

BULLETIN OF THE BURMA STUDIES GROUP
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#39

The Center for Burma Studies Dedication

On July 29-30, Burma scholars and Burmese living in America converged on DeKalb, Illinois, for the inauguration of the Center for Burma Studies at Northern Illinois University. Dedication of the new Center was enhanced by the magnificent collection of Burmese art donated to the Burmese Studies Foundation by Dr. Sarah Bekker. Also on exhibit in the University library were old Burmese parabaiks, kammawasas, and palm leaf manuscripts given by Paul J. Bennett.

The opening ceremony on July 29 was held in the Swen Parson Gallery, surrounded by the golden beauty of the Bekker collection given in memory of Konrad Bekker, an enthusiastic Burma Studies Group member always. Presiding was Dr. Richard Cooler, Director of the Center for Burma Studies, whose enthusiasm and hard work is largely responsible for bringing the Center to Northern Illinois University. Joining him for this auspicious occasion was Dr. John LaTourette, President of NIU, whose support for the project has been strong.

Also greeting the assembled participants was Dr. F. K. Lehman, President of the Burma Studies Group and Chairman of the Board of the Burma Studies Foundation.

Speakers following Dr. Lehman included Dr. John P. Ferguson, Secretary of the Burma Studies Group and of the Foundation, U Tin Hla of the Burmese Buddhist Association of Chicago, and Sunda Kingsley for the Burma-America Buddhist Association of Silver Spring, Md.

The Center was then formally dedicated by the Venerable Kaba-Aye Sayadaw, U Pannadipa of the Burma Buddhist Mangala Rama monastery in Silver Spring, Maryland. Reverend U Pannadipa translated much of the service given first in Pali. The audience took the Precepts, and U Pannadipa gave blessings to make the Center free of evils. He also gave auspicious gifts to the Center.

Following lunch, the scholarly work of the Center was inaugurated by two panels. The first, on "Burmese Arts: Ceramics and Paper," was presided over by John Ferguson. William G. Solheim described the early international trading patterns suggested by pottery of the Pyu era; Thecla Cooler discussed the technically brilliant, but ultimately abandoned, effort of early Pagan craftsmen to apply glazes to stone as well as to pottery; H. Leedom Leffert presented an illustrated description of modern Burmese pottery making, especially that at Twante; and Donna Koretsky described how paper is made in Burma

and showed samples of the very special paper produced in Mandalay for use in beating gold leaf.

The second panel, on "Burmese Art and History," was presided over by Michael Aung Thwin. Presenters were Sunait Chutintaranond, who compared the concept of cakravartin (universal kingship) in early modern Burma and Siam; Dr. Sarah Bekker, who described and illustrated the origins and progressive humanization of depictions of Burmese nats; and U Thaug, who discussed and read, in Burmese and in translation, themes from classical and contemporary Burmese songs.

A reception in the Swen Parson Gallery was enlivened by demonstrations of Burmese classical dancing by Phymar Tin and Ohnmar Tin, and of traditional music by Maung Maung Tin and Paul Myo Kywe.

The evening closed with an address by the distinguished Burmese historian U Than Tun, discussing his ongoing transcription and translation of the extant corpus of Burmese Royal orders and instructions, extending over many centuries, which will provide a major new source for Burmese historians at home and abroad.

Many events were recorded by Mrs. Myint Zaw Lwin for the Voice of America, which broadcasted excerpts to Burma the next day.

The next day F. K. Lehman moderated a session on "Religious Issues in Burma." Ingrid Jordt compared women who renounce the world in Burma and Thailand. Juliane Schober dealt with Buddhist "mysticism" in Burma, stressing the htwet yat pauk. Mark Woodward talked about lay Buddhism in early colonial days.

Juliane Schober moderated a lively session on social issues, with Aye Kyaw's dealing with the status of women in family law and Daw Yee Yee Lay Stein's discussing the adjustments Burmese women have to face when living in America.

The Burma Studies Group met. The Foundation is applying to IRS for status so that gifts to the Foundation will be tax deductible. Until the IRS decision, donors were urged to loan materials to the Center. When the IRS status is achieved, then the donors should cancel the loans and give the materials to the Burma Studies Foundation, which in turn will give them to the Center for Burma Studies, but the Foundation will then be responsible to ensure that the donated items are always properly treated and used. The Burma Studies Group decided to have its next colloquium at DeKalb in the fall of 1988 (date not determined. Cooler to check.) and not have an official group activity at the SEASSI sessions at Hawaii next summer, but about a dozen of the Group are planning to go as individuals. The

Group decided in 1988 a flat fee would be charged members for receiving all our regular publications: thus Bulletin, Aung Thwin Burma Newsletter, and Announcements and such from the Center. Richard Cooler is to determine if a \$10 or \$15 fee is most appropriate, taking into consideration the Center's finances.

Nathaniel Tarn suggested that a Burma philatelic collection be formed and donated to the Center. He offered to help organize the effort. Interested parties can write him at Box 566, Tesuque, NM 87574.

A tribute was paid to the memory of the late Saimong Mangrai by John Musgrave.

Announcement was made of intent by Muriel Williamson to donate to the Center, through the Foundation, a collection of over 8,000 color slides on Burma made by Muriel and her late husband Robert. Burma Studies Group members will remember seeing a number of these fine photographs in programs presented by Muriel over the years. Also important in this collection is the valuable documentation which accompanies them.

Discussion was held on the advantages of the Center's having its own Apple Computer with the proper enhanced software. Cost estimates were \$1200 for the hardware and \$3000 for the software. Potential binary devas in the wings are urged to consider the tax advantages of donating funds to the Foundation for such a cause.

Keynote Speaker at Dedication

On Wednesday Evening, the President of N.I.U., Dr. John LaTourette, very generously hosted a Southeast Asian dinner for Conference participants at which the Provost of the University, Kendall Baker, welcomed guests and pledged support to the Center.

On the evening of the second day the Honorable U Nu, former Prime Minister of Burma and esteemed Buddhist scholar, gave the keynote address to a packed room. With erudition and wit, U Nu spoke about the nats of Burma, with particular attention to Western misunderstandings of such beings. A reception followed.

Other Programs and Events on Burma at DeKalb

A panel discussion on bibliographic resources for Burma was held by John Badgley and William Tuchrello. This far-ranging panel reported on library holdings in Burma and around the world, including a look at what is being researched today and who has access in Burma -- all this done, hopefully, not to "trivialize knowledge," as John put it. With some good fortune, much of this important material can be published by the

Center for Burma Studies.

At the anthropology museum an exhibit on Burma was open, complete with a slide show and music.

On Saturday an open house was held at the spacious, newly painted quarters of the new Center: The Center for Burma Studies, 140 Carroll Ave., Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115 (Tel. 815-753-0512).

NEWS FROM THE BAZAAR

Josef Silverstein has been informed that we will have a back-to-back panel on Burma at the AAS San Francisco meeting March 25-27, 1988. The panels on Friday afternoon review the latest 40 years of Burma's independence. Join us there.

The new director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University is MICHAEL AUNG THWIN. Mike will start his duties for the fall term. He succeeds Ronald Provencher at the post. (The Center is a separate entity from the Center for Burma Studies) [Ed.].

This issue of the Bulletin is edited by your familiar friend always found lounging under the faded umbrella at the bazaar, but he has been joined this time by a fugitive from the sun, HUGH C. MAC DOUGALL, our new co-editor. Hugh is most welcome.

Hugh is also preparing for our members a new publication which is separate from this Bulletin and Maureen Aung Thwin's Newsletter. From the Rangoon Working Peoples Daily Hugh compiles the Burma News Summary. His announcement follows:

BURMA NEWS SUMMARY

A Monthly Summary of the Rangoon Working Peoples Daily

-- The information you need to know from the
Burmese Press:

- Burmese Delegations abroad
- Foreign visitors and activities in Burma
- Diplomatic, political, economic, and military nominations and appointments
- Statistical information of all sorts appearing in articles or speeches
- Significant quotations
- Military communiques and news
- Cultural and miscellaneous information

-- Current Information. Burma News Summary is mailed about two weeks after the month to which it refers (e.g., summary of September press mailed about October 15). Each summary consists of about 10 pages, in two columns, distilling significant

information from the Rangoon Working Peoples Daily. The compiler has followed the Burmese press for some years, and is familiar with Burmese press conventions. Speech texts and feature articles of especial interest, which cannot be printed in full, will be noted and photocopies can be obtained at cost from the compiler.

-- Cost: To cover the cash costs of obtaining the newspaper, reproduction and mailing, etc., the subscription charge is initially set at \$25.00 per year. Individual issues may be obtained at \$2.50 each. The Summary is available beginning with the April 1987 issue, but subscriptions may begin with any issue.

-- Ordering: The Burma News Summary is being compiled by Hugh C. MacDougall, 32 Elm Street, Cooperstown, New York 13326. (Tel. (607) 547-2118), to whom subscription orders and requests for information should be addressed. Checks for subscriptions should be made out to Hugh C. MacDougall.

MARGARET AUNG THWIN is in England resolved to complete her translation of the Burmese novel. SARAH BEKKER will be the lecturer on a Smithsonian Burma-Thailand trip January 9 through the 29th, followed by a trip to Indonesia for the Institute for Asian Studies. Yves Rodrigue, former French ambassador to Burma, has made a number of films on Burma between 1984 and 1987. Writing your editor about her research in history and politics of Burma in the 1930-1940's is Dr. Jan Becka, Oriental INSTITUTE CSAV, LAZENSKA 4, 118 37 Praha 1, Czechoslovakia. CHUCK SMITH will be writing the piece on the BCP for the Hoover Institution's Yearbook on International Communist Affairs.

Retiring at Cornell is R. B. JONES, who supervised the teaching of Burmese and Thai for many years. Resigning at Cornell is FRANKLIN HUFFMAN from the Dept. of Modern Language and Linguistics to pursue a career in the diplomatic service. TIN TIN NU RASCHID is the President of the American Association of Burmese Women. BILAL RASCHID gave an illustrated talk to that Association entitled, "The Architecture of Pagan through an Architect's Eyes.." AYE KYAW published in the SEASSI Journal, 1986, "A Short History of Modern Burmese Literature" and "Adorn With Eight Letters Every Day: Translation of a Classical Poem Composed by Shin Maharathanthara (1463-1530). Aye Kyaw also presented papers: "The Western Impact on the Legal System and Customary Law of Burma and Thailand" at Comberra, Australia, "The Politics of Meaning: Thakin and Chao in Burma and Thailand" at Vancouver, Canada. BILL SOLHEIM will be leading an "Archeological Adventure" to Ban Chiang and other Southeast Asian destinations (not including Burma) next January. The Encyclopedia of Asian History is due for publication this November by Macmillan. LEEDOM LEFFERTS has been continuing his search for Burmese materials in U.S. collections, and he has

shared with the Center for Burma Studies information on the Orr Collection of ceramics at the U. Of Michigan Anthropology Museum, a copy of Kenneth Orr's "Field Notes on the Burmese Standard of Living" in 1951, and a list of the Denison University's holdings, a typescript of Taw Sein Ko's "Monograph on the Pottery and Glassware of Burma, 1894-5." Leedom is also expecting to share with the Center a complete listing of the Smithsonian's collection of things Burmese.

In April and May the National Council of Asian and Pacific Women, joined by other interested organizations in Hawaii, sponsored a public forum on "Understanding a Nation: Burma, the Golden Land of Mystery," at the East-West Center in Honolulu. Speakers included Dr. Tin Myaing Thein, U Paw U, Benji Bennington, Sherry Cox, Dr. D. Haigh Roop, Dr. Wilhelm G. Solheim III, and Dr. Albert Moscotti. The program included presentations on Burmese culture, language, archaeology, and history.

The Cornell University Southeast Asia Program has announced the availability of two fellowships for first-year graduate students from Southeast Asia, including Burma, which will be available for the academic year 1988-89 and summer 1989. The fellowships include round-trip transportation, tuition, and living costs, and will be valid for one year only; it is presumed that holders will qualify for assistantships or other fellowships for the second and third years of graduate study. Applications are due by December 15, 1987, and information can be obtained from the Director, Southeast Asia Program, 120 Uris Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853-7601; Tel. (607) 255-2378.

The Southeast Asian Summer Institute (SEASSI) will be held at the U. of Hawaii July 1 through July 3, 1988. Emphasis is being given to literature as a reflection of social conditions and history and to modernization's impact on Southeast Asians. Proposals are being sought. Please contact Dr. R. Van Niel, Dept. of History, U. of Hawaii, 2530 Dole St., Honolulu, HI 96822.

BOOKS

The 1987 Fall Catalogue of the Paragon Book Gallery, Ltd., 2130 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023 lists the following items of possible interest to Burma wallahs:

315. BRAUN, ROLF und ILSE: Opium-Gewichte. Opium Weights. Poids d'Asie. 240 pp. 623 ill. text in Germ. Engl. & French. pa. 1983. History & production techniques with illustrations of miniature ducks, lions, elephant and other forms. \$37.50

318. COURTAULD, CAROLINE: In Search of Burma. 110 pp. prof. ill. in col. cl. 1984. Photographic essay of a

Burmaphile and insatiable traveller, with introduction by Hugh Tinker. Historical charts and bibliography. \$19.95 [Note: beautiful photos of "traditional" Burma -- HCM]

341. WENK, CLAUS (ed): Murals in Burma. Vol. I. Paintings from Pagan of the late period, 18th century. Elephant folio. 267 pp., 66 tipped in color plates. cl. Zurich, 1977. The results of a project begun before the 1975 Pagan earthquake, so including much material now lost. Includes survey of Burmese art. \$690.00 (!)

675. T'IEN, JU-K'ANG: Religious Cults of the Pai-I Along the Burma-Yunnan Border. 132 pp. pa. 1986. \$15.00

785. CORNYN, WILLIAM S.: Spoken Burmese. Book I, with cassettes. 156 pp. pa. 1979. \$80.00

814. YULE, HENRY 7 A. C. BURNELL: Hobson-Jobson. Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words. 1021 pp. c. repr. 1986. \$39.95 [Note: this dictionary, published in 1903, is an invaluable reference to Indian (including Burmese) words adopted (or adapted) by the British in greater India. Includes etymologies and usage. -- HCM]

Buyers should add postage (\$4.50 for first book, \$1.00 for additional books) plus sales tax for New York State addresses.

Aung San Suu Kyi, Aung San. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984. (Leaders of Asia Series). 42 pp, bibliog. A brief and generally uncritical biography of modern Burma's founder by his daughter. Available from University of Queensland Press, Box 42, St. Lucia, Queensland, Australia. Also from The Cellar Book Shop, 18090 Wyoming, Detroit, MI 48221, at \$6.00 including postage.

Andre and Louis Boucaud, Birmanie sur la Piste des Seigneurs de la Guerre. Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1985. 216 pp., photos. Journalistic, analytic, and historical account of Burmese insurgent groups by two French journalists who visited many of them between 1975 and 1983. Available from The Cellar Book Shop at \$23.00 including postage.

Vum Son of Takoma Park, Maryland, has announced publication of his new book, Zo History, which covers the history of the so-called Chin peoples in Burma, India, and Bangladesh, as well as their traditional culture and pre-colonial traditions. The 350 page, illustrated volume is available for \$30.00 from Liana Son, P. O. Box 5884, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

Southeast Asian Affairs 1987 is now available from The Managing Editor, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Pasir Panjang, Singapore 0511. This 350 page annual is now in its 14th year and includes a segment on Burma by U Mya Than entitled "Burma in 1986: The Year of the Snake." For readers in the United States the price is US \$23 plus US \$2

for postage, which may be remitted by US check. The 1986 issue, with articles on Burma by Dr. Josef Silverstein and U Tin Maung Maung Than, is available at the same price.

NOTE: Only those who have paid \$5.00 will receive Maureen's Burma Newsletter. If you forgot to subscribe to it and wish to, please send \$5.00 payable to Burma Studies Group, SUNY Ag.Tech. Cobleskill, NY 12043.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Charles B. Smith, 417 Sternwheeler Ct., Gaithersburg, MD 20877
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