



# ARI NEWS



## The Centennial Conference Asian Horizons: Cities, States and Societies

The National University of Singapore has just turned 100. As part of the university's celebration of a century of higher education, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Asia Research Institute held an international conference "Asian Horizons: Cities, States and Societies" in the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel, 1 through 3 August, just before Singapore celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Dr. Aline Wong, Chairman of the Housing and Development Board, opened the conference on 3 August. Nearly three hundred people attended the opening ceremony, which ended with the sound of a traditional gong. Dr. Wong, an academic by training and a politician by calling, praised NUS for its excellence in higher education and challenged the university to climb further heights. The conference brought together a hundred and fifty local, regional and international scholars. They discussed and debated the tumultuous transformations of Asian cities, states and societies in the past century and explored future horizons. This focus highlighted NUS's commitment to achieve excellence in the study of Asia. NUS has extensive expertise on Southeast Asia, South Asia and East Asia; Singapore itself is in the heart and at the crossroads of these regions. This has given NUS an added advantage with which to develop into the centre of Asian Studies.

The three-day conference saw a whole array of panels that dealt with a wide variety of topics and disciplines. They included "Cities and Nations", "Asian Port Cities: Commodities and Cultures", "Globalisation and City Autonomies" and "Baby Blues: Fertility Trends in Asia" as well as "The Cultural Transformation of the Asian Sixties", "Asian Intellectuals at the Twentieth Century Horizon", "Spaces of Neo-liberalism in East Asia" and "Singapore – from City to State: Economy, Politics and Society" and many more. Many of the papers presented and issues discussed resonated with Singapore's experience as a cosmopolitan city-state grappling with the challenges of nation building and globalisation.

The three plenary forums saw jam-packed halls of students, scholars and interested Singaporeans. The first forum featured Saskia Sassen (pictured), Ralph Lewis Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago and Centennial Visiting Professor at

the London School of Economics. Professor Sassen spoke on "Reinventing the Global City in Asia". She began by addressing the dynamics of several major and emerging global cities in Asia. But the focus of her talk was on the lesser and newer dynamics, such as computer centred interactive networks, financial markets and instruments that are turning whole cities into objects of global investment, labour market trends, and the trend towards civic space becoming political space in major global cities. In an interview with the Straits Times after her address, Professor Sassen gave a definition of a global city: "a broader zone where the old spatialities and temporalities of the national and the new ones of global digital age get engaged". Global cities are "great for owners of capital but no so great for about 70 countries around the world that have been destroyed by it." She went on to explain: "some financial instruments are weapons of mass destruction". She said, "Singapore already is a global city" and praised Singapore's success, highlighting the areas of public housing and transportation. She added: "Singapore might want to think of how it can help regional industries grow. Competition is disabling".

Conference participants were treated to a fusion of Asian food and music, by NUS's very own Kent Ridge Ensemble, whose musical offering ended the first day. The second forum featured Professors Jonathan Rigg from the University of Durham, Thongchai Winichakul from the University of Wisconsin in Madison and Peter Coclanis from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. These distinguished professors who specialise in different aspects of social scientific understanding of Southeast Asia spoke on the theme of "One Hundred Years of Change" and shared their knowledge on the most critical issues in Southeast Asian research. The third forum featured Robert Hunter Wade, Professor of Political Economy from the London School of Economics. Professor Wade spoke on "Governing the Market in Asia: the Case for National and perhaps Regional Industrial Policy". The conference concluded with a boat cruise on the Singapore River, along with a tour of and a gala dinner at the Asian Civilisations Museum on the third day.

## ASIA TRENDS



Asia Trends 2005 "Asian Migrations: Sojourning, Displacement, Homecoming and Other Travels" brought together ten select presentations of papers from 'home' and 'host' countries, developed and developing nations, from researchers and activists, and from women and men. The day-long conference held at Swissotel Merchant Court on 20<sup>th</sup> September marked the third year of this annual event of ARI on a topical issue in Asia. The context of this year's theme was provided by the growing perception in academia that the migration and mobility of people in and out of Asia no longer takes

the crystal form of permanent ruptures like uprooting and settlement; rather, they have tended to become transient and complex, ridden with disruptions and detours, fraught with multiple chains of movements and translocal interconnections.

In his opening remarks, Acting Director of ARI, Professor Alan Chan provided a brief introduction to ARI as an institution, its research clusters and the Asia Trends public conference, and invited Assistant Professor Chitra Sankaran to welcome the Keynote Speaker and introduce him to the audience. In his keynote address, the well-known author of many novels ranging from *In An Antique Land* to *The Glass Palace* and *The Hungry Tide*, Professor Amitav Ghosh (pictured) from Harvard University, highlighted the conscious or the subconscious selection that human memory makes because of experiences of discrimination based on race, class and trauma a migrant undergoes. He elaborated on this through an Indian protagonist's unstructured casual narratives of the complex social dynamics that determined the Burmese evacuation after the Japanese made air attacks on Rangoon in the second world war - of the Europeans by air, but the Indians on foot through dangerous terrain and refugee camps to Manipur, Chittagong, and Silchar. He tried to find an answer as to why only disjointed records of such events are available from reluctant memoirs of the protagonists.

The ten conference papers were presented at four plenaries. The first plenary on Conflict, Displacement and Homecoming had Jennifer Hyndman of Simon Fraser University, speaking on the constraints on mobility that the identity card information about place of birth of

the holder inflicted within Sri Lanka; Andrew Hardy from Vietnam explaining how Vietnamese emigration from colonial Indochina was for the angry radical, the educated rich, and the ambitious poor, and how their destinations differed; and Leakthina Chau-Pech Ollier, from Cambodia raising the questions of divided identity and belongingness of those on the move.

The second plenary was on Globalizing Singapore: Between "Home" and "Away", where Tan Ern Ser of NUS presented the results of a sample survey about migration orientation and migration propensity of Singaporeans as a measure of their national loyalty and rootedness in the face of globalization.; and Tisa Ng of the Singapore Council of Women's Organisation tried to analyse the impact of foreign female workers' presence in Singapore on the female labour market participation of Singaporean women vis-a-vis their role as home-makers.

In the third plenary on Migration, Transition and Translations, Rajeev Patke of NUS addressed the individual's experiences of exile in diaspora through an analogy of translation whereby some part of the original essence is bound to be lost or changed; Claire Lowrie, a Ph. D. candidate from Australia, explained how the fictions emerging from the colonial societies of Australia and Malaya reflected the attitudes towards migration and mobility among colonial settlers and sojourners; and Audrey Yue of the University of Melbourne examined migration as a process of transition through contemporary Hong Kong cinema.

The final plenary on Transnational "Nomads" and "Ghosts" was chaired by Professor Wang Gungwu, Director of East Asian Institute. Tseng Yen-fen of Taiwan National University spoke on the permanently temporary nature of migration that Taiwanese business entrepreneurs experienced due to rising costs of labour in their production sites; and Pattana Kitiarsa of ARI explained the incidence of death amongst the Thai migrant labour in Singapore and the kind of 'haunting' effect it produced back home in Thailand.

All the presentations, as well as the Keynote address of Professor Amitav Ghosh evoked probing questions, comments and observations from the audience, which included graduate and undergraduate students of NUS. The high point of the event was the distribution of the bound volumes of papers presented at the conference, published by ARI and Singapore University Press. An exhibition-cum-sale of Professor Ghosh's novels and other books that broadly related to the theme of this Asia Trends Conference was an added attraction in making the event memorable.

WORD FROM  
ACTING DIRECTOR  
– PROFESSOR  
ALAN CHAN



I am delighted to be able to bring you the latest edition of the ARI News. Professor Anthony Reid, ARI Director, is currently away on sabbatical at Cambridge University, taking a well-deserved break from administration to concentrate on his many research projects. Tony sends his greetings; he will be back on campus by the second week of January, 2006.

ARI continues to be abuzz with intellectual excitement and activity, some of which is captured in these pages. In August, for example, ARI co-organized with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) a major conference on “Asian Horizons: Cities, States and Societies,” which formed a part of the University’s centennial celebrations. ARI also organized a roundtable on “Asian Studies in Asia” at the Fourth International Convention of Asia Scholars in Shanghai, which drew, as I was able to observe, a large audience and much discussion. Of particular interest was a call to better coordinate research effort on Asia by scholars based in Asia, which attracted some debate and which ARI would certainly be interested in exploring further.

In September, ARI presented “Asia Trends 2005,” which focused on “Asian Migrations.” Asia Trends is an annual event, through which we hope to bring significant research on a specific topic to the general public. ARI is mindful of its mandate not only to pursue excellence in research, as I said in my opening remarks at the conference, but also to engage the public in discussion on important issues that confront contemporary Asia. In the same spirit, ARI presented a public lecture in September by Professor Christopher Bayly, a distinguished historian of South and Southeast Asia.

Looking ahead, a rich spread of conferences, workshops, lectures and seminars have been planned for the next several months. These include a multidisciplinary workshop on “From Moneylenders to Microfinance: Southeast Asia’s Credit Revolution in Institutional, Economic and Cultural Perspective”; a public lecture by the eminent scholar of Chinese literature and religion, Professor Anthony Yu, whose four-volume translation of the classic novel *Xiyou ji* (Journey to the West) remains a standard in the field; and a conference on “Religious Commodifications,” which examines the dynamic interactions between religion and the economy in Asian contexts. I must applaud not only our researchers but also our events management team, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure a successful outcome for each and every ARI activity.

There is, indeed, every reason to be optimistic about ARI’s future. The five ARI clusters all have active research agendas and are now home to a strong team of resident researchers and visiting scholars. The recently established “Open” Cluster, though the name may seem a little odd, also harbors considerable promise. Research programs are measured by their qualitative output; they do not go on indefinitely. Significant research outside the clusters should be supported and potential new research foci should be nurtured. This is precisely what the “Open” Cluster is designed to do, as a kind of “incubator” to advance new research areas.

Thanks to the support of the University’s Office of Research, we are now developing a new initiative on “Asian Cities.” This is a joint effort with the School of Design and Environment (SDE) in NUS. In the next issue of ARI News, we should be able to share more on this development; but the point I would like to make here is that from its inception, ARI has been tasked with developing research on Asia not in isolation but with the FASS, SDE, Faculty of Law, and School of Business. ARI can flourish only if it succeeds in creating research synergies with its campus partners, and the “Asian Cities” initiative represents an important step in that direction. Firm plans are also in place to launch a joint project with the Faculty of Law. ARI already works closely with FASS, and we are currently pursuing a couple of possible joint appointments that would further enhance our partnership. Another exciting new possibility would be to seek collaboration with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

There is, of course, still much work to be done, be it in building stronger ties with departments and faculties/schools, strengthening internal processes to create an environment that is conducive to research, or reaching out to the larger public. To bring research on Asia to greater heights, I also believe we need to begin exploring strategic partnerships with comparable research organizations in Asia and beyond. In the near future, we should see ARI combining forces with both internal and external partners in charting new intellectual territories and competing for substantial research grants. While giving priority to research excellence, ARI would do well also to carve out what may be called a development arm to enable regional partners to flourish in research. In the pursuit of excellence, if I may close by paraphrasing a saying of Confucius in the *Lunyu* (6.30), it remains crucial that we seek to establish not only our interests but also those of others.



## NEW ARI MEMBERS

### Assistant Professors

#### Alexius A. Pereira

is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore. He received his PhD (sociology) from the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is the author



of *State Collaboration and Development Strategies in China* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). He is currently writing about the synergy (or conflict) between national foreign direct investment (FDI) policy and transnational corporations business strategy in Asia, with India, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam as case studies. Between 2002 and 2006, he served as the Executive Secretary of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee "Economy and Society".

#### Chitra Sankaran

is an Assistant Professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore. Her primary research interests are in postcolonial fiction and gender studies. She has published articles



in journals such as *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Journal of South Asian Literature*, *World Literatures Written in English*. Her other publications include a monograph, *The Myth Connection: A Comparative Study of R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao* (1993), an edited volume *Complicities: Connections & Divisions: Perspectives on Literatures and Cultures of the Asia-Pacific Region* (2003). She is an invited member of the editorial committee of the Canadian online journal *The Postcolonial Text*. She is currently editing a volume on Amitav Ghosh. While at the Asia Research Institute she hopes to work on 'Globalisation and South Asian Fiction' with special reference to some diasporic Indian writers like Amitav Ghosh, and Salman Rushdie.

**Assistant Professor Kenneth Paul Tan**, the 1995 Lee Kuan Yew Postgraduate Scholar, read for a Ph.D. in Social and Political Sciences at the University of Cambridge (1996-2000). Before that, on a Public Service Commission Overseas Merit (Open) Scholarship, he took a First in Economics and Politics at the University of Bristol (1991-1994). After completing his doctorate, he joined the National University of Singapore in July 2000 as an Assistant Professor in both the University Scholars Programme and the Department of Political Science, where he was Assistant Head for two years (2003-2005). He has won several teaching awards.



His research interests have included topics in social, cultural, and political theory, as well as aspects of society, culture, and politics in Singapore. During this writing semester at ARI, he will be working on two Singapore-related book projects: one on globalization, the creative economy, and political legitimacy; and a second on film and television. He is Chair of the newly registered Asian Film Archive. He also sits on the Board of Directors of the Singapore theatre company, 'The Necessary Stage'.

#### Dr Stephen K Wittkopf

joined us as Assistant Professor on 1 July 2005 and will be here for 6 months. Dr Wittkopf is on writing leave from the Department of Architecture at NUS. After graduating as an Architect from University of Technology Aachen (Germany) and receiving a Post Graduate Diploma from Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich he received his PhD in 2001 from University of Technology (Germany). He joined NUS in 2001 and his research interests relate to Sustainable Architecture with special focus on Solar Architecture (designing with daylight). During his time at ARI he will write up the results of his current research projects that assess the potential of building integrated photovoltaic and daylight re-directing devices in the tropical Singapore climate.



#### Dr Takashi Terada

joined us as Assistant Professor on 1 July 2005 and will be here for 6 months. Dr Takashi is Assistant Professor at the Department of Japanese Studies, NUS where he has taught Japanese politics and international relations since 1999. He obtained his Ph.D from Australian National University. He has published extensively on market-oriented (Free Trade Agreements) and institutional-oriented (organization-building) approaches to regional integration in Asia and the Pacific both in English and Japanese. Dr Terada has recently completed editing, together with Professor Peter Drysdale, a four-volume anthology concerning Asia Pacific economic cooperation, which will be published in 2006. While at ARI, he will work on the role of Japan in the evolution of Asian regionalism over the last five decades, by identifying the factors, indigenously or exogenously, influencing the emergence of distinctive regional economic institutions in Asia over the decades.



### Visiting Fellow

#### Dr Julius Bautista

is on a joint-appointment with the Southeast Asian Studies Programme and ARI as a Visiting Fellow for 2 years from 20 July 2005. Dr Bautista is an ethnohistorian. He obtained his PhD from the Australian National University where he taught courses on Southeast Asian culture and society before taking up a Teaching Fellowship at the University of Sydney. Dr. Bautista has published several articles on folk Catholicism and religious iconography in the Philippines, the most recent of which is the chapter entitled "The Christchild in the Philippines: The Santo Niño as Culture Hero" in Warne and Zika (eds.) *God the Devil and a Millennium of Christian Culture* (Melbourne, 2004). At ARI, he will be part of the Religion and Globalisation Cluster until July 2007. Aside from teaching courses in World Religions and Religious Theory at NUS, he will focus on completing a book manuscript on religious discourse in Cebu, the Philippines.



## NEW ARI MEMBERS

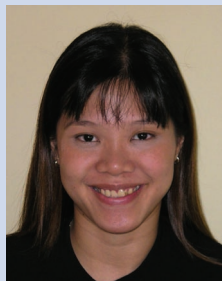
### Research Assistant and Administration

**Ms Laavanya Kathiravelu,**

Research Assistant for the Cultural Studies cluster, joined us on 4 July 2005. She is no stranger to NUS, having pursued her B Soc Sci (Hons) here. She went on to complete an MA in Communication, Culture and Society at Goldsmiths College, London in 2004. Her MA dissertation explored the performance of a classical South Asian dance form within a postcolonial context. Her research interests include the performance of transnational cultural flows, diasporic movement, and the sociology of dance, movement and the body. While at ARI, she will assist Professor Chua Beng Huat as the RA of the Cultural Studies cluster



**Kristy Won** has a Bachelor of Science in Banking and Finance from University of London. She has been in the secretarial field supporting senior management staff in various MNCs ranging from Education Institutions, Engineering and Shipping companies. She will be responsible for providing all core secretarial duties to the Director and the Institute.



**Mr Henry Kwan Wai Hung**

joined ARI's administrative team as of 29th August 2005 as a Technical Support Officer. He holds a Diploma in Electronics and Communications and Advanced Diploma in Computer Studies. Prior to joining ARI, Henry has worked in a number of private companies for the past 10 years in roles such as Service Engineer, Software Engineer, Software Quality Assurance and Management Information System Administrator.



## RECENT ARI CONFERENCES

### Symposium: 'Paths Not Taken: Political Pluralism in Postwar Singapore' 14–15 July 2005

The symposium was jointly sponsored by the Centre for Social Change Research at the Queensland University of

Technology and the Asia Research Institute. It was the culmination of a 3-year project undertaken by Carl Trocki and Michael Barr that brought together researchers to study political and social movements in postwar Singapore that operated outside the parameters of imagination created by the ruling People's Action Party. The papers presented at the symposium drew on diverse disciplines to address various aspects of 'alternative' histories, following the themes of 'New Ideas', 'Civil Society', 'Chinese Social and Intellectual Movements' and 'English-educated Movements'. The wide range of topics included party and activist politics; trade unions; commercial and professional organisations; social, intellectual, ethnic and religious movements, and the media and service organisations. An edited book arising from the symposium is currently in production.

### Roundtable: Asian Studies in Asia: Reflections and Dialogues, ICAS 4, Shanghai, 22 August 2005

**Panel Organizer and Chair: Mika Toyota**

For this roundtable, five leading editors from major Asian Studies journals, Paul H. Kratoska, Pilwha Chang, Takeshi Hamashita, Chen Kuan-Hsing and Deng Shichao, addressed both the practical and conceptual challenges of publishing Asian Studies in Asia. The discussants shared their experiences of being involved in the process of knowledge production and dissemination of academic research conducted by the emerging generation of Asian scholars. The event hoped to develop networks and alliances to further build up intra-regional interactions among critical intellectuals working on Asian studies.

### Graduate Roundtable: 26 September 2005 Decolonisation and the Asian Nation-State

### Prof. Christopher Bayly University of Cambridge, Distinguished Visitor

**Jointly organised by Asia Research Institute, Department of History,  
South Asian Studies Programme**

This Roundtable was designed to build on Professor Bayly's insights into the process of decolonization in South and Southeast Asia and its effects on the new independent nation-states. Participants discussed how colonial boundaries, policies, institutions, and the particular political circumstances under which decolonisation took place, affected the viability of the emergent nation-states of South and Southeast Asia. Attention was given to the effects of ethnic discrimination, indirect rule, legal pluralism, administrative decentralisation, and political repression in the colonial states during their last years, and to attempts by the outgoing colonial powers to shape the future of the independent states in such ways as to secure long-term Western strategic and economic interests.

## ASIAN METACENTRE FOR POPULATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

ageing. More recently, she applied her statistical and demographic expertise to the studies on ethnicity and religion in Indonesia, relating social and economic variables to political variables of Indonesian electoral behaviour, and examining democracy in the emerging democratic environment of Indonesia. Armed with these broad social, economic, and political perspectives, she will now be focusing on the 'changing family and labour market in Indonesia'.

### New Staff

**Dr Evi Nurvidya Arifin**  
Postdoctoral Fellow

The Asian MetaCentre welcomed back Dr Arifin in August 2005. Dr Arifin has worked on various population-related issues and applied statistics encompassing topics such as family, fertility and family planning, health, population projection, migration, and



## APPOINTMENTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Please refer to our website at [www.ari.nus.edu.sg](http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg) for details and direct all queries to [joinari@nus.edu.sg](mailto:joinari@nus.edu.sg)

- **3-month (Senior) Visiting Research Fellowships**  
April, July or October 2006  
Closing date of application: 31 October 2005
- **6-month Writing Semester Scheme for Assistant Professors in NUS**  
July 2006 or January 2007  
Closing date of application: 30 November 2005
- **ASEAN Research Scholars Programme**  
1 May 2006 to 31 July 2006 (20 positions)  
Closing date of application: 15 December 2005
- **Research Fellowship in the Asian Migration cluster**  
To begin 1 August 2006 or 2 January 2007  
Closing date of application: 31 January 2006
- **Postdoctoral Fellowships in Cultural Studies and Changing Family clusters**  
To begin 1 August 2006 or 2 January 2007  
Closing date of application: 31 January 2006
- **Postdoctoral Fellowship and Research Assistantship** in a new "AsianCities" research programme, subject to confirmation of budget and other details

### Recent Workshop

#### Training Workshop on "Interactions of Population Dynamics and Environmental Changes: Research on the Health Consequences"

**5 – 9 September 2005, Bangkok, Thailand**

This training workshop examined the health impacts of population and environmental changes as well as appropriate methodologies for research on this theme. The main goal of the workshop was for participants working in teams to develop research proposals specific to the theme of "health consequences of population change in Asia".

### Forthcoming Events

#### Training Workshop on "Safe Motherhood and Abortion"

5 – 18 January 2006, Bangkok, Thailand

#### International Conference on "Population and Development in Asia: Critical Issues for a Sustainable Future"

20 – 22 March 2006, Phuket, Thailand

#### International Workshop on "Sexuality and Migration in Asia"

10 – 11 April 2006, Singapore

Co-organised with Royal Holloway, University of London

For more information and details of these workshops and conferences, please visit <http://www.populationasia.org/Events.htm>, or email the Secretariat at [popnasia@nus.edu.sg](mailto:popnasia@nus.edu.sg).



## ARI RECOGNITION AND NEW BOOKS

**Professor Binod Khadria** delivered the keynote address entitled, 'Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy', Or 'A Great Off-white Hope'? at the International Seminar on Actors and Models of the Indian Diaspora in International Relations, jointly organized by Centre de Sciences Humaines and the India International Centre, at New Delhi, September 26–27, 2005.

**Professor Gavin Jones** chaired the General Assembly of CICRED (the Committee for International Cooperation in National Research in Demography), held during the 25th International Population Conference of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population in Tours, France. Prof. Jones is Chair of the Council of CICRED.

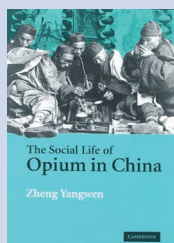
**Professor Bryan Turner** gave a plenary lecture at the International Institute of Sociology conference in Stockholm Sweden in July 2005. The title was "Global Religion, Diaspora and the Future of Citizenship".

**Professor Lois Verbrugge** presented a keynote address on Tuesday 13 September 2005 at a Professional Forum on "Access, Ageing and Disability: Issues and Possibilities" as part of the MCYS- Tsao Foundation Experts' Series on Successful Ageing 2005.

**Dr Geoffrey Wade** served as a member of the Singapore National Library's Zheng He Commemorative Exhibition Organising Committee. The Exhibition, which took over a year to plan and execute, was the inaugural exhibition for the new National Library Building and was opened on 13th August 2005. He also presented four lectures on "The Zheng He Anniversary: Reassessing, Commemorating, and Utilising the Eunuch Voyages" at the invitation of Malaysia's Star Newspaper, in Melaka, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh and Penang as part of the Malaysia national lecture tour in July 2005.

**Professor Brenda Yeoh** was appointed to the Street and Building Names Board (national-level committee).

**Ms Connie Teo** has been promoted to the position of Administrative Officer. Congratulations!



**Zheng,  
Yangwen**

**The Social Life  
of Opium in  
China**

Cambridge,  
Cambridge

University Press, 2005.



**Bryan S. Turner (editor)**

**Penguin Dictionary  
of Sociology (Fourth  
Edition)**

Abercrombie, Nicholas,  
Hill, Stephen and Turner,  
Bryan S. (eds.)

Translated (into Japanese) by  
Prof. Maruyama Tetsuo.  
Tokyo, Minerva Shobo, August 2005.

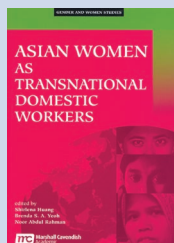


**Brenda S A Yeoh  
(editor)**

**Migration and  
Health in Asia**

Jatjana, S., M.  
Toyota and B. S. A.  
Yeoh (eds.)

London, Routledge, 2005.

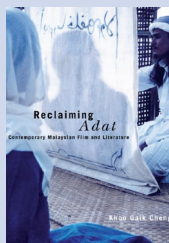


**Brenda S A  
Yeoh (editor)**

**Asian  
Women as  
Transnational  
Domestic  
Workers**

Huang, Shirlena, Yeoh, Brenda S A  
and Noorashikin Abdul Rahman

Singapore, Marshall Cavendish  
Academic, 2005



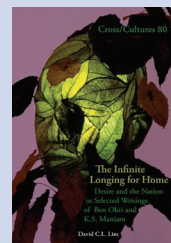
**Khoo Gaik Cheng**

**Reclaiming Adat  
Contemporary  
Malaysian Film and  
Literature.**

Vancouver, Canada,  
University of British

Columbia Press, November 30, 2005.

Gaik Cheng was a postdoctoral fellow at ARI and this book was completed during her time here. She is now Associate Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts, Australian National University in Canberra.



**David C. L. Lim**

**The Infinite  
Longing for Home.  
Desire and the  
Nation in Selected  
Writings of Ben  
Okri and K.S.  
Maniam.**

Amsterdam, New York, 2005.

David C. L. Lim was a postdoctoral fellow at ARI for two years and this book was completed during his time here. He is now Lecturer in English at Open University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.



## ARI PUBLIC LECTURE

### India in the Liberal Age: 1850–1914

**Professor Chris A. Bayly**  
**Distinguished Visitor**

This talk reconsiders Asian liberalism in the mid-nineteenth century, especially as it was envisioned in Calcutta, Bombay and some northern cities. But many of its concerns could equally be located in Singapore or Penang. It largely concerns Hindus and Parsis, though Muslim liberalism would make an equally interesting study. I attempt to recapture the sense of how one lived and thought liberalism at this time by examining the influence in India of the Italian radical liberal and democratic nationalist, Giuseppe Mazzini. Evidently, liberalism was the intellectual field in which nationalism took root. Yet liberal ideology and practice also spoke more broadly to Indians' understanding of the modern world. All Indian liberals to one degree or another acknowledged their status as subordinates, even as slaves within the colonial system. To them, liberalism was particularly a doctrine that could release them from this slavery. The liberalism that they espoused, however, was a conjunctural phenomenon, rather than simply a lineage or influence diffused from Europe to Asia, from metropole to colony. It reflected attempts by people -not all of them elite- to grapple with the consequences of globalisation, the intrusion of the state and the collapse of the embodied authority of popes, mandarins or brahmins which had all happened within a generation. In this talk, therefore, I am deliberately approaching Indian liberalism at a 'conceptual angle' by examining the reasons why Mazzini was the most truly admired foreign social and political thinker in South Asia between 1850 and 1914. The British philosophers J.S. Mill and Herbert Spencer were peaks to be scaled. Mazzini was loved.

This year is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Mazzini. But my interest is not really biographical. It reflects a move that has gathered pace recently to reinstate the history of ideas, and particularly the history of political thought in Indian and other non-western historiographies. To understand how Indians envisioned Mazzini, we must first abandon European definitions of liberalism and understand that the scholarly Mazzini and his alter ego, the warrior nationalist, Giuseppe Garibaldi, represented Italy itself to the Asian imagination. The image of Italy was more important than any particular component of Mazzini's thought, which was notable more for its vigour than its coherence. To imagine a nation and a democratic nationalist people, one must also imagine other nations. In the Indian case, British radical liberalism was inevitably

the key reference point for India's new public men. But for many, Italy, along with Ireland, provided further points on the imaginative triangle. These nationalities seemed to be the other's other. Italy could be imagined as a fallen nation rising up as India would rise. Surendranath Banerjea made this explicit in his 1876 eulogy of the Italian leader. Italy, like India, had an ancient civilisation that could yet provide the foundations of a vibrant modernity. Its peoples were varied, differing from north to south and east to west, but they were animated by a common culture and sympathy that could be strengthened by political leadership. Italy, like India, was subject to foreign conquerors. As late as 1848, the Austrians ruled in northern Italy, the despotic Bourbons in the south. Yet within a generation Italy had begun liberated itself. Italy, like India, was thought to be a religious society where religion had become corrupt and worldly. Italy, like India, was also a poor peasant society, but one with reserves of commercial capitalist talent which, if nurtured and protected, would create new wealth. By reforming religion and the family and bringing the different peoples of Italy and India together through popular festivals, the potential of these new nations could be released.

Most of all, however, Mazzini's Italy was for Indians the site of a liberalism that was humane but constructive, one that comprehended difference and the sacredness of territoriality. Uday Mehta has pointed to the systematic failure of British liberalism after Edmund Burke to comprehend cultural difference, territoriality and the meaning of the other's feelings of community. The imagining of Italy could provide an empathetic liberalism for Indian leaders. They could see Italy as a nation in making, a cultural area attaining statehood, but also the precursor of a new humanity.