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Please direct all correspondence to:

National Library Board
100 Victoria Street
#14-01 National Library Building
Singapore 188064
Tel: +65 6332 3255
Fax: +65 6332 3611
Email: ref@nlb.gov.sg
Website: www.nlb.gov.sg

SUPERVISING EDITOR

Veronica Chee

EDITOR

Ng Loke Koon

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Barbara Teo-Quek
Joseph Dawes

Pushpa Latha Devi Naidu
Sundusia Rosdi

CONTRIBUTORS

Bonny Tan
Bouchaib Silm
Juffri Bin Supa'at
Katrina Gulliver
Loh Kah Seng
Low Eng Yong Kelvin

Low Kwee Fah
R Ramachandran
Sharon Teng
Sundari Balasubramaniam
Vicky Gao

DESIGNER AND PRINT PRODUCTION

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Director's Column

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Suzhou Industrial Park in China. In conjunction with the anniversary celebration, a bilingual exhibition *Adapting Singapore's Experience – Commemorating the 15th Anniversary of Suzhou Industrial Park*, was held at the National Library from 15 May to 15 June. The "Spotlight" article in Chinese highlights the books and resources on the Suzhou Industrial Park and other parts of China. These are available at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library's China Resource Collection on Level 9 of the National Library.

Once again, we are pleased to publish the research findings of our Lee Kong Chian Research Fellows – Katrina Gulliver, Loh Kah Seng and Kelvin Low. Katrina Gulliver gives an account of how important Malacca was to Europe and how the city developed under Portuguese and Dutch influences. Loh Kah Seng looks at the misconceptions of emergency housing in post-war Southeast Asia and Hong Kong. *Samsui* women played an important role in Singapore's nation building. In his paper, Kelvin Low discusses the different means through which *samsui* women are portrayed and remembered vis-à-vis media constructions found in newspaper reports and popular history books.

In this issue, read all about the close and strategic ties Singapore has forged with the Middle East and India through the years. Singapore strongly advocates India playing a greater role in the Asia-Pacific region. It paved the way for India's association with the ASEAN Regional Forum and supported India's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong's visits to the Middle East in 2004 resulted in Singapore hosting the inaugural Asia-Middle East Dialogue (AMED) in June 2005 and the launch of the Middle East Business Group by the Singapore Business Federation in March 2007.

The resources on Islamic banking and the sports collection of the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library are featured in this issue. *Chrita Orang Yang Chari Slamet*, translated into Baba Malay from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, is part of the Rare Book Collection in the National Library. Find out how you can access these resources from the articles written by our reference librarians.

Do take the opportunity to visit the exhibition *Vignettes in Time: Singapore Maps and History through the Centuries* held on Level 10 of the National Library Building from 1 August to 31 October. This exhibition of more than 130 maps depicts Singapore as seen through the eyes of cartographers, geologists, mariners, military generals and town planners, and provides little-known historical snippets of Singapore. On display for the first time are many never-before-seen maps from the collections of both the National Library and Mr Lim Shao Bin, a private map collector.

Happy reading! We look forward to receiving your comments and feedback.

Ms Ngian Lek Choh
Director
National Library

苏州工业园开发建设15周年资料展



by VICKY GAO

Senior Librarian
Lee Kong Chian Reference Library
National Library

高小行

高级参考与研究馆员
李光前参考图书馆

前言

2009年，苏州工业园迎来了开发建设第15个年头。在两国政府的推动下，今日的苏州工业园无论在经济实力、发展的速度和质量，还是体制机制创新方面，都走在了中国开发区的前列，成为中新双方友好合作的结晶，中国对外开放的重要窗口。

5月26日，对苏州工业园的发展倾注了大量心血的内阁资政李光耀亲自率领新加坡政府代表团赴苏州工业园参加15周年庆祝活动，在庆祝大会上，李资政指出，苏州工业园是两国合作项目的重中之重，并以“青出于蓝”四个字概括园区15年来的发展成果。

新加坡国家图书馆举办苏州工业园区开发建设15周年资料展

借鉴新加坡经验是苏州工业园开发建设的最大特色，用连续15年时间向一个国家借鉴其先进经验，在改革开放后的中国几乎是唯一的。在庆祝苏州工业园开发建设15周年之际，新加坡国家图书馆于5月15日至6月15日在九楼中文馆藏区举办了《借鉴新加坡经验——纪念苏州工业园区开发建设15周年资料展》，让广大的民众通过展览了解苏州、了解苏州工业园以及苏州工业园15年来传递的新加坡经验。



MM Lee speaking in Mandarin at the 15th anniversary celebrations of the Suzhou Industrial Park yesterday. Flanking him are (from left) former vice-premier Wu Yi, Vice-Premier Wang Qishan, DPM Wong and Commerce Minister Chen Demin. MM Lee described the park as the "priority of all priorities" among all China-Singapore bilateral cooperation projects.

2009年5月26日中国—新加坡合作苏州工业园区开发建设15周年庆祝大会会场

Picture published in The Straits Times, 27 May 2009

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展览吸引了公众参观



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展览受到了苏州媒体的关注

创刊于1949年, 苏州地区最大的日报《苏州日报》于5月26日15周年庆祝大会当天在头版刊登新闻报道, 介绍新加坡国家图书馆举办的这次展览。与此同时, 苏州市政府网站、苏州工业园专题网站及苏州市广播电视台网站均进行了转载。



让更多新加坡人走近苏州

新加坡国家图书馆举办纪念 园区开发建设15周年资料展

本报讯(高小行 姚喜新)在庆祝苏州工业园区成立15周年之际, 新加坡国家图书馆于5月15日至6月15日举办《借鉴新加坡经验——纪念苏州工业园区开发建设15周年资料展》, 目的是通过这个展览, 让更多的新加坡人了解苏州工业园区的发展过程和15年来取得的辉煌成就, 同时也为新加坡人了解苏州、了解中国提供一个资讯平台。

占地11352平方米、高16层的新加坡国家图书馆不断运用新技术, 为世界各地的读者提供可信、便捷及连接全球的图书馆与咨询服务。此次资料展位于新加坡国家图书馆中文馆藏区, 16个展板介绍园区借鉴新加坡经验的成果, 推介

书展示区展出馆藏资料介绍园区投资环境以及苏州悠久的历史 and 璀璨的文化, 5个展柜展示中新两国联合发行的《苏州工业园区成立十周年》纪念邮票、园区公积金宣传手册以及苏州工业园区法规文件汇编。

此次展览由苏州工业园区管理委员会新加坡办事处和中新苏州工业园区开发股份有限公司新加坡公司等提供展品及其相关资料。这些有关园区的第一手资料, 对新加坡学者或国外学者研究新加坡经验是非常重要的参考资料。

据了解, 为使公众更好地了解新加坡的历史、文化、教育、经济、城市规划、公共服务等, 新加坡国家图书馆开通了远程参考咨询服务站 ref@nlb.gov.sg。

捐赠资料选介

为保存新加坡文化遗产，新加坡国家图书馆积极收集与新加坡有关的出版物，《借鉴新加坡经验——纪念苏州工业园区开发建设15周年资料展》获得了苏州工业园区管理委员会驻新加坡办事处的大力支持，捐赠园区出版物，这些有关园区的第一手资料对新加坡学者或国外学者研究新加坡经验是非常重要的参考资料。

以下是部分捐赠馆藏资料，有兴趣的读者可到9楼中文馆藏区参阅：

新加坡国家图书馆也为读者进一步研究苏州工业园设立了资源选介网站http://libguides.nlb.gov.sg/suzhou_industrial_park (中文)或 http://libguides.nlb.gov.sg/sino_singapore_sip (英文)，该网站有我馆整理的有关苏州工业园借鉴新加坡经验的报章索引(1994-2008)，供研究人员参考。

苏州工业园区15年来传递的新加坡经验不仅属于苏州，



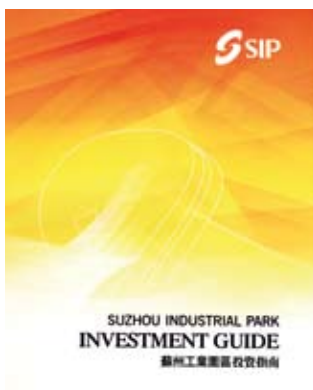
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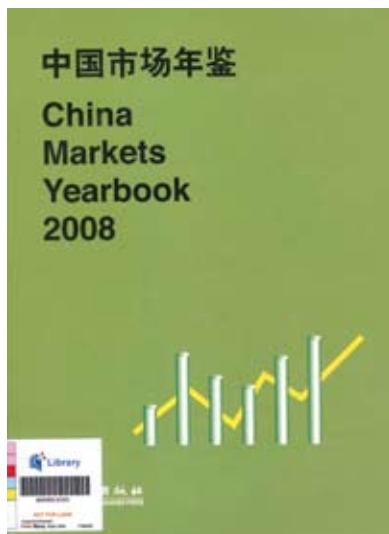
更属于全中国。2007年11月18日，中国总理温家宝与新加坡总理李显龙在新加坡共同签署了关于在中国天津建设生态城的框架协议，成为继苏州工业园区之后，中新两国在可持续发展和环保领域合作的又一个亮点。展望未来，新加坡经验将在中国更多的地方复制与发扬，新中合作将迈向更宽领域。

对苏州、天津或中国其它地区感兴趣的读者，可使用国家图书馆九楼的“中国资料”专题。中国是新加坡的第五大贸易伙伴，中国经济持续高速发展以及庞大的需求市场，为新加坡商家提供了巨大商机，“中国资料”专题收藏中国经济资料，如中国中央级年鉴、省级年鉴、重要城市年鉴、行业年鉴、行业报告、企业名录等，为人们从各个层面研究中国国情提供参考资料。

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15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUZHOU INDUSTRIAL PARK

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Suzhou Industrial Park in China. The one unique feature of Suzhou Industrial Park lies in its continuous adaptation of the Singapore experience in the course of its development. Using a Chinese phrase “重中之重”, Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, during the anniversary celebrations of the project, described the landmark park as the “priority of all priorities” among all China-Singapore bilateral cooperation projects.

In conjunction with the anniversary celebration, a bilingual exhibition *Adapting Singapore's Experience - Commemorating the 15th Anniversary of Suzhou Industrial Park*, was held at the National Library from 15 May to 15 June. The exhibition attracted the interest and attention of the Suzhou media such as the *Suzhou Daily*, which reported the event on 26 May; the official websites of the Suzhou Industrial Park and Suzhou People's Government Gateway; and Suzhou Radio Station. The extensive coverage of the exhibition in Suzhou provided a good opportunity for the National Library Singapore to reach out and connect to a wider group of people in China.

This article serves to highlight the books and resources on the Suzhou Industrial Park and other parts of China that are available at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library's China Resource Collection. The list of books and resources has been compiled into an online guide accessible at http://libguides.nlb.gov.sg/suzhou_industrial_park.

For further enquiries, please e-mail Reference Point at ref@nlb.gov.sg or send an SMS to 9178 7792. Reference Point is a remote reference enquiry service provided by the National Library Singapore.

European Perceptions of Malacca in the Early Modern Period



by KATRINA GULLIVER

Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow
National Library

Malacca was controlled by European powers for more than 400 years - by the Portuguese in 1511, the Dutch in 1641, and the British, first temporarily in 1795, then from 1824 as part of the Anglo-Dutch Treaty, in which the city was exchanged for Bengkulu in Sumatra.

Malacca held an important role in the European expansionist imagination. Tomé Pires said: "Whoever is lord of Malacca has his hand on the throat of Venice". English texts from the 16th century onwards demonstrate a desire to capture the port, and the cultural position its name held as a symbol of wealth and the exotic. This paper looks at how Malacca was used, and how it demonstrates changing attitudes towards colonisation and the idea of the city.

Malacca was an important site in European expansion into Asia. In the 15th century, the city was a crucial nexus of a trade network from the Moluccas to Venice. Being at the "end of the monsoon", it served as a major site for intra-Asia trade between China and India. I have chosen to look at the city from a different angle, in examining how important Malacca was to Europe, and how the city developed with European influence.

EUROPEAN PERCEPTIONS OF THE CITY

The term Golden Chersonese (or Chersonese) appears in Ptolemy's geography, referring to what was later confirmed to be the Malay Peninsula.¹ This term was in use during the early modern period in Europe to refer more specifically to the region, and in a more vague, mythical sense as a site of treasure. During the late 15th century, the city of Malacca came to be known in Europe, and references to it began to appear in literature.

During Portuguese control of the city, the references became more common, both in factual references and literature. I am limiting my references to printed works that would have been available to a broader audience than unpublished manuscripts. Gasparo Balbi's *Viaggio dell'Indie Orientali*, published in Venice in 1590, described Malacca's location and what could be bought there (*sandoli, pocellane*: sandalwood and porcelain, p.64), and detailed the dates of the monsoon season between Goa and Malacca.²

The overlap in usage between Malacca and Golden Chersonese is discussed in this 1604 text:

*"Is it not easie to find Molaco in ancient bookes, which they called the golden Chersonese: the Cape of Comori, which was called the Promontorie of Coci; & that great & famous Iland of Sumatra, so well knowne by the ancient name of Taprobana."*³

The "great & famous illand" description also demonstrates a growing level of assumed knowledge in Europe about the East Indies, and how much they had even by this stage (the English East India Company's first mission was in 1601) become part of the mental map projected from Europe.

A more detailed description of Malacca was given by Pierre d'Avity, translated into English in 1615:

"Malaca is seated upon the river of Gaza, and is a good faire Towne, having in circuit neere twentie miles. The originarie or first inhabitants of this place report, that the beginning came of six or seven fishermen, which came to dwell there, but their number increased, by the arrivall of other fishermen of Siam, Pegu, and Bengola, who built a towne, and framed a particular language, taking all the best kind of speech from other nations. They named their towne Malaca, which is growne so rich and mightie in a short time by reason of her situation, as she contends for precedence with the greatest townes, yea with some realmes thereabouts.

*The Countrie people sleepe upon trees for feare of Tygers, whereof there are so many as they will come into the towne for a prey. The Portugals who tooke this towne from a king of the Moores, found the scituation so commodious, as they have made it in a manner the Center of all the merchandise and trafficke of the East, and the head of a kingdome, which extends from Sincapura to Pullo, and Cambilan;"*⁴

Here we see two elements emerging in the description: One is the wealth and success of the town, and the other its position as a central gathering place for traders from different regions, as what might be termed proto-multiculturalism.

In Portuguese literature (the city is mentioned in the *Lusiad*, of 1572, an epic poem by Luís Vaz de Camões, depicting Portuguese history and the events of the discovery of India as blessed by mythological figures) demonstrating even at this stage its role - and that of colonialism in general - in Portuguese national culture.

Malacca is mentioned in Book X, verse 44:

*Nor Him shalt Thou (though potent) scape, and flye,
(Though sheltred in the Bosome of the Morn)
MALACCA (and the Apple of her Eye)
Prowd of thy wealthy Dow'r as her first-born.
Thy poyson'd Arrows, those Auxiliary
CRYSES I see (thy Pay That do not scorn)
MALACCANS amorous, valiant JAVANS,
Shall all obey the LUSITANIANS.*

And verse 57:

*Great Actions in the Kingdom of BINTAN
Thou shalt perform, MALACCA'S Foe: her score
Of Ills in one day paying, which That ran
Into, for many a hundred year before.*

With patient courage, more then of a man,
Dangers, and Toyles, sharp Spikes, Hills always hoare,
Spears, Arrows, Trenches, Bulwarks, Fire and Sword,
That thou shalt break, and quell, I pass my word.

(This text is from Richard Fanshawe's 1655 translation; the work has been translated a number of times into English.)

By the 17th century, Malacca was making a more regular appearance in literature written in English. As well as its inclusion in guides of the world, guides to spices and general histories, it was again featured in poetry. David Dickson was a Scottish preacher and his *Truth's Victory over Error, or, An abridgement of the chief controversies in religion which since the apostles days to this time, have been, and are in agitation, between those of the Orthodox faith, and all adversaries whatsoever...* was a translation into English of Dickson's sermons given in Latin. It is relevant that by this stage the city of Malacca was being specified rather than the more vague "Golden Cherson".

"As Ophirs Gold, which from Malacca came,
Made Solomon on Earth the richest Man.
So will this Book make rich thy heart and mind,
With Divine Wisdom, Knowledge of all kind.
Thee richer make than Croesus of great name,
Thee wiser make than Solon of great fame.
Than all the seven wise Sages, Greeces Glory,
I do protest it's true, and is no Story." ⁵

We also see the direct Biblical link being used. Malacca was being firmly situated in the cultural geography of Europe in texts such as this. Being already "familiar" and linked to Biblical and classical references, the city developed an identity in European culture through these depictions. This also links to the Portuguese use of religious justification for colonisation.

Under the heading "Manners of the People", the residents were described by Pierre d' Avity as follows:

"There are in this place about a hundred families of Portugals, which live after the manner of their countrie, with a Bishop, and a Colledge of Jesuits, besides the Castell. They that are borne in this place weare long haire, they have malitious spirits, and take delight to commit murders in the night, to the end the authors may not be known. Both men and women make love alike, and thinke that there is not any Nation can mannage it so well: they make amarous songs and rimes, and doe wonderfully commend the power of love in their verses, which are wittie, well composed, and of a good grace. They have the nearest, and most elegant language of all the East: and therefore many at the Indies doe use it; as in England, Germanie, and the Low-countries they use the French tongue." ⁶

He draws a clear distinction between the Christian Portuguese residents and the local community. The exoticism of the Malays in this description, as both murderers and passionate authors of romantic songs and poems is an interesting juxtaposition. It is particularly relevant that the Malays, or "they that are borne in this place" are not described as Muslims.

INFLUENCING THE CITY

There are two major themes in colonial historiography that are often applied to city sites: one is that colonisers took the opportunity to create "ideal" cities, often based on the Renaissance vision of

the perfect city with straight streets and boulevards and a central square marked by visual symmetry and balance. The idea of building the ideal city from scratch was appealing because it was something that could not be done in Europe where most of the cities had developed organically over hundreds of years without central planning. These neoclassical ideas were brought in to, for instance, city planning by the Spanish in the Americas. It was also seen in some of the towns built by the British in India, which were built to appeal to an aesthetic of Oriental classicism, rather than resembling architecture in Britain.

The second approach to colonial cities is a presumed intention of replication of the metropolis. More than simply utilising known construction techniques and plans, this vision is aimed at recreating the *experience* of living in Europe.

UNDER THE PORTUGUESE

The built environment at Malacca was shaped by the Portuguese, most famously in their construction of the fort.

The fort was constructed with a thick heavy wall and was obviously designed to protect the city from attack. However, this creates a very strong separation of the city from the hinterland of the surrounding regions. And it was significant particularly when the city was ruled by foreigners. It had no strong relationship with the regions outside the city and this accelerated the development within Malacca of a distinct Malaccan city urban identity quite detached from the region around. The strength of the fort also



Some foundations of the fort were recently discovered and a section is being rebuilt to demonstrate how it would have looked during this time
Courtesy of Katrina Gulliver



The remaining gate of the fort
Courtesy of Katrina Gulliver

suggests permanence to the Portuguese settlement.

The fort did not really replicate something that was in Portugal although it followed the building styles there. It has a fairly organic shape, responsive to the natural geography of the hill. The lack of a grand design for the city is an indication of several things about the Portuguese, one being that they did not know how long they would stay. And it is evident from Portuguese documents of the time that their goals

towards the city were somewhat conflicted. Building forts was something that the Portuguese tended to focus on in their colonial efforts in other parts of the world, and a clear resemblance can be seen between the Malacca fort and those at Mombasa, Goa and elsewhere.



This map of 1630 shows the shape of the fort
Image reproduced from *Livro das Plantas das Fortalezas, Cidades e Povoações do Estado da Índia Oriental*. Pg 105
All rights reserved, Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1991

It is problematic to apply the notion of colony and the attendant philosophies to refer to the time when the Portuguese captured Malacca. The Portuguese did not establish a large settlement of civilians and they did not hold much territory beyond the borders of the city itself. However their fortifications at least hinted at plans for permanence extending further than simply a factory. Nonetheless, their attitude towards the Malay Peninsula seemed ambivalent.

The idea of conversion to Catholicism was clearly part of the rhetoric of the Portuguese expansion. Nonetheless, the missions set up by the Jesuits, while endorsed by the Portuguese, were not really part of the official expansion nor were they something that the Portuguese crown invested in. It was very convenient to promote the idea of converting the Malay world from Islam to Christianity for audiences in Europe, particularly the Vatican, but in practice the Portuguese showed little interest in actually pursuing this.

The pre-existing town was sizeable, described thus in 1510: "In Malacca, there are approximately ten thousand homes, which are located along the sea and river. Those who live further away from the sea are at a distance of a little more than a cross-bow's shot."⁷ This assumes a population of at least 40,000, in housing clustered close to the sea.

Economically, the city was not a great success for the Portuguese. They were unable to regain the city's prosperity when it was under the sultan. The Portuguese did act in accordance with their Christian expansionist plans to the extent that they limited Muslim trade in the town,⁸ which reduced profitability.

Macau's duties paid to Malacca and Goa sustained Malacca.⁹ The true scale of the economy cannot be established, as much of it was unofficial, either held by private individuals or on the side (illegally) by agents of the state; aided by the loss of documents, and the fact that much of the empire "was created and functioned in the prestatistical age".¹⁰

According to Victor Savage, Malacca was in the 16th century, as Ayuthia was in the 17th, a "comfortable and beautiful city for Western residents".¹¹ While Malacca might have been beautiful, it was not precisely a city on European lines. The largest reminders of the Portuguese were the fort and the church, which were reused by the Dutch. Savage's description also hints at the

evolving European taste for the exotic, in listing the destinations of luxury for European residents and the temporal/geographic shift around Asia.

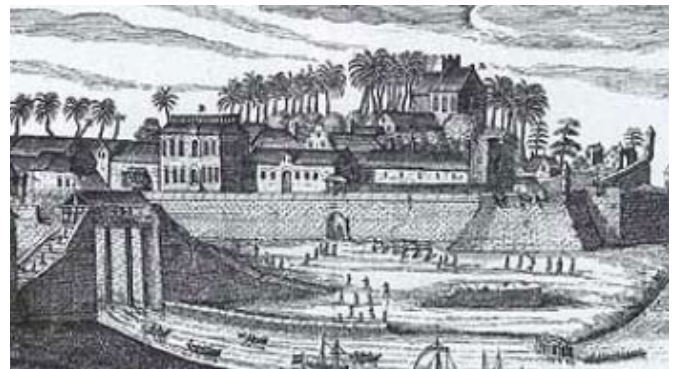
UNDER THE DUTCH

When the Dutch took possession of Malacca, they did not attempt to do what they had initially done in Batavia (Jakarta today) – replicating a Dutch city. Likewise, they were not taking large numbers of civilian settlers to Malacca either. So it developed as an Asian city under European jurisdiction rather than a European city in the tropics. Direct European influence on architecture during the colonial period did not extend past official buildings.

Again, Malacca was not an economic success, as described in this account:

*"The conquerors found a fort, which, like all the works of the Portuguese, was built with a degree of strength, which has never since been imitated by any nation. They found the climate very healthy, though hot and moist; but the trade there was entirely decayed; the continual exactions having deterred all nations from resorting thither. It has not been revived by the company, either on account of some insuperable difficulties, or the want of moderation or the fear of injuring Batavia. The business is confined at present to the sale of a small quantity of opium, and a few blue linens, and to the purchase of elephants teeth, calin, which cofts 70 livres a hundred weight, and a [end p. 166] small quantity of gold at 180 livres a mark."*¹²

The Dutch built the State House and other administrative buildings, as well as private housing. But their arrival did not signal a rapid overhaul of the city, rather a slower evolution. The Dutch reuse of the fort demonstrated this continuity.¹³



This print of Malacca in 1679 shows the centre of the town with Dutch-style buildings within the Portuguese fort
Image reproduced from Hoyt, S.A. (1993). *Old Malacca*. Pg 53
All rights reserved, Oxford University Press, 1993

Malacca was unique in the region for not relying on an agrarian hinterland, due to its "unusually favourable position".¹⁴ This position depended on supplies from outside, and a level of trade to maintain them, which did not always hold under the Dutch.

Under the Dutch, there was a small European population. There was not much work for artisans and tradesmen,¹⁵ which meant that the European influence on material culture was less than in other colonies. Chinese and Indian artisans were often involved in construction and design. This led to the development of a unique visual idiom and these elements also helped to give the city (and its citizens) a particular identity.

The Dutch construction included St John's Fort, which was

sited for inland defence rather than defence against attack from the sea. As well as a demonstration of the politics involved, such an element of the built environment serves to imply a level of visual hostility to the surrounding area, and to reinforce insularity to the city.



St. John's Fort
Courtesy of Katrina Gulliver

MALACA,
Which is a Town belonging to the Company,
and was taken from the Portuguese.
This Place is very considerable, and much frequented
for Traffick, and is the Magazine of
the Eastern Trade, where all Nations, who
have frequented the Seas, met heretofore. At
present, its Trade is not near so considerable,
not sufficient to answer the Charge;

which Inconveniency might be remedied, by
sending thither a good Director; for it is certain,
that there is a good Vent in that Town
for great Quantities of Linnen Cloth, of all
sorts, as well as in many other Towns, its
Dependencies, or which lye round about it;
as Andragieri, and other Towns, and such
Places as lye along the Rivers of Sierra, Per-
ra, &c. where for the most Part the Payments
are made in Gold and Tin, which is a Return
very rich, necessary, and profitable for the
Good and Support of the Trade of the Company.
Malacca is the Rendezvous of all the Vessels that return from
Japan every Year with their Cargoes, and which they there sort
and distribute, in order to their being sent to the [end p.212] other
Store-houses on the Coast of India, Coromandel, Bengal, & c. ¹⁶

Once again, we see a return to the standard descriptions of Malacca, that even in an account of its economic failure, it is referred to as the "magazine of the east" and in positive terms. Malacca's ability to retain a positive image in European minds even as it was a poor investment merits further investigation, which I hope to pursue later.

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The Myth of the 'Squatter' and the Emergency Housing Discourse in Post-war Southeast Asia and Hong Kong



by LOH KAH SENG

Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow
National Library

Before anger was expressed over "slum" in Danny Boyle's popular, multi-Oscar winning movie *Slumdog Millionaire* (*New York Times*, 21 February 2009), representations of informal housing (otherwise known as "squatter" housing) played a much more prominent role in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong after World War II. Boyle's film depicted the dwellers of an Indian slum to be both criminal and cosmopolitan, although critics focused on the former.

After the war, however, metaphors of contagion, crime and communism were commonly used to depict informal communities in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong. Framed by both the colonial and post-colonial states, these representations were much more discursive and invasive than their cinematic equivalents in *Slumdog Millionaire*. The post-war metaphors were a key part of an emergency housing discourse which conveyed no love for the slum, only a great anxiety to control them.

The very nature of informal housing was inimical to the states of Southeast Asia and beyond. James Scott has written about "high modernist" governments which embrace a robust "self-confidence about scientific and technical progress...and, above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws". These states desired cities to be organised according to subscribed scientific-rational principles. In their view, the city, when seen from the air, should reveal itself as a "legible map", whose "beauty" and "order", it is argued, are expressed



A young community in Klong Toey, Bangkok, Thailand
Image reproduced from Chira Sakornpan et al. (1971). *Klong Toey: A Social Work Survey of a Squatter Slum*. Pg 9
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visually in the form of straight grid lines and clearly defined zones of planned building and infrastructure development (Scott 1998, 4-5).

The classic informal settlement in post-war Southeast Asia and Hong Kong was anything but that. They were the unplanned products of a massive population boom and various forms of transnational, rural-urban and intra-urban migration of low-income families after the war (Yeung and Lo 1976, xviii). By 1961, there were an estimated 750,000 informal dwellers in Jakarta (constituting 25% of the city's population), 320,000 in Manila (23%), 250,000 in Singapore (26%), and 100,000 in Kuala Lumpur (25%) (McGee 1970, 123).

The informal house was typically built without planning approval and with light semi-permanent materials such as wood, attap and zinc. The numbers of such housing grew rapidly after the war at the physical and administrative margins of the city: in war-damaged sectors; on steep hillsides, unused cemeteries and rooftops of existing shop houses; along railway tracks,

dried up riverbanks and canals; in boats, foreshore areas and parks; and over swampy ground, disused mining land and rubbish dump sites (Sendut 1976, Johnstone 1981, McGee 1967, Dwyer 1976, Giles 2003, Dick 2003, Laquian 1969, Stone 1973). The peripheral locations of informal settlements caused the state much anxiety. They were spaces where official control was weakest and where, as the state feared, any social change could profoundly alter the character of society (Douglas 2002, 150).



Informal dwellers living in boats in Hong Kong
 Image reproduced from Golger, O. J. (1966). *Squatters and Resettlement: Symptoms of an Urban Crisis: Environmental Conditions of Low-standard Housing in Hong Kong*
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The official fear of informal housing did not arise merely over housing form or geography. It was deeply reinforced by how their residents, far from being disorganised and marginal, like the housing, formed dynamic social communities. On the one hand, as scholars in other contexts have observed, informal housing dwellers were well-integrated into the politics and economy of the city and country (Perlman 1976, Castells 1983). On the other hand, the dwellers possessed their own networks of mutual self-help, much of which was frowned upon by the state.

There were numerous gangs based in the settlements, which recruited from among its youthful, under-employed residents. But in Manila, for instance, informal dwellers viewed their community as safe and harmonious, while also organising volunteer fire brigades and anti-crime patrols to safeguard their basic interests (Laquian 1971, 196-7). In short, the informal communities challenged the formal authority of the state. They constituted “the quiet encroachment of the ordinary” or the growing strength of “the weapons of the weak” (Bayat 2004, 90, Scott 1985, 1990).

It was in such a context, in which the balance of state-society relations was being redefined by the growth of the informal settlements, that the governments of Southeast Asia and Hong Kong created an emergency housing discourse. Governments in the region sought to bring informal housing under official regulation or even completely replace it with modern public housing. The basic aim was not just to change the form of shelter – it was, more ambitiously, to socialise semi-autonomous informal dwellers into becoming model colonial subjects and, subsequently, citizens of the high modernist state.

DISCOURSE AND REPRESENTATION: CREATING THE ‘SQUATTER’

The first discursive act of the Southeast Asian state was to criminalise informal dwellers as “squatters”. The term conveys an instant impression of both illegality and social inertia and forges a powerful sense of social crisis. As Greg Clancey has argued, the colonial state in Singapore forged a controlling emergency discourse, which empowered it with the moral authority to intervene robustly in the everyday lives of ordinary people (Clancey 2004, 53). In fact, most Chinese informal dwellers were not squatters but rent-paying tenants, having settled in autonomous housing as migrants from China and Malaya or from the overcrowded shop houses in the inner city after the war.

The Singapore Land Clearance and Resettlement Working Party of 1955, in fact, rejected the term “squatter”, as it had been “a long established custom in Singapore for owners of land not required for immediate development to rent out plots on a month-to-month basis and for the tenant to erect thereon a house” (Singapore 1956, 2, 3). But its use persisted into the post-colonial period.

This criminalising discourse also appeared in post-war Thailand. Here, only a small minority of the informal dwellers were technically squatters. Like in Singapore, the majority were renters who had been granted permission on a temporary basis by landlords to build houses on their lands (Giles 2003, 213). In Manila, too, many informal dwellers confidently viewed themselves not as squatters but as rent-paying tenants. In 1962, when the Philippine government sought to clear informal dwellers in Singalong and took them to court, the residents argued that they were not



Informal housing built on hillsides in Hong Kong
 Image reproduced from Dwyer, D. J. (1975). *People and Housing in Third World Cities: Perspectives on the Problem of Spontaneous Settlements*. Plate 8 between pg 36 and 37
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squatters but “lessees who had been paying rentals”. Such an assertive self-perception was rooted in the popular belief among Filipinos that public land in the country was not the possession of all but belonged to no one, and could be freely occupied (Cited in Stone 1973, 40-3, 71-3, 80).

In Hong Kong, the illegality of “squatters” was based on a complicated official distinction between building land and agricultural land. This stipulated that residents could erect buildings only on the former. The distinction was made at the beginning of the 20th century and had been hotly contested. It could even lead to the criminalisation of residents who had built unauthorised houses on their own agricultural land. The legal distinction made it difficult for the private sector to satisfy the requirements of the complex building regulations to convert agricultural land into building land. The construction of informal wooden housing became illegal (Smart 2003, 212-3).

The use of a criminalising discourse of illegality and social inertia to provide the state with a powerful mandate to re-house unauthorised housing dwellers in public housing in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong did not simply aim to represent. Rather, it sought to depict the “squatter” as the liminal Other who needed to be eliminated so that the city can be re-created in the political and public imagination (Mayne 1990, 8-9). Scholars in India have contended that the notion of illegality was, really, a fabrication since the laws of the state served chiefly the interests of the powerful. Cities, they argue, had always been built from the bottom up until recently; the poor had the right to build their own housing if the government was unable to provide for them (Desrochers 2000, 17-22, 27).

TRANSNATIONAL ROOTS AND WESTERN ADVOCATES

The discursive vocabulary of “squatters” was common in official statements on housing in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong because it had strong transnational links and advocates. The 1951 United Nations Mission of Experts, which visited informal settlements in Thailand, India, Indonesia, Malaya, Pakistan, the Philippines and Singapore as part of its survey, reported that “squatting on somebody else’s land has become an art and a profession” in the Philippines (United Nations Mission of Experts 1951, 157). Charles Abrams, an influential American urban planner in the post-war period, warned that informal housing dwellers formed a “formidable threat to the structure of private rights established through the centuries”, the rule of law and the basic sovereignty of the state (Abrams 1970a, 11, 1970b, 143, 1966, 23).

Abrams and other Western urban planners such as Morris Juppenthalz frequently advised Southeast Asian governments on housing and urban planning after the war. Juppenthalz was a United Nations town planner who had worked in post-war Manila, Hong Kong and Rio de Janeiro. Drawing from the stark, powerful metaphors of disease and contagion, he represented informal housing as “a plague” and an “urban sickness”. Juppenthalz reveals his highly modernist mind in expressing his distaste for the physical appearance of informal settlements, where “[t]he outward appearance of the malady, the urban squatter colonies, when viewed from the air, from a helicopter, is that of a fungus attached to and growing out from the carapace of the city”.

He blamed many of the cholera outbreaks in Philippine cities on the physical environment of the informal settlements and the social habits of their residents. The basic solution, Juppenthalz



Informal housing built on both sides of a railway line in North Harbour, Manila, Philippines
 Image reproduced from Juppenlatz, M. (1970). *Cities in Transformation: The Urban Squatter Problem of the Developing World*. Pg 111
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urged, was to organise the residents' integration into the state as tax-paying citizens. In this, the government's role was pivotal and needed to be "based on the scientific method and planned urban development throughout the entire nation" (Juppenlatz 1970, 1-5, 41, 104, 212). Abrams had also warned that the "diseases of housing rival those in pathology" (Abrams 1965, 40).

'DETRIMENTAL TO CRIME AND MORALS': CONTAGION AND THE GANGS

British officials in the colonies fully endorsed these abject views of informal housing. In 1948, the British housing authorities in Malaya represented the "mushrooming" informal housing as being "temporary buildings of a very inferior type, erected without regard to the elementary requirements of sanitation, light and air" (Cited in Johnstone 1983, 298). In Hong Kong, similarly, the connection between the clearance of informal housing and state intervention into public health matters was similarly strong: informal housing became illegal when British colonial officials ruled it to be unhealthy for habitation (Smart 2006, 32). In Singapore, the 1947 Housing Committee also reported that the unplanned urbanisation and development of slum and informal settlements in the city after the war were "detrimental to health and morals" (Singapore 1947, 11), and in literally being "schools for training youth for crime" (Singapore Improvement Trust 1947).

The likening of informal housing development to the spread of disease in official and even academic discourse underlines the social and moral danger the residents were alleged to pose. They were regarded not only as a threat to themselves but also to the fabric of society at large. Many official and academic commentators also did not fail to point to the alleged prevalence of crime and gangsterism in the informal settlements. Juppenlatz emphasised that the Oxo and Sique Sique - organised criminal gangs in Manila - were based in informal housing areas (Juppenlatz 1970, 107). In Jakarta, groups of *djembel-djembel* ("vagabonds"), also based in slums and informal settlements, gained a reputation for being responsible for much of the crime in the city (Cited in McGee 1967, 159).

In Malaysia, increased overcrowding in the cities produced "a mood of urban anxiety", with which not only the state but also the middle class viewed their values to be coming under severe threat (Harper 1998, 218). The Ministry of Local Government and Housing depicted informal settlements in Kuala Lumpur in 1971 as "seedbeds of secret societies and racketeers" (Malaysia Ministry of Local Government and Housing 1971, 42).

In Singapore, too, the government portrayed slum and informal housing as "breeding grounds of crime and disease", noting that "[t]he incidence of tuberculosis is higher here than anywhere else on the island, as is the incidence of crime and gangsterism." (Choe 1969, 163)

MASSES AND MOBS: ANGLO-AMERICAN FEARS OF COMMUNISM

Another international dimension of the emergency housing discourse was related to the Cold War and the attempt of Western planners to determine the character of post-colonial societies in Southeast Asia. Informal residents, understood to be resistant to resettlement, were seen to constitute "a potentially dangerous mass of political dynamite", wherein lay the deadly possibility for anti-establishment and revolutionary politics (McGee 1967, 170). Abrams acutely feared that the rural-urban migration was leading many Asian cities to relive the unfortunate history of Western cities:

"[Asian cities] have become the haven of the refugee, the hungry, the politically oppressed. The Filipino hinterlanders fleeing the Huks pour into Manila, the Hindus escaping the Moslems head into New Delhi, and the victims of Chinese communism head into Hong Kong." (Abrams 1966, 10).

In Malaya, the British perceived locally born Chinese of the first generation, who did not speak English and whose fathers were immigrants, as a great menace to peace; their numbers were "expanding in labour forces and squatter settlements ... [and] nothing can be done to convert them into Malayan citizens" (Britain, Colonial Office 1948). The post-colonial Malaysia state, which won with British support the counter-insurgency struggle against the communists, also maintained that the clearance of informal housing was "not only in the best interests of Kuala Lumpur as a capital city but also to foster economic growth, improve social standards and improve security, thereby making for greater political stability" (Malaysia Ministry of Local Government and Housing 1971, 29).

In 1968, political scientist Samuel Huntington wrote of how an enforced programme of urbanisation in South Vietnam offered an important way for the anti-communist regime to defeat the Vietcong insurgents based in the countryside (Huntington 1964, 648, 652).

The fear of communism was deeply embedded in the minds of Western, particularly American, urban planning experts. It forged a strong link between their ideas and practices and the re-housing programmes which emerged in post-war Southeast Asia. As Abrams warned, unlike the institutional and cultural buffers which existed against communism in Europe, Asian countries were openly vulnerable to the spread of communism. The "housing famine", he cautioned, could easily encourage the ascendancy of Marxism, where "today's masses" could turn into "tomorrow's mobs".

Such an ideological view of urban housing reflected Abrams' belief that the city was the frontier in the post-colonial struggle



Informal housing in Tondo, Manila, Philippines
 Image reproduced from Aprodicio A. L. (1983). *Basic Housing: Policies for Urban Sites, Services, and Shelter in Developing Countries*. Pg 103
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Informal housing built along a railway track in Jakarta, Indonesia
 Image reproduced from Dwyer, D. J. (1975). *People and Housing in Third World Cities: Perspectives on the Problem of Spontaneous Settlements*.
 Plate 6 between pg 36 and 37
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to establish peaceful, democratic and stable societies in the less developed world. Asian cities were not only sites of great social and demographic growth; they were also politically explosive places, where the housing crisis represented a serious threat to both national development and global stability (Abrams 1966, 287-8, 296). The 1962 United Nations Ad Hoc Group, which Abrams chaired, likewise believed that housing and urban development were activities in which “social and economic progress meet” (United Nations 1962, 1, 9-19).

CONCLUSION

In post-war Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, powerful emergency housing discourses were forged by the colonial regimes and subsequently embraced by their successor states. But only the city-state of Singapore and Hong Kong successfully adopted policies of social governance which approached the “high modernist” model. The governments of Singapore and Hong Kong overrode organised opposition to replace superficially “messy” informal settlements with visually legible modern housing estates. Both governments possessed the will to transform their subjects into model citizens towards achieving broader developmentalist goals.

One was a non-representative colony which did not have to contend with democratic politics, while the other was an elected post-colonial government which tolerated little opposition and dominated domestic politics. Both also launched their public housing programmes in the context of major states of emergency occasioned by the outbreaks of great fires in settlements of informal housing (Castells et. al 1990, Smart 2006, Loh 2009).

Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, both the colonial and post-colonial governments were unable to integrate semi-autonomous informal communities into the formal structures of the state (Dwyer 1975, Ooi 2005). The post-colonial state was typically the

patron of the citizenry, including the informal communities. They usually failed to obtain the requisite political hegemony to push through unpopular housing reforms.

In the Philippines, informal dwellers, local politicians and senior administrators held too much political influence for the state to carry out a sustained campaign of eviction and resettlement. By contrast, the Thai, Indonesian and Malaysian states were not genuinely democratic. But they were also too reliant on patronage politics for political legitimacy to ignore the importance of votes found in informal settlements at the margins of the city (Dick 2003, Stone 1973, Laquian 1966).

In Manila, both national and local politicians were bound up in a mutually beneficial relationship: both needed each other to win elections. They also aligned themselves with informal dwellers to win votes, while the residents themselves made use of such patronage to resist eviction and win lawful tenure of their occupation from the state (Laquian 1966, 54, 118). The result of these complicated tangles of state-society relations was that most Southeast Asian states usually embarked on limited, short-term and visible “prestige projects”. T. G. McGee has observed that “national prestige, more than national concern for the social welfare of squatters, has been the most active force leading to their shift in these two cases”, but this, in the final analysis, merely maintained the status quo (McGee 1967, 169-70).

The region’s states floundered in tackling the informal housing issue in characteristic ways: forming numerous public agencies to disguise a lack of political authority and commitment, without being able to coordinate these agencies, and lacking comprehensive planning, sufficient resources and proper legislation and bylaws (United Nations Mission of Experts 1951, Sicat 1975).

Nonetheless, despite the failure of most Southeast Asian states to remove their informal settlements, it remains crucial

to highlight the role played by the accompanying emergency housing discourse. Compared to the actual dis-housing efforts, the discourse was much more invasive. By representing informal dwellers as criminal, inert, unsanitary and, above all, dangerous populations, high modernist states were framing these part-autonomous, part-integrated communities of people as the Other. Such discursive views of "slum dwellers" and "squatters" have entered into popular consciousness and are uncritically accepted as "common sense" truisms, even before the making of *Slumdog*

Millionaire. In the process, the states have been able to establish political hegemony over matters of what constituted modern, healthy housing and living and what the character of the model citizen was to be in post-war Southeast Asia and Hong Kong (Gramsci 1992).

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Interpreting Media Constructions of Samsui Women in Singapore¹



by KELVIN E.Y. LOW

Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow
National Library

INTRODUCTION

Migrating from southern China to Singapore in the early decades of the 20th century, *samsui* women have been routinely portrayed throughout Singapore’s history as among its pioneers who played a part in the building of the nation. In many avenues of social memory production based on *samsui* women, they have, more often than not, been presented in various ways as “pioneers”, “feminists” and “Cantonese women” who are set apart from other Chinese females in relation to their qualities of thrift, resilience and independence.



Samsui women on their way to their cleaning job at the Empress Place Building
Source: Singapore Tourist Promotion Board Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

This paper discusses the different means through which these women are remembered vis-à-vis media constructions found in such examples as newspaper reports and popular history books. These constructions of *samsui* women’s experiences are limited in view of their neglect of other dimensions in their everyday life experiences. Further issues are raised with regard to the need to reflect upon other avenues of memory-making in which we receive knowledge about these women, as well as how they are being remembered in both past and present contexts.

SAMSUI WOMEN – A BRIEF BACKGROUND

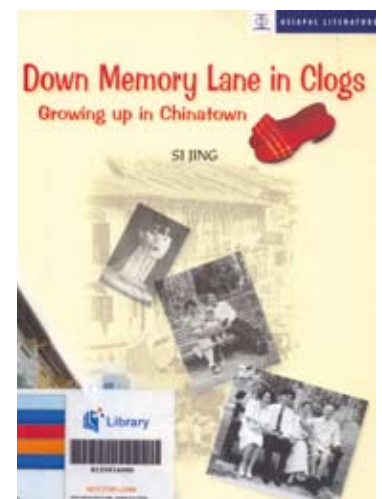
Samsui women, or *hong tou jin* – translated literally as “red headscarf” (Lim, 2002) – came from peasant families in the *Samsui* area of the coastal province of Canton (Guangdong today) in

China (Tang, 1960). These women often helped out and toiled in the fields at a very young age, and hence were able to find work at construction sites in Singapore when they left their homeland. This was primarily a result of the Alien Ordinance imposed on Singapore (then part of the Straits Settlements) by the British, which saw many *samsui* women migrating to Singapore in the 1930s (Lim, 2002). A quota was imposed on the numbers of male migrants entering Malaya, whereas no restrictions were enforced upon female migrants.

Samsui women went through a *sui haak* (middlemen) before securing a job in the building and construction industry overseas. One *samsui* woman for instance, paid 30 dollars to a *sui haak* to help her make the necessary arrangements to work overseas, which covered the fare for her journey, food and other migration procedures (Lim, 2002, p. 231). Tang (1960) estimates that between 1934 and 1938, about 190,000 women from China migrated to Malaya, and *samsui* women formed part of this wave of female migrants.

The *samsui* female labourer was easily recognised and singled out by her distinctive red cloth headgear, black tunics and black pants (*samfoo*) which she wore to work every day (Lim, 2002, p. 230). Although the exact reason for donning the headgear is hitherto debatable, it is surmised that the first woman to wear it was Su Tong Po’s mistress in the Hakka district of China, by the name of Chao Yun (Lim, 2002). Through the passing of time, the headgear was adopted as the traditional headgear of Hakka women, who took along this tradition with them as they migrated south from China. Working alongside these Hakka women, *samsui* women also began to put on the red headgear to work. However, Lim (2002) points out that this account remains contested, and that the real reason and motivation for wearing the headgear is still not known.

Samsui women migrated to Singapore in the 1920s and 1930s. Some of them remained



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in Singapore, while others either passed on or returned to *Samsui*. In order to interpret media constructions of *samsui* women, the ensuing section will elucidate upon the ways through which these women are remembered vis-à-vis media memory-making channels.

CANTONESE/SAMSUI WOMEN

Hailing from the *Samsui* province located in southern China, the women who typically worked in the construction industry are usually termed as *samsui* women, although some writers have pointed out that not all women who worked on construction sites came from *Samsui*. For instance, Chin and Singam note:

“Indeed, it has become common for English speakers to refer to all still-surviving, old, single, immigrant Cantonese women as *Samsui* women. This lumps together, quite incorrectly, women from many districts – each distinct in sub-dialect and self-image.”
(2004, p.106)

A similar observation is also made by Yip:

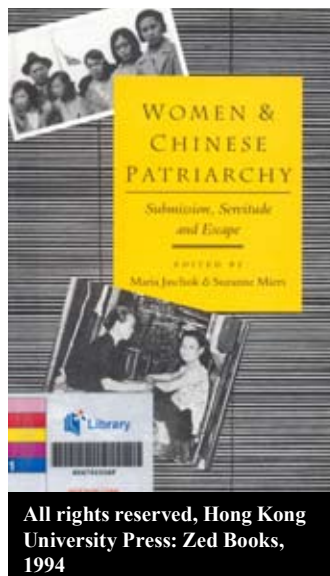
“Not all *Samsui* women came from the *Samsui* village in the Guangdong Province in China. But because of the preponderance of these women from *Samsui*, the term *Samsui* women has been used to describe all the Chinese women in similar occupations.”
(2006, p. 40)

A more interesting point to note with regard to *samsui* women is their membership in the dialect group of the Cantonese. Framed as a “different and markedly independent category of Chinese women from the south” (Chin & Singam 2004, p. 105), Cantonese women were known to be highly independent and feisty, and refused to, or rarely married (Chiang, 1994; Gaw, 1988; Samuel, 1991; Stockard, 1989; Tan, 1990; Topley, 1959).

Along the lines of highlighting their Cantonese origin (see also, Kong *et al.*, 1996), *samsui* women are also typically presented as emerging triumphant from hardships back in China, toiling in the fields, dealing with useless, opium-addicted husbands who were match-made to them in their teens, and



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being singled out as “strong-willed” (Lim, 2005, p. 141) or resilient (Chin & Singam, 2004). Having framed *samsui* women as a group of independent Cantonese womenfolk, this approach becomes a useful resource for another level of representation, that of presenting them as “pioneers” and “feminists”, which I address next.

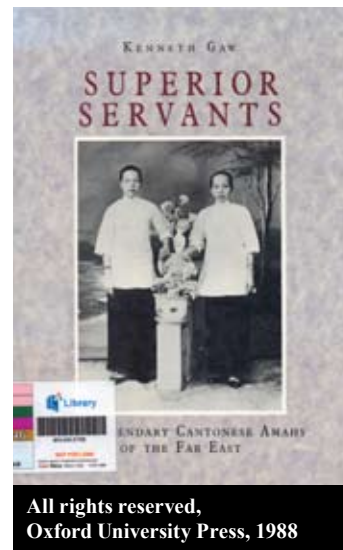
“PIONEERS” AND “FEMINISTS”

Given the atypical work position of *samsui* women who toiled alongside men in the construction industry (and in other occupations), these women are often lauded and highlighted for their contributions to the physical infrastructure of Singapore’s

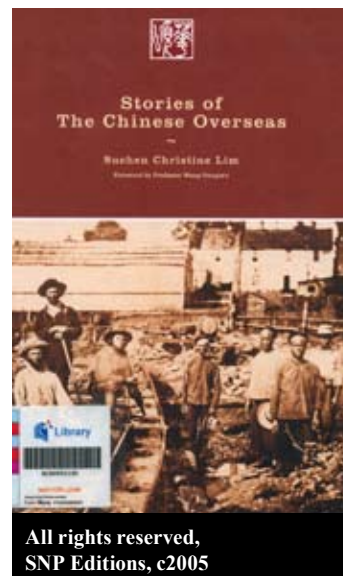
built-up environment, so that “they are not forgotten as the early builders of our nation” (Chan, 2005, p. 59). Their roles in construction work see them involved in constructing landmark buildings such as, among others, Alexandra Hospital (Partridge, 1998), Meritus Mandarin Hotel, and Singapore Conference Hall, the last of which “is a site they helped erect way back in the 1960s” (Tan, 2003). Related to their pioneer status is that of claiming them as “Singapore’s first Asian feminist” (Tan, 2003), or “alpha women of yesteryear” (Yip, 2006, p. 41). Tan notes:

“It is not just the obvious role she has played in the building of Singapore’s physical history, as testified by school textbooks and local soap operas. It is what she has come to stand for, as Singapore’s first Asian feminist.” (2003)

Their link to feminism has also received a nod from former Nominated Member of Parliament, Dr Kanwaljit



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Soin, who praised *samsui* women at a Lunar New Year lunch:

“Singaporean women like to think we’ve achieved much in the past 30 years. But the *samsui* women set our direction when they came here 100 years ago (sic). I salute them as the original Asian feminists.”

(*The Straits Times*, 5 February 2002)

Similarly, *samsui* women have also been mentioned by another former Nominated Member of Parliament, Braema

Mathiapparanam, who urged that some form of commemoration of these women should be carried out on National Day in order to remember their contributions.²

Apparently, the term “*samsui* women” hangs easily with those who talk about them as “pioneers” or “feminists”. Yet, such passing reverence or remembrances of these women are but limited glimpses of what we know about them and their life experiences. I discuss this further below, where I point out the utilisation of these terms upon the women by both the state and other institutions in furthering certain aims and goals.

ELDERLY WOMEN

Koo’s article, written based on two *samsui* women, tells of the women’s current position in their later years. Their frailty, vulnerability and helplessness are highlighted. The first *samsui* woman is Gui Jie, who was 92 at the time of the interview with Koo. She describes Gui Jie:

“Dressed in a grey blouse with flowers printed and black pants, her grey hair was short and tidy; her small frame somehow made the wheelchair appear to have plenty of room.” (2006, p. 56)

The other *samsui* woman is Di Jie, who was three years younger:

“Di Jie was temporarily staying at the Old People’s Home. As her application to the subsidy from the government and the daughter of her sister could no longer support her lodging fee of S\$300 per month, Di Jie was trapped in a situation where no one could take care of her anymore...” (2006, p. 57)

It is clear from Koo’s description of these two *samsui* ladies that she frames their current situation in a helpless and hapless manner, iterating their transition from being sturdy female construction workers to physically challenged elderly with little or no support.³

Similarly, in a local newspaper article, another *samsui* woman was mentioned as a recipient of home care help from a local organisation:

“She was once a robust *samsui* woman who could carry heavy loads effortlessly. But at the age of 89, just moving from her bed to her wheelchair is a challenge for Madam Heun Lin Yow.” (Chan, 2003)

Additionally, *samsui* women have often been highlighted in the media as recipients of aid in various forms from charitable associations, receiving free medical checkups, being treated to Lunar New Year dinners and other special functions, among others (see Kee, 1996; Luo, 2005; Ramesh, 2006).⁴ In spite of their frailty, which is clearly a marked contrast from their earlier years, these women have often been presented as always incorporated into and remembered or noted and honoured for their contributions by society through such events as the Lunar New Year festivities, when special meals were provided for them.

OVERLAPPING IDENTITIES

In the preceding three sections, I have demonstrated how *samsui* women are presented through the categories of Cantonese

migrant women, pioneers and feminists, and elderly in need of help. I indicate here a combination of some if not all of these categories to illustrate how their identity has been presented in the media as a kind of template which has been developed and put together from the previous three categories of identity production.

In a chapter on “Older Women: Planning for the Golden Years” included in *A Woman’s Place: The Story of Singapore Women* (Wong & Leong, 1993), *samsui* women have been described as follows:

“These women worked hard and were regarded to be almost as good as the men, not just in the way they worked, but also in their ability to save and send money home. Working women in those days might have worked in humble jobs that younger workers today shun, but they remained fiercely independent and took great pride in the fact that, not only did they support themselves, they even supported their families back in their homeland.” (1993, p. 61-62)



Similar descriptions can be found in another piece of writing produced by the *Singapore Contractors Association Ltd* (SCAL), titled “Tribute to our History”:

“As restrictions were once imposed on male immigrants from poverty-stricken China, the women came instead to take on the heavy work. The women, clothed in black *samfoo* and a headgear, worked at construction sites from dawn to dusk seven days a week, moving from project to project, chipping stones, mixing cement mortar, carrying heavy loads, sweeping and cleaning.” (1997, p. 17)

After having been praised for the work that they did, these women were further described as elderly in need and receipt of social assistance in contemporary times:

“The three ‘*samsui por*’ are now too old to work and receive \$90 each per month from the Social Welfare

Department. But Madam Fong and her two friends are happy with what little they have and have saved enough to buy a place in an old folks' home." (ibid.)

Finally, in the conclusion of the article, the women are recognised for their contribution and position in the history of Singapore's construction:

"SCAL members who remember the yesteryear of construction in Singapore will acknowledge that the labour provided by these *samsui* women was instrumental in their success, allowing them to compete with British contractors for projects." (ibid.)

These quotes point to a combination of varying identities of *samsui* women in media memory-making. Similar issues concerning their reasons for migrating, struggling against a series of hardships, eking out a living in Singapore as construction workers and, finally, retiring on social welfare, become generalisations of how the history and memory of *samsui* women as a collective are remembered. However, many other experiences of *samsui* women are left unheard.

My research, which includes volunteer work with *samsui* women and other elderly, archival research, as well as speaking with (the adopted) kin of these women (see Low, 2007b), indicate that they were more than just Chinese female migrants who toiled at construction sites and either went back to China to retire, or remained in Singapore. Some *samsui* women also worked in other occupations, as rubber factory workers and domestic helpers, while others also adopted children, or got married. Other experiences of the women – including difficult times during the Japanese occupation of Singapore in the early 1940s, travelling back to *Samsui* for a visit after a few decades (Lim, 1996), among others – remain untapped and allocated to the background of popular memorialisation processes. Similar experiences and narratives of a few *samsui* women⁵ may be gleaned below:

"Tough, but of course! Knee-deep high water also must go in. Now got machines to use. At that time, we carried [cement and bricks] by ourselves. Four, five storeys, seven storeys also carry up like that.

Just a few cents only! We had to endure from morning till night. Even if our shoulders were bruised, we still had to climb up twelve storeys high.

My life was not good. Had to remit money to brothers and sisters. Eat less lor, I only spend one cent on food a day. One cent worth of food to eat for a day. Ate peanuts, salted turnip, string beans...ate these kind of stuff! You think got fish and meat to eat ah? Don't have ah, don't even get to eat chicken on festive occasions at that time. Also couldn't afford salted fish. Sometimes we ate pig's blood fried with beansprouts, to eat for a day.

[Was] expensive, would set us back by two cents.

Our lives went by like that. What can we hope for?

No family here. Cannot regret...already came here.

No regrets, once we made up our minds to come."

Other than these varied experiences which have not been substantively interpreted, it is also pertinent to probe into the various aims that motivate selective identity-representations

of *samsui* women. For example, state remembrance of *samsui* women as pioneers and feminists reveal "claims" over these women in order to produce a heritage that Singaporeans can relate to. I discuss elsewhere, how *samsui* women have been appropriated in various ways through what I term "pioneer narratives":

"Dissemination of knowledge concerning these Chinese female migrants framed within the discourse of *samsui* women as pioneers, can be better understood within what I refer to as 'pioneer narratives' - a form of 'historical recall script' employed by the state in order to manage and perpetuate a sense of heritage and therefore collective identity. More importantly, virtues of hard work, thrift, resilience and perseverance are often highlighted in accounts of the *samsui* women, adding on to the list of 'desirable values' which the state often emphasises upon for its citizens. These pioneer narratives therefore form as media of heritage for purposes of instilling collective identities and therefore a sense of belonging to a 'common past'."

(Low, 2007a, p. 6)

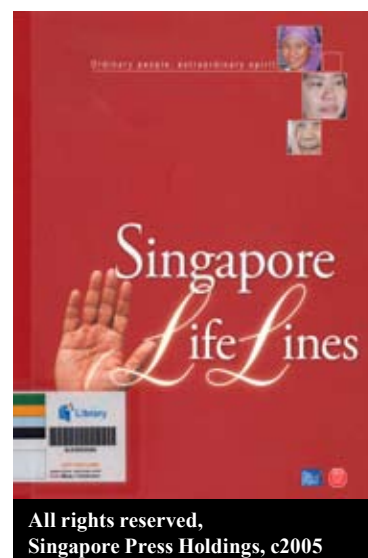
Such selective presentation of *samsui* women brings about limiting representations of their experiences, as Chang and Huang contend:

"Nostalgia for images of...*samsui* women are certainly romanticised and shorn of the painful realities that usually attend real events...Most of the lives of the *samsui* women were also very painful, marked by backbreaking labour, meagre salaries and exploitative employers. (2005, p. 278)

Presenting *samsui* women as pioneers is one issue. But framing them as feminists then becomes an appropriation of them as icons of female independence, hence adding favourably towards championing women's rights and causes. I would also propose that such framing does not necessarily reflect upon all experiences of the women. As I have mentioned earlier, some of these women, for instance, were married and had children and grandchildren in Singapore.⁶

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It may be right to suggest that the direction of media constructions of *samsui* women has, as its template, the four identity-categories which appear to be presented as unchanging and permanent. In other words, the production of knowledge on *samsui* women seems to centre mainly on their pioneering contributions, right up to their present situation as elderly women in



need of help. Beyond these constructions, it is important to consider other ways in which we remember or know about their experiences. Were there other points in their lives which brought about relocation or permanent settlement in Singapore? For example, the opportunity to return to *Samsui* at various points of their lives may have been a good or less desirable awakening, either in the form of a desire to return to their country of origin, or to realise, upon their return, that they no longer fit in with their familial members back in China. Keeping in mind these

varying queries, it is thus crucial to manoeuvre ourselves beyond the four identity-categories and not to regard them as ideal representations of *samsui* women.

While some writings have emerged in recent years which provide a more in-depth engagement with the everyday life experiences of *samsui* women (for example, Low, 2005; Koo, 2006), more work of this nature needs to be produced in order to expand our knowledge concerning the life trajectories and experiences of *samsui* women.

ENDNOTES

1. This paper forms a part of my ongoing Ph.D. research on social memory and historiography of *samsui* women in Singapore, and is a preliminary article written for general readership. I would like to thank Kevin Blackburn for his constructive comments on an earlier draft of the paper
2. Parliamentary Debates, 2004.
3. In an article on Singapore's greying community, *samsui* women were also described as "shrivelled and grey" (see *The Straits Times*, 1995, May 3).
4. See also, *The Straits Times*, 1997, February 3 and *The Straits Times*, 1997, January 31, in which *samsui* women were reported to have received red packets and food parcels from voluntary welfare associations, and been invited to a Lunar New Year *Yusheng* lunch hosted by the American International Assurance.
5. These quotes are taken from a documentary produced in 1995 titled "An immigrant's story: With sweat, tears and toil - The *Samsui* Women" (Mediacorp News and Channel News Asia, Singapore).
6. A filmlet based on a *samsui* woman has recently been produced in conjunction with the 2007 National Day celebrations of Singapore's 42nd anniversary of independence. In that clip, *samsui* woman Loke Tai Hoe was featured as having come from China in 1936, and after having worked for 42 years, her "efforts have finally paid off", and she was seen sitting in the centre of a family portrait with her children and grandchildren. See <http://www.ndp.org.sg/multimedia/video/filmlets/samsui.html>.

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Singapore and the Middle East: Forging a Dynamic Relationship



by BOUCHAIB SILM

Researcher
National Library

While Singapore's system of governance has proved its efficiency and sustainability, there are serious concerns about whether successful stories such as Singapore's can serve to stimulate

change in other countries, including those in the Arab world. Unfortunately, Arab societies tend to be conservative, and therefore lag behind in global integration.

Table 1: Human Development Index

HDI Rank		Human Development Index (HDI) Value 2005	Life Expectancy at Birth (years) 2005	Adult Literacy Rate (% aged 15 and older) 1995-2005	Combined Gross Enrolment Ratio for Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education (%) 2005	GDP Per Capita (PPP US\$) 2005	Life Expectancy Index	Education Index	GDP Index	GDP Per Capita (PPP US\$) Rank Minus HDI Rank
HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT										
33	Kuwait	0.891	77.3	93.3	74.9	26,321	0.871	0.871	0.93	-8
35	Qatar	0.875	75.0	89.0	77.7	27,664	0.834	0.852	0.938	-12
39	United Arab Emirates	0.868	78.3	88.7	59.9	25,514	0.889	0.791	0.925	-12
41	Bahrain	0.866	75.2	86.5	86.1	21,482	0.837	0.864	0.896	-8
56	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	0.818	73.4	84.2	94.1	10,335	0.806	0.875	0.774	4
58	Oman	0.814	75.0	81.4	67.1	15,602	0.833	0.766	0.843	-15
61	Saudi Arabia	0.812	72.2	82.9	76.0	15,711	0.787	0.806	0.844	-19
MEDIUM HUMAN DEVELOPMENT										
86	Jordan	0.773	71.9	91.1	78.1	5,530	0.782	0.868	0.67	11
88	Lebanon	0.772	71.5		84.6	5,584	0.775	0.871	0.671	8
91	Tunisia	0.766	73.5	74.3	76.3	8,371	0.808	0.75	0.739	-23
104	Algeria	0.733	71.7	69.9	73.7	7,062	0.778	0.711	0.711	-22
106	Occupied Palestinian Territories	0.731	72.9	92.4	82.4		0.799	0.891	0.505	33
108	Syrian Arab Republic	0.724	73.6	80.8	64.8	3,808	0.811	0.755	0.607	7
112	Egypt	0.708	70.7	71.4	76.9	4,337	0.761	0.732	0.629	-1
126	Morocco	0.646	70.4	52.3	58.5	4,555	0.757	0.544	0.637	-18
134	Comoros	0.561	64.1	-	46.4	1,993	0.651	0.533	0.499	10
137	Mauritania	0.55	63.2	51.2	45.6	2,234	0.637	0.493	0.519	-5
147	Sudan	0.526	57.4	60.9	37.3	2,083	0.540	0.531	0.507	-10
149	Djibouti	0.516	53.9		25.3	2,178	0.482	0.553	0.514	-15
153	Yemen	0.508	61.5	54.1	55.2	930	0.608	0.545	0.372	16
WITHOUT HDI RANK										
	Iraq	-	57.7	74.1	59.6	-	0.545	0.692	-	-
	Somalia	-	47.1	-	-	-	0.368	-	-	-

Source: UNDP, HDR 2007/2008, Table 1: 229-232

Data for Iraq and Somalia are from HDRO online database at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/data>

Reproduced from Table 01, Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries

<http://www.arab-hdr.org/contents/index.aspx?rid=5>

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History has shown that Arab culture is actually very dynamic and highly capable of learning and making progress. In the eighth century, the Abbassid Khalif al Ma'mun, son of the famous Abbassid Khalif Harun Al Rasheed, established the "Bait al-Hikma" or House of Wisdom in Baghdad, Iraq. Al Ma'mun gave orders for important books in different fields of knowledge in the Greek, Persian and Indian languages to be translated into Arabic.¹ Arab scholars accumulated a great collection of knowledge about the world, and built on it through their own discoveries.

Such achievements enabled the rise of the Arabic-speaking Islamic civilisation, which later became the blueprint for

the European Renaissance. Meanwhile, the recent rise of an Arab business intelligentsia that is equipped with excellent educational qualifications and ready to face new challenges has demonstrated the ability of Arabs to learn from the experiences of others. For instance, the six countries of the Gulf Cooperate Council (or GCC), Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman, in general, and the United Arab Emirates in particular, offer clear examples of the readiness of the Gulf Arab societies to acquire new knowledge, and of how Arab societies can study and implement new knowledge that has been received from different societies.

Table 2: Energy Sources

		Shares of TPES													
		Total Primary Energy Supply (Mt of oil equivalent)		Fossil Fuels						Renewable Energy				Other	
				Coal (%)		Oil (%)		Natural Gas (%)		Hydro, Solar, Wind and Geothermal (%)		Biomass and Waste (%)		Nuclear (%)	
HDI Rank		1990	2005	1990	2005	1990	2005	1990	2005	1990	2005	1990	2005	1990	2005
HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT															
33	Kuwait	8.5	28.1	0.0	0.0	40.1	66.5	59.8	33.5	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
35	Qatar	6.3	15.8	0.0	0.0	12.1	15.7	87.8	84.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	(.)	0.0	0.0
39	United Arab Emirates	22.5	46.9	0.0	0.0	39.9	27.9	60.1	72.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	(.)	0.0	0.0
41	Bahrain	4.8	8.1	0.0	0.0	26.5	23.2	73.5	76.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
56	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	11.5	19.0	0.0	0.0	63.8	72.2	35.1	27.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.8	0.0	0.0
58	Oman	4.6	14.0	0.0	0.0	46.6	33.3	53.4	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
61	Saudi Arabia	61.3	140.3	0.0	0.0	64.7	35.3	35.3	36.4	0.0	0.0	(.)	(.)	0.0	0.0
MEDIUM HUMAN DEVELOPMENT															
86	Jordan	3.5	7.1	0.0	0.0	95.3	78.9	2.9	19.5	1.7	1.0	0.1	(.)	0.0	0.0
88	Lebanon	2.3	5.6	0.0	2.4	93.7	92.9	0.0	0.0	1.9	1.8	4.4	2.3	0.0	0.0
91	Tunisia	5.5	8.5	1.4	0.0	57.5	50.0	22.3	36.6	0.1	0.2	18.7	13.3	0.0	0.0
104	Algeria	23.9	34.8	2.6	2.0	40.6	31.7	56.7	66.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0
106	Occupied Palestinian Territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
108	Syrian Arab Republic	11.7	17.9	0.0	(.)	65.3	11.7	11.7	33.0	2.0	1.7	(.)	(.)	0.0	0.0
112	Egypt	31.9	61.3	2.4	1.5	49.2	21.1	21.1	45.3	2.7	1.9	3.3	2.3	0.0	0.0
126	Morocco	6.7	13.8	16.8	32.3	60.2	0.6	0.6	2.8	1.6	1.0	4.7	3.3	0.0	0.0
134	Comoros	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
137	Mauritania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
147	Sudan	10.6	18.4	0.0	0.0	19.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.6	81.7	79.5	0.0	0.0
149	Djibouti	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
153	Yemen	2.6	6.7	0.0	0.0	97.0	98.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.2	0.0	0.0
WITHOUT HDI RANK															
	Iraq	19.1	30.8	0.0	0.0	90.2	92.3	1.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
	Somalia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: UNDP, HDR 2007/2008, Table 23: 306-309

Data for Iraq and Somalia are from HDRO online database at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/data>

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A REGION OF COMPLEX IMAGES

Occupying a strategic location and possessing a wide array of natural resources, the Middle East is a region where the major powers have long competed to exercise their influence. Indeed, it has been an arena of conflict and cooperation that has helped shape the political, economic and security configurations of the world in which we live today.²

Meddling by foreign powers in the domestic politics of Middle Eastern countries has resulted in two distinct outcomes. First, Western intervention has led to the diversion of a large portion of oil revenues to military expenditure, rather than investing these funds towards economic progress.³ As is well known, the Middle East commands nearly three-fourths of the world's oil reserves and has earned vast revenues from its oil resources.⁴

The second outcome is closely tied to the first. The involvement of the two Cold War superpowers – the United States of America and the Soviet Union – brought violence and uncertainty to the region, including the many wars and skirmishes that took place during the 20th century. Cases in point are the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1967 and 1973, the Iran-Iraq War from 1980 to 1988, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, America's invasions of Iraq in 2003 and the persistent problem of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Israeli-Hizbullah conflict in Lebanon.⁵

The recent escalation of tension between Iran and the United States over the Iranian nuclear programme has also led to speculation on the possibility of an imminent military confrontation between the two countries. If left unresolved, such a confrontation could lead to new military conflicts. On the other hand, we must not ignore the internal problems within the Middle Eastern countries: social and political problems, religious

fanaticism, tribal conflicts, ideological extremism, dictatorships, and the denial of educational and professional opportunities to women in some Middle Eastern countries.

This list of problems could, perhaps, lead to a very negative impression of the region, a conclusion that would deny any hope for prosperity and peace there. But this is not the case. Despite political uncertainties and numerous other problems in the region, business opportunities are fast emerging in the GCC states. Some scholars and politicians have argued that the current changes in the Gulf States are a product of oil revenues, and that the oil and natural gas sectors are still predominant in their economies, rather than other sectors. However, this argument has no solid basis. The winds of change are blowing across the Middle East, and the clearest indication of this shift is the inflow of large amounts of foreign investment. State monopoly over economic resources has also given way to privatisation and, thus, to increased manoeuvring space for local companies.⁶

As Singapore's Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong has rightly observed, the Middle East is "experiencing breathtaking development."⁷ Like Singapore, the Gulf States are exploring the viability of creating, controlling and selling their technology. City-states such as Dubai in the United Arab Emirates have set an excellent example for other countries in the Middle East. In light of this, it is fair to assert that, while oil is certainly an enabling factor, it is not the determining factor for the region's economic progress. The Middle East has slowly responded to the changes taking place in the world,⁸ but a great deal of work and determination are still needed. For instance, there is a strong need for economic integration in order to give the region a major role in the global economy.⁹



The 28th Singapore Lecture by HRH Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Premier, Minister of Defence and Aviation and Inspector General, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia HRH Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud (left) and Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong
Photo courtesy of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore



His Highness Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Bahrain, delivering his address at the launch of the SBF Middle East Business Group Knowledge Partners Programme, 16 September 2008, Singapore
Photo courtesy of the Singapore Business Federation

SINGAPORE AND THE MIDDLE EAST: INCREASING MUTUAL COOPERATION

Serious engagement between Singapore and the Middle East began in 2004, when Mr Goh made several official visits to the Middle East.¹⁰ These visits were soon followed by Singapore's hosting of the inaugural Asia-Middle East Dialogue (AMED) in June 2005, which offered an opportunity for Middle Eastern representatives and their counterparts from other Asian countries to discuss issues of mutual concern.¹¹ AMED enabled policymakers, intellectuals and businessmen to discover a wide range of opportunities for cooperation, and led to several bilateral agreements between their countries.

As a follow-up, the Singapore Business Federation (SBF) launched the Middle East Business Group in March 2007, which set out with two primary objectives: to foster strong ties between business chambers and companies from both sides, and to provide consultations for local companies with business interests in the Middle East.¹² Even so, the options for economic cooperation between Singapore and the Middle East have been relatively few, regardless of the opportunities. One reason for this could be the Western-centric approach of Singapore's foreign policy. Recent events, such as the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States of America, have resulted in a shift towards the promotion of a more intensive Asia-Middle Eastern engagement.



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

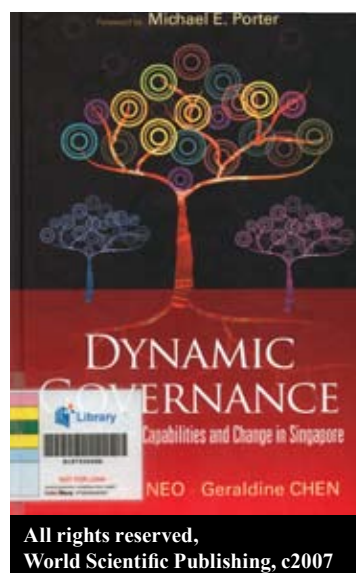
Education is the conduit that connects the leadership of a modern nation-state to the population, since the national leadership disseminates its policies to the people through this channel. Education is responsible for establishing lines of communication between the leaders and the citizens. In the case of Singapore, education has produced a generation of Singaporeans trained in modern science, and able to change and adapt to new

technologies. In fact, education has helped create a favourable framework for policymakers to disseminate their programmes. Indeed, no matter how brilliant the leaders are or how clear their strategies and planning, they cannot possibly share their ideas and views with an illiterate society. The success of the strategy depends on the general population; if the majority of the population is ignorant, any plan for progress will surely fail. Therefore, educating the people should be the foundation of any leader's vision. Education can produce citizens with whom the leadership can communicate, and among whom can be found the future leaders of the country. This is as true for the Gulf States as it is for Singapore.

DYNAMIC GOVERNANCE

This paper suggests that economic development is the yardstick by which the success of any state is determined. Economic development promotes social and political stability. Although there may be no worldwide unanimous agreement on the criteria for achieving good governance, it is clear that good governance has the ability to transform societies and promote development, as well as social stability and peace. In the case of Singapore, the good governance provided by its leadership has transformed this nation from a Third World country to a First World success story. The combination of courage, determination, commitment, character and ability on the part of its leaders have ensured their people's willingness to follow their leadership.¹³

Such values are clearly demonstrated in the behaviour of the government during times of conflict, as well as in times of peace. A



dynamic approach is a vital factor, as this determines the capability of a given leadership to maintain its legitimacy. In their book *Dynamic Governance: Embedding Culture, Capabilities and Change in Singapore*, Neo Boon Siong and Geraldine Chen listed three characteristics for a dynamic government:

First, the government has to think ahead, so as to identify areas for future development and set goals, as well as devise strategies to achieve those goals.¹⁴ In the absence of this factor,

the government will be left to merely react to new developments in times of shock and fear.¹⁵ In Singapore's case, the civil servants have succeeded in accomplishing almost all the plans that have been made by the leadership. Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew himself acknowledged the role of this group of people, and attributed Singapore's success to them. He said: "The single decisive factor that made for Singapore's development was the ability of its ministers and the high quality of the civil servants

who supported them.”¹⁶ In the book *The Modern Prince: What The Leaders Need to Know Now*, Garnes Lord explained that Mr Lee set down several criteria when selecting the civil service team. These criteria included the power of analysis and imagination, as well as a sense of reality.¹⁷

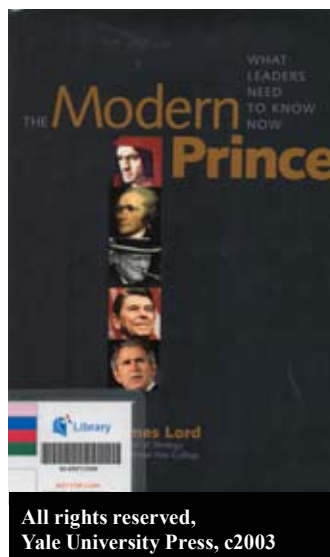
Second, since to err is human and it is only natural to make mistakes, a dynamic government must not be reluctant to review its performance objectively, and it must be ready to revise its policies whenever necessary. One may argue that when a government revises its original position, it implies that it is incompetent. However, this argument is deeply flawed and disregards the fact that no one is infallible, including government leaders. A leadership that refuses to accept that it has failed will produce a society that is unable to learn from its own mistakes. On the other hand, revising one’s previous position is a crucial factor that sets a successful government apart from a failed regime. It “requires leaders who are willing to confront the realities of current performances and feedback, and to challenge the status quo.”¹⁸

The third characteristic of a dynamic government is its ability to “think across” traditional orders and boundaries in order to learn from the experiences of others.¹⁹ What happens when the set agenda does not work, and when there is an urgent need for a change in strategy? How can a leadership think of new ways to achieve its agenda, and where can the new ideas be found? Barriers against sharing ideas for development are dissolved when leaders, as well as individual citizens, become eager to share their success with other nations through the media and cooperative exchange programmes. To learn from its own mistakes while following the examples of others does not undermine the legitimacy of a country’s leadership. Instead, these characteristics reflect the open-minded spirit of learning new ideas and strategies, while also accepting the inherent limitations of the human condition.

To succeed, a society must allow and encourage its people to innovate and think into the future, and it must also refrain from



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making harsh judgments against those who have failed. A society that opens its people’s minds to learn from the experiences of others is a dynamic society that is able to differentiate between pride and pragmatism. Refusal to do so will only result in isolation in an increasingly globalised world.

Singapore enjoys an outstanding reputation in the eyes of its neighbours and the international community as a whole. Its sophisticated infrastructure and strategic location, combined with the business-friendly environment of this island city-state, are just a few of the many factors that have made Singapore the ideal country to take the lead in reconnecting the Middle East with the rest of Asia. To highlight one example: Singapore enjoys excellent bilateral relations with China. The value of trade between the two countries reached US\$20 billion in 2003. It further increased to more than US\$30 billion in 2005 before hitting nearly US\$40 billion for the first 10 months of 2006, and accounting for more than 10% of Singapore’s total foreign trade.²⁰ Singapore was China’s seventh largest international

trade partner and China’s top trading partner among the ASEAN nations.²¹

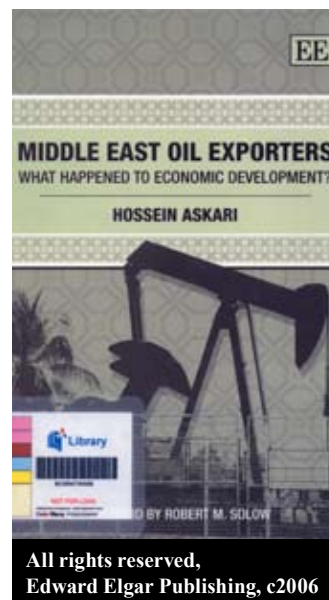
Singapore is therefore highly qualified to take the lead in increasing economic ties between Asia and the Middle East. Indeed, its sophisticated infrastructure, strategic location and excellent relations with the Middle East are just a few of the driving factors that have put Singapore forward as an ideal trading partner for the Gulf States and the rest of the countries of the Middle East.

Although wars, conflicts and uncertainty are still shaping the Middle East, the region nevertheless preserves its uniqueness and appeal. However, if the political and security outlooks paint a pessimistic picture of the area, business opportunities and trade would appear to be far more promising. The winds of change are heading towards the region. Privatisation and foreign investments are just two of the signs of the changing trends that are permeating several aspects of life in the region.

According to the World Bank report *Middle East*



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and North Africa Region 2007: Economic Developments and Prospects, the region “has turned in strong economic performances, driven, to a large degree, by high oil prices and a favourable global environment, but also by reform policies that, though gradual, are generally on the right track. Growth in the region continues to be robust for the fourth year in a row.”²² Unfortunately, although there have been tremendous achievements recently in the GCC states, some other areas of the Arab world have not yet responded positively to international developments, especially those in the field of non-oil-related businesses. Hopefully, the GCC states can provide examples of success to be emulated by their neighbours.

CONCLUSION

Recent political, economic and social developments all forecast a revival of the Silk Road. History was always present in the

establishment of connections between the different regions of Asia, as demonstrated by the trading links between the Middle East and Southeast Asia via Arab traders.²³ These established networks wield the power to enable Singapore and the Middle East to enhance their patterns of cooperation and exchange, and to move towards a more vital and dynamic relationship. To be sure, Singapore can play a pivotal role in reconnecting the Middle East with the rest of Asia.

Singapore's experience is also attracting the attention of other Asian states, including China and Taiwan, as well as many countries in Eastern Europe. It is unjust to narrow Singapore's success to just a few factors. What has made Singapore what it is today is a system of policies, taking into consideration all aspects of life in this country, including the economy, education, research and development, and good governance. These policies have created an efficient government, effective leaders, successful citizens, an excellent educational system and a thriving economy.

ENDNOTES

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- Current Transformations and Their Potential Role in Realising Change in the Arab World*, p. 148.
- Masoud Kavoossi, *The Globalization of Business and the Middle East, Opportunities and Constraints*, (New York: Quorum Books, 2000), p. 146.
- Countries/ Regions > Middle East, Bilateral Relations, <http://www.mfa.gov.sg/>
- Ibid.*
- Singaporean companies have been very active in various business sectors in the Middle East, including petrochemical distribution, hotel development, water desalination, investment in petrochemical olefin projects, food manufacturing, e-government projects (for example, e-judiciary and e-trade projects), the sale of automotive parts, stationery and printing consumables, oil and gas parts and automotive parts, as well as oil and the petrochemical trade. “SBF launches Middle East Business Group to boost business ties between Singapore and the Middle East” <http://www.sbf.org.sg/public/aboutsbf/pressroom/prdetails/pressroom20070326.jsp>
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இந்திய-சிங்கப்பூர் பல்நோக்கு உறவு



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சுந்தரி பாலசுப்ரமணியம்

நூலக அதிகாரி
லீ கொங் சியன் மேற்கோள் நூலகம்
தேசிய நூலகம்

இந்திய-சிங்கப்பூர் உறவு பல துறைகளையும் உள்ளடக்கியது. வர்த்தகத்தில் மட்டுமல்லாமல் பயணத் துறை, பொருளியல், தற்காப்பு, வட்டாரப் பாதுகாப்பு, கலை, கலாசாரம் என்று பரந்த அளவிலானது. இந்தியாவுடனான வர்த்தகக் கூட்டுறவில் சிங்கப்பூர் உலக அளவில் எட்டாவது இடமும், ஆசியான் வட்டாரத்தில் முதலிடமும் வகிக்கிறது. இந்தியாவிற்கு வெளியே நெருக்கமான உறவு கொண்ட நாடு என்றால் அது சிங்கப்பூர்தான். உலக நாடுகளுடன் இந்தியாவை இணைக்கும் மையமாக விளங்குகிறது சிங்கப்பூர். 2008ஆம் ஆண்டு மே மாதம் சிங்கப்பூரில் இருநாட்டு பேராளர்கள் கூடி இந்திய சிங்கப்பூர் உறவைப் பற்றிக் கலந்துரையாடி இருநாட்டின் உறவை மேலும் வலுப்படுத்தினர். இதில் இருதரப்பு உறவின் தற்போதைய நிலை மற்றும் புதிய ஒத்துழைப்புத் துறைகள், இந்திய, சிங்கப்பூர், சீன உறவு, ஆசியாவில் அமெரிக்காவின் பங்கும் தாக்கமும் போன்ற பல அம்சங்களை பேராளர்கள் அலசினர்.

இந்தியத் தலைவர்களின் சிங்கப்பூர் வருகை

அன்றைய பிரதமர் திரு ஜவஹர்லால் நேரு 1950 ஆம் ஆண்டு சிங்கப்பூர் இந்தியர் சங்கக் கட்டடத்துக்கு அடிக்கல் நாட்டியது வரலாற்றில் மறக்கமுடியாத நிகழ்வாகும். அன்று தொடங்கி இன்று வரை இரு நாடுகளுக்கும் இடையேயான உறவு வளர்ந்து இன்று பல துறைகளில் வெளிப்படுகிறது.

1954ஆம் ஆண்டு ஐநாவில் இந்தியாவைப் பிரதிநிதித்த விஜயலட்சுமி பண்டிட் சங்கக் கட்டடத்தின் விரிவாக்கத்திற்கு சிங்கப்பூர் வந்து அடிக்கல் நாட்டினார். நேருவின் சகோதரியான இவரின் பெயர் முக்கிய வரவேற்பு அறைக்குச் சூட்டப்பட்டது.

1966ஆம் ஆண்டு சிங்கப்பூருக்கு வருகை புரிந்த அன்றைய துணை ஜனாதிபதி திரு ஜாஹிர் ஊசைன் இந்தியர் வர்த்தக தொழில் சபையில் ஆற்றிய உரையில் சிங்கப்பூர் இந்தியாவின் நம்பிக்கைக்குரிய நட்பு நாடாக விளங்குகிறது. இருநாடுகளுக்கும் இடையில் தொழில், பொருளாதாரம் ஆகிய துறைகளில் நெருங்கிய ஒத்துழைப்பு திகழ்கிறது எனக் குறிப்பிட்டார்.

1966க்கும் 1971க்கும் இடையில் சிங்கப்பூர் பிரதமர் திரு லீ குவான் யூ இந்தியாவிற்கு மூன்று முறை பயணித்தார். அதே போல் அன்றைய

பிரதமர் திருமதி இந்திரா காந்தி 1968ஆம் ஆண்டிலும், அதன் பின் துணை பிரதமர் திரு மொரார்ஜி தேசாய் அவர்களும் சிங்கப்பூருக்கு வருகையளித்தனர். இவ்வாறு தலைவர்களின் கருத்துப் பரிமாற்றலால் இருநாடுகளுக்கிடையே உள்ள உறவு மேலும் வலுப்பெற்றது. 1994ஆம் ஆண்டு இந்தியா சென்றிருந்த அன்றைய பிரதமர் திரு கோ சோக் டோங் இரு நாடுகளும் இணைந்து சிறந்த பொருளாதாரப் பாதை வகுத்துள்ளதாகக் குறிப்பிட்டார்.



விஜயலட்சுமி பண்டிட் இந்தியச் சங்க விரிவாக்கத்திற்கு அடிக்கல் நாட்டுகிறார்.
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இந்தியாவின்

தொலைநோக்குப் பார்வை

இந்தியாவின் உலகமயமாக்கல்,

தாராளவாதக் கொள்கைகள் போன்றவை பல நாடுகள் இங்கு முதலீடு செய்ய வழிவகுத்தன. பன்னாட்டு நிறுவனங்கள் பெருகி பல மடங்கு வேலை வாய்ப்புகளை அதிகரித்தன.

1992ஆம் ஆண்டில் இந்தியா கிழக்காசிய நாடுகளை நோக்கித் தன் கவனத்தை திருப்பியது. அத்துடன் 2001ஆம் ஆண்டு நடைபெற்ற இந்தியா-ஆசியான் மாநாடுகள், 2005ஆம் ஆண்டில் கையெழுத்தான இந்திய-சிங்கப்பூர் இருதரப்பு 'விரிவான பொருளாதார ஒத்துழைப்பு ஒப்பந்தம்' (CECA - Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement) போன்றவை இந்தியாவின் பங்களிப்பிற்கு உந்துதலாக இருந்தன. 2002ஆம் ஆண்டு அன்றைய இந்திய பிரதமர் திரு வாஜ்பேயி அவர்களின் சிங்கப்பூர் வருகை, இவ்வொப்பந்தம் நடைமுறைக்கு வர பெரிதும் உதவியது. இதன் விளைவாக இந்திய தொழில் மற்றும் வர்த்தக சங்கங்களின் கூட்டமைப்பின் கீழ் (FICCI - Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) சிங்கப்பூர் இந்திய நாடாளுமன்றக் கருத்துக் களம் தொடங்கப்பட்டது. மேலும் இருநாடுகளுக்கிடையில் பொருளாதாரம் மற்றும் வர்த்தகத்தை மேம்படுத்த சிங்கப்பூர் இந்திய கூட்டுறவு அடித்தளம் அமைக்கப்பட்டது.

சிங்கப்பூர் இந்தியாவிற்கிடையே கையெழுத்தான ஒப்பந்தங்கள்

- 1965 - இருநாடுகளுக்கிடையே அரசியல் உறவுகளை பலப்படுத்துதல்



பண்டிட் ஜவஹர்லால் நேரு, இந்தியச் சங்கக் கட்டடத்திற்கு அடிக்கல் நாட்டுகின்றார். மேலிருந்து கவனிப்பவர் திருமதி இந்திரா காந்தி.
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- 1981 - இரட்டைவரிசை அட்புறப்படுத்தும் ஒப்பந்தம்
- 2000 - கலை, பரம்பரியம், ஆவணக்காப்பகம், தலைவர் ஆய்வுத் துறைகளின் கூட்டுறவு செயற்குழு நிழைச்சிவர் பரிமாறல்
- 2002 - தலைவர் தொழில்நுட்பத் துறையின் புரிந்துணர்வு ஒப்பந்தம்
- 2003 - தன்னடி கூட்டுறவு ஒப்பந்தம்
- 2005 - விர்வான பொருளாதர ஒத்துழைப்பு ஒப்பந்தம் (CECA)

CECA வின் அம்சங்கள்

- பரம்பர புரிந்துணர்வு உடன்படிக்கையின்படி (Mutual Recognition Agreements-MRA) பொருள்சை இரட்டைவறு முறையான சேதசையிட்டு சான்றிதழ் வழங்குதல் கூடாது;
- இறுதாடுகலும் இணைந்து அதை சேத்பார்க்க சேய் ஒரு செயற்குழு அமைப்பது;

வரைமுறை வகுத்தல், இரட்டை வரி விதித்தலை திருத்தியமைப்பது, சிங்கப்பூர் திறுவனங்களுக்கு சேர்ச்சியல் தடாடு திறுவனங்களுக்கு அளிப்பது சேர்ச்சி சலுகைகளை அளிப்பது;

- அதிய பொருள்சைக்கு உள்நாடு சந்தையின் அணுகல்
- அளிப்பது
- இறு நாடுகளின் வங்கியகளுக்கு தடைபிணை அணுகல்
- அளிப்பது
- இத்தியாவில் நிர்வாகிக்கப்பட்ட அதிய முதலீடுகளின் உள் வரம்பக கூட்டதும் சேர்ச்சி மதும் சிங்கப்பூர் அளிசல் முதலீடுகளுக்கு கூடுதல் சலுகை அளிப்பது.
- பக்குச் சந்தை சேர்ச்சி திதி சேவைகளில் உதவி சேய்பது;
- கல்வி, அறிவியல், தொழில்நுட்பம், விமானச் சேவைகள்,
- அறிவுசார் சேர்ச்சியமை சேர்ச்சிசைகளில் இறு நாடுகலும் ஒத்துழைப்பு அளிப்பது;
- கல்வி, மருத்துவம், சேர்ச்சியல், திதி, விமானபரம் சேர்ச்சி துறைகளில் உள் வரம்பகல் சளிதரக இறுதாடுகலும் பயனிக்க விள கூட்டம் தார்த்தப்படுதல்;

இதல் பயனாக இறுதாடுகலும் இடைபெயான வர்த்தகம் US\$2.2 பில்லியலிலிருந்து 2007இல் US\$18 பில்லியனாக உபர்ந்தது. ஆசியாச் நாடுகளிடையே சிங்கப்பூருடன் இத்திய சேர்ச்சி வர்த்தகம் 38 விதிகளாகும். உகை அளவில் சிங்கப்பூருடன் சேர்ச்சி வர்த்தகம் 3.4 விதிக் என ஏதும் கண்டது.

இத்தியாவில் முக்கிய ஏற்றுமதிகள் - சேர்ச்சியல் சேர்ச்சி, கர்சா சர்செய் மதும் உத்திரிக்கப்பட்ட சர்செய், இரத்தினக் சந்தல், ஆபரணங்கள், மிர்சா சரணங்கள், உதிர்பாணங்கள், சரி சேர்ச்சிசெய், சேர்ச்சிசெய் சரணங்கள், பூதலங்கள், உகைத் துண்டுக் சேர்ச்சிசை. சிங்கப்பூர் இத்தியாவிற்கு ஏற்றுமதி சேய்பல் சேர்ச்சிசைகளில் 50 சதவிகிதம் இத்தியாவிலிருந்து இறக்குமதிசேய்ப்பட்ட முகப் சேர்ச்சிசைகளிலிருந்து உத்பத்தி சேய்ப்பட்ட சேர்ச்சிசைகளாகும்.

சிங்கப்பூரின் வளர்ச்சி

சிங்கப்பூர் இத்தியாவில் முதலீடு சேய்வதில் முக்த வகையான சேய்வதில்லகை கையாணுகிறது. தனிபார் முதலீடுகளை சேய்படுத்ததல், இப்பாச் சேர்ச்சி ஆசிய நாடுகலையும் முதலீடு சேய் வகக்குவித்தல் மதும் இத்தியாவில் சேர்ச்சி வளர்ந்து வரும் நாடுகளில் முதலீடுகலான வார்ப்புகளைக் கண்டிதல் ஆகியவை. சிங்கப்பூரின் இத்திய முதலீடுகள், சேய்ப்பாச்சமை இத்தியாவின் அடிப்படை வசதிகளான சாண சேய்ப்பாடு, துறைமுக சேய்ப்பாடு சேர்ச்சிவதிற்காகச் சேய்விடப்படுகிறது. சூரிப்பக விட்டுவழி திட்டங்கள், சேய்வகரு தலைவர் தொழில்நுட்பப்பூர்வ



சேய்வகரு வில் அமைத்தல் தலைவர் தொழில்நுட்பப் பூர்வ. All Rights reserved, செய்வகரு துறைமுகம், 2008



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சேர்ச்சிசைகளைக் சூரிப்பிடணம். கல்வி சேய்வகரு வளர்ச்சித் தொழில்நுட்பப் பூர்வகல் திறுவதில் இத்திய தொழில் வக்துறகலோடு சேர்ந்து சேய்ப்படுகிறது. உதவகத் துறைகளில் கலைய சேய்வதில் வகுவிதது. இத்தியாவில்குத்து சிங்கப்பூர் வரும் பயனிகள் அறிவித்து வகுக்கிறார். அளிசலின் வகுக்கலை அறிவிக்கப் பற திட்டகலை வகுத்தல்வது.

2005ஆம் ஆண்டில் அக்தரைய இத்திய சனாதிபதி அட்புக் கலம் அக்தர் சிங்கப்பூர் வக்திர்த்தபேறு இறுதாடுகலும் விளகத் தொழில்நுட்ப வளர்ச்சிக்கு இணைந்து சேய்ப்பட்ட தீர்மானம் சேர்ச்சிவர்ப்பட்டது. அதக்டு ஆசியாச் பயனிகள் விளகலை வகுவகமத்து உத்பத்திசேய் வித்பகைசேய்தல், விளக பரம்பரிப்புச் சேய் கலம் திறுவதல் ஆகியவதில் கூட்டுமுயற்சி எடுக்கப்பட்டது. மேலும் உயிரித் தொழில்நுட்பம், உயிர் சேய்வகல், மருத்து உத்பத்தி, தலைவர் தொழில்நுட்பம், சரிபான முறைகளில் வளங்கலையும் பயன்படுத்ததல் சேர்ச்சி பக துறைகளில் கூட்டுமுயற்சி சேய்வகலப்பட்டது.

இறு நாடுகலும் தகலக்கு இடைபிணை இறுதாடு வர்த்தகத்தை தாங்கு ஆக்டுகளில் இரண்டு மடங்கககத் திட்டம் சேர்ச்சிசை. 2006ஆம் ஆண்டு டக்டில்குச் சேய்வகரு வர்த்தக தொழில் அமைகர் இறு கில் உ கியாச் திதகை அறிவித்தார். திதகச் சாதிக்கப் பல்வேறு உத்பகலை தம் முயற்சித்துப் பார்த்துவகலும் எனக் கூறினார். அடிப்படை வசதிகள், திசச் சேர்ச்சி உறுவகல், விருத்தெனப்பல், கல்வி, களாதரச் சேய்வகல், தலைவர் தொழில்நுட்பம் ஆகிய துறைகளில் இத்தியாவில் அறிச முதலீடு வளப்பகல் இறுகல்கலான ஏற்றம் அளித்தல் கலைய சேய்வகருமுறு சிறிய நடுத்தர வர்த்தக திறுவனங்கலிடம் சேர்ச்சிசைகலார்.

இருநாடுகளுக்கும் இடையில் நிபுணர்கள் இன்னும் தாராளமாகச் சென்றுவர ஏற்பாடுகளைச் செய்வது பற்றி பேச்சு நடந்துவருகிறது என்றும் திரு விம் கூறினார்.

சிங்கையின் முன்னேற்பாடுகள்

இளையர்கள் படிக்கும் காலத்திலேயே இந்தியாவைப் பற்றி அறிய அவர்களுக்கு சிங்கப்பூர்த் தொடக்கக் கல்லூரிகளில் இந்தியப் பாடம் என்ற புதிய படிப்பு 'ஏ' நிலைப் பாடங்களில் ஒன்றாக அறிமுகப்படுத்தப்படும். இந்தியப் பாடம் ஆங்கிலத்தில் சொல்லித்தரப்படும் என்று கல்வி அமைச்சு தெரிவித்தது.

சமூகக் கலாசாரம், பொருளியல், அரசியல் சக்திகள் ஆகியவை இந்தியாவின் வளர்ச்சிக்கு எவ்வாறு உருக்கொடுத்துள்ளன; அவற்றின் விளைவுகள் ஆகியவை இந்தப் பாடத்திட்டத்தில் கற்றுத் தரப்படும். இந்தியாவின் பன்முகத்தன்மையைப் புரிந்துகொள்ள மாணவருக்கு இந்தப் பாடம் உதவும். அத்துடன் உலகத்தில் மதிப்பு கூடி வரும் நாடான இந்தியாவைப் பற்றி சிங்கப்பூர் மாணவர்கள் அறியவும் இந்தியாவுடன் நெருக்கமான உறவை நேர்த்தி செய்யவும் இப்பாடம் உதவும்.

இதன் தொடர்பாக சிங்கப்பூர் பல்துறை தொழிற் கல்லூரி இந்தியாவில் வர்த்தகம் செய்ய விரும்புவோர்க்கு பயிற்சி வழங்குகிறது. மேலும் கல்லூரியின் வர்த்தகத் துறை மாணவர்கள் இந்தியாவுக்கு கல்விப்பயணம் மேற்கொள்ளவும் அங்கு வேலைப் பயிற்சி பெறவும் வாய்ப்பு அளிக்கப்படும். இந்தப் புதிய திட்டத்தை கல்வி அமைச்சு சிங்கப்பூர் இந்திய வர்த்தக தொழில் சபையுடன் இணைந்து செயல்படுத்துகிறது. இத்திட்டத்திற்கான புரிந்துணர்வு ஒப்பந்தத்தில் சிங்கப்பூர் பல்துறை தொழிற் கல்லூரி முதல்வர் திரு டான் ஊங் சியோங்கும் சிங்கப்பூர் வர்த்தக தொழில் சபையின் தலைவர் திரு விஜய் ஐயங்காரும் கையெழுத்திட்டனர். பல வாய்ப்புகள் நிறைந்த இந்தியாவில் வேலை பார்க்கவும் தொழில்கள் தொடங்கவும் இந்தியக் கல்வி பாடத்தின் மூலம் வாய்ப்புகள் கிட்டுமென எதிர்பார்க்கப்படுகிறது.

கலாசார பரிமாற்றம்

இந்தியாவும் சிங்கப்பூரும் இணைந்து வலுவான கலாசார மேம்பாட்டுத் திட்டங்களை வகுத்துள்ளன. இருநாடுகளுக்கிடையே கலாசார கருத்துப் பரிமாற்றங்கள், சுற்றுலா விரிவாக்கம் போன்ற பல்வேறு நடவடிக்கைகள் மேற்கொள்ளப்படுகின்றன.

2000ஆம் ஆண்டில் இந்திய ஜனாதிபதி திரு கே. ஆர். நாராயணன், சிங்கை வந்தபோது இரு நாடுகளுக்கிடையில் கலை, கலாசாரம், ஆவணக்காப்பகம், நூலகம் ஆகிய துறைகளில் புரிந்துணர்வு ஒப்பந்தம் (MOU) கையெழுத்தாகியது. அதன்படி இருநாடுகளுக்கிடையில் கைவினைப் பொருள்கள், கலைச் சிற்பங்கள் போன்றவைகளைக் காட்சியகத்திற்குக் கடனாக கொடுத்துவை இருநாடுகளும் சம்மதித்தன.

2009ஆம் ஆண்டு ஜனவரி மாதம் சென்னைப்பில் மாபெரும் அனைத்துலக இந்தியர்கள் மாநாடு நடைபெற்றது. 'பிரவாசி பாரதிய திவாஸ்' எனும் மூன்றுநாள் மாநாட்டில் கலந்துகொண்ட சட்ட அமைச்சர் திரு கே. சண்முகம், இந்திய கலைகளுக்கும் தென்கிழக்காசியக் கலைகளுக்கும் இடையே உள்ள தொடர்பை ஆராயும் பிரமாண்ட கண்காட்சி நடைபெற உள்ளதாகத் தெரிவித்தார். இம்மாநாட்டை ஒட்டி சிங்கப்பூர் கலை அரும்பொருளகமும் டில்லியின் நவீன கலைகளுக்கான தேசிய அரும்பொருளகமும் இணைந்து கண்காட்சி நடத்தினர். சிங்கப்பூருக்கும் இந்தியாவிற்குமிடையே அதிகரித்துவரும் பண்பாட்டுப் பரிமாற்றங்கள், கண்காட்சிகளில் இதுவும் ஒன்று என்றும் இருநாடுகளுக்கும் இடையேயான உறவு வலுவடைந்து வருவதற்கு இவை அறிவுறு என்றும் அமைச்சர் குறிப்பிட்டார்.

இந்தியாவுடன் உறவை வளர்க்க மற்றொரு வழி தொன்மைச்சிறப்பு மற்றும் வரலாற்று முக்கியத்துவம் உள்ள இடங்களுக்கான சுற்றுப்

பயணங்களை வசதியானதாகவும் அறிவுபூர்வமானதாகவும் ஆக்குவது என்றார் அமைச்சர். சிங்கப்பூர் மக்கள் தொகையில் ஏழு விழுக்காடு இந்தியர்கள் என்பதும் இந்தியாவில் புத்தமத சுற்றுலாத் தளங்கள் அதிகமாக இருப்பதும் இத்தகைய சுற்றுலா வளர்ச்சிக்கு அவசியமாகிறது.

இருநாடுகளும் இணைந்து இந்தியாவின் பீகாரில் உள்ள நாலந்தாவில் பல்கலைக்கழகம் ஒன்று அமைக்க முன்னேற்பாடுகள் நடைபெறுகின்றன. நாலந்தா வரலாறு சிறப்புமிக்க இடமாகும். உலக வரலாற்றிலேயே இங்குதான் முதன் முதலில் பல்கலைக்கழகம் நிறுவப்பட்டது. இப்பல்கலைக்கழகம் புத்தமதக் கொள்கைகளைக் கற்பிக்கும் ஒரு சிறந்த மையமாக அக்காலத்தில் விளங்கியது. இந்தப் பாரம்பரியத்தைக் கட்டிக்காக்க 21ஆம் நூற்றாண்டின் நாலந்தா பல்கலைக்கழகம் அனைத்துச் சமய மையமாகவும் தெற்காசியாவுக்கும் கிழக்காசியாவுக்கும் இடையிலான பாலமாகவும், ஆசிய மறுமலர்ச்சியின் ஒரு அங்கமாகவும் விளங்கும் என நாலந்தா வழிகாட்டிக் குழுவின் பன்னாட்டுப் பொறுப்புக் குழுவின் உறுப்பினரான திரு ஜார்ஜ் இயோ கூறினார்.

பாதுகாப்பு, ராணுவக் கூட்டுமுயற்சி

சிங்கப்பூரும் இந்தியாவும் 2008ஆம் ஆண்டு ஆகஸ்டு மாதம் இருதரப்பு கூட்டு ராணுவப் பயிற்சி உடன்பாட்டில் கையெழுத்திட்டன. இதன் மூலம் இந்தியாவில் சிங்கப்பூர் ஆயுதப் படைகளின் கவச வாகனங்கள் மற்றும் குழி பீரங்கிப் பிரிவுகளின் பயிற்சிகளுக்கு வசதிகள் செய்து தரப்படும். இத்தகைய கூட்டு ராணுவப் பயிற்சிகள் இதற்கு முன்னர் கையெழுத்திடப்பட்ட பல்வேறு இணக்கக் குறிப்புகளின் அடிப்படையில் நடைபெற்றுவந்தன. இனி இதுபோன்ற ராணுவப் பயிற்சிகள் இந்தத் தற்காப்பு ஒப்பந்தத்தின் அடிப்படையில் இடம்பெறும் என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. இதன்படி 'அக்னி வாரியர்' என்ற இருதரப்பு பயிற்சி இந்தியாவில் நவம்பர் மாதம் நடைபெற்றது. இந்தப் பயிற்சி இருநாடுகளும் மற்றதன் உத்திகளைப் புரிந்துகொள்ள உதவுகிறது என்றும் இதனால் பரஸ்பர புரிந்துணர்வு மேம்படுகிறது என்றும் தற்காப்பு அமைச்சு அறிக்கையில் தெரிவித்துள்ளது.

கல்வி பரிமாற்றம்

சிங்கப்பூர் மாணவர்கள் இந்தியக் கல்வி முறையையும், இந்தியக் கலாசாரத்தையும் அறியும் பொருட்டு அவர்களுக்கு பள்ளிகள் மூலம் இந்தியச் சுற்றுலா ஏற்பாடுசெய்யப்பட்டு வருகிறது. இந்தியாவிற்கு முதன்முதலாகச் செல்லும் மாணவர்கள் அங்குள்ள இந்திய மாணவர்களோடு சேர்ந்து அவர்கள் வகுப்பில் பாடம் கற்கின்றனர். அங்கு பயிற்றுவிக்கும் முறையையும் அறிகின்றனர். அதனுடன் தொண்டுறியத்திலும் ஈடுபடுகின்றனர். கலை நிகழ்ச்சிகள், கருத்துப் பரிமாற்றம், போன்ற பல அம்சங்கள் நிறைந்த சுற்றுலாவாக அமைகிறது. இதேபோல் ஆசிரியர் பரிமாற்றத் திட்டத்தின் கீழ் தமிழ் ஆசிரியர்கள் சென்னைக்குப் பயிற்சிக்குச் செல்கின்றனர். அங்கு மாணவர்களுக்கு எளிதாக தமிழில் உரையாடவும் எழுதவும் கற்பிக்கும் பயிற்சியில் ஈடுபடுகின்றனர்.

சவால்களும் வாய்ப்புகளும்

கடந்த 15 ஆண்டுகளாக இந்திய-சிங்கப்பூர் உறவுகள் பெரும் முன்னேற்றம் கண்டுள்ளன. இந்தியாவின் கீழைநாட்டுக் கொள்கைகளுக்கு ஆதரவு காட்டிவரும் சிங்கப்பூர், கீழைநாடுகளுடன் இந்தியா சமூகமான உறவு கொள்ள ஒரு பாலமாக விளங்குகிறது. ஆயினும் இந்தியாவில் வர்த்தகத்தில் ஈடு படுவோர் அந்நாட்டு அரசியல் கொள்கைகள், அரசியல் தலையீடுகள், தெளிவற்றதன்மை போன்ற பல குறைகளால் தங்கள் முயற்சியில் பின்னடைவு காண்கின்றனர். இவைகளைக் களைந்தால் சிங்கப்பூர் இன்னும் அதிகமாக இந்தியாவில் முதலீடு செய்யும்.

INDIA-SINGAPORE MULTIFACETED RELATIONSHIP

India and Singapore have over the years developed a very strong strategic partnership that covers a whole gamut of areas of cooperation, including trade, tourism, security and defence. India's "Look East Policy", launched in 1992 along with its economic liberalisation and export promotion programmes, was warmly received by Singapore. Singapore played a central role in initiating ASEAN-India summit meetings and is one of the core constituencies of India's "Look East Policy". A strong advocate of India playing a greater role in the Asia-Pacific region, Singapore has

also paved the way for India's association with the ASEAN Regional Forum and supported India's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

India-Singapore relations received a major boost from Singapore's regionalisation approach to trade and investment, resulting in the formation of India's first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with ASEAN countries. The bilateral relationship entered a new phase with the signing of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), which is also seen as a stepping stone towards the ASEAN-India FTA.

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சிங்கப்பூரும் இந்தியாவின் மகாராஷ்டிரா மாநிலமும் புரிந்துணர்வுக் குறிப்பில் கையெழுத்திட்டன. அதைப் பற்றிய தொகுப்பு.
- மே மாதத்தில் 103,000 இந்திய நாட்டவர் சிங்கப்பூர் வருகை. (2008, ஜூன் 28). தமிழ் முரசு, பக்கம் 2.
- இந்தியாவில் வர்த்தகம் செய்ய சிங்கப்பூர் மாணவருக்கு முன்பயிற்சி. (2008, ஜூலை 23). தமிழ் முரசு, பக்கம் 3.
இந்தியாவில் வர்த்தகம் செய்ய விரும்புவோருக்கு இந்திய வர்த்தக தொழில் சபையுடன் சேர்ந்து பயிற்சி வழங்குகிறது சிங்கப்பூர் பல்துறை தொழிற் கல்லூரி.
- கூடுதல் ராணுவப் பயிற்சிகள்: சிங்கப்பூர், இந்தியா ஒப்பந்தம். (2008, ஆகஸ்டு 14). தமிழ் முரசு, பக்கம் 2.
சிங்கப்பூர் இந்தியாவுக்கிடையே நடைபெற்ற கூட்டு ராணுவப் பயிற்சி ஒப்பந்தம் பற்றிய குறிப்பு.
- சிவலீ. (2008, ஆகஸ்டு 28) இந்தியாவின் மற்றொரு மிகச்சிறந்த தலைவர் சிங்கையில். தமிழ் முரசு, பக்கம் 1.
டாக்டர் அப்துல் கலாமின் வருகை பற்றிய தொகுப்பு.
- கௌரவ சிங்கப்பூர் குடிமகன், ரத்தன் டாட்டா. (2008, ஆகஸ்டு 30). தமிழ் முரசு, பக்கம் 1.
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A Graphic Tale in Baba Malay: Chrita Orang Yang Chari Slammat (1905)



by BONNY TAN

Senior Librarian
Lee Kong Chian Reference Library
National Library



Chrita Orang Yang Chari Slammat by John Bunyan;
translated by William G. Shellabear
All rights reserved, American Mission Press, 1905



Christian leaves his home
Image reproduced from Bunyan, J.
(1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slammat*
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Press, 1905

the allegorical sojourn that it soon became a bestseller in England. It was then carried beyond the English shore by missionaries who fanned out to the outposts of the colonised world.

The book has been translated into more than 200 languages, was never out-of-print and remains one of the most widely read today.

Almost 250 years since its first publication, another passionate Christian in Malaya translated this classic into Baba Malay. He was none other than soldier, scholar and missionary William Shellabear.

MALAY TRANSLATIONS

“It would be difficult to name an English classic which would seem less likely to appeal to the frankly hedonistic Malays than Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. Yet there are three translations of this book in the Malay language”.¹

INTRODUCTION

Before J.R.R. Tolkien there was John Bunyan. *Pilgrim’s Progress* was a 17th century bestseller based on an allegorical world of the Christian faith’s journey.

Bunyan was an unschooled tinker from an impoverished family who was inspired by his faith to share the gospel with others. While imprisoned for conducting religious service outside the official church, Bunyan penned the now immortal *Pilgrim’s Progress*. First published in 1678, it traces the journey of Christian, the everyman of faith, from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City.

Caricatures representing spiritual encounters and transformation, culled from Biblical parables and various scriptural references, show that the adventure could very well have been Bunyan’s own spiritual autobiography. Bunyan conveyed the convert’s life of faith so simply yet vividly through

The story of the Pilgrim was already much alive among the local community at the turn of the 20th century. For instance, in the 1880s, readings from *Pilgrim’s Progress* in Chinese were conducted at the Prinsep Street Church for Straits Chinese, accompanied by singing in English and Malay concerning the life and works of Bunyan and illustrated using magic-lantern slides.² Characters such as Worldly Wiseman and Hopeful were thus part of the Christian vocabulary among the Straits Chinese prior to the publication of the story in Baba Malay.

In the Malay Archipelago, the tale had had several translations and versions. One of the earliest translations was done in Jawi some time in the 1880s; it was then followed by a Dutch romanised Malay version. In the Malay Peninsula, Benjamin Keasberry, a missionary serving under the London Missionary Society and father of Malaya’s early printing press, brought out one of the first Malay versions.

Shellabear’s translation however was unique in the Malay

Peninsula as it was in Baba Malay and published especially for the Straits Chinese community. Shellabear makes reference to one of these earlier publications and his reasons for publishing a version for the Straits Chinese in the introduction to his book:

“Ada brapa puluh tahun dhulu satu tuan yang pandai skali sudah pindahkan ini chrita dalam bhasa orang Mlayu: ttapi sbab dia pakai perkata’an yang dalam-dalam, terlampon susah orang China peranakan mngerti, dan sbab itu kita bharu pindahkan ini chrita dalam bhasa Mlayu peranakan, spaya smoa orang China dan nonya-nonya yang chakap Mlayu boleh mngerti baik baik.”

(“Several decades ago, an intelligent gentleman translated this tale to Malay. However, as he used complex terms, the Chinese Peranakans found it difficult to understand. Because of this, we have translated this tale into Peranakan Malay so all Chinese and their women folk who speak Malay will be able to better understand it.”)



Christian with his wife and children

Image reproduced from Bunyan, J. (1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slamat*. Pg 2
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Slightly more than a decade after Keasberry passed away, Shellabear came to Singapore in 1887, not as a missionary but as a military man in the British Royal Engineers, assigned to build Singapore’s defence. He fell in love with the Malay soldiers under his command and sought to take the gospel story to them. Thus his passion turned him to translating religious works into Malay and, conversely, translating Malay classical mythology into English. Leaving the military, he joined the Methodist Missions and established the Methodist Mission Press in Singapore which brought out various publications in Malay along with invaluable language tools such as English-Malay dictionaries and grammars, still highly regarded even today.

The Press and his translation work took much of his time, but Shellabear had to return to England in 1894 on account of his wife Fanny’s ill-health. She unfortunately passed away and Shellabear returned to Singapore and later married Emma Ferris in 1897, an active Methodist missionary whose work had crossed paths with his. By 1904, the Shellabears’ base for missionary work had moved to Malacca, the heartland of the Straits Chinese. It was here that Shellabear would translate *Pilgrim’s Progress*.

THE USE OF BABA MALAY

Shellabear had already made the acquaintance of the unique hybrid community of Chinese in Singapore, many of whom traced

their genealogy to the Malaccan Straits Chinese. This included prominent community member, Tan Keong Keng, who was one of the early Straits Chinese to adopt the thoroughly Western idea of having his daughters educated.³ Thus he persuaded the Shellabears to establish a school for girls in Malacca. Tan’s home at Heeren Street in Malacca was given to Emma Shellabear and Ada Pugh to start the institution – a task most suited to Shellabear’s wife Emma who had already been active in the Methodist girls’ school in Singapore.

Meanwhile, Tan sent his only son, Tan Cheng Poh, to Shellabear to learn how to type and practise English. With little to translate to English, Emma considered having him translate a children’s version of *Pilgrim’s Progress* into Baba Malay instead. The exercise was Shellabear’s first introduction to Baba Malay and he became fascinated with its “distinct dialect of Malay, with very definite idioms and rules of its own.”⁴ Another Baba, Chin Cheng Yong, was recruited to help in verifying the accuracy of the translation; but little is known of him.

In translating *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Shellabear kept close to the original text, including scriptural references which Bunyan had noted. He was careful to keep his translated language simple and clear: “Skali-kali kita t’ada pakai perkata’an yang dalam-dalam atau yang orang susah mngerti, mlainkan dalam agama punya perkara ada juga sdikit perkata’an yang orang t’ada pakai s-hari-hari...” (“Thus we have refrained from using complex terms or those people find too difficult to understand, except for that pertaining to religious terms which may not be frequently used by most...”)



Interpreter’s home

Image reproduced from Bunyan, J. (1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slamat*. Pg 33
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Particularly challenging were the translations of the book’s place names as many are abstract terms with peculiar Christian connotations. Shellabear had used an older Malay edition of the story, lithographed in Munshi Abdullah’s Jawi script, to help determine the translations of the various characters.⁵ Thus most of the terms were translated into more formal Malay terms or, if not, were taken directly from the English or Christian terms. For example, Christian’s name is literally translated as “Kristian”, while “Beulah Land” is transcribed as “Tanah Biulah”. The title of the book *Pilgrim’s Progress* has cleverly been simplified to *Orang Yang Chari Slamata* (“One who seeks salvation”), although this title could have been Keasberry’s original translation or that of the earlier versions in Malay. To assist his readers in grasping the

meanings of these terms, the appendix lists all the given place names and personal names with both Baba Malay and English translations along with page references. This is followed by a glossary of terms with both a Peranakan explanation and an English translation. Some terms include definitions according to Malay terms. For example, “gombala” is explained in Malay as “gumol” or “wrestle”.

More interestingly, Shellabear expressed the need to include in the glossary English terms because he expected many of his readers to be proficient in English: “Lagi pun dalam ini chrita ada banyak nama orang dan nama tmpat yang kita sudah kumpolkan, dan sudah taroh Inggris-nya yang John Bunyan sudah pakai, spaya orang yang tahu bhasa Inggris boleh bandingkan dan boleh mngerti lagi baik...” (“Also, in this tale, many personal pronouns and place names we have compiled with English terms that John Bunyan himself used so those who understand English can compare and better understand...”).

However, the grammar of the text conveys some of the unique nuances inherent in Baba Malay, mainly influenced by Hokkien linguistic constructs. For example, this sentence found in the introduction is full of the idiomatic phrases peculiar to Baba Malay: “Ttapi John Bunyan ta’mau ikut itu ong ke kau punya smbahyang, dan sbab itu bila dia ajar dalam dia punya greja dia kena tangkap, dan dia kena tutop dalam jel...”⁷ (“However, John Bunyan did not want to follow the religious practices of the official church and so, when he taught at his own religious gathering he was caught and placed in jail...”). “Punya”, a Malay term meaning “to own” is used instead as the Hokkien possessive particle “e”, a common construct found in Baba Malay, is unknown in vernacular Malay. In the same vein, “kena” is also used to convey passive past - “dia kena tangkap”. “Ong ke kau” is a Hokkien idiomatic term which Shellabear explained in the previous sentence as “Kompani punya greja” (The company’s church). “Jel” is also a transliteration from the English “jail”. Thus, as is typical of the Baba language, the text has a mix of Malay, Hokkien and English terms.

However, it is only in the introduction to the text that Shellabear remains true to Baba Malay. In the translation of the story, a more proper though low Malay is applied. Thus, although key terms such as “punya” are consistently applied, other typical terms such as “gua” for the personal pronoun “I” and “lu” for “you” are not used. Instead, Shellabear applies the Malay terms “sahya” (“saya” or “I”) and “angkau” (“engkau” or “you”).⁸ That Shellabear retained the more “proper” Malay expressions and terms in the translation may mean that he wanted a wider audience for the book and showed his higher regard for the use of standard Malay.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE STRAITS CHINESE

T. W. Cherry had taken over from Shellabear in the running of the Methodist printing press in Singapore. In mid-1904, C. W. Bradley, a young illustrator, had been sent by the American Methodist Missions to assist Cherry in the work of the printing press. Unfortunately, Bradley proved inadequate in printing duties as his only experience had been as a cartoonist for a newspaper. As the Missions had to pay for his passage home, he was sent to Shellabear in Malacca to illustrate *Pilgrim’s Progress* to make it worth their money.⁹ The result was 24 fine line drawings that detail the life of the Chinese in the Straits Settlements at the turn of the 20th century.

In the introduction, Shellabear praised Bradley for his accurate depiction of the local people and scenery: “...dia sudah tulis btul sperti rupa orang dan rumah-rumah dan pokok-pokok yang kita tengok sini s-hari-hari...(see below)” (“...he has made realistic drawings of people, homes and trees that we see daily...”)



His burden fell away at the cross
Image reproduced from Bunyan, J. (1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slamat*. Pg 47
All rights reserved, American Mission Press, 1905



Hill of Difficulty
Image reproduced from Bunyan, J. (1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slamat*. Pg 55
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Indeed, the background scenes in the illustrations include coconut trees and banana clumps typically found in tropical Malaya. The familiar facades of the Malayan shop house and its interiors are also sketched. However, it is noteworthy that Si Kristian (Christian) is depicted as a typical Qing Chinese, complete with queue and Chinese clogs. However, when he encounters Tuan Pandai-chari-dunia (Mr Worldly-wise), the wealthy man rides a modern horse-drawn carriage driven by what appears to be young barefoot Malays wearing Turkish hats. The wealthy Chinese dons a mix of oriental and modern Western clothes



Lord Worldly-wise wants to educate Christian
Image reproduced from Bunyan, J. (1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slamat*. Pg 17
All rights reserved, American Mission Press, 1905



Vanity Fair
Image reproduced from Bunyan, J. (1905). *Chrita orang yang chari slamat*. Pg 125
All rights reserved, American Mission Press, 1905

topped with an English hat. Interestingly, Si Kristian acquires these Western trappings – a top hat and shoes – soon after his burden of sin falls away at the foot of the cross. It is uncertain if the Western costumes represent the Baba dress at the turn of the century since many of the drawings seem mainly of generic Chinese that had come to Malaya. Nonyas in kebayas and Babas of yore in their hybridised costumes are not really reflected in Bradley's illustrations.

At Pasar Sia Sia (Vanity Fair), a detailed scene of the local Chinese congregating at a marketplace, shows a vignette of the 20th century Malayan Chinese community in its complex social world. Many were likely part of the influx of immigrants who had journeyed from China since the 1880s. In fact, Singapore's Chinese population had almost doubled its numbers from 87,0000 in 1881 to 164,0000 by the 1900s.¹⁰

On the extreme right of the picture is a tea house located in a typical Straits Chinese house. Beside it, a letter writer reads a letter while a crowd of patrons await his services. Scenes from the wet market show vegetables sold on the dirt floor while chicks roam at the feet of men having their hair cleaned off lice, all showing Bradley's keen eye for detail. At the foot of a *wayang* performance are food stalls where Chinese men eat while squatting on their chairs. Among the sea of fair-skinned men are a few Malays and turbaned Indians.

The shop houses with tiled sloping roofs, wooden shutters and animal figures in plaster below the windows are those found in the Straits Settlements. Other drawings give details of the interiors of Chinese mansions and, in contrast, the humble home of Si Kristian. They do not necessarily show the Malayan features or cosmopolitan designs which now have become associated with Peranakans. In fact, much of the interiors are of Chinese taste. Nevertheless, the graphic details of Bradley's illustrations are invaluable for the study of the social lives of the local Chinese in the early 20th century.

SHELLABEAR'S CELESTIAL CITY

The publication was released in November 1905 and, by 1913, Shellabear had published the New Testament – *Kitab Perjanjian Bahru* – in Baba Malay, along with an article on Baba Malay in the *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Although he remained a premier scholar of Malay text and focused mainly on publishing in Malay, these Baba publications testify to Shellabear's versatility and interest in the wider local community.

By 1917, however, translation work and ministry took its toll on Shellabear and he returned to the United States on furlough. Even though he attempted a return to the East, health and internal politics lead him to retire from missionary work by 1919. Yet he never left his love for the Malays and Malay works, mastering Arabic later in life and then teaching and writing about the Malays while at the School of Missions at Drew University.

The story does not end here. In 1955, eight years after Shellabear's death, his son-in-law R. A. Blasdell continued the family tradition and published a higher Malay version of *Pilgrim's Progress* as *Cherita Darihal Orang Yang Menchari Selamat* (1955) ("*The story of one seeking salvation*").

Chrita Orang Yang Chari Slamata is part of the Rare Book Collection in the National Library Singapore. It has been digitised and can be found online at <http://sgebooks.nl.sg/details/020000195.html> or at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library on microfilm, NL8790.

The author wishes to acknowledge the invaluable help of Dr Robert Hunt who pointed to details of Shellabear's life and publications and provided access to unpublished materials.

ENDNOTES

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| 1. Notes of the day. (1934, December 12). <i>The Straits Times</i> , p.10 | 5. Shellabear. <i>The life of the Reverend W. G. Shellabear</i> , DD. p. 37 | 8. Shellabear was well aware of the use of these Hokkien terms and actually explained the different usage in both Baba Malay and vernacular Malay in his article <i>Baba Malay</i> (1913). |
| 2. Untitled. (1887, July 11). <i>The Straits Times</i> , p. 2 | 6. I was unable to find the translation by Keasberry or the earlier Javanese translations. | 9. Shellabear. <i>The life of the Reverend W. G. Shellabear</i> , DD. p. 37 |
| 3. Song, p. 529 | 7. Shellabear, Introduction, <i>Chrita orang chari slamat</i> . | 10. Turnbull, p. 95. |
| 4. Shellabear. <i>The life of the Reverend W. G. Shellabear</i> , DD. p. 37 | | |

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| 2. Hunt, R. (1993). The life of William Shellabear. <i>Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i> , 66 (2), 37-72. | 5. Untitled. (1887, July 11). <i>The Straits Times</i> , p. 2. | 8. Turnbull, C. M. (1992). <i>A history of Singapore, 1819-1988</i> . Singapore: Oxford Press
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The Theory and Practice of Sports: A Profile of the Sports Collection at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library



by SHARON TENG

Librarian
Lee Kong Chian Reference Library
National Library

Sports in Singapore have garnered a great deal of media attention in recent years, with several high profile international events in the pipeline. These include hosting of the inaugural Asian Youth Games and Men's Junior Hockey World Cup held this year, the first Youth Olympics in 2010, the Netball World Championship, and the completion of the Sports Hub in 2011.

The number of Singaporeans who actively participate in sports has also risen substantially over the last five years. According to the 2005 National Sports Participation Survey, almost 50% of Singaporeans engage in sports at least once a week, up from only 38% in 2002.

The figures are borne out by the flood of participants at local sports events such as the annual Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon, the Singapore Biathlon, the Singapore Bay Run, and the ITU Triathlon World Championships Series. In the past two years, more women-only races have also been organised, such as the Shape Run and the inaugural 2008 Triladies Triathlon race. Correspondingly, spectatorship at these events has also increased.

Over the same five years, Singapore has also witnessed a mushrooming of large gym chains, yoga studios and fitness centres all across the island. *The Straits Times* reported on 10 December 2008 that the sports industry in Singapore, though still in its infancy, was currently estimated at S\$1 million, with the government planning to inject up to S\$2 billion to fulfil a target of some 20,000 people employed in the sports industry by 2015.

Sports sponsorship continues to rise every year, with more corporations, especially local banks and insurance companies, jumping on board to sponsor media-worthy events, such as the Women's Champions Golf Tournament sponsored by HSBC and the OCBC Cycle Singapore event that was held in February.

In the light of new and expanded career opportunities in Singapore's sports industry, local educational institutions such as Republic Polytechnic and Nanyang Polytechnic have introduced diploma courses in sports and exercise sciences, sports and leisure management and outdoor adventure learning. Overseas educational institutions have been quick to follow suit, with a spectrum of diplomas, degrees and master's

courses aimed at equipping people aspiring to enter the sports industry. The Singapore Sports Council (SCC) also offers Sports Industry Development Programmes to develop and enhance the knowledge and skills of future entrants and current practitioners in the profession.

With so much emphasis on the sports scene in Singapore today, this timely article presents an overview of the sports collection at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library and serves as a reference guide to the resources available. The collection will serve the needs of the industry and the community. Target users are sports officials, coaches, athletes, sports science lecturers and students, sports facility managers, sports event organisers and policy makers.

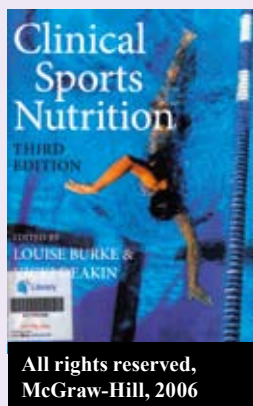
Sports professionals who are coaches, fitness instructors, personal trainers, physical education (PE) teachers, sports nutritionists, therapists, technicians and other specialists in the field have to be well versed in the scientific principles behind sports, understand how the human body functions and moves, and keep themselves updated on the latest research and developments. This knowledge of sports as both an art and a science enables them to help people improve their performance through the use of sporting equipment and ergogenic aids, the recommendation of new, improved and smarter training methods and plan diets that are tailored to the athlete's specific training regime and sport.

The sports collection at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library caters to this information need with its range of materials on a broad spectrum of sports and exercise science topics:

Sports & Exercise Science	
Human anatomy & physiology	Performance Enhancement
Exercise physiology	Sports Medicine
Exercise prescription and programming	Sports psychology
Biomechanics, movement and sports injuries	Sports nutrition
Coaching	Strength and conditioning
Exercise rehabilitation	Physical Education

Clinical Sports Nutrition

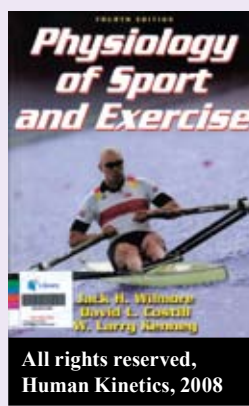
Burke, L. & Deakin, V. (Eds.)
Sydney: McGraw-Hill, c2006
Call no.: R 613.2088796 CLI



Written for sports nutritionists, coaches, athletes and sport science professionals, this book provides a comprehensive coverage on topics such as nutrition for competition, recovery foods, weight loss, eating disorders in athletes, sports supplements and recommendations for athletes with special needs such as those with diabetes and gastrointestinal disorders.

Physiology of Sport and Exercise

Wilmore, J. et al
Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, c2008
Call no.: R 612.044 WIL



This expansive text provides readers with a well-rounded understanding of sport and exercise physiology with its coverage of the human physiological system, principles of exercise training, environmental influences on performance, performance optimisation, age and sex considerations in sports and exercise and exercise prescription. It comes with an interactive online study guide for learners to practise and test their knowledge of the concepts from the book.

The Biophysical Foundations of Human Movement

Abernathy, B. et al
Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, c2005
Call no.: R q612.76 BIO



Divided into five sections, this authoritative text on human movement studies covers functional anatomy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, motor control and sport and exercise psychology. Diagrams, graphs, illustrations and references for further reading are included in each chapter for more comprehensive learning.

An Introduction to Sports Coaching: From Science and Theory to Practice

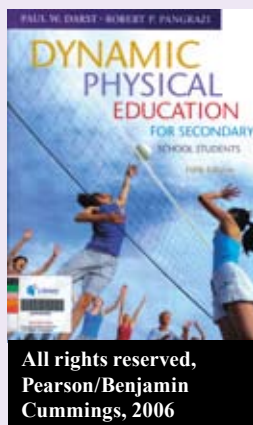
Jones, R. L. et al (Eds.)
London; New York: Routledge, 2008
Call no.: R 796.077 INT



Written for students and sports coaches, this text provides a well-rounded introduction to the fundamental perspectives on the practice of coaching, covering sports theory, philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, biomechanics, physiology, sports development, skill acquisition, notational analysis and sports medicine.

Dynamic Physical Education for Secondary School Students

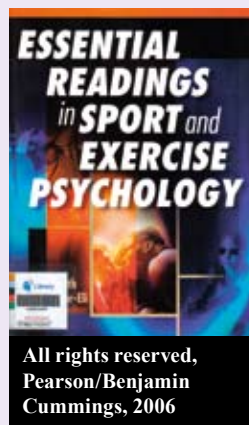
Darst, P. and Pangrazi, R.
San Francisco: Pearson/Benjamin Cummings, 2006
Call no.: R 613.70712 DAR



Targeted at physical education trainee teachers and current professionals, this book is a useful guide for planning, developing and implementing a physical education programme in schools for students between 12 and 18 years of age. Instructional activities are recommended in the last section of the book, focusing on sports, lifestyle and outdoor adventure activities. References for further reading and a list of web sites are appended at the end of each chapter.

Essential Readings in Sport and Exercise Psychology

Smith, D. and Bar-Eli, M. (Eds.)
Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, c2007
Call no.: R 796.01 ESS



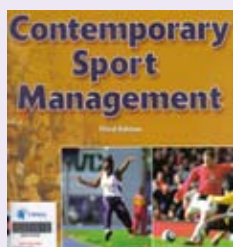
This book is a compilation of 50 essential readings by more than 60 professionals from 25 countries in sports psychology. The introduction to each article sets the context, describes and summarises its contents. The readings are divided into eight thematic subjects, from how sport and exercise environments and individual differences have an impact on performance, to discussing the issues and challenges of applied sports psychology.

Contemporary Sport Management

Parks, J. B. et al (Eds.)

Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 2007

Call no.: R 796.069 CON



All rights reserved,
Human Kinetics, 2007

This book offers an in-depth analysis of sport management, covering various aspects such as sports tourism, the nature of professional sport, finance and budgeting in the sport industry, legal and ethical issues in sport management and the social significance of sport in the 21st century.

Sponsorship: For a Return on Investment

Masterman, G.

Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2007

Call no.: R 796.0691 MAS



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Butterworth-
Heinemann, 2007

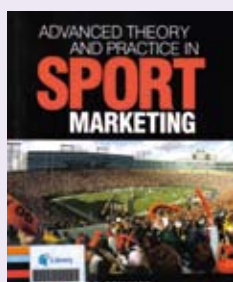
This is a useful guide for practitioners and students to understand what sports sponsorship is, how investment returns can be reaped from it, learn how to recruit, cultivate relations with and manage sponsors, and how to use the media as a marketing tool to attract sponsors and make the partnership a successful one.

Advanced Theory and Practice in Sport Marketing

Schwarz, E. and Hunter, J.

Amsterdam; Boston: Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008

Call no.: R 796.0698 SCH



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Elsevier/Butterworth-
Heinemann, 2008

Aimed at sports management practitioners and students, this book goes beyond mere marketing concepts. It introduces readers to sports marketing research, using information systems for sports marketing, consumer behaviour and impact on sport consumption, product management, sales, promotions, advertising, sponsorship, e-business, retail management and global marketing.

With greater attention placed on the sports industry in Singapore, more companies are showing a keen interest in sports sponsorship as a social responsibility in their corporate objectives. Veteran sports sponsor Nestle, widely acknowledged as Singapore's patron of sports, has been active in Singapore's sports development since 1950, and has spent millions sponsoring sports events at inter-school and nationwide levels as well as

meeting the nutritional needs of athletes at events such as the 2002 Sheares Bridge Run and the 2002 Eco-Challenge in Fiji. Singapore Pools, The Singapore Sports Council's "partner in sports", is another organisation that has been closely associated with sports sponsorship for a long time, from providing funds for National Sports Association programmes, to contributing to the Sporting Singapore Fund, and sending athletes overseas for tournaments.

Newcomers to the sports sponsorship scene have also been generous in their support of sports-related causes that aim to benefit under-privileged groups in Singapore. For example, document production and equipment processing company Fuji Xerox Singapore organised the inaugural Singapore Open Water Swimming in 2006 and 2007, with funds raised by participants through pledge card going to the Singapore Children's Cancer Foundation. In August 2008, local property company UOL Group Ltd sponsored 12 undergraduates to undertake a 1,000-mile charity cycling expedition, "Ride from the Heart", from Phuket to Singapore, to raise funds for The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund.

Sports is thus perceived as a powerful publicity tool that cuts across all demographics, helps to raise awareness of branding in the market, and conveys positive messages about the values of the companies involved.

Books on sports marketing, case studies on sports business, sponsorship, sports organisations, leisure and facilities management in the collection are relevant to this segment of readers.

As Singapore's national sports agency, The Singapore Sports Council is responsible for developing sports in Singapore. One of its aims is to promote and cultivate a sporting culture among Singaporeans, specifically targeting women, children and youth and working adults. To fulfil this vision, the SSC offers affordably priced "Learn to Play" programmes to enable beginners to pick up the rudimentary skills of a sport or activity, such as aerobics, line dance, salsa dance, gymnastics, yoga, kickboxing, badminton, inline skating, tennis, wushu and taiji.

The sports collection's offering provides an additional source of information for people wishing to pick up a sport on their own as well as recreational aficionados who are keen to read up further to improve their knowledge and deepen their understanding of their chosen sports activity.

Besides the theoretical and scientific aspect of sports, a major portion of the collection comprises books on specific indoor recreational games and outdoor sports such as the following:

General Sports topics

History and description of sports and games

Health and Lifestyle

Social and cultural issues in sports

Indoor games

Board games

Backgammon

Card games

Ball games
(billiards, pool, snooker)

Chess

Electronic/Computer games

Checkers

Games of chance

Athletic and outdoor sports and games

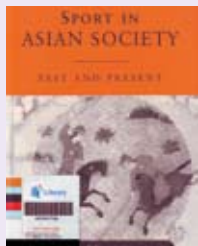
Ball games (football, soccer)	Olympic games
Racket games (badminton, table tennis)	Outdoor activities (walking, hiking, trekking, camping)
Golf	Cycling
Hockey	Car racing
Cricket	Combat sports (wrestling, oriental martial arts forms, judo, karate, aikido, bushido, fencing)
Weightlifting	Aquatic and air sports (boating, swimming, diving, surfing, sailboarding, windsurfing)
Track and field	Equestrian sports
Gymnastics	Fishing, hunting, shooting

Sport in South Asian Society: Past and Present

Majumdar, B. and Mangan, J. A. (Eds.)

London: Routledge, 2005

Call no.: R 306.4830954 SPO



All rights reserved,
Routledge, 2005

This collection of essays explores the role and significance of sports in Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, Japan, India, China, Singapore, Korea, Iran, Indonesia and Taiwan, from the 19th to the 21st centuries.

Sport in the 21st Century

London: Thames & Hudson, 2007

Call no.: R 796.09051022 SPO



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Thames & Hudson,
2007

The 766 photographs that capture the excitement of competition and athletes in their moments of victory and defeat make this book a spectacular visual treat. It also discusses and documents how sports have changed through time, with the rise of the media, the impact of commercial sponsorship and the pervasive use of drugs in the sporting arena.

Besides print materials, the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library subscribes to many electronic databases that provide sports statistics, research data, news and analyses. One full-text sports database, in particular, is EBSCOHost SportsDiscus, with more than 700,000 articles of up-to-date information and the latest research findings from more than 400 sports science and sports medicine

Athlete First: A History of the Paralympic Movement

Bailey, S.

Chichester, England; Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2008

Call no.: R 796.0874 BAI



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John Wiley & Sons,
2008

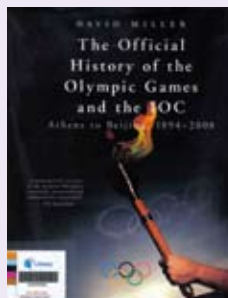
This book traces the history of the Paralympic Movement over the past 50 years, charts its milestones and accomplishments decade by decade, discusses the formation of The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and highlights significant contributions of key individuals and groups involved in furthering the work of IPC.

The Official History of the Olympic Games and the IOC: Athens to Beijing, 1894-2008

Miller, D.

Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2008

Call no.: R 796.4809 MIL



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Mainstream, 2008

This beautifully illustrated volume tells the story of the first Olympics held in Athens in 1894 to the most recent one held in Beijing last year, including the disastrous 1936 Nazi Games, the terrorist massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Games and the Ben Johnson drug debacle in 1988. Legendary Olympians such as Sebastian Coe, Jesse Owens, Alexander Popov, Nadia Comaneci and Michael Phelps are also featured.

journals. All these databases are accessible at NLB libraries and some also from home through the National Library Board eResources website <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/index.aspx>.

Staff on duty at the Information Counters are on hand to answer any queries on the subject and the collection. For in-depth sports research enquiries, additional assistance can be sought on the researcher's behalf, from the Singapore Sports Council Library, with which the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library has established a working partnership.

Reference Point, a remote enquiry service accessible by e-mail, mail, fax, SMS and telephone, is also available to library patrons. Examples of some interesting enquiries have included request for the number of Singapore competitors who have participated in and won medals at the SEA Games since its inception, information on sports tourism in Singapore and documentation on the history of track and field in Singapore.

All are welcome to browse and feed on the rich content in our sports collection available at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library for leisure reading and professional research.

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2. *National sports participation survey 2005*. (2006). Singapore: Market Probe-Precision Research Pte Ltd. Call no: RSING 796.095957 NAT
3. Singapore Sports Council. (2008). *Sports Corporate - Home*. Retrieved 21 August, 2009 from <http://www.ssc.gov.sg/publish/Corporate/en.html>

Perbankan Islam



by JUFFRI BIN SUPA'AT

Associate Librarian
Lee Kong Chian Reference Library
National Library

"Oleh sebab kesemua sumber yang berada di tangan manusia telah dikurniakan oleh Tuhan, maka manusia sebagai khalifah Tuhan bukanlah pemilik utamanya. Manusia hanyalah pemegang amanah terhadap sumber-sumber tersebut."

(Islam dan cabaran ekonomi, hlm 250)

Perbankan Islam telah menjadi tajuk perbincangan yang semakin rancak akhir-akhir ini dan menarik minat orang ramai. Dengan tercetusnya krisis kewangan sejagat yang menjejaskan banyak negara dan institusi-institusi kewangan dan ekonomi utama dunia, kini tumpuan diberikan kepada sistem perbankan Islam sebagai sistem kewangan alternatif. Ia tidak lagi hanya wujud di negara-negara Islam sahaja, bahkan telah berkembang ke banyak negara yang mengamalkan sistem ekonomi sekular atau konvensional seperti Singapura dan Hong Kong. Di Singapura umpamanya, Penguasa Kewangan Singapura (MAS), telahpun melancarkan polisi dan perundangan yang memudahkan institusi-institusi kewangan untuk memulakan operasi sedemikian di negara ini.

Usaha-usaha ini telah menampakkan hasil apabila banyak sistem kewangan utama di Singapura telah menawarkan berbagai jenis simpanan dan pelaburan yang menepati keperluan syariah terutama kepada masyarakat Islam. Umpamanya, MAS telah membenarkan bank-bank di Singapura melaksanakan

konsep "pembinaan musyarakah yang biasa digunakan dalam pembinaan hartanah atau aset berlandaskan Syariah" (Norhaiza Hashim, 2009). Daya penarik khidmat kewangan Islam sudah mampu menarik pelaburan yang mencecah berbilion dolar. Menurut laporan Berita Harian (2009), tawaran sukuk oleh pemerintah di Singapura, Malaysia dan Indonesia boleh dijangka mencecah AS\$1.3 bilion bagi separuh pertama tahun ini. Ini belum lagi termasuk penjualan produk-produk kewangan Islam yang lain seperti takaful dan sebagainya.

Perbankan Islam adalah suatu sistem perbankan yang didirikan berdasarkan hukum agama Islam. Ia didasari oleh beberapa undang-undang syariah seperti larangan memungut atau mengambil riba atau meminjam dengan mengenakan wang bunga. Ia juga melarang para pelabur untuk melibatkan diri dalam kegiatan-kegiatan yang dikira haram umpamanya di syarikat-syarikat

yang menyediakan atau mengeluarkan makanan atau minuman yang haram seperti arak, mahupun syarikat yang berkaitan atau mengendalikan perjudian. Di dalam sistem kewangan Islam, para pelabur tidak dibenarkan untuk terlibat dengan perkara-perkara yang mempunyai unsur-unsur spekulatif atau gharar, yakni sesuatu yang kurang jelas kerana ia bersifat perjudian.

PERBEZAAN PERBANKAN ISLAM DAN PERBANKAN KONVENSIONAL

Sistem ekonomi syariah sangat jauh berbeza dengan ekonomi kapitalis sosialis mahupun komunis. Namun, masih ramai yang masih belum dapat memahami sepenuhnya diantara produk dan perkhidmatan Perbankan Islam dengan Perbankan konvensional. Hal ini disentuh di dalam buku "Wang, Anda dan Islam" (2008), yang memberikan perincian yang jelas tentang ciri-ciri yang membezakan kedua sistem perbankan itu.

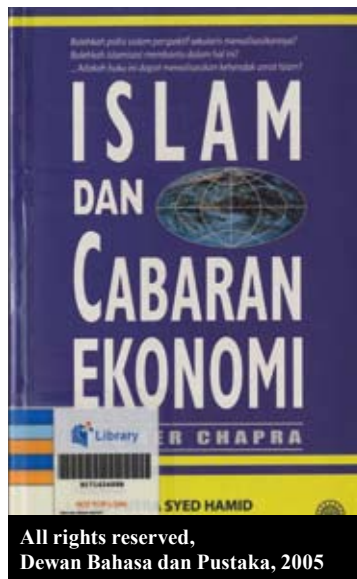
Antara ciri dasar perbedaannya ialah sistem perbankan Islam



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Jabatan Mufti Kerajaan, Jabatan
Perdana Menteri, 2000

bersandarkan kepada syariah menurut Al-Quran dan As-Sunnah. Dalam produk pelaburannya, bank Islam mengenalkan sistem perkongsian risiko dan untung di antara para pelabur dan pengurus pelaburan. Oleh itu, tiada perjanjian untuk memberikan sebarang kadar tetap keuntungan. Tapi, bagi sistem perbankan konvensional, terdapat kegiatan pinjam-meminjam yang mempunyai perjanjian untuk memberikan kadar faedah tetap yang berbentuk riba kepada para pelabur. Jadi, keuntungan dibahagikan tidak berdasarkan keuntungan yang sebenarnya.

Natijahnya, sistem perbankan konvensional mendapat pendapatan melalui kadar faedah tetap yang dikenakan kepada pelanggan tetapi sistem perbankan Islam mendapat pendapatan mengikut landas perkongsian, sama ada untung atau rugi bersama pelanggannya. Oleh itu, pihak bank dan pelanggan mempunyai hubungan sebagai penjual, pembeli dan juga rakan kongsi.



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Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2005

BAHAN-BAHAN RUJUKAN BERKENAAN PERBANKAN ISLAM

Bank Syariah: Suatu Pengenalan Umum



All rights reserved,
Tazkia Institute, 2000

Penulis: Muhammad Syafi'i Antonio
Penerbit: Jakarta: Tazkia Institute, 2000
No. panggilan: R 332.12 ANT
Mengandungi tiga belas bab, dimulakan dengan Islam sebagai agama yang lengkap dan meliputi segalanya tentang riba dalam tafsiran Islam, sejarah dan ekonomi serta penerangan mengenai produk-produk bank Islam yang ditawarkan seperti Al Wadiah, Al Musyarakah, Al Mudharabah dan lain-lain lagi.

Perbankan Syariah : Prinsip, Pratik, Dan Prospek



All rights reserved,
Serambi Ilmu
Semesta, 2004

Penulis: Mervyn K. Lewis dan Latifa M. Algaoud
Penerbit: Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2004
No. panggilan: R 332.10917671 LEW
Buku ini diterjemahkan daripada karya asalnya berjudul "Islamic Banking", terbitan Edward Elgar, Massachusetts, 2001. Dibahagi pada sembilan bab dan salah satu bab yang menarik ialah mengenai sikap Islam dan Kristian terhadap riba dan dan perbandingan dilakukan terhadap ajaran kedua agama tersebut.

Bank Syariah: Dari Teori Ke Praktik



All rights reserved,
Gema Insani, 2001

Penulis: Muhammad Syafi'i Antonio
Penerbit: Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2001
No. panggilan: R 332.10917671 ANT
Buku ini antara lain membincangkan tentang perkembangan sistem perbankan Islam, isu riba dan bunga, perbezaan antara bank Islam dan bank konvensional, serta menerangkan dengan terperinci prinsip-prinsip perbankan Islam.

Menyoal Bank Syariah: Kritik Atas Interpretasi Bunga Bank Kaum Neo Revivalis



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Paramadina, 2004

Penulis: Abdullah Saeed
Penerbit: Jakarta: Paramadina, 2004
No. panggilan: R 332.10917671 SAE
Mempersoalkan tentang kaedah bunga di dalam sistem perbankan Islam yang menurut penulis tidak boleh dihapuskan tetapi hanya diragamkan dengan pelbagai nama dan samaran.

Ke Arah 20% Pasaran Perbankan Menjelang 2010: Strategi Sistem Perbankan Islam



All rights reserved,
Institut Kefahaman
Islam Malaysia, [2002]

Penerbit: Kuala Lumpur: Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia, [2002]
No. panggilan: R 340.5909595 MUZ
Kumpulan tujuh kertas kerja yang dihasilkan untuk seminar anjuran Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia dan Persatuan Institusi-Institusi Perbankan Islam Malaysia pada March 2002.

ISLAMIC BANKING

The Islamic financial and banking system has been of interest lately. There have even been discourses on the system to promote Islamic finance and banking as an alternative to conventional finance and banking. This article highlights some of the characteristics of the Islamic financial and banking system and its differences vis-a-vis the conventional system, as well as resources available at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library on the subject matter.

For further enquiries, please e-mail Reference Point at ref@nlb.gov.sg or send an SMS to 9178 7792. Reference Point is a remote reference enquiry service provided by the National Library Singapore.

RUJUKAN

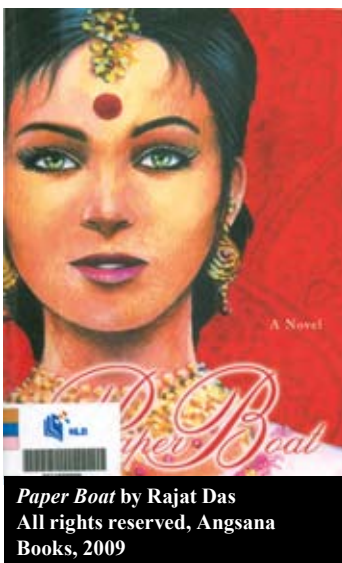
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Book Review

Paper Boat: A Convincing Tale



by R RAMACHANDRAN

Executive Director
National Book Development
Council of Singapore

other is like a necklace in format along the arc – the main story line – on which hangs a series of independent side shows and stories. I think Rajat's *Paper Boat* is like a necklace with lots of side stories that have potential to be developed into yet another series of novels.

PAPER BOAT

Paper Boat's main story is centred on a fascinating couple – the strong and lovely Nalini and Romoni, the handsome, generous and forgiving gentleman par excellence – and their family, friends and neighbours within the larger community set in Bengal against an exotic period in Indian history – British India. It's an epic family tale that runs into several generations.

It is a convincing tale of first love that is everlasting; though not consummated it is always smouldering, lingering and pining – a tale of generosity, kindness and sacrifice. It is a novel of successes and failures – the rise and fall of families and the British Empire. Rajat paints his vast array of characters vividly but all in good light. Even the cruel and crude, the shady and shameless are redeemed. Believe it or not, the masters – the British – conduct elegant, friendly and respectful conversations with their subordinates – the Indians.

If *Slumdog Millionaire* showed the seedy and seamy side of modern India, Rajat's *Paper Boat* focuses on the elite of traditional India – the rich who live in huge bungalows, sipping

INTRODUCTION

I just wish to comment on two aspects of the book:

- i) My experience of reading *Paper Boat*; and
- ii) The significance of *Paper Boat* in Singapore's publishing scene.

STORY STRUCTURE

Writers basically adopt either one of two well-known story structures to tell their tales. One is the arc format that introduces the characters and provokes conflict, heightens tension and finally ends with resolution. The

Devonshire tea in the garden under the cool shade of the flame of the forest, engaging in intellectual conversations, venturing into the forest for an energising hunt, travelling in horse carriages and buying only "Made in Great Britain" products.

FRESH VIEWPOINT

What I like most about the novel is that it is a tale of hope written in the belief that mankind is ultimately good and benign. I find this viewpoint refreshing in a world of fear, poverty and war, where tradition is breaking down and the foundation of society and its fundamentals are no longer held in awe and reverence.

When I completed the book I felt a sense of satisfaction of having travelled long into the core of British India and having delved deeply into the lives and minds of people living then. After the last page I was pining for more – and this is most striking in this long tale – there is a latent momentum, inherent suspense, a sense of mystery that pushes you on until completion. I strongly recommend this stimulating and wholesome novel to you.

It is a convincing tale of first love that is everlasting; though not consummated it is always smouldering, lingering and pining – a tale of generosity, kindness and sacrifice. It is a novel of successes and failures – the rise and fall of families and the British Empire.

SINGAPORE PUBLISHING SCENE

My second point is that this novel makes publishing history in Singapore for three main reasons:

- i) The novel-writing scene has been quiet in Singapore for quite some time. For the past four years all the winners of the Singapore Literature Prize were poets. For a long while we were wondering: "Where have the novelists gone?"
- ii) At the same time there has been no novel this long, and this interesting, published in Singapore. The only novel of significance that comes this close is *Shrimp People* written by Rex Shelly in 1991 and that was only 400 pages long.

“It has been said that bad writing is unreadable and good writing is unread. In the case of Rajat’s *Paper Boat*, it is good writing that compels anyone who turns the first page to read on until the last line on page 782.”

iii) And perhaps a more significant reason is that *Paper Boat* is one of the few novels published in Singapore for the Asian and international markets. I recall that *Saint Jack* by Paul Theroux and *Tanamera* by Noel Barber and more recently several of Catherine Lim’s novels, all aimed at the international market, were published in London.

This is because Singapore serves as a hub for commerce, petrochemicals, transportation, computer generated graphics (CGI), TV-media linkup, etc, but not as a publishing hub like London or New York. What this novel does is to highlight the possibility that Singapore can also become a publishing hub, especially for fiction set in Asia. This novel would therefore draw the attention of other writers in Asia who would be encouraged to publish their novels in Singapore and international publishers like Flame of the Forest will be able to market them to the rest of the world. Alex Chacko the publisher needs to be congratulated for helping place Singapore in the literary map of the world.

A GOOD READ

It has been said that bad writing is unreadable and good writing is unread. In the case of Rajat’s *Paper Boat*, it is good writing that compels anyone who turns the first page to read on until the last line on page 782. And what’s more, it makes publishing history in Singapore that is bound to position the city-state as one of the key centres of Asian fiction.

Paper Boat is available for reference and loan at the National Library and its branches (Call no.: RSING/SING DAS).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF PAPER BOAT

Rajat Das, married with three children, invested a lifetime designing and developing heuristic tools of learning before embarking on *Paper Boat*. He grew up in India. A Singapore citizen, he lives with his wife Serene Choo and son Shomir. He’s an avid tennis and pool player.



Autograph signing session by Rajat at Books Kinokuniya Singapore Main Store on 16 May 2009

“Honestly, back even in school, Nalini had begun to realise that right from her birth a predestinating hand was guiding her. She was a paper boat, in the rough and rapid river of life, built by a chubby Godchild for his coarse amusement in heavy rain. She was the eponymous heroine of an adventure story. This boat would set sail with ease, complete a journey, enjoy thrills on the way, assimilate maritime knowledge, use that knowledge to work the next journey, and in this manner yaw and turn, to go on and on, smash, rise, smash, and up then again.

This trip might perhaps be another of the treacherously exhilarating sojourns she would experience for a time, in ways few experienced them, and move on, only to fetch up at the next port of call. The divine beings up there had conjured up perhaps a legion of spare boats to hand; what if the cause-and-effect hull sprang a leak now and then?

(Extracted from page 483-484, *Paper Boat*)

National Library Singapore Celebrates Customer Appreciation Day



by LOW KWEE FAH

Deputy Director
NL Marketing & Group Services
National Library

It has been four years since National Library Singapore (NLS) re-opened in July 2005 at Victoria Street. Today, NLS receives about 5,000 visitors daily and the use of NLS services has grown from strength to strength. This would not have been possible without the strong and continuous support from our loyal customers.

Indeed, customers were placed under the limelight on 4 June this year. An open invitation of complimentary coffee/tea during the library opening hours on that day was advertised on our home page. It was a simple gesture to mark the inaugural Customer Appreciation Day. Word got around and soon visitors made a beeline at a fast and furious pace to Level 10 of the National Library Building for free coffee/tea!

An appreciation gift pack comprising NLS mementos was also given free to every visitor, to the delight of our customers. One of them, Josephine, said: "The souvenir pen which you put in the pack as a gift...is rather unique in design and contemporary. The Customer Appreciation Day was a nice surprise. It's a great idea for people like me with little spending power and I am delighted with your gift of a shopping bag. Thank you for the numerous cups of tea I had. It's wonderful that you think about your customers."

Well, the feeling is mutual and we want to show our appreciation to our customers who have been supporting the National Library Singapore over the years! Thank you!



Advertisement on the National Library Singapore home page



Appreciation gift pack with National Library mementoes



Customers enjoying their cuppa on Level 10



A delighted customer receiving a gift from a student volunteer

Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow: Dr Mahani Binti Awang

Avid believer of peace and justice



by MAHANI BINTI AWANG

Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow
National Library



Dr Mahani was awarded the Lee Kong Chian Research Fellowship by Ms Ngian Lek Choh, Director, National Library, at a signing ceremony held on 29 July

(From left to right) Ms Isabel Kam, Senior Manager, Publishing and Research Services; Mr Johnson Paul, Deputy Director, Publishing and Research Services; Ms Ngian Lek Choh; Dr Mahani; Mr Chia Yeow Tong, Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow and witness for Dr Mahani; Ms Kartini Binte Saparudin, Associate Librarian, Lee Kong Chian Reference Library; and Ms Masamah Ahmad, Senior Library Officer, Publishing and Research Services

Although born in Kelantan, I spent most of my childhood in the neighbouring state of Terengganu where my father worked at a land scheme, and received my early education in Kuala Berang in Terengganu. Kuala Berang is a humble rural town, but has an important and ancient local history. It is famously known as the place where the Terengganu Stone was found. The stone which has an inscription dated 1303 A.D. is commonly accepted as archival evidence of the early arrival of Islam to the Malay Peninsula.

In addition to this, Kuala Berang also goes down in history as the first royal town in Terengganu when the first sultan of Terengganu, Sultan Zainal Abidin I, made Kuala Berang his home. The importance of Kuala Berang in the history of Malaya is evident during the colonial period when it became one of the strongholds of the famous Terengganu Peasant Uprising (against the British) in 1928, led by the religious leader Haji Abdul Rahman Limbong.

These exciting historical facts were unknown to me until I became a student at the School of Humanities in Universiti Sains Malaysia. While pursuing my degree in History at the university, I learned in my Malaysian history classes that my childhood days were spent in a district that experienced events of historical proportions. This discovery was even more meaningful when I recalled my close friends remembering their grandfathers as "brave fighters who fought the white men".

My tranquil life in a laid back rural town in Terengganu changed tremendously when my family moved to Ipoh, in

Perak, on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Dubbed as the "mining town", Ipoh opened up new challenges to my family and me. Perak was unlike the predominantly Malay states on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia where I had lived previously. The city of Ipoh had a multi-ethnic and multi-religious population. The exposure to other ethnic groups, religions and culture proved to be a new experience that would have a lasting impact on me and shaped my world view. My time in Ipoh helped me to grow up with a better understanding of other people and communities with different beliefs and cultures. In 1978, at an impressionable age of 14 I attended an all-girls school in Ipoh where I met and made friends with girls from other ethnic groups. This was significantly different from my "Terengganu days" when my friends were predominantly Malays.

While in secondary school, I was known as a talented artist. My group won second place in the state level painting competition held in conjunction with the National Day celebrations in the early 1980s. I still like to paint. Besides painting, I also enjoy music and am a fan of the late Michael Jackson. My appreciation of the arts also extends to drama. I own a wide collection of popular Korean dramas and am particularly drawn to dramas such as *Jewel in the Palace* and *Hwangjini* which focus on women's life in the great Joseon dynasty.

I enjoy cooking and have passion for Indian Muslim food. I also like reading, particularly magazines and books on antique collections, paintings and museums. Museum visits are a must whenever I'm on holiday with my family. I visit museums not just as a hobby but also because it is useful to me as a consultant to the Penang State Museum. I believe that museums, besides textbooks, are important in educating people and the younger generation on the meaning of history and nation-building.

An avid believer of peace, justice and respect for all, I fervently hope that all nations, regardless of wealth and power, respect the sovereignty and freedom of every other nation. I also look forward to the day when gender discrimination is a thing of the past and when women are treated equally, respected and appreciated at all levels of the society.

For information on the Lee Kong Chian Research Fellowship, please contact the Administrator at:

Email: LKCRF@nlb.gov.sg

Tel: 6332 3348

Fax: 6333 7990

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WHAT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN

In the article "14th General Conference of the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL): Towards Dynamic Libraries and Information Services in Southeast Asian Countries" published in Vol 5, Issue 2, July 2009, it was mentioned that Dr Gary Gorman, Professor of Information Management, School of

Information Management at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, was one of the keynote speakers on the second day of the conference. Dr Gary Gorman's presentation was in fact cancelled.

We would like to apologise for the error.

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General Enquiries:
TEL +65 6332 3255

Reference Enquiries:
EMAIL ref@nlb.gov.sg
FAX +65 6332 3248
SMS +65 9178 7792

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National Library Board
100 Victoria Street
#14-01 National Library Building
Singapore 188064