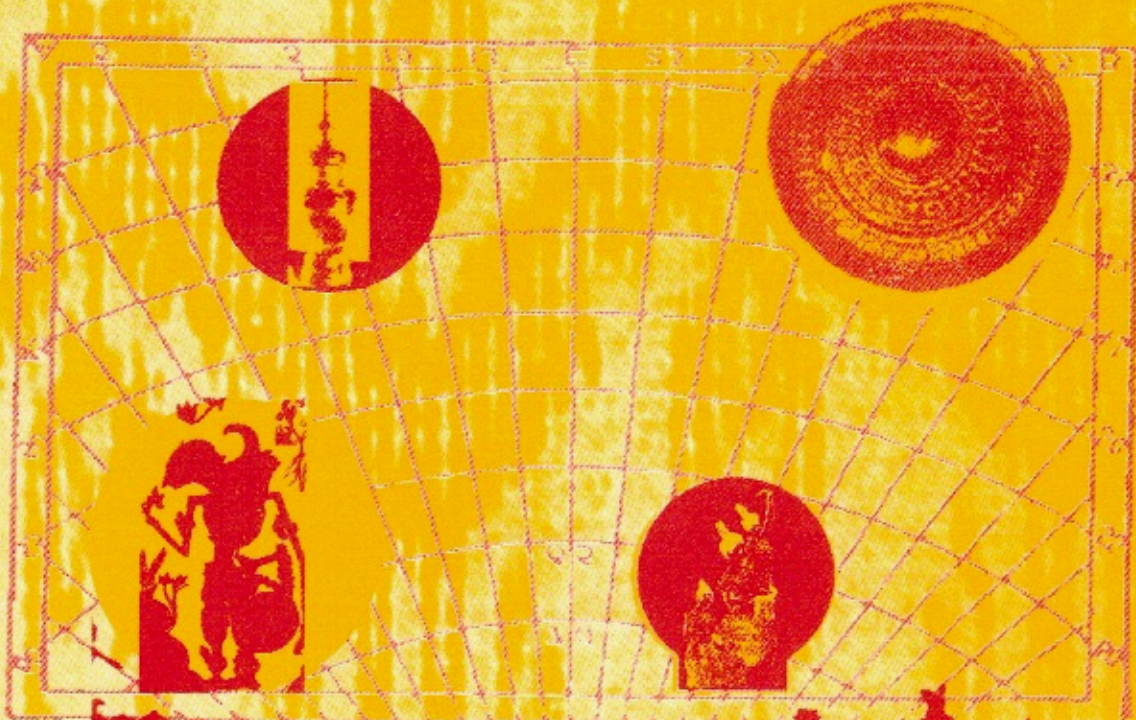


SEAN

BULLETIN

Southeast Asian Studies Bulletin (1/00) Apr-May 2000



Art, Culture & Space in Southeast Asia



Editor

Maria Serena I. Diokno

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CONTENTS

Southeast Asian Studies Bulletin 1/00 Apr-May 2000

Features

4 The Palace, the Market, the Village and the Street

Reviews

8 Ruptures and Departures: Language and Culture in Southeast Asia

10 Arts and Culture Management by Selected Southeast Asian Government Agencies

14 Archaeology in Southeast Asia in the 3rd Millennium

16 SEASREP Research Abstracts

Profiles

19 Approaching Asia from Asia

22 Poetics and Literature in Southeast Asia

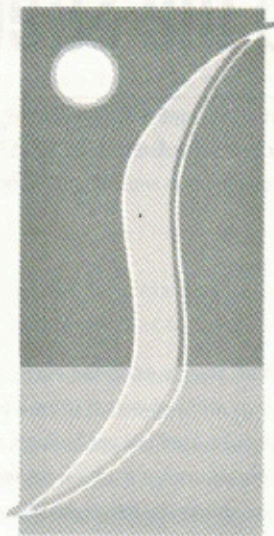
24 Southeast Asian Studies in Thammasat University

Announcements

29 Conferences • New Publications • Recipients of SEASREP's 2nd Southeast Asia Traveling Classroom Grant

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Maria Serena I. Diokno



There are new efforts to "internationalize" Southeast Asian studies abroad by bringing it closer to home in Southeast Asia. One way to do this would be for, say, American students to study part of the time in the U.S. and part in Southeast Asia, earning credits in both parts of the world. This idea, among others, was discussed in the recently concluded two-day conference organized by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California-Los Angeles.

Here in the region the effort is, as SEASREP Council member Charvut puts it, to "Southeast Asianize" Southeast Asian studies by bringing scholars within the region in touch with each other. This really is what SEASREP is all about: the traveling classroom for undergraduate students, the research and study programs for graduate students, and the visiting professors program for faculty.

At some point the local and the foreign will meet, as they have been in the past, though hopefully in more creative and challenging ways. Admittedly the audiences are different: in the U.S., the large student population of Asian Americans seeking to establish the roots of their distinctiveness as members of a multi-cultural North America; and in Southeast Asia, Asians themselves who, having defined the self in a national framework, are still in the process of working out a larger collective in a highly diverse and not always harmonious region.

I started to work on this editorial in Los Angeles as I listened to one paper after another on how Southeast Asia is presented and constructed in different parts of the world. The more I listened, the more I thought about the enormity of the work ahead, building on our achievements in recent years. In the end, I told myself, our success would rest on the women and men we tap to develop and support Southeast Asian studies in our part of the world. Our numbers, though growing, still aren't large enough and it takes time to develop commitment and a solid network of scholars.

On 19 April, we lost Luisa Mallari-Hall, one of our youngest recruits to the cause, a dynamic Southeast Asianist who specialized in Malay literature. Luisa along with her husband Martin, and their children Irene, who was two, and Ella, who was all of three months, died in the plane that crashed while attempting to land at Davao airport. Luisa was to take part in the SEASREP Council's workshop this May; she turned in her paper the day before she took the flight home to Davao. We will listen to Luisa as we read her paper and ponder over her suggestions about how Southeast Asian studies in the region can be improved. This was her final act, a genuine contribution to the cause of Southeast Asian studies. ▀

The Palace, the Market, the Village and the Street

Zulkifli Bin-Haji Mohamad, Senior Specialist for Performing Arts,
Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization-SEAMEO Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO-SPAFA),
Bangkok, Thailand

At an early age, we always find our own space to create our own little theatre. I remember we used to get together in front of this old abandoned house, using the verandah and the big stone staircase as part of stage. Some of us performed and some decided to be audience, sitting on the ground in front of the stairs. We danced, sang, played wedding, birth and death ceremonies. Sometimes we even played shadow puppets, by making our own puppets, using a dinner table as theatre box and white bed sheet as the screen. All these play spaces disappeared right after we were called to dinner. On different days we used different spaces, but the memory of those particular spaces will always be there. It is not necessarily the memory of an actual space but of what had taken place in that space.

Another interesting space is the weekend market in front of my house, which turned into a basketball or badminton court on one evening, or *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet) theatre on another day and *ronggeng* (Malay social court dance) court on another eventful day. But in some neighborhoods, where they built a special structure and called it *dewan serbaguna* or "multipurpose hall" not much happened. The same became of our market shade when the district office decided to make the place official as *dewan serbaguna*. Everything disappeared; just the building remained.

Why did these events disappear the minute the space became formalized? Perhaps it is especially true in the case of Asian cities. We want both the event and space to be recognized officially but, coincidentally, our so-called cultural community disappeared with the appearance of modern technology such as television, movie theatre, etc.

Space and Meaning

Space is that in which all objects exist and move, it is the distance between two or more objects, it is area or volume, like open spaces such as land not yet built on, it is limited or unoccupied place or area, it is also a period of time set out with regular spaces in between. Space has its moment and time with its own memory and history, erased and re-written, over and over again. What's left is the topmost layer or the moment most remembered. (Noguchi, 1994)

This paper looks at spaces and their multi-faceted expressions — historical, cultural, community, traditional, modern and contemporary. It discusses official state spaces, their functions and expressions, as well as unofficial and unrepresented spaces, availability of official traditional space, private contemporary space, and conventional and unconventional spaces.

Traditionally, there were three main types of space: royal or state or political space, trading space, and community space. The first two are discussed by Anthony Reid in *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*. The royal/state/political space looked like this:

By staging spectacular events in which thousands of people took part, the ruler most fully showed himself as the supernatural fulcrum around which his state revolved.

Royal and religious festivals provided an opportunity for the ruler to display himself before his people in all his majesty, with courtiers, officials, soldiers, followers, and even foreigners all assigned their proper place in the pageant.... Royal coronations, marriages, funerals, and puberty rituals, the annual religious festivals, ceremonies

In fact, the concept of open space or open theatre is nothing new to Asian drama or even Greek drama. Perhaps we were too caught up with the idea of having a proper theatre space, a formalized and controlled venue. Without realizing it, we were actually limiting performance spaces, techniques, styles and genres as well as theatre groups and audiences.

to ensure the fertility and well-being of the country, and even the reception of foreign ambassadors were occasions for public processions and entertainments....

The trading/market space was described by Reid as follows:

Markets were part of every great feast. Such massive assemblages of people were in themselves a guarantee of brisk trading in food and other essentials. It is probable that country folk used the great annual festivals to bring their produce to market and stock up on imported luxuries for the year ahead. Their periodic appearances in the city could also be the occasion to present the tribute or harvest share due to their lords....

Community space, on the other hand, could include the Ruai of the Dayak's long-house in Borneo. As described by Charles Hose in *Natural Man* (1988), Ruai is the open living room in the long-house. The long-house usually consisted of an odd number of rooms or houses (more than five and up to 25 or more) joined together with the middle house being the house of the headman. The middle house was considered political space in a traditional community. The *ruai* was often used in *Gawai* (harvest festivals), births, deaths, weddings, receiving guests and merry-making. More often than not, the ceremony would start from the headman's house, with the headman taking the first step to start the dance.



Changing Spaces

With colonization, modernization and urbanization, spaces and layers of space in Asian countries, changed shapes, functions and expressions. The Palace of the Sultan of Kutei in Kalimantan Timur, Borneo, for example, became the Dutch administration office during colonial days. With independence, it became the office of the Governor. With industrialization, it became a museum, and with tourism and culture searching, the Sultan of Kutei visited the place and celebrated his birthday there. The place must have appeared rather strange to him since he had never stayed and celebrated his birthday there before.

Sanam Luang (Royal/Official Field), an open space in front of the Grand Palace in Bangkok, in its present day changes from a kite-flying field on a windy day, with people scattered around having picnics after a hard day's work, to a field of love games, romance, seduction and prostitution, as the day progresses into night. As the night nears the wee hours of the morning, the field shaded with bushy trees becomes a palace for the homeless. On some days the space hosts auspicious royal ceremonies such as the King's birthday celebration and Royal Ploughing Day. Around this open space stand various other state spaces such as the National Museum, the National

Gallery, Silpakorn University, Thammasat University, the National Theatre, the College of Dramatic Arts, the Royal Hotel (the first hotel in Bangkok), and government offices. The space might mean one thing to the official, and another to the public. Whatever the meaning, this space has liberalized itself over the past centuries.

continued next page

Richard Engelhart, Director of UNESCO Asia Pacific, based in Bangkok, mentioned that Sanam Luang was the weekend market in Bangkok, some fifteen years ago. Stalls were set up around the field, with the middle space being the play space for bird singing competitions in the morning, boxing rings, kite flying in the late afternoon, and *likay* performances staged in the night. This was confirmed by a Thai friend living in New York, who told me how he spent his childhood going around to the weekend market in Sanam Luang, watching performances and retiring to the Royal Hotel with his family for cool lemonade. By Monday morning the field would return to normal with no trace of the weekend happenings. Now the weekend market has been moved to Chatuchak, probably the biggest market place in the world, attracting thousands of people during the weekends. Managed by the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA), it is now promoted by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) as one of Bangkok's special attractions selling everything from sand to sculptures. The structure of the market place stands there seven days a week, but only comes alive on Saturdays and Sundays. What's missing in this weekend market now are the performing arts, partly due to time, because the market opens in the morning and closes by 6 or 7 p.m. On top of that Chatuchak is also not a neighborhood kind of place, but exists only as a market, whereas Sanam Luang was more than just a market; it was a place surrounded by real people including artists. Perhaps there will be performances in Chatuchak soon.

In the past, performances put together by dancers, musicians, and medicine men in the market square were meant to entertain traders, merchants and the public as well as serve as a money-making venture. More often than not, these performers were travelers from other places and were not part of court troupes. In the past two years, the European Union in Bangkok has been organizing a Street Theatre near Tha Phra Chan, gathering various theatre groups coming from Europe to perform in streets of old Bangkok. They must have been inspired by the Phra Atit Road Festival, first organized by the Hemlock Café Gallery, gathering artists, graduates of

nearby Silpakorn University and performing artists from the neighborhood. What would be interesting is to see performances put up by various Thai artists. In the past few years, too, we have seen students put up performances as a kind of protest against the government. Indonesians, Thais and Filipinos are known for that. They choose the spaces for their demonstrations and dramas.



Recently also, BMA was inspired to do a street festival by closing Mairi Chit Road near China Town in Bangkok. They hired a consultant company as organizer but the affair ended up a weekend market. Many motorists complained about closed roads and traffic jams. About Café Gallery, known for its trendy activities and events, was trapped in the middle of all these, having to change its usual entrance, (thank god for its side entrance), but tolerating the loudness of street music.

How should we deal with these sometimes incompatible interests? Are we approaching these things in the right way? Or have we simply gotten excited over the city council's closure of the road for weekend pedestrians, without thinking about access and parking lots for visitors. Though the event at About Café had some audience, a lot more people were turned off by the traffic jam or got lost in the redirected routes. Though the event should be shaped by the needs of the public, the management of the event is crucial. It is not easy to deal with non-conventional space, both for the space itself and the audience. When the audience has mixed perceptions, performers need to have the right attitude towards the space and the audience.

Constructing Spaces

Up to the reign of King Chulalongkorn, Thai dramatic performances were given either in the open air or on temporary stages, with or without roofs, built on the locations of festivals, fairs, funerals, or other ceremonies and social occasions. (Rutnin, 1996)

In fact, the concept of open space or open theatre is nothing new to Asian drama or even Greek drama. Perhaps we were too caught up with the idea of having a proper theatre space, a formalized and controlled venue. Without realizing it, we were actually limiting performance spaces, techniques, styles and genres as well as theatre groups and audiences.

According to Mattani M. Rutnin, these temporary stages have been mentioned since the early Bangkok period as 'Rong Lakhon' (theatre). Only at the end of the reign of King Chulalongkorn were many private theatres built in the palaces of princes and princesses and the mansions of aristocrats. It was King Vajiravudh, an English-educated sovereign, who introduced the modern theatre construction of Siam. After his trips to Europe, America and Japan in the early 1900s, he built a small western style theatre in the compound of the Saranrom Palace. The first permanent theatre was built in Dusit Park, called Royal Theatre, Dusit Park. Later when he became King, the theatre became the National Theatre. King Vajiravudh, who loved theatre and literature, created various other theatres attached to his summer retreats outside Bangkok, such as Sanam Chan Palace in Nakhon Pathom, Marukhathiwan Palace in Hua Hin, and Bang Pa In Palace near Ayutthaya.

After the 1932 revolution and the fall of absolute monarchy, the Fine Arts Department took over the National Theatre from the palace and set up an academy of music and dance. From then on cultural performances were very much related to Thai national culture building. With the new National Theatre built in 1960, Thai identity building became stronger and stronger. The space has somehow become the forum for official cultural entertainment sponsored by military and government leaders. The Thailand Cultural Centre, funded by the Japanese government, opened in 1985 to stage Thai culture on the international standard as well as bring in international performers. By 1997, the National Theatre had become obsolete, unable to cooperate with technical requirements, and was forced to close for renovation. Since then it has become even more difficult to witness a traditional Thai dance except at Thai restaurants. After nearly fifteen years of establishment, the Thailand Cultural Centre is becoming more and more official, a place where foreign embassies showcase their culture. It became more liberal only when there's money involved, such as for pop concerts.

The development of contemporary theatre in the 1970s was very much the activity of two universities in Bangkok, Thammasat and Chulalongkorn. Only in the 1980s did private spaces for contemporary theatre emerge, such as Sala Chalerkrung and Bangkok Playhouse. Both stage commercial plays and musicals.

Moving Out

As the usual theatre spaces move out, new spaces are opened. In 1998, the Dance Centre, a private company, staged "The Last Silver Crane" on the grounds of an old palace called "Suan Prakad". Later that year, the Centre staged the same play on the grounds of The Siam Society, with two traditional Thai houses as background. Patravadi Theatre, another private company with its Theatre Season and Bangkok Fringe Festival, has various spaces available within the big compound including an open theatre on top of the swimming pool, a studio theatre as well as an open-air café theatre. The idea might not be new to other Southeast Asian cities like Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. More than five years ago, for example, the Instant Café Theatre staged a big production of "Mid-Summer Night's Dream" on the grounds of The Carcosa, Kuala Lumpur, and early last year, Five Arts Centre staged their play "Welcome to Mrs. Yang's 98th Birthday Party" in the entire house. Unimastage in Kuching, Malaysia, staged a contemporary dance production, "River", at the Kuching Waterfront, with 40 performers, using both sides of the Kuching River and two boats lit with candle lights crossing the river towards the audience and merging within them.

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Breaking Boundaries

Moradok Mai Black Box Theatre, has given a chance to new ideas and theatre groups such as the recent production "This Is My Life-I Love You", the so-called first gay musical play in Thailand, going beyond drag and go-go shows in Pat

continued on page 25

Ruptures and Departures: Language and Culture in Southeast Asia



The University of the Philippines Department of English and Comparative Literature held its second international conference on Southeast Asian language and literature on 19-21 January 2000. Entitled *Ruptures and Departures: Language and Culture in Southeast Asia*, the conference brought together various perspectives on language

and culture and a wide variety of research interests such as language policy, language teaching, colonial education, nationalism in language, language and literature, gender and language, creative writing, history, dance, and technology in language teaching. ❖ Experts from Australia, Japan, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Philippines shared research findings and scholarly insights. The conference especially provided local participants an opportunity to take part in a multidisciplinary international exchange. ❖

The international conference is in line with the Department's thrust of strengthening the Southeast Asian component of its language and literary studies in the Philippines. As global concerns inevitably bind us all, the Department feels it should know its immediate neighbors first. The conference, therefore, gave the participants an opportunity not only to interact with international scholars but also touch base with other cultures. As important as the conference sessions were the evening activities, during which participants were treated to the best of Filipino music and dance and to a multicultural mix of poetic nuances in the poetry reading session. ❖ Following are abstracts of six selected plenary papers.

Ambiguities of Enlightenment Pioneering World-Folklore in the Philippines

Benedict R. Anderson
Cornell University

The paper concerns the extraordinary ethnography, *El Folklore Filipino*, compiled by Isabelo de los Reyes at exactly the same time that Jose Rizal was writing the incendiary nation-creating novel *Noli Me Tangere*. The paper shows how de los Reyes' "future-oriented" anthropology differed from the antiquarianism of contemporary European folklore studies. Anderson also discusses the complex ways in which de los Reyes positioned himself vis-à-vis England and Germany, Spain, colonial society in the Philippines, his own Ilocano ethnic group and the "wild peoples" of Luzon's High Cordillera. The paper considers the status, in de los Reyes' eyes, of the Spanish language in which he wrote, then understood by no more than three percent of his fellow countrymen, and argues that it was seen by him primarily as an international language, not one of colonial oppression. Out of this emerges an analysis of what kind of patriot the young ethnographer imagined himself to be. The paper concludes with some reflections on why folklore to this day remains a more powerful vehicle for nationalist writing in the Philippines than in any other Southeast Asian country.

Cultural Dislocations: A Personal Literary Journey

Muhammad Haji Salleh
Kyoto University

The paper traces a traditional Malay village childhood and a Malay-language education where nature, traditional social hierarchy, and religion played central parts. This traditional life and education were abruptly replaced by the English-medium colonial education after three years, where the traditional was overtaken by the western, and children were subversively

The language of life and intellectual expression was quickly replaced so that when a young person began to write, the colonial language would automatically become his literary medium. He struggled through it, always knowing it was a borrowed language and one belonging to a race that suppressed his people, language, and land.

taught that the local is inferior. The language of life and intellectual expression was quickly replaced so that when a young person began to write, the colonial language would automatically become his literary medium. He struggled through it, always knowing it was a borrowed language and one belonging to a race that suppressed his people, language, and land.

The writer began writing poetry both in Malay and English, continually translating a dual-culture self into two separate languages. But English always had the upper hand. On the other hand, overexposure to English for long periods produced a kind of need to write back as the other, in the end urging him to leave that language for his native tongue for local themes, mythologies, and icons.

The shift was no romantic journey. The struggle to find a language not sentimental and yet harsh enough to deal with colonialism and a violent present, without closing the door of the traditional house, preoccupied him obsessively. He was in fact making a language from the pieces of the past and the self. This poet perhaps may last a little longer than the one who closes literary doors.

After thirty years, a certain linguistic and cultural equilibrium seems to have been achieved.

Ruptures and Departures, the Case of Malay(sian and Indonesian)

E. Ulrich Kratz
University of London

The paper looks at the use of Malay and its development into Malaysian and Indonesian, with reference to differing colonial attitudes. The post-colonial development of the language(s) in Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, and Singapore, its/their interaction with other cognate languages of the region, its/their political and cultural significance, and their actual state and condition vis-à-vis the use and role of English are discussed.

The paper is interested in considering the current status of the language(s) in light of the historical role of Malay.

Transplantation of Language in a Different Culture: Possibilities and Alternatives

Andrew Gonzalez, FSC
Secretary, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Philippines

Using the case of the English language in the Philippines but moving beyond the Philippines to other post-colonial societies in Southeast Asia, an attempt is made to draw out theoretical considerations on possibilities and alternatives using the metaphor of transplantation to describe what happens to a colonial language in a different setting where there are indigenous languages.

The recipient culture offers possibilities of developing the transplanted language and the assumption of new roles in the post-colonial society. At the same time, what has not been hitherto treated explicitly in the literature and is programmatically discussed in this paper is the effect of the transplanted language on the indigenous languages and their subsequent development in light of the needs and the cultural configurations of that society.

Challenges for the Third Millennium: Cross-cultural Readings of Literature

Kirpal Singh
Nanyang Technological University

For too long we have been taught to read "Literature" as if there was only one, or at most two or three, possible Readings of a particular text. While we seem to have come through the problems associated with reading western texts

continued on page 28



Arts and Culture Management by Selected Southeast Asian Government Agencies

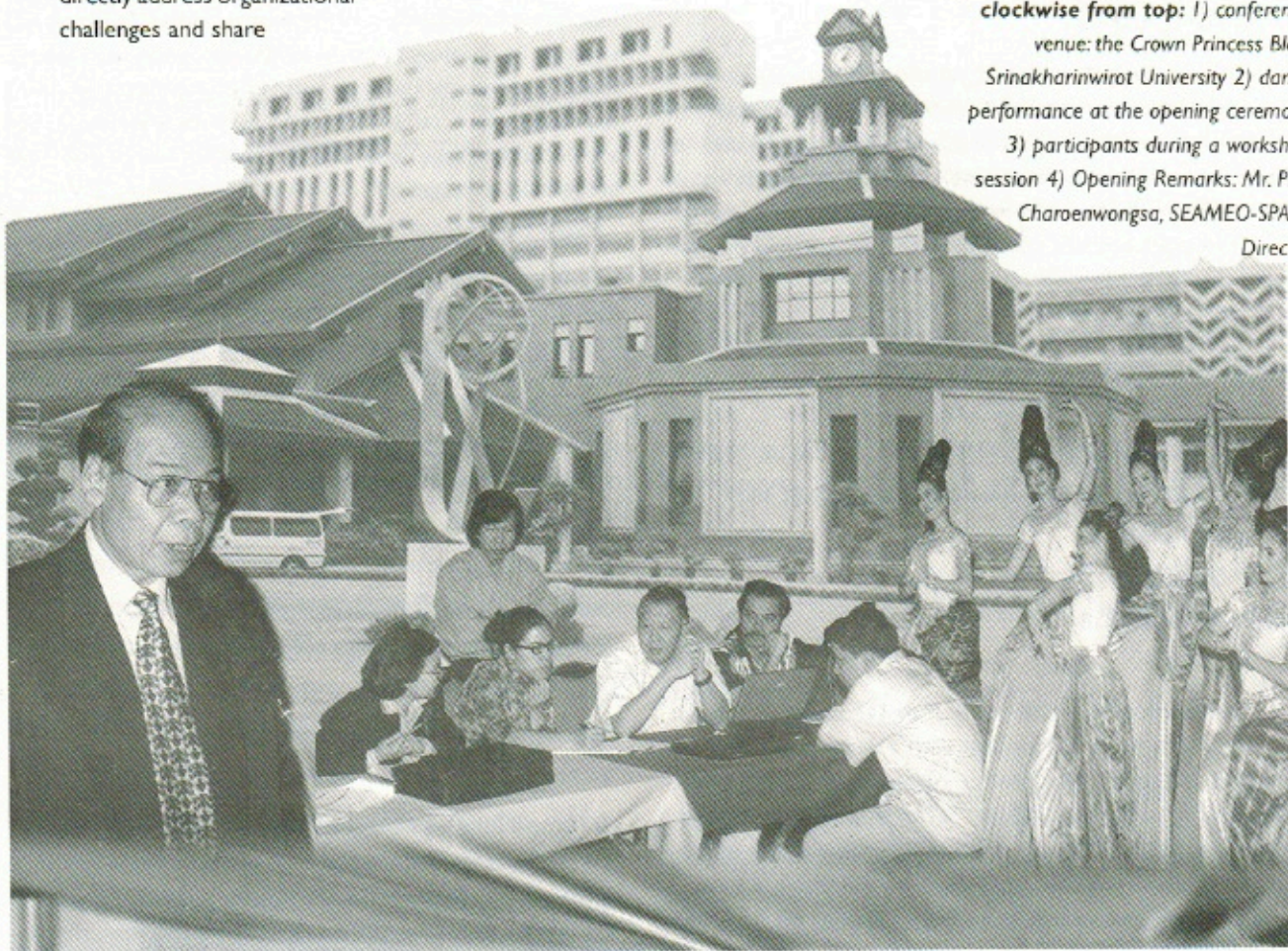
ON 12-17 OCTOBER last year, the Srinakharinwirot University, in coordination with the AAFA French Embassy of Thailand, hosted the SEAMEO-SPAFA seminar on *Arts and Culture Management*. The seminar aimed to:

- ▶ survey, update and evaluate the development of institutional programming of arts and culture, with emphasis on the operational mechanism, creative focus and management practices of organizations catering to the performing and visual arts and heritage;
- ▶ provide a forum where arts and culture managers can foresee, identify, analyze and directly address organizational challenges and share

information and management strategies, network development and future exchange; and

- ▶ provide unconventional thinking in creative arts and cultural programming in relation to space, theme, event, funding, and managing resources.

Twenty museum and gallery curators and arts and culture managers based in Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam took part in the six-day workshop. Following are country reports presented in the workshop featuring selected culture agencies of government. ▶



clockwise from top: 1) conference venue: the Crown Princess Bhumrajakuladej Srinakharinwirot University 2) dance performance at the opening ceremony 3) participants during a workshop session 4) Opening Remarks: Mr. Pracha Charoenwongsa, SEAMEO-SPAFA Director

BRUNEI

ACADEMY BRUNEI STUDIES. Studies all aspects of Brunei life; mainly serves as the Secretariat of the National Supreme Council of Melayu Islam Beraja (Malay Islamic Monarchy).

NATIONAL CULTURAL COUNCIL, NATIONAL CULTURE CENTER (carries out research and documentation, training and leadership, cultural development, support, education, exchange and cooperation), **CULTURAL MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION,** and **CULTURAL ECONOMICAL INFRA-STRUCTURE.** Manage arts and culture.

*from left: 1) country report presentation: Thailand and Laos
2) Session 4: Arts and Society (Media Spaces and Society) Mr. Dan Bunnag of Thailand Tattler and Mr. Philip Cornwel Smith of Bangkok Metro Magazine 3) Zulkifli Bin-Haji Mohamad of SEAMEO-SPAFA*

**INDONESIA**

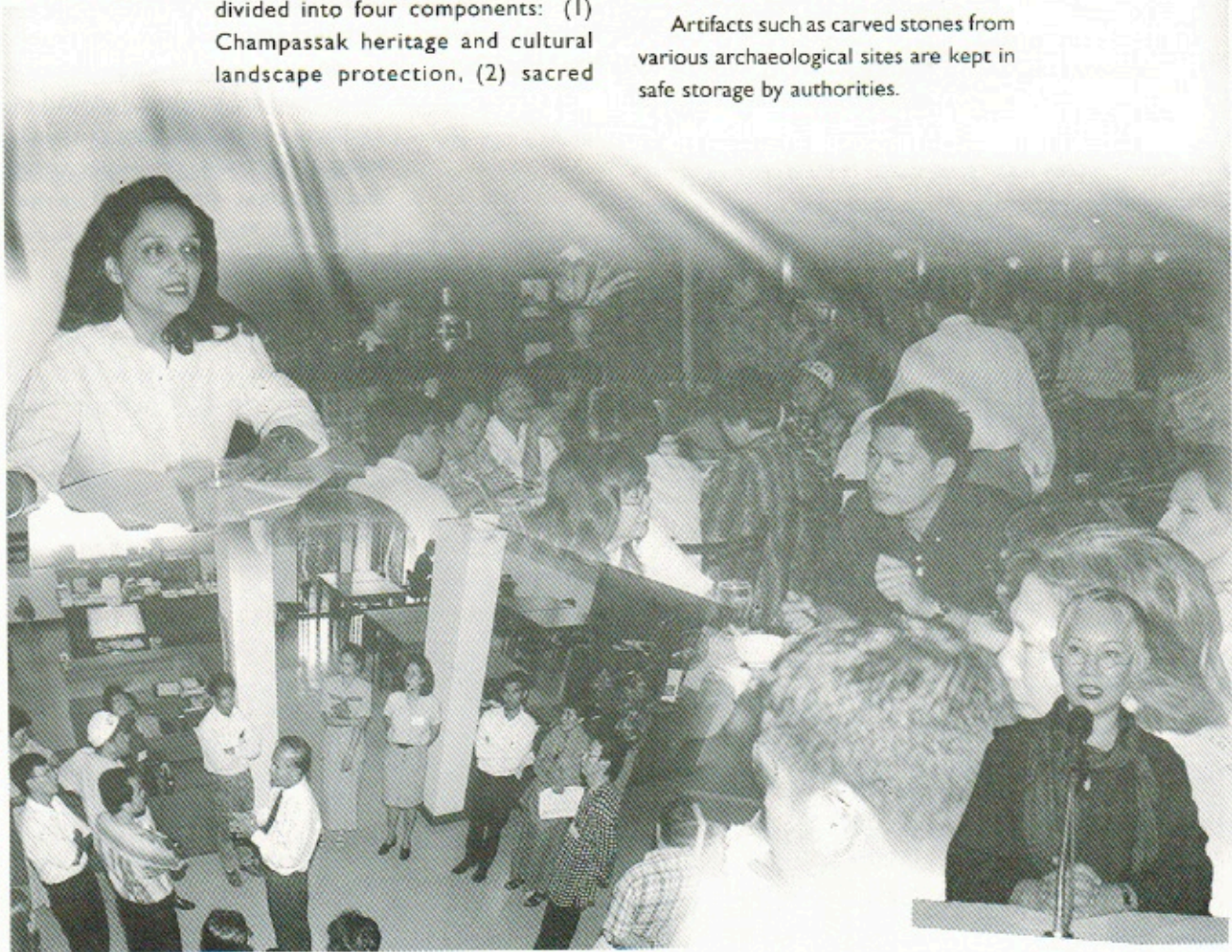
DIRECTORATE FOR PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE. Based in Jakarta with nine technical units

(regional offices) in the provinces: one is located in Bali.

Regional office attends to protection, maintenance, renovation, documentation and publication of, and education

and information on, both movable and immovable historical and archaeological objects.

Protection: Safety zone or "zoningisasi" classified as (1) main zone, or the empty space for the object itself; (2) support zone, incl. trees near the object to avoid pollution and people's activities; and (3) development zone for public facilities like souvenir shops, etc.

LAO PDR

DIRECTORATE OF VAT PHU MONUMENTS. Oversees administration, security and safekeeping of monuments.

CHAMPASSAK HERITAGE ZONES. Conserves and protects the cultural landscape around Vat Phu, which is divided into four components: (1) Champassak heritage and cultural landscape protection, (2) sacred

environment conservation, (3) archaeological research, and (4) monument management.

Tourism (6,000 visitors in 1998 and 13,000 in 1999) provides income for site maintenance and development and employment for local people.

Artifacts such as carved stones from various archaeological sites are kept in safe storage by authorities.

MALAYSIA

NATIONAL MUSEUM AND ANTIQUITY DEPARTMENT.

Official depository of country's culture and natural history; displays various items of interest relating to country's history, culture and flora and fauna; preserves, restores and imparts knowledge on Malaysian historical and cultural heritages.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF MALAYSIA.

Collects, stores and preserves records and information of national value and historical heritage; advises government on systematic record keeping based on National Archives Act; traces, obtains, collects, preserves and stores archive materials from government or private sources.

MALAYSIAN TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD. Deals with tourism development

NATIONAL ARTS GALLERY. Custodian of Malaysian artistic heritage (collection of 2,000 art works); collects Malaysian art works, organizes exhibits, arts seminars, etc., and promotes the learning and development of visual arts.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, ARTS AND TOURISM. Five divisions: Culture, Tourism, Development, National Theatre, and National Arts Academy; also maintains a Culture and Arts Office in all Malaysian states to provide professional advice, technical support pertaining to culture, arts and tourism

PHILIPPINES



VISUAL ARTS UNIT OF CULTURAL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES. Takes charge of the Center's exhibition program (15-20 regular exhibits); develops and educates an audience for visual arts and venue for experimental,

innovative, controversial, and/or non-commercial art projects, exhibitions and events, some involving not only local but foreign and collaborative talents; awards progressive young artists; maintains a good collection of Philippine modern art with emphasis on the 60s and 70s.

SINGAPORE



SINGAPORE PHILATELIC MUSEUM. Holds temporary exhibits in the theme galleries ranging from birds, festivals, sports, architectural heritage, ASEAN, to the use of photography in stamp designing; a subsidiary of the Telecommunication Authority of

Singapore, with a Trust Fund of S\$5 million for operating expenses.

Also offers courses on museum planning, organization and management, documentation, curatorship, exhibition planning and design, and public education.



top: the participants during the final day of the workshop

opposite page, clockwise from top:

- 1) Session 3: Arts Spaces and Events (Performance Art and Spaces) Ms. Varsha Nair of WOMANIFESTO
- 2) the participants on their last night together
- 3) Session 3: Arts Spaces and Events (Spaces and Events) Ms. Patravadi Mejudhon of Patravadi Theatre
- 4) a visit to Siam Society Library

THAILAND



NATIONAL CULTURE COMMISSION. Under the Ministry of Education,

aims to promote, exchange, conduct research programs, coordinate and develop the national cultural affairs at the national and international levels.

THAI LIFE EXHIBITION PROMOTION DIVISION. Administers the Thai Life

Permanent Exhibition Hall; organizes permanent exhibits on Thai life, special cultural and education activities, produces transmission media in accordance with the permanent exhibit; promotes and supports cultural exhibition halls at provincial level; organizes training programs for personnel of cultural exhibition halls; and cooperates with foreign countries in organizing exchange exhibitions.

Archaeology in Southeast Asia in the 3rd Millennium



On 27-29 September 1999, the Centre for Archaeological Research Malaysia in conjunction with the Universiti Sains Malaysia's 30th anniversary, supported by a SEASREP grant, hosted an international colloquium on Archaeology in Southeast Asia in the 3rd Millennium. More than 70 archaeologists from 17 countries took part in the colloquium. The colloquium explored the future directions for the development of archaeology in the 21st century. Below are abstracts of selected papers presented in the colloquium.

The Interplay of Western Archaeological Theories and Southeast Asian Archaeology: Insights from the Past and Considerations for the Future

Elisabeth A. Bacus, Institute of Archaeology, London, UK

The theoretical terrain of Western (particularly North America and British) archaeology has changed significantly during the past 35+ years. At the same time, Southeast Asian archaeology has undergone its own developments, some reflecting the incorporation of Western archaeological practices. The paper considers some of the contributions various western theoretical approaches have made and/or continue to make to Southeast Asian archaeology. It also critically assesses the relevance of some of the models used to interpret or explain prehistoric and early historic developments in Southeast Asia. Finally, while it cannot be denied that Southeast Asia should be as important as any other region to archaeology's comparative and generalizing concerns, it is clear that it usually receives less consideration in the

Anglo-American literature, for example, in world prehistory texts, comparative analyses, and as case studies for applying or developing new theoretical insights. This certainly need not be the case, and the paper concludes with an example of how Southeast Asia's rich ethnographic, historical and archaeological records may contribute new insights relevant to current theoretical discussions of political power in complex studies.

Future Plan for Archaeological Research in the Philippines **Wilfredo P. Ronquillo, Philippines National Museum, Philippines**

Archaeological research in the Philippines, which started during the exploration activities of French archaeologist Alfred Marche in 1922, has had a long and colorful history. Despite a sluggish start, the discipline slowly matured through the painstaking efforts of archaeologists from the 1940s through the 1990s.

Two factors have hampered the growth of archaeology as a discipline in the Philippines, namely, the lack of interest and therefore, of adequate financial support from the national government, and the absence of an adequate university-based academic organization for Archaeology. These factors have contributed to the limited number of professional Filipino archaeologists.

Things are looking brighter in the 1990s. In the last three years various changes in the bureaucracy as well as a new National Museum System Act enacted by the Philippine Congress have rekindled awareness of and interest in Philippine prehistory and archaeology.

Numerous development projects in the country necessitated the enforcement of environmental laws, including the need for archaeological assessment prior to granting

Tourism should share not just the benefits but also the responsibility for maintaining, preserving and conserving archaeological monuments and the environment for sustainable development planning, especially in the force of the emerging global culture.

environmental clearance for development projects. Renewed interest in the country to adequately protect the environment has also indirectly resulted in the protection of caves and rock shelters all over the country. Many of these caves are important archaeological sites.

As we face the new millennium, the demands of the discipline of archaeology have drastically changed and there is now a pressing need to meet these challenges. The need for more professional Filipino archaeologists is urgently needed to undertake important archaeological research projects in the country in the next millennium. These young archaeologists will also play a crucial role in the protection and preservation of the country's archaeological sites against looting, unabated development and sheer neglect.

The need for nationwide inventory of land archaeological sites by political region is also great. Having one archaeologist in each political region of the country is ideal for the protection and preservation of archaeological heritage in the country. With an increase in the number of professional archaeologists, the state can then strictly enforce the requirement for archaeological assessments of developing projects.

Archaeology for Tourism in Southeast Asia I Made Sutaba, The National Research Centre for Archaeology, Bali, Indonesia

There is no question that the tourism industry has become a means of raising the national income of countries. This is true in Southeast Asia as in other developing countries. Archaeological research has shown that a large variety of archaeological monuments found in Southeast Asia could be attractive to tourists within a frame of cultural tourism.

After archaeological research has been done, archaeological tourism should be planned carefully so as not to spoil the archaeological monuments as integrated elements of the national cultural property. Tourism should share not just the benefits but also the responsibility for maintaining, preserving and conserving archaeological monuments and the environment for sustainable development planning, especially in the force of the emerging global culture. Opportunities should also be created for the local people have a part in the responsibility and benefit of tourism.

Suggestion for Future Global Strategy of Indonesian Archaeology Mundardjito, University of Indonesia, Indonesia

Since the 1970's archaeology in Indonesia has grown especially in the number of researches, archaeological sites, and the kinds of artifacts being studied. However, these gains are not without weaknesses. One imminent weakness is dating, which has led to the absence of a temporal link between the growing knowledge of formal and spatial relationships. A good research management system and method of disseminating information are yet to be established. These are instrumental for the integration of archaeological data in Indonesia as well as the correlation of Indonesia to the Southeast Asian regional framework.

Some Indonesian archaeologists have expanded towards contemporary issues such as settlement patterns, ecological adaptation, exchange system, ethnographic analogy, and taphonomy. But without the basics, such as firm dating, such advanced research will be futile in a regional framework and will remain particularistic. ▀

SEASREP Research Abstracts



Below are abstracts of some of the research projects supported by SEASREP in 1999. These projects have been completed.

Interaction of Culture and Entrepreneurship: A Comparative Study of Small and Medium Chinese Entrepreneurs in Malaysia and Singapore Chin Yee Whah

The research aims to discover how Chinese entrepreneurs of Singapore and Malaysia establish and expand their business and how they perceive the role of their government in commerce. The author went to Singapore and Butterworth, a town in the northern region of Wellesley province in Malaysia, to conduct in-depth interviews of Chinese entrepreneurs.

The findings reveal that many Malaysian Chinese entrepreneurs are not dependent on the government for assistance. Respondents stated that the government tended to favor established enterprises more than start-up companies. So far, lowering interest rates and taxes are a few of the government policies and schemes that have directly benefited the small entrepreneurs. In contrast, Chinese Singaporean entrepreneurs are provided safety nets by their government. Thus, these entrepreneurs depend on their government for protection and financial assistance more than their Malaysian counterpart. Chinese core values such as Confucianism do not emerge as the driving force of Singaporean Chinese entrepreneurship. The concept of reciprocity and religious influences such as Buddhism and Taoism have shaped the value system of these Chinese entrepreneurs. Western management systems and technology, principles and strategies drawn from the Chinese classical literature, *The Art of War*, influence their skills. However, the majority of Malaysian Chinese entrepreneurs have retained their Chinese values and continue

to practice their culture. It is evident the value system and the culture of entrepreneurship of both Chinese entrepreneurs in Singapore and Malaysia are different even if both originate from a common ancestry.

Thesaurus of Khmu Dialects in Southeast Asia Suwilai Preamsirat

In the first period of the project (December 1996-November 1997), the study concentrated on Khmu in Vietnam where field trips to Dien Bien Phu and Nghe An were carried out. Nghe An Khmu was selected for detailed study. About 4,500 words were collected including major syntactic patterns and folktales. The data were translated into Vietnamese, Thai, and English.

Previous studies on Khmu in Laos were investigated and various field trips to Khmu areas were carried out (Udomsaj, Huaphan, Luang Prabang, and Chiang Khwang) in the second period of the project (December 1997-February 1999). Three Khmu dialects were selected for detailed study: Khmu Lue in northern Udomsaj, Khmu Rook in central Udomsaj, and Khmu Cuen which is the dialect spoken in Huaphan, Luang Prabang, and Chiang Khwang.

Around 4,500-5,000 words of each Khmu dialect in Laos were collected, including major syntactic patterns and folktales. The collected data were computerized using the shoebox program. The data of each dialect were then presented as a rhyming dictionary so that the pronunciation and transcription of all words could be rechecked for accuracy. The rhyming dictionary of each Khmu dialect was achieved by rhyming the initial consonant. The sound of each word was then rechecked and then tape-recorded. All the data were classified into semantic fields.

Labuan also facilitated British nautical control along the Palawan passage from the Malacca Straits to China, with the Palawan Canal as an entry point to Sulu Islands, Indonesia and the Philippines.

All the Khmu dialects studied have the same syllable and word structure, the majority of the words being monosyllabic and disyllabic. Only a few trisyllabic words are found. The Khmu Cuen in Laos and Nghe An Khmu in Vietnam have the consonant system with voiced and voiceless consonants. Khmu Lue and Khmu Rook in Laos and many Khmu dialects in Thailand, however, have lost the consonant system that occurs in Khmu Cuen and Nghe An Khmu. All the Khmu dialects in Laos have the same final consonant. The Khmu dialects also have similar vowel systems. There are 22 vowels, divided into 19 single vowels and three diphthongs. They belong to nine pairs of long and short vowels. There is also a central mid-low vowel which is quite rare.

This research project on Khmu dialects demonstrates clearly various stages of tonogenesis in the languages of Southeast Asia. Khmu Cuen and Nghe An Khmu have no register and no tone. The words contrast in the voiced and voiceless initial consonant. Khmu Lue has register contrast (lax and tense), whereas Khmu Rook has tone contrast (low and high). It is obvious that the voiced initial consonant in Khmu Cuen (1) becomes a voiceless consonant with lax to breathy voice in Khmu Lue (2), and becomes a voiceless stop consonant with aspiration and level to low tone in Khmu Rook (3).

On the other hand, the voiceless initial in Khmu Cuen becomes a voiceless consonant with high or high-falling and tense voice quality in Khmu Lue, and high tone in Khmu Rook. Apart from this, it is noticeable that Khmu Rook (3), which has developed a two-tone system, has more monosyllabic words. Originally, disyllabic words in other Khmu dialects tend to become monosyllabic in this dialect. Moreover, it is also noticeable that for some Khmu Rook (3) speakers, most of the voiceless stops can occur with aspiration.

It is interesting that the syntactic structure of all Khmu dialects is similar. However, the yes-no question may be different. Affixations and expressives are productive. The productive affixes are causative, stative and instrument.

The vocabularies of different Khmu dialects normally differ morphologically and phonologically. Influences from languages that are spoken in the same area as the Khmu people are evident. Nghe An Khmu in Vietnam has influences from both Tai dialects spoken in the same area (Tai Siang and Vietnamese — which is the national language), whereas the Khmu dialects in Laos are influenced considerably by Lao, and the Khmu in Thailand is considerably influenced by both standard Thai as well as the local Tai dialects of the people living in the same area as the Khmu (such as Lue or Phuan).

In general, the semantic structure of all the Khmu dialects is very similar. However, Khmu has very fine distinctions in certain semantic domains, especially those concerning verbs. One verb in English can be equivalent to many verbs in Khmu.

Below are summaries of ongoing researches by recipients of SEASREP's M.A./Ph.D. Study grants.

Fish Trading from Pattani (Thailand) to Singapore: 1975-1995 Abdullah Derrauh

While fish trading from Pattani to other trading places in Thailand has been well documented, there are only a few researches on fish trading between Pattani and neighboring Southeast Asian countries. The thesis examines fish trading from Pattani to Singapore and aims to: (1) investigate the role of Chinese investors and Malay Muslim fishermen in fish marketing, (2) study government policies on fishing, and (3) examine existing cooperation among the government, Chinese investors and fishermen. The information was obtained by conducting interviews and actually participating in the fish

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The case of the ethnic movements in Cordillera and separatist movements in Mindanao reveal a material, intellectual and concrete foundation that is rooted in the people's concept of territory, homeland or region.

distribution from Pattani to the Sadao, Bukit Kayu Hitam, Canglun, Johor Bharu and Jurong Central fish markets.

The thesis traces the factors that contributed to the development of the fishing industry in Pattani and the problems faced by the fishing sector in the inner part of the Gulf of Thailand. The relationship between Singaporean Chinese investors and Malay Muslim fishermen is also discussed, with focus on the role of Singaporean Chinese investors in fish processing. The thesis concludes with the role of these investors in fish marketing and distribution and the relationship between the two main actors, the Singaporean Chinese investors and Malay Muslim fishermen.

Labuan, 1846-1963: From Natural Harbour to Planned Port Nazli Bin Aziz

The development of a port relies on its location, the rise and fall of rival ports, the development of world shipping and the economic and social progress of the port. The goal of this thesis is to reconstruct the history of Labuan Island from 1846 to 1963, tracing the transformation of Labuan from a natural harbour to a planned port. Library research and a site visit to Labuan were carried out to gather data.

The development of Labuan port is divided into four periods: 1) 1846-1889, the establishment and foundation of the port; 2) 1890-1906, from crown colony to the British North Borneo Co. (BNBC); 3) 1907-1941, from BNBC to the Straits Settlement; and 4) 1942-1963, from destruction to the free port. These periods correspond to the different foreign forces that have influenced Labuan.

At first, scholars considered Labuan an insignificant factor in the history of the Straits Settlement owing to its location and features. Preliminary research reveals that the harbour served as the only natural resource of Labuan. The need for a British sanctuary in the South China Sea saw the

transformation of Labuan into a naval station. Later on Labuan was established as a port to encourage merchants to conduct trade between the British ports of Singapore and Hongkong. Steam and sailing vessels from India passed Labuan en route to China, fostering trade relations among countries in Asia. Labuan also facilitated British nautical control along the Palawan passage from the Malacca Straits to China, with the Palawan Canal as an entry point to Sulu Islands, Indonesia and the Philippines. Although Labuan never developed as a commercial center in Southeast Asia, it is apparent that the economy of Labuan and some Southeast Asian countries depended on the port.

Foreign trade created the port of Labuan and the greatest impetus for its economic and political development was the migration of people to Labuan. But the preservation of Labuan relies on the government's maintenance of free trade and Labuan's free port status.

Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Philippines and Indonesia A Re-examination of Political Autonomy and Separatism Rizal G. Buendia

The Philippines and Indonesia have a lot of similarities and divergences. Geographically, both countries are archipelagos and historically, experienced centuries of colonial rule. Among the divergences, the Philippines is predominantly a Christian nation (the only one in Asia), while Indonesia is Muslim (the largest in the world). The movement for autonomy and independence in the Philippines is being experienced in the northern (Cordillera) and southern (Muslims in Mindanao) parts of the country while in Indonesia it is in the western (Aceh) and eastern parts (Timor, now under the United Nations). In the Philippines, the Muslims have considered themselves distinct from the rest of the

Approaching Asia from Asia

Prof. Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Pacific and Asian History, Australian National University

AS PART OF THE continuing work of the Asian Studies in Asia network, this conference set out to consider approaches to the study of Asia in Asia, and to contribute to the development of frameworks of research which may serve as a renewed starting point for closer collaboration amongst scholars of Asian studies within the Asian region. Nineteen scholars from across the region participated in the conference, which took place in Sariska, India from 19-21 February 2000. The two days of intensive discussion provided a valuable opportunity to exchange views on our approaches to research and on future possibilities for collaboration. Although participants addressed issues from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives, certain common questions and concerns recurred throughout the conference. There was widespread recognition of the importance of rethinking the relatively static boundaries which have often been assumed to surround the nation states and cultural regions (though also a recognition that the historical significance of the nation state could not be ignored). There was an obvious enthusiasm, too, for exploring the interconnection of ideas and historical experiences within the Asian region without falling back on reified visions of "Asian culture".

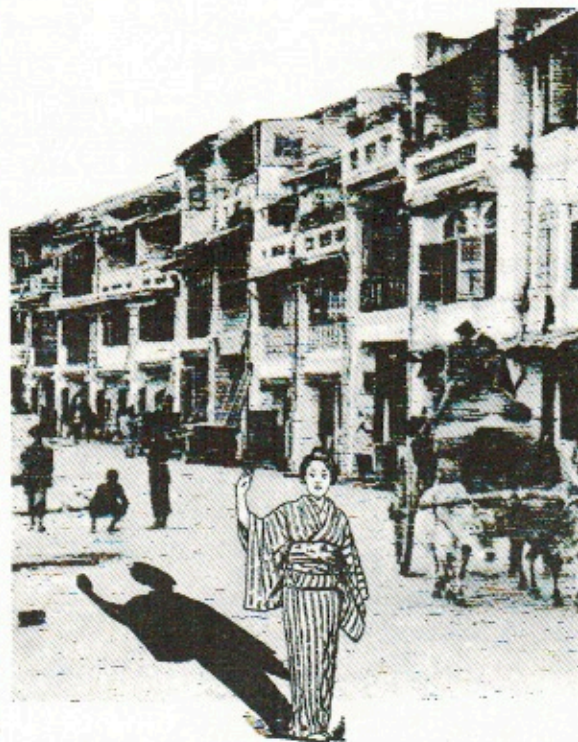
During the opening session on the evening of 19 February, Professor Giri Deshingkar of the Centre for Chinese Studies, New Delhi, and Professor Robert Elson, President of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, outlined the aims of the conference and spoke about the development of the Asian Studies in Asia network to date. The conference's three keynote

addresses, presented by Professors Wang Gungwu (National University of Singapore), Prasenjit Duara (Chicago University) and Hamashita Takeshi (Tokyo University), explored the methodological challenges of studying Asia from "within".

Wang Gungwu began his address by pointing out that many Asian countries have relatively little tradition of studying their neighbors, and that Asian scholars have often tended to be more closely connected to their counterparts in Europe or North America than to scholars in neighboring Asian countries. However, as these structures and attitudes begin to change, it is important to reassess the heritage of scholarship within the region, and to consider what relevance the methods of the past may have for future study. Professor Wang's paper developed this point by presenting an extensive and richly documented account of the history of changing Chinese

approaches to the study of the region, from early studies (going back at least to the 6th century) of neighboring states with native rulers, to Chinese observations on European colonialism within Asia, and finally to studies of neighboring independent states in the second half of the 20th century.

Prasenjit Duara addressed the notion of civilization as a framework for understanding the region. He began, drawing a contrast between, on the one hand, an earlier imperial European vision of a singular, hierarchical "Civilization" (with a capital C) and, on the other, a new notion of civilizational processes: a notion which emerged from around the end of the First World War. This new



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In rethinking the frameworks we use to study societies and their interactions, it is essential to understand the way in which existing frameworks have evolved and changed.

concept, which tended to stress the spiritual or ideational qualities of civilizations, was developed not just by European and American but also by Chinese and Japanese political and social thinkers. Professor Duara's paper showed in particular how intensively ideas about civilization were exchanged between Japan and China during the first half of the 20TH century, and how they were elaborated at a popular level by a variety of new ethical "redemptive movements" such as the Daoyuan in China. He suggested the need to pay close critical attention to the 20TH century discourse of civilization, and to use a critique of this discourse to salvage "not its substantive values, but its status precisely as the higher standard of value and justice".

Hamashita Takeshi's keynote address pointed to the value of using a variety of different models to understand the dynamic interconnection of the Asian region. The maritime Asia model, for example, looks at the region as an interconnected chain of seas stretching from the Okhotsk Sea to the Bay of Bengal. The tributary model focuses on the complex set of tributary and trading relationships centered around the Chinese empire. The network model, on the other hand, focuses on the key role of certain nodal points such as Ryukyu and Tsushima, which linked various parts of the region to one another. Viewing the region in terms of networks helps us to see how maritime trade and trading ports were linked to the hinterland, and how cities were connected to one another both within and across state boundaries. Professor Hamashita used the case of the trading system centered on Ryukyu between the 16TH and 18TH centuries to illustrate the possibilities of a network approach as an alternative framework for approaching the history of the region.

The question of developing new spatial models for the study of society was also addressed in the first conference panel by Liu Hong (National University of Singapore), who presented the notion of Sino-Southeast Asian Studies as an analytical paradigm for exploring important aspects of the region's past and present. Elaborating the notions of the "contact zone" and of "transnationalism", Dr. Liu suggested

ways in which the Sino-Southeast Asian Studies paradigm can provide an alternative to notions of fixed and bounded national geographies, and can help to make visible a variety of relatively neglected (and often non-state centered) cross-border relationships. Issues of mobility and interaction were also the theme of a paper on Indian discourses of belonging, presented by Sanjay Srivastava (Deakin University). Dr. Srivastava noted that the notion of the "home village" has been central to most modern analyses of Indian identity, but argued that historically notions of wandering, mobility and itineraries have been key themes in Indian representations both of "self" and of "others".

In rethinking the frameworks we use to study societies and their interactions, it is essential to understand the way in which existing frameworks have evolved and changed. Several paper-givers took up this issue by looking at the changing ways in which "Asia" itself has been defined by different groups of "Asians". Linked papers by Brij Tankha and Madhav Thampi (University of Delhi) discussed the genealogy of images of the region in China and Japan. Dr. Thampi traced the broadening and deepening of Chinese knowledge of the region to the early Ming period, the shift to a more inward-looking approach from the late Ming period onwards, and the Chinese "rediscovery" of Asia in the context of western colonialism during the 19TH century. She also observed how Chinese perceptions of other Asian countries were often influenced by the colonial experience. (For example attitudes to India were affected by the presence of Indian soldiers and policemen in the British concessions in China. Brij Tankha noted how the imported notion of "Asia" transformed Japanese visions of their neighbors — which had earlier been based upon a tripartite division between Tenjiku (India), Kara (China) and Nihon (Japan), or on a division between center (China and/or Japan) and periphery ("foreign countries" and "outer barbarians").

Ravi Palat (University of Auckland) also raised Japanese visions of "Tenjiku" in his paper "Is India Part of Asia?" As he pointed out, it is ironic that while Europeans were labeling the inhabitants of the Americas "Indians", Japanese too labeled

the first Europeans they encountered "people of Tenjiku". Dr. Palat's paper noted how subtle shifts in the definition of "Asia" have tended to marginalize India from the definition. Though India was central to 19TH century European perceptions of Asia, and (through writers like Tagore) to the emergence of notions of Pan-Asianism, it was far less important to postwar US strategic and economic considerations in the region, and therefore also to postwar constructions of Asian Studies in North America. From a somewhat different perspective, Alison Broinowski (Australian National University) suggested that Australia, too, had been at least implicitly included in the vision of "Asia" put forward by some prewar Pan-Asian thinkers, but had come to be excluded both from the immediate postwar Pan-Asianism of the newly independent non-aligned states and from the most recent wave of the "Asian Renaissance" propounded by figures such as Prime Minister Mahathir.

By moving beyond the conventional nation-state framework to look at the movements of ideas across boundaries, it is possible to cast new light on neglected aspects of the region's past and present. This point was illustrated by a number of papers which addressed cross-border movements and adaptations of cultural forms. Curie Virag (Harvard University) examined the shifts in Neo-Confucian thought which occurred when these ideas were transferred from China to Korea in the early Chosŏn period. Focussing on Kwŏn Kun's *Iphak Tosŏl* [Explanation of the Diagrams for Elementary Learning], she showed how the import of Neo-Confucianism into Korea involved not simply an acceptance and interpretation of borrowed ideas, but a fundamental reworking of these ideas in a new intellectual environment. Addressing a more recent period of East Asian history, Pai Hyung-II (University of California, Santa Barbara) looked at the imposition of Japanese notions of cultural heritage in colonial Korea, and showed how the colonial system has had a lasting impact on definitions of heritage and cultural identity in the Korean context. Diverse reworkings of shared ideas in different political contexts was also the theme of a presentation by Kikue Hamayotsu (Australian National University)

on "Islam and Nation-Building in Southeast Asia". This paper highlighted the contrasting ways in which the political dynamics of Malaysia and Indonesia have affected the role Islam has played in the nation-building processes in both countries.

Although many papers were concerned with trans-border flows of ideas and influences, there were also reminders of the key role which the nation-state continues to play in the destiny of the region. Zhang Minjie (Zhejiang Academy of Social Sciences) observed that in an age of increasing globalization, there is a need for a rational nationalism which can promote economic, cultural and political development without falling prey to emotional chauvinism.

As several speakers pointed out, studying Asian social and cultural phenomena from within the region poses challenges, not just to the spatial frameworks of analysis, but also to the theoretical paradigms which we bring to our research projects. This point was highlighted particularly by the presentation of Eugene Tan (National University of Singapore), which addressed ethnic conflict regulation in Asia and called for the development of autochthonous paradigms for studying and addressing ethnic tensions within the Asian region.

In the conference's concluding session, participants discussed possibilities for further cooperation to promote Asian Studies in Asia. It was pointed out that a number of important initiatives (such as the SEASREP program, and the Institute of International Education Asian Studies in Asia Fellowship program) already exist. However, there was concern that enrolments in Asian studies courses in some parts of the region were falling, and that the Asian Studies in Asia Fellowship program will come to an end in the near future. It was proposed that the network should urge the Institute of International Education to continue this program. It was also emphasized that there is a shortage of regionally-based Asian studies journals, that relatively few countries in the region have Asian Studies associations, and that there is no region-wide Asian Studies association. It was suggested that the network might see the creation of such an association as one of its long-term goals.



Poetics and Literature in Southeast Asia

Dr. Lily Rose-Tope, Department of
English and Comparative Literature,
University of the Philippines Diliman



Prof. Kirpal Singh, Nanyang Technological University, was a visiting professor at the Department of English and Comparative Literature, University of the Philippines under the SEASREP program. He delivered his lectures on 6-10 December 1999.

DR. KIRPAL SINGH'S VISIT was a meaningful one because he brought Southeast Asia closer to Filipino students and scholars. He conducted three intensive three-hour lectures on Singaporean literature during his first week. Dr. Kirpal's insights into his own culture made for an intimate yet critical discussion of Singaporean literary works. As the students themselves said in their evaluation, the sessions enlightened them and rid them of misconceptions regarding a neighbor they hardly knew. The students' exposure to Dr. Kirpal's turbaned presence was material proximity to Southeast Asia's varied ethnicity, something they will never get within the relative homogeneity of Manila environment.

Dr. Kirpal also conducted a poetry workshop attended by faculty and student poets. The day-long workshop made the participants question their craft and how they say what they want to say. The workshop allowed participants to critique each other, with guidance from Dr. Singh. According to one participant, although the workshop did not teach them anything new, it made them more aware of the possibilities of a poem which, in turn, made them more confident of their poetics.

The public lecture, entitled "Into the Next Millennium: Poetics and Literature in Southeast Asia," was well attended by faculty and students. To many faculty members not in the field, it was a good introduction to the literature of Southeast Asia. One of the highlights was Dr. Kirpal's articulation of the need for Southeast Asian peoples to know each other better by reading each other's texts "from OUR point of view and not from those we inherited from our colonial masters."

Dr. Kirpal was always generous with his time. Those who befriended him learned of his culture over plates of food and bottles of beer. He was also generous with his books, some of which he generously donated to the Department. They are now in the main library, available to anyone with a budding interest in Singaporean literature. Dr. Kirpal's interest in the Philippines was just as intense as his interest in Singapore. As a student of culture, he processed every experience, every cultural idiosyncrasy, and compared the result with what he

had read or heard. The people he met all learned from him but it also gratified the department that during his stay in the University, Dr. Kirpal believes he "learned much more than he taught."

Excerpts of reactions from students of Comparative Literature 143 (Literature of Southeast Asia) to the lectures of Dr. Kirpal Singh, Visiting Professor from the National University of Singapore

► "Dr. Singh was very insightful. He would explain stories and poems with the tenacity and clarity commensurate of a true scholar.... He made us feel welcome and treated us as his peers and equals.... The most important thing that Dr. Singh has given me was not the analytical exactitude that he has exhibited. I believe that he has done more than that. He has liberated me from my personal bias toward Singaporeans. He has taught me not to be judgmental and bigoted. He is a great man who will be surely missed."

No name

► "Dr. Singh's stay with us, though brief, has provided the class with a lot of insights on the culture, history, and the nature of literature in Singapore. His teaching style should be commended."

because he was able to provide the class with an atmosphere that is both enjoyable and conducive to learning.... In general, even if I've only been in his class a few times, I can say that he is an excellent instructor—one of the best I've ever had."

Michelle Esmeralda

► "Regarding his lecture and discussion of the novel *Fistful of Colours*, he presented them in a very clear manner. Therefore, there was no difficulty on our part to understand what he was saying, considering his cultural orientation as different from ours and also the cultural background of the novel.... Honestly, I learned a lot about the lecture..."

Marie Beth M. Fajardo

► "Kirpal Singh's lectures were very thorough and informative. He is a great teacher because he could easily relate to his students and he was also very open-minded about a lot of things because he didn't impose his ideals on his students. His lectures were very well thought out and he explained all the points in the discussion very exhaustively. The lessons were never boring because he interjected them with many enlightening anecdotes."

Christine Borja

► "I like his lectures on Singaporean literature and culture because they are informative. Aside from that, Dr. Singh is casual toward his students, which is why we can easily relate to him. I hope that the SEASREP supports more interactions like these for it is not everyday that we meet and learn a culture of our Southeast Asian neighbors from an authority who lives the/in culture itself."

Grese Concepcion

► "Prof. Kirpal Singh gave a face, a culture and a way of life to the Singapore I knew before as merely a small mass of land. However diverse the cultural and ethnic aspects of that country, the people somehow have found a way a way to co-

exist harmoniously and benefit from that diversity. Prof. Kirpal Singh introduced to us writers like Noraini Md.Yusof, Catherine Lim, Simon Tay, Ee Tiang Hong, Damian Sin and Grace Chua, who exemplify Singaporean thinking and philosophy."

No name

► "I found out that he keeps his mind updated with the Filipino way of life, with the things that have been happening here. The knowledge I gained from him is truly valuable. Prof. Tope hasn't realized that she did give us a very wonderful Christmas gift—the three sessions we had with Mr. Kirpal Singh."

Mary Joy Jagonia

► "...With him we learned to take a stand on what we believe in, to be proud of being an Asian. We would love to see him again doing his monologue. I would always remember his views on 'language'. I love his definition of Singlish—the way English has evolved in a Singaporean way. I wish the Philippines would also have a Philippine way of speaking English."

Rotchelle Alburo

► "... It was quite engaging listening to how his life experiences—an interesting melange of the mundane and the marvelously insane!—are brought to bear upon his poetics. His musings suggest the how beyond 'practice' and 'process'. Poetry is necessarily philosophical and ineluctably political (in the more general, etymological sense).... Precisely because of these things, a day with Dr. Kirpal Singh is not enough. The participants would truly appreciate an in-depth treatment of the poems, a rigorous, well-cogitated, and ultimately liberating reading of texts. And so I will keep the advent light burning until the poet from the waters of the Merlion comes back to sing(h)."

Randy Bustamante



Southeast Asian Studies in Thammasat University

Dr. Charnvit Kasetsiri, Department of History, Thammasat University

SOUTHEAST ASIA has been the site of human settlements and culture from very early times, prehistoric and historic. Its unique importance was that it lay between the two great Asian cultural centers of China and India. In modern times, Southeast Asia has become a strategic area between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the joining point of Southeast Asia, East Asia and Pacific Rim. Today, Southeast Asia, now joined together in ASEAN, is undergoing rapid change, politically, economically, socially and culturally.

Knowledge of Southeast Asia and ASEAN is therefore of vital importance to relations between Thailand and its neighbors, and between us and the rest of the world.

With these considerations in mind, the Faculty of Arts established a B.A. degree program in Southeast Asian Studies that is interdisciplinary, covering politics, administration, economics, society, arts and culture, and regional languages.

Students must also have some proficiency in English as some of the advanced lectures will be in that language.

The aim is to produce a new sort of graduate who knows and understands Southeast Asia. Those graduating from this course will have the linguistic and academic background for broad careers in the Thai Foreign Service, regional agencies, international agencies and private businesses trading abroad. Graduates may also use the knowledge they have gained in their own businesses or as a basis for further studies in the field.

The curriculum requires 30 credits of general education, 96 credits of Southeast Asian Studies major subjects, which also require students to take English as a second language and one Southeast Asian language as a third, and 9 credits of free electives. ▶

SEAS Major Subjects (Compulsory Courses)

- SA. 211 Principal Concepts and Theories on Society, Economics and Politics
- SA. 221 Religions in Southeast Asian Society and Politics
- SA. 231 Social Geography in Southeast Asia
- SA. 241 Southeast Asian Economics
- SA. 321 Gender Issues in Southeast Asia
- SA. 322 Mass Communication and Social Change in Southeast Asia
- SA. 331 Environmental Problems in Southeast Asia
- SA. 421 Literature in Southeast Asia
- SA. 451 Seminar in Southeast Asia
- SA. 551 Research Methodology in Social Science
- SA. 552 Research Paper

Cross-Listed Selected Compulsory Courses

- PO. 330 Politics and Government of Southeast Asia
- SO. 201 Introduction to Sociology
- SO. 342 Minority Groups
- AN. 333 Cultures and Societies in Southeast Asia
- HS. 210 Thai History: From Villages to Kingdoms
- HS. 224 History of Southeast Asia to the Nineteenth Century
- HS. 324 History of Southeast Asia from the Nineteenth Century
- PH. 271 Eastern Philosophy
- EG. 221 Reading for Information
- EG. 231 Basic Writing
- EG. 241 Listening-Speaking I
- EG. 242 Listening-Speaking II

The Palace, the Market... (continued from page 7)

Pong, Bangkok. This little theatre charged nothing from the theatre group and only a minimal charge from the audience. A self-supporting non-profit organization, About Art Related Activities Gallery and Café, has curated and staged many art shows, talks and performances. Apart from being a gallery, this three-level space offers a gallery café on the ground floor, exhibition and performance space on the second, and performances on the third floor. In fact, this gallery is not about fixed space for specific activities. They have staged street fashion shows on the first and second floors, alternative bands on the first floor, and dance theatre performances on the second, all on the same night. With such a mixture of programming, we can see so-called high culture intermingled with popular culture within the same space and time. Perhaps this can only happen in a society where social classes, wealth and power are ignored, even momentarily.

In June 1999 Patravadi Theatre and Central Chidlom Department Store broke another boundary by jointly sponsoring the "Contemporary Thai Festival" which featured dance, music and theatre performances to shoppers and theatre lovers in the shopping complex. They converted one corner of the complex into theatre space with a small stage and benches for the audience. In the past people always saw this kind of activity as a commercial event, but with proper treatment of the space and performance, commercial space like this can be turned into a creative, cultured, artistic and celebrated space.

Such boundaries are, in fact, frequently broken. For instance, the political, ritual and cultural space, which is the living area in front of the headman's room in the long house, can turn into a commercial space when tourists are received for a long house visit. This same space that has witnessed the disappearance of old cultural and ritual performances could re-stage the performance for tourist entertainment, amusement and appreciation. At the same time space offers a chance to preserve culture.

More avant-garde theatre companies, such as Asia Theatre Research, Arts Fission and Theatre Workshop in Singapore and Five Arts Centre in Kuala Lumpur, are constantly looking for non-conventional space, not just to move out from the usual space, but for other (pragmatic) reasons such as cheaper rent. The alternative spaces are not necessarily easier to deal

with from the administrative, artistic and technical points of view, but they certainly pose challenges as well as create publicity and awareness.

Reaching the Community

Sarawak in East Malaysia consists of 33 ethnic groups. Kuching as a city, by the Sarawak River, founded by James Brooke in 1840, now has a mixture of British colonial, traditional and new Malaysian buildings. Kuching Waterfront, The People's Place, a one kilometer esplanade on the right bank of Kuching River, known for blending modern and contemporary ethnic design, won several international awards for its design features including a historical walkway, a series of traditional architecture gazebos, play ground, cafes, gardens, modern and traditional sculptures and amphitheatres. It is definitely a community space. With the memories of colonial past and spaces, the community space constantly brings together traditional cultures of various ethnic groups as well as popular culture of rock, rap, jazz and pop concerts.

In cosmopolitan Singapore, which is preparing to be the hub of Southeast Asian cultural activity, the National Arts Council launched another program, performing arts for the communities living in Housing Development Board flats. Originally an outreach program, it has now become a special program featuring Chinese Opera, Bangsawan, Indian dance and modern plays.

Singapore has played a role as an important space for arts, culture and markets in modern times ever since Sir Stamford Raffles created the concept of entreport city for Singapore. In recent years, the Singapore Tourism Board has emphasized cultural discovery with the concept "Singapore, The New Asia", "Cultural Hub of Asia". The National Arts Council, with its successful Singapore Arts Festival, recently launched The Esplanade, Theatre on the Bay, which provides facilities for established arts companies. The setting up of non-conventional spaces like The Substation, has created many interesting ideas: exposing the Singapore public to various types of art expression, not just "high" culture of opera, ballet and symphony orchestra, but also promoting Chinese Opera, Bangsawan, Joget, Bharatam Natyam in a multi-cultural society.

Grants, awards and spaces have been given to artists by the National Board, including a breakout performance at the international festival. But will nationally known playwrights be able to produce controversial plays, such as about a multi-cultural old age home? Recently the Action Theatre produced a play about HIV+ with a real HIV+ player on stage, attracting the international press which said Singapore is now emerging from its nanny state image. Has it really? Or is this play just a publicity run for the coming opening of The Esplanade and to cover up rumors that this year's art festival was a flop because of its too politically correct production? Perhaps the audience has become more knowledgeable, more sophisticated and more demanding, after years of attending festival programs.

The government of Singapore has also recognized the success of private companies bringing western musicals and pop concerts and the interest of audiences from the region. That makes Singapore a tourism destination for culture, both high and popular. One might wonder what will happen to present performance spaces, when The Esplanade is completed.

Questioning Spaces

One might say that contemporary theatre in Thailand is not getting any attention from the Thai government, which is only promoting traditional Thai dance and theatre for the tourist market or modern western performing art forms for high Thai society. It is different in Malaysia, where the government has chosen to promote folk dance and Malay comedies, ignoring classical art because of political and religious reasons. As a result, traditional classical art forms will die off. Perhaps one might envy Indonesia, whose government does not promote either folk or traditional classics but puts effort into education. Perhaps one should not complain about not getting any spaces from the government. There is always some price to pay for what you ask. The arts should be in the right hands, but there are no right or wrong spaces. Each space has its own artistic poetry, meaning, power and memory.

There are definitely more questions to ask ourselves, such as the meaning of contemporary arts in relation to space, the role of classical forms and tradition and their direction in the future. More often than not, we in the arts try to build superiority for

our own art forms, which invariably involves us in the politics of sponsorship and space creation. For example, we start as a dance troupe. We then become the Royal Dance Troupe. Next we build a grand national theatre space and this in the end limits us to that space and its audience. Then there are all the other groups trying to fit themselves into the spaces between the official space. I guess we have to remember that as we seek answers, break boundaries and reach out to communities, we are also constantly constructing new cultural spaces. ▀

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Filipinos, in contrast with the Christians in Timor, who believe they have never been part of Indonesia historically, culturally, and religiously. The Acehnese believe they are the "real" Muslims as against the Javanese, whose practices of Islam have been diluted by other religions. On the other hand, the Cordillerans consider themselves the "real" indigenous Filipinos untainted by colonial influence. These peoples — Cordillerans, Moros, Acehnese, and Timorese — continue to regard themselves as separate from the majority of the people who inhabit the current nation-state.

The aims of the proposed research are to: (1) examine the dynamics, processes and vicissitudes of self-determination as a political, social and cultural concept which has become today the concept of ethnic transformation; 2) explore the impact of "self-determination" struggles in the governance of both states as well as the impact of state policies on the political, social and cultural integrity of people involved in such movements; and 3) analyze and propose modes of intervention that can be employed to ensure political stability in a diverse and plural society through the institutionalization of a form of interactive governance. Field work in Indonesia and the Philippines included visits to national, regional and local government offices and agencies, and interviews of key persons involved in the movement.

Work on the Philippines has been substantially completed. Field research in the Philippines initially shows that the intensity of resistance employed by an ethnic group is directly proportional to the degree of opposition or threat that might affect their survival as a group or a community. The case of the ethnic movements in Cordillera and separatist movements in Mindanao reveal a material, intellectual and concrete foundation that is rooted in the people's concept of territory, homeland or region.

Nationalist movements have their political and economic reasons. The Cordilleras and Muslim Mindanao belong to the poorest regions in the Philippines despite being rich in natural resources. Allegiance of ethnic groups and communities to their heritage supersedes loyalty to the state when the state neglects the people's economic and political development; when the natural, human and technical resources of these ethnic groups are exploited; and when external threats like domination by the ethnic majority is present. However, these ethnic identities and loyalties seem to be flexible in accordance with a political objective such as the case of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which shifted their loyalty to the state once their leader, Nur Misuari, became the Governor of the region and the Chair of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development. The Cordillerans are not exempt as seen in the unsuccessful passage of the Cordillera Organic Act.

The Cordilleran and Muslim movements are reactions against the attempts of the centralized state to create a homogenous society controlled by a few. Martial law proved that coercion or repression as a means of homogenizing or assimilating diverse ethnic groups will only succeed in strengthening the cultural identity of ethnic groups. Development that displaces ethnic groups from their homeland has painted the state as a regressive advocate of nationalism. Meanwhile, the movements are slowly creating a mosaic democracy. The creation of the Cordillera Administrative Region and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has forfeited the ethnic groups' right to decide on the basis of their values and aspirations. Military aggression has become the government's response to these groups' continuing struggle for self-determination. If the government refuses to accept the plurality of the Filipino people, the creation of a multi-nation-state is possible. ■

Ruptures and Departures... (continued from page 9)

in primarily a western-oriented way, the author believes we are still a long way off from doing the same with our own Southeast Asian texts. Using examples from Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines, he explores the exciting possibilities of reading literary texts from a cross-cultural position, a position likely to be more and more significant in the opening decades of the third millennium.

The Global and the Local: English in Language Policy and Planning and its Impact on Nationism and Nationalism

Anne Pakir

National University of Singapore

One of the great challenges facing Southeast Asia is the rapid development of English as the lingua franca for the interconnected world. There is a steep demand for the language, leading sometimes to less attention to other important languages. The concern is legitimate as we currently witness the effects of information flows, people flows, and cultural flows, in which much of this ease of exchange or interchange has come about via the English language.

The paper addresses the role of the English language within changing landscapes and mindscapes of multi-ethnic Southeast Asia. It revisits, at the beginning of the 21st century, Joshua Fishman's distinction between "nationism" and "nationalism" (Fishman, 1968), and tries to deal with contemporary "ethnicity" and "nationalism" issues. The paper discusses, in particular, the place of English in language policy and planning in three ASEAN countries: Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore. The concern with language or languages in education and the role(s) they play in a borderless world will remain a recurrent one for these countries and as well as other ASEAN countries. The paper highlights some issues of concern: the place of the English language in the larger social context, the symbolic attachments to it, and its interrelationships with other aspects of life and culture in multi-lingual Southeast Asia. ▀

Approaching Asia... (continued from page 21)

Several participants emphasized that the issue was not simply the strengthening of Asian Studies in Asia. In approaching Asia from within the Asian region, we also need to reconsider some of the basic paradigms of conventional Asian studies. Professor Wang Gungwu pointed to three key issues which had emerged from the conference. The first was the "rediscovery of Asia" - the growing awareness of a wide variety of cross-border commonalities within the regions. The second was the need for people within the Asian region to make greater efforts to understand neighboring countries and societies. Thirdly, the conference had also highlighted the processes by which social science paradigms developed elsewhere (mostly in Europe and North America) are being absorbed, rejected, modified and digested within the region. This creates exciting possibilities for the emergence of new conceptual advances within Asia.

It was agreed that the network should take several steps to pursue these ideas further. A web site should be established to disseminate information about the conference and other network activities (including the directory of Asian studies in Asia). This should also be used to draw in more participants (who could be invited to register their interest on-line) and to link participants to other existing electronic networks on Asian studies. Further funding should be sought to enable scholars to continue cooperation on the themes discussed at the conference. This might best be achieved by seeking to create panels addressing these themes within a variety of region-wide conferences, thus promoting links between the network and other groups engaged in studying Asia within Asia.

Particular thanks are due to Professor Giri Deshingkar for hosting the conference and arranging the splendid Sariska venue, and also Clare Guenther at the Australian National University for her tireless organizational work (sometimes in the face of the vicissitudes of international communications technologies!) The conference was made possible by the generous financial support of the Ford Foundation. ▀

CONFERENCES



- **Environment and Development: Scientific, Social and Technological Challenges for the Pacific Rim**
15-19 August 2000, Chulalongkorn University. APRU Fellows Program 2000.

For inquiries, contact

The Office of International Affairs
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Tel. +662-2183331 to 35



- **7th Pacific Basin Symposium on In Search of a New Asian Way**
29-31 August 2000, Petaling Jaya Hilton, Malaysia. A collaboration between Soka University and the University of Malaya.

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- **UKM 30th Anniversary Conference on The University in the New Millennium, Challenges and Opportunities**

5-6 September 2000, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia. *Themes:* the university environment — new technologies, modes of teaching and learning, infrastructure, finance, scholarship, research and development, borderless university; societal aspirations and nationhood; internationalization and excellence; and values and ethics.

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