

Bulletin of the Burma Studies Group  
Association for Asian Studies  
Southeast Asian Council  
June, 1980  
#19

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Burma Studies Group occurred on March 21, 1980, at the Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. The following were present: Kris Lehman, John and Catherine Ferguson, Joseph Silverstein, Edith Piness, Edwin Martin, Lucian Hanks, Robert T. Myaing, Edward Law-Yone, Kirsten Andersen, Than Lwin, Maureen Aung Thwin, Marta Nicholas, John Thomson, James and Helen Poe, John and Betty Musgrave, Margaret Aung Thwin, Millidge Walker, Charles Keyes, Tin Tin Nu Raschid, Sao Yin Sita, Helen Turchello, Irene Khin Khin and Vernon Jensen, Maung Maung Gyi, Tun Aung Chain, Izabella van Raalte, Paul Sarno, Herbert Spivak, David Hytha, James Riley, and Leedom Lefferts, and Sarah and Konrad Bekker, and David Steinberg.

This was the greatest gathering of souls ever recorded for any annual meeting. They were witness to historic events as a radical shift in leadership took place. Our dauntless chairman, F. K. Lehman, deftly released the reins of power to your secretary, John Ferguson, who has agreed to serve for a year while our former chairman is in Burma. Your new chairman, sensing the group's will, asked Jon Wiant, without warning, to serve as secretary. Jon with consummate grace agreed and will prepare the Bulletins after this one. Please send all correspondence to him at the following address:

112 W. Greenway Blvd.  
Falls Church, Virginia 22046  
Tel. 703-533-7834

Discussion was held on a proposal from the Southeast Asia Record to publish the Bulletin regularly in the future. Due to the infamous irregularity of this publication's appearance and our traditional desire to be fiercely independent, we decided not to accept the proposal but to send copies of the Bulletin to the Record for them to use as they see fit.

A rather intensive discussion was held on the AID Burma program. The sense of the meeting was that your chairman should act on behalf of the Burma Studies Group in the event that cuts in budgeting might take place (It later turned out that there was no need for your chairman to act on the matter.).

Due to the financial wizardry of our former chairman, over nine hundred dollars is available in our SEAC account. The group approved the idea of using those funds to help pay travel and room costs for essential people coming to next fall's Colloquium at Denison.

Plans for the Colloquium were discussed as outlined below.

Kris Lehman was commended and thanked for his valuable and most helpful Burma bibliography published in the last Bulletin.

Again the request of Bardwell Smith of the Sri Lanka Studies Group was presented for an indication of interest in some future Sri Lanka-Burma panels. The group's opinion seemed to be that such cooperation would be most appropriate at AAS meetings rather than at the Colloquium.

There being no more business, many members of the group proceeded to storm the second floor of the Thai Orchid restaurant, where we eagerly consumed everything set before us, so kindly arranged by David Steinberg. As usual it was a grand and happy occasion.

Third Burma Studies Group Colloquium

Plans for the Colloquium are moving along nicely.

Papers. We are very pleased with the enthusiastic response from our membership. We are in contact with over fifteen people who are working on papers, and if you would like to present a paper and have not contacted us, please do so as soon as possible. Remember also that we very much like to have short reports on "Work in Progress" which can be informally given at the Colloquium. At the moment it would appear that we will have a really comprehensive group of presentations that should create an exciting meeting. Details will be mailed later on topics and speakers.

Lodging. The Granville Inn at an earlier stage became confused about making reservations for the Colloquium. The Inn may have informed you that there was no room, when actually there was room! We attach reservation cards on copies of this Bulletin for those we know will be attending. If your Bulletin has no reservation card attached and you wish to make reservations, simply call the Inn at 614-587-3333 or write The Granville Inn, 314 E. Broadway, Granville, OH 43023. When you call or write, be sure to make it clear that you are part of the "Burmese Colloquium."

If, in the months ahead, the Granville Inn does become full, then lodging can be found for those with transportation at the following places: Legend Inn, Church St., Newark, OH 43055 (614-344-2136); Sheraton Inn, No.2nd & Church, Newark, OH 43055 (614-349-8411); Holiday Inn, Heath, OH, and Howard Johnson, Heath, OH. If you have any difficulty finding rooms, please let us know at once.

Since the Colloquium will begin on Friday morning, Nov. 7, reservations should be made for Nov. 6 through Sat., Nov. 8. The Colloquium will end around noon on Sunday, Nov. 9.

Travel Funds. At the annual meeting, it was decided to use our remaining AAS funds to help finance travel costs for some of those presenting papers. If you wish to be considered for a travel award, please write our secretary, Jon Wiant. All travel requests should reach him by July 15, 1980. We will make final decisions by August 1, 1980. In your note to Jon, please give full details on the travel costs you will incur (Note: We will try to arrange transportation to and from the airport at Columbus.).

Nat Iconography. A few of us have been collecting modern painted wooden and plaster images of nats. We are planning to bring our few examples to Denison to give them a sense of companionship and attention in a foreign land. If you have some of these figures and would like to bring your nat to visit Denison, we would be happy to welcome them and give them a special place of honor during the Colloquium (Terry Bailey willing!).

Slides and Movies. If you have movies on Burma that have not been seen by our group, perhaps you would consider sharing these with us at Denison, or perhaps you have slides that could be arranged in a program that might be appropriate for post-dinner sessions. Please write John Ferguson, Warnerville, NY 12187, if you can help in this matter. Many of us have materials to show that our group has not yet seen.

News Items:

U TUN AUNG CHAIN, a Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Fellow at Cornell U. and a Professor of History at the Rangoon Arts and Science University, spoke on "Ritual and Kingship in 19th Century Burma" at the Burma Council of the Asia Society in March. Later he also gave a talk for the Cornell Southeast Asia Program. JULIANA

SCHOBER of the U. of Illinois, Urbana, has received word that she will be allowed to study Theravada Buddhism in Burma; details are not yet available. JOHN OKELL, who is hoping to return to Burma this fall, wrote to say that a Southeast Asia Librarians Group is working in England to prepare a handbook for librarians in their field. John, PAT HERBERT, and ANNA ALLOTT have been drafting pieces on such matters as history and manuscripts, language, script, romanization, authors' names, and publishing and dating systems. HEINZ BECHERT wrote to say that at the Seminar Fuer Indologie and Buddhismuskunde at Goettingen, they are working in the field of Burmese literature. RICHARD COOLER gave a lecture at Cornell's Southeast Asia Program in March on "Architectural Expressions of Religious and Political Power: The Buddhist Temples in Pagan, Burma." MICHAEL AUNG-THWIN received a Grant-in-Aid from ACLS for research on "The Origins of the Classical Burmese State." Michael will be teaching next fall at Elmira College on a tenure track. Congratulations to Mike for his recent election to the Southeast Asia Council of AAS. PAUL SARNO gave an illustrated lecture on Burma at the Asia Society in April, entitled "From Mandalay to Moulmein." EUAN BAGSHAW gave a talk entitled "Postlude to Empire" at the Asia Society in April; he is also working on his English translation of Shin Sanda Linkaya's Maniyadana and may possibly have an interested publisher for this rare work. Professor HLA PE is due to retire from SOAS this summer; his plans call for a return to Burma. John Okell and Patricia Herbert published a piece on Burmese names and cataloguing in International Cataloguing 7,4. Oct./Dec., 1978. John also collaborated with KEITH BOSLEY in a translation of five Burmese poems published in The Elek Book of Oriental Verse (ed. Keith Bosley), London: Elek, 1979. MICHAEL ROBINSON and LEWIS SHAW, two British numismatic enthusiasts, have almost finished a book on Burmese coins and are seeking a publisher. BBC TV showed a documentary film recently of footage shot in Burma in 1978, entitled "The Haunted Land." Those who have seen the film are fairly enthusiastic about its coverage of contemporary Burma. Argus Communications, 7440 Natchez Ave., Niles, IL 60648, have published a filmstrip and cassette on Burmese Buddhism. The MAHASI SAYADAW and other monks visited both the U.S. and England last year; plans are now under way for a Burmese Theravada center in Washington, D.C. U REVATADDHAMMA, a Burmese monk, has been residing in Birmingham, England, for 2 or 3 years now. TORU ONO of Osaka U. of Foreign Studies has published a book on the paintings of Pagan, with illustrations that John Okell describes as "splendidly produced" (title not available). RYUJI OKUDAIRA (U Thit-sa) of the Japan Foreign Service, who is currently in the embassy at London, has spent 7 years in Burma and collects materials on the Burmese Dama-that. MARGARET AUNG THWIN has begun work on a "Burmese Oral History Project" with Burmese in the Miami area. Margaret has been working with HAZEL HITSON on the project. The second issue of the Burma Newsletter is out, published by The Asia Society, 112 E. 64th St., NYC 10021. DAVID STEINBERG, JON WIANT, LIONEL LANDRY, and JOSEF SILVERSTEIN had a panel discussion on Burma at The Asia Society in Washington, D.C. JOHN FERGUSON gave a talk on Weikzas, with slides, at The Asia Society in May. BILL SOLHEIM writes from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, where he has been spending the year; he reports a "moderate sized Burmese community" there. He expects to return to Hawaii in July. MURIEL WILLIAMSON sent me two offprints of papers she has published: "A biographical note on Mya-wadi Wun-gyi U Sa, Burmese poet and composer" in Musice Asiatics, Vol. 2, Oxford U. Press, 1980; and "The basic tune of a late eighteenth-century Burmese classical song" in the same volume edited by L.E.R. Picken. (I am indebted to John Okell for most of the news about Burma activity in England.)

Please send future news items to our secretary, Jon Wiant.

John P. Ferguson  
Chairman  
Burma Studies Group