

SPAFA Activities

Study Tours of Sub-centre Personnel Arranged

To provide archaeology and fine arts experts and scholars in the region an opportunity to meet and to exchange views on the various SPAFA programmes and activities, the SPAFA Co-ordinating Unit, since the beginning of the year 1983, has arranged consultancy services for and study tours to the SPAFA Member Countries: Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand.

The two sub-centres in the Philippines, Sub-Centre for Prehistory and Sub-Centre for Fine Arts, played hosts to Indonesian and Thai experts. Mrs. Nattapatra Chandavij, Thailand and Mrs. Sumarah Adhyatman, Indonesia acted as consultants to the SPAFA Workshop to Standardize Studies on Ceramics of East and Southeast Asia which was convened jointly by the Sub-Centre for Prehistory, the University of San Carlos in Cebu City and the SPAFA Co-ordinating Unit on February 15-20, 1983. Four experts did work with the Sub-Centre for Fine Arts: Mr. Aree Soothiput, Thailand and Mrs. Hildawati Siddhartha, Indonesia provided consultancy work in a

training programme in the field of visual arts while Dr. Saisuree Chutikul, Thailand and Mr. F. X. Sutopo, Indonesia consulted with Philippine experts in the field of documentation of ethnic music.

The SPAFA Thai Sub-Centre sponsored a study tour to the archaeological sites in the north and northeastern part of Thailand. Two participants from each member country observed the Thai archaeologists doing excavation, preservation and restoration work of ancient and living monuments. They were as follows: Indonesia: Dr. R. P. Soejono and Mr. Uka Tjandrasasmita, Philippines - Mr. Wilfredo Ronquillo and Mr. Nestor Bondoc, and Thailand - Mr. Suraphol Damrikul and Mr. Chamaiporn Varophas.

Another study tour was conducted in the Philippines. Dr. Alfredo Evangelista and Mr. Jaime

Reyes from the SPAFA Sub-Centre for Prehistory and Mr. Somsak Rattanakul and Mr. Vidya Intakosai of the SPAFA Thai Sub-Centre visited the underwater archaeological project in Marinduque. They also discussed important matters related to the implementation of this area of archaeological research.

To evaluate the impact of the training programmes implemented by the Sub-Centre for Fine Arts, Dr. Virginia Agbayani, its Director, went to Indonesia and Thailand to meet with the Sub-Centre's former trainees. She also did preliminary planning work for the subsequent projects that the Sub-Centre for Fine Arts in the Philippines will undertake.

Dr. Jose Maceda, the convenor of the training programme on documentation of ethnic music, visited Thailand to conduct preliminary preparations for the SPAFA research on traditional music which is being funded by UNESCO. He met with the Thai participants to the project who will undertake the field work.

As part of the SPAFA exchange of personnel programme, representatives from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand visited the Phimai sanctuary.



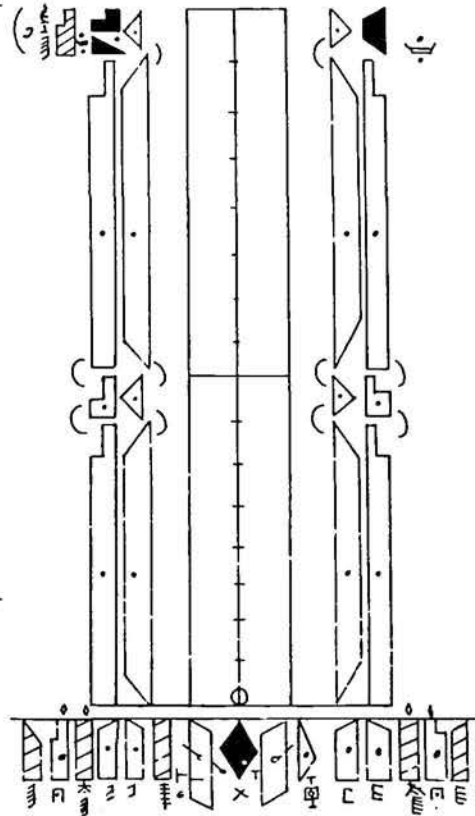
Labanotation: Recommended Notation System for Dance

A project to facilitate the use of Labanotation System to notate the traditional dances of Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand was the major recommendation of the participants to the SPAFA Technical Workshop to Work Out a System of Documentation for the Traditional Dance and Dance Drama held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 18-28 July 1983.

The project involves the conduct of a training programme geared to developing skills in adopting Labanotation as a means of documenting dances. This will be directed to the relevant nationals of the three SPAFA member countries. The project is envisioned as having three phases: the pre-training preparation which will require would-be participants to gather and to analyze materials on the existing dances in their countries; the training period proper wherein 10 to 15 students from each country will be given instruction in Labanotation; and the regional evaluation phase which will seek to determine the effectiveness of the system in documenting dances and the degree of its acceptance by the member country.

Other Recommendations

Aside from this specific project, the participants suggested that the following programmes be undertaken: identify and document the work of the dance masters who are recognized as the "national treasure of living documentation"; set-up a training course where people aspiring to be dance documentalists will get their practical training; and establish a clearing house for the documented dances. Each country will implement these according to what is feasible and using its already existing network.



A part of "mungkah lawang" taken from Panji (the Balinese Gambuh Dance) notated by I Made Bandem is an example of how Labanotation is used.

On the regional basis, the SPAFA Library and Documentation Centre is recommended as a possible Regional Clearing House for all the documented dances and dance drama. It is also enjoined to provide fellowship for the Labanotation programme for staffmembers who will be involved in this activity.

The Country Reports


The 8-day workshop included the following activities: presentation of country reports and supplementary reports with demonstrations and film, video and slide

presentations; discussions; exhibitions; task groups; observations of dance teaching, dance rehearsals, dance performances and Wayang Week Exhibition.

The status of the documentation work related to the traditional dance and dance drama of each country was contained in the country reports presented during the workshop. Dr. Surapone Virulrak who gave the report for Thailand described the general characteristics of the dance and dance drama in Thailand. He concentrated on explaining the training, notation and documentation systems employed by the Thai classical dancers and musicians. Dances are transmitted from generation to the next by oral tradition, he stressed. Dr Virulrak also mentioned the institutions engaged in the preservation of the Thai dance and dance drama.

The Philippine country reports were presented by Prof. Corazon Inigo and Prof Francisco Feliciano. The former talked about the documentation of the Philippine traditional dance while the latter focused on the traditional music in dance. Prof. Inigo gave a short description of the traditional dances in the Philippines. She enumerated the media used in the documentation of dances. They were oral tradition; print like books, thesis and other manuscripts; and visual means like photographs, slides, films and video. She also discussed some of the constraints faced by people documenting the dance like the lack of funds, the psyche of the performers, and others and at the same time gave suggestions on how these could be overcome.

Prof. Feliciano did the same for the music in dance. He gave a run-down of recorded music already

brush tap step brush tap step ball change ball change

 1 and 2 1 and 2 and 1 and 2

Pause for a short while after the sixth time.

(a) Brush L backward (ct. 1), tap L close to R (ct. and), step L close to R (ct. 2) 1 M
 (b) Brush R backward (ct. 1), tap R close to L (ct. and), (ct. 2). Starting L, ball change, ball change (cts. and, 1, and, 2) moving little by little sideward right 2 M
 (c) Repeat (a - b), five more times moving sideward right 15 M
 Transfer weight to L foot, pausing for a short time.
 (d) repeat all (a - c), starting with the R foot, moving to sideward left. Finish with the weight on the R foot 18 M

Throughout this figure, the arms are swung forward and backward alternately in a natural way following the rhythm of the step. The hands of the dancers remain with fingers clasped together.

An example of a dance noted in a descriptive style.

Group Discussions

The participants were divided into two groups for the discussion: the first group discussed the traditional and modern systems of dance notation and the other, the means, types, systems of dance recording and the classification of materials to be documented. The first group compared the traditional notation system used in the three countries. The Indonesians articulated the practicality of the Labanotation System in recording Indonesian dances. Hence, the group recommended the adoption of Labanotation as a common system of notation among the SPAFA member countries. This, the members emphasized, would facilitate the exchange of dance knowledge among them. It also suggested that fellowships for an exchange programme of Asian traditional dance experts and Labanotation experts be provided.

Group II, on the other hand, focused on the various ways of documenting both traditional and contemporary materials and gave some criteria for the selection and reproduction of materials to be preserved. It recommended the establishment of a national clearing house to take care of the collection of the documents and records on dances and dance dramas. It also asked for the standardization of documentation methods and the utilization of computer as a medium of documentation.

The Participants

Following is the list of those who attended the workshop: Indonesia - Dr. Soedarsono, Mr. Sal Murgiyanto, Mr. Enoch Atmadibrata, Mr. Ben Suharto and Mrs. Edi Sedyawati; the Philippines - Prof. Corazon Inigo, Prof. Francisco Feliciano and

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available and the people or organizations responsible for them. However, he cited the need for more research to record the music of other cultural minorities in the Philippines.

Another Filipino, Mr. Ricardo Angeles, raised some issues regarding the Filipino drama. In his report, he emphasized the difference between the problem of documentation in the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. Mr. Angeles underscored that unlike Indonesia and Thailand, the Philippines still has to search for its indigenous drama. The Spanish and American influences in the country inhibited the growth of a truly Filipino dramatic tradition. Hence, rather than preserving which is what Indonesia and Thailand have to do, the Filipinos are still in the process of discovering its dramatic past.

As gleaned from the report given by Dr. Soedarsono, the Indonesians have had a record of their dances from way back. The earlier documentation is seen in the bas relief around the Borubudur and Prambanan temples. Written documents of dance and dance drama have also been available since the 18th century. Yet, written notation, according to him, cannot be classified as the best medium for documentation. Notes, for example,

cannot record the subtlety of movements of some dances, he said by way of explanation. Print should be combined with other medium like film.

Aside from Dr. Soedarsono, four other Indonesians addressed the workshop participants. Mrs. Edi Setyawati delivered a paper on the "Purpose of Documentation"; Mr. Ben Suharto, on the "Chronological Movement-Script. A Traditional Dance Notation and Documentation"; Mr. Enoch Atmadibrata on "Audio Visual and Descriptive Record as a Means of Documentation"; and Mr. Sal Murgiyanto, on "Labanotation: An Alternative System of Analyzing and Recording Movements".

All the speakers agreed that the written notation was insufficient to document the dance. Modern technology like video and computer should be used along with the notes, they recommended.

Each presentation is accompanied by either a live or filmed performances to give the participants a glimpse of the traditional dance and dance drama in each country. Lectures on and demonstrations of Indonesian dances were also conducted. The seminar delegates witnessed how a Jakarta masked dance and some Balinese dances were taught.