

BULLETIN OF THE BURMA STUDIES GROUP
ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES
SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNCIL

16

January, 1979

The Second Burma Studies Colloquium was held at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, from the 13th to the 15th of October, 1978. Our gracious host for the event was Professor JANE TERRY BAILEY.

Thanks to Terry Bailey the arriving guests were treated to a fine museum display of Burmese art, ranging from beautiful textiles to buddha images and plaques. Those attending the Colloquium were as follows:

A brief summation of the Colloquium follows: DAW MYA SEIN shared with us her recollections on Burmese marriage traditions and some of the pre-war English novelists who wrote about Burma. KONRAD BEKKER, DAVID STEINBERG, and TOM GIBSON expressed various points of view on the state of the present Burmese economy. JOHN CADY spoke on his experiences at Judson College in the pre-war days. JON WIANT entertained all with slides on his recent helicopter rides in Burma with the official U.S. delegation of visitors. JOSEPH WITHEY analyzed some of the themes prevalent in U Nu's dramatic works. KONRAD and SARAH BEKKER shared their fascination with some unusual buddha images that perhaps had Mahayanist overtones. ROBERT GARFIAS gave a talk on Burmese music, complete with tapes that he had made in Burma. LA RAW MARAN explored some of the new directions that linguistics is taking in contrast to older approaches. EDITH PINESS delivered a paper that explored some of the backgrounds of British administrators in pre-war Burma. MICHAEL AUNG THWIN reviewed the use of inscriptions for the study of Burmese history and alerted us to the number of such inscriptions which are currently available. U THAUNG reviewed the current publishing vicissitudes that beset the modern Burmese writers in terms of publishing practices of the present government. Terry Bailey presented a slide program on 15th century ceramic temple plaques. Sarah Bekker presented a program on the natpwe, complete with slides and tapes of the music. Juliane Schober shared some preliminary considerations on her work dealing with Burmese astrology.

A fine Saturday night banquet was held at the Granville Inn, the event highlighted by an after-dinner talk by U LAW YONE that recalled his early days in the Kachin State in Burma. Following his talk was a showing of the color footage taken by E. MICHAEL MENDELSON in Burma during the late 50's. We are all grateful to Terry Bailey for her gracious hospitality and the tremendous effort she put forth to make the Second Colloquium such a success. Much appreciated were the two breakfasts she provided at the Art Annex and the lunch at the museum, to say nothing of all the details she took care of to get everyone back and forth from the airport. We are also delighted to learn that we are invited back to Denison in the future. The President and Secretary of the Burma Studies Group regret the confusion that existed concerning the planning of the Colloquium, due mainly to the loss in the mails of the final announcement of the Colloquium itself. Next time we promise to do better.

Spring AAS Meeting

The annual business meeting of the Burma Studies Group will be held in Los Angeles on March 30, 1979 through April 1, 1979. As usual, we hope to plan a gathering at a local restaurant at which all attending plus members of the nearby community can socialize.

At the AAS meetings ALBERT MOSCOTTI will chair a panel on "New Directions in Historical Research on Burma." John Ferguson will chair a panel on "Basic Symbolism in Southeast Asia" as part of the Asian Folklore Studies Group meeting, at which Sarah Bekker will also present a paper.

Other News

On December 12, 1978, The Burma Council of the Asia Society presented a film "To Be Born A Burman," a 56-minute documentary by Nimrod Productions of New Zealand. The announcement describes it as follows: "One of the first Western films to be made in Burma since the 50s, it focuses on: a traveling circus family in Syriam; a lake fisherman's family in the Shan states; Daw Mya Than, the well-known classical dancer and teacher of dance in Mandalay; and the initiation of a young boy into the Buddhist priesthood." I have written to Maureen to see if the film is available for rental.

KRIS LEHMAN wrote to say that he was leaving on December 12 for a visit to India and Burma, expecting to spend the first week of January in Rangoon. JOE SILVERSTEIN has also been making plans to go to Burma between terms. Jon Wiant is possibly going to make a return visit soon also. JERRY BENNET is currently expecting to be appointed to the Consulate in Chiangmai some time in early 1979.

A letter from D. G. E. HALL tells us of his recent activities. Despite difficulties with his eyesight, Dr. Hall is writing his reminiscences at Rangoon University, editing a diary of his study leave in Southeast Asia during parts of 1952 and 1953, and has finished working on the 4th edition of his History of Southeast Asia, which should be published early in 1980.

Final Call for Papers on Burma Book

Your Editor in the next few weeks will be working on the Brill Burma book and would appreciate obtaining final manuscripts from all those who have shown an interest in this volume.

Please also send to your Editor any news of your activities for inclusion in the next Bulletin.

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