

Wednesday, 8th February 2017 at 2:30 p.m.

IAS Meeting Room 2.27, Level 2, FASS Building

### Abstract

The early histories of the Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah, as well as of the sultanate of Brunei, in north Borneo, rely to a large extent on Chinese sources.

The genealogy of the sultans of Brunei (*silisilah rajah-rajah Brunei*) is the only Malay source that records the presence of Ong Sum Ping, an eminent Chinese man who in one way or another was linked to the early Brunei ruling house. The official Chinese sources of the Yuan (1279-1368) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties have no record of Ong Sum Ping and his variant others. Yet Ong in Borneo lore has been identified as the governor of an alleged Yuan province in Sabah, as an envoy of the Ming dynasty, and as an admiral of Zheng He's fleet, among others.

The present paper studies how Chinese writers especially since the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have created these diverse identities and critically examines their credibility.

### Speaker's Profile



Johannes Kurz received his Ph.D. in Classical Chinese Studies from the University of Heidelberg in 1993. His research interests are the historiography in early Song; imperial libraries in Song; history of the Five Dynasties and Ten States (907-960); history of the Southern Tang (937-976); and Chinese sources in the fabrication of modern Southeast Asian national histories.