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BERITA



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Ron Provencher: Reflections on a Career

By Sue Russell

Ron Provencher, the third chairman of the Malaysia/Singapore/Brunei Studies Group, retired from the Department of Anthropology at Northern Illinois University, effective August 1998.

Since the beginnings of M/S/B Studies Group in 1996, Ron has been a steady supporter and able leader.

Ron tells us he still teaches a bit at NIU despite his "retirement." M/S/B Studies Group wishes him all the best and extends its sincerest gratitude for all of the excellent work he has done in Malay studies.

J.A.L.

A graduate of the University of Missouri (B.A.), University of New Mexico, and the University of California, Berkeley (Ph.D.), Ron joined NIU's faculty of anthropology in 1974. He chaired his academic department and then became Director of NIU's Center for Southeast Asian Studies from 1981 to 1987 and in 1995-96. He was also appointed Interim Director of the University Libraries from 1992 to 1993. He is a specialist on Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand, and has academic interests in the anthropology of complex societies, folklore, popular culture, medical anthropology, psychological anthropology, and cultural histories. Ron is a leading scholar of Malay studies.

Sue Russell: A lot of your interests have spanned diverse areas of anthropology, most especially pre-history and ethnology in addition to different areas of the Malay world in Southeast Asia. How did you first become interested in anthropology?

Ron Provencher: Originally when I started college, I was interested in zoology. Not until

after being in the army did I discover anthropology. I was attracted to anthropology after reading Leslie Spier's Klamath ethnography. I wanted to pursue my graduate career in anthropology as an oceanic specialist but just couldn't seem to stay on track. I went to the University of Missouri and then New Mexico where the department had me busy working as an archeologist in the Southwest.

I left New Mexico because I felt that I was being pushed in directions that I didn't want to go, and I got a fellowship at Berkeley for the Ph.D. program. They accepted me even though I hadn't finished my masters. I met Paul Wheatley who at that time was the director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Berkeley, and I was impressed by him as an intellectual. He spoke a number of different languages and read them. He as an old-fashioned historian who did field work. He was trained as a geographer as well and had a deep interest in the anthropology of Southeast Asia.

The second thing that happened was that Lauriston Sharp came to Berkeley as a visiting professor from Cornell. He was a dynamic teacher, a very interesting and pleasant man who spent a lot of time with students. I took a Peoples and Cultures of Southeast Asia course from him at a graduate level and did a paper for him that he didn't like. It came out of the fact that he had that older view of Southeast Asia as a place where the idea of states came entirely from India and China. Southeast Asia was not a place of early cultural origins. At Berkeley, I started my dissertation field research on immigration into Jakarta. It won me a SSRC grant for doctoral

research in Indonesia. My research proposal gave me some money to go to Cornell so that I could get into certain Indonesian parts of their library. What came along in the meantime was something called Konfrontasi. The semi-warfare between Indonesia and Malaysia occurred in 1963-64 at a time when I was preparing to go, and it was impossible to get permission to go into Jakarta. I was at Cornell and I communicated with the SSRC about the problem and they wrote back and said, "Well, you won your grant fair and square. Why don't you just figure out something that you could do in another country in Southeast Asia." So, I chose Malaysia on the theory that it would be something like Indonesia. But this was really a false assumption. What I ended up doing was a comparison of historically related urban rural communities. That started my career as a Malaysianist.

When you first went to Malaysia what was anthropology like there?

There really wasn't much in the way of anthropology. The main focus at the University of Malaya was then the social sciences department of Malay Studies. It was a place where they provided degrees for people who would become district officers and later would reach higher positions in the civil service. When I came back to Malaysia in 1971, some of those students had earned graduate degrees in Australia, Europe, or the United States. These young faculty members were employed by the University of Malaya, where a rebellion began over language issues. These were nationalists who wanted a Malay language university. They created Universiti Malaysia, the National University of Malaysia, where I was the first visiting professor in the College of Social Sciences.

How would you compare the approaches and interest of European and American anthropologists working in Malaysia with

those of indigenous Malay anthropologists today?

Malay anthropologists study things Malay more than they study things Chinese or even Aboriginal. How many Malay anthropologists study Chinese society or look into the details of the Indian community in Malaysia? Not many. I think that is a problem because it makes American cultural anthropology what it is. We have always looked at systems of knowledge and not just social forms.

What are some of the things you would like to see happen with anthropology in Malaysia?

I think that the most serious thing is that Malaysian anthropologists have not contributed nearly enough to the study of people outside of Malaysia. I think that they should come to exotic places like Mexico or the United States or go to Germany or into Africa and do more studies in these cultures that are different from their own. They would bring new perspectives and tendencies which could add to the field of anthropology; but this is a very hard thing to get them to do because so many of them end up in Malaysia government service.

What kinds of things are you working on right now? And what are your specific interests as an anthropologist?

I have two on-going projects. One of them is a study of the suburbanization of Malay fishing communities in the Pattani area of southern Thailand. It is a study of people who are being drawn physically into the edges of that city. I am looking at progress in the sense of the community's use of different kinds of technology and the impact that it has on the economic and religious aspects of their lives and where it puts them politically vis-à-vis the Thai establishment. It is basically about suburbanization and the impact of that on culture.

Another project seems very narrow, because it involves comic books. One of the things I discovered when I first went to Malaysia was that Malays love comic books. At that time they were very interested in the American comic book *Mad*. Every day of their lives, they practice a joking kind of ridicule of each other that goes on interminably. They eventually invented their own magazine, *Gila Gila*, which means "mad about *Mad*." It sells the most copies of any magazine in Malaysia. It publishes not only cartoons and cartoon scripts but also funny short stories, sayings, make-believe political columns, and advice columns. All of this is making fun of both modern and traditional contexts in Malaysia. I am into old-fashioned study of Malay culture in terms of a particular medium. In fact what I do is cultural interpretations. One of the things that the Malaysians have enjoyed about my publications is that I interpret the cartoons – try to explain what's so funny and interesting about them from Malay perspectives. I was drawn into this from a grant that originally was supposed to start me into a restudy of a "traditional" urban Malay community. I had to figure out a special way to relate to teenage boys because I was an older man. They would see this old white guy show up and they would all run. But when I showed up at their coffee shop with new issues of Malay comic books and asked them "what does this mean, what does that mean," they became interested in me. They discovered that I was a human being. I discovered not only do teenage boys read comics, but old men read them, women read them. Over the years there has been more and more content about female roles. So this is an instructive place to see something about Malay concepts of gender both from male and female sides. It is an aspect of my interest in complex society and modernity.

What was the most interesting period of your field work in Malaysia in terms of other scholars?

James Scott came to one of the places I worked. I got to know him and Louise, and my wife Barbara and I saw them regularly. He was doing some work on Malay civil servants. We used to get together and argue about things and talk about our own research and each critique the other one. We had some outrageously good arguments and argued about other things like John Steinbeck and Ernest Hemingway, and about Marxism. It was a very interest-ing, thick kind of relationship. Actually we've kept it up through the years. One of the things that happened in his career was that he came more and more into anthropology over time. I'm not sure that I influenced him in that direction however.

Robert McKinley at Michigan State also came looking for me in Malaysia. He was a very funny guy. It started for both of us as a life-long dialogue about the nature of Malay culture. He is the one professional I know who has the same intense interest in the meaning of the Malay systems of knowledge that I have. He certainly spurred me on to deeper investigation of Malay culture as a system of meaning.

What are the most significant social or cultural changes you have seen over the years in Malaysia?

I would say the most significant was the change that was signaled by the riots in 1969, the change in the political consciousness of the Malays as the majority ethnic group in the country. It developed gradually. The riots in '69 were not the first time of serious fighting between the ethnic groups. At the end of World War II, for example, there was serious ethnic conflict. But in the early British colonial period, different coalitions of Malays and Chinese were at war with each other. Later in the colonial period, the British succeeded in doing what they did everywhere in their colonies, which is to get the different ethnic factions at war with each other, making it easier for the colonial machinery to operate. Ethnic

strife now is really about class structure and the fairness of the economic system. The Malays make that their issue even though there are outrageously rich Malays as well as poor Indians and Chinese.

One of the things that happened over the years is that religion has been brought into this matter. I think that is always a dangerous thing. The old Malay culture in fact took account of other peoples' customs. Many Malays still comment on the terrible thing that has happened: they really don't have those good relationships with Chinese and Indians that they once had, and they miss it.

How do you compare the situation for Malays in southern Thailand with the ethnic complexity of Malaysia today?

One of the obvious things is that in southern Thailand the Malays are the outsiders. What you have now is a Thai government that is aggressively involved in developing the Peninsula. Malays believe Thais are destroying their lands. Many young Malays have migrated. Local Chinese and Thais have bought much Malay land one plot at a time. In 1997, the Malays discovered that the rice land had been sold to several real estate agents who staked out a new suburb for wealthy Thais and Chinese. This "progress" has occurred over several decades and it affects different ethnic communities differently. (Reprinted with permission from *The NIU Mandala*, Spring 1998).

Books

The descriptions of books featured here are mainly from publishers' catalogues and brochures. *Berita* still would welcome reviews of any books concerning Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei.

- **From the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies** (Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Pasir Panjang Rd., Singapore 119596):

Southeast Asian Identities: Culture and Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. *Joel S. Khan.* (1998. 274 pp. Hardcover, \$35; Pbk, \$29).

Nationalism, cultural identity, the politics of representation, culture wars, cultural globalization – these are some of the themes explored in this collection of essays on Southeast Asia. Drawing on insights developed in the relatively new fields of cultural and post-colonial study, but at the same time attuned to the rather specific histories of Southeast Asian cultures and society, the authors from the region, Australia and Canada examine instances of and contests over, cultural identity formation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

An Introduction to Southeast Asian Studies. *Mohamed Halib and Tim Huxley,* editors. (1998. 254 pp. Hard cover, \$49; Pbk., \$42).

An Introduction to Southeast Asian Studies draws on a rich intellectual heritage. This collection of essays by leading specialists explores the evolution of various disciplinary approaches to the region. In the course of investigating the study of Southeast Asia's anthropology, history, literature, geography, sociology, economics, politics and international relations, the authors examine many of the crucial debates and controversies of the past, and aim to provide a picture of the current "state of the art" in each discipline as it relates to the region.

A Modern History of Southeast Asia: Decolonization, Nationalism and Separatism. *Clive J. Christie.* (1998. 286 pp. Pbk., \$43).

The massive transformations that occurred in the decade 1940-50 were decisive in shaping the modern history of Southeast Asia,

and have determined the course of politics in the region right up to the present day. The 1940s saw the break-up of the European colonial empires in Southeast Asia and the creation of independent nation states. However, this nationalist revolution met resistance, not only from the colonial powers, but also from peripheral communities and regions that felt their identity to be threatened by these emerging nation-states and by the ideologies dominating Asian nationalism. Clive Christie's history of the region considers the overall decolonization of Southeast Asia, and shows how, despite the great diversity of the region, issues of identity, ethnicity, religion and "loyalism" affected the newly-formed nation-states in remarkably similar ways.

Southeast Asian Exports Since the 14th Century: Cloves, Pepper, Coffee, and Sugar. *David Bulbeck, Anthony Reid, Lau Cheng Tan, and Yiqi Wu*, compilers. (1998. 195 pp. \$36).

Southeast Asia, like other non-Western areas, has often been seen as economically static and self-sufficient until the arrival of late 19th century capitalism, for no better reason than lack of evidence to the contrary. This volume seeks to lay a basis for more solid analysis of the precolonial record through accumulating one type of data – exports – for which the record is long and continuous. By compiling data series for each of the Southeast Asian products which in turn dominated long-term exports (cloves, pepper, coffee and sugar), it reveals a dynamic pattern of rises and falls in the economic record of the region.

Southeast Asian Affairs 1998. *Derek da Cunha and John Funston*, editors. (1998. 339 pp. Hardcover, \$38; Pbk., \$23.90).

Southeast Asian Affairs 1998 provides comprehensive regional coverage on the political, economic and social trends and developments in contemporary Southeast Asia.

Designed to be easily readable yet in-depth, informative yet analytical, issue-focused yet providing a background, this volume is a useful tool for all students, academics, diplomats, senior executives, journalists, and publicists who seek to understand the dynamics of Southeast Asian developments.

Oral History in Southeast Asia: Theory and Method. *Patricia Lim Pui Huen, James H. Morrison and Kwa Chong Guan*, editors. (1998. 180 pp. \$44.90).

Contains a range of papers dealing with the theoretical, methodological, and practical issues in oral history and the unique problems of their application in the Southeast Asian context. The authors include both academics and practitioners who bring with them a wealth of expertise and experience in anthropology, history, sociology, publishing and archives administration.

The Malay Labourer: By the Window of Capitalism. *Zawawi Ibrahim*. (1998. 348 pp. \$32.90 and \$45).

Explores the ethnography of the emerging proletarian social consciousness and resistance as Malay peasants from east coast peninsular Malaysia find themselves reconstituted as a "class" not only as an economic category but also as a "community" in plantation society. The plantation, as a "window" to capitalism, serves as an excellent small-scale empirical ambience and testing-ground to probe how Malays respond to both industrial class-status authority and wage labor, and subsequently analyze how the nuances of Malay proletarian moral economy and dignity are articulated with their notions of class, culture, ethnicity, and humanism.

The Junk Trade From Southeast Asia. Translations from the Tosen Fusetsu-gaki, 1674-1723. *Yoneo Ishii*, editor. (1998. 283 pp. \$29.90).

At a time when other sources on Southeast Asia were relatively scarce, a remarkable set of reports were compiled in Nagasaki from the evidence of Chinese junk captains arriving from Southern ports. Hundreds of these reports have been preserved in Japan covering the period 1675-1723. Though published in Japanese, they have never been available in any other language to Southeast Asianists, and thus have usually been ignored in histories of the region. They reveal a great deal about not only the East Asian trade of Siam, Cambodia, the Malayan Peninsula and Java, but also the internal conflicts and political systems of the area.

Institute of Southeast Asian Studies: A Commemorative History, 1968-1998. *P. Lim Pui Huen et al.*, 1998. 98 pp. \$24.

The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies was founded in 1968 when the sense of region was only beginning to emerge. This history traces the 30 years of the Institute's existence. Through a wide range of activities, the Institute has endeavored to enhance an awareness of Southeast Asia and foster a deeper and more critical knowledge of the area, both regionally and inter-nationally.

▪ **New from University of Hawaii Press:**

Chinese Business in Malaysia: Accumulation, Ascendance, Accommodation. *Edmund Terence Gomez.* (Jan. 1999. 288 pp. \$42).

This book examines eight large ethnic Chinese business enterprises in Malaysia through an analysis of Malaysia's economic development. Case studies on eight publicly-listed Chinese companies focus on the factors that have determined forms of business practice and influenced corporate ventures. This study – which covers the colonial period, independence to 1969, the New Economic Period of 1970 to 1990, during which the government attempted to redistribute country

wealth, up to the present day – identifies key issues pertaining to Chinese business operations in Malaysia: ownership and control patterns, style of growth, relations with the state, politicians and other Chinese businessmen, and the manner of business development abroad, at the same time debunking the theory that large-scale Chinese capital is not very entrepreneurial in nature.

The Japanese Occupation of Malaya: A Socio-Economic History. *Paul H. Kratoska.* 1998. 312 pp., \$35).

Discusses how events of Japanese occupation affected the population of Malaya at large.

Prehistory of the Indo-Malaysian Archipelago. Revised. *Peter Bellwood.* (1997. 400 pp., \$32.95).

The Riddle of Malaysian Capitalism: Rent-Seekers or Real Capitalist? *Peter Searle.* (1998. 336 pp., \$35).

Identifies the complex interaction between the state, the dominant political party UMNO, and business as the source of dynamism or defeat in the development of Malay capitalists.

▪ **Curzon Press** (15 The Quadrant, Richmond, Surrey TWQ 1 BP, England):

Democracy in Malaysia: Discourses and Practices. *Francis Loh Kok & Khoo Boo Teik.* (1999. Hardcover, \$49; Pbk., \$26.95).

Analyzes discourses pertinent to democratic politics in Malaysia, including the political elite's interpretation of 'Asian values' and 'Asian democracy', contending Islamic views on democracy, the impact of development on political culture, and the recovery of women's voice in everyday politics.

- New publications from **Northern Illinois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies** (412 Adams Hall, DeKalb, IL 60115).

Swettenham. *H.S. Barlow.* (1997. 783 pp., \$69.95).

Based on Swettenham's personal papers, including many not previously used by scholars, Barlow examines the life and career of a major figure in British colonial history in Malaysia. The book includes now-documented aspects of Swettenham's personal life that have never before been published. The text is supplemented by 94 illustrations created by artists of the period.

The Struggle over Singapore's Soul: Western Modernization and Asian Culture. *Joseph B. Tamney.* (New York and Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996. 238 pp., DM 98 and DM 48).

- **Hamline University** (St. Paul, Minnesota) has published:

The Temiar-English, English-Temiar Dictionary. *Nathalie Means,* edited by *Gordon P. Means.* Temiar collaborators: *Abuk Alang, Aleg B. Along, Angek Asoi, Ahud Duga, Kamaruddin, Awin Pedik, Halimah Yunus.* (1998. 175 pp., US\$19.95).

The first dictionary of the Temiar language represents the combined effort of a team of seven Temiar collaborators working with Nathalie Means over a period of almost a decade on a project to put the Temiar language into written form. The Temiar are one of the aboriginal tribes of West Malaysia. They are the second largest of the Orang Asli (aboriginal) groups, inhabiting the highland areas of the Malaysian states of Kelantan and Perak. The dictionary provides full reference and definitions from Temiar to English and English to Temiar for over 2,600 Temiar root

words and over 3,800 derivative words. This volume can be ordered directly from The Temiar Fund, c/o Gordon P. Means, 110932 Von Herten Circle, Chaska, MN 55318-2704, USA. A US dollar bank draft or postal money order in US dollars made out to "The Temiar Fund" should accompany all book orders. After January, this volume may be ordered or purchased directly from the Southeast Asian distributor: Select Books, 19 Tanglin Road, #03-15 Tanglin Shopping Centre, Singapore 247909.

ATTENTION GRAD STUDENTS:

This year, the Malaysia/Singapore/Brunei Studies Groups of the Association of Asian Studies added a student representative. As the newly elected student representative to M/S/B, I would like to establish a list of students interested in the region. This list would enable us to locate and network with others to discuss country specific ideas and to develop our research skills and interests.

Toward this end of tapping the wealth of knowledge in the Assoc of Asian Studies and M/S/B membership, there will be a questionnaire/survey of interests for students in the next issue of *Berita*. If you are interested in M/S/B, please complete and return the survey or contact me at AEMouser@aol.com. Contact others who share our interests so they can add their names to the roster.

This is an chance to develop a community of contacts who can help with our current research and future goals. Let's take advantage of this opportunity.

Sincerely,
Audrey E. Mouser, M.A.
Student Representative - M/S/B

Hard Times for Public Intellectuals: Jomo Sued Over *Asian Wall Street Journal* Article, Chandra Dismissed by Universiti Malaya

Kit Machado

Political Science Department
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Constriction of Malaysia's already limited space for critical public discourse has been one consequence of the country's continuing economic difficulties and mounting political crisis. Two prominent academics and outspoken public intellectuals well known to *Berita* readers, Profs. Jomo K.S. and Chandra Muzaffer, have recently been caught up in these circumstances. In late February 1999, Jomo was sued for defamation by a politically well-connected businessman, and Chandra was dismissed by Universiti Malaya. Only a few weeks earlier, a *New Straits Times* opinion piece on the quality of the nation's public discourse reported that Jomo and Chandra along with Rustam A. Sani were the only Malaysians consistently identified in background interviews as public intellectuals (10 Jan 1999). What at that time was said to look like the "dimly visible" outline of an emerging "public intellectual culture" has quickly become harder to discern.

Jomo, in late February 1999, was slapped with a RM 250 million (US\$ 66 million) defamation suit by Vincent Tan, Chairman and Chief Executive of the Berjaya Group, over statements he made in an *Asian Wall Street Journal* (AWSJ) op-ed article entitled "Malaysia Props Up Crony Capitalists" (21 December 1998). Jomo's argued that, while Prime Minister Mahathir's introduction of capital controls in September 1998 could buy Malaysia time to carry out reforms and hasten economic recovery, this opportunity was be-

ing put at risk by proposed government bail-outs of politically favored companies and individuals. He cited several cases that in his opinion supported this contention. Tan alleges that he was defamed in this article because Jomo meant to say that he, Tan, "...had improperly been awarded a contract to build a monorail system by the government on favourable terms, including the right to develop the Linear City project because he was a crony of government" (*The Straits Times* [Singapore], 12 February 1999). Jomo's defense was due and to be submitted the week of March 15, 1999.

Chandra had been Professor at and Director of the Centre for Civilisational Dialogue at University of Malaya since the Center's inception two years ago. He has also been a vocal supporter of Anwar and critic of Mahathir during the current political crisis. In December 1998, he also joined Wan Azizah, Anwar's wife, in forming ADIL (Movement for Social Justice). In any case, Chandra was employed by the University on one year contracts, the latest of which expired on 28 February 1999. He was advised by the University only five days before this date that his contract would not be renewed. "(E)conomic factors affecting the University...and a government directive requesting the University to optimize available internal human resources" were given as reasons for this decision (Chandra, Media Statement, 24 February 1999). Chandra says he knows "for a fact that my contract was

going to be renewed until the larger political situation changed and my own role as a social critic assumed a new dimension" (Media Statement, 1 March 1999). Many others also found the University's explanation unconvincing. Student protests and expressions of concern from both domestic and international quarters followed. Human Rights Watch, for example, requested Education Minister Najib to launch an impartial investigation into Chandra's dismissal, which it said had "the appearance of a politically motivated reprisal for his support for Anwar and the reform movement" (Letter, 2 March 1999).

Both of these cases should be understood in the context of larger developments in Malaysia. During the Mahathir era, power has come increasingly to center on the networks of relationships among key UMNO leaders and the new class of Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera businessmen. Many business dealings are thus inevitably relevant politically, and, correspondingly, they are often the subject of controversy. Severe strains occasioned by the

current economic crisis have exacerbated factional conflict in UMNO, heightened such controversies and inspired elite efforts to dampen them. Similarly, as Malaysian politics have become increasingly polarized in the wake of Anwar's arrest, elite tolerance of criticism has diminished. In this context, defamation suits by members of the elite (e.g., the Prime Minister's son, Mirzan Mahathir against AWSJ) as well as their embattled opponents (e.g., Anwar against Mahathir and Lim Kit Siang against UMNO associated paper *Utusan Melayu*) have become a more prominent feature of the political landscape. As an early election appears more likely, containing the threat posed by Anwar supporters has also become a more pressing project for the elite. Malaysian politics seem likely to become even more contentious as the current leadership crisis unfolds, and this promises to create increasing difficulties for the few like Jomo and Chandra who attempt to raise critical questions about the conduct of their nation's affairs.

Periodicals

- Ramaprasad, Jyotika. "Relationship and Communication Values: Their Reflection in Advertising Information Choices of Malaysian Youth." *Asian Journal of Communication*. 8:1 (1998), pp. 132-149.
- Lick, Ho Chee. "Representations of School in Singapore Teenage Magazines: A Linguistic Analysis." *Asian Journal of Communication*. 8:1 (1998), pp. 87-110.
- June M.L. Poon. "The Malay Wedding." *Asian Thought and Society*. Sept.-Dec. 1998, pp. 221-237.
- Recent articles in *Far Eastern Economic Review* include:
 - Sept. 17 – Murray Hiebert and Andrew Sherry, "After the Fall," pp. 10-12; S. Jayasankaran, "Who's Next?" p. 12; S. Jayasankaran, "Protege to Pariah," pp. 13-14; Paul Krugman, "Malaysia's Opportunity?" p. 32; Salil Tripathi and Ben Dolven, "Some Pains, Some Gains," pp. 51-52; Salil Tripathi, "Out of Controls," p. 52; Faith Keenan, "Petronas Plea," p. 56; "That Surreal Feeling: Malaysia Imposes Capital Controls," p. 62.
 - Sept. 24 – Nayan Chanda et al, "Singapore: Politically Incorrect," pp. 10-12; Ben Dolven and Murray Hiebert, "Singapore: Ties That Bind," pp. 13-14; Lee Kuan Yew, "His Story," pp. 16-17; Murray Hiebert, "Virtual

Rival,” p. 19; Sulaiman Mahbob, “Investors Still Welcome,” p. 36; S. Jayasankaran, “Business as Usual?” pp. 58, 60; “Sex, Lies and Gettysburg: Lincoln’s Lessons for Clinton and Malaysia,” p. 70.

Oct. 1 – Simon Elegant, Murray Hiebert, and S. Jayasankaran, “First Lady of Reform,” pp. 18-20.

Oct. 8 – “Bruising Times,” p. 17; S. Jayasankaran and Murray Hiebert, “Bruised but Unbowed,” pp. 19-20; Murray Hiebert, “Alternative News,” pp. 21-22; Michael Vatikiotis, Ben Dolven, and Rodney Tasker, “Friends Indeed,” pp. 22, 26; Murray Hiebert, “Virtual Banking,” p. 72; Murray Hiebert, “Feel the Heat,” pp. 74, 76; “Lee’s Line,” p. 92; Khoo Kay Kim, “An Education in Pragmatism,” pp. 92-93; Garry Rodan, “Fear and Loathing of Malaysia,” pp. 93-94; Lim Say Boon, “Losing Faith,” p. 99.

Oct. 15 – S. Jayasankaran and Murray Hiebert, “Malaysia: The Ringmaster,” pp. 18-19; Simon Elegant, “Silent Movie,” p. 20; Chan Chee Khoo, “Whose Body Is It?” p. 36; S. Jayasankaran, “Art for Politics’ Sake,” p. 56; Ben Dolven, “Feeling the Pinchs,” pp. 58-59; “Speaking Out: Malaysians Willing To Be Heard,” p. 78.

Oct. 22 – Murray Hiebert, “Road Worthy,” p. 40; Ben Dolven, “Rooting for Lettuce,” p. 48; Murray Hiebert, “Catch Some Breezes,” p. 50; Murray Hiebert, “Forgers Can’t Pass,” p. 54; Murray Hiebert, “Sharing the Wealth,” p. 77; S. Jayasankaran, “Bailout Benefits,” p. 78.

Oct. 29 – “Regional Ruckus,” p. 10; Murray Hiebert and S. Jayasankaran, “A Single Spark,” pp. 12-14; Murray Hiebert, “Police Under Fire,” p. 14; Simon Elegant and Murray Hiebert, “Going for Gold,” pp. 66-67; “Accounting Costs: Wouldn’t Mahathir Benefit from Freer Debates?” p. 94.

Nov. 5 – Murray Hiebert, “No Turning Back,” p. 17; Murray Hiebert, “Storing Up Trouble,” p. 61; “Cap the Hazards: Lending Practices in Malaysia,” p. 70.

Nov. 12 – “Temporary Curbs,” p. 8; S. Jayasankaran, “Prime Mover,” pp. 18-20; Murray Hiebert, “Courting Public Opinion,” p. 19; S. Jayasankaran, “Turning Off the Tap,” p. 74; S. Jayasankaran, “Bond Woman,” pp. 84-85; S. Jayasankaran, “Pricey Pet Projects,” p. 88; Ben Dolven, “Tightening the Belt,” p. 91.

Nov. 19 – S. Jayasankaran, “Collateral Damage,” pp. 18-19; Murray Hiebert, “Slow Train,” pp. 20-21; Ben Dolven, “Singapore: Neighbourly Exchange,” p. 64.

Nov. 26 – “Party Challenge,” p. 8; Murray Hiebert, “Ugly American?” p. 11; S. Jayasankaran, “Under Control,” p. 105; “Speak Softly: Ad Hoc U.S. Foreign Policy on Kuala Lumpur?” p. 110.

Dec. 3 – S. Jayasankaran, “Blood and Gore,” p. 28; Murray Hiebert, “Police Persuasion,” p. 28; Ben Dolven, “Singapore: Treading Lightly,” pp. 30-32; Frank Ching,

“Apec Hears America’s Voice,” p. 42; Anastasia M. Ashman, “Restoring Glory,” pp. 52-54; Lim Say Boon, “Welcome to the Barbarians,” p. 62; Ben Dolven, “Singapore: Hitting the Floor?” p. 72; “Strange Politics,” p. 78.

Dec. 10 – Murray Hiebert and Kubang Pasu, “Call of the Imams,” pp. 18-20; S. Jayasankaran, “Reformasi Restrained,” p. 20.

Dec. 17 – “Odd Man Out,” p. 8; S. Jayasankaran, “Zigzag Driver,” p. 17; S. Jayasankaran, “Succession Question,” pp. 20-21; Manu Bhaskaran, “R & R – Singapore Style,” p. 50.

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▪ *Asiaweek* has carried the following articles:

Sept. 18 – Ricardo Saludo, “Cold War over Hot Money,” pp. 28-29; Cesar Bacani, “The Road Less Traveled,” pp. 30-32, 34; Tim Healy, “Economics Made Easy,” pp. 36; 38; Sangwon Suh and Assif Shameen, “Battle of Wills,” pp. 40-42, 44, 49; “I Never Threatened the PM,” p. 50; “Anwar Has No Support,” p. 51; Assif Shameen, “Pumping Life Into Stocks,” p. 52; Roger Mitton, “ASEAN Loses Critic Anwar,” p. 54.

Sept. 25 – Assif Shameen and Sangwon Suh, “Reaching Critical Mass,” pp. 34,36; Alejandro Roces, “War of Words,” pp. 40-42, 47-48; Lee Kuan Yew, “A Statesman’s Write of Passage,” pp. 50-59; Jonathan Sprague and Assif Shameen, “No Second Thoughts,” pp.

77-78; Rehman Rashid, “The Way Backward,” p. 84.

Oct. 2 – “A New Way To Play the Old Power Game,” p. 12; “Brunei’s Crack-down,” p. 14; Sangwon Suh and Assif Shameen, “Crack-down,” pp. 24-26, 29-30, 32; Santha Oorjitham and Arjuna Ranawana, “Anwar’s Surprising Spouse,” p. 32; Jim Erickson, *WWW.Politics.Com.*, pp. 42-45, 47-49; Stuart Whitmore, “When Politicians Go Online,” p. 45; Stuart Whitmore, “Just a Web of Lies?” p. 46; Jim Erickson, “The Wired Warrior,” p. 47.

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Nov. 27 – Alejandro Reyes and Tim Healy, “Shattered Summit,” pp. 24-27, 30; Alejandro Roces, “Behind the Scenes in K.L.,” p. 31; “Look at the Total Picture’: Malaysia’s Foreign Minister Answers the Critics,” p. 36; Cesar Bacani, “Who Has the Edge? Hong Kong Versus Singapore,” pp. 60-61; Rehman Rashid, “Seeking the Center,” p. 71.

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Dec. 18 – Sangwon Suh, “Case of Weaving Driver,” p. 36; Santha Oorjitham, “A Tragedy Set to Music,” pp. 54-55.

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- Fan, Laura. “Rupa Malaysia: A Decade of Malaysian Art in London.” *Art Asia Pacific*. No. 21, 1998, pp. 25-26.

Prospectus

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“Speaking the Truth to Power”

By
Jomo K.S.

The following is a postscript to a New Year’s greetings letter Professor Jomo K.S. sent a number of friends and acquaintances on January 15, 1999. Berita and the Committee for Human Rights in Malaysia and Singapore may be calling for your support as events transpire in this situation.

P.S. Just as I was about to send off the above letter on Christmas Eve three weeks ago, I received a letter from V.K. Lingam, lawyer for billionaire Vincent Tan in connection with my op-ed piece in the *Asian Wall Street Journal* of 21 December 1998 (reproduced below). Lingam’s letter claims that VT ‘has clearly been seriously defamed’ by the article which ‘contains very grave and serious allegations, imputations and innuendoes’ against him ‘and amounts to a very serious libel’. The rest of the three-page letter is in similar tone before asking me to do four things, including retract, compensate and refrain. All this may seem farcical in light of the article, if not for the actual situation I face. Let me quote several friends who have understandably insisted on remaining unnamed:

‘I am very pessimistic about your chances... They will bankrupt you, and in the process of doing so, ruin the next few years of your life at tremendous personal financial and emotional cost... The legal merits of your case are of little relevance even though it looks very strong, even to me... Lingam is no ordinary lawyer; he made a lot working for Eric Chia (the now disgraced former head of UMW and Perwaja, the national steel company) and has been photographed on holiday with the Chief Justice and others on the

bench... As you know, Vincent has won awards of tens of millions from various others he has sued in recent years... contrast these awards with what Musa (then Deputy Prime Minister) got from S.H. Alatas (just over RM100,000)... Your best hope is probably public, including international pressure, e.g. for greater accountancy and transparency, especially since the Malaysian authorities desperately need foreign credit from Tokyo, the World Bank, etc., ...but be careful about what you are not allowed to do in such matters'.

Lingam has since told a lawyer friend who had contacted him on my behalf that he was proceeding with legal action against me. I therefore expect to be rather preoccupied with this matter in the fore-seeable future and may not be responsive to your communications. Please understand. I am grateful to those who have expressed support; such solidarity has greatly fortified my resolve. Thanks also for your kind offers of financial assistance. If this becomes necessary, which seems increasingly likely, I hope to find someone to organize this properly. He or she will get in touch with those of you who have offered such help.

As is obvious to everyone, the action is intended to intimidate and deter public discourse and criticism of abuses. Hence, it is important that we remain unintimidated; otherwise, they succeed. After all, speaking the truth to power is our responsibility. I wish you well in your endeavours and struggles in the year ahead and remain inspired by your friendship.

POTTERY SITES SOUGHT

Request for assistance in locating sites of contemporary earthenware and stoneware pottery production: Louise Cort, Curator for

Ceramics, Freer and Sackler Galleries of Art, Smithsonian Institution, and Leedom Lefferts, Professor, Anthropology, Drew University, have been conducting a multi-year study of contemporary earthenware and stoneware pottery production in mainland Southeast Asia. This has included visiting every site where production is taking place, including some where it took place in the remembered past, and recording or eliciting processes of production. Southeast Asian women produce earthenware using at least five different techniques, which may include the use of a wheel, and men produce stoneware using a wheel. We have been studying village-based, not factory production, using videotape as well as still cameras and notebooks. We have presented several papers, detailing the distribution of types of production found in these areas, a methodology of comparison, and a review of what is meant by the "paddle-and-anvil" technique of finishing a pot. Copies are available on request.

With this notice, we ask for information from the Malaysian/Singapore/Brunei area. We are in contact with Muzium Negara and received invaluable information, complementing that done by English observers (Evans 1922, Wray 1903, and Harrison 1974), so that Lefferts was recently able to observe production in Kampong Mambong, Kuala Krai, Kelantan. We also have copies of the material published on Malaysian Borneo.

Of particular interest to us are observations by researchers which have not yet been published; we are interested in all such, regardless of the degree of recording which was done at the site. Of course, we would much appreciate extensive notes, slides, and film or video-tape. We are willing to provide a list of publications of previous research to interested readers. However, the most complete single source on production in Insular Southeast Asia is:

Gasser, Stephan A.,

1969 *Das Topferhandwerk von Indonesien*. Basel Beitrage zur Ethnologie, Band 7. Basel: Pharos-Verlag Hansrudolf Schwabe AG. (Please note that this covers all of Insular Southeast Asia, including the Philippines and Insular Malaysia.)

Would researchers with information about production please contact us at: 132 12th Street, SE, Washington, D.C. 20003-1413, USA, E-mail: cortleff@gcsx.net Thank you for your assistance.

MALAYSIA/SINGAPORE/BRUNEI STUDY GROUP MINUTES, 1999 AAS

by

Diane K. Mauzy, Chair

The Malaysia/Singapore/Brunei Study Group (MSBSG) held its annual meeting on Friday, March 13, 1999, as part of the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) in Boston, MA.

The following members were present: David Camroux, Peng-Khuan Chong, John Lent, Craig Lockard, Kit Machado, Diane Mauzy, Audrey Mouser, Kent Mulliner, Judith Nagata, Donald Nonini, Michael Peletz, Margaret Sarkission, Lian The-Mulliner, Tong Soon Lee, and Stacey Yap. The members present spoke briefly about their current academic and research interests.

Diane Mauzy chaired the business segment of the meeting, which was based on information conveyed from the Southeast Asia

Council (SEAC) meeting held the previous day.

The most striking news concerned the Cross-Borders Initiative. For the San Diego AAS in March 2000, the AAS plans for about 15 "Cross-Border" panels, which will most likely have funding. Panel themes must cross disciplines, time, and/or region. They should be big themes wrapped around important intellectual issues. They should aim at innovative formats that allow lively dialogue and audience participation. An independent committee will select these panels. The deadline is quite soon—May 1, 1999.

The themes selected for the SEAC-sponsored panels are "subaltern studies" and "diaspora". Those interested should contact Mary Steedly (Anthropology, Harvard) of the Southeast Asia Program Committee. Regular panel proposals are due by August 2, 1999.

Once again it was noted that there have not been enough panel proposals for Southeast Asia. This year 21 of 22 Southeast Asian panel proposals were accepted (in 1998 there were 22 out of 30). While the percentage accepted was very high, this represents only about 11% of the panels, whereas Southeast Asia comprises 14% of the membership. Indonesia and Vietnam had the largest number of panels and roundtables. There were NO panel proposals for Malaysia, Singapore, or Brunei. Hopefully this can be rectified for the next AAS conference. While single country, single discipline panels are discouraged, especially for the smaller countries, it is possible to package proposals where M/S/B papers predominate, but the themes are of interest across disciplines and to a wider audience.

The *Journal of Asian Studies* editor reported to the SEAC that he would like to see more Southeast Asian articles submitted, particularly those which have broad analytical

implications. In 1998, there were 12 Southeast Asian submissions, out of which 5 were published (in 1997, it was 14 and 2, respectively).

Turning to MSBSG news, the group's budget is derived from *Berita* subscriptions, and it is used for publication and mailing costs. The revenue remains basically stable: 12/31/96 (\$2,940); 12/31/97 (\$2,781); 12/31/98 (\$3,230).

Kent Mulliner kindly agreed to set up a web site for the MSBSG, possibly with links to the Malaysian Social Science Association.

Don Nonini of the Department of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina is the new chair of the MSBSG, effective immediately after the Boston AAS. Michael Peletz was unanimously selected as the deputy chair, and Stacey Yap as the vice-deputy chair. Our graduate student representative, also unanimously chosen, is Andrey Mouser of Brown University.

MSBSG members were reminded that the Northwest Consortium of Southeast Asian Studies and the Canadian Council of Southeast Asian Studies will be holding a joint conference in Vancouver, B.C. in October 1999, and all are welcome to attend. Paper proposals are being accepted now.

The MSBSG also discussed with regret the intimidation of academics in Malaysia as seen in the libel suit against Prof. K.S. Jomo and the dismissal of Prof. Chandra Muzaffar.

The membership then adjourned for a late dinner.

M/S/B ONLINE

The electronic counterpart of *Berita*, *MSBForum*, suffers from neglect or *tidapa-*

thy. Created to facilitate communication among scholars and others with academic and/or research interests in Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei, the list offers opportunities for communication and dissemination of information with colleagues from around the world. In contrast to many other lists, the annual traffic can be counted on one hand. And, while the subscribership is fewer than *Berita*, it is global though small.

To subscribe, simply send a message with no subject to:
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Hosting of MSBForum is kindly provided by Central Michigan University through the good offices and assistance of Elliott Parker.

H-SEASIA

H-Net (Humanities and Social Sciences Online) has announced the launching of an H-SEASIA list as a "discussion list on history and study of Southeast Asia." It is targeted at two constituencies: "first, and most important is academics working on topics relating to Southeast Asia and living in the Southeast Asia region." The second "is the broader academic community throughout the world with an interest in this region. The Editors are Paul Kratoska (History, National University of Singapore [NUS]), Ho Kong Chong (Sociology, NUS), and Yong Jong Say (Economics, NUS). The list is sponsored by the Centre of Advanced Studies at NUS and the Advisory Board members are all from NUS.

To subscribe, send a message with no subject to: LISTSERV@H-NET.MSU.EDU with a message of: SUBSCRIBE H-SEASIA firstname lastname, institution or other affiliation