

The Asian API PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS

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The 11th API Regional Workshop in Tagaytay during November 24-28, 2012

Engage! Public Intellectuals Transforming Society

Mary Racelis and Lisandro E. Claudio

Wide-ranging and meaningful ideas leapt out of the papers of 27 API Fellows for the 11th Regional Workshop. The workshop was held in Tagaytay City, Philippines from November 24-28, 2013, with a workshop theme of "Engage! Public Intellectuals Transforming Society."

The sessions were set up to help the Fellows reflect on the sociocultural realities they are exploring, encouraging them to integrate their professional knowledge and insights into discourse and action in rapidly transforming societies. Their range of concerns was broad, among them: peacebuilding, culture, meaning, memory, identity, adaptation, inclusion, performance, and agency. Add to this: diversity, gender, ethnicity, child rights, religion, spirituality, local tradition, community, environment, and civil society. They also

discussed migration, social entrepreneurship, alternative energy, localism, globalism, social movements, and more – a dazzling array!

The Challenge

Workshop Directors Mary Racelis and Lisandro E. Claudio exhorted the Fellows not only to explore and reflect on their findings, but to venture beyond and Engage! Seeking social transformation means entering into partnerships with people that place knowledge within their grasp and that help organize them to utilize meaningful information for their own enlightenment and action. This entails examining sustainable community initiatives in which people call the shots, underscoring the importance of democratizing the production and dissemination of knowledge.

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The Rise of ASEAN's Middle-Class Youth

API Public Forum entitled "Elections, Democracy and Regional Community-Building: Implications from Malaysia and Cambodia in 2013" exchanged views and shared different perspectives on developing and sustaining democratic values and institutions.

For public intellectuals, already charged to speak truth to power, the democratic imperative requires listening to people and communities and interacting with them as peers. Since local people are closest to their problems, they have the greatest stake in identifying emergent issues and finding solutions that work. The Fellows unpacked the dynamic interactions between researcher and community; theoretical and grounded knowledge; and local and universal perspectives.

Their creative skills emerged as they explored a single topic in one or more countries, and explained how previously ignored social processes and interactions are leading to alternative paradigms of development and change.

Plenaries and Workshops

The four-day program unfolded in a variety of dynamic learning sessions. After the welcome dinner, keynote address, and opening session statements, the workshop sessions got underway. They were devoted to panel presentations, intense discussions, and both formal and informal interactions.

The Fellows' presentations were divided into six panels with individual themes. The first panel, "The Politics of Memory and Meaning," examined social memories of collective violence, their transmission, and their representations. Wahyudi of Indonesia discussed the struggle for justice after the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. Lambang Trijono, also of Indonesia, analyzed peacebuilding in post-conflict situations in Mindanao, Philippines. Patporn Phoothong of Thailand presented a comparative analysis of Peace Museums in Japan and the Philippines, while Malaysia's Too Chee Hung showed his audience videos of performance art pieces dealing with memories of World War II and the atomic bomb in Japan.

The second panel was entitled "Expanding Space: From Exclusion to Inclusion". It was concerned with the deepening of democracy in Asia using case studies of social groups fighting for democratic space. Fadzilah Majid Cooke of Malaysia compared case studies of unresolved land disputes in Muslim Thailand and the Philippines. Norhayati Binti Kaprawi, also from Malaysia, analyzed progressive Islam in Indonesia and its impact on Muslim women. Syvongsay Changpitikoun of Laos looked at how civil society organizations in the Philippines and Thailand have promoted children's rights. And Malaysia's Susanna George examined the organizational challenges faced by feminist groups in the Philippines, Japan, and Indonesia amid increasing globalization.



From left: Lutgardo Labad, Pomsiri Cheevapattananuwong, Tawatchai Pattanaporn and Henri Ismail discussed on "Post-Development Paradigms in Asia"



From left: Syvongsay Changpitikoun, Susanna George, Norhayati Binti Kaprawi and Fadzilah Majid Cooke presented on "Expanding Space: From Exclusion to Inclusion"

The third theme, entitled "Cultures and Identities in Transition", was divided into two panels. The first panel examined artistic forms, political strategies, educational techniques, and community organizing strategies amid heightened interactions between people from different cultural backgrounds. Japan's Yuria Furusawa examined how Filipino Catholics have localized the image of the Virgin Mary by depicting her in ethnic clothing. Noriko Ishimatsu, also from Japan, explored emerging contemporary art scenes in Malaysia and Thailand, tracing how these scenes transcend the tenets of modernist art. Vicente Handa of the Philippines outlined models of culturally relevant science education in Japan and Thailand. And Vietnam's Khuat Thu Hong examined how return migrants to the Philippines and Vietnam re-adapt to their home countries.

The second panel explored the impact of globalization on "Cultures and Identities in Transition", through the challenges and opportunities faced by indigenous groups and ethnolinguistic minorities. Albertus Yustinus Imas of Indonesia reflected on the changing social, cultural, and historical contexts of indigenous peoples living in the cities of Sarawak. Mucha-Shim Quiling A. of the Philippines wrote a creative essay about the lives of the Sama people,

as they traversed the porous boundaries of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Japan's Toshiyuki Doi drew lessons from ethnic minorities who searched for ways to conserve linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity. Vietnam's Truong Huyen Chi assessed primary educational institutions in the Philippines and Japan to see how they represent cultural diversity. And Indonesia's Firly Afwika analyzed how the Malaysian government represents ethnic diversity through its "Malaysia, Truly Asia" tourism campaign.

The last theme, also divided into two panels, looked at "Post-Development Paradigms in Asia." The first panel examined how local and indigenous knowledge has been integrated into various development models. Indonesia's Mochamad Indrawan discussed methods of participatory governance of land and natural resources in Japan. Documentary photographer Tawatchai Pattanaporn, from Thailand, displayed his photographs of Japanese rice growers affected by the 2011 tsunami and the Fukushima nuclear reactor leak. Indonesia's Henri Ismail examined the mining industry in the Philippines and Indonesia, to assess its impact on communities and the environment. Thailand's Pomsiri Cheevapattananuwong looked at various local case studies in Indonesia and Japan of sustainable, alternative energy production. And the Philippines' Lutgardo Labad probed emerging models of social entrepreneurship developed by creative industries in Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand.

The final panel, also under the theme "Post-Development Paradigms in Asia", examined the intersections between development work and social movements. Thailand's Pradit Prasarthong looked at small theater companies in Japan, asking how these creative groups conceived of ideal societies. Abhayuth Chantrabha, from Thailand, spoke about urban poor movements in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Japan, and how these groups organized against neoliberal models of development. Somchai Phatharathananunth,



From left: Toshiyuki Doi, Mucha-Shim Quiling A. and Albertus Yustinus presented on "Cultures and Identities in Transition"

also of Thailand, discussed the impact of social movements on Philippine and Thai democracy. Finally, Malaysia's Kam Suan Pheng evaluated integrative and participatory approaches in pro-poor agricultural research in Thailand.

While the panel discussions were stimulating, the Workshop went beyond talk. In between the panel discussions, the Fellows spent a day visiting communities in nearby rural and peri-urban areas. These encounters encouraged them to rethink current paradigms of scholarship in light of "evidence from below." Experiencing on-the-ground interactions with local people are opportunities to create a new kind of knowledge-based society to which every person can gain access as well as contribute.

When this approach is taken, "experts" are not primarily external consultants with advanced university degrees who pass their insights on to community groups. It is the other way around: community groups apply indigenous knowledge and experience to guide their actions and are recognized for contributing to their society's fund of knowledge. Since they are motivated to formulate workable solutions for their own communities, they are best placed to decide how to tap into the tools and skills of outside partners. External expertise thus becomes most useful when it interacts with local expertise in egalitarian partnerships that generate sustainable outcomes.

Learning from Communities

A full day of "Learning from Communities" encounters offered an opportunity for interactions with local communities to learn about their everyday issues. The evening before the visit, community leaders and partner civil society organizations oriented the respective participant groups to the issues at hand.

Fellows selected one of three field learning sites:

1. Fish farming/aquaculture on Taal Lake: people, environment and long-term sustainability -Talisay, Batangas
2. Micro-finance and livelihood programs in relocated urban communities: partnerships and their impact on youth, women and poor households, Paliparan, Dasmariñas City, Cavite
3. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) in a vulnerable coastal community, Muzon 2, Rosario, Cavite

Affect, Encounters and Final Reflections

In the last session on Affect and Encounters the impact of these visits emerged from the informal conversations among participants beforehand followed by their final reflections. The Fellows were encouraged to address these questions:

1. What have been your most moving experiences during your time as an API Fellow?
2. Which of these experiences moved you to change the way you think?
3. Which of these experiences moved you to continue working for what you consider important?

Ultimately, the questions led the Fellows to reflect on what keeps them going and what allows them to continue their work as public intellectuals. Recalling the lessons learned from real people struggling with both large and mundane real-life issues in their everyday



From left: Lisandro E. Claudio, Mary Racelis, and Nash Tysman



Fellows' site visit to a vulnerable coastal community

lives, participants sought to integrate these memories in ethical ways into their future roles as public intellectuals. How could they "light or replenish the fire within" to enable them to influence and learn from others?

The individual reflections of the participants paraphrased below range widely, generally expressing a cautious optimism or an "optimistic uncertainty":

- I will continue what I'm doing while recognizing that in the process my thinking about social transformation is evolving.
- I have no idea about the future, if I am to be honest with myself. Where injustice clearly prevails, forgiveness and moving on are difficult; yet they must be done. Pushing for change is very tiring, so I can't answer the question yet.
- On returning home, I hope to transfer this enlightening experience of doing politically risky

research on religion to younger generations because it is essential for their intellectual credibility.

• Our advocacies from the research process require significant paradigm shifts which are not likely to happen soon. I'm not sure my activities will change anything but I won't stop trying. At least there is a forum like this one in which I can participate to sustain my hope.

• I worry that my research may have led to the death of a shaman who shared her secret knowledge with me. My research goes against mainstream norms and thus incurs risks of losing my academic identity. But I must follow the heart more than the intellect, or be bound by constricting structures and standards.

- Family values are important.
- Inspiring stories abound in human situations.

Marian Dosey Chua



API Fellows exchanged their reflections

- I will return home with increased confidence.
- I want to learn more in order to retake the space for a peaceful society. I want to address the dominant structures – moral, ethical and political leadership.
- I appreciated how the communities welcomed us with such great hospitality and no questions asked. Enriched by the interactions I was encouraged to continue learning from them while having fun and avoiding romanticizing them.
- I learned I can understand the “Other” and why they do things the way they do. I now see people as human beings, not as research subjects.
- I gained an increased respect for what local people know, and for their friendly outlooks.
- I learned not only factual information but how to adapt to different ways of life; it was exciting.

• Urban poor people are smart; they know how to deal with their lives, especially Muslims who are so often stereotyped. My research brought out their many abilities.

• I feel more motivated to help the people I worked with. I admired their resilience and coping behaviors. We need to reduce the alienation they feel from the government. That means being more critical of our own cultures. Society needs to be restructured and I must help make that happen.

• People don't want to fight injustices, but may be forced to do so.

• This chance to reflect pinpointed my anger at injustice and the determination to engage with people's actions. I will seek guidance from NGOs to legitimize people's rights and recognize their struggles.

• Activism is reinforced by grounded understanding. When you are discouraged,

it is good to remember that although clouds and fog obscure the sky, underneath is beauty.

Ultimately, all of the Fellows agreed that it was people who kept them going: the people back home, the people they interacted with during their research, and the people they will serve in the future. Motivation to continue one's work, as such, occurs when our goals are concretized through the realities of human experiences.

Fr. Jose M. Cruz, S.J., summed it up best when he said: “We are all called to be rice cookers.” He was referring to a story about a rice cooker that was told by a workshop participant. He explained:

“Rice in its uncooked form is inedible. It has to be brought to fire. In Ilokano, rice is called inapuy, something to which you have to apply a fiery heat before it becomes edible. In the end, the final measure of whether applying fire is worthwhile is whether it results in aromatic cooked rice. For the Asian Public Intellectual, the equivalent question is: Can/Will my effort at engaging society transform it?”

In bringing to the fore a variety of experiences and affective responses, the Workshop found Fellows in agreement about the essential contours of the public intellectual's duties. Thinking back to the opening plenary session, they recalled that Professor Resil Mojares had set the tone for these reflections and influenced many of the ensuing discussions. On the surface, he explained, public intellectuals create networks and forge linkages. But to constrain their activities to these instrumental tasks may seem “morally barren.” And these terms do not explain “what causes bring people together.” For Mojares, the public intellectual cannot forget “the affective values of friendship, respect, mutuality, and community.” The forging of Asian Public Intellectuals thus remains an open-ended ethical project. ❖



Learn, Share and Work Together for the Betterment of Asia

Yohei Sasakawa

As you know, one of the most important changes taking place in the region today is Myanmar's movement toward democracy. As Japanese Government Goodwill Ambassador for the Welfare of the National Races in Myanmar, I am striving to help bring about a ceasefire and peace accord between the nation's government and its ethnic groups.

Last month, I invited representatives of ten ethnic groups to Japan to discuss possible relief measures for the nation's one million internally displaced people. As a result, The Nippon Foundation decided to contribute three million dollars worth of emergency food and medical supplies. The foundation is acting as a mediator between the two sides, and both welcome this emergency relief.

When API started in the year 2000, we discussed urgent issues common to the region: The growing gap between rich and poor; the exploitation of natural resources; environmental destruction; religious and ethnic conflict; and human rights violations.

All of which continue to confront us even today. From the beginning, we have realized that to solve these problems, we need close collaboration among such stakeholders as governments, international bodies, private enterprises, academic institutions, NGOs and community organizations. We need to transcend boundaries and work together. Above all, we need public intellectuals who can drive forward such cross-border collaborations.

Thus, this API Program began in order to identify and nurture regional public intellectuals. The program selects those with the knowledge, experience, and commitment to deal with complex issues. Then, it gives you, the selected individuals with opportunities to conduct research and exchange activities in neighboring countries.

A second aim has been to create a community of public intellectuals that can work together collectively to solve problems, and in June this year, the API Regional Project Culminating Event was held in Bangkok. This was the apex of a three-year project, through which Fellows combined their expertise on shared themes. Working with people from local communities, they rooted out the causes and devised solutions for many pressing issues. The results of their work will be disseminated throughout the region and the world, through documentary films, a book and a website. I hope that API Fellows continue leading the way with such collective work as this.

I congratulate you, the 11th batch of Fellows, on the successful completion of your projects. I also encourage you all, both as members of the API Community and as public intellectuals responsible for the future of Asia, to continue to work for the betterment of society under the flag of API.

This year, for the first time, API has selected Fellows from Myanmar. I sincerely hope that these new Myanmar Fellows have many chances to meet Fellows from other countries, so that you can learn from each other, share information,



On February 25, 2013, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida presented The Nippon Foundation's Chairman Yohei Sasakawa with a written appointment from the Cabinet, naming him Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar, for his role in addressing the issue of ethnic conflict in Myanmar and work hard to assist with the democratic development of the country

and contribute to the democratization and peace-building process in Myanmar.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Vice President Jose Cruz and everyone at Ateneo de Manila University. I also sincerely thank the members of each country's Selection Committee, the International Selection Committee, and the staff of the Coordinating Institution and Partner Institutions for your continuous hard work. It is you that have

enabled this program to achieve such great results. I wish you a fruitful and successful workshop.

An excerpt from the video message delivered by Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of The Nippon Foundation, at the opening ceremony of the 11th API Regional Workshop on November 24, 2012 ◆

The Nippon Foundation

The Making of Asian Public Intellectuals: Historical Reflections

Resil B. Mojares

Of the three words that compose the caption to this gathering — Asian public intellectuals — the word that is most elusive is Asian. As the Indonesian intellectual Goenawan Mohamad wittily remarks: “Asia is like God. You cannot categorically deny or affirm its existence. No one knows where it begins, where it ends, or whether there is a way to define it.” Yet, the notion of Asia remains beguiling and cannot be so quickly dismissed. That Asian public intellectuals constitute a “community” invites reflection on the idea and basis of such a community.

The case of the Philippines is enlightening in showing how intellectuals in one Asian country positioned themselves in the world. A form of “Asianism” was already part of the Philippine nationalist movement from its beginnings in the 1880s, as Jose Rizal and other intellectuals sought to embed the Philippines in a wider “Malay” region, as part of the claim

that Filipinos were inheritors of a “high” and “ancient” Malay civilization.

In the early 1890s, the focus of the nationalist movement was reform, “assimilation”, and a status for the Philippines as an overseas province rather than a colony of Spain. A revolution for independence was not as yet perceived to be a realistic option. At this time, Filipinos saw themselves within the frame of “Greater Spain” rather than that of Asia. Hence, Filipino leaders — who were a group of highly Europeanized intellectuals — took a distanced, skeptical view of Japan’s call for “Asia for Asians.” (By December 1897, however, they) had given up hopes that reform would come from Spain, and a Philippine government-in-exile, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, set up headquarters in Hong Kong. Filipino revolutionaries turned to Japan for assistance in a struggle that changed in 1899 from a revolution against Spain to a war against U.S. annexation.

The Philippine revolution began in 1896, and the base of the Filipino nationalist movement shifted—physically and intellectually—from Europe to Asia. This was the first nationalist revolution in Asia, and it stirred wide interest because of its implications for Western domination in the region. (It was at this time) that Filipino nationalist Mariano Ponce (became) the “first Filipino Asianist.”

He was posted to Yokohama in 1898 as the Aguinaldo government’s representative in Japan, where he actively networked with Japanese “pan-Asianists”. He was in Japan at a time that saw, arguably for the first time, the emergence of a community of Asian public intellectuals. Societies were organized there to stimulate intellectual exchanges and promote the spirit of pan-Asianism. Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, Indians, Thais, and Japanese met to exchange views and celebrate their solidarity. Pan-Asianism, however, was never a unitary





Network of Asian public intellectuals at the opening ceremony of the 11th API Regional Workshop. From left: Jose M. Cruz, S.J., Yoko Hayami, Tatsuya Tanami, Resil Mojares, Filomeno Aguilar, Koji Tanaka, Taufik Abdullah and Surichai Wun'Gaeo

or homogeneous movement. There were deep divisions among the Japanese as to the policy their government should pursue with regards to the rest of Asia, and deep suspicions among other Asians over Japan's expansionist ambitions.

Caught between feelings of optimism and despair about his mission to enlist Japan's help for the fledgling Philippine Republic, Mariano Ponce lamented how the world was driven by the currents of "positivism." "There is no nation today," he said, "that moves unless driven by its own interest."

Yet, Ponce remained open to the world and genuinely admiring of the Japanese as a people. He immersed himself in Japanese

culture and history—dressing up and living like a Japanese man in Yokohama, and even marrying a Japanese woman. In 1906, he visited Indochina (Vietnam) and confessed that it was only when the Philippine revolution began that he realized how wrong he and the other Filipinos were in helping the French against the Vietnamese who were, after all, only defending their own country. This realization, he said, had deepened his affection for the Vietnamese.

Back in the Philippines after 1907, Ponce promoted knowledge about Asia even as he was actively engaged in the political and cultural life of his own country. His wife took a Filipino name, and an old family photograph

shows her looking very much like a Filipino matriarch, in traditional Filipino dress, surrounded by her children and grandchildren.

In 1915, Ponce co-founded the *Sociedad Orientalista de Filipinas*, which published a monthly journal of Asian affairs, *Boletín de la Sociedad Orientalista de Filipinas* in 1918. These are the first Asian studies society and journal independently established by Southeast Asians.

Asia has grown exceedingly complex. It can no longer be imagined as a totality, and the imperatives for action can no longer be reduced to the stark, racist East-West binaries of the past. In a time suspicious of absolutes, pan-Asianism should remain a name for a historical artifact rather than a current agenda, since the word has a hegemonic sound to it.

Today, it suffices that intellectuals in Asia are connected in many ways on the basis of shared issues, advocacies, ideologies, and professional concerns. Such connections, however, need to be built up, particularly across issues and sectoral concerns. It is here where the Asian Public Intellectuals Fellowships Program—a program undertaken in the spirit of consultation and participation—is most valued and needed.

And while Mariano Ponce's story may perhaps be a bit romanticized, it is a story worth telling for showing what, at the most personal level, being an Asian public intellectual can mean.

An excerpt from the keynote address delivered by Resil B. Mojares, Professor Emeritus of the University of San Carlos, Cebu City, at the opening ceremony of the 11th Regional Workshop of the API Fellowships Program on November 24, 2012. For the full address, please visit: www.api-fellowships.org/body/keynote_mojares_tagaytay.pdf



Philippine intellectuals in Spain: Jose P. Rizal, La Solidaridad publisher Marcelo H. del Pilar, and Mariano Ponce



Mariano Ponce with his close friend, the Chinese nationalist leader, Sun Yat-sen at his residence in Yokohama, Japan, in 1899

The Presidential Museum and Library

indohistorian.tumblr.com

Paving the Way to Myanmar's Higher Education: Courage in the Face of Intimidation

Myanmar's education system has faced critical challenges over the past two decades of military rule. Despite these difficulties, the Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) has managed to serve the country as a pioneering institute of higher education and is about to establish several human rights programs. What is the secret to MIT's success? In an interview with API in August 2013, MIT's Vice President Reverend Dr. Maung Maung Yin discussed the past, present and future challenges for education in Myanmar and potential collaborations with Asian communities. He is also MIT's Director of Peace Studies Center (PSC); a professor of Christian Social Ethics; and is regarded as one of the most progressive scholars in Myanmar.



MIT ON EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

What is the significant contribution of MIT to Myanmar's education and society?

MIT started with just four students in 1927 as the English Department of a Karen Baptist Seminary, teaching theology in English. Ever since then, we have welcomed all students, regardless of their religion. Now we have more than a thousand students, about fifty faculty members, and over seventy staff.

Since the military coup d'état in 1962, the quality of education in the country declined in many different ways. University degrees were no longer accredited, so MIT couldn't register as a university. However, MIT was the one and only university that offered accredited theological degrees, through the Association of Theological Education in Southeast Asia (ATSEA).

After Myanmar opened up in 2010, MIT was finally recognized as a university for two key programs: the Theology Program offered postgraduate degrees, including a Ph.D. program; and the Liberal Arts Program (LAP) began to offer Master's degrees (M.A.) in 2000. The LAP was initiated in response to the decline in the quality of education and the shortage of academic human resources as a result of the political situation. However, since MIT was registered as a seminary, the LAP could only offer a "Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies" or BARS. Although this degree was not officially accredited, our students could study abroad at some universities in Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Philippines, and they were then able to receive doctoral degrees. Today, at least 60% of our liberal arts graduates find employment in Myanmar, where the unemployment rate is very high. They will be contributing more and more to Myanmar society.

How does a core foundation in theology serve the various ethnic groups who are non-Christian?

Although Burmese is the official language in Myanmar, we have 135 ethnic groups speaking thirty-five main languages. Some ethnic groups are predominantly Christian. However, our school is widely recognized for offering a "liberal" education because, our curriculum goes beyond Christian theology to include social subjects such as gender equality, the environment, corruption, and human rights. MIT has always worked with people from all religions to promote social harmony.

What are the key challenges of working with different religions?

One of the key challenges comes from our Christian community. Some Christians think new ideas and concepts have diverted too far from our original concepts, and we need to argue that it's not. Another challenge comes from the government, which needs to be convinced that we are working for the betterment of the community. Some conservative religious organizations don't want to join us in these efforts, but the religious organizations we work with are open-minded and that's why we collaborate. For example, we have a seminar that includes Muslims and encourages them to explain the concept of Jihad. We try to develop interfaith understanding so that we can all learn from each other.

Is that why MIT established the Peace Studies Center (PSC)?

We would like people to understand the meaning of authentic peace. We thus took a risk to establish the PSC in 2006 when "peace" was a dangerous word for ordinary people. Actually the concept of "human rights" could also be dangerous in this country, so sometimes we need to change it to "human dignity". The PSC deals with all aspects of violence, conflict and peace studies. Major activities include workshops, seminars, and research fellows programs such as the "Women for Peace Workshop" on domestic violence (DV) to empower women; the "Youth for Peace Workshop" on human trafficking, especially along the Thai and Chinese borders where a lot of human trafficking occurs; and the "Minister for Peace" program is exclusively designed for Christian educators and community leaders. We also provide workshops on conflict transformation to engage Christian leaders from ethnic groups who are either involved in peace talks with the government or are engaged in civil war. Our workshops are held in rural and remote areas to engage with the grassroots.

In October 2014, we plan to establish two M.A. programs—Peace Studies and Interfaith Dialogue Studies. We also hope to register MIT as a university. Once it is recognized as a university here, MIT will become the one and only private Christian University in Myanmar. A few years before the founding of the PSC, the MIT's Judson Research Center (JRC) was also established to work in the areas of interfaith dialogue studies, academic seminars on interfaith and related issues.

How can education bring positive changes to society?

I believe academe has the power to inform and mobilize people so they can implement and establish peace, justice, and human rights in society. The effort to create a thriving academic community is one of the essential elements in developing Myanmar. We lost this chance in the past and so many talented people left the country. Many people did not believe in institutions anymore as universities had no credibility and no job prospects. But fortunately, some Burmese people still believe in the importance of education, so we just need to make changes in our educational system. Now we are trying to enhance young junior faculty members. Our institute is beginning to connect with regional neighbors by making efforts to send young people on exchanges to liberal institutions.

PEACE-BUILDING AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

How could MIT play a role in national reconciliation in response to ongoing ethnic conflicts in Myanmar, such as in Rakhine State?

We were asked to provide workshops on trauma and conflict transformation in Rakhine state, where Buddhists and Muslims have serious conflicts. There is no peace, so it is very difficult for people who are seriously traumatized. Our culture is very prone to violence because of the military culture we have lived with for nearly half a century. Therefore, we are trying to introduce a culture of peace as an alternative through these workshops. And, we are trying to build this culture of peace from the bottom-up.

Aren't local people afraid of the Government? If so, how could they overcome this fear?

In the past, yes, there was a sense of intimidation. We have been living in fear for two generations and loss of trusts. However, regardless of their small number, intellectuals are still visible in Myanmar. We keep our hopes alive by preparing for a better future. We want to make changes, so we are very careful in whatever we do.

I believe in education. We need all kinds of education for all aspects of life: public health; religion; human rights; social transformation; business; the environment, and so on. In Myanmar, there is a wide gap between liberal arts studies and scientific studies. That's a big mistake. As a result, we have a serious lack of thinkers. As the country changes, we need critical thinkers and philosophers. We also lack liberal arts expertise: we don't have enough historians or literary critics.

How long will it take Myanmar to fill this gap?

It may take 20 years. We had been facing a serious brain drain during the military years. But fortunately, some of intellectuals, such as historian Thant Myint-U and journalist Tin Mg Than, are returning to work with the younger generation. Thus, this situation is not totally hopeless. Some Burmese who became American or British citizens have already come back and the government is going to allow them to become permanent residents so they can stay longer to help the country develop.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION & REGIONAL COLLABORATION

What is your framework of existing international cooperation?

The international community helped us very much when our country was closed. Institutional connections were developed, especially through scholarships. One major contribution to the progress in our Liberal Arts Program is the help from the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA), which has a head quarter in New York and offices in Southeast Asia, in providing grants for our students to study Master's degree further abroad.

In early 2013, American academics came to Myanmar. After visiting educational institutions throughout Myanmar, they wanted to work with us because MIT responded with dynamic exchanges and understood how curriculum was taught. We have already signed several bilateral agreements with institutions in the US, such as Stanford University and the University of Massachusetts, as well as with Phayap University in Thailand and one university in South Korea. Basically these agreements involve student exchange programs and faculty exchange programs especially in the liberal arts. I am going to Thailand's Mahidol University to see a possible collaboration in M.A. programs in International Disability and Public Policy Studies. There is very little awareness about disability in Myanmar even though we have a lot of disabled people. We have to go step by step to raise public awareness of this issue through this program. We are starting from ground zero.



Rev. Dr. Maung Maung Yin at the workshop "Engaging Southeast Asia: Religion, Public Policy and Social Transformation" in Bangkok

“I believe academe has the power to inform and mobilize people so they can implement and establish peace, justice, and human rights in society. The effort to create a thriving academic community is one of the essential elements in developing Myanmar. We lost this chance in the past...”

What are your expectations for regional collaborations?

This is why I am here, with API and Chulalongkorn University's Center for Peace and Conflict Studies. Recently I was also invited to a seminar sponsored by Church of Sweden, on "Networking for Peace Builders", which was held at Gadjah Madah University, Yogyakarta.

Before 2010, however, we suffered in many ways as it was difficult for us to connect to the world. We could only leave the country if somebody invited/sponsored us. Even now we have some barriers like slow internet connections, electricity problems and poverty. I have to admit that our networking in the region has not developed as fast as our connections with the West, for different reasons. One reason is related to financial support, since regional organizations do not provide sponsorships for many opportunities especially in participating regional conferences and seminars.

We are now trying very hard to build networks in the region. For example, the workshop "Engaging Southeast Asia: Religion, Public Policy and Social Transformation" (initiated by the Indonesian Consortium for Religion Studies: ICRS, in collaboration with Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand. The workshop was held in Thailand in August 2013) was the first time that MIT worked together with regional institutions. In the past, we would come to other institutions for studies, but this time it was a collaborative project. Because of the encouragement by API and Chulalongkorn University, we have begun to develop regional networking.

This workshop initiated by ICRS is based on a three-year plan. By next year, my team and I hope to contribute a paper on the role that religion can play in public policy and social transformation. The first year's theme is the role of religion and religious organizations in the development of civil societies. In our own project, Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia will all contribute to this academic paper by July 2014.

What impact do you hope the paper would have on the region?

I hope it would inspire involvement with other countries in the region. We are going to meet again in April 2014 to come up with the draft paper together. The paper will present new ideas, and academic arguments that can be used by governmental institutions, academe and NGOs. I hope it could be used to encourage governments in the region to apply our methods to their policy making. Thus, in 2014 a public forum and a workshop will be organized and we will invite scholars, activists, and government officials to contribute to the paper. At the end of the year, all the papers will be combined by ICRS and published in a final format.

What would be your suggestions for public intellectuals in Asia for sustainable actions together?

If possible, I would like to see API to develop younger generations of intellectuals with academic potentials to do various kinds of research together to support the country's democratic transitions, development of democratic institutions, and development of education in higher levels, especially in secondary and tertiary education. ❖

More information on MIT: www.mittheo.com

Chadapan Malipan

Asia in All Directions

Inuhiko Yomota, JAPAN SENIOR FELLOW YEAR 2007-2008

Asia in All Directions is my newest book. It is a collection of 65 essays, excerpts from two diaries and two lectures, as well as articles and reviews. I wrote them between 1990 and 2013. Actually, when I edited the book, I realized I had contributed so many articles and reviews to Japanese and Korean magazines during those 23 years that I had to leave out almost two thirds of them.

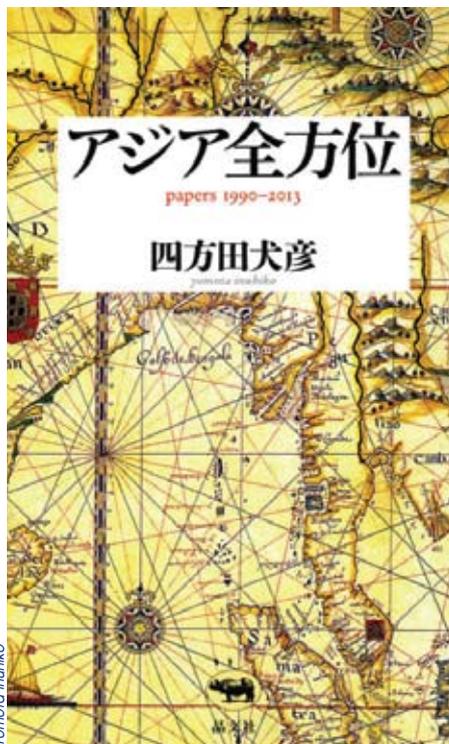
I became an API Fellow in 2007 and stayed in Jakarta and Bangkok as a researcher of local film history. I wanted to compare horror movies produced in Indonesia and Thailand. The two societies had developed prolific horror film industries in very different religious contexts. I focused on the roles that gender and politics played in the historical development of the horror film genre.

My theme at that time was, quite simply, ghosts. I tried to interpret local cultural representations of traditional supernatural beings in the context of film history. If this sounds too abstract, I was basically investigating the fact that most of the ghosts and monsters in Indonesian and Thai horror films are female. Before they became ghosts, these women had hard lives: they were injured, abused and killed. They often died in childbirth or when they were pregnant. They were generally victims of their local communities who used their supernatural powers to take revenge against society. I published my conclusions in a Japanese book, whose title translates into English as *Asia: Paradise for Ghost Movies (Kaiki Eiga Tengoku Aija*. Tokyo: Hakusuisya, 2009).

As for my new book, *Asia in All Directions*, you will find so many different topics in it that you will feel as if a child has upended a toybox and scattered surprises all over the floor. I invite you to examine these surprises with me.



The author in Sri Lanka



The author's newest book—*Asia in All Directions: Papers 1990 - 2013*

My diaries will take you to Thailand where I collected and recorded my impressions of Bangkok and the northeastern Isaan region, including the local music and food. I talked to everybody, even an Isaan street cook who prepared the famous green papaya salad, called *somtam*. I interviewed Thai students, artists and intellectuals such as Seksan Pasertkul and Prabda Yoon, and even the queen of Thai horror films, actress Mamee (Napakpapha Nakprasitte). In Indonesia, I met writer Goenawan Mohamad and Nilwan Setant, I share my impressions of Jakarta, Aceh and Tana Toraja and all the details of daily life in these places, including music, food and cityscapes.

My interest in Asian history sometimes also included perspectives from the Middle East. I analyzed Zionist propaganda films from the late 1920's, comparing them with Japanese propaganda films produced in Manchuria a few years later. I also interviewed Palestinian-Israeli actor and filmmaker Mohammad Bakri, when my institute invited him to Tokyo and Kyoto.

One of the two lectures in my book will take you to Gwangju, South Korea where I discussed the problems of cultural hegemony and political power. I gave this lecture in 2010, one hundred years after Japan colonized South Korea. I continued this theme when I researched the propaganda films produced during Japan's occupation of Asian countries during the Second World War. For example, these films often portrayed a romance between a moral Japanese policeman and an innocent native woman.



Mohammad Bakri and Kidlat Tahimik at the 2007 Yamagata International Film Festival

“*Asia in All Directions* is like a buffet at a restaurant. You can pick out your favorite thing and enjoy reading”

I explored cultural hegemony and political power in other contexts too: in my impressions of Nobel Laureate Gao Xingjian, a Chinese exile in Paris; in my long review of a Cambodian film that was adapted from a short story by Oe Kenzaburo; and when I compared Hollywood's representation of Manila's Smokey Mountain with my own experience of the famous landfill site.

The book is like a buffet at a restaurant. You can pick out your favorite thing and enjoy reading. To whet your appetite, I include below an excerpt from my introductory essay.

“There is on the earth no place called ‘Mysterious Asia’. It only exists in a Hollywood movie fantasy. The real Asia in front of us is nothing but a product of European colonialism. Neither is there any such thing as a generic Asia. Every place and society in Asia is different. Asia turns out to be a reality that always refuses insistently to be absorbed by the “Other”. Its history is also Europe's history: they complement each other. If Europe succeeded in making herself modern by exploiting Asian colonies, Asia also watched Europe, followed her and constructed herself by imitating Europe. Asia and Europe cannot be divided into clear boundaries, because they reproduced themselves in each other.”

Inuhiko Yomota is a prolific writer, also a teacher in Asian film studies. He currently is a visiting researcher at Kyoto Zoukei Geijutsu Daigaku. ❖

Tales from the Town: Nagasaki and Its Geographic Memory

Patporn Phoonthong, THAILAND FELLOW YEAR 2011

What can we learn from a town's stories? We first have to understand that they not only represent collective memory but they also serve as a political tool that is used to create an identity for residents. Memorials tell tales, and these tales tell residents what they should remember and value about where they live. But how many stories should people remember and whose stories should be told?

If you could visit Nagasaki, what do you think it would tell you and what would you expect to see? As an outsider, I considered Nagasaki as a living museum; I expected it to tell me how it lived through World War II, and to show me its post-war vision for peace.

Nagasaki today has left the war so far behind we hardly see any evidence of it, besides the museums. We would not know that people here suffered unless we had a chance to listen to the "hibakusha", a term that refers to the surviving victims of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. You could start your World War II journey at Ground Zero, located at Nagasaki Peace Park, where there are several monuments reminding visitors of the devastating damage of the atomic bomb. You might then follow the town's memory lane by walking southeast, up the hill from Ground Zero, to the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum and the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims.

This is where you would see how Nagasaki's people suffered during the war, especially after the atomic bomb. Then you could return to Ground Zero, but this time turn to the southwest, and after walking for about a mile and a half, you would reach the Shiroyama Peace Memorial Museum, which tells the stories of the Shiroyama Elementary School students whose lives were taken on August 9, 1945. This museum is located in Shiroyama Elementary School; surrounding the school are cherry blossom trees, which were planted by mothers as memorials to their beloved children.

There is more to Nagasaki's World War II history than the atomic bomb that struck on August 9, 1945. It consists of diverse people and memories, such as the Korean civilians who were relocated in Japan as forced labor, and all the people from Korea, China and Southeast Asian countries who suffered under Japanese occupation. These tales are told in the small private peace museum called "Oka Masaharu Memorial Nagasaki Peace Museum", where the visitor is able to see the aggression of the Japanese military, which cannot be found elsewhere. The exhibition includes images of the Nanjing massacre; comfort women; and Japan's Biochemical Weapons Unit 731, which conducted experiments on human beings for the Imperial Army's Biological Warfare Program.

“There is more to Nagasaki's World War II history than the atomic bomb that struck on August 9, 1945”



The monument "Infinity" in Nagasaki Peace Park was donated by Ankara, Capital City of the Republic of Turkey, to celebrate the "100th Anniversary of Friendly Relations" between Turkey and Japan. The figure of a man and a woman joining hands symbolizes peace and harmony among the entire human race



Lives after the Nagasaki Bombing



A panel presentation on Comfort Women at the Oka Masaharu Memorial Nagasaki Peace Museum

As collective memory is an integral part of a society's communication process, each of these museums plays a significant role in communicating what has happened in Nagasaki's past. The various approaches and themes of these museums confirm that Nagasaki has more than one history, truth, and society; the stories reflect many different experiences. Nagasaki's geography of memory reflects a freedom of expression because it includes the varied experiences of all members of its society. This recognition of human rights and respect for human diversity will lead to peaceful agreement whenever conflict arises. And this is what we call a sustainable peace.

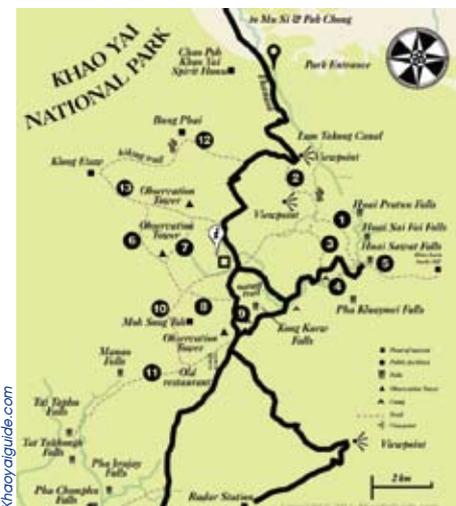
Patporn Phoonthong is currently a researcher and curator at The Initiative of Museum and Library for Peace, Peace Information Center and Asian Muslim Action Network. ❖

Linking Tourism, Community, and Environment through Ecotourism at Thailand's National Parks

Wiwik Mahdayani, INDONESIA FELLOW YEAR 2012-2013



Wiwik (second from right) with park rangers and staffs during her site visit at a ranger station in Thailand



Khaoyai guide.com

Guide on trekking trails in Khao Yai National Park

Sustainable tourism is a concept that was formed to reinforce the link between tourism and sustainability by integrating the spirit of sustainable development. It is a response to the increasing impact from tourism activities and is expected to become a pillar of all types of tourism. Sustainable tourism development was the driving force that led to the ecotourism sector, which focuses on nature-based responsible travel that can balance environmental conservation and cultural preservation with the need to provide economic opportunities for destination communities.

Thailand introduced ecotourism to sustainably manage tourism at natural areas—with protected and/or non-protected status. National parks are protected areas and they are the main nature-based tourism attractions in Thailand. The growing demand for nature-based tourism and the intensive promotion of protected areas in the Kingdom resulted in over 9.9 million visitors to Thailand's national parks in 2012.

However, ecotourism at these parks is still a challenge. Some park visitors do not behave responsibly and there is also a lack of community involvement in park activities. Community participation is limited to providing food, lodging and tour services or boat rentals. It is also a challenge to make ecotourism terminology accessible to tourists and to apply ecotourism principles in practice. Ecotourism is a concept that tends to be mainly discussed in the public sector, or at conferences, in classes, academic journals, at NGOs with donor support, or in official documents. It is inadequately understood in the private sector and by park visitors. Academic and technical documents are abundant while easy-to-understand publications are rare for destination communities, the private sector and park visitors. Thailand isn't alone in facing these ecotourism challenges; Indonesia's national parks are also struggling in terms of visitor-private sector awareness, and community involvement.

I learned my lessons about Thailand's national parks during my API project. The objective of this project in Thailand was to develop communication tools for visitors and the private sector to raise awareness and promote strategies for the ecotourism sector at Thailand's national parks. This API project was carried out at 18 national parks in Southern Thailand, where tourism is the most concentrated and where the most popular national parks are located. During site visits to the research locations, I found limited private sector awareness and a lack of interpretative information to orient national park visitors. For example, the different rules that apply to protected areas and non-protected areas were not clearly explained.

My research brought me to several conclusions. First, community involvement is critical to provide the services needed to support ecotourism, so this should be promoted. Second, both the private-sector and park visitors play major roles in controlling the impact of tourism at national parks. They should encourage the right balance between cultural and environmental conservation and tourism-related economic benefits for local people. The visitors need educational resources to increase their awareness of ecotourism goals, and to help them prepare for

“ Ecotourism is a concept that tends to be mainly discussed in the public sector, classes, academic journals, at NGOs with donor support, or in official documents. It is inadequately understood in the private sector and by park visitors ”

their visit. Although several national parks provided interpretative facilities to enhance visitors' experiences and encourage education to lessen any negative impacts from tourism, more support is crucial. Since visitors and the private sector are the center of ecotourism activities, their responsible behavior and support are essential to ensure the sustainability of a destination.

Wiwik Mahdayani is co-founder of DESMA Center, an organization focuses on sustainable tourism and conservation programs through activities of planning and research, capacity building and education, also marketing implementation strategies. For further information visit: www.desmacenter.com ❖



A large number of tourists at Mu Koh Ang tong National Park

Malaysian Premiere of *Cross Currents* at Monash University Malaysia

Yeoh Seng Guan, MALAYSIA SENIOR FELLOW YEAR 2005-2006

On Wednesday morning, September 25, 2013, the documentary film, *Cross Currents: A Journey into Asian Environments* had its Malaysian premiere at the Malaysian branch campus of the Australian-based Monash University.

The event was organized by Nasi Bungkus Cinema, based at the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS), Monash University in association with the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Nasi Bungkus Cinema was co-founded by Yeoh Seng Guan in mid-2006 as a venue for appreciating and advancing independent Southeast Asian cinema.

Pro-Vice Chancellor of Monash University, Helen Bartlett welcomed the audience, comprised of staff and students of the university as well as members of the general public. She was pleased that Monash University was hosting the film's premiere, and said the issues tackled in the film were not only timely and globally important, but were also central to the research and teaching concerns of Monash University.

Rashila Ramli, the Director of IKMAS, introduced the audience to the vision and goals of the Asian Public Intellectuals (API) Fellowships Program. She said there were more than 300 API Fellows scattered throughout the region contributing to the growth of public spaces by generating effective responses to community needs.

Yeoh Seng Guan, a Senior Lecturer at SASS and Associate Producer of *Cross Currents*, explained why the inaugural API Regional Project was set up, and how it gave birth to the film. Then the film's director, noted Filipino film scholar Nick Deocampo (Philippines Senior Fellow Year 2000-2001), shared some of the challenges he faced making *Cross Currents*, and what he learned from them.



Rashila Ramli (IKMAS, UKM) and Helen Bartlett (Monash University) having a chat before the screening



From left to right - "*Cross Currents*" director Nick Deocampo, Josie Fernandez and Justine Vaz fielding questions from the floor



"*Cross Currents*" associate producer Yeoh Seng Guan (left) with director Nick Deocampo

After the screening, aquatic biologist Holly Barclay, said she was impressed with the way API Fellows seemed to work so closely with the various local communities in the film, as they conducted their research to achieve a human-ecological balance. Barclay said the film would be very pertinent to her undergraduate course, "The Sustainable Planet", which she teaches at Malaysia's School of Science at Monash University. She hoped that the film would be readily available not only to students at Monash University but to the wider general public.

Questions from the floor were then fielded by a panel comprised of Nick Deocampo Justine Vaz and Josie Fernandez (Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2006-2007). Both Vaz and Fernandez are independent Malaysian researchers with expertise in the fields of environmental and biodiversity conservation; indigenous people's traditional knowledge; and natural resource management. Vaz was also the editor of the API Regional Project's book, *Living Landscapes, Connected Communities*, in which API Fellows learned from communities and discussed how their community-based research initiatives were working towards a human-ecological balance across Asia.

A member of the audience said the documentary seemed to pay more attention to the religious beliefs and practices of indigenous

peoples, than to followers of mainstream religions. In reply, Deocampo observed that in Batanes for example, even though the local community members were Roman Catholics, their religious beliefs were not in conflict with the principles of human-ecological harmony. Similarly, Vaz also noted that the local community in Kali Code found it necessary to marry traditional Javanese beliefs and practices with their everyday livelihood concerns. Colin Nicholas (Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2000-2001) stressed that it is important not to be sidetracked by religious semantics, since what is more significant is how the animist beliefs and practices of indigenous peoples actually hold their communities together, and sustain the natural environment on which they depend for their livelihoods and well-being.

After the documentary screening, the lively discussions continued informally over a lunch that was hosted by IKMAS.

Yeoh Seng Guan is a senior lecture at the School of Arts & Sciences, Monash University (Sunway Campus, Malaysia). His current research interests include urban anthropology, visual ethnography, and Southeast Asia. ❖

More updates: www.api-fellowships.org/body/fellowupdates/index.php?p=news

RECOGNITION

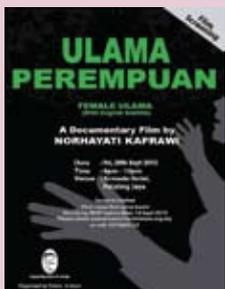


inquirer.net

Ambeth R. Ocampo

(Philippines Senior Fellow Year 2010-2011) received the Presidential Medal of Merit from President Benigno S. Aquino during a meeting with the Filipino community at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo on December 12, 2013. Ocampo was recognized for "his writings, through which he popularized Philippine history, art, and culture thus bringing these aspects of our national identity and culture closer to the people." At the same time, Ocampo attended the 40th ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit to discuss with heads of states and government officials of Japan on common concerns, including territorial disputes with China in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea), East Sea and East China Sea. ❖

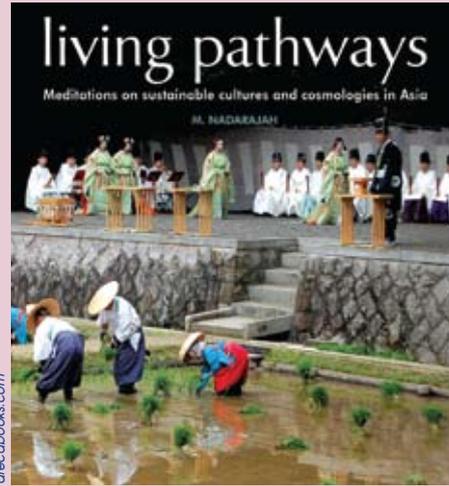
PUBLIC SHARING



Norhayati Kaprawi

(Malaysia Fellow Year 2011-2012)'s 45-minute documentary "Ulama Perempuan (Female Ulama)" explores the role of female religious leaders in Indonesian society, and was shown at Malaysia's annual Freedom Film Festival, which was held in Kuala Lumpur during December 7-15, 2013. The annual event screened human rights films made by independent filmmakers, and was organized by Pusat Komnas, with support from the Penang and Selangor state governments. This documentary is partly based on her API Fellowship activities in Indonesia. ❖

PUBLICATION



arecabooks.com

Nadarajah Manickam

(Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2005-2006)'s new book *Living Pathways: Meditations on sustainable cultures and cosmologies in Asia* was released in January 2014 by Areca Books. In 2005, Nadarajah embarked on a journey into the heart of Asia to research culturally embedded notions of sustainable development, or more accurately, sustainability. He met with the indigenous communities of the Henanga, Ainu, Lanna, Karen, Kankanaey, Balinese and several others. These cultures reside far from the problems of mainstream development, both physically and spiritually. Their lifestyles incorporate philosophies of interconnectedness, the sacredness of nature, and the continuity of Past, Present and Future. Rather than offer notions of sustainable development, these life-affirming philosophies pave pathways towards a deep sustainability.

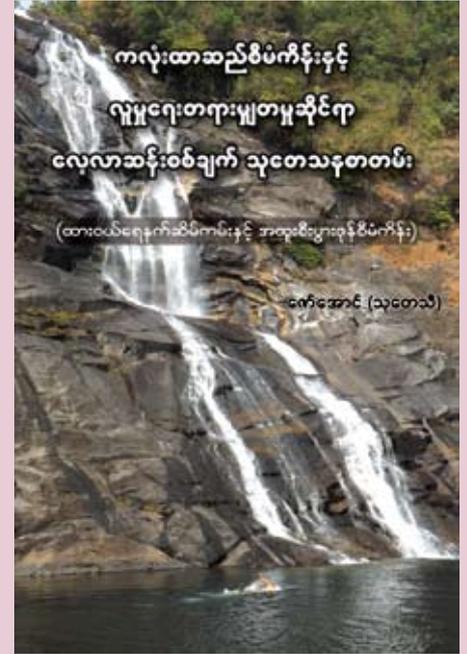
Living Pathways offers its readers a chance to meditate upon important questions and consider ways of being that we have not paid enough attention to or have disregarded completely. It reflects upon the meaningful directions that could be taken towards the socially-engaged spiritual paths well-trodden by sustainable communities. Above all, it presents the reader with a picture of the world we live in, and the world as it could be, if we passionately and mindfully choose to make it happen. ❖ (Source: arecabooks.com)

NEW POSITION



Fadzilah Majid Cooke

(Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2011-2012) is Professor of Sociology at the School of Social Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu. ❖

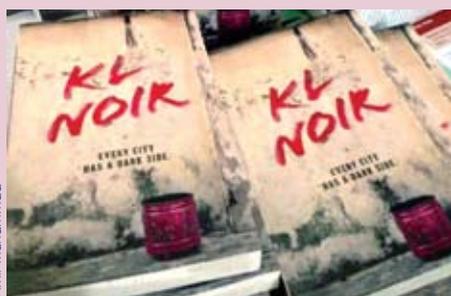


Zaw Aung

(Myanmar Senior Fellow Year 2013-2014) launched a book in May 2013 in Burmese titled *Ka Lone Htar Water Reservoir and Social Justice (Dawei Deep Seaport and Special Economic Zone Project)*. The book is funded by the Ka Lone Htar Village Development Committee, and distributed throughout Dawei and Yangon.

Synopsis:

Myanmar's government transformed itself from the military authoritarian rule to democratic governance in 2011. To rebuild the nation once isolated by Western sanctions, the democratically elected government believed that industrialization was the key to economic growth. The government initiated economic reforms to open up the economy and to seek foreign direct investments for industrial growth. However, the country is facing growing social movements against state-led industrial development projects. One contentious area is the water resource governance policies and practices that create conflicts between industrial development projects and the sustainable agricultural livelihoods of rural communities. Myanmar's reforms also broadened the democratic space, giving rise to social movements devoted to environmental and social justice, creating a new dynamism that is so new, hardly any proper research studies have been done. This book researched the linkage between water governance and grassroots social movements through the case study of the Ka Lone Htar Reservoir, which is one of the key components of the "Dawei Deep Seaport and Special Economic Zone" located in the southern coastal region of Myanmar. The research found that the decision to exclude the local agrarian society in the industrial development process generated social instability, along with a land and water grab that led to the rise of social movements in Myanmar. ❖



Dina Zaman

(Malaysia Fellow 2012-2013) contributed "After Dark, My Love" in a book titled *KL NOIR: Red*, edited by Amir Muhammad (Malaysia Fellow 2003-2004). "KL NOIR: Red" is the first of four volumes about the Malaysian capital city's dark side. There are 14 short stories and one essay related to murder, drug-dealing, kidnapping, sexual depravity, prostitution, celebrity secrets, suicides, academic rivalry, gangsters, police brutality, cannibalism, black magic, creepy rituals, political corruption and so fourth. ❖
(Source: goodread.com)

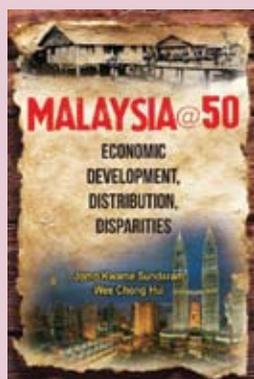


Adeline Ooi Yah-Chine

(Malaysia Fellow Year 2002-2003) contributed texts in *Narratives in Malaysian Art, Volume 2: Reactions - New Critical Strategies*, recently published by Rogue art.

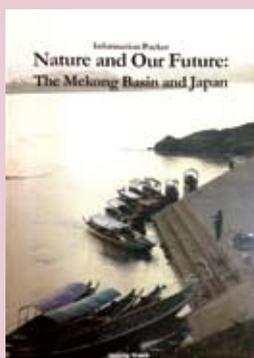
Synopsis:

Illustrated with black-and-white and color, the publication looks at the ways how Malaysian artists have responded to socio-political events that have taken place in Malaysia, and also at the changing approaches and attitudes in art-making over the past 45 years. It features leading critical voices in Malaysian art during the 70's -90's. This volume also captures aspects of the underlying urgency and passion that have informed the development of contemporary Malaysian art and artistic practice. Polemical tracts by artists and art groups, existing and newly commissioned essays, as well as interviews with artists, and excerpts from seminal exhibition texts are among the highlights. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/NarrativesInMalaysianArt ❖



Jomo K.S.

(Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2001-2002) recently launched *MALAYSIA@50: Economic Development, Distribution, Disparities*, which he co-authored with Wee Chong Hui. The book is about Malaysia's growth and changes since the country was formed on September 16, 1963, such as development policies drafted in response to national as well as international developments. The book also looks at how public policy has been influenced by, and has influenced, economic distribution, public finance and economic federalism. Discussions on government taxation, spending and distribution implications are included. This book is published and distributed worldwide by World Scientific Publishing. ❖
(Source: amazon.com)



Toshiyuki Doi

(Japan Senior Fellow Year 2011-2012) consolidated his knowledge and research findings from his API Fellowship period into an Information Packet entitled *Nature and Our Future: The Mekong Basin and Japan*, a product of "Green Mekong Initiative citizens' publication and citizen proposals regarding conservation of Mekong Basin ecosystems making active use of traditional natural resource management". The information packet consists of two parts: 1) briefing papers presenting the Mekong River's environment and natural resources, the impacts of development, people's resource utilization, alternative local initiatives, and experiences in Japan. 2) a collection of videos that depict the natural environment, which is valued by the people living in the Mekong basin and also represents their livelihood. ❖
More information: www.mekongwatch.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- API Country Workshop will be held in each PI country during March - May 2014.
- 13th API Regional Workshop will be held in Hiroshima during November 9-13, 2014.

2013

API COUNTRY WORKSHOP

An API Country Workshop (CW) is held annually in each country to serve as an important platform for information exchange and discussions on ongoing API activities and collaborations. It is attended by Fellows from different batches, representatives of The Nippon Foundation (TNF), the API Coordinating Institution (CI), and the respective Partner Institution (PI) in each of the five participating countries.

Since the API's current organizational mandate will end in May 2015, the main focus of discussion in each CW workshop was API's post-2015 scenario with TNF's Executive Director Tatsuya Tanami. CW participants were also socialized on the Collaborative Grant — a new grant scheme which is now available for smaller-scale projects with a regional dimension and/or topics that are more specific to each country's immediate concerns. Updates on National Coordinating Committee (NCC) and Regional Committee (RC) activities were also exchanged during the Workshops.

The schedule of the 2013 Country Workshops was as follows:

Country	Date	Venue
Indonesia	March 22-23, 2013	Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Jakarta
Japan	March 2-3, 2013	CO-OP Inn Kyoto
Malaysia	October 6, 2013	Grand Dorsett Subang Jaya
Philippines	March 8-9, 2013	Ateneo de Manila University
Thailand & CLV	March 16-17, 2013	Sasa International House, Chulalongkorn University

INDONESIA



The orientation and Indonesia Country Workshop were attended by 32 Indonesian Fellows and several invited guests from Australian universities, The Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), and NGOs. It was opened with remarks from Taufik Abdullah, Program Director of the API Indonesia, and TNF's Executive Director Tatsuya Tanami. Special participants included Raul C. Pangalangan (Philippines Senior Fellow Year 2012-2013) and Ruayrin Pedsalabkaew (Thailand Fellow Year 2012-2013) who were both conducting research in Indonesia.

Seminar and Fellow's Paper Presentations

A seminar entitled "The Flow of Ideas, People, Commodities, and Capital across ASEAN Countries: Sabah and Sulu Questions" was held as part of the Country Workshop. Keynote speaker Salim Said, Lecturer of Pertahanan University and Director of Peradaban Institute, discussed the role of democracy in Asia, particularly in Indonesia. He compared the implementation of democracy in Indonesia and the Czech Republic, where he once served as Indonesia's Ambassador. Erni Budiwanti (Senior Fellow Year 2009-2010) moderated a seminar on Sabah-Sulu issues, in which the following four API Fellows presented papers—Ahmad Suaedy (Senior Fellow Year 2009-2010) examined "The Citizenship Dilemma in Modern Nationalism: Tracking the Triangle History of Filipina-Mindanao/Sulu-Malaysia and Its Future Challenges"; Dias Pradadimara (Senior Fellow Year 2007-2008) focused on "Sulu Issues in History (1878-1978-2013)"; Rina S. Shahrulla (Fellow Year 2007-2008) discussed "Sabah from an International Law Perspective"; and Dave Lumenta (Fellow Year 2002-2003) explored "Sabah as a Buffer Zone".

In a session titled "The Flow of ideas, People, Commodities, and Capital across Asia" moderated by Addinul Yakim from Mataram University, six Fellows of the Year 2011-2012 shared their research experiences—Albertus Yustinus Imas; Mochamad Indrawan; Lambang Trijono; Henry Ismail; Wahyudi; and Firly Afwika. These presentations were followed by updates from other API Community members who also shared their current research activities.



From left: Rina S. Shahrullah, Erni Budiwanti, Dias Pradadimara, Ahmad Suaedy and Dave Lumenta during paper presentations

Updates on RC and NCC

Concerning API activities, the following topics were exchanged—results of the RC meetings in Kuala Lumpur in July 2012 and February 2013; RC Implementing Guidelines; RC and API Community Mandate; Report on Regional Project Products; new grant scheme (API Collaborative Grants); and finally, the "API Community: Aiming for the Next Phase". For the body of representatives and regional collaboration, the participants discussed on the NCC appointments; RP Book (Indonesia); brainstorming collaborative themes; RC transition (electing new RC representatives); and finally drafting an agenda for the 2014 Country Workshop. The new NCC Chair is Dave Lumenta (Fellow Year 2002-2003); Sri Nuryanti (Fellow Year 2001-2002) is the Vice Chair; and Ahmad Suaedy is the new Secretary. Newly elected RC Representatives Rina S. Shahrullah and Yuli Nugroho (Fellow Year 2005-2006) are also members of the NCC. ❖

JAPAN

The eighth Japan Country Workshop was attended by 18 Fellows, and representatives from both the TNF and Japan's PI. Japan Program Director Yoko Hayami welcomed the participants and encouraged Fellows to share their work with each other. TNF's Tatsuya Tanami reported on TNF-sponsored events such as the Tokyo International Literary Festival, and new Programs for Myanmar. He also shared the results of an API Program Evaluation. The report says API is a unique and excellent program but it is unclear what the API Community is aiming for. It should review how to improve API's profile in society. In a briefing about the RP Documentary, which was completed in October 2012, he said a promotional campaign is on-going and the film has already been screened for educational purposes.

Updates of the Fellows

Fellows were requested to provide updates on their activities from the past year. Copies of a booklet containing profiles of each Japan Fellow were also distributed. This booklet was appreciated by the Fellows and some of them suggested English translation in order to share it with other Fellows to facilitate networking.



Regional Project (RP)

RC representative Motohide Taguchi (Fellow Year 2002-2003), briefly explained the benefit of RP for the newly selected Fellows. Wataru Fujita (Fellow Year 2003-2004) summarized the June 2012 Culminating Event, which he attended in Bangkok. As for the RP products, the RP Documentary was released in October but the accompanying RP Book will be published later. API's Coordinating Institution (CI) has published the Culminating Event proceedings and copies have been distributed. The results of the RP Assessment conducted by Ateneo de Manila University's Center for Organization Research and Development (CORD), were also presented.

Announcement of the Collaborative Grant

Motohide Taguchi reported on the recent RC meeting, which decided to seek for the activities that are more goal-oriented and content-oriented, rather than large scale projects such as the RP. The RC proposed a new grant scheme, ideas of which were incorporated by the EXECO and become "the Collaborative Grant". Applications closed in October 2013.

The Future of API

Tatsuya Tanami, representing TNF and EXECO, discussed the challenge of putting together a future vision for API. The current API mandate will end in 2015, and it is not yet known how API's current human resources, networks, and operational mechanisms will function in the future. Participants offered many suggestions, including the following: Fellows' information (key words, activities, interests, etc.) should be archived; Japan's PI website could be used to provide links to each Fellow's own site; alumni gatherings may be appropriate for Japan Fellows, since NCC members in the Tokyo area have already organized similar meetings. These gatherings could become starting points for further collaboration.

Updates on RC and NCC

RC Chair Tatsuki Kataoka (Fellow Year 2001-2002) reported on recent developments and proposals from the RC meetings. One of the most urgent issues is that his RC term as it is already beyond the approved length. Therefore, it was agreed that Japan's RC representative should be a new representative. As a result, Kohei Watanabe (Fellow Year 2009-2010) was selected as a new RC representative. It was approved that Motohide Taguchi (Fellow Year 2002-2003) shall continue to serve as RC member.

As for the National Coordinating Committee (NCC), the following members were confirmed— Tatsuki Kataoka, Mokoto Kawano (Fellow Year 2002-2003), Motohide Taguchi, Wataru Fujita, Mizuki Endo (Fellow Year 2004-2005), Tetsuya Araki (Fellow Year 2002-2003), Kohei Watanabe



Toshiyuki Doi shared information on the disappearance of Sombath Somphone

(Fellow Year 2009-2010), Itsue Ito (Fellow Year 2005-2006), Tomoko Momiyama (Fellow Year 2003-2004), Kaori Fushiki (Fellow Year 2006-2007), Kenta Kishi (Fellow Year 2010-2011).

Special Lectures

Toshiyuki Doi (Senior Fellow Year 2011-2012) and Yuria Furusawa (Fellow Year 2011-2012) gave lectures on their research and activities. Doi talked about his own organization (Mekong Watch) and its activities, his API research entitled "Conserving linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity in a globalized Asia". He also shared information on the abduction of Sombath Somphone. Furusawa talked about her API research, "Images of the Virgin Mary Wearing ethnic costumes in the Philippines". Each lecture was followed by a lively discussion. ❖

MALAYSIA



About 35 people participated in the Malaysia Country Workshop, including Fellows from Thailand and Indonesia. It started with welcoming remarks from the new Malaysia PI's Program Director, Rashila Ramil, followed by remarks by TNF's Tatsuya Tanami.

Updates from Fellows, RC & NCC and Sharing on Fellows' Research Findings

Fellows were requested to update their activities since the last CW. Then the minutes from last year's CW and reports on NCC and RC activities were presented. Five API Fellows from Year 2011-2012 also shared their research conclusions—1) Chi Too (Too Che Hung) on "Public Performance Art Works as an Act of Mutual Forgiveness and Understanding of World War" 2 and the Atomic Bomb Incidents"; 2) Fadzilah Majid-Cooke on "Mobilization in the Name of Civil Society: The Unresolved Land Issue in Muslim Thailand and the Philippines"; 3) Kam Suan Pheng on "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Participatory Approaches in Pro-Poor Agricultural R&D: An Analysis of Case Examples from Thailand"; 4) Norhayati Kaprawi on "Documentary Film on Progressive Islam in Indonesia and Its Impact on Muslim Women"; and 5) Susanna George on "Upholding Feminist Principles in the Era of Globalization: Challenges Faced by Women's Activists in Finding Balance between Core Values and Organizational Practices in Women's Movement-based Organizations".

The Future of API

Tatsuya Tanami gave a presentation on API's future mandate. He said that API's new mission is to serve as a catalyst and platform to effectively link public policy and knowledge production in activities such as collaborative trans-regional research/projects by promoting dialogue among public



Fellows exchanged their updates and concerns

intellectuals. Tanami and the Fellows agreed that the most important things to consider were the content and the structure which would support the proposed activities under the new API

Special Session on Malaysia's General Election

During the final session "The State of Malaysian Civil Society after the 13th General Elections: Sharing Insights, Concerns and Information" moderated by Sumit Mandal (Senior Fellow Year 2002-2003), participants discussed on local issues and Malaysia's General Election (GE13) in May 2013 and voiced their concerns. To them, GE13 was seen as an eye opener. As public intellectuals in civil society, the Fellows insisted that credibility and balance were important. Some suggestions were made, such as establishing a radio program for API Fellows, in which Fellows could discuss pressing concerns using their own expertise (e. g. artists could use the platform to address social issues). ❖

PHILIPPINES



The Philippine Country Workshop focused on post-Fellowship collaborations in the country and at the regional level. Discussions on more concrete collaborative efforts translated into a decision to establish an NCC.

A Possibility of a Philippine "NCC"

Unlike other partner institutions, Philippine PI does not have an NCC. Therefore, Rosalie Hall (Fellow Year 2004-2005), Philippine representative

to the RC, pitched the idea of forming a Philippines NCC and presented the NCC structures of Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand.

The Fellows agreed that the Philippine NCC should be (1) the formal structure responsible for the selection of the Philippine representative to the Regional Committee; (2) the formal organization that will be tasked to develop guidelines on intra-country activities; and (3) the organization that will facilitate networking among country Fellows in preparation for the API Community grant application.

Philippines Fellows are excited about the NCC establishment, but the Fellows requested for more time to discuss on the NCC formation. They agreed to set up a workshop to draft a formal mandate. The Fellows also noted that the idea of forming NCC is very timely since it coincides with the development of a post-2015 API mandate.

Mapping Networks

The rest of the workshop focused on how Fellows' collaboration could address specific countries and regional needs by using the internal and external resources available.

In a discussion facilitated by RC representatives Rosalie Hall and Cristina Lim (Fellow Year 2008-2009), Fellows were encouraged to invite their colleagues to be part of their current projects and future endeavors, in order to maximize the network of experts within the API Community.

In this regard, Fr. Joey Cruz, S.J. facilitated a special workshop for strategic planning. Participants were divided into four teams and each team had to devise a way of organizing the total of 308 API Fellows into seven categories. Teams were given a set of cards that provided information on Fellows' names, nationalities, and research interests. Finally the participants came up with different conceptual designs on how to group Fellows, while the Fellows' research fields were the key consideration.

The activity enabled Philippine Fellows to be more familiar with the work of the other fellows and encouraged them to seek these people out for future collaborations. The Fellows also appreciated that the activity provided them more time to interact with the other Fellows, compared with the usual speaker-audience meeting.



Participants brainstormed on how to group Fellows for future collaboration

Overall, the CW was the time of reunions and reconnections. It witnessed strong desire of API Fellows in the Philippines to work with one another for the continuity of API good work within the country and in the regional level. ❖

THAILAND & CLMV



The Thailand & CLMV Country Workshop opened with remarks from M.R. Kalaya Tingsabhadh, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Chulalongkorn University, and Masato Seko, representing TNF.

Prawase Wasi, Special Advisor to the API Fellowships Program, shared his perspectives on API's role in the region and the world that national governments cannot tackle inter-connecting global problems on their own, and API can fill this gap by opening up social and intellectual space for a regional conversation. He emphasized on inequality and the degree of inequality correlates with health and social problems which are difficult to solve. He encouraged Fellows to continue to share, learn, and work together for a peaceful world where all people can live with each other and respect the environment.

Myanmar Participation in API and Regional Solidarity

As API this year welcomed Fellows from Myanmar, **Surichai Wun'Gaeo**, API Program Director for both the Regional Coordinating Institution and Thailand & CLMV, commended TNF for its role in inviting Myanmar to

participate in the API Community. This special effort has given API a stronger platform for regional solidarity and cooperation by inspiring hope in the next generation of leaders. The world looks to Asia with much anticipation, thus it is API's task and API Fellows to create human solidarity and a way of working together to respond to our own problems. The quality of leadership in the region is also important and Fellows could play leadership roles in their own local and regional contexts. Surichai lastly expressed his hope for such interaction that the Fellows could help strengthen one another morally and move ahead together.

Updates on RC and NCC

RC representatives from Thailand reported the following updates—Regional Project (RP) Products; API Regional Project Assessment; RC's withdrawal from RP project implementation; API Collaborative Grant; Ideas for activities within and between countries; and amending API's RC Implementation Guidelines.

As far as the 2015 API transformation was concerned, the RC encouraged the Fellows to promote intra-country and inter-country activities at all levels. This would help to prepare for the next, phase of the API Community. While the API Collaborative Grant is now available for projects with a regional dimension and focus, intra-country activities on a smaller scale and/or topics that are more specific to each country's immediate concerns could be organized by collaborating with PIs or other organization(s). Possible activities were suggested: 1) Public round-table discussions/seminars on a timely topic or topic of common concern. NCC could invite Fellows or experts from other countries as speakers/resource persons. 2) Fellows could write a coordinated series of articles to be featured in newspapers. 3) Skills-based workshops with artists. 4) Semi-public exhibitions.

Semi-public Forum on People's Participation in ASEAN Community

The afternoon was dedicated to a semi-public forum on "People's Participation in ASEAN: Challenges and Opportunities" Led by the following three keynote speakers.

1) Anan Nakkhong from the Faculty of Music, Silpakorn University, discussed on how music and art could connect people in ASEAN countries. Since music is an international language, it goes beyond geographical and language limitations. The ASEAN countries have shared similar musical characteristics and instruments and regional culture has been shared, exchanged, and transformed throughout the time. Music can be used as a key to learn other's lifestyles, cultures, and beliefs, like in the distant past when people used music to get in touch with the divine/supernatural aspects of life.

2) Zaw Aung (Myanmar Fellow Year 2013-2014), Independent Researcher, focused on social justice and environmental issues that there are still challenges prior to the launch of ASEAN Community in 2015, particularly in terms of participation from the CLMV countries. The ASEAN Community would have brought opportunities for high economic growth and high costs at the same time. Other trans-boundary challenges include environmental degradation; natural disasters; climate change; cross-border labour migration both documented and undocumented; trans-border organized crime; human and drug trafficking; and large-scale industrial investment. These have impacts and consequences on people's livelihoods, through land confiscation and food insecurity, as widely visible in the CLMV countries. He reminded us that a "people-oriented ASEAN" is mentioned in the ASEAN Charter, but ASEAN governments have yet to put clear ideas, approaches, and mechanisms in place to ensure that people are included in the national and regional development process.



Semi-public forum on People's Participation in ASEAN Community



Vitit Muntarbhorn addressed some concrete linkages of ASEAN people orientation

3) Vitit Muntarbhorn from the Faculty of Law, Chulalongkorn University; Commissioner of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria, addressed the importance of people's participation in democracy. He added to Zaw Aung's statement on the ASEAN Charter that the Charter calls for people's participation although there is no actual people-oriented institution in its text. It only refers to "summits" and "coordination councils" in general. As for the more concrete linkages of ASEAN people orientation, three institutions were built up since 2009— 1) ASEAN Inter-Governmental Human Rights Commission; 2) ASEAN Commission on the Rights of Women and Children; and 3) ASEAN Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers.

Based on areas of interests, participants joined in three parallel sessions: 1) Socio-economic development: people's livelihoods & environmental challenges; 2) Political change, people's participation & communication strategizing: how media and technologies connect people; and 3) The role of arts and culture in building community. After that, they presented the results of their discussions and exchanged different perspectives.

Surichai Wun'Gaeo provided a closing remark that the exchanged dialogues confirmed that the approach of informality and non-bureaucracy—particularly in the labour and economic aspect—is much richer than the formal counterparts. Exchange of knowledge and experience must be expanded to the broader public, in cross-disciplinary and cross-border participation. In addition, API should seriously consider how it could be part of the bigger process of ASEAN. We could also create our own version of ASEAN. For example, API Fellows who are artists could more actively participate in promoting ASEAN ideals by communicating this vision in a broader sense. ASEAN's future depends on the API Community's ability to play a bigger role in strengthening regional solidarity through increased collaboration. ❖



From left: Forum's keynote speakers Zaw Aung and Anan Nakkhong

Newly-Selected Fellows Year 2013-2014

INDONESIA

**Yusmarni Djalius****Project Title:** The Influence of Minangkabau Intellectuals in Malaysia**Iwan Meulia Pirous****Project Title:** Initiating Network of "Praxis-Intellectuals" Who Work for Social Transformation in the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia**Reza Indragiri Amriel****Project Title:** Psychology of Judicial Decision Making**Meiske Taurisia****Project Title:** Film Funding Models in the Asian Region: Between Public and Private Structures

JAPAN

**Jun Akamine****Project Title:** Toward Inclusive Dialogue for Sustainable Sea Cucumber Conservation in Malaysia**Yuka Kiguchi****Project Title:** Living with Development: Memories and Records of Thai River Communities**Mayumi Hirano****Project Title:** Site-Specific Art Practice in Philippines: Process of Building, Identity and Forms of Survival**Shunsuke Sasaki****Project Title:** Toward Taking "A Photograph for Conveying Social Message More Deeply" – Capturing a Daily Life in the Slums of Waste Disposal Site

MALAYSIA

**Lai Suat Yan****Project Title:** Buddhist Women as Spiritual Leaders, Ritual Specialists and Religious Innovators**Zulkifli Zakaria (Joe Kidd)****Project Title:** The History of Punk & DIY Hardcore-Punk Subculture in Southeast Asia**Zulhabri bin Supian****Project Title:** Ajeg Bali: A Tradition's Vitality That Eradicates Subculture**Sulaiman bin Tamby Hussin (Shieko)****Project Title:** A Visual Narrative and Empowerment for Transsexual Women and Community in Malaysia

PHILIPPINES

**Ricardo G. Abad****Project Title:** Negotiating Conviviality: Intercultural Theater and the Imagined Nation**Federico S. Dominguez****Project Title:** Painting and Exhibit of Origin Tales and Others Folklore Reflecting Identity and Shared Heritage**Tessa Maria Guazon****Project Title:** Culture in Urbanization Schemes: Art in Public Spaces Across Southeast Asian Cities**Karl Ian Cheng Chua****Project Title:** Teaching Our Children: Disaster Education in Japan Since the Great Kanto Earthquake to the Present

THAILAND

**Attachak Sattayanurak****Project Title:** Resolutions to Conflicts and Violence in the ASEAN Social and Political Landscape**Sanan Chusakun****Project Title:** The Community Creative Power for Sustainable and Fair Development Study Project**Viriya Swangchot****Project Title:** Creative Cities and the Sustainable Life: A Study on the Making of Cultural Spaces in Osaka and Bandung**Teerawat Mulvilai****Project Title:** Freedom of Expression and the Performing Arts

CLMV

**Chheang Vannarith**
(Cambodia)**Project Title:** How to Transform International Migration into a Source of Growth and ASEAN Community Building? Case Studies of Cambodian Migrant Workers in Thailand and Malaysia**Tingthong Phetsavong**
(Laos)**Project Title:** Legal Rights for Women Migrant Workers: Case Study in Thailand and Malaysia**Amphaphone Sayasenh**
(Laos)**Project Title:** Contract Farming: What Lao PDR Could Learn from Thailand's Experiences**Zaw Aung**
(Myanmar)**Project Title:** Trans-boundary Investments and Responsibility for Social and Environmental Justice: Lessons Learnt from the Industrial Development Policies and Practices of Japan and Thailand**Su Su Yin**
(Myanmar)**Project Title:** Social and Health Impacts of Migration: Adaptation in New Cultural, New World Circumstance

Joining Hands for Solidarity

Learning from Typhoon Haiyan and Supporting the Affected



On November 16, 2013, Thailand API Community and the API Coordinating Institution co-organized a “Gathering for Solidarity: Support the Affected by Typhoon Haiyan” at Chulalongkorn University, to initiate discussions for a regional collaborations in response to natural disasters. About 30 professionals with a range of experience in disaster relief, including API Fellows from Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan and Thailand, as well as climate change experts from Germany and Mexico and some Thai youth volunteers who helped in the aftermath of Myanmar’s devastating Cyclone Nargis, joined the event. Participants shared the lessons they learned from a range of perspectives.

Director of API Thailand and CLMV Surichai Wun’Geao emphasized the urgency of the solidarity event when the full scale of the damage from Typhoon Haiyan remained unknown and fundamental challenges should be addressed. He extended his gratitude to the API Fellows for attending this event to share their knowledge and cooperation in response to the crisis.

On behalf of the API Philippines Fellows, Rosalie B. Arcala Hall (Philippines Fellow Year 2004 – 2005) shared an overview of the effects of Typhoon Haiyan and the 7.2-magnitude earthquake that devastated Bohol and Cebu in October 2013. Haiyan was the 23rd storm to hit the Philippines in that year, but its Category 5 force made it a super typhoon, and the worst storm in 2013. Early warnings closed businesses in some areas 48 hours before the storm struck, but the typhoon moved in too quickly to spare the devastated Samar and Leyte islands. The Philippines is vulnerable to coastal storms, so risk reduction and management have been a focus of concern. The current framework for coping with natural disasters places most of the responsibility with local governments in order to more effectively address the issues. Yet, in this case, the local government leaders were also victims and survivors, and the evacuation plans were inadequate for a storm of this magnitude. The schools and churches used as evacuation centers were designed for Category 2 disasters and residents were only prepared for risks such as flooding and landslides. Since all telecommunications infrastructure was destroyed and roads were largely impassable, relief supplies had to be flown in.



Rosalie Arcala Hall shared an overview of the effects of Typhoon Haiyan and the Philippines’ current framework for coping with natural disasters

Saya Kiba (Japan API Fellow Year 2010-2011) gave a presentation entitled “Trust-building in Disaster Relief beyond Aid Conflict and Coordination Dilemmas”, which was based on her current research. She emphasized the important role that trust plays in the effective delivery of international aid and provided an overview of the main disaster relief players—central government agencies; the military; local governments and NGOs; regional representatives; and international organizations and NGOs. In Japan, for example, local governments are perceived to be very trustworthy and a decentralized system has been established for a long time. Thus, in 2011, following the tragic earthquake, regional aid agencies could contact Japan’s local governments directly. In Thailand, the military has won the public’s trust. In the Philippines however, nobody believed in the local governments, while the central government, the military, and NGOs were often perceived negatively as very politicized. Other key factors that can affect the delivery of aid include a perception of neutrality; the coordination capacity; and putting the right people on the ground. For example, she noted that development aid experts are not necessarily the right people to administer emergency aid.

Participants raised key concerns and challenges including the following, in their discussions about how best to coordinate a regional response to natural disasters:

- Due to climate change, more attention needs to be paid to educating the public about the risks of natural disasters and the cycles of extreme weather.
- Politics and negotiations should go beyond vested interests. Penchom Saetang (Thailand Fellow Year 2005-2006) shared her experience in unsuccessful negotiations at the Conferences of the Parties (CoP) for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. She said no action had been taken because of conflicting political and economic benefits. Therefore, there is no hope from the UN and governments. She believes we have to take care of ourselves and work together to put pressure on our governments.
- Human-made disasters such as the Fukushima nuclear crisis should also be taken into account. In the future, if natural disasters combine with industrial-related disasters, the effects will be even worse.
- Despite their awareness of climate change impacts, policy makers are less likely to reduce their industrial activities unless they are pressed by economic loss. Thus, a public movement needs to pressure policymakers.
- Apart from relying on external aid, people in affected areas could join together, share supplies, manage their roles and help each other to survive, which includes healing from the trauma.
- Food supplies to disaster survivors should be more nutritious.

The gathering ended by singing together led by Karnt Thassanaphak (Thailand Fellow Year 2008 – 2009)’s music performance “The Voice”, to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to regional solidarity and to provide moral support to all those affected by natural disasters. Participants also presented Rosalie Arcala Hall with a donation worth a thousand dollars, which she will deliver to Typhoon Haiyan survivors. (Read more about relief efforts in the Philippines in Rosalie’s report on page 23) ❖

Surviving and Thriving in the Shadow of Super Typhoon Haiyan

Rosalie B. Arcala Hall, PHILIPPINES FELLOW YEAR 2004-2005

On November 8, 2013, Category 5 Super Typhoon Haiyan (or Typhoon Yolanda), the biggest Pacific storm ever recorded, was scheduled to make landfall and to barrel its way through the central Philippines. I was at home in Iloilo City on that day, where the warning was for a Category 3 storm. My husband's early morning flight from Hong Kong was the last to land that day, and I had returned home from overseas just the day before. Filipinos cope with tropical storms all the time, so we went through the usual drill: stocked up on groceries, drinking water and emergency lighting; gadgets and mobiles were fully charged; and the crank-up radio was at hand to listen to updates.

Typhoon Haiyan broke new ground in the way our country prepared for a tropical storm. Having shifted in 2010 to a new disaster-preparedness framework that focused on risk reduction and management, the Philippine government put fresh practices to test. Haiyan's evolution into a mega storm was tracked by PAGASA, the meteorological agency; briefings about its path and attendant dangers were regularly dispensed by the media. A national emergency was declared, suspending all businesses and school operations two days prior. Local governments (tasked with primary responsibility for disaster response) in high risk areas issued evacuation orders. Relief items were pre-positioned and disaster response personnel were alerted.

But our preparations were no match for Haiyan's fury. Powerful winds flattened power lines and peeled off roofs from government buildings and churches that also served as evacuation centers in Eastern Samar, Leyte, northern Iloilo, Capiz and Antique provinces. There was none of the expected flooding or landslides. Instead, there were shocking and gruesome images of Tacloban City laid to ruins and thousands of deaths. The Tacloban campus of my home university, the University of the Philippines (UP) Visayas, was devastated. Although only two casualties were recorded, our entire Tacloban College community was among the hundreds of thousands in the city who lost their homes and possessions. Whatever was spared by the five-meter storm surge (the campus is located along the coast) was looted over the following days. The photos posted online by the inspection team made clear that academic operations would be suspended indefinitely. In northern Iloilo where our university has partnerships with fishing and island communities, villagers lost their homes and their livelihoods. Since they couldn't access relief supplies by land, they faced the specter of starvation.

UP Visayas volunteers spent weekends sorting and putting together relief packages of rice, canned goods, bottled water and used clothing. Three relief deliveries (with huge support from Christian Aid and other local partners) were sent to over 2000 households in November and December 2013 in Carles and Isla Higantes. A further 38 boxes of relief goods and 35 sacks of used clothing/bedding were sent to the Tacloban campus on November 29,



From left: Josephine Firmase and Jorge Ebay of the UP Visayas Community Outreach Program, Bruce Hall (husband of Rosalie Arcala Hall) and Charles McJilton, Executive Director of Second Harvest Japan, a partner of UPV-COP on the receipt of the donation collected from the API Solidarity Event in Bangkok



With a help from the Philippine National Police to deliver the reliefs packed in waterproof blue canisters

2013, along with a truckload of repair materials, carpenters and handymen. My home university pulled off a remarkable organizational feat by carrying out relief operations on an adhoc basis, led by seasoned disaster-response Community Development faculty members. UPV staff conducted damage assessments; prepared a master list of beneficiaries; and organized everything from warehousing, packaging, and logistics to aid distribution. A fourth delivery to Carles is scheduled to include a shipment of relief goods from Second Harvest Asia in February 2014. Books and school supplies as well as personal hygiene kits were prepared to arrive in time for the January 13, 2014 re-opening of the Tacloban campus. Psychology faculty members offered psycho-social/trauma training for local frontline service providers (counselors and teachers). On the homefront, 60 cross-registrants from Tacloban College arrived with a range of supplies and expertise: parallel mobilization for makeshift accommodations in every possible non-classroom building space; generous meal plans from alumni donors and one local restaurant; and a stream of relief items for the student-refugees.

For my husband and me, Typhoon Haiyan revealed the compassion of our friends and the seemingly inexhaustible generosity of spirit borne out of trying times. A follow-up donation from the API Indonesia Fellows came; another solidarity event planned by the API Japan Fellows is scheduled for February 2014. We opened a PayPal account to which US-based donations were channeled. The amount is currently set aside for

“Relief items were pre-positioned and disaster response personnel were alerted. But our preparations were no match for Haiyan's fury”

planned rehabilitation efforts in northern Iloilo partner communities. We borrowed 20 folding beds from an expat friend's medical mission for the UP Tacloban cross-registrants' use. My husband joined one relief run to Isla Gigantes and came on board as logistics volunteer for Christian Aid. I put together 50 personal hygiene kits; pulled out many college textbooks, notebooks and boxes of pens for UP Tacloban students who literally are starting from zero.

The task of rehabilitating the UP Visayas Tacloban campus and the northern Iloilo partner communities is enormous. Even as we struggle to achieve some level of normalcy here in Iloilo City, our concerns linger with those who must rebuild their lives. Everyday, I am consoled by the knowledge that we Filipinos are one of the most resilient people on earth; that we smile and say thanks in response to any help we receive, no matter how small the contribution may be. We shall overcome. I would also like to thank the organizers and participants of the API-sponsored forum, "Gathering for Solidarity: Support the Affected by Typhoon Haiyan", which was held just eight days after the typhoon struck. They donated a thousand dollars to my home university's typhoon relief fund in northern Iloilo, and the funds will be administered to survivors through the university's Community Outreach Program (COP).

Rosalie B. Arcala Hall is a Professor of Political Science at the University of the Philippines Visayas in Miagao, Iloilo. She finished her Ph.D. in Public and International Affairs at Northeastern University (Boston, MA) in 2002. ❖

Demanding New Politics: The Rise of ASEAN's Middle-Class Youth

As 2013 marked an election year for Malaysia and Cambodia and witnessed new political dynamics in the region, an API Public Forum entitled "Elections, Democracy and Regional Community-Building: Implications from Malaysia and Cambodia in 2013" was organized by the API Fellowships Program in collaboration with Chulalongkorn University's Institute of Security and International Studies (ISIS) and its Faculty of Political Science's Department of Government. Professionals from academe, diplomatic circles, civil society and the media exchanged views and shared different perspectives on developing and sustaining democratic values and institutions.

Two keynote speakers addressed the implications of the elections: Chheang Vannarith (Cambodia Fellow Year 2013-2014), former Executive Director of the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace; and Francis Loh, former Professor of Politics at the Universiti Sains Malaysia and President of ALIRAN, a Penang-based organization for social and democratic reform. The forum was moderated by Chantana Banpasirichote Wun'Gaeo, from the Department of Government, at Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Political Science.

Vannarith provided an overview of Cambodia's election history and emphasized that the 2013 election was the most significant turning point for Cambodian democracy since 1993. He said that the 2012 merge of the Human Rights Party and Sam Rainsy Party into the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) created "the biggest political wave" ever. Cambodia's voters today are demanding good governance, transparency and corruption-free elections, reflecting a dissatisfaction with the government led by Prime Minister Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP). Social media platforms such as Facebook generated discussions among politicians and voters, particularly the youth, who were major supporters of the CNRP. The voters aged 18-30 years old represent a third of all Cambodian eligible voters, and they contested the election's final results when the CPP won the most seats. In Vannarith's view, Cambodia's political crisis and instability could weaken ASEAN's relevance and role, and would generate regional spillover effects. For instance, CNRP's election campaign targeted anti-Vietnamese nationalists in an attempt to win the election.

Loh analyzed changes in Malaysia's electoral patterns, from the dominance of the Barisan Nasional Party (BN), to the current system of two coalitions. It also marked the new politics that young middle-class Malaysians increasingly searched for political participation beyond and in-between elections, as they demand for good governance, a corruption-free society, both consultative and participatory democracy. Therefore,



From left: Siripan Nogsuan Sawasdee, Francis Loh, Chantana Banpasirichote Wun'Gaeo, Chheang Vannarith and Thitinan Pongsudhirak

young middle-class, Chinese, and associates with new NGOs and social movements (e.g. Bersih and the Green Movement) strongly supported Pakatan Rakyat Party (PR) led by Anwar Ibrahim. Although the BN won the 2013 election for 133 seats, its popular vote dropped from 51.4% in 2008 to 47.5%, losing to the PR. The BN's popular votes were sustained only among the Malay ethnic group and rural areas especially in Rural Bumiputera Sabah and Sarawak (Borneo). It is clearly seen that votes and ethnic ideology largely divide. Under the strong tie between the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) and Borneo partners in the new BN, evident in more Borneo presence in the cabinet, people fear that development policies would become overly pro-Islamic and pro-Borneo.

Two discussants from Chulalongkorn University responded to the speakers' presentations. Siripan Nogsuan Sawasdee, from the Department of Government, made three main observations. 1) The popularity of the one party/leader-dominant regime was diminishing. 2) The problem of free and fair elections affected electoral values. She noted that in a proportional representation system, for example, a candidate can win a seat despite receiving less than 50% of the votes. 3) urban youth and minorities are increasingly calling for more inclusive politics, and their widespread use of digital media shows that elections are no longer the only way to justify political power. Thitinan Pongsudhirak, the Director of ISIS, agreed that the phenomenon of one-party dominance has declined, especially in Southeast Asia. Political parties tend to adjust themselves to the new trend, and to the democratizing effects of social media in order to win elections. Opposition parties have opportunities to take over if they are cohesive and effective. He said that political reforms are needed, otherwise, the democracy would go to the street.

Forum participants raised issues such as the roles of youth, the media, and the use of nationalism as a tool to gain electoral popularity. Loh remarked that new media platforms are attracting more people to politics. Especially minorities including women, disabled persons, the young, and the elderly, are becoming more politically involved. This suggests that politics could become increasingly fragmented. People's frustration with unchanged regimes could lead to even more divisions. As for regional implications, Loh suggested that the regional community should work together to broaden the current understanding of democracy to encompass non-formal politics. In his view, even an ideal electoral system would not necessarily lead to true democracy. Thus, democracy must go beyond elections, to include cultural democracy, through increasing political participation from minorities (women; the LGBT community; the disabled; youth; and the elderly). We should focus less on power politics and more on relationships across the region and the political participation of minority groups. ❖



Various professionals shared different perspectives toward political issues in the region

API POST FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM



SALZBURG GLOBAL SEMINAR

API-Salzburg Global Seminar Collaboration Awardees 2013

Salzburg Global Seminar (SGS) focuses on critical challenges confronting the global community and is designed to formulate innovative solutions to global problems. Since 2008, the SGS and the API Fellowships Program have collaborated to provide API Fellows the opportunities to expand their intellectual capacities and to share Asian perspectives with other regions. For the 2013 Program, the following four API Fellows have been selected:

Wan Abdul Manan (Malaysia Fellow Year 2004-2005)

participated in the Session: "Getting to Grips with Obesity" during June 14-17, 2013. Obesity has been recognized in the last decade as a global epidemic. It is estimated that one billion adults are overweight, and a further 475 million are clinically obese. Obesity has also become a sustainable development issue because of the strain on public health services, and the ecological implications of food production. This session explored different aspects of the obesity pandemic to show how it has become a major challenge of the 21st century, and an urgent problem to be solved. Wan learned about different perspectives on nutrition, such as the concept of energy imbalances, the problem of sugar-sweetened beverages and food education programs in schools. ❖



Wan Abdul Manan, centre foreground



Kohei Watanabe, far left, second row from the back

Kohei Watanabe (Japan Fellow Year 2009-2010)

participated in Session 515: "A Climate for Change: New Thinking on Governance for Sustainability" during June 23-27, 2013. This session aimed to infuse the rapidly-evolving sustainability landscape with new ideas and fresh approaches, in order to develop an innovative framework that would identify concrete steps for target audiences; and establish an inter-generational network of dedicated experts, critical thinkers and practitioners. "The seminar provided me with new points of view and lots of inspiration. In my daily work, I don't see many others working together on a common issue, and I tend to become so overwhelmed by duties and chores that I end up like the Japanese proverb that says 'you won't see the forest if you look only at a tree'. I developed a sense of camaraderie with the participants, which gave me the encouragement and enhanced confidence I need to develop to keep growing as a university researcher," said Kohei. ❖

Rina Shahriyani Shahrullah (Indonesia Fellow Year 2007-2008)

and **Sri Nuryanti** (Indonesia Fellow Year 2001-2002)

participated in Session 508: "Getting Transition Right: a Rights-based Approach towards Diversity and Inclusivity", during November 1-6, 2013. In the context of the recent socio-political developments following the revolutions in the Middle East and the North African (MENA) region, the session focused on transitional justice and aimed to identify strategic directions to improve diversity and inclusivity in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen. Rina and Nuryanti shared their insights by comparing the current situation in the MENA region with Indonesia's similar experience in 1998 after the resignation of Soeharto. They explained the transitional period in Indonesia from legal, political, social and cultural perspectives. They emphasized the importance of collaborations to smooth the transitional process that is critical to establishing diversity and inclusivity based on a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law. Nevertheless, this priority depends on how the MENA countries establish "a common ground and vision". They also noted that the media could also play a key role in defending human rights by helping to steer society's values and views. ❖



From left: Sri Nuryanti and Rina S. Shahrullah

API POST FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

API Collaborative Grants

API Collaborative Grant is a new grant scheme launched in January 2013. It aims to support the efforts of Fellows in consolidating community building, serving the public good and generating social transformation in Asia, in response to the region's key challenges especially in poverty, climate change and disintegrating communities. The grant supports collaborative projects with regional implications and transformative potentials including clear articulations of possibilities for social change.

2013 grantees

1) Policy Brokering of Community Knowledge for Sustainability Transition in Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand

Grantee: Hezri Adnan (Malaysia Fellow Year 2006-2007)

Collaborators: Dicky Sofjan (Indonesia Fellow Year 2007-2008), Myfel Joseph D. Paluga (Philippines Fellow 2006 – 2007), Ayame Suzuki (Japan Fellow Year 2006-2007), Wimonrart Issarathumnoon (Thailand Fellow Year 2003-2004)

2) Impact of Urban Migration for Major Cities in Indonesia: Studies and Creative Practices for Massive Influx of Workers in City and Its Implications for Existing Urban Community

Grantee: Kenta Kishi (Japan Fellow Year 2010-2011)

Collaborators: Moch. Ichsan Harja Nugraha (Indonesia Fellow Year 2010-2011), Junko Sato (Japan Fellow 2005-2006), Mohammad Cahyo Novianto (Non-API Fellow), Bintang Putra (Non-API Fellow) and Daiki Nakagawa (Non-API Fellow)

3) Hearing Historical Voices: Oral Histories of Political Violence in Southeast Asia, Connecting Past Violence, the Present Situation, and Future Justice

Grantee: Patporn Phoothong (Thailand Fellow Year 2011-2012)

Collaborators: Narumol Thammapraksa (Thailand Fellow Year 2008-2009), Wayhudi (Indonesia Fellow Year 2011-2012) and Ekraj Sabur (Non-API Fellow)

4) Comparative Analysis of Military-NGO Cooperation Policies in Asia

Grantee: Saya Kiba (Japan Fellow 2009-2010)

Collaborators: Rosalie Hall (Philippines Fellow Year 2004-2005), Erna Anjarwati (Indonesia Fellow Year 2009-2010), Atsushi Yasutomi (Non-API Fellow), Christopher Magno (Non-API Fellow) and Philip Parnell (Non-API Fellow)

5) Participatory Governance in Developing Social Safeguards in REDD + Implementation in Central Kalimantan

Grantee: Yuli Nugroho (Indonesia Fellow Year 2005-2006)

Collaborators: Wataru Fujita (Japan Fellow Year 2003-2004) and Lukas P. Rumboko (Non-API Fellow)

2014 grantees

1) Puppet Theatre "Potehi" in Southeast Asia: Moving People, Adaptation, Conflict and Creativity

Grantee: Kaori Fushiki (Japan Fellow Year 2006-2007)

Collaborators: Tan Sooi Beng (Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2008-2009), Michi Tomioka (Japan Fellow Year 2006-2007), Herry Yogaswara (Indonesia Fellow Year 2001-2002), Ardian Purwoseputro (non-fellow), Robin Ruzendaal (Non-API Fellow) and Caroline Chia (Non-Fellow)

2) Risks and Challenges of Urbanization: Focusing on the Solid Waste Management Issues

Grantee: Kohei Watanabe (Japan Fellow Year 2009-2010)

Collaborators: Cristina P. Lim (Philippines Fellow Year 2008-2009), Siti Khadijah binti Abdul Gani (Malaysia Fellow Year 2005-2006), Prijono Tjptoherijanto (Indonesia Fellow Year 2007-2008), Iderlina B. Mateo-Babiano (Philippines Fellow Year 2006-2007), Tetsuya Araki (Japan Fellow Year 2002-2003), Adelia R. Licos (Non-API Fellow) and Tomoko Okayama (Non-API Fellow)

3) Asian Small Farmers' Resilience in Times of Trade Liberalization: A Comparative Study of Rice Trade and Organic Farming in Indonesia, Japan and Thailand

Grantee: Michiko Sugawara (Japan Fellow Year 2009-2010)

Collaborators: Ekoningtyas Margu Wardani (Indonesia Fellow Year 2008-2009), Dwi Any Marsiyanti (Indonesia Fellow Year 2009-2010), Supa Yaimuang (Thailand Senior Fellow Year 2006-2007) and Kengo Yoda (Non-API Fellow)

4) Migration and Migrants Policy for the Coming ASEAN Economic Community plus Three: Bridging Policy and Implementation

Grantee: Pataya Ruenkaew (Thailand Fellow Year 2001-2002)

Collaborators: Nguyen Van Chinh (Vietnam Senior Fellow Year 2010-2011), Pande Ketut Trimayuni (Indonesia Fellow Year 2001-2002), Darunee Tantiwiramanond (Thailand Senior Fellow Year 2002-2003) and Suthasini Kaewleklai (Non-API Fellow)

5) No More Guns: Documenting Local Conflict Resolution Initiatives in Selected Asian Communities

Grantee: Rosalie Arcala Hall (Philippines Fellow Year 2004-2005)

Collaborators: Rufa Cagoco-Guiam (Philippines Fellow Year 2008-2009), Prangtip Daorueng (Thailand Fellow Year 2001-2002) and Rina Shahriyani Shahrullah (Indonesia Fellow Year 2007-2008)

6) From Stories to Policies: Enriching Discussions over Key Development Issues through Local Verbal Repertoires in Three Mekong Countries

Grantee: Toshiyuki Doi (Japan Senior Fellow Year 2011-2012)

Collaborators: Bampen Chaiyarak (Thailand Fellow Year 2009-2010), Syvongsay Changpitikoun (Laos Fellow Year 2011-2012), Leakhana Kol (Cambodia Fellow Year 2012-2013), Tomohiro O (Non-API Fellow) and Satomi Higashi (Non-API Fellow)

More information: www.api-fellowships.org/body/Collaborative_Grant.php

We are impressed with how substantial this time's newsletter is, in content, quality and in volume. This may be due to the newsletter only being issued several times a year; however a more evident reason is the increased activity of the API Fellows and the API Community which has led to the pleasing result of there being much more information available to be shared. It must have been a difficult job for the CI staff members to edit. Thank you for your hard work.

Recent news from The Nippon Foundation concerns our activities in Myanmar. As everyone knows, our Chairman Yohei Sasakawa was appointed Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar in February 2013. Since then, he has been concentrating all his efforts into encouraging the Myanmar government and ethnic groups to move towards peace.

Over 130 different ethnic groups reside in Myanmar and conflict between them and the Myanmar government has continued for more than 60 years. According to UNHCR, around 870,000 people have been forced to leave their homes due to fighting and are now internally displaced persons (IDPs), struggling to live in the mountains and border areas. President Thein Sein is proactively trying to attain peace between the ethnic groups and the Myanmar government. While it may still take some time, the hope for achieving a nationwide cease-fire is visible. Mr. Sasakawa is active in identifying the needs of villagers who have fled to mountainous areas because of internal conflicts, and considering how to revitalize communities, provide education for children, and what infrastructures are needed for development of villages.

Since 1976, long before this democratic movement became prominent, The Nippon Foundation has been involved in projects in many fields in Myanmar, beginning with the elimination of leprosy, as well as distribution of traditional medicines, and construction of elementary schools. Regarding school construction, this project has been running from 2002, mainly in Shan State, and over 200 schools have been completed. The project to distribute medicine boxes containing traditional medicines started in 2009 and has been well received. Boxes have already been given to 14,000 villages in 14 states and they play an important role in maintaining the everyday health of the villagers. These projects will continue to be actively run. However, the most pressing issue at this time is to provide humanitarian aid through distribution of food supplies and medicine to citizens affected by conflicts. From the end of 2012 until now, The Nippon Foundation has provided 300 million yen's worth of aid.

The way to democracy in Myanmar is definitely being paved and support is needed to improve the lives of the people in Myanmar and to develop society. Two fellows from Myanmar have already joined the API Community and through them, as well as other channels, many forms of support can be provided through the organizations and individuals connected with API.

In regards to the future of the API program, it is regrettable that neither EXECO nor The Nippon Foundation can give any concrete details of plans as yet. As you all know, the current structure of the API program will come to an end in 2015. With EXECO at the center, a great deal of exchange

of ideas has been made on how to make use of and develop the 15 years of results and accumulation of human and intellectual resources. Questions include: Should API become an independent institution or should it remain a network that runs a program through the support of local universities? As an organization that serves people in communities, what type of activities should be developed? Should the form and size of the Fellowship be changed in order to continue? What should happen to the API Alumni in each country?

In response to these questions, much work has been done and proposals for future API have been gathered by the EXECO.

The Nippon Foundation, on receiving these proposals of the future, will consider whether it is feasible for the foundation to continue providing support or not. API, of course, can continue to exist without the support of The Nippon Foundation; however, this may be considered after it has been concluded what involvement we, The Nippon Foundation, will have in API from 2016.

At the request of the Board of Directors of The Nippon Foundation, in order to assist with discussions among the members, we have decided to conduct a thorough review of the 13 years of the API Fellows achievements and results of community activities once more. That review will be completed by this fall. A decision will be made on the foundation's role after studying those results and the direction of API from 2016 will be based on that decision.

We greatly appreciate the patience of everyone in the API Community as you await more details from us.

Tatsuya Tanami

From the Editorial Desk

Sustaining Engagements, Nurturing Collaboration

Engagements of public intellectuals in the service of shared well-being are about a collective effort in learning, understanding and connecting with each other. It involves working with various stakeholders to generate positive changes to our global community. Sustaining these engagements requires determined and active participation by applying networking as an effective tool for learning and empowerment. Yet, change takes time and patience. Engagements need to be consistent in order to nurture the collaboration that will sustain our efforts, especially in the face of various struggles that we encounter along the way.

In this issue, we feature an interview with Rev. Dr. Maung Maung Yin, who shows us the value of perseverance when faced with adversity, and how an intellectual has the power to inform and mobilize people to work together for a better society. Despite encountering the decline of education in his country, he never gave up. He has been working, in his humble way, for more than two decades in Myanmar and has become a change agent for quality education.

Engagement was also the key theme of API's 11th Regional Workshop in Tagaytay. We were reminded that public intellectuals have the power to contribute to social transformation by engaging in collaborative actions. The Workshop's keynote address, "The Making of Asian Public Intellectuals: Historical Reflections", enlightens us about a proud history of Asian public intellectuals' engagements. For instance, Philippine intellectual Mariano Ponce was instrumental in building a network of Asian intellectuals and promoting knowledge about Asia. One of his legacies was to establish the first Asian Studies Society.

Even in solidarity, engagement is one of the key elements. During the time of crisis as Super Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in late November 2013, API Fellows promptly called on to each other and co-organized various gatherings in different countries to provide immediate responses/reliefs and exchange experiences for regional collaborations in the future.

Engagement can become a powerful force for change, especially in the present digital age that connects people instantly through social media. Exchanges in the discussion forum, "Demanding New Politics: The Rises of ASEAN's Middle-Class Youth", introduced us to a dramatic shift in democratic power. Asia's middle-class youth and minorities (women, elderly citizens, etc) are

participating in politics more than ever before, and they are demanding changes to improve their societies. They are using social media as a political tool/platform to give them a voice, to ensure they are no longer invisible.

Outputs of engagements are also shown in the "Fellows in Focus" section. They include "Asia in All Directions" by Inuhiko Yomota on his 23-year experiences throughout Asia; "Tales from the Town: Nagasaki and Its Geographic Memory" by Patporn Phoothong on museums built for memories and remaining lives; "Linking Tourism, Community and Environment through Ecotourism at Thailand's National Parks" by Wiwik Mahdayani on efforts in promoting eco-tourism; and "Malaysia Premier of Cross Current at Monash University Malaysia" by Yeoh Seng Guan, with regard to some audience's feedback on API Regional Project Documentary — a result of API Fellows' three-year engagement with local communities from five countries.

We hope all these examples of sustained public engagements and intellectual collaboration will inspire our readers to continue to share their work with each other, as they face various challenges in the region.

Chadapan Malipan



API FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

Public intellectuals - academics, researchers, media professionals, artists, creative writers, NGO activists, social workers, public servants and others with moral authority - are those who are committed to working for the betterment of society by applying their professional knowledge, wisdom and experience. The Nippon Foundation fellowships for Asian Public Intellectuals (API Fellowships Program) are designed to stimulate the creation of a new pool of intellectuals in the region. They aim to promote mutual learning among Asian public intellectuals, and to contribute to the growth of public spaces in which effective responses to regional needs could be generated.

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