

SPAFA AFFAIRS

by Wynette Puntuna

SYNOPSIS

Brunei Darussalam Joins 4th SPAFA GBM

The fourth SPAFA Governing Board Meeting (GBM) highlighted the first participation of Brunei Darussalam as a Member Country of the SPAFA Regional Centre. During this meeting, held for the first time outside Thailand, Mr. Sumadi bin Sukaimi, Governing Board Member of Brunei Darussalam, expressed his government's appreciation of their membership and their willingness to join all SPAFA programmes and activities.

Lasting from October 2 to 4, 1989, the 4th GBM was carried out at the

Garuda Plaza Hotel in Medan, Indonesia. It was attended by the newly appointed Governing Board Members, representing Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. They were joined by the directors of SEAMES and SPAFA, as ex-officio members of the Board.

The Government of France, as a SEAMEO Associate Member Country, graced the meeting with the presence of their representative while high officials from SEAMES, SPAFA, and the External Relations Division, Ministry of Education, Thailand,

lent their support by attending as observers.

Chaired by Prof Dr R.P. Soejono, Governing Board Member for Indonesia, the Board agreed, among others, that:

* Prof MC Subhadradis Diskul be reappointed for another three-year

in case the official nominee is unable to participate in the training.

* Unused scholarship slots should be equally shared by Member Countries subject to the SPAFA Centre Director's approval.

* Brunei Darussalam could participate in all programmes and activities

of SPAFA during FY 1990/1991 onwards, subject to the availability of funds.

* Subject to the approval of the Government of Thailand and the availability of funds in the salary category, the proposal for inflation allowance of 5% for professional

staff and 8% for the general staff of SPAFA is approved.

Welcome Governing Board Members

June 30, 1989 bade farewell to the first group of Governing Board Members for the SPAFA Regional Centre. But July 1, 1989, welcomed a new set of SPAFA Governing Board Members. Except for the Governing Board Member from Brunei Darussalam, whose government officially joined SPAFA only on November 8, 1988, the rest will be serving for 1989-1992. They are:



term as SPAFA Centre Director.

* Considering the possible duplication of ASEAN-COCI activities on culture, SPAFA should have a dialogue with ASEAN-COCI to ascertain the area of cooperation/collaboration in order to avoid duplication and overlapping.

* SPAFA should now proceed to act for the recruitment of the Senior Specialist in Archaeology.

* The screening for SPAFA trainees should be more stringent and that country nominations should be submitted to SPAFA in advance, accompanied by names of several alternates,

Brunei Darussalam

- Mr Sumadi bin Sukaimi (1988-1991)

Head of Culture
Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
Indonesia

- Professor Dr R.P. Soejono (reappointed)

Director
National Research Centre of Archaeology
Malaysia

- Mr Adi Haji Taha (reappointed)

Senior curator
Department of Museums
Philippines

- Father Gabriel S. Casal
- Director of Philippine National Museum and Head of the National Coordinating Unit for SPAFA
Singapore

- Mr Foo Meng Liang
- Deputy Secretary (Culture)
Ministry of Community Development
Thailand

- Mr Taveesak Senanarong

(reappointed)

Director-General
Department of Fine Arts

SPAFA Holds 5th Advance Training Course in Underwater Archaeology

The fifth Advance Training Course in Underwater Archaeology was held from March 1 to May 29, 1989 in Chantaburi Province, Thailand. This course was attended by ten representatives from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. It was jointly organized by SPAFA and the Underwater Archaeology Project, Division of Archaeology, Thai Department of Fine Arts.

The training course concentrated on the re-excavation of the 18th century Samed Ngam shipwreck, which is actually on a dock. Lying on the edge of Chantaburi River, the site enabled the study of the ship's structure.

Experts from France, Canada and the USA guided the trainees. Together they excavated the ship-

wreck's site to discover the remains of the 24x8 meters ancient Chinese junk ship. They also worked to find ways and means of preserving the ship's present state.

The course, which was favourably covered by the Thai press and tele-

vision, also included field trips to different museums, kiln sites, monuments and historical parks in the north of Thailand. Under the present SPAFA Five-Year Development Plan, this course is the second to the last in the series of six. January to March 1991 is the expected schedule for the last Advance Training Course in Underwater Archaeology.

Training Course on Palynology

Nine trainees from government museums, research centres, and universities represented Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand in the recently concluded SPAFA Training Course on Palynology. The course, held in the Philippines, from July 9 to September 9, 1989, was jointly organized by SPAFA with the Philippine National Museum.

This intensive two-month course was primarily designed to develop skills for collecting and analyzing recoveries of pollen and spores from sediments. The course curriculum, developed in the Philippines, provided theoretical, field and laboratory aspects of pollen analytical work. Moreover, it placed emphasis on methods for efficient collection of pollen samples and on identification of specific pollen and spore types with particular attention on Philippine taxa.

During this SPAFA activity, the majority of the time was spent at the microscope/processing samples, which provided practical experience under the direction the Philippine National Museum's expert staffs. Considerations of archaeology, paleobotany, Philippine vegetation, herbarium techniques, pollen morphology



and pollen diagrams enhanced instructions in sampling and identification.

Among the reasons which prompted the SPAFA Regional Centre to implement the course, foremost is the need to increase interest and concern for the study of ecological history and to arouse awareness in the use of palynology as a tool in Southeast Asian studies.

SPAFA Centre Director Attends UNESCO's Consultative Meeting

The SPAFA Centre director, Prof MC Subhadradis Diskul, attended the Consultative Meeting for the Representatives of Regional and Sub-Regional Networks of Research and Co-operation in the Field of Cultural Development, organized by UNESCO and the Council of Europe from June 29 to July 1, 1989. The meeting aimed to promote the exchange of information on work carried out for ongoing research and on future projects foreseen in the different networks.

Offering the opportunity for reviewing ways and means of improving information and coordination as well as for studying the possibility of undertaking joint projects, the meeting was composed by representatives of 19 organizations located in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Among others, the meeting recommended that UNESCO support the creation and development, at the regional and sub-regional level, of professional associations in the field of research, documentation and training in cultural development; promote and support the cooperation among centres and networks of industrialized countries in favour of research and training institutions of developing

countries -- the form of this aid to be technical assistance, documentation, exchange of personnel, etc.; and give priority to joint projects and studies on cultural development within the framework of projects submitted for assistance under UNESCO's Participation Programme.

Held at the Office of the Council of Europe in Paris, France, the Consultative Meeting certainly brought about an exchange of views on ongoing and planned research activities within the different cooperation networks and the search for possible ways to achieve better information and coordination among specialized centres and institutions belonging to different networks as well as leading to the setting up of joint projects.

Moreover, the meeting proved to be an opportune occasion for Prof MC Subhadradis to acquaint others of the concerns and activities of the SPAFA Regional Centre.

ICCROM Supports SPAFA Seminar

The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) paid for the travel expenses of the SPAFA Member Country participants to the seminar on "Conservation Standards in South-east Asia". This seminar, consisting



of museum, archaeology department and conservation laboratory directors, was held in Bangkok from the 12th to the 15th of December 1989.

This gathering of experts was SPAFA's reply to the felt need to raise Southeast Asia's standard of conservation by constant training and research. The seminar formulated an action plan and strategy for such a task.

During this activity, Mr O.P. Agrawal, Director of the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Culture Property in Lucknow, India, and Vice-Chairman of the ICCROM Council, was present as a resource person. Each participant of the seminar presented a report covering the extent and types of cultural properties present in his country as well as the status of conservation facilities, problems of conservation and the availability of training and research infrastructures.

Proposed Research Project on Dance and Drama

The proposal to document the "Current Problems and Prospects of Dance and Drama Education in

Southeast Asia" recently took form when Dr Chua Soo Pong conducted a preliminary survey in Kuching, Bandar Seri Begawan and Kuala Lumpur.

During this seven-day mission, in early July 1989, Dr Chua visited the Kuching Ballet Academy, Sarawak Museum, Sarawak's Cultural Village, Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and its Dance Company, Brunei Arts and Handicrafts Centre, Brunei National Museum, Malay Technology Museum, University of Brunei Darussalam, Museum of Asian Art of the University of Malaya, and the Suasana Dance Company.

The primary aim of this research project is to assess the current issues in dance and drama education in the region. The dance and drama activities in selected schools will be documented on video tapes which will be used as data base for public libraries, universities, colleges and art schools.

Furthermore, the research project will study the teaching materials on dance, music and drama used in schools and colleges. Dr Chua, leader of this research project, hopes that, with the co-researchers in the SEAMEO Member Countries, the project could help produce high quality video tapes and publications promoting the greater appreciation and understanding of the enormous varieties of dance forms and folk dramas existing in Southeast Asia. He says, "The awareness of our rich cultural heritage will

undoubtedly enhance the cultural identity of the young students."

Artists and Their Role in Modern Everyday Life

From June 20 to 30, 1989, nine of Asia's most outstanding artists met in a joint effort to further develop their respective cultural arts and to strengthen the artists' roles in the preservation of the national identity. The auspicious occasion, titled the SPAFA Workshop for Artists and Their Role in Modern Everyday Life, was held at the Sabang Hotel of Jakarta, Indonesia.



The workshop was made possible through the cooperation of the Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. During the ten-day activity, the Southeast Asian artists, representing various fields of arts and the SPAFA Member Countries, assessed the cultural and artistic activities in their own countries.

Observation tours were also conducted during the meeting to enable the participants to find ways of imparting his skills, knowledge and experiences to the community people by stimulating artistic and recreational activities. During the workshop discussions participants identified problems hindering on creative and recreative activities/expression. They raised issues of concern regarding the state of national culture and cultural identity.

In the final sessions of the workshop, the participants gave recommendations for the various categories of arts. Among these are: implimentation of youth programmes; research in the use of indigenous art materials such as dyes, pigments, etc.; the compilation, in textbook form, of the art histories of the different Southeast Asian countries.

Likewise, they recommended the organization of travelling and exchange exhibitions in all forms of two-dimensional and three dimensional arts in countries and within the Southeast Asian region; the documentation of traditional and contemporary art activities; cultural artist/scholar exchange programmes; and awards, as incentive for Southeast Asian artists.

Lastly, the artists unanimously expressed their wish for SPAFA to encourage similar forums for artists in the various categories of art, within the Southeast Asia region. This, according to them, could update and

identify the growing needs of each country in art, relevant to the modernization of each nation.

Personnel Exchange Programme

Prof Virginia Agbayani, through the SPAFA Personnel Exchange Programme, assisted in the preliminary survey of the proposed SPAFA Research Project on Textbook Development for Art Education in Southeast Asia in June 1989.

A Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines, Prof Agbayani is one of the Philippines' foremost art educators. She is also not new to SPAFA; from 1980 to 1987, she was Director of the SPAFA Sub-Centre for the Philippines. At present she is the World Councilor, for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, of the International Society for Education Through Art (INSEA).

Prof Agbayani was invited by SPAFA through the initiative of Prof Bertoldo J. Manta, SPAFA Senior Specialist in Visual Arts and the Project Leader for the Research Project on Textbooks Development for Art Education in Southeast Asia. In the preliminary survey, both professors identified institutions and universities involved in the development of art education. During the survey, they also laid out the criteria for the implementation of the research project.

Although the proposed research project has already gained a US\$ 5,000.00 support from UNESCO's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture, it is still needful of financial support for full implementation. This project on Textbooks Development for Art Education in Southeast

Asia covers the performing arts of dance, drama and music, the functional and non-functional arts and design, in addition to visual arts, architecture and the mass media.

The research project is intended to provide provocative insights into the methods of teaching and the use of appropriate textbooks and teaching materials for art education. It is, according to Prof Manta, envisioned to facilitate more effective planning of national art education programmes.

SPAFA Library and Documentation Services



Since the reconstitution of SPAFA into a regional centre in 1987, the Library and Documentation Services of SPAFA has undergone changes. It is now divided into four units, namely: Library, Clearing House, Documentation, and Audio-Visual. Prof Khunying Maenmas Chavalit, SPAFA Library and Documentation Officer, explains the new set up as follows:

The Library Unit

The library's collection consists of monographs (*books*), serials (*occasional papers issued in series, professional journals*), research reports, reports on seminars/meetings/symposium and training courses, and

clippings on archaeology, fine arts and other related subjects.

The catalogue of materials received by the library during the period 1975-1989 are in card formats. For materials on archaeology and fine arts, a union catalogue is available. However, starting from 1989, the general cataloging of the library will be computerized and outputs from the data base will be in the form of computer disk or hard copy, as requested by users.

The Clearing House Unit

This unit undertakes the editing and publication of information materials related to SPAFA and its activities; storing, distribution and management of all publications produced by the unit.

The Documentation Unit

Concentrating on the documentation of archaeology and the fine arts, this unit selects and processes information data on relevant subjects, the outputs of which are in the form of subject bibliographies. The unit also collects data on antiquities and compiles directories of historical and archaeological sites and monuments of Southeast Asia as well as reading lists on special subjects for SPAFA training courses/workshops.

The Audio-Visual Unit

Mainly for the reproduction of the Regional Centre's information materials, this unit is also responsible for the acquisition, processing, maintenance and servicing of audio-visual materials for use in the documentation of SPAFA activities. ■