Joint Seminar

Protecting the Dragon: Dutch attempts to limit access to Komodo Island in the 1920s and 1930s

SPEAKER

A/P Timothy P. Barnard
Department of History, National University of Singapore

Day, Date, Time, Venue

Wednesday, 20 October 2010, 3 pm,
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Seminar Room B (AS7-01-17)

Chair:
Dr. Patrick Daly
Asia Research Institute

Abstract
In 1912 Dutch scientists announced the existence of large lizards on Komodo Island in the Dutch East Indies. By the 1920s these large lizards became the focus of intense collecting efforts on behalf of zoos and natural history museums, which desired the publicity and status inherent in displaying such a ‘celebrity species’. To limit access to a little understood animal, as well as a location on the margins of their authority, Dutch scientists and administrators began developing regulations restricting access to these ‘dragons’, which, by the 1930s, led to new understandings about the role of wildlife reserves and thus became vital in the development of early environmental conservation in Indonesia.

About the Speaker
Timothy P. Barnard is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the National University of Singapore.

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