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ASIA TENGGARAH DALAM ABAD 20

THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON

Southeast Asia in the 20TH Century

آسيا في القرن العشرين

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Southeast Asians Look at Themselves and the Region

Universiti Malaya's Jati Journal



on our Cover

The conference title ***Southeast Asia in the 20th Century*** in Filipino, Bahasa Indonesia; and Jawi, Thai, Myanmar, Cambodian, and Vietnamese scripts.

Editorial Box

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C O N T E N T S

Southeast Asian Studies Bulletin 2/96 October 1996

Features

- 4 *The Regional Conference on Southeast Asia in the 20th Century*
- 6 **Southeast Asians** Look at Themselves and the Region
- 7 VISITING PROFESSOR **Thanet Aphornsuvan** at the University of the Philippines

Review

- 8 **The View from Next Door** Universiti Malaya's *Jati* Journal

SEAS Profiles

- 10 Jabatan Pengajian Asia Tenggara (**Department of Southeast Asian Studies**) University of Malaya
- 12 International Conference on the **Centennial of the 1896 Philippine Revolution**
- 12 **Korea-ASEAN Circuit Seminar** in Hanoi
- 13 **Thailand Research Fund Vietnamese Studies Program**

Announcements

15 ► Seminar on **Thai-Myanmar Studies in Yangon** ► Grants for the **Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program** of the Toyota Foundation and the Japan Foundation Asia Center ► Manila meeting of the **SEASREP Council** and officers of the signatory five universities to the Memorandum of Understanding for Southeast Asian Studies Manila meet.


Maria Serena Y. Diokno

The field of Southeast Asian studies is quickly advancing in the region. The first batch of graduate students on language training grants have left for their study: a Malaysian studying Dutch in Indonesia; another Malaysian, a Filipino and two Indonesians studying Thai in Thailand; A Filipino and a Thai in Indonesia taking Bahasa; and an Indonesian in the Philippines learning Tagalog.

The first group of visiting professors have also delivered their lectures in various Southeast Asian universities: Dr. Taufik' Abdullah and Dr. Adrian Lapan, both Indonesian, lectured at the University of Malaya; so did Dr. Serafin Quiazon from the Philippines. Indonesia played host to two visiting professors from the University of the Philippines, Dr. Consuelo Paz and Dr. Maria Luisa Camagay, and to Dr. Sukanya of Thammasat University; while the University of the Philippines received Dr. Ibrahim Alfian of Gadjah Mada University and Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan of Thammasat. In return, Thammasat University had Dr. Djoko Surya of Indonesia as its visiting professor.

In our next issue the SEAS Bulletin will report on the second batch of Southeast Asian scholars who were recently awarded grants by the Japan Foundation Asia Center and the Toyota Foundation to either study a Southeast Asian language (or a "source" language such as Dutch or Spanish); to pursue a postgraduate degree in another Southeast Asian university; to deliver lectures as a visiting professor; or to undertake a collaborative project with other Southeast Asian researchers. The numbers are growing which can only mean that Southeast Asian studies are seriously being pursued by scholars in the region.

For now we wish to focus on a very exciting project

that we hope will help crystallize the Southeast Asian agenda and sow the seeds of a community of Southeast Asian scholars vigorously interacting with one another. This is the Regional Conference on Southeast Asia in the 20TH Century. Originally the idea, as conceived by the SEASREP Council, was to expound on what the present century has meant to Southeast Asia in its various aspects — politics, economics, culture, gender, science and technology. But the fear was subsequently expressed by another group of Southeast Asians that the conference might attract primarily historians of all kinds and leave out culture and other specialists in the region. Hence the broader title, Southeast Asia in the 20TH Century.

The project moves us because of its potential impact. Before this century comes to a close, Southeast Asian scholars from different parts of the region will gather together to share their views on how their region, their countries and societies have been transformed over the past ten decades. Before the 21ST century opens, therefore, we will have made our statement to ourselves and before the world.

The project moves us, too, because it opens the door to greater interaction among Southeast Asians who live next to each other but have much to learn about their neighbors. The barriers are gradually breaking down and in the century to come, we can look forward to what Shaharil Talib calls a "borderless Southeast Asia."

Southeast Asianists from other parts of the world are welcome to listen and exchange their views during the conference. We will issue the announcement and the call for papers soon after the new year opens. Interested scholars can write us directly if they wish to receive these notices.

Regional Conference on Southeast Asia in the 20TH Century

The 20TH century is a major turning point in the development of Southeast Asian societies. In this period Southeast Asian nation-states evolved into the political and cultural entities by which their peoples, governments, and peculiar identities are now predominantly defined by the rest of the world. The region itself has become an active player in the world scene, not the mere blob of earth and sea southeast of the Old World, the object of enterprise and conquest.

The process has not been without upheavals, however. Wars of independence had to be fought, won and lost; economies integrated, isolated and re-integrated; and layer after layer of cultural influences have been padded onto ancient cultures and histories, creating patterns of growth that have vibrantly, if not confusedly, mixed old and new. Evidently, the Southeast Asia that will step into the 21ST century is a transformed Southeast Asia of the 1900s.

The closing of the 20TH century provides an impetus for Southeast Asian scholars to collectively reflect upon and examine the transformation process that has taken place in the region in its various manifestation.

A Conference that will enable Southeast Asian scholars to view their transformation process from their own lenses creates a distinct perspective. Through insightful inquiry on the past-in-the-making, Southeast Asians can then equip themselves with the framework and self-awareness necessary for charting their futures.

With the generous support of the Japan Foundation Asia Center and the Toyota Foundation, as well

as the commitment of the five signatory universities to the Memorandum of Understanding for the promotion of Southeast Asian Studies, this Conference will soon become reality. In January next year, the formal call for papers will be made. The Conference itself is to take place in January 1998 in the Philippines.

The Conference aims to:

- identify the forces and factors significant in shaping 20TH century Southeast Asia as a whole and its various aspects;
- define the various forms — cultural, political, economic and others — into which Southeast Asian societies have evolved in the century;
- elaborate upon Southeast Asian perspectives on the region's transformation process; and
- assess the emergent trends, forces and features that will remain significant in the next century.

For most of the region and their nation-states' modern history, the writing and sifting of experiences have been dominated by non-indigenous scholars. Thus, in addition, the Conference and the papers that will be generated will help correct the imbalance in Southeast Asian studies, a field developed and dominated by Western scholars. It is also important that the Conference serves as a venue for the exchange of ideas and views among scholars in the region because of the need to build a community of Southeast Asian scholars. The Conference will also be an opportunity for these scholars to share their perspectives with others engaged in Southeast Asian studies outside the region.

The Conference will highlight six major themes in the unfolding of Southeast Asia in the 20TH century:



culture and societal transformation; economic development; politics, the state and civil society; gender and gender discourse in Southeast Asia; environment, science and technology; and perspectives in the study of Southeast Asia.

The Conference will also serve the goals of the Memorandum of Understanding on Southeast Asian Studies signed by five universities in the region. Article II of the agreement specifies regional and other conferences as possible venues for exchanges among Southeast Asian scholars.

To broaden the participation of Southeast Asian scholars in the Conference, a limited number of travel subsidies for paper readers will be offered on a competitive basis. The terms and conditions of the travel grant will be announced in January 1997 along with the call for papers.

Although the Conference is being organized in Manila, the idea is the product of the SEASREP Council which brainstormed on the concept in its meeting in Bandung, Indonesia and in Manila, Philippines in 1995. For further inquiries about the Conference, write the SEAS Bulletin. ☉

Miriam C. Ferrer and **Maria Serena I. Diokno**, Third World Studies Center, UP College of Social Sciences and Philosophy.



Southeast Asians look at themselves and the Region

On 26 and 27 October 1996, five scholars from Southeast Asia met in Manila to flesh out the themes of the Regional Conference on SEA in the 20TH Century. Each of them will read a synoptic paper on a major theme that will be discussed in plenary sessions, while the more specific topics will be addressed at the panel level in smaller, simultaneous workshops. Proposals from scholars interested in reading a paper will be clustered by topic or sub-theme in the workshops.

The theme on gender will be done by an Indonesian scholar who was unable to join the writer's workshop in Manila. Her piece will be featured in the next issue. This is how the other five scholars intend to develop their respective themes.



Politics, the State and Civil Society

Sida Sonsri Thammasat University

The political systems presently governing the lives of South-east Asia's 400 million inhabitants have been built on considerably different cultures; the religious component alone embraces Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam. The politics of these countries has been conditioned by colonial rule, although to a lesser degree in the case of Thailand. As a result, after independence, the political character of these states has continued to be significantly affected by a wide range of relationships with outside powers. With the rise of independent states, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the upsurge in democratization movements throughout the world, democracy is and remains the only model of governance with broad ideological legitimacy and appeal.

The paper will focus on the process of democratization in the region as it experienced a number of crises: the crisis of identity, which has led to internal conflicts as in the case of Burma; the crisis of legitimacy, which has witnessed the rise and fall of some governments and the lingering presence of others in the region; the difficulty of government's ability to enforce its decisions at various levels of society and in different parts of the country; the crisis of citizen participation and the demand for popular empowerment; and the need to redistribute wealth and resources so that democracy becomes real and viable. ☉

Culture and Societal Transformation

Wazir Jahan Karim Universiti Sains Malaysia

A great deal of what has been said about Southeast Asia is in reality derived from the academic assumption that Southeast Asia is devoid of its own indigenous origins and is merely an outpost, trading center and playing field of greater Asia and Europe. But much has been discovered about the region which challenges such a supposition. Traditional political and economic systems and gender relationships, for example, demonstrate vibrant, more complementary exchanges than the supposedly enlightened, humane colonial systems.

The modernity of Southeast Asia over the last decades has, however, posed serious questions about the sustainability of indigenous social systems and the possibilities of global-local cultural integration in the future. Given the phenomenal impact of industrialization, urbanization and the globalization of primary and service industries which are increasingly adapted to Western or East Asian managerial operations, how much of Southeast Asia remains indigenized? The impact of global multimedia on Southeast Asian culture, for instance, is increasingly significant since major media networks are still controlled or owned

[continued next page]

(Above, L-R) Sida Sonsri, Wazir Jahan Karim (Below, L-R) Reynaldo C. Ileto, Jomo Sundaram and Roger Posadas.

by Western agencies. Trends toward Western acculturation may not so easily be subsumed by a pan Southeast Asian effort at promoting indigenous material culture for efforts to do so continue to be dependent on superficial, political inputs from governments rather than from the people. A Southeast Asian renaissance in the 21st century will, therefore, depend on the wealth of creative and intellectual capital which SEA can generate for itself. ☉

Environment, Science and Technology

Roger Posadas University of the Philippines

The introduction of Western science into Southeast Asia by colonizers and foreign traders in the early part of the 20th century and subsequent efforts by Southeast Asian nations to develop their own independent, self-reliant, and self-sustaining science seem to confirm George Basalla's three-stage model for the introduction and diffusion of modern science in non-European societies: first, the conduct of scientific surveys and geographical explorations of the colony by European and later, American scientists; second, the conduct by native scientists themselves of colonial science, that is, science dependent on and oriented toward European or American science; and last, the struggle of the local scientific community to establish an independent, scientific tradition and culture.

All Southeast Asian nations have experienced the first stage and are now struggling to move from the second to the third stage. It is, therefore, interesting to compare the present state of national science development in the region and to share experiences, problems and lessons of Southeast Asians as they struggle to develop an independent, national scientific culture and tradition. This would also include a comparison of technological development among Southeast Asian countries, their strategic technological development thrusts and their modes of technology acquisition. ☉

Perspectives on the Study of Southeast Asia

Reynaldo C. Ileto Australian National University

Departing from the usual linear, modernization paradigms employed in writing the history of Southeast Asia, the paper will attempt to reexamine notions about Southeast Asian history in the past and in the present. Traditionally, the region's history was depicted largely in terms

of European experiences. During colonial rule, history was useful in the service of foreign ends. As a reaction to colonialism, history was harnessed for the purpose of nationalism and the formation of national identity (as evident in the textbooks).

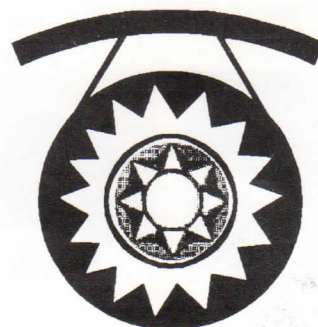
The paper will examine perspectives in the study of Southeast Asia over time and assert the need to veer away from Eurocentrism and displace traditional notions of Southeast Asian history and societies. The whole thrust towards a rigid nation-state framework, for instance, is now under challenge by marginalized ethno-nationalist groups. Women historians vigorously redefine male-oriented history. In examining these and other challenges, the paper intends to suggest alternatives to the limiting paradigms that govern Southeast Asian historical discourse. ☉

Economic Development

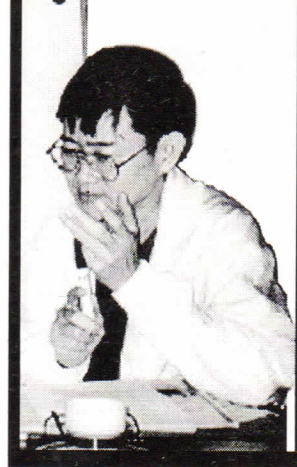
Jomo Sundaram Universiti Malaya

With the emergence of the dragon economies composed of the first generation Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) such as South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, on the one hand, and the subsequent rise of the tiger economies, composed of the second generation NICs, namely Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, on the other, an economic divide now distinctly classifies Asia's booming economies. The question "Why can't tigers be dragons?" is thus to be posed and explored in the paper. Using the tiger-dragon images as a framework, the similarities and differences of the economies of these states and the dynamics of their economic development processes will be juxtaposed. On the other hand, the paper will also look into why some Southeast Asian states are currently experiencing an economic boom (the "tigers"), while others lag behind. For these lesser economies which are currently confronted with the dilemma of not belonging to either the tiger or dragon development models, the species to which they belong remains a lingering question. ☉

Maria Serena I. Diokno and **Lara T. Ardales**, University Research Associate, Third World Studies Center.



VISITING PROFESSOR **Thanet** **Aphornsuvan** at the **University of the Philippines**



2/96 SEAS Bulletin 7

From 29 July to 3 August 1996, Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan of the History Department, Thammasat University, gave a series of lectures before the faculty, graduate and undergraduate students of the Departments of History and Political Science at the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, and the Asian Center. Dr. Thanet's stint as visiting professor at the University of the Philippines is part of the SEASREP Exchange Program sponsored by the Toyota Foundation and the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Dr. Thanet focused on Thai intellectual history and the formation of the modern Thai nation-state.

The concept of freedom in the making of modern Siam was the main theme of Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan's lecture at the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy's audio-visual room on 2 August 1996. Sponsored by the History Department, the lecture was attended by the faculty and students of the Departments of History and Political Science (from the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy) and the Department of Filipino (from the College of Arts and Letters).

Professor Thanet held the interest of the audience for more than an hour that early afternoon. His lecture was immediately followed by equally well-thought out reactions from Dr. Milagros Guerrero and Dr. Noel Teodoro of the Department of History.

In his lecture, Dr. Thanet discussed freedom as part of the larger discourse on Thailand's modernization. Modernization, as perceived by the Thai elite, was the solution to the question of Western expansionism in the late 18TH and 19TH centuries. *Seriphab*, meaning freedom, was a term invented by the royal elite to coincide with the concept of freedom — something the royal elite had to do in the process of transforming the Thai legal and educational systems into Western models.

Dr. Thanet further clarified that the abolition of slavery in Thailand was not the result of the popularization of *seriphab*, but a direct consequence of the royalty's sensitivity to the growing impressions of foreigners in Thailand. He also pointed out that it was the non-compatibility of slavery with modernization that sealed the fate of slavery.

In her reaction, Dr. Guerrero maintained that the concept of freedom was not alien to Southeast Asian peoples. In fact, she pointed out, it became the battle cry of both the Vietnamese and the Filipinos, for example, against colonial domination. Dr. Guerrero also stressed that the construct of freedom in Thailand may differ from its neighbors' by virtue of the fact that Siam was not outrightly colonized by any Western power. Hence the distinctive character of the Thai discourse on freedom. She added that while Thailand's triumph in abolishing slavery and articulating its quest for freedom were different, Thailand nonetheless joins the rest of the region in experiencing poverty.

[continued on page 14]

Student Impressions of Dr. Thanet's lecture

...He was able to raise the most important points that concern the formation of a modern Thai nation-state. He mention(ed)...the Bangkok-centeredness of the modernization (process) which I believe is still prevalent up to this day. He was at a vantage point when he recognized the importance of mass support which is very crucial to an ideal modern nation-state. Lastly, he acknowledged (no matter how brief) the significance of the ethnic minority issue to the larger issue of the modernizing Thai nation-state.

Zenamar L. Machacon, Political Science
178 (Politics of Southeast Asia).

Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan's lecture... on the formation of the modern Thai state ...clearly indicated the relativity of the formation of state systems. Each state has its own peculiar development, and the Thai state is no exemption. It is also noteworthy that Dr. Thanet's discipline of history may have given him (an advantage) in the study of the formation of the... Thai state....In general, Dr. Thanet's lecture...was able to show clearly the importance of the military, bureaucracy, and the "middle class" in the

[continued on page 15]

Displaying the underbelly of history seems to be the primary concern of *Jati*, a bilingual journal published by the Southeast Asian Studies Department of Universiti Malaya. The *Jati* journal, in itself, is a laudable effort in reclaiming the dominion of Southeast Asia's scholars in the field. It also offers a rare glimpse into the academic discourse and parameters of inquiry in Malaysia, which is the first in the region to institutionalize Southeast Asian Studies as an academic program. With the exception of a guest article from the Philippines, all of the ten articles published in this maiden issue (September 1995) of *Jati* were written by Malaysians, most of whom are attached to the University's Southeast Asian Studies Department.

The recovery of marginalized discourses by the Malaysian scholars is more successful when it involves their own history. Of the four articles on Malaysia, those that deal with the issue of poverty manifest innovative methods of historical inquiry that make the *Jati* journal worthy of its name (*jati* = native, pure, original). "*Rintihan dari Pusaka Usang: Getir hidup kaum tani di Semenanjung Tanah Melayu 1935-1945*," which was previously presented at a seminar on modern Malaysian history in 1992, is a collaborative paper by Mohammed Halib, *Jati*'s editor; Shaharil Talib, and Mohd Setefarzi Mohd Noor. Although revised for publication in the journal, the results of their archival research into the Small Estates Deceased Files of Kota Bahru, Kuala Kangsar, Kuala Lipis, Rembau and Johor during the period 1935 to 1945 remain preliminary in nature. Nonetheless, the empirical data raise interesting points regarding the interrelationships of class, race and property in colonial Malaya that continue to be at work in present-day Malaysia. The authors

may have been motivated by a desire to reevaluate the development strategies of their government, but it is their mode of historical inquiry that opens up possibilities for other scholars in the Southeast Asian region. Research into the transfer of property, through inheritance in the region's colonial period, is undeniably a fertile area for today's scholars.

Of the articles that deal with contemporary Malaysia, it is Irene Sia's extensive profile on commodities trader and property tycoon, Robert Kuok, that deserves some comment mainly because of the ubiquitous presence of Shangri-La Hotels in Southeast Asia. Sia discusses the business personality of her choice by historicizing him as a representation of the overseas Chinese found in the Malaysian political and economic landscape. At one point, she asserts that the Kuok Brothers company "is one of the earliest Chinese companies to understand Government need to provide equal opportunities to Bumiputras" and thus concludes that "it was the ability of Kuok to work with Government institutions and Government policies that allowed his company to grow by leaps and bounds" (p. 65).

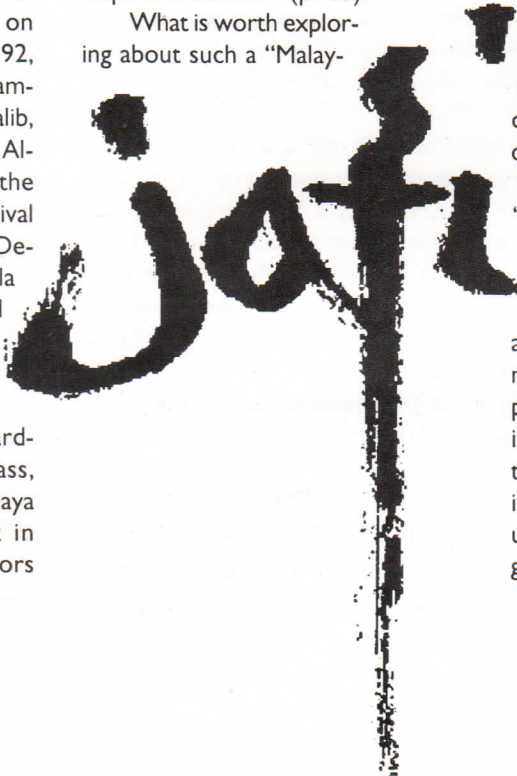
What is worth exploring about such a "Malay-

sian Taipan" is whether this same ability has also been effective in his Southeast Asian investments, particularly, in the Philippines where Kuok Philippine Properties, Inc., recently announced it would spend five billion pesos over the next three years to boost its rent-yielding business.

The two articles on the Philippines are attempts at providing an alternative view of its socio-cultural history. In more ways than one, Lucrecia Kasilag's article, "Filipino Women in the Arts in the Context of Cultural Development," which was originally presented in the 1991 International Conference on Women and Development in Asia held at Kuala Lumpur, extends the cataloguing method to its limits. The names of women involved in cultural activities (music, dance, theater, literature) are carefully listed down and accounted for.

Yet, despite her recovery of women artists from the margins, Kasilag remained well within the hegemonic discourse of the Filipino cultural elite. Because of her initial acceptance of "the inevitable historical circumstances of colonial domination" (p. 94), the article tends to privilege the mainstream (that is, establishment art) for which Imelda Marcos is credited as the "greatest single influence in Philippine cultural development in the past two decades" (p. 106).

Hanafi Husin, in his article "*Masyarakat dan Protes di Filipina semasa Regim Marcos, 1969an-1970an*," offers a more refreshing perspective. He reconstructs the activities of the student protest movement before Ferdinand Marcos placed the country under martial law in 1972. Hanafi's careful documentation of the organizations involved in the mass demonstrations is built upon his acceptance of them as legitimate expressions of a post-inde-



pendence nationalism that tried to resist the continuing neocolonialization of the Philippines. He does fall prey, however, to the usual simplifications that this nationalism was anti-American and destabilized Philippine society to such an extent that martial law was necessary. Despite this Hanafi was able to provide his Malaysian colleagues with an alternative view that is grounded on documents that lie outside the margins of Marcosian historical discourse.

The demystification of Singapore emerges as a single project in three articles that reconstruct its colonial history. In "*Pelabuhan Singapura — a port by design*," Hanizah Idris reverses the oft-perceived notion that Singapore already possessed a naturally deep harbor by reconstructing the dredging projects that were done by the British colonial authorities. Although Hanizah's article is merely an excerpt from her M.A. thesis (1995), it provides a wealth of information that can be used for further studies on 19th century colonial infrastructure.

Amidst this wealth of details, however, is a telling silence in exploring the implications of the archival materials used in the research. Had the materials been subjected to this kind of scrutiny, Singapore's viability as a natural port would clearly reveal itself to be a historically constructed misconception. Hanizah, instead, concludes her article by referring to the presence of Indonesia's Tanjung Priok harbor as another "port by design". In so doing, she has displaced her inquiry from a deconstruction of a widely held belief among past scholars (p. 24) to one that merely asserts that the Singapore harbor is not uncommon in the region.

The unfulfilled potential for breaking down historical constructs is similarly apparent in another article about colonial Singapore. Written by

Siti Khajar Md. Shah, "*Periuk Api dalam Pertahanan Laut Singapura (sehingga perang dunia kedua)*" begins by asserting that the cast-iron cannons that made up Singapore's naval defense system before the Second World War were motivated less by the British desire to transform the Malay Peninsula into a sea power in Southeast Asia than by a "prejudiced" view that spurred them to protect their own investments in Singapore (p. 38). Yet, the implications of such an assertion remain unarticulated. Instead, the article was more intent on providing a detailed description of the locations, categories and types of cannons the British had set up around the island.

Finally, Shaharil Talib is able to approximate this potential for reversing constructs. His "Singapore (1824-1958), this is My Island in the Sun" is strategically placed as the journal's opening article. Not only does it establish a thematic thread for all the articles in this issue of the journal; it also reveals how such a mode of historical inquiry can be both provocative and substantive.

Written for an IAHA colloquium in 1994, Shaharil's article not only attempts to displace the myth that

The Jati journal . . . is a laudable effort in reclaiming the domination of Southeast Asia's scholars in the field. It also offers a rare glimpse into the academic discourse and parameters of inquiry in Malaysia, which is the first in the region to institutionalize Southeast Asian Studies as an academic program.

Singapore's geography has "no bounds, only unlimited possibilities in the expansion of Singapore's domination over the Southeast Asian region" (p. 1). It also reveals the repositioning of Singapore from across the causeway.

The manner in which Shaharil effects the reversal is through a closer reading of the treaties and colonial maps that consolidated Singapore as a separate geographical entity. The ambiguities of Singapore's territorial limits are dispelled by invoking the ten-mile radius stipulated in the 1824 treaty and the subsequent marking out of the island's boundaries by such British colonial officers as Sir John Crawford. Through an intrepid analysis of topographical surveys of Johore and the maps that accompanied the 1927 treaty, the "open seas" of Singapore are shown to be bounded by the proprietorial lines of the Dutch and British colonizers. To embark upon these so-called open seas turns out to be a traversal of enclosed spaces. In the concluding section of the article, Shaharil is then able to assert that "the enigma that is modern-day Singapore is a series of islands, straits and seas geographically bounded and contained and yet with the application of technology and human resources able to breakthrough (sic) all barriers as the Island of islands in Island Southeast Asia" (p. 16).

Unfortunately, such a provoking statement was left unexplored in favor of a need to answer the "final puzzle" regarding the exact number of islands that were ceded and then retroceded to the British throughout the colonial period. This accounting of islands could well have been the article's conclusion. But the article, in fact, ended with a paragraph describing an incident in 1939 when a British vessel strayed into Dutch territorial waters abutting the Raffles Lighthouse.

JABATAN PANGAJIAN ASIA the *Department of Southeast Asian Studies* TENGGA RA

SEAS Bulletin 2/96
10

The Beginning

In 1978 the University of Malaya initiated an undergraduate program on Southeast Asian Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. It was a proactive response by the academic community of the University to the vision embodied in the Declaration of ASEAN Concord in Bali on 24 February 1976. The internalization of Southeast Asian Studies was part of a wider effort to structure an Asian Studies-based faculty along area studies and discipline-based departments. In the following years, the program realized its potential and was upgraded by the Ministry of Education in 1989 as a full-fledged Department in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The initiative was bold and imaginative with a clear investment in the future.

The Department of Southeast Asian Studies was the first integrated undergraduate teaching, postgraduate training and research-based department, among all the leading universities in the region and continues to be the cutting edge. It established close cooperation and collaboration with several research and teaching institutions in the region. Too, several international funding agencies identified the department to manage, through multilateral agreements, the rapid integration of several leading Southeast Asian universities and research institutions for undergraduate teaching, postgraduate training and research collaboration in the study of the region. This private sector initiative

complemented the concerted efforts by the governments of South-east Asian nations to integrate the region along sectoral lines.

The Current Status

The Department has established a distinctly modern Southeast Asian Studies thrust in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences' undergraduate teaching curriculum. The approach is multidisciplinary and the courses offered are structured along broad-based, regional lines. A total of fifty new courses were instituted in the period from 1978 to 1996. All students are required to register in a Southeast Asian language course and to submit a two-unit graduate exercise based on original research concerning the region. In addition, the Department organizes students for "traveling" classrooms that take them into remote corners of the region as they gather data and experience.

Furthermore, experts on the region from outside the University are invited to share their thoughts and experiences in a compulsory seminar course in the students' final year. The concept of a borderless Southeast Asia, thus, has been embedded in the teaching program even before it became a contemporary buzzword.

In 1990, the Department's first Ph.D. candidate graduated. In a relatively short period, from 1990 to 1996, two doctorates were awarded and eleven others earned their masters degrees. Currently, there are eighteen postgraduate students on

the registry at various stages of their research. There is a positive Asian response to the academic field of Southeast Asian Studies judging from the diverse national backgrounds of the researchers. The postgraduate community includes students from Africa, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and Brunei. Several of these students have been awarded research scholarships from the Uni-

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at the UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

versity of Malaya, the Malaysian Technical Training Co-operation Award and the Toyota Foundation.

The Department has a small staff of nine lecturers and one permanent tutor. It is led by a Professor, while five others hold the post of Associate Professor. The individual and collective research strengths of the mem-



bers of the department have gained recognition internationally and regionally. They have won handsome research grants from international and national funding agencies. Annually, they present their research findings during regional and international conferences.

Their major research papers have been published by internationally recognized publishing houses. More recently, their skills at regionalism and human resource networking have caught the attention of corporate sectors, who are spearheading the drive to regionalize along industrial lines. Towards the end of 1995, the Department launched its academic journal entitled *JATI*, which is to serve as its academic flagship.

There is no doubt that the next century will be a global Asian century and that the Southeast Asian region will be the critical link that will bind East, West, South and Central Asia. The Department is preparing itself to meet the challenges and needs of the newly emerging international order. Undergraduate courses will be constantly reviewed and revised. New research directions will be planned and executed for accelerated participation in regionalism. Students and staff will be exposed to the region by the mechanisms of language training, student exchange programs, post-graduate training, staff training and exchange and collaborative research along regional lines. There will be a free flow of students and staff cutting across national institutions within the region. There will emerge a supra-faculty among Southeast Asian universities to mobilize human resources within the region. This open regionalism will encourage others from outside the region to actively participate in the making of a future Southeast Asia that is truly ours to share. ☉

Shaharil Talib *Chair, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Malaya.*

Titles of Masters & Doctoral Theses 1990-1996

- Ph.D. 1991** *The Malay Handloom Weavers: A Study of the Growth and Decline of Traditional Manufacture, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1990** *Brunei and its External Relations, 1888-1983, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1992** *The Development of Political Theater in the Philippines, 1969-72, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1992** *The Making of Migrant Workers: Historical Development and Contemporary Analysis of Foochow Chinese, sitiawan in Singapore, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1993** *Japanese Mining Companies in Malaya before World War II, Japan*
- M.A. 1993** *Regionalism in Southeast Asia: A Study of ASEAN, Korea*
- Ph.D. 1993** *From Gathering Tripang to Trawling Prawns: A Historical Case Study of the Development of the Fishing Industry, North Borneo, 1750-1990, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1994** *Military Cooperation between Malaysia and Indonesia, 1966-92, Korea*
- M.A. 1994** *Indonesian Migrants in a Felda Scheme, Sungai Koyan, Raub, Pahang: Social-Economic Implications, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1995** *The History of the Defence of Singapore and its Dependencies, 1819-1927, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1995** *The Infrastructure Development of Singapore Port, 1819-1941, Malaysia*
- M.A. 1996** *South Korea-Malaysia Relations: A Study of the Political Economy of Interdependence, Korea*
- M.A. 1996** *The Formation of the Malaysia-Thai Boundary, Malaysia*

Year

Year	Thai		Southeast Asian Languages Taught 1977-1996	
1977/78	18			
1979/80	2			
1980/81	38		Tagalog	
1981/82	34	37		
1982/83	40	38		
1983/84	35	20		Burmese
1984/85	16	16	14	
1985/86	18	17	16	
1986/87	18	17	18	
1987/88	18	17	18	
1988/89	4	15	7	
1989/90	5	20	4	
1990/91	12	16	10	
1991/92	8	13	13	
1993/94	28		9	
1994/95	10	6	3	Vietnamese
1995/96	4	7		25
				8

International Conference on the Centennial of the 1896 Philippine Revolution

A highly successful and memorable international conference on the Centennial of the 1896 Philippine Revolution was held from 21-23 August 1996, at the Manila Hotel. There were 91 papers presented by foreign and Filipino scholars on topics pertaining to the conference theme, "The Philippine Revolution and Beyond." The speakers and participants came from Europe, Asia, the Americas and the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand — countries whose histories have been linked to the Philippines or whose historical experiences have been similar in some way. From the Spanish-speaking countries, there were speakers from Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Spain; from Europe, speakers from England, France, Russia, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and the Czech Republic; and from Asia, scholars from the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and Singapore. The other speakers came from the United States, while the bulk of the speakers and participants were resident Filipino scholars and Filipinos abroad who came home for the conference.

The International Conference on the Centennial of the 1896 Philippine Revolution was almost two years in the making — it was conceived of in November 1994 when the Committee on Historical Research of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) submitted a proposal to convene an international conference to the Philippine Centennial Commission chaired by Dr. Salvador H. Laurel. The conceptual framework and plan for the conference were put together by Samuel K. Tan and Bernardita R. Churchill, both members of the NCCA-Committee on Historical Research.

In planning the conference theme, the program committee wanted the conference to look into historical developments or the conditions in the nineteenth century — social, political, economic, cultural, intellectual — some of which might have contributed to the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896 which culminated in the establishment of the First Philippine Republic in Malolos in January 1899. Presentations on the Philippine Revolution itself, covering the period from 1896 to 1902 and beyond were also



considered. The historiography of the Philippine Revolution is extensive but it has been, until recently, narrowly focused on the *ilustrado* leadership of the revolutionary/nationalist movement and the events that unfolded in Manila,

Cavite and Malolos. The *Katipunan* and the Revolution also figured prominently outside the heartland of the Revolution in Luzon, where movements in the towns and provinces also merit serious study.

Because the Philippine Revolution, the first against colonial rule in Asia, was an event of international significance, we wanted that momentous period discussed in the context of the revolutions and nationalist movements of other countries, especially in Asia. We also wanted to see the reports on the event by foreign countries who were aware of what was going on in the Philippines or concerned about Philippine affairs. The martyrdom of Jose Rizal in December 1896, which was the focus of the last day of the conference, was a landmark event in the Filipinos' struggle for liberation from colonial rule.

There were also papers that dealt with the past one hundred years by way of engaging in a national assessment of the state of the nation and its national life towards a vision of the future. The Conference was, in the words of a journalist, "A Three-day Century," and a fitting commemoration of the Centennial of the 1896 Philippine Revolution. ☉

Bernardita R. Churchill, Conference Program Director.

Korea-ASEAN Circuit Seminar in Hanoi

The Korean Association of Southeast Asian Studies (KASEAS) held their 4th Annual ASEAN Circuit Seminar last July 26 to 27, 1996 in Hanoi, Vietnam. The theme of the seminar was "Southeast Asia and Korea: Economic Development and Political Reform."

Nine Korean scholars, led by KASEAS President Prof. Ahn Chung-Si of the Political Science Department, Seoul National University joined the seminar. Madam Pham Chi Lan, secretary-general of the Vietnam Chamber of Com-

merce and Industry co-chaired the organizing committee. Five scholars from Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand presented country reports.

The papers presented dealt with the interplay of economic development and political reform in selected ASEAN countries and South Korea, and issues pertinent to economic development such as quality of life, Japanese and Korean foreign development assistance and investments, global integration and security.

The KASEAS' annual seminars aim at promoting mutual understanding, encouraging collaborative research activities, and seeking out ways to promote mutual cooperation between Korea and the ASEAN countries. Since 1993, the Korean Overseas Information Service has regularly sponsored the Circuit Seminar. To date, three rounds

韓國東南亞學會

have been held successively, in collaboration with Thammasat University, University of Malaya, Universitas Indonesia, and Singapore Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, under various themes such as "Partnership Among Korea and Southeast Asian Countries in the Asia-Pacific Era," "Promoting Korea-Asean Cooperation and Political and Economic Development," and "Opening of the WTO Era and the Role of the APEC."

KASEAS was founded on June 29, 1991, through an Inaugural General Meeting at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea. It publishes an annual journal, *The Southeast Asian Review*, in the Korean language.

The purpose of the KASEAS are to lead in and deepen Southeast Asian Studies at the academic level in Korea; to develop an academic community pursuing balanced and integrated Southeast Asian studies and transcending the division between social science and the humanities; to encourage exchange of information among members and develop specialists; and to support the promotion of mutual understanding and exchanges between Korea and the region.

The KASEAS office is at 263-13, Gongduk-Dong, Jaeil Bldg. #906, Mapo-ku, Seoul 256-13, Korea. Their telephone numbers are (822) 706- 6761 or 706-6764; fax # (822) 706- 6765. ☎

Miriam C. Ferrer, Political Science Department, University of the Philippines, and Deputy Director, UP Third World Studies Center.

Thailand Research Fund Vietnamese Studies Program

2/96 SEAS Bulletin
13

Foreign Area Studies constitute a basic component of the Thailand Research Fund. Understandably, the Fund gives special attention to countries with which Thailand has close relations or which have significant impact on certain aspects of Thailand's future. In addition, the Fund supports researches about countries whose per capita income is less than Thailand's. Vietnam is among these countries.

One difficulty of area studies is foreign language proficiency and in Thailand, researchers with this skill are rather few. Hence the Fund invites foreign scholars to help accelerate area studies in Thailand. To qualify for support, foreign applicants must meet the necessary academic requirements, including proficiency in the English language.

In late 1995 and early 1996, a delegation was sent by the Fund to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam to carry out a fact-finding mission on the current state of Vietnamese Studies in Vietnam and to explore venues for collaboration. The delegation consisted of Dr. Charnvit Kasetsiri (Thammasat University), Dr. Theera Nujpium (Silpakorn University), Dr. Thanyathip Sripana (Chulalongkorn University), and Prof. Sophana Srichampa (Mahidol University), with Dr. Boonrak Boonyakhetmala, Director of the Program on Transnational and Development Options, as head. As the coordinator and interpreter, Mr. Nguyen Chi Thong (Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University) introduced the delegates to the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies in the National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities of Vietnam.

The delegation was warmly welcomed by Dr. Pham Duc Thanh, director of the institute, who organized several meetings with Vietnamese scholars both in Hanoi and in Ho Chi Minh City.

In May 1996, the Fund decided to provide a grant for a seminar on Vietnamese Studies in Bangkok and another to support a project entitled "The Identity of Viet-



[continued next page]

[Thanet continued from page 7]

For his part, Dr. Teodoro noted that Dr. Thanet's discussion was limited to the Thai-Buddhist experience. Dr. Teodoro expressed interest in understanding how the notion of Thai freedom translates into the predominantly Islamic culture in the Malay provinces in southern Thailand which once formed part of the Siamese kingdom. Dr. Teodoro also referred to the tradition of rebellion in Thailand as he drew out the experiences of nearby Malaysia. He posed the question as to whether or not there was any correlation between the Malaysian experience and Thailand's and how the concept of freedom, as discussed earlier, fits into such experience.

These reactions were followed by questions from the audience which Dr. Thanet answered ably. As he recognized the importance of the reactions and comments raised by the audience, Dr. Thanet stressed, however, that from the outset, his paper was limited to the Thai-Buddhist experience and that comparative inquiries have yet to be explored. In response to a question from the audience, he pointed out that *seriphab* was popularized by the Thai student movement in the 1960s. But he said he found no contradiction between this modern phenomena and the fact that *seriphab* is an ancient Thai concept.

Dr. Thanet concluded by noting that with the queries raised by and as a reaction to his paper, more work remains to be done on the complex issue of the Thai concept of freedom.

If we are to draw insights from the interactions that took place in the forum, the exchanges between the Thai scholar and the Filipino audience promise a bright and lively future in the exchange of ideas and frameworks among Southeast Asians. ☉ Victor J. Paz, History Department, University of the Philippines.

[Thai Research continued from page 13]

name Culture" by Prof. Phan Ngoc, an outstanding Vietnamese senior researcher. The Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, which is headed by Dr. Withaya Sucharitha-narugse, was assigned to manage these two projects, with the help of the board of management, including all the Thai delegates to Vietnam mentioned above.

On 23 July 1996 in Hanoi, an agreement to implement the Vietnamese Studies Program was made by the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University and the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities of Vietnam. Under the agreement, Vietnamese scholars are to prepare twelve academic papers (in English) which will be used in the pre-seminar of the Thai and Vietnamese scholars in late October 1996 in Ho Chi Minh City. The final papers will be presented in a three-day seminar in Bangkok in January 1997. Distinguished guests, Thai and foreign mass media, businessmen, investors and others interested in Vietnamese studies will be invited to the seminar.

As for the project on "The Identity of Vietnamese Culture", Prof. Phan Ngoc will be invited by the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, to present his paper which will be translated into English. He will also read a paper in the Bangkok seminar. During his stay there, from October 1996 to February 1997, Prof. Phan Ngoc will interact with Thai scholars in various institutes and faculties. The proceedings of the seminar as well as the works of Prof. Phan Ngoc will be published by the Institute of Asian Studies.

With the full and active participation of Vietnamese scholars, as noted by Dr. Withaya Sucharitha-narugse, and the support of the board of management and staff in the Institute of Asian Studies, the Vietnamese Studies Program sponsored by the Thailand Research Fund is well on its way to success. ☉ Nguyen Chi Thong, Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University.

[Jati Review continued from page 9]

The uneven handling of history's underbelly among these articles may have been caused by the elision of comparisons and the preference for single-country studies. Yet this is apparently something already recognized within the Malaysian domain. The journal's closing article, "*Penilu-san dan Realiti Sejarah Asia Tenggara: satu persoalan*" by Mohammad Raduan Mohd. Ariff and Shaharil Talib, argues for an expansion of the parameters in Southeast Asian historical research beyond the borders of individual nations. They proceed to sift through the various researches done after the Second World War in their search for the mode of historical inquiry that brings it closer to the reality of Southeast Asia as a region.

It is the work done on maritime kingdoms and their histories that they found to be most acceptable, in particular, the challenge issued by Adrian B. Lapan, the Indonesian historian who argues that the seas are central rather than marginal to Southeast Asia's history. The article also marked out the Sulu Sea, the Johor-Riouw-Linga Empire, and Singapore as the three areas that offer a number of possibilities for maritime research. Evidently much of Malaysian maritime research, particularly in Universiti Malaya, has ventured further into Singapore's surrounding seas. The article's overview of the graduate theses and research projects being done in the University's Southeast Asian Studies Department attests to this. The *Jati* journal thus gives us much to be optimistic about. It shows that the mode of historical inquiry in Malaysia is moving towards "borderless" research. More significantly, it is providing the impetus within the region for a more invigorated use of the comparative method in Southeast Asian Studies. ☉ Luisa J. Mallari, Department of English and Comparative Literature, University of the Philippines.

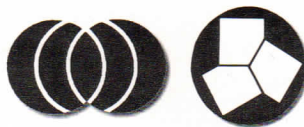


The Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, and the Universities' Historical Research Centre at Yangon, Myanmar, will co-host a

seminar on Thai-Myanmar Studies in Yangon on 2-4 December 1996. The seminar will focus on various aspects and issues in Thai and Myanmar historiography.

For further information, write:

Daw Ni Ni Myint, Director
Universities' Historical Research Centre
Amara Hall, Yangon University Campus
Yangon 11041, Myanmar
Fax No. 951 530-121

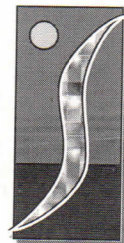


The Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program of the Toyota Foundation and the Japan Foundation Asia Center will announce the availability of grants for fiscal year 1997 from 1 February to 30 March 1997.

For inquiries, write:

Tokyo Joint Secretariat for SEASREP
c/o The Toyota Foundation
Shinjuku Mitsui Bldg.
37F/ 2-1-1 Nishi-Shinjuku
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 163-04, Japan
Tel. (813) 3344-1701
Fax (813) 3342-6911

On 13-14 December 1996, the **SEASREP Council** and the liaison officers of the five signatory universities to the Memorandum of Understanding for Southeast Asian Studies will meet in Manila to flesh out the details of admission and other policies for faculty and students on exchange programs. This will be the first meeting between the university representatives and members of the Council.



[Students on Thanet lecture continued from page 7]

formation of the modern Thai state.
Ruel Ulysses E. de Guzman, *Political Science 178 (Politics of Southeast Asia)*.

▮ Far from being merely a recollection of history, Dr. Aphornsuvan's lecture does a number of things. First, it corrects our notion that Thailand was unconditionally independent of the Western colonizers that laid siege to its neighboring territories. It speaks of the numerous concessions which the Thai kings made to the Western countries in exchange for their sovereignty. It avoids the tendency to glorify Thai's early history, a trap...which many social scientists, more particularly historians, are often susceptible to.

For me the greatest feature of Dr. Aphornsuvan as a speaker is that he did not act as an apologist for the various flaws which his discourse revealed... (about) his nation's history. Academicians can...act as proponents of their own countries' policies, no matter how bad.

Perhaps, the advantage Aphornsuvan possesses over such individuals is the fact that he was, in fact, once an activist. At any rate, he comes across as frank and honest about his country's situation...

Another thing that struck me about Dr. Aphornsuvan was his sense of humor ...and I was glad to see the audience appreciated (his jokes). It is this ability to discuss and at the same time know when to inject humor that will make discussion among Southeast Asian scholars a pleasurable experience. **Jaime Arroyo**, *Political Science 178 (Politics of Southeast Asia)*.

▮ "The discussion was lively because of the exchange of opinions and views. The only obstacle to effective communication was Dr. Thanet's not being able to understand the Filipino language and the audience's lack of knowledge as well of the Thai language...**Maria Isabelle Lorena S. Pineda**, *History of Asia and the World*.

▮ The main topic was slavery in Thailand, called "Land of the Free." But are the Thais truly free? Perhaps they were not colonized by foreigners, but many of them were slaves in their own land, also because of poverty. In my view, this can be compared to the "maids" here in the Philippines. Because of grave need or heavy indebtedness, they fall under the control of others.

In analyzing the history of Thailand, it can be said that the slaves were not the only ones held in bondage or the ones without freedom; common people, too, and some others in authority were not truly free. In truth, only one person exercised absolute freedom — who else but the king.

It is true, after all, that freedom is very important. Without it, what is the purpose of life in this world? Now, I understand and value even more the struggle of our heroes (for freedom) in 1896. **Margarita B. de la Peña**, *History of Asia and the World*.

