit of these investigations lies in using the MS to provide a sophisticated and theoretically developed causal explanation of outcomes that IR and IPE scholars are interested in, but often cannot explain using their theories' traditional, limited focus on interstate dynamics. For example, IPE scholars have devoted enormous attention to the international development agencies, but little time to understanding why domestic reform outcomes diverge from plan, beyond *ad hoc* explanations or technocratic, apolitical critiques

of inadequate ‘capacity’ or ‘political will’. In other cases, this neglect leads IR scholars to simply misunderstand outcomes entirely, or – in a parallel to neo-institutionalists’ misapprehension of domestic dynamics – exaggerate the impact of normative and other institutional variables. For example, while Caballero-Anthony (2005) emphasises institutional changes that have ostensibly granted civil society organisations greater influence in ASEAN policymaking, Gerard (2014) carefully demonstrates how this involvement is actually heavily ‘regulated’ in accordance with powerful domestic interests.

However, the limitation of this literature is that, by presenting domestic politics as causally primal, it tends to neglect international dynamics and their interrelation with domestic ones. Essentially, once domestic struggles and preferences are understood, they are seen either to warp incoming international interventions, or to express themselves more or less directly in outgoing policies. In the latter approach in particular, this can lead to a ‘methodological nationalism’ (see Wimmer and Schiller 2002), where the MS is used to elucidate the preferences of each regional state, which then interact to promote these interests (e.g. Jones 2012a). This approach is vulnerable to criticisms often levelled at Marxist IR (including by other Marxists), which is seen to focus on identifying domestic political economy dynamics, failing to theorise the international level explicitly, and thereby leaving states interacting in a ‘proto-realist fashion’ (Callinicos and Rosenberg 2008: 85). Although these approaches may spend some time identifying how international dynamics reshape domestic ones – thus adopting a properly dialectical analysis, not merely a ‘two-step’ approach – the basic problematique, exploring how the ‘outside’ affects the ‘inside’ or vice-versa, risks reifying the inside/outside distinction (Walker 1993). In reality, what is often at stake in contemporary political struggles is where this ‘distinction’ is to be drawn.<sup>4</sup>

### *Towards a multi-level analysis*

A second strand of literature has avoided this pitfall by developing a multilevel analysis that recognises how political outcomes are shaped by developments operating simultaneously at multiple scales. This again builds on the third phase of MS research but goes beyond merely explicating the influence of international dynamics on domestic developments, or vice versa. The ontological starting point is that the aforementioned domestic/international distinction is increasingly blurred in an era of globalisation – not just in theory, but also in practice. The

---

<sup>4</sup> This is recognised, but not fully developed, in Jones (2012a), which argues that sovereignty and intervention are political technologies used to define who is legitimately included or excluded from political conflict in a given territory.

increased involvement of institutions like the World Bank and IMF in domestic reform processes is not a temporary phenomenon, but an *ongoing process* directed at *transforming domestic governance in target countries* (Carroll 2010).<sup>5</sup> This process is still contested by local socio-political forces, as the MS has always maintained. However, international actors and initiatives can no longer be thought of as merely external conditions or ‘shocks’, which are then filtered through domestic power struggles. Instead, these ‘international’ forces are increasingly *part* of ‘domestic’ contestation, and ‘domestic’ forces are increasingly ‘international’ in their scope and interrelations. Grasping this transformation has required supplementing the MS with insights from state theory and political geography.

The primary point of departure for this body of work is Kanishka Jayasuriya’s studies of state transformation in the third phase of Murdoch scholarship, which developed the MS’s underlying state theory in a more sophisticated direction. Crucially, Jayasuriya recognised that what was at stake after the Asian financial crisis was not merely piecemeal efforts to reform domestic institutions but rather a wholesale move to transform Asia’s developmental states into ‘regulatory states’ in the Western mould, driven both by the international financial institutions but also by the increasing transnationalisation of capital and manufacturing. In Europe, regulatory statehood has involved governments retreating from directly securing social and economic goals to setting targets and rules for a broad range of governance actors across the public-private divide. In the process, authority has often passed to quasi-public and private agencies, which have often developed their own multi-level, transnational governance networks with their overseas counterparts, beyond the reach of domestic accountability institutions (Jayasuriya 2001). Although the process of state transformation in Asia has undoubtedly been more fraught, similar developments have been observed there, even in supposedly ‘Westphalian’ states like China (Breslin 2013; Dubash and Morgan 2013; Jarvis 2014). This represents an epochal change with attendant consequences for regional governance (Jayasuriya 2004, 2009) and the global order (Jayasuriya 2005).

Regional governance in Asia, for example, can no longer be understood in terms of ‘proto-realist’ developmental states trying to promote the contradictory interests of powerful fractions of capital (cf. Jayasuriya 2003). Instead, we witness a new form of ‘regulatory regionalism’, which strongly promotes policy coordination and harmonisation across established territorial boundaries (Jayasuriya 2004; Hameiri and Jayasuriya 2011; Hameiri 2013). This perspective usefully transcends the tired debates in IR and IPE about whether

---

<sup>5</sup> For a helpful, non-MS account of this shift from ‘intervention’ to ‘governance’, see Williams (2013).

regional organisations will supplant the sovereign authority of states. This literature, particularly as applied to Asia, frequently suggests that because states remain jealous of their sovereignty, regionalism is stalled because multilateral organisations are not allowed to acquire supranational authority. By contrast, the ‘regulatory regionalism’ approach allows analysts to see how regionalism may occur not through a simplistic zero-sum transfer of authority but through efforts to internationalise domestic state apparatuses dealing with a specific issue area, such that they harmonise their policies with their foreign counterparts and impose international disciplines on other parts of their states and societies (Hameiri and Jayasuriya 2011; Hameiri and Jones 2015; Tubilewicz and Jayasuriya 2015).

Although the traditional MS approach remains fundamental to these analyses, they have also needed to incorporate theoretical concepts from other fields. Attempts to transform domestic governance are efforts to redistribute power and control over resources and, accordingly, they are contested by socio-political coalitions rooted in specific political economy contexts, with outcomes contingent upon this struggle. This is classic MS fare. However, understanding what this struggle is actually about involves going beyond the usual MS focus on domestic state, or even subnational institutions. A key focus in the struggles around state transformation is the *territorial scope* of regulatory agencies. Put simply, some apparatuses of powerful states are vying to acquire regulatory power over activities in other territories. Meanwhile, some domestic state apparatuses in other territories are being drawn into transnational networks such that they lose their purely domestic quality. For example, the Australian Federal Police, a formerly domestic agency, has acquired transnational policing powers over several Pacific island countries, while policing agencies in those countries have been subjected to Australian-led reform programmes to redirect their purposes and procedures along lines favoured in Canberra (Hameiri 2010: Ch 5-6). To theorise this, Hameiri (2010) pioneered the incorporation of political geography into MS analysis, conceptualising such developments as attempts to ‘rescale’ state apparatuses, i.e. to shift the scope and extent of the institutions, actors and power dynamics involved in the (re)production and use of state power. Critical political geographers have long emphasised that the scale at and instruments by which an issue is governed is never neutral but, because changing scales involves new configurations of actors, resources and power relations, it is a centrally contested feature of political life. From this perspective, what is at stake in establishing the new modes of governance identified by Jayasuriya is a contested process of state rescaling. This involves a ‘territorial politics’, where socio-political coalitions mobilise around different scalar arrangements that best promote their interests and ideologies, e.g. some may seek to

transnationalise governance, but others – who stand to lose – may strive to keep it local. Thus, political geography is used to specify a new focus and form of social conflict, while the MS remains useful in specifying the nature and content of this conflict. This perspective has been used to explain outcomes in international statebuilding, which Hameiri (2010) theorises as an attempt to transnationally ‘regulate statehood’, and in efforts to govern transboundary, ‘non-traditional’ security threats, which involve similar efforts to transnationalise state apparatuses to match the scope of these problems (Hameiri and Jones 2013, forthcoming).

In addition to recognising a qualitative shift in the nature of political contestation, the benefit of this approach is that it does not leave the international level entirely untheorised. These changes are understood to emanate from epochal shifts in the global political economy since the late 1970s, with attendant power shifts in favour of capital, the transnationalisation of finance and production, and the transformation of states to facilitate this. The diminished regulatory capacity of ‘national’ states and the intensifying transnational flows associated with capitalist globalisation are seen to have induced greater elite and popular fear of transboundary threats and risks like transnational crime, environmental degradation and pandemic diseases – often called the ‘dark side of globalisation’. The hollowing out of domestic politics and the rise of new spatial imaginaries – global villages, eco-systems, city-regions and the like – have also created a subjective sense of vulnerability to these challenges. This has apparently impelled policymakers in powerful states and international organisations, often supported by issue-specific experts and NGOs, to seek new, transnational governance approaches that map better to the alleged scale of such problems than individual state-based responses (Hameiri 2010: Ch 2-4; Hameiri and Jones forthcoming: Ch 2). This both offers an account of the causal forces behind international governance projects and identifies the structural context in which the subsequent politics of state transformation plays out.

### **What next for the Murdoch School?**

There is still considerable scope for each of the three broad approaches identified above to generate insight into different research questions. The exact choice of emphasis will largely depend on what question one adopts. However, a case can be made that the real-world blurring of international and domestic politics necessitates each approach to build more of ‘the international’ into their perspectives.

Clearly, the traditional MS focus on domestic political trajectories still has enormous mileage. This is not least because the questions it addresses are those of the vast field of comparative political development, and ‘social conflict’ correctives to liberal and neo-institutionalist perspectives are still very much required in this domain (see Robison in Pepinsky *et al.* 2010). Area and country specialists, students, policymakers, the media and the general public, will continue to require and generate dedicated ‘domestic’ analyses, not least because ‘national’ states remain an overwhelming focus of everyday political activity. Moreover, the MS approach has not yet even been applied to every country in Asia, leaving considerable scope for new scholarship in a traditional vein.

Likewise, depending on the research question, an ‘inside out’ or ‘outside in’ approach may still be useful for generating insights in IR and IPE. After all, not every international policy involves an attempt to establish transnational governance regimes and transform states. For example, it is not unreasonable to model the imposition of international sanctions on a target state as an external, intervening force into local socio-political conflicts (Jones forthcoming). The goal may be to shift domestic power relations and thereby the regime, but in such a hostile situation there is no thought or possibility of crafting regulatory regionalism. Although the second strand of literature on state transformation posits a real-world shift towards blurring international-domestic boundaries as its point of departure, it is important to emphasise that this shift is emergent and uneven, and thus not to over-stretch its conceptual application.

Nonetheless, all of these approaches would benefit from a more dialectical analytical approach that fully recognised that the ‘domestic’ and the ‘international’ are merely two analytical slices of an integrated social whole. As proponents of ‘uneven and combined development’ emphasise, the trajectory of any given country’s politics is always articulated within broader patterns of geopolitics and capitalist economic development and can never be fully understood in isolation (development is ‘combined’); likewise, nor can international developments be grasped independently of the social contradictions and crises that result from the spatially irregular nature of capitalist development (it is ‘uneven’).<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, analysis of domestic political regime development ought to take full account of the international dynamics shaping the emergence and trajectories of class forces, their power, resources and political opportunities. If these insights were incorporated into ‘inside out’ approaches in IR/ IPE, this would avoid reifying the domestic sphere and instead approach a

---

<sup>6</sup> See <http://unevenandcombineddevelopment.wordpress.com/>.

truly dialectical analysis of how international relations impact upon domestic relations, with a recursive impact on international relations. Similarly, ‘outside in’ approaches would do well to identify the factors driving the ‘outside’ to intervene, rather than merely exploring the domestic impact of external action. These broad prescriptions would obviously require incorporating additional insights from other bodies of theory, depending on the research question being pursued.

If we pursued this agenda, what might a new edition of the *de facto* handbook of the MS, *The Political Economy of South-East Asia*, look like? Previous editions have largely sought to explicate the development of individual countries, notwithstanding general theoretical introductions and the odd chapter of a comparative or thematic nature, e.g. on pathways from the Asian financial crisis, or the weakness of organised labour. One way to decisively break out of this ‘methodological nationalism’ would be to adopt a more transnational lens and a thematic rather than country focus for chapters. The collection might begin with an overview (necessarily lengthy, to capture the considerable variation) of the trajectory of Southeast Asia’s political economy, situating it firmly within global patterns of trade, finance, aid, development and social conflict. The material basis for all subsequent analysis is thereby explicitly transnational from the outset. A first substantive section might then consider how broad political trajectories across the region (rather than in individual countries) evolve from this baseline. Topics to cover might be: oligarchy, authoritarianism and democracy; transitions from state ‘socialism’; the contested transformation of Southeast Asian states, from ‘developmentalism’ to ‘regulation’; opposition and liberation struggles; and trajectories of regional governance. A second substantive section could be more sectoral, illustrating how the aforementioned economically undergirded socio-political dynamics have a recursive impact on the development of various economic and social sectors. This would cover traditional MS ground, but also develop the analysis into thematic fields of comparative political economy, which have hitherto been relatively neglected. Topics might include: the international financial institutions and development assistance; poverty, inequality and welfare; energy and natural resources; agribusiness and land grabs; and environmental degradation and climate change. In both of these sections, authors would be required explicitly to situate domestic developments in international dynamics and vice-versa, emphasising that neither happens in isolation.



## References

- Acharya, Amitav (2001, 2009, 2014) *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*, London: Routledge.
- Acharya, Amitav and Stubbs, Richard (eds.) (2013) *Theorizing Southeast Asian Relations: Emerging Debates*, London: Routledge.
- Amsden, Alice (1993) *Structural Macroeconomic Underpinnings of Effective Industrial Policy: Fast Growth in the 1980s in Five Asian Countries*, Geneva: UNCTAD.
- Anek Laothamatas (1997) *Democratization in Southeast and East Asia*, Singapore: ISEAS.
- Beeson, Mark (2006) *Regionalism and Globalization in East Asia: Politics, Security and Economic Development*, London: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Beeson, Mark and Stubbs, Richard (eds.) (2012) *Routledge Handbook of Asian Regionalism*, London: Routledge.
- Brenner, Robert (1977) 'The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism', *New Left Review* 104: 25-92
- Breslin, Shaun (2013) *China and the Global Political Economy*, paperback ed, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Caballero-Anthony, Mely (2005) *Regional Security in Southeast Asia: Beyond the ASEAN Way*, Singapore: ISEAS.
- Callinicos, Alex and Rosenberg, Justin (2008) 'Uneven and Combined Development: The Social-Relational Substratum of "The International"? An Exchange of Letters', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 21(1): 77-112.
- Carroll, Toby (2010) *Delusions of Development: The World Bank and the Post-Washington Consensus in Southeast Asia*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carroll, Toby (2012) 'The Cutting Edge of Accumulation: Neoliberal Risk Mitigation, the Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan Pipeline and its Impact', *Antipode* 44(2): 281-302.
- Carroll, Toby and Jarvis, Darryl S.L. (eds.) (2014) *The Politics of Marketizing Asia*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carroll, Toby and Sovacool, Benjamin (2010) 'Pipelines, Crisis and Capital: Understanding the Contested Regionalism of Southeast Asia', *Pacific Review* 23(5): 625-647.
- Dubash, Navroz K. and Morgan, Bronwen (2013) *The Rise of the Regulatory State of the South: Infrastructure and Development in Emerging Economies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ford, Michele and Pepinsky, Thomas B. (eds.) (2014) *Beyond Oligarchy: Wealth, Power and Contemporary Indonesian Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Gerard, Kelly (2014) *ASEAN's Engagement of Civil Society: Regulating Dissent*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gerschenkron, Alexander (1962) *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hadiz, Vedi R. (ed.) (2006) *Empire and Neoliberalism in Asia*, London: Routledge.
- Hadiz, Vedi R. (2010) *Localising Power in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia: A Southeast Asia Perspective*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

- Hadiz, Vedi R., Aspinall, Edward, Rosser, Andrew, Sudibyo, Agus, Patria, Nezar, Achwan, Rochman (2013) 'Feature Section: Capitalism and Indonesia's Democracy', *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 43(2): 208-294.
- Hameiri, Shahar (2010) *Regulating Statehood: Statebuilding and the Transformation of the Global Order*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hameiri, Shahar (2013) 'Theorising Regions through Changes in Statehood: Rethinking the Theory and Method of Comparative Regionalism', *Review of International Studies* 39(2): 313-335.
- Hameiri, Shahar and Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2011) 'Regulatory Regionalism and the Dynamics of Territorial Politics: The Case of the Asia-Pacific Region', *Political Studies* 59(1): 59-77.
- Hameiri, Shahar and Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2012) 'Regulatory Regionalism in Asia', in Beeson, Mark and Stubbs, Richard (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Asian Regionalism*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, pp. 177-85.
- Hameiri, Shahar and Jones, Lee (2013) 'The Politics and Governance of Non-Traditional Security', *International Studies Quarterly* 57(3): 462-473.
- Hameiri, Shahar and Jones, Lee (2015) 'Regulatory Regionalism and Anti-Money Laundering Governance in Asia', forthcoming in *Australian Journal of International Affairs*.
- Hameiri, Shahar and Jones, Lee (forthcoming) *Governing Borderless Threats: Non-Traditional Security and the Politics of State Transformation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hewison, Kevin, Robison, Richard and Rodan, Garry (eds.) (1993) *Southeast Asia in the 1990s: Authoritarianism, Democracy and Capitalism*, St Leonards, Australia: Allen and Unwin.
- Higgott, Richard (2000) 'The International Relations of the Asian Economic Crisis: A Study in the Politics of Resentment', in Robison, Richard, Beeson, Mark, Jayasuriya, Kanishka and Kim, Hyuk-Rae (eds.) *Politics and Markets in the Wake of the Asian Crisis*, London: Routledge, pp. 261-282.
- Hughes, Caroline (2003) *The Political Economy of Cambodia's Transition, 1991-2001*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Huntington, Samuel P. (1993) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Hutchison, Jane and Brown, Andrew (eds.) (2001) *Organising Labour in Globalising Asia*, London: Routledge.
- Hutchison, Jane, Hout, Wil, Hughes, Caroline and Robison, Richard (eds.) (2014) *Political Economy and the Aid Industry in Asia*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jarvis, Darryl S.L. (2014) 'Regulatory States in the South: Can they Exist and Do We Want Them? The Case of the Indonesian Power Sector', in Carroll, Toby and Jarvis, Darryl S.L. (eds.) *The Politics of Marketizing Asia*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 71-100.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2001) 'Globalisation and the Changing Architecture of the State: Regulatory State and the Politics of Negative Coordination', *Journal of European Public Policy* 8(1): 101-123.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2003) 'Embedded Mercantilism and Open Regionalism: The Crisis of a Regional Political Project', *Third World Quarterly* 24(2): 339-355.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka (ed.) (2004) *Asian Regional Governance: Crisis and Change*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2005) *Reconstituting the Global Liberal Order: Legitimacy and Regulation*, London: Routledge.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2006) *Statecraft, Welfare and the Politics of Inclusion*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2009) 'Regulatory Regionalism in the Asia-Pacific: Drivers, Instruments and Actors', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63(3): 335-347.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka and Rodan, Garry (2007) 'Special Issue: Beyond Hybrid Regimes', *Democratization* 14(5).
- Jessop, Bob (1990) *State Theory: Putting the Capitalist State in its Place*, London: Polity.
- Jessop, Bob (2008) *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach*, Cambridge: Polity.
- Jones, Lee (2010) '(Post-)Colonial Statebuilding and State Failure in East Timor: Bringing Social Conflict Back In', *Conflict, Security and Development* 19(3): 547-75.
- Jones, Lee (2012a) *ASEAN, Sovereignty and Intervention in Southeast Asia*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jones, Lee (2012b) 'State Power, Social Conflicts and Security Policy in Southeast Asia', in Robison, Richard (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Politics*, London: Routledge, pp. 346-360.
- Jones, Lee (2014) 'The Political Economy of Myanmar's Transition', *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 44(1): 144-170.
- Jones, Lee (forthcoming) *International Economic Sanctions and State Transformation*, book manuscript.
- Kuhonta, Erik Martinez, Slater, Dan and Vu, Tuong (eds.) (2008) *Southeast Asia in Political Science: Theory, Region, and Qualitative Analysis*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Legro, Jeffrey W. and Moravcsik, Andrew (1999) 'Is Anybody Still a Realist?', *International Security* 24(2): 5-55.
- Nesadurai, Helen E. S. (2003) *Globalisation, Domestic Politics, and Regionalism: The ASEAN Free Trade Area*, London: Routledge.
- Moore, Barrington (1966) *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Boston: Beacon Press.
- Pepinsky, Thomas B. (2014) 'The Institutional Turn in Comparative Authoritarianism', *British Journal of Political Science* 44(3): 631-53.
- Pepinsky, Thomas B., Geddes, Barbara, McCargo, Duncan, Robison, Richard, Kuhonta, Erik Martinez, Slater, Dan and Vu, Tuong (2010) 'Discussion of Erik Martinez Kuhonta, Dan Slater, and Tuong Vu's *Southeast Asia in Political Science: Theory, Region, and Qualitative Analysis*', *Journal of East Asian Studies* 10(2): 171-208.
- Poulantzas, Nicos (1973) *Political Power and Social Classes*, London: NLB.
- Rasiah, Rajah and Schmidt, Johannes Dragsbaek (eds.) (2010) *The New Political Economy of Southeast Asia*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Robison, Richard (1986) *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Robison, Richard (ed.) (2012a) *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Politics*, London: Routledge.
- Robison, Richard (2012b) 'Interpreting the Politics of Southeast Asia: Debates in Parallel Universes', in Robison, Richard (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Politics*, London: Routledge, pp. 5-22.
- Robison, Richard and Goodman, David S. G. (eds.) (1996) *The New Rich in Asia: Mobile Phones, McDonald's and Middle-Class Revolution*, London: Routledge.
- Robison, Richard and Hadiz, Vedi R. (2004) *Reorganising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets*, New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

- Robison, Richard and Hadiz, Vedi R. (eds.) (2006) *The Neo-Liberal Revolution: Forging the Market State*, London: Palgrave.
- Robison, Richard and Hewison, Kevin (eds.) (2006) *East Asia and the Trials of Neo-Liberalism*, London: Routledge.
- Robison, Richard and Hout, Wil (eds.) (2009) *Governance and the Depoliticisation of Development*, London: Routledge.
- Robison, Richard, Beeson, Mark, Jayasuriya, Kanishka and Kim, Hyuk-Rae (eds.) (2000) *Politics and Markets in the Wake of the Asian Crisis*, London: Routledge.
- Rodan, Garry (1989) *The Political Economy of Singapore's Industrialization: National State and International Capital*, London: Macmillan.
- Rodan, Garry (ed.) (1996) *Political Oppositions in Industrialising Asia*, London: Routledge.
- Rodan, Garry and Hewison, Kevin (eds.) (2006) *Neoliberalism and Conflict in Asia after 9/11*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Rodan, Garry, Hewison, Kevin and Robison, Richard (eds.) (1997) *The Political Economy of South-East Asia: An Introduction*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Rodan, Garry, Hewison, Kevin and Robison, Richard (eds.) (2001) *The Political Economy of South-East Asia: Conflicts, Crises and Change*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Rodan, Garry, Hewison, Kevin and Robison, Richard (eds.) (2006) *The Political Economy of South-East Asia: Markets, Power and Contestation*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Rodan, Garry and Hughes, Caroline (2014) *The Politics of Accountability in Southeast Asia: The Dominance of Moral Ideologies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rodan, Garry and Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2012) 'Hybrid Regimes: A Social Foundations Approach', in Haynes, Jeffrey (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Democratization*, London: Routledge, pp. 175-189.
- Rosser, Andrew (2009) 'Risk Management, Neo-liberalism and Coercion: the Asian Development Bank's Approach to "Fragile States"', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63(3): 376-89.
- Tubilewicz, Czeslaw and Jayasuriya, Kanishka (2015) 'The Local Regulatory State and Regional Regulation', forthcoming in *Australian Journal of International Affairs*.
- Wade, Robert (1990) *Governing the Market: Economic Theory and the Role of Government in East Asian Industrialization*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Walker, R.B.J. (1993) *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, David (2013) 'Development, Intervention and International Order', *Review of International Studies* 39(5): 1213-1231.
- Wimmer, Andreas and Glick Schiller, Nina (2002) 'Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences', *Global Networks* 2(4): 301-334.