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ASIAN HISTORY

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By Farish A. Noor

## America's Encounters with Southeast Asia, 1800-1900

*Before the Pivot*

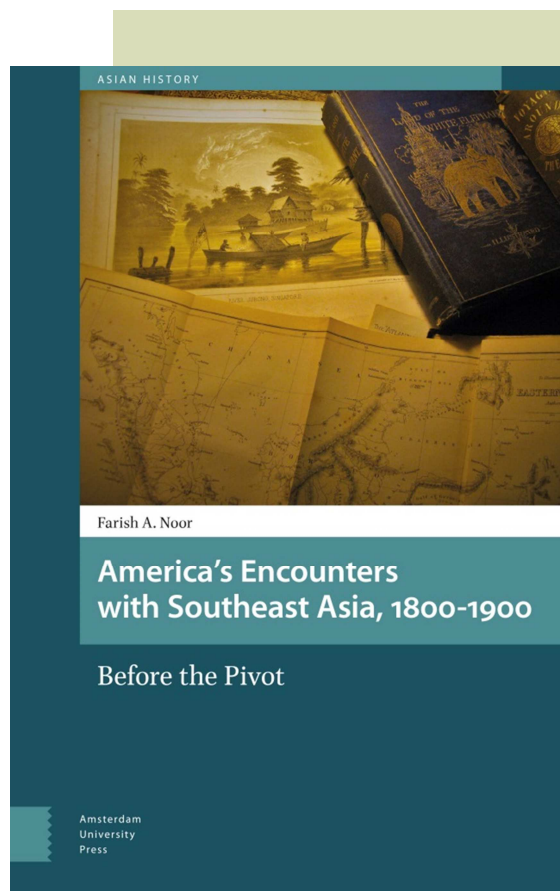
A century before the Philippines came under American control, Americans were already travelling to Southeast Asia regularly. This book looks at the writings of American diplomats, adventurers, and scientists and chronicles how nineteenth-century Americans viewed and imagined Southeast Asia through their own cultural-political lenses. It argues that as Americans came to visit the region they also brought with them a train of cultural assumptions and biases that contributed to the development of American Orientalism in Southeast Asia.

*"Absolutely unique, beautifully written and quite simply mind-blowing. This is a distinct and original piece of work that offers an account of American-Southeast Asian encounters through a lens that is rightly critical of Orientalist constructions of Asia. There is nothing else like this book and the field of Southeast Asian studies is very much in need of it."*

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*"Highly original and un-put-down-able. Farish's work looks at the interaction of Americans with Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century and the development of American Orientalism. Studying the emerging Orientalist discourse in 19th century America through the works of American authors, this work has much to say about issues of racism, and the cultural and religious exceptionalism of the United States as it emerged as a colonial power."*

Professor Peter Carey, Emeritus Fellow, Trinity College, Oxford, and Visiting Professor, Faculty of Humanities, University of Indonesia



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