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IN SOUTHEAST ASIA





SEAMEO-SPAFA Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts

SPAFA Journal is published three times a year by the SEAMEO-SPAFA Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts. It is a forum for scholars, researchers, professionals and those interested in archaeology, performing arts, visual arts and cultural activities in Southeast Asia to share views, ideas and experiences. The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of SPAFA.

SPAFA's objectives :

- Promote awareness and appreciation of the cultural heritage of Southeast Asian countries;
- ► Help enrich cultural activities in the region;
- Strengthen professional competence in the fields of archaeology and fine arts through sharing of resources and experiences on a regional basis;
- Increase understanding among the countries of Southeast Asia through collaboration in archaeological and fine arts programmes.



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SPAFA Journal

Volume 17 Number 1 (January - April 2007)

CONTENTS

Comics/Cartoons in Southeast Asia

John A. Lent 7 Southeast Asian Cartooning:
An Overview



Lim Cheng Tju 13 Southeast Asian Comic Artists Invade USA!



Soh Lai Yee 19 Catching up with Lyra Garcellano



Carolyn Wong 27 Niu Bizi and other Cartoons
— Huang Yao's Legacy



Marcus von Essen 33 Southeast Asia: One or Many?



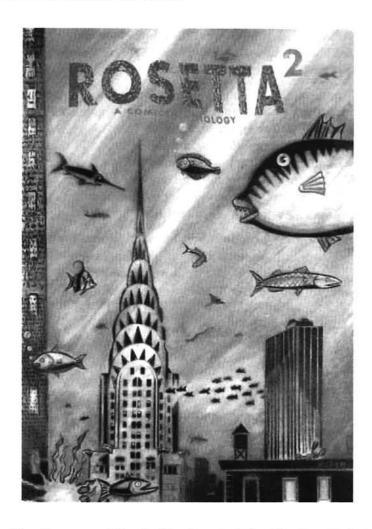
Adrian Vickers 39 Ida Bagus Nyoman Rai: and Leo Haks Painter of History



Ean Lee 45 Art & Archaeology – International



Comics/Cartoons in Southeast Asia



According to a recent book, 'Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions (2006)', Southeast Asian studies have suffered some setbacks and the situation requires attention. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) turns 40 this year (8 August 2007), and while the more established Southeast Asian culture, literature, art and films are gaining a foothold in the world market, questions are being asked about the interest in other Southeast Asian popular culture, such as comics and cartoons.

ASEAN realised the need to engage the youth of the region, and the ASEAN theme for 2006 was 'ASEAN and Young People'. This is important as the awareness of ASEAN among the younger generation is vital to its survival and effectiveness as a regional body. To the young of this region, as with those of others, pop culture, such as comic books and comic strips, appeal to their sensibilities.

The articles in this issue, pertaining to Southeast Asian comics and cartoons, provide a historical perspective and the range of topics and styles covered in Southeast Asian cartooning. Eminent international comics scholar John Lent gives a broad overview of the state of comic book publishing and production in the region. He touches on how comics and cartoonscan serve an educational role in the formation of identity and a common culture. Lent illustrates the exciting developments in the comics/cartooning scene of Southeast Asia, with many examples.

Carolyn Wong, the granddaughter of pioneering Chinese cartoonist Huang Yao, writes about her late grandfather's sojourns in Southeast Asia and eventual settlement in Malaysia. While Huang Yao is a giant in Chinese cartoons, his influence was widespread in Southeast Asia and also in Hong Kong. The cartoons he drew, when he lived in Southeast Asia, utilized many local forms and culture. This indigenization of Huang Yao's cartoons shows the vibrancy and adaptability of cartooning in Southeast Asia, a characteristic which continues to date.

My own article on the penetration of Southeast Asian cartooning talents in the American and Western comic book markets shows the future is bright for the artists in the region. With globalization and the improvement in info-communication technologies, comic book artists in Southeast Asia can find job opportunities in the West without having to leave their countries.

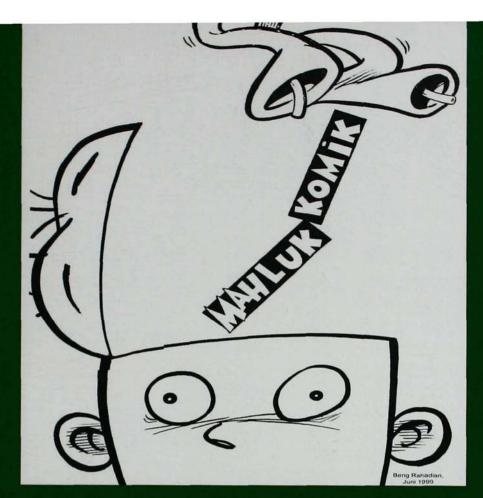
Cartooning is identified as an emerging market by the various governments of ASEAN countries. For example, Singapore's Media Development Authority (MDA) organised the Inaugural Workshop on Asian Comic Art in 2004 which sought to promote comic art as part of media industries, and to encourage greater interest among the younger generation in comic art as a vocation. A far cry from the 'dark ages' in the 1970s when some violent Hong Kong action comics were banned in Singapore, and the reading of comic books was discouraged as it was deemed to promote the usage of broken English.

The MDA has also started the First-Time Writers and Illustrators Publishing Initiative two years ago, and this includes a Comics and Graphic Novels category. Up to 10 projects were selected and each successful applicant was awarded a grant of up to \$\$8,000, as well as the opportunity to work with a publisher/distributor on the production of the graphic novel.

While it is still too early to speak of a Southeast Asian pop culture scene (as compared to the current Asian pop explosion in the form of K-pop, Japanese manga and Bollywood movies), the potential is there as history has shown. Just as Singapore was once the centre of Malay publishing and movie-making in the first half of the 20th Century, Southeast Asian cartooning in the new millennium has the opportunities to expand beyond its geographical reach.

Lim Cheng Tju

Link for Comiclopedia http://lambiek.net/artists/index.htm



Southeast Asian Cartooning: An Overview

John A. Lent

A king hires a famous cartoonist to illustrate two books he has written. A comics character lends his name to what becomes known as a national trait. A humour magazine tops a country's most-circulated periodical list. The comic book as a genre functions as one of the main vehicles for communicating messages promoting a nation's social consciousness.

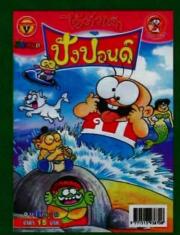
That is the diversity of Southeast Asian cartooning which, beginning with its humour magazines, has existed since the late 19th Century. Political cartoons and newspaper comic strips appeared in some countries during the early 20th Century, followed by comic books after World War II. The 1960s-1970s were the heyday of comic books in a country such as the Philippines, when Filipino *komiks* were a major purveyor of family planning messages, the source of half of local film plots, and a way to promote Marcos government campaigns.

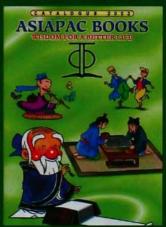
Southeast Asia has seen profound changes in its cartooning, particularly comic books, since the early 1990s. For one thing, the style and format of comic books have changed, due to the influx of Japanese manga, new technology, and a different set of comics publishers and creators.

The Influence of Japanese Manga

Throughout the region, Japanese influence permeates the sphere of cartoon/comics, with bookstores stocking many Japan-originated titles,

locally published manga appearing, and Southeast Asian cartoonists imitating the Japanese style. Indonesia's once thriving comics industry was almost ruined because of manga which make up 80 percent of the market; in the Philippines, there is even a genre known as Pinoy manga; and in Singapore, where piracy of manga has stopped, legitimate publishers such as Chuang Yi reproduce Hong Kong and Taiwan editions of manga with licenses from Japanese publishers, and Asiapac both translates manga into English and publishes traditional Chinese stories in manga style. Malaysia still publishes pirated manga, and artists for local periodicals (Art Square Group, Ujang, Apo?, Kreko, Blues Selamanya) use the technique, style, and atmosphere of manga. In Thailand, illegal manga publishers still control more than a fifth of the market even though a 1995 copyright law in Thailand reduced the number of manga by half; the other





five major publishers produce manga or Thai comics in Japanese style.

Not everything about the Japanese influence can be viewed as negative; no doubt, manga have regenerated interest in some quarters for what was a dying medium. The global manga phenomenon stimulated local entrepreneurs and creators to enter comics production, a result being

that many relatively new companies sprouted – Art Square Group in Malaysia; Chuang Yi, M. G. Creative, and Comix Factory (now defunct) in Singapore; Mango Comics and Nautilus Comics in the Philippines; ElexMedia Komputindo in Indonesia; Bun Lour Sarn (Banlue), Nation, New Venture Generation, and Siam Intercomics in Thailand. To stay affoat, these companies moved into production of merchandise related to the characters in their published materials, games/lifestyle/entertainment magazines, graphic novels, and in some cases, manga.

The New Age

New information technology, coupled with globalization and corporatism, also has had an impact on Southeast Asian comics. Professional and amateur cartoonists are increasingly displaying their works on the Internet, with cartoon-related Websites such as Myanmar

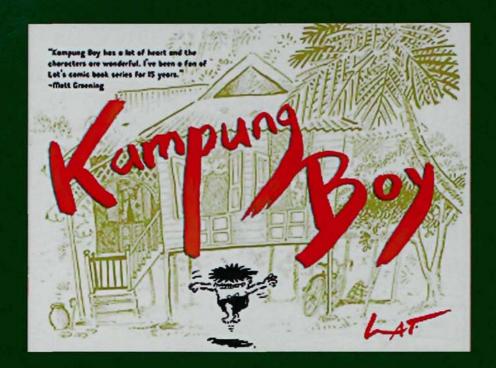


e-Cartoon Network, Weekly Myanmar Cartoon and Entertainment News, Philippine Komiks Message Board, etc.. The situation has changed from that of 15 years or more ago when Southeast Asian cartoonists were isolated, unaware of neighbouring countries' cartoon communities, and usually unknown to the outside world. Lat (Mohd. Nor Khalid, Malaysia), who is known worldwide, now has his *Kampung Boy* finally published in North America; the works of 15

Singaporean cartoonists made up a recent U.S.-published anthology; and Southeast Asian comics are sometimes displayed at international comics festivals.

Other changes experienced by the region's comics since the 1990s are:

- Sales and distribution from male-friendly comics shops and roadside stalls to comics/Internet cases, comics shops, and large retail bookstores attractive to both male and female readers;
- Genres the demise of Philippine nobelas; the rise of graphic novels (such as EQ Plus Publishing's series of Knowledge Comic and "A Day Story Comic" series, both in Thailand; underground/



alternative comics (Althonk's *The Bad Times Story* and others in Indonesia; the Hesheit series in Thailand);

- Adaptations and spin-off rebirth of *komiks* movies in the Philippines; animation adaptations, such as Lat's *Kampung Boy* and Jaafar Taib's *Jungle Jokes* in Malaysia and *Pang Pond* in Thailand; and radio and television versions of comics, such as Johnny Lau's *Mr. Kiasu*, the book that made *Kiasu-ism* (Singaporeans' urge to be number one) known as a national trait;
- Humour magazines especially in Malaysia, where at various times, as many as 15 regularly-published humour magazines vied for readership (one, *Gila-Gila*, actually topped national circulation charts for a while); and
- Role of women an increase in readership because of Japanese girls (shoujo) and *yaoi* (boy to boy love) comics; more attractive rental/sales venues; female-friendly content (*Cabai*, Malaysian "exclusively for women" humour magazine), and more women practitioners (in Indonesia, most young comics artists are women working for books published by ElexMedia Komputindo).



With Malaysian cartoonist, Lat (on the left).



Political Socio-economic Constraints

Newspaper comic strips do not seem to have changed much in recent years. In the Philippines and Indonesia, major dailies still carry a rather large assortment of local strips in the national language, while in Singapore and Malaysia, one finds a mixture of a few local and foreign syndicated strips. Thai dailies, except on Sunday when colour sections of U.S. strips appear, usually have one or two local funnies (sometimes political). Explanations given for the limited growth of Southeast Asian newspaper strips are economics (it is less expensive to use foreign strips), government/social pressures, and lessened importance given to newspapers.

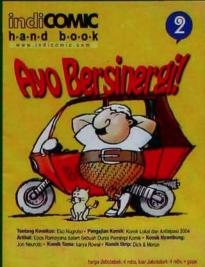
The development of political cartooning in a country, as always, depends on the type of government in power. In Myanmar,

Cambodia, Vietnam, and to lesser degrees, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, cartoonists are stifled by officialdom in dealing directly with political issues, resorting instead to covering social problems or using subtle means to get messages across. Thai political cartoonists seem to be the most outspoken, for even historically-free Philippine political cartoonists face the perils of self-censorship because of the oligarchic control of the dailies. In some cases, political cartoonists have left their countries, going into exile (as with Myanmar cartoonists working out of Thailand) or seeking more lucrative financial arrangements (as with some Philippine cartoonists who went to Singapore).

Taking off

Perhaps the most significant difference Southeast Asian cartooning experienced in the past 15 years has to do with recognition and professionalism. Individual cartoonists have received honours lately, most notably, Lat and Chai Rachawat being awarded government





Darna (Philippines)

Indonesian comics

and royally-conferred titles (Chai illustrated Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej's two recent books). In the 1990s, McDonald's created hamburgers for Lat and Johnny Lau characters – Kampungburger and Kiasuburger – but whether that represented an honour is debatable. Professionalism is on the rise with the creation of cartoonists associations (eg. Association of Comic Artists Singapore); comics conventions in Malaysia (Comic Fiesta); Indonesia (Komikasia); and Philippines (KOMIKON); a planned Philippine Comics Art Museum; competitions; exhibitions; awards; and comic art programmes in some universities/colleges.

Much of what has happened since the early 1990s bodes well for a profession, which was floundering in Southeast Asia just a few years ago.

John Lent, Professor of Communications at Temple University, Philadephia, is a foremost expert in the area of comics/cartoons, particularly in Southeast Asia. He is the editor of Asian Cinema and the International Journal of Comic Art.

Images provided by author

Southeast Asian Comic Artists Invade USA!



Sonny Liew

The world might not be flat like what New York Times columnist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Thomas Friedman has suggested, but it is definitely smaller today with globalization and the advancement of communication technologies. The internet and email have shortened the distance between Southeast Asia and the West, and the development has helped more comic artists in this region in making headway in the American comic books industry. The leading examples are Malaysians Billy Tan (The Uncanny X-Men), Tan Eng Huat (The Doom Patrol), and Singapore-based Sonny Liew (Malinky Robot/My Faith In Frankie).



Penang boy Billy Tan has been working in Los Angeles for more than a decade, having worked on Top Cow comics, such as *Witchblade* and *Tomb Raider*. He initially majored in business in the US, but stayed on after his studies to pursue his childhood dream of being a comic book artist. He received his break when he tried Top Cow's talent search programme for new comic book artists, and struck gold when they gave him a drawing assignment in 1994. The rest is history and now Tan is helming the popular *X-Men* series for Marvel Comics, an indication that he has definitely hit the big time.

Over at DC Comics, it was editor Andy Helfer who spotted the talent of Tan Eng Huat at a Hong Kong comics convention in 1999, and saw



Tan Eng Huat

the potential of this young talent. Tan was Chinese-educated, but his limited English and the fact that he drew for DC Comics all the way from the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur obviously did not hamper his chances of working for one of the two biggest comics companies in America. Cheaper charges for overseas calls (he had weekly conversations with Helfer when he was given assignments for the relaunched Doom Patrol series in 2000) and the internet narrowed the distance between the artist and his employer. This is in contrast with the situation in the 1970s when Filipino artists had to relocate to the United States when they worked for DC and Marvel Comics.

Not all who have broken into the American circuit are working on superhero comics. Malaysian-born Sonny Liew is gaining a reputation in the alternative comics scene in America with his Xeric Foundation-funded series, *Malinky Robot* (featuring a couple of youngsters and oddball characters in a futuristic slum). Two issues of this acclaimed comic book have been released. Liew has

also found work with Vertigo Comics (the alternative comics imprint of DC Comics) and worked on the four-issue limited series, *My Faith In Frankie*. Incidentally, Liew cut his teeth as a comic strip artist when

he drew a daily strip called *Frankie and Poo* for Singapore's *The New Paper* in the early 1990s. He went to study at the Rhode Island School of Design in 2001, and was taught by David Mazzucchelli (famed artist of *Daredevil*, *Batman Year One* and *Rubber Blankets*). Liew is currently based in Singapore and doing freelance design work on top of drawing comics.

However, the two Tans and Liew were not the first ones to break into the American comic book market. In the 1970s, many Filipino artists were hired to work for DC Comics when its editor Carmine Infantino heard rumours about a strike by American artists at DC. He had also heard about the excellent work found in Filipino *komiks*, and decided to look for artists in the Philippines as backup. He flew to the Philippines, and secured the services of many top-notch artists. Ironically, the rumoured strike did not happen, but the gate was opened for the Filipino invasion of the USA with talented artists, such as the late Alfredo Alcala, who gave American artists a run for their money.

Whereas these pioneering Filipino artists had to move lock, stock and barrel to America, today's comics writers and artists in Southeast Asia can do their work in their own homeland (Alcala did not return to the Philippines, and passed away in the West Coast a few years ago).

Some have even ventured to publish their own comic books, and had them distributed in America. Singaporean Wee Tian Beng's *The Celestial Zone* has sold more than 10,000 copies in the US, Canada, and Europe in the past three years. His comics, produced by his own publishing house TCZ Studio, are distributed in America by Diamond Book Distributors (the world's largest distributor of English comics) and are listed in comics catalogue of Diamond's Previews.

Medical doctor Ng Suat Tong is another Singaporean writer who has gone down the publishing route. A frequent contributor of comics reviews for *The Comics Journal*, Ng has put out two volumes of *Rosetta*, an anthology published by Alternative Comics in America, which sought to introduce European and Asian comics to North America. Ng is the editor of these two volumes containing his own comics stories which were illustrated by Nick Bertozzi and Miriam Katin. The *Rosetta* volumes also have the scoop of having two new Lat (Malaysia) stories that gave American readers a chance to read Lat

16

before First Second's recent release of *Kampung Boy** for the Western book market.

Collaborations between Southeast Asian and European comic artists are also evident in the Asia-Europe Comics Project 2006 in Singapore. Organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation, it saw the involvement of artists from Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia's Alfi Zachkyelle, Lyra Garcellano of the Philippines (see interview on page 19) and Vietnam's Le Phuong.

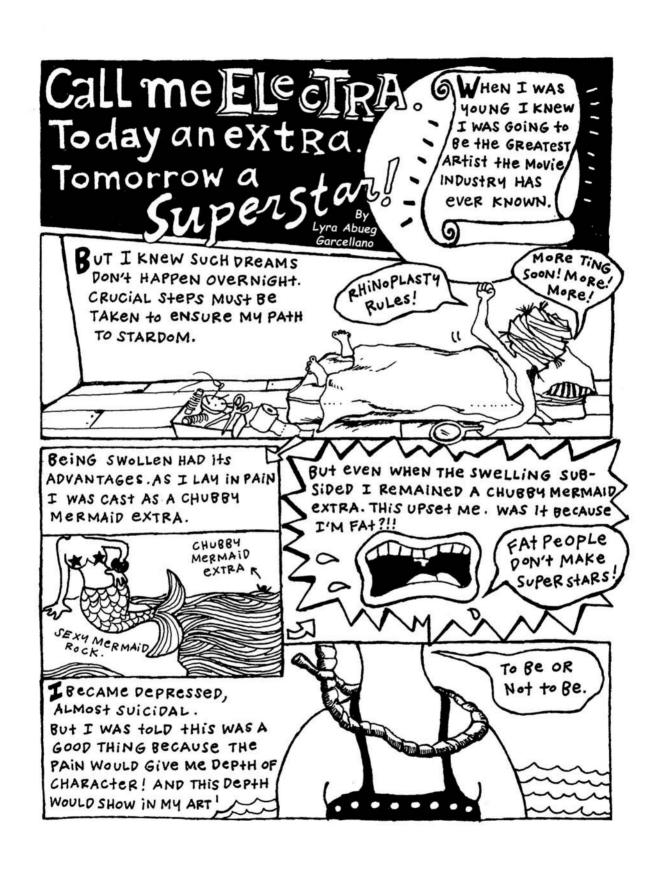
Just thirty years ago, comic book artists in Southeast Asia would have to send their art samples by snail mail to America to get their work considered by DC and Marvel Comics. Today, globalization and technology have made it possible for comics artists in the region to reach out to a much wider audience in the West.

Lim Cheng Tju, a history teacher in Singapore, has written about cartoons, prints and popular culture in the Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science, Journal of Popular Culture, International Journal of Comic Art and Print Quarterly.

Images provided by author

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^{*} Kampung Boy is a favourite of millions of readers in Southeast Asia. With masterful economy worthy of Charles Schultz, Lat recounts the life of Mat, a Muslim boy growing up in rural Malaysia in the 1950s: his adventures and mischief-making, fishing trips, religious study, and work on his family's rubber plantation. Meanwhile, the traditional way of life in his village (or kampung) is steadily disappearing, with tin mines and factory jobs gradually replacing family farms and rubber small-holders. When Mat himself leaves for boarding school, he can only hope that his familiar kampung will still be there when he returns. Kampung Boy is hilarious and affectionate, with brilliant, super-expressive artwork that opens a window into a world that has now nearly vanished (http://www.powells.com).





Catching up with Lyra Garcellano

Lyra Garcellano, creator of the Atomo and Weboy comics published in the Philippines, began illustrating for magazines and books during her college years. Yet, the graduate in Fine Arts (Major in Studio Arts from the University of the Philippines, Diliman), only became a comics artist/writer by "accident". She explains how in the following interview with Soh Lai Yee, whom Lyra first met at the pilot edition of the Asia-Europe Comics Project (Asia-Europe Foundation) last year. Lyra is also a contemporary arts practitioner, having held her own exhibitions, and participated in shows in various countries, including Indonesia, USA, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.

Lai Yee: How did you become a comics artist, Lyra?

Lyra: I stumbled onto this field. I didn't plan to be doing this but it's not as if I didn't want to be here either. So, it was actually quite serendipitous.

When I was in art school I was bent on creating studio-based works such as painting and installation art, which are activities I still engaged in – they are a significant part of my life. But prior to going to art school, I've been doing illustrations for magazines, coffee-table books, and children's books.

It was while in school when I was assigned work on the activity pages for a children's section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer. A few years later, the comics section editor asked me to try my hand at comics.

Drawing/making comics was entirely new to me. I knew that a sequential format of illustrating with a story in 3-4 frames was going to be difficult. So I just kept on studying, reading and exploring all sorts of comics. It was as if a whole new world opened up to me. And honestly, it has been an interesting ride ever since.

Initially, I was told that my target audience was children. But when I started making *Atomo and Weboy*, I didn't want it to have the usual simplistic humour. My fear was that I would have a very limited audience. I persisted with the kind of style and dialogue I wanted. Soon, I got word that although my comics did not capture the kids market, it attracted a different set of crowd. Ever since then, I've gotten feedback from the coffee-drinking crowd, consisting of college students and professionals, telling me that they enjoy reading my comics.

Lai Yee: I am really happy to hear that you are collaborating with Tomas Kucerovsky, who was also a participant at the Asia-Europe Comics Project. What is your contribution to the I0-page comics for Aargh?

Lyra: The great thing about the comics project in Singapore is that the participants enjoyed one another's company enough to want to work together on other projects. Tomas (Czech comics artist and editor of the Czech-based comics magazine *Aargh!*) sent me copies of *Aargh!*, and came up with the idea of having all 12 comics artists involved in the Asia-Europe Comics Project to do something for his magazine.

So when he emailed me and asked if I was interested, I immediately said yes. At that time, I was already working on the storyline for "And Suddenly She was 34..." Luckily, when I pitched the idea to him, he said the plot will fit perfectly for *Aargh!*

ATOMO & WEBOY by Lyra Garcellano



"And Suddenly She was 34..." came to me when I found myself once again mulling existentialist questions while drinking a milkshake (while some people work up angst over alcohol, I get the same feeling over sugar-overload). The story's about a girl who went through life doing the same thing over and over again, and before she knew it, she was 34 years old. I suppose it's a story about the feeling of how life tends to pass us by.

Is it autobiographical? Not really. I may get snippets of my life in the story but it will not be entirely about me. Like all things, it's still a work in progress. But whether or not it does see print, I'm hoping I'll be able to buckle down and finish the work.

20 SPAFA Journal Vol. 17 No. 1

Lai Yee: You once remarked that you wanted to do more for the female comics artists in the Philippines. Can you elaborate, and how is the Filipino comics scene today?

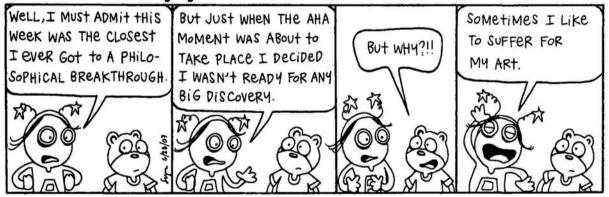
Lyra: Based on my observations of the scene right now, it seems to be "there but not quite there", although there have been attempts by small-time publishers to create new markets by producing new comics anthologies. I don't know if such anthologies made a huge impact. Maybe they made an impression but I don't believe they were commercial success. The one I used to contribute to closed down after 5-6 issues. I was told they would publish the series again in the near future but it's been a year since I last spoke to them.

There are people, however, who still produce locally made graphic novels, and I suppose that's a good thing. But again, the market is still generally small or too specific.

Most comics enthusiasts here are still most likely to pick up a copy of Marvel, Vertigo, Gaiman, Anime or any foreign artist's book, for that matter.

On the comics bookshelf in bookstores are rows upon rows of foreign comics. On one tiny/short row, there may be the locally produced graphic novels.

ATOMO & WEBOY By Lyra Garcellano



But that isn't just the problem of the comics industry. I think that's the problem of the entire local book publishing industry. Foreign books get all the rows and shelves. Whereas locally published books warrant only a mere fraction of the space bookstore owners offer to foreign titles.

I must, however, emphasize that the scene is "thriving" in the sense that there are publishers willing to give local comics artists a chance. At the same time, there are also courageous self-publishing comics artists.

Lai Yee: How would a female artist be placed in this scenario?

Lyra: If I go to a local bookstore, it won't be easy to find a comic book solely done by female artists. Those who are published right now are mostly males. If and when there are female artists involved, they are generally in the peripheries of the book production.

Interestingly, the first-prized winners of the Neil Gaiman graphic novel contest held in the Philippines in 2006 were a pair of sisters; one wrote the story and the other sister did the illustration. A few female artists have done comics for national dailies.

I attended a comic convention last year, and saw a lot of female artists there but they were mainly engaged in producing DIY mini-comics. Well, I suppose mini-comics should not be disparaged against, yet they cannot compete with the comics in nationally-circulated publications.

But I don't think there really is a blatant effort to keep females out of the comics industry here. It's just that, sadly, there is a dearth of female artists who have made a dent at all. I believe people will agree with me when I say the scene is quite male-dominated, and at the same time cliquish.

Lai Yee: Was there a time when you consider dropping what you do, and move on to something else?

Lyra: I do remember having a "crisis" of sorts around 2002 when I was under an artist-in-residency grant (UNESCO-Ashberg Bursuries for Artists) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, studying contemporary art, and at the same time contributing comics to a national daily. I started to ask myself "what is it that I want to be?" I think I was trying to reconcile in my head all the different things that I did. Until I met this Australian curator who helped me to realise that there really shouldn't be a crisis of identity in the first place, and that I should accept and enjoy what I do – both contemporary art and comics.

Sometimes, both fields seem to converge. Lately, I've been doing my comics-like illustrations in my installation art, and I like to use contemporary art as a theme for my comics. Well, that sounds too simplistic but from time to time I do find that both fields can intersect.

Just a few months ago, I was asked to do a mini lecture of my studio-based works at the University of the Philippines. I included samples of my comics along with the pictures of the installation art I've made. Interestingly, the

22



group of professors and students who listened to me were very familiar with the comics I've done.

Lai Yee: Good that you stuck to comics creation among other artistic pursuits. I thoroughly enjoy Atomo and Weboy's antics. What is your inspiration for the creation of Atomo and Weboy?

Lyra: I am tempted to say *Atomo and Weboy* is an autobiographical form of comics but given the outrageous plots that I frequently use, it's going to be strange to just call it that. People who know me say that whenever they read my comics, they can't help but think that whatever it is that Atomo is going through, I must be going through something similar in real life. I had a week's worth of comic strips about Atomo going through some weight-gain changes of sorts, and next thing I know, people started asking me about my weight problems. At that time I hadn't gained weight. But now I have, so I suppose the comic strip was prophetic. Ha-ha!

What I like about that subplot was that Atomo couldn't wait to get fat. So, she worked on having flabby arms and getting double chin implants. The character Atomo, to some degree, is something of an alter-ego while Weboy, her best bear friend, is based on the teddy bear my parents gave me when I was 6 months old. I still have the bear with me, and I'm in my 30s now. Weboy in my family's eyes remains 6-7 years old. When it comes to my beloved toys, we like to think time is suspended.

I try to find storylines from my experiences because I think real experiences are the best sources for creating interesting plots. But of course, imagination has to work double time when there's just nothing great happening in my life. And my life can be tremendously boring at times. There are days when I'll just wake up, scratch my tummy and putter around the house the entire day in my pajamas. It's Atomo and Weboy who get all the adventures, like meeting a genie; owning a talking pet rock; and learning to levitate.

SPAFA Journal Vol. 17 No. 1

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LaiYee: Other than contributing Atomo and Weboy to the daily paper, what else is up your sleeves, Lyra?

Lyra: I'm a little overwhelmed with what I want or can do. Last year's experience at the Asia-Europe Comics Project proved to be very enlightening. Just being able to actually have access to the books, projects, and ideas of other artists from different countries was an eye-opener. The only problem now is the momentum. Sometimes when I get so overwhelmed, I feel lost in inertia because of the so many things/ideas happening in my head.

But once I got back home from that workshop, I did round up female contemporary artists and asked them if they wanted to do an anthology of comics. All four said yes. It's just a matter of buckling down to work and jumpstarting the project, and seeing it done to the end.



I've also been working on my own stories, and trying to get stuff done; at the same time putting together a compilation of *Atomo and Weboy* for publication.

It's important that the anthologies by female artists are out before the year ends. I think the local scene needs some other perspective other than anime-inspired iconography. I think that's why I'm not so keen on the stuff that comes out here. I do support them in some sense but I'm tired of the usual superhero/heroine, big-breasted and small-waist female characters that a majority of local comics artists generally churn out. *Anime* is Japanese, not Filipino. We can't all want to be *otakus* out there. I believe there's got to be another perspective made available to the readers.

I haven't been able to do comics as much as I would have wanted to; although I'm trying to produce the 10-page comics for Tomas' *Aargh!*

I have been involved in some exhibitions, and as I was fortunate to be one of the recipients of 'The 13 Artists Awards' in the Philippines last year, I was busy with work related to the awards.

Other than that, I've been working on some storylines for a 2-page comics which I'm hoping a friend of mine will upload soon on his Pinoy Webcomics sites.

Lai Yee: Do you have any rules of thumb to share with aspiring artists?

Lyra: It's hard to give advice because, sometimes, even if I nailed the advice down pat I still don't end up following it myself. Har!

Maybe the best would be to keep on reading. There are just so many books published by big or even small presses that are outstanding. Where else can one get ideas if not through reading?

Comics always start with the idea and the content. One may have fantastic drawings but if it's linked together by a lousy storyline, then the comics will fail. Well, sometimes, impressive drawings can be a boost. But it's still best to put a great deal of effort on the storyline. It is the story/good writing that sustains everything.

A friend of mine who's very much into the scene (he does comics reviews, webcomics, etc.) also told me that he often encounters wide-eyed students who want to "hit it big too fast, too soon", so to speak. So they end up copying whatever style is out there.

I've no problem having a certain style inspiring an artist, but when an artist becomes so stuck in one style that the work he/she makes doesn't seem to evolve anymore, then it will leave much to be desired.

So, it's really best to do research and keep on learning. My world became much wider when I actively sought out the different comics available everywhere. There is an amazing (along with the not so amazing) selection out there.

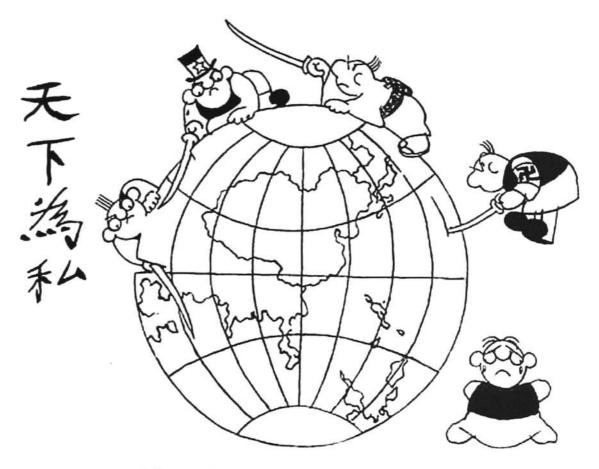
The 1st Asia-Europe Comics Project was organised in 2006, and a publication with the 12 artists' comics is being produced. The 2nd Asia-Europe Comics Project – "Lingua Comica" – will take place in London.

For further information, please visit www.asef.org

Soh Lai Yee (laiyee@asef.org) is the Project Manager (Public Affairs) of Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). She organised the first Asia-Europe Comics Project in 2006 (Singapore), and is a member of the advisory committee for the Youth Expedition Programme (National Youth Council of Singapore). Lai Yee also keeps herself busy by volunteering for arts and community projects outside of her professional engagement.



'An Account of Contradictions'



Niu Bizi and other Cartoons - Huang Yao's Legacy

Huang Yao was born in Shanghai, China, and became well-known for his creation of the popular Niu Bizi cartoons in the 1930s. He became art editor-and-journalist of the Shanghai News in 1933, where he published his cartoon character, Niu Bizi. During the war between Japan and China, Huang Yao produced anti-Japanese cartoons that were adopted as anti-Japanese propaganda material throughout

China. He travelled through China and Vietnam, and continued to express himself in his cartoon paintings; finally settling in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In 1956, seventy thousand visitors attended the three-day "Niu Bizi Cartoon Exhibition" in Kuala Lumpur. The high attendance was due to Niu Bizi (or Ox-Nose)'s incredible popularity. The cartoons were published simultaneously in over forty newspapers, magazines and books all over China.



Huang Yao (1917-1987)

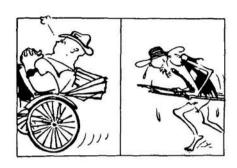
To counter the prevailing misconception of "China as the sick man of Asia", Huang Yao created Niu Bizi in 1934 when he was only seventeen. It became an instant success. This cartoon character began as an amusing Chinese gentleman but later appeared as male or female, current or historical, literary or mythological figures to mock the existing social and political situations in China. By 1936, Huang Yao was selected along with other renowned cartoonists for the First National Cartoon Exhibition in Shanghai.



His book, "Ten Talks on Niu Bizi" was used in schools, and when children were called to contribute to Niu Bizi's war resistance cartoons, there were over one hundred thousand responses. The Japanese plagiarized Niu Bizi in Japan, and later in Beijing as part of their war propaganda. Many significant cartoonists, including Zunzi of Hong Kong and Niu Ge of Taiwan have acknowledged being influenced by Niu Bizi.

During the war (1938–1945), Huang Yao was active in Chongqing and the interior of China, encouraging resistance to the Japanese aggression, exposing injustice in society and writing about his travels. Many of the books were in both Chinese and English (for international readers). One of these books, "Chinese People in War Time" (1943), had flags of the Nationalist China, Communist China, America, and Britain on its cover. For the less literate population, there were woodblock prints of Niu Bizi as "The Military Door Gods", "Zhongkui at War" and comics of war stories. However, because of the war, only three out of over

28 SPAFA Journal Vol. 17 No. 1



twenty books of Huang Yao's cartoons reached readers in Shanghai. The family has been able to recover most of these books in libraries where he had once published his works, but not the major libraries in Shanghai or Beijing.

From 1945 onwards, Huang Yao spent most of his life in Southeast Asia. He once commented that it was easy to get into trouble with cartoons. Obviously, his cartoons had offended some important people in China. Since he was not a citizen of the countries he later resided in, he decided to restrain himself. Niu Bizi never appeared in any political cartoons again.

Upon leaving China, Niu Bizi gave up its multiple roles and continued as only a simple Chinese gentleman. In Hong Kong, an older looking Niu Bizi was a comical new immigrant, wearing his Chinese clothing but his feet no longer turned inwards like a country bumpkin. In Singapore,



the "Malay Niu Bizi" was a set of colour paintings of Niu Bizi wearing the Malay costume, and sportingly participating in the local customs. In Malaysia, Niu Bizi matured into a middle-age gentleman in Western attire, guiding a young boy called "Xiao Niu". The Niu Bizi educational cartoons appeared regularly in newspapers, magazines and books for over a decade, with the final cartoon, "Niu Bizi's Visit to Wulai", presented

SPAFA Journal Vol. 17 No. 1

as a gift for an old friend, commemorating Huang Yao's visit to Taiwan in 1980 (here, Niu Bizi was smoking an indigenous pipe, and wearing his Chinese clothing again!).

Besides Niu Bizi, Huang Yao produced many other cartoons. An important set, "An Account of Contradictions", depicted the many inequalities in the society under the Nationalist government. The

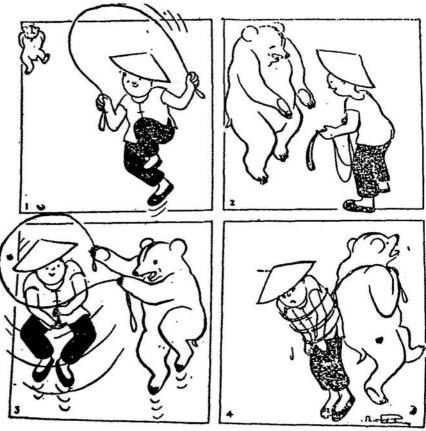
candid cartoons were coloured paintings, and were exhibited in Kunming and Guangzhou in 1947, incurring the displeasure of the authorities but Huang Yao was leaving China at that time, to which he never returned.

In Hong Kong, his cartoons, reflecting the society in post-war years, were published in the newspapers. His work there included the set, "Words of a Child", which illustrates a child's view of his family. In Thailand, he drew his last political cartoons, "Ah Tang", a simple Chinese farmer protecting a small lamb which represents the next generation. The farmer was often taken advantage of by a bear and a Lenin-looking character (was he hinting at his reason for not returning to China?).

character (was he hinting at his reason for not returning to China?).

He did three othercartoons: a schoolboy in Thailand, a non-Chinese man, "Mr. Fluke", and "The Education of a Son". His last set of cartoons was completed in the early 1970s. In "Eve and Adam", he expressed his views on the creation of paintings, the world beyond art and the relationship between the two sexes.

Some of the likely reasons for Huang Yao's success in cartooning were his early solid foundation in literati studies, including Chinese calligraphy, painting and the classics; his keen observations as a journalist; his patriotism and his love of Chinese culture. His cartoons were fine line drawings using the Chinese brush. All the titles of



'Ah Tang'

the cartoons were written upside down to look like children's writing consistent with the innocent humour of the plain speaking Niu Bizi. Huang Yao was unique in his ability to write Chinese calligraphy upside down and fluently.

In his years in Southeast Asia, he spent his time on education. He was invited in 1956 by Tun Razak (who was then the Malaysian Education Minister and later Prime Minister) to visit Malaysia, and help establish education policies. He also spent some years teaching, and was the principal of a high school. Huang Yao spent ten years of his spare time to research and publish "The History of the Chinese in Malaya and Singapore".

Huang Yao became well-known as an artist, and his paintings ranged from traditional to modern abstract and innovative paintings of Chinese pictographs. After a minor stroke in 1981, he wrote about his life in China, calligraphy, paintings and cartoons, including one specifically on Niu Bizi, laying down clues to his life work. He passed away in January of 1987.

When his wife, Madam Huang, passed away in 1998, his family discovered an intact collection of over forty years of his works, from paintings, drafts, articles, and sketches. The Huang Yao Foundation was eventually set up to find, preserve and conduct research on his works, and disseminate information on his contributions in cartoon and art. Huang Yao's paintings have been acquired by renowned museums, such as the National Palace Museum, the British Museum, and Singapore Art Museum.

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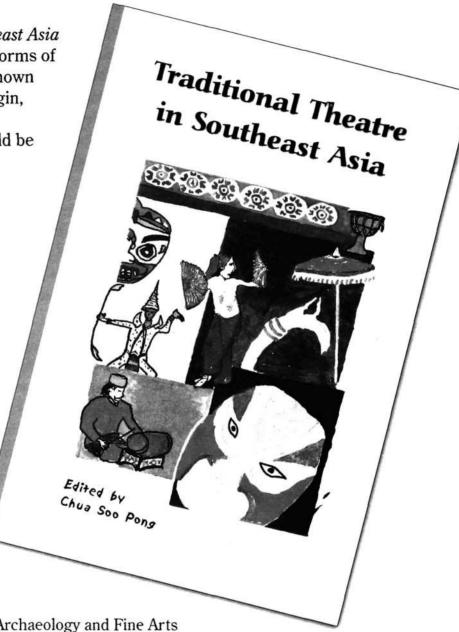
Images provided by author. For more information, please visit www.huangyao.org or contact <u>carolywong@mac.com</u>.

Carolyn Wong is the granddaughter of the late Huang Yao, one of the pioneering greats in Chinese cartooning. She used to be a fund manager before devoting full-time to preserve and promote her grandfather's legacy.

Traditional Theatre in Southeast Asia

9 Euro / US\$10

Traditional Theatre in Southeast Asia focuses on many traditional forms of theatre that are not widely known outside their countries of origin, and provides analyses and discussions on how they could be revitalized.



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Southeast Asia: One or Many?

Book review of 'The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia'. A New History. Owen, Norman G., ed. 2005. University of Hawai'i Press, 541 pages. ISBN 0-8248-2890-9

riting a history of Southeast Asia is a daunting task – the heterogeneity of the region is at odds with broad historical generalization. The authors of this book, eight scholars from the United States and Australia, hedge their bets from the outset. Theirs is not an attempt to provide a single narrative of the region's history. Instead, their book offers the reader a historical menu comprised of five courses, ranging from the early 18th to the last half of the 20th century. It is organised around general chapters that provide synoptic analyses on historical transformations across the region and chronologically structured country-specific chapters. A reader may opt to read the book from beginning to end, but he could as well limit his attention to the thematic chapters or the history of one country.



The future may hold the irony that, like their former colonial powers, regional integration will enable Southeast Asian nations to establish themselves as agents in the coming global order, and will allow the defining of their relations with the coming world powers on their own terms.

The result is a book that does less well in telling a coherent story, but one that provides a valuable study for exploring the region's history. In this, it is particularly useful in alerting its audience – students of the region and the generally interested reader – to the fallacies of focusing excessively on a distinctive set of long- or short-term variables in explaining historical processes and outcomes. The authors leave no doubt that analytical categories such as colonialism, capitalism, nationalism, industrialization,

SPAFA Journal Vol. 17 No. 1

religion, and demography play crucial roles in defining social actors' interests and actions or, as historical forces, serve to explain why political, economic or social change occurs at a particular moment in time. Yet, by exposing how history is always driven by a confluence of factors – big and small, some predictable, some unexpected – they also demonstrate the limits of any attempt to put history into a single interpretative framework.

This book is a precious case of analytical modesty. Since our understanding of history inevitably shapes our thinking of the present and the future, this is not a minor contribution. What is revealing is how often western observers, social scientists, Asian strongmen, and critical theorists – all of them, more often than not, apologists for their own cause – had it wrong. The authors do not discriminate: from Eurocentric colonial critics to the 'Asian fatalists' of the early independence period and the mid-90s' 'Asian values' debate, from the social pessimists who see nothing in 'modernization' but 'oppressive-history-repeating' to the ideologues of economic orthodoxy, 'The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia' offers discomforting food for thought.

Unfortunately, the authors missed to serve the dessert in an otherwise well-balanced exercise in chronological history-telling and historical sociology. Leaving behind the search for comprehensive paradigms is no impediment to pointing out common features that manifest themselves in cross-country comparisons. Rather than leaving it up to the reader to identify them throughout the book, the authors would have done well to do so in a more detailed fashion in a summarizing chapter.

One such feature might be the blend of two distinct but inter-related economic systems in the region's economic history – the emergence of a colonial export economy and the parallel development of regional markets in finance, goods, and people. An easily neglected factor of social transformation, systems of credit introduced by Chinese and Indian shop-keepers and money lenders, permeated the Southeast Asian countryside and monetized the rural economy long before the imposition of western colonial capitalism. And while the late 19th century global economy, dominated by the latter, left no scope for the emergence of infant industries to replace the export of raw materials with processed goods, this blend was to return in the post-colonial era in the form of Southeast Asia's family type business organisations and ethnic Chinese capitalism. The new national economies' answer to the challenges posed

Colonial governments drew the maps of today's Southeast Asia, but the economic, political and intellectual changes that followed colonial state-building were as important to the region's post-colonial development as the 'gunboats and uniformed troops'.

34

by global economic structures, this coalescence became the foundation of the region's distinctive development trajectory. As the authors explain, 'to compete with multinational capitalism, Southeast Asia at first had to find business realms that were protected, even while depending on foreign ties for technology and markets.' By the last decade of the 20th century, production and finance had reversed roles, and this 'Asian blend' of capitalism was embedded in the global financial system, with well-known consequences.



Another feature is the distinctiveness of the colonial legacy. Colonial governments drew the maps of today's Southeast Asia, but the economic, political and intellectual changes that followed colonial state-building were as important to the region's post-colonial development as the 'gunboats and uniformed troops'. As the authors claim, 'Western colonialism left behind in Southeast Asia, when it departed, small but significant elites, which compared well in creativity with their African, Latin Americas and Middle Eastern counterparts – for reasons that remain to be fully explored'. These elites later determined how the created institutions adopted, responded and interacted with the modern world, and how centralized state authority was exercised.

As in any other region of the world, the history of Southeast Asia is a history of human excesses, foreign and domestic. It shows that growth does not foster social cohesion without policies designed to benefit the poor; that free elections do not mean change in political power structures of the end of oligarchic rule, and that moving up the global value chain does not reduce the threat of imminent ecological collapse or labour exploitation.

Immense challenges remain, from setting the terms of political authority to the distribution of economic resources, from sustainable development to the social transformations of economic modernization, and finding the balance between traditional values and social liberalism. Southeast Asian societies are still defining their social contracts; coping with adaptation and change remains a fragile process. Previously at the receiving end of political and economic prescriptions and faith-based proselytism, the region today is becoming a laboratory of the modern world in its own right: Southeast Asian societies are at the forefront of the search for solutions to an array of pressing issues, from integrating the national and global economies to reconciling individual rights, nationalism and cultural diversity, and defining relations between politics and religion in society.

Here the book ends. Concerned foremost with the emergence of 'modern' Southeast Asia, the authors seem to run out of steam once the first decades of independence are left behind and a new phase of global economic inter-dependence sets in. Bypassing the evolution of Southeast Asian states' external relations, they miss an opportunity to add a regional perspective to their history. Only one page is reserved to account for what the authors themselves call the 'ASEAN Success Story'. No indication is given why ASEAN has become the most successful regional organisation in the nonwestern world. The future may hold the irony that, like their former colonial powers, regional integration will enable Southeast Asian nations to establish themselves as agents in the coming globalorder, and will allow the defining of their relations with the coming world powers on their own terms. As one observes the return to the region of what theauthors call the 'Chinese world system' - coinciding with the decline of the manufacturing base of those western industrial economiesthat replaced it one and a half centuries age - we may be witnessingthe emergence of yet another 'new' history of Southeast Asia. Here, however, we enter the domain of current affairs and speculation – nothing to be expected from a history book.

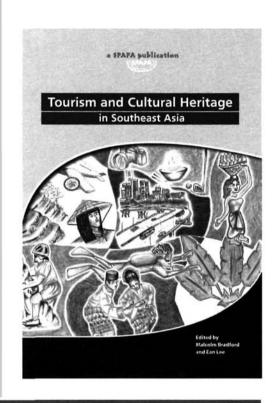
Marcus von Essen, Policy Associate, World Bank, Paris

IIAS #41

Illustration by Pattanapong Varanganon

The region today is becoming a laboratory of the modern world in its own right: Southeast Asian societies are at the forefront of the search for solutions to an array of pressing issues, from integrating the national and global economies to reconciling individual rights, nationalism and cultural diversity, and defining relations between politics and religion in society.

Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Southeast Asia



"What make these papers particularly interesting are the specific and in-depth treatments of subjects unique to the individual countries. Of special interest are those papers dealing with countries that are in the earliest stages of modern tourism development, such as Brunei and Viet Nam."

> Russell V. Keune, FAIA American Institute of Architects

US\$10 9 Euro @2004 ISBN 974-92382-1-4 Published by SEAMEO-SPAFA

Tourism is today one of the largest industries in the world, and Southeast Asia is a favourite destination among tourists. It generates immense income and employment, and is economically beneficial, but can also leave a negative impact on the environment and culture of the host country.

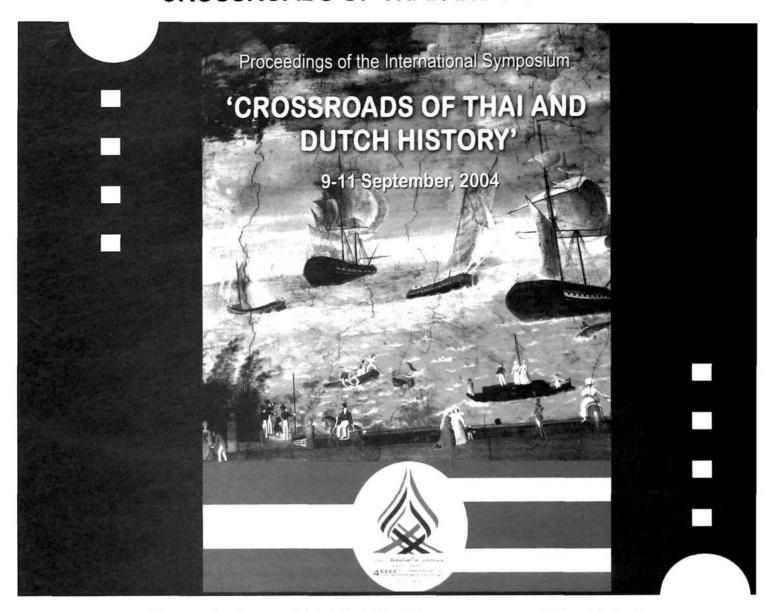
The management, preservation and sustainability of cultural heritage and an ongoing discussion on their effectiveness in the Southeast Asian region are the particular focus of this publication. Case studies, and essays on heritage management and eco-tourism are presented in this volume, which includes information on the effects of tourism on Southeast Asian society and culture, and the measures and actions taken in response to the phenomenon.

Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Southeast Asia is published by SPAFA, and is available at book shops of Asia Books, River Books, all Bookazine branches, and Muang Boran in Bangkok. For information and purchase, contact:

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Ida Bagus Nyoman Rai: painter of history

The Balinese painter Ida Bagus Nyoman Rai died in 2000, leaving behind one of the few depictions of the Japanese occupation of Bali, an enigmatic work that has only now come



to public attention. A 'history painting' that tells us much about Balinese art and its development during the modernist period, it also shows how art that appears to represent history ambiguously can actually enhance our understanding of it.

Adrian Vickers and Leo Haks

I da Bagus Nyoman Rai (who also used the last name Tengkeng or Klingking) was born into a poor brahmana, or Brahman, family between 1907 and 1920 in Sanur, and began painting as a teenager. During the 1930s, like many Balinese villages, Sanur produced a great number of artists; most were very young and new to art. Inspired by Bali's aesthetic qualities, they created for new audiences, including western newcomers who, using their economic and artistic influence, favoured images of a romanticized and timeless Bali like those produced by western artists. Dozens of highly original Balinese artists rejected this romanticization, and instead portrayed the modern reality in which they found themselves. Foremost amongst them were leading artists from the village of Sanur, including I.B. Rai who, at the time of his death, was among the last of the school's first generation. Though second and third generations persisted, the school's influence weakened after the second world war, making I.B. Rai an important link to the school's birth and trademark style of strong lines against background depictions of local sites.

Leo Haks, a collector of Balinese paintings of the pre-war or 'modernist' period¹, had long known about the collection of Theo Meier (1908-1982), a Swiss artist who lived on Bali during the 1930s and 1940s. Meier had married a Thai woman and moved to Chiang Mai, where upon his death in 1982, his wife honoured him by locking the door to his collection. She

did not open it for 20 years, after she decided to back a dealer writing her husband's biography. The dealer bought all the paintings and, in 2003, Haks himself got his first look at an extraordinary record of works that depart from the standard images of Balinese painting. Amongst the collection are a number of works that provide new understanding of Balinese modes of depicting history, including the remarkable work of I.B. Rai depicting the Japanese on Bali. Rai's painting (on page 39) captures the viewer's attention instantly because of its dramatic composition and subject matter.

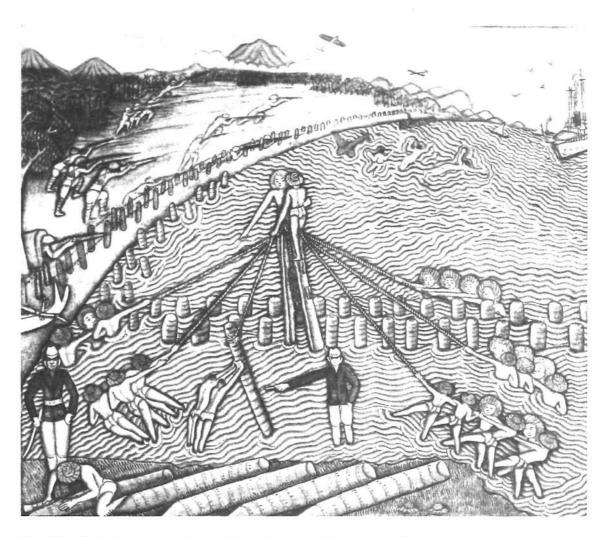
In the background, the beach is a battlefield that curves like a rainbow from the painting's lower left-hand corner to its upper right-hand corner, where it meets a line of volcanoes known to mark the centre of Bali.

Art imitating life?

Set on a northern stretch of Sanur beach known as Padang Galak (Wild Fields), the painting's foreground depicts Japanese soldiers supervising labourers sinking piles just offshore. In the background, the beach is a battlefield that curves like a rainbow from the painting's lower left-hand corner to its upper right-hand corner, where it meets a line of volcanoes known to mark the centre of Bali. As soldiers standing on the beach shoot their rifles, six planes fly overhead; a seventh has crashed into the sea near a sunken ship and three swimmers. Finally, passing by two small sailboats, two ships approach from the painting's upper right-hand corner. The soldiers on shore appear to be firing at the swimmersand approaching ships. The painting begs the question: What battle is this?

Leo Haks tried to find out. Historian Geoffrey Robinson suggested that the painting could depict the Allied landing on Bali of 2 March 1946, although he conceded that 'the landing occurred without a single shot fired by either side. Nor, to our knowledge, did the Allies employ air support during the landing². Frank Morgan, an occasional Bali resident, told Haks that his step-father had served in the Yogyakarta-based Seventh Bomber Group until January 1942, and had bombed Japanese troop transports unloading 'on the beach just at the north end of the Sanur reef'.³ Morgan's information was promising, especially since Bali-based researcher Fred B. Eiseman's data on Bali's Allied air defence confirmed it.⁴ But was it definitive?

Haks continued to dig. He met Wayan Gedar (b.1924), a Sanur hero of the Revolution and one of the Pemuda who had resisted the Dutch. Gedar remembers the Japanese ordering the building of a bridge, which he and other locals used, across the river mouth north of Sanur, and an American air attack on Sanur at the beginning of the Japanese



Ida Bagus Nyoman Rai, 'The Battle of Bali, 1942. Washed pen and ink on paper, 49 x 55 cm. Courtesy of Leo Haks

occupation, although he could not specify a year. During a morning battle that lasted from four to ten o'clock, he witnessed the downing of an American plane; two injured crewmen helped ashore by Balinese 'disappeared' soon after, and were believed to have been rescued by the Americans.⁵

Gedar's memories match several accounts of Allied engagements during 'The Battle of Bali' (also known as 'The Battle of Badung Strait'): the initial attempt to defend Bali from Japanese air attacks on 5 February, in which one Allied plane was shot down and another crash-landed; the downing of Japanese bombers over Java and Bali on 18 February; attacks on Japanese ships on 19-20 February that cost two Allied planes over Bali and Java; and later raids that destroyed up to ten Japanese planes at the cost of a number (sources vary as to the total) of Allied casualties.⁶ However, none of these accounts – including Gedar's – specifically mentions the painting's depiction of a sunken ship. Could the sinking also have taken place during 'The Battle of Bali'?

What do other sources say?

We know the Japanese landed on Bali on 18 February 1942, with only four Japanese destroyers and two transport ships nearby. According to one source, the U.S. countered with 'thirteen B-17 high altitude bombers and seven A-24 dive bombers, without any escort of fighter planes'. The source mentions neither downed planes nor sunken ships.

Regarding other Allied air forces, a more contemporary source states only that 'the Dutch Air Force lost many planes in attacks and efforts to reconnoitre'. The Allies also responded by sea: a first wave consisted of two light cruisers, two destroyers, and two 'fourstackers' that departed Surabaya late on 18 February to engage the Japanese at night; while darkness afforded the advantage of surprise, the Americans did not calculate that it also put the moon behind them, which illuminated their position to the Japanese.

Nevertheless, Allied forces claimed success,⁹ though accounts differ. According to a Dutch naval source, only one ship was sunk and it was Dutch: the destroyer Piet Hein, whose crew members the Japanese fired on as they tried to swim to safety. This could have inspired the painting's scene of Japanese soldiers shooting at swimmers, even though the ship had sunk at night and thus ship and swimmers might not have been visible unless illuminated by moonlight. The same source states

that islanders helped ship survivors who reached shore escape

to Surabaya.

A second wave of the Allied naval response, comprised of four American ships, followed the next day but only damaged Japanese ships before withdrawing when the Dutch light cruiser, Tromp, and the U.S. destroyer, Stewart, were damaged. Dutch and U.S. sources claimed subsequent Allied bomber raids sunk perhaps 20 Japanese ships off Bali¹⁰, but later accounts revealed that this was an exaggeration. Only one Japanese ship, the Michishio, sustained damages, while a U.S. claim to have sunk a Japanese vessel (the Sasago Maru) was false. The battle's net effect was a weakening of Allied forces prior to the larger Battle of the Java Sea.

It does not record actual events but how the Balinese perceived those events and main actors: the Japanese as authoritarian, the Allies as distant and indistinguishable, the Balinese as the slaves or supporters of either.

Painting history

Rai's painting certainly reflects some elements of the above historical accounts, and likely does depict the Battle of Bali. But it also includes

events that did not necessarily happen during that battle, such as what is most likely the 5 February air raid in which an Allied plane was shot down, and Japan's building of local infrastructure – the sinking of piles – using forced labour. Thus neither I.B. Rai's nor similar Balinese paintings that treat historical events is a 'photographic' record. Rai's painting captures at least three separate moments in order to represent what the Japanese arrival in Bali meant to the artist; strictly speaking, it presents a parochial, and not Balinese, history. It does not record actual events but how the Balinese perceived those events and main actors: the Japanese as authoritarian, the Allies as distant and indistinguishable, the Balinese as the slaves or supporters of either. The painting demonstrates how representational works can enrich the construction of historical accounts by providing unique points of view that can both inform and be informed by other sources.

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Adrian Vickers is Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Wollongong, and conducted this research as part of an Australian Research Council project on Indonesian historiography, a collaboration with KITLV. Leo Haks is a collector and art dealer based in Amsterdam.

IIAS #41

Test your knowledge Quiz

The following are eight questions which are related to the news from which you will find answers. You may choose to do the Quiz first or read the news (Page 45 - 54), and return to this Quiz later ... or do the Quiz BOTH before and after.!! Answers are on page 56.

- 1. There are three hilltop temples in the Angkor region that are attributed to Yasovarman's reign: the Krom temple, Bok temple, and the?
- a. Bayon temple
- b. Bakheng temple
- c. Mahathat temple
- 2. Which two countries in Southeast Asia committed to an agreement in 2000 to suppress illegal trafficking in artefacts, and impose sanctions against violators?
- a. Cambodia and Thailand
- b. Vietnam and Brunei
- c. Thailand and Laos
- 3. The ancient Chachapoya people of Peru are known for their mountaintop citadels and well-preserved mummies. What is the name of the site in which the tombs of the mummies were discovered?
- a. Kuelpa
- b. The Lake of the Condors
- c. Puerto Maldonado
- 4. A man was recently arrested in France after attempting to sell through internet advertising what he claimed was a lock of hair from Egypt's Pharaoh Ramses II. The man informed the he had obtained the item through his father, who worked on the mummy of the pharaoh when it was being treated, in the 70s, for fungus infection. How did he say his father was involved?
- a. As one of the researchersb. As a fumigator in the teamc. As a security guard
- 5. The Ta Prohm temple is considered by many as the most awe-inspiring among the

Angkor Complex monuments in Cambodia, due particularly to the preservation method applied on it by allowing natural forest growth at the site. What is it known as to the locals?

- a. 'Forest Temple'
- b. 'Jungle Temple'
- c. 'Tree Temple'
- 6. For more than 150 years, archaeological explorations have been undertaken in Saqqara, the ancient necropolis (city of the dead) of Egypt. What is the estimated percentage of its huge number of treasures, tombs and temples discovered so far?
- a. 45%
- b. 30%
- c. 40%
- 7. A recent paper in the 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences' concluded that the chances of extracting DNA from fossils are reduced by incorrect conservation treatment. What was found to be the most important issue?
- a. The cleaning of fossils
- b. The use of gloves in handling the finds
- c. The practice of freezing samples
- 8. The most ancient solar observatory in South America has been discovered in Peru. A cluster of structures, known as the Thirteen Towers, has been found, and they are considered to be 2,300 years old. Which is the archaeological site of the discovery?
- a. Huaca del Sol
- b. Pikimachay
- c. The Chankillo



fossils found

Giant dinosaur fossils found

Fossils uncovered in Spain belong to what was probably the biggest dinosaur found in Europe. The massive fossilised bones show that the region might have been inhabited by dinosaurs as huge as those in Africa and the Americas.

Discovered in Teruel, eastern Spain, the dinosaur has been identified as *Turiasaurus Riodevensis*, a four-footed herbivore despite its fearsome teeth. It measured around 30-37 metres, and weighed between 40-48 tones, qualifying as the biggest terrestrial animal yet discovered in Europe.



Teeth of Turiasaurus

The longest recorded dinosaur in the world is *Argentinosaurus*, a South American creature twice as heavy. It lived about 100 million years ago, and reached 35 metres in length.

Seismosaurus, estimated to measure 37 metres, was the longest dinosaur ever discovered (in Mexico), and it lived about 145 million years ago. Sauroposeidon, 18 metres tall, is the tallest dinosaur found (in Oklahoma).

Evolution of snakes

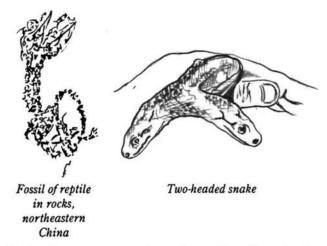
A fossil discovered in Argentina is reviving the debate about whether snakes evolved on land or in the sea.

The creature, with a pair of legs and a sacrum, which was a bony feature that supported the pelvis, lived in Patagonia, and is believed to be the most primitive snake known. Its anatomy and location indicate that it lived on land. Scientists believe that snakes evolved from lizards, losing the Sacrum and limbs as a result.

This find can establish that the evolution of snakes took place on land, and promises to clarify some of the doubts concerning how snakes originated and evolved. The discovery was published in the journal, *Nature*.

Two-headed reptile

The first fossilised example of a two-headed reptile was discovered last year in China, and dates to the dinosaur epoch.



Belonging to a group of aquatic reptiles, the animal was a choristoderan, characterized by a long neck.

The specimen shows the creature's spinal column divided with two long necks and skulls.

Choristoderans are considered common aquatic reptiles during the Cretaceous Period in China (144 to 165 million years ago). The fossils were unearthed from Cretaceous rocks in the Yixian Formation of

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northeastern China, and now placed in the Shenzhen museum in South China.

Trafficking of artefacts

A recent *Bangkok Post* investigation has found that though the illicit trade of precious artefacts is still thriving in Southeast Asia, it is undergoing significant changes.

Khmer artefact

Economic factors and the effects of laws are affecting the lucrative business, causing traffickers to adapt. Many are now turning to the trade in fakes as law enforcement becomes more effective, and priceless artefacts are more difficult to find in the market. The illicit trade volume has dramatically declined from that of previous years.

Authorities and traders informed the *Bangkok Post* that public awareness has increased, and the assistance of ordinary citizens have been contributing to the alleviation of the looting and trafficking of ancient objects.

Artefacts stolen from Vietnam have been smuggled to Thailand through Laos, but the Vietnamese government has been quite effective in managing the problem. Similarly, law enforcement in Cambodia has been vigorous, and as a result, trafficking activities are now being carried out with more circumspection. Temples are carefully supervised, and artefacts have been registered.

Cambodia and Thailand committed to an agreement in 2000 to suppress illegal trafficking in artefacts, and impose sanctions against violators. Meanwhile, Thailand continues to hold the notorious reputation as "the principle sale and export point for artefacts in Southeast Asia," a smuggling transit for Burma, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.

Funds for World Monuments Fund

The World Monuments Fund (WMF) archaeological group recently appealed for more funds to continue with its restoration of the centuries-old Bakheng temple in Cambodia.

As a part of the famous Angkor temple complex, the 10th century Bakheng temple has been attracting an increasing number of visitors who choose to watch the sunset from the temple on a hill.

The non-profit WMF has been repairing the collapsed walls, and preventing further deterioration, of the temple.

Angkor temples have endured wars, looting and deforestation, but are now facing the risk of accelerated damage caused by tourism. *AP* reported John Stubbs, WMF vice-president, as saving that "as many as three thousand tourists climb the hill in the space of just a few hours to see the sunset" at the Bakheng temple.

Peruvian headdress seized

An ancient artefact of major significance to Peru's cultural heritage has been confiscated at a lawyer's office in London.

The object, a Peruvian headdress symbolising a marine god, dates back to over 1,300 years, and is considered an example of the art of an ancient civilisation known as Mochica.



Peruvian headdress seized from a lawyer's London office

It is believed to have had been extracted from the La Mina archaeological site, where a tomb was looted.

Scotland Yard's Art and Antiques officers held the raid at the lawyer's office after much cooperation with the government ministers and authorities in Peru, and Interpol. The headdress is expected to be returned to its country though diplomatic channels.

Asia's largest dinosaur

The remains of the largest dinosaur ever found in Asia were recently unearthed in Changji, Xinjiang region of China.

Measuring about thirty-five metres, the dinosaur fossil excavated so far consisted of the neck of the creature, a researcher at the Institute of Vertebrate Palaeontology and Palaeoanthropology reported.

China, particularly in the northern desert region, is rich with dinosaur fossils, and more finds are expected to be made there.

Meanwhile, a new giant dinosaur species was discovered in Brazil, based on fossils dating back to the Late Cretaceous Period.

The herbivorous reptile, *Maxakalisaurus topai* lived 80 million years ago, and belongs to the Titanosauria group. It had a huge body, long neck and tail, and a relatively small head; weighed approximately nine tonnes, and measured thirteen metres long.

Dinosaurs from the *Titanosauria* group were believed to be the main herbivorous dinosaurs of the ancient continent (200 million years ago) identified as Gondwana (consisting of Africa, South America, India, Antaratica and Australia).

Ceramics of Southeast Asia

About 200 diverse and fine ceramic vessels from Southeast Asia will be displayed at the Smithsonian's Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, in an exhibition titled 'Taking Shape: Ceramics in Southeast Asia'. The remarkable objects, produced during the prehistoric to the present, "provide the focus for a detailed narrative of the migration of pots from their mak-

ers to their users," according to a news release of the gallery.

The landmark exhibition presents the two basic types of ceramics crafted in Southeast Asia – soft, porous earthenware and high-fired stoneware. Spanning four millennia of invention and exchange, the items were made for domestic use, trade, rituals and burials, and they indicate the depth and diversity of ceramic traditions in the region.

'Taking Shape' will go on show from April to the year 2010, and includes the narrative of discoveries, excavations and shipwrecks, with the help of a spectacular satellite image of Southeast Asia, informative maps and photographic panels.

Global warming threatens heritage sites

Experts warned that ancient ruins and heritage sites would not survive a rapidly warming world.

In November last year, the Stockholm Environment Institute issued a report on threats to archaeological sites, coastal areas, and other treasures. Released at a UN climate conference, the report said that the 600-year-old ruins of Sukhothai in Thailand were damaged by recent floods caused by climate change. It also provides other examples from around the world

The two-week conference on climate brought worldwide delegates to address the issue.

The 189 parties to the 1992 UN climate treaty are separated into two groups: the 165 that signed the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gases; and the minority, led by USA, which did not. A mandate in the Kyoto accord demands that 35 industrial countries cut their emissions by 5% by 2012. USA dismissed the accord as a constraint on the American economy, and objected to the exclusion of poorer nations from its mandate.

Singapore's casino design

The government of Singapore has chosen architect Moshe Safdie's design for the island's US\$3.6 billion casino.

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Safdie, who holds Israeli and Canadian citizenship, was the former head of the urban design school at Harvard University. He achieved early success but has also suffered disappointments. His design for a tower at Columbus Center was rejected after it was opposed by New York residents on the grounds that Central Park would be overshadowed by the architecture.

Recently, in Israel, there was a controversy over the urban expansion of Jerusalem, based on Safdie's blueprints.

With the addition of a casino, another architectural icon will be added to the modern Singapore urbanscape, which has been transformed since the early 70s. Much of the city's built heritage in the historical centre has been replaced, and it was only in the late 80s that the nation realised the loss of its architectural distinctiveness, and has since become more conscious about conservation.

World's most expensive paintings - art market taking off

'Golden Adele' by artist Gustav Klimt was the most expensive painting in the world in November 2006. The 1907 art nouveau portrait of a Viennese woman in a gown was sold for \$135 million to Ronald Lauder, a cosmetics tycoon.

Klimt's 140 cm. by 140 cm. painting was exhibited at the Neue Galerie museum (July-September) in New York where admission fees rose to \$50, with crowds queuing up to view the golden portrait.

The painting was surrendered by the Austrian government in early 2006 after a protracted legal struggle over restitution. Coupled with Lauder's record purchase, and rumours about a love affair between the painter and his model, public interest in the works of the Austrian artist skyrocketed.

Rewards are being set and broken dramatically in the art world, with 2006 turning out to be a good year for the market. In one particular week during November, half a billion dollars were transacted at an "extraordinary" Christie's impressionist auction in New York. The Gustav Klimt record sale has now been broken by that of a Jackson Pollock painting which went for \$140 million. The works of Paul Gauguin, Egon Schiele, and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner also made their marks.

Economic prosperity, financial confidence, speculation, and a new generation of billionaire collectors and buyers are contributing to the record-breaking frenzy, coupled with the availability of some rare works for sale.

While buyers now include many from India, China and Russia, the market continues to be dominated by Americans and Europeans, the traditional driving force in the art world.

Top 10 auction sales

Garçon à la pipe by Pablo Picasso	May 2004 - \$104.1m		
Dora Maar au Chat	May 2006 -		
by Pablo Picasso	\$95.2m		
Portrait of Dr. Gachet	May 1990 -		
by Vincent van Gogh	\$82.5m		
Bal au Moulin de la Galette,	May 1990 -		
Montmartre by Pierre-Auguste Renoir	\$78m		
Massacre of the Innocents	July 2002 -		
by Peter Paul Rubens	\$76.7m		
Portrait de l'artiste sans barbe	November 1998 -		
by Vincent van Gogh	\$65m		
Rideau, Cruchon et Compotier	May 1999 -		
by Paul Cézanne	\$60.5m		
Femme aux Bras Croisés	November 2000		
by Pablo Picasso	\$50m		
Irises by Vincent van Gogh	November 1987 \$49m		
Les Noces de Pierrette	November 1989		
by Pablo Picasso	\$49m		

Lost civilisation of Chachapoya

Researchers uncovered an archaeological site in Peru that may be linked to the Chachapoya "cloud warriors" who fought the Inca Empire before the Spanish conquest.

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The mountain site, an unfortified structure, lies in what was previously deemed the fringe of the Chachapova territory in the upper Amazon area.

Known as Hauca la Penitenciaria (Penitentiary ruin), the ruins include a huge ceremonial platform, rectangular and circular monuments, and a plaza. The area had been abandoned for at least 400 years, it is reported, making it a fascinating archaeological time capsule.

Overtaken by the Incas, the Chachapoya people co-operated with the Spaniards after 1932. They are known for their mountaintop citadels, such as Kuelpa and Vira Vira, and well-preserved mummies discovered in tombs at the Lake of the Condors. The civilisation, which existed between 800 and 1475, eventually disappeared, overwhelmed by diseases brought by the arriving Europeans.

Pre-Inca site

A major pre-Inca site was discovered in northern Peru, revealing about twenty tombs of Sican nobles, who were viewed as agents of divine power.

It is regarded as one of the most significant finds (near Ferranafe, north of Lima) in the country, and should contribute to understanding ceremonial knives and figures (tumis), ceramics, masks, breast-plates and the remains of a woman.

Preserving fossils correctly

A paper in the 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences' concludes that incorrect conservation treatment of fossils reduces the chances of extracting DNA from them.

The study advises that currently standard processing and storage, such as washing, brushing and varnishing ancient bones, cuts the odds on recovering good DNA, and that the practice of freezing and using gloves in handling samples is adopted as mandatory.

It was found that the most important issue concerns how fossils are cleaned, usually on site in a big bath that can allow contaminants in the water to permeate the porous bones. Close co-operation between archaeologists, excavators, paleontologists, field researchers, etc. and DNA specialists, lab geneticists, and paleontologists, etc. is urged so as to establish proper preservation practices, and improve the odds for recovering DNA from samples.

The paper also informs that DNA does not survive well in warm environments, and thus ancient DNA examinations have been carried out on permafrost samples.

Whale remains found in vineyard

The most massive whale fossil ever found in Italy was dug up in one of the country's finest vineyards. Measuring 10 m. in length, the 5 million year-old skeleton was unearthed in the vineyards of Castello Banfi in Tuscany, which make Brunello de Montalcino wine, one of the most famous and highly valued Italian wines.

A fossil seeker, who was granted access to the area, has been credited with the find. Paleontologists have been excavating to retrieve the whole skeleton piece by piece.

The region of Tuscany was under water millions of years ago, and Castello Banfi was the sea bed.

Ancient solar observatory

The most ancient solar observatory in South America has been discovered, a study reveals.



Chankillo site

A cluster of structures was found in the Chankillo archaeological site of Peru. Called the Thirteen Towers, the buildings are considered to be 2,300 years old. They span the annual arc movement of the sun, providing a solar calendar.

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Ranging along the ridge of a low hill from north to south, the Thirteen Towers are considerably well-preserved, with each containing a couple of inset stairways to the summit. From two observation points, the long spread of the tower along the horizon corresponds closely to the rise and fall of the sun throughout the year.



The Thirteen Towers on a hill

The study, published in the journal 'Science', suggests that the ancient civilisation could have regulated a calendar by tracking the time it required the sun to move from tower to tower.

Regarded as a ceremonial centre that was occupied in the 4th Century BC, the site where the towers are situated covers 4 sq km. It is located in the Casma-Sechin river basin by the coast of Peru, and includes buildings, plazas and a fortified temple. Researchers believe that the inhabitants were part of a sun cult.

Historical evidence indicates that the religion of the Incas was based on worshipping the sun, and they were conducting solar observations by 1,500 AD.

No milk please, we're early man

Europeans have been drinking milk for only a few thousand years to date, and not before, scientists reported.

In the 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences', researchers from University College London conclude that the quick dissemination of a gene which allows humans to gain the benefits of milk demonstrated evolutionary movement.

Analysis of Neolithic remains suggests that European adults then could not digest milk, but that tolerance to the substance is still uncommon in contemporary times.

A researcher said that the ability to consume milk provided early Europeans an immense survival advantage; the benefits of the evolutionary trait being nourishment; relative safety from parasitical contamination compared to stream water; and its continuous supply as against the uncertainty of seasonal crops.

Ancient chilli grains found

Chillies were used in cooking more than 6,000 years ago, archaeologists in Ecuador said.

Evidence of chilli grains were found in southwest Ecuador that archaeologists said indicated a cultivation for trade and cooking much earlier than presumed.

The discovery suggested that the inhabitants in this region were first in adding the spice to their cooking, rather than the highland people of Peru or Mexico.

These ancient remains of chilli peppers have changed researchers' understanding of prehistoric Latin American cuisine and agriculture, the 'Science' journal reported. Dated 6,000 years old, the grains show that peppers were among the oldest domesticated foods in the continent.

The report also mentioned that the discovery will prompt a reconsideration on Latin American food, thousands of years before Christopher Columbus arrived. He is said to have had taken chilli pepper to Europe, from where it spread to the rest of the world.

Staff strike at Louvre

Staff of the Louvre museum in Paris went on strike, blocking access to ticket counters, making entry to the museum free of charge for visitors.

Those on strike demanded a bonus for the stress that they suffered in coping with the high number of visitors, particularly attendants managing crowds in the rooms displaying the Mona Lisa or the Venus de Milo, and having to constantly remind the public of the prohibition against the use of flash photography.

AFP reported a union member as saying that with the annual average of 7-8 million visitors during the past two years, more new rooms, and the same number of attendants, the demanding work was reduced to only that of crowd control.

The Louvre management said that the strikers were made up of a small percentage of the museum's attendants, and their action was "having little effect".

Taiwan's museum of treasures reopens

Taiwan's National Palace Museum reopened recently in February after three years of renovation costing \$21m.

The renovations are reported to have elevated the museum, whose collection has been top-rate, into a world class attraction.

Already holding some of the most significant artefacts collected by the ancient emperors of China, the National Palace Museum now has more public areas, larger gallery spaces, many new restaurants, etc..



A treasure of Taiwan's National Palace Museum

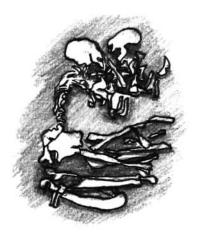
Relations between authorities in Beijing and Taipei have been controversial with regard to the museum's collection, which were originally part of the treasure trove in Beijing's Forbidden City. As Japan planned the invasion of China in 1933, thousands of the artefacts – in over 3,000 crates – were removed to Taiwan on the order of China's Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek.

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There are now more than 650,000 objects in the collection of the renovated museum, of which less than 1% could be viewed at any one time, *BBC News* reported.

Buried in an embrace

Two skeletons, believed to be 5,000 to 6,000 years old, were found locked in an embrace. Archaeologists uncovered the remains from the Neolithic period at a burial site outside Mantua, south of Verona, Italy.



The skeletons' bones were discovered interlaced

Chief archaeologist Elena Menotti told *Reuters* that the find was extraordinary in that double burials during the Neolithic period had never been discovered, and it was an inspiring discovery – two humans, almost certainly a male and a female, buried in the position of a hug.

Flint tools, including arrowheads and a knife, were unearthed next to the couple.

Researchers will investigate the remains, and determine the course of death.

The burial site was found during construction of a factory.

A new human species

A study has concluded that the remains of human "Hobbits" discovered in Indonesia belong to a completely new branch of our family tree.

The findings were published in 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences', and assert that the bones are those of a separate human species, *Homo floresiensis*.

Dubbed the Hobbits (humans with small anatomy), the remains were found in 2003 at Liang Bua, a limestone cave on the island of Flores, east of Bali. The finds caused a sensation and controversy about whether they were modern humans of tiny stature, afflicted by microcephaly, a brain disorder (characterised by its small size and cognitive impairment).

In the new study, researchers were of the opinion that *Homo floresiensis* evolved from an unknown tiny ancestor, who became small in stature to adapt to the environment, which provided a limited supply of food.

It is believed that the 1m-tall humans survived until around 12,000 years ago, when the region was devastated by a volcanic eruption.

Fossil galore in Australia caves

Limestone caves in Australia have yielded a "treasure trove" of fossils belonging to animals dated to between 400,000 and 800,000 years ago.

The creatures, including twenty-three kangaroo species, eight of which previously unknown to science, and a complete specimen of an extinct marsupial lion, were unearthed in caverns under the arid Nullarbor Plain, in southern Australia. *Nature* magazine has published a paper on the discovery.

Sixty-nine vertebrate species have been identified in three chambers of what is now known as the Thylacoleo caves.

These include mammals, reptiles, and birds. Kangaroos of various sizes, up to 3m, were identified. The continent was once inhabited by an astonishing diversity of giant beasts.

The rare discovery intensifies the debate on what eliminated the population of huge prehistoric creatures (megafauna) in ancient Australia. For million of years, the scorched Australian landscape was inhabited by large animals, such as marsupials, lizards



The marsupial, about the size of an African lion, was a top predator

seven metres long, and lions which lived in trees. At around the time of arrival of humans about 45,000 years ago, the number of immense creatures started to decrease, and within a few thousand years, 90% of them disappeared.

Pharaoh's hair for sale on internet

Thinking of selling precious relics on the internet? Don't. A man was recently arrested in France after attempting to sell through web advertising what he claimed was a lock of hair from Egypt's Pharaoh Ramses II. The man informed the he had obtained the item through his father, who was one of the researchers working on the mummy of the pharaoh when it was being treated, in the 70s, for fungus infection.

Police confiscated the relic from the man's house in Grenoble, and specialists said, after testing, that the man's claim might be true.

Advertised as "strands of hair from the mummy of Ramses II," the item was priced at 2,000 euros.

Digitizing ancient Sanskrit manuscripts

US scientists are digitally restoring rare ancient Sanskrit manuscripts on Hinduism.

Members of New York's Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) are applying modern imaging techniques to digitize the 'Sarvamoola Grantha'

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which describes the essence of Hindu religion and philosophy.

The 700-year-old Indian palm leaf manuscript is a priceless collection that includes Sanskrit commentaries written by one of India's most respected theologians, Sri Madvacharya (1238-1317 AD).

In addition to the commentaries based on sacred scriptures such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Mahabharata, Brahma-sutras, Puranas, etc., philosophical tracts, writings on daily rites and religious hymns are part of the collection.

The deteriorating artefacts were kept at Phalimaru Matha, a Hinduistic monastic set-up, close to Udupi, a coastal town in the Karnataka state, south India.

Last Renaissance paintings found

Two Renaissance paintings, lost for hundreds of years, have been discovered in a home in Oxford, England.

Valued at over \$1m, the two small pieces were painted by a monk, Fra Angelico, in 1439 and were part of a collection in St Marco church and convent in Florence, Italy. The two panels disappeared during the Napoleonic wars, and were found by Michael Liversidge, a former art history expert at Bristol University. They had been hung behind a door in the spare room of the house of his friend, Jean Preston, a retired academic.

Miss Preston was a museum curator of historic manuscripts when she purchased the two art works for around \$200 in the 1960s. She passed away in 2006 when she was 77.

Roman shipwreck

A Roman ship, wrecked with historical treasures, has been fascinating archaeologists. Found off the coast of Spain, it is the biggest Roman ship (30m long, and holding 400 tonnes) discovered in the Mediterranean.

In 2000, sailors found the ship by accident, when their anchor snagged a jar.

The vessel, believed to have sunk in a storm in the 1st Century during its journey between Cadiz (southern Spain) and Rome, is in remarkably good condition, with 60% of it buried in the sea floor mud. It is located just 1.5 km from the coast of Valencia, and in 25 m of water, making the ship-wreck amazingly accessible. The Spanish authorities have constructed a steel cage around the vessel to protect it from looters.

A proper archaeological exploration has only been organised in July 2006 after years of preparation, relating to funds, expertise and equipment. Reports indicate that amongst the many items on board were hundreds of jars of garum – a fish sauce that was a favourite condiment for wealthy Romans, and considered an aphrodisiac, as well as an estimated 1,500 two-handled amphorae (clay jars) and lead ingots.

Art on catwalk

Seven young Nepali artists and a Sri Lankan curator, Deneth Pimakshi, have organised a unique exhibition in which the exhibits stroll among the patrons rather than the other way round.

Based on the concept of 'Wearable Art', a range of art was presented on the catwalk, accompanied by carefully chosen music. The evening show was held in a palace garden in Kathmandu, which included one performer dressed as a Roman gladiator, and another who wore a version of Picasso's 'Guernica'.

As part of the exhibition, each of the seven artists selected art from a particular period, such as cave painting, Renaissance, Cubism, and works which were influenced by Buddhism.

Latest finds at Saqqara, Egypt

The latest discoveries from the Saqqara, Egypt, concerning a number of important finds have been made public. Archaeologists uncovered two tombs, dated between 3,000 and 4,200 years ago, that belong to a royal scribe and a butler. The discoveries also include sarcophoguses (of a priest and his female companion) from the 12th dynasty (1991-1786 BC).

The tomb of the royal scribe dates to the period of Akhenaten, the pharaoh who ruled between 1379 and 1362 BC, before Tutankhamen. Akhenaten was known for discarding the gods of Egypt.

The limestone tomb belonging to the butler, who

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died 3,350 years ago, was found with well-preserved blue and orange paints illustrating images of animals and rituals.

Another find, that of the priest Sobek Hat and his female partner, unveiled 4,000 year-old anthropoid wooden coffins painted in light orange with blue hieroglyhics. Anthropoids were known to be used as a substitute body for the dead. The coffins have not been opened yet, and the mummies inside remain intact, it was reported.

Saqqara, the necropolis (city of the dead), lies south of Cairo, and holds a large number of treasures, tombs and temples, with only an estimated 30% of them discovered, despite over 150 years of archaeological exploration.

Preserving Ta Phnom, the Tree Temple

The Ta Prohm temple is considered by many as the most awe-inspiring among the Angkor Complex monuments, due particularly to the preservation method applied on it by allowing natural forest growth at the site.

In 2006, the Archaeological Survey of India carried out technical studies and investigations on the life-span and conservation of trees (arboriculture), and structural stability of the buildings, reports *Lok To Raja*, a bulletin of the Apsara authority that oversees the Angkor complex.

The group has been assigned to restore and conserve Ta Prohm by preserving both the natural and built heritage, and maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the site (letting trees

and monuments coexist); and adopting a multi-disciplinary approach in its conservation efforts.

Regarded by the locals as a "Tree Temple", Ta Prohm consists of numerous trees on its site with which the community has an age-old association.

Engineers from Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, have conducted extensive studies on the stability of various parts of the temple, specifically where the trees are growing over the structures.

Stone-by-stone documentation of components of the complex was also made; including construction of wooden stairs and platforms to facilitate tourist movement.

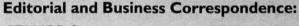
Conference on international music education

The 16th Professional Music Education Conference of the International Society for Music Education (ISME) took place in Hanoi, Vietnam in the latter part of last year, the *Bulletin of Vietnamese Institute* for Musicology reported.

Sponsored by Vietnam's Ministry of Culture and Information, SIDA, and the Swedish embassy (Hanoi), the conference focused on the study of new models for professional music education, modern teaching and study methods, and technological developments in training programmes.

The conference was also concerned with students studying to be composers, and preservation of traditional folk musical instruments. It was held in the Hanoi National Conservatory of Music.

Illustrations by Pattanapong Varanyanon



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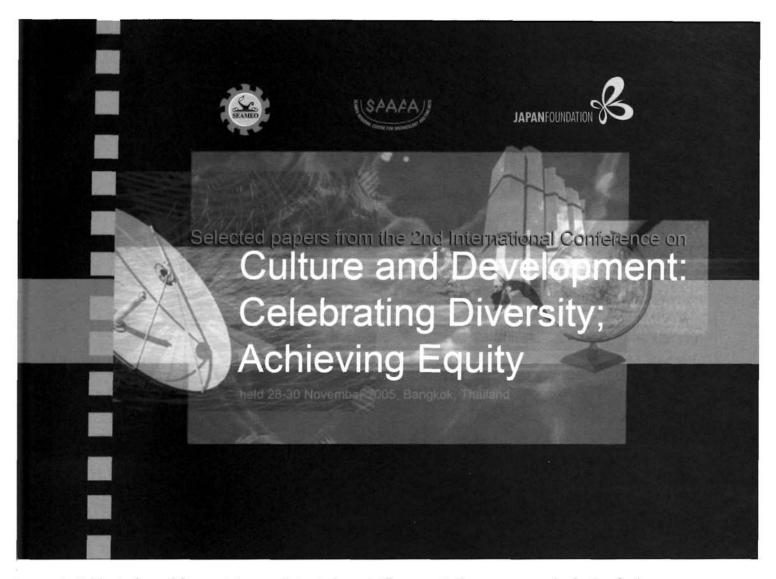
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CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT



Individuals from 18 countries participated, and 47 presentations were made, in the 2nd International Conference on Culture and Development.

This publication is a compilation of 18 papers, selected from the conference, which are largely concerned with the need to strike a balance between economic and social development. The papers cover a range of topics, such as industry, the environment, health, good governance, local wisdom and educational development.

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Answers:

to Quiz on Page 44

1 b

2 a

3 b 4 a

5 c

6 b

7 a

8 c

Scores:

You got 8 right - You super genius you!! You got 7 right - Hats off ... if only! You got 6 right - Not quite close to Nirvana You got 5 right - Take a course, any course You got 4 right - Neither here nor there You got 3 right - Hey, pull those slumpish socks up You got 2 right - Pooh! You got only 1 right - Run for cover!!

