

## Abstracts

### **The Impact of Railroads on the Malayan Economy, 1874–1941**

AMARJIT KAUR      Pages 693–710

The main contention of this essay is that railways in Malaya were constructed specifically to serve the tin and rubber industries which were dominated by Western capitalist enterprise. The railroads were concentrated in the west coast states, reinforcing the trend toward economic specialization that had already begun. The pattern of subsequent capital investment which was related to railroad development produced wide regional inequalities. It gave rise to a spatial dualism that was most evident in the emergence of export-oriented enclaves and the associated infrastructure in the western states, leaving the eastern states outside the mainstream of capitalist development. The railways did not stimulate well-rounded economic development in the country because they had little or no multiplier effect on the local economy. The benefits of railroad construction accrued largely to the British economy. I seek to make clear the links between railway development in Malaya, the emergence of an extractive-colonial economy heavily specialized in tin and rubber, and the incorporation of the country into the international capitalist system.

### **Sino-Japanese Business in China: The Luda Company, 1921–1937**

TIM WRIGHT      Pages 711–727

The weakening of Japan's position in China following the Washington Conference led to the establishment of the Sino-Japanese Luda Company to run the Zichuan coal mines, operated by the Japanese army since 1915. The inability of the Chinese promoters to raise sufficient funds for the company, however, allowed the Japanese investors the major say in company policy. As a Sino-foreign company, Luda enjoyed special privileges which were zealously upheld by the Japanese consuls. Though these practices eroded Chinese sovereignty, they did not make the company a financial success. This failure resulted partly from the Japanese investors' greater concern with their country's long-term fuel supply than with Luda's short-term profits; but this paper also stresses both the ways in which the Chinese, in their attempts to reassert China's sovereignty, harassed and restricted privileged foreign companies, and the overriding importance of locational and geological factors in determining a mining company's success.

### **Rantau Pariaman: The World of Minangkabau Coastal Merchants in the Nineteenth Century**

TSUYOSHI KATO      Pages 729–752

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, European colonial powers established economic and political control over most of Southeast Asia. The entrench-

ment of colonialism affected the lives of coastal merchants as well as those of peasants in interior villages. Yet how indigenous coastal merchants responded to the new situation has been a relatively neglected question in studies of this region. Based on the autobiography of Muhammad Saleh, a self-made Minangkabau merchant, this paper details the world and distinctive outlook of Minangkabau coastal merchants, and how Saleh successfully responded to changing political and economic conditions in West Sumatra in the late nineteenth century. Far from being the story of a helpless native merchant at the mercy of the Dutch governing power and Chinese merchants, the life of Muhammad Saleh reveals the adaptability of a certain sector of the indigenous merchant class in the Dutch East Indies. It also reflects the profound changes taking place within the world of Minangkabau merchants.

### **The Political Significance of Religious Wealth in Burmese History: Some Further Thoughts**

VICTOR B. LIEBERMAN      Pages 753–769

This article examines the recent assertion by a scholar of Burmese history that extensive landholding by the Buddhist monkhood helped to undermine every dynasty between the ninth and nineteenth century. It argues that religious wealth, possibly before the fifteenth century and certainly after that period, was less significant than has been suggested, and that the institutional relation between throne and monkhood was by no means static. During the later dynasties, secular elites represented the principal threat to the centralization of resources. Further, in certain instances, royal purification of the Religion sought not to deprive the monkhood of wealth, but to strengthen both the Religion and the crown at the expense of private lay interests.