

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and announcements related to Burma research should be directed to the editor electronically at burmaresearch@soas.ac.uk or by post to:

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Inclusion is at the sole discretion of the editor and entries may be subject to editing.

ASEASUK Conference: CALL FOR PAPERS/PANELS

The Association of South-East Asian Studies of the United Kingdom (ASEASUK) will hold its 21st annual conference at the University of Leeds, 17-19 October 2003. Panel and paper proposals are invited in any of the following areas:

- humanities, including: history, arts or performance,
- social sciences, including: anthropology, politics or development studies

An opening event and reception is being planned for the evening of 17 October. We hope to run at least two consecutive panels on 18 October, and the morning of 19 October. Postgraduate students are particularly encouraged to apply. Some limited funding may be available for students and for a very small number of participants from South-East Asia.

All enquiries to:
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ASEASUK Website

The ASEASUK website has now moved from Hull University to its new home at SOAS:

<http://web.soas.ac.uk/aseasuk/index.htm>

The website includes information on the association, current research on South East Asia in the United Kingdom (and elsewhere), conference announcements, news, book reviews, and other important information.

For information on the website, contact the web manager, Michael W. Charney at mc62@soas.ac.uk or at mcharney@aol.com.

Britain-Burma Society

The Britain-Burma Society offers seminars, book reviews, and other Burma-related activities. For more information, contact Mr. Derek Brooke-Wavell at d.wavell@ntlworld.com or go to the website at:

<http://www.shwepla.net/Myanmar/index.htm>

2002-2003 Seminars held by the Britain-Burma Society:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 7 February 2002 | Helga So-Hartmann. "Life in the Southern Chin Hills" |
| 19 March 2002 | Shelby Tucker. "Forbidden Tracts." |
| 7 May 2002 | Desmond Kelly. "Kelly's Myanmar Campaign." |
| 12 June 2002 | William Womack. "The Art of Tattoo." |
| 7 November 2002 | Norma Joseph. "A Dawn Like Thunder." |
| 12 December 2002 | Sir Nicholas Fenn and Lady Fenn. "Magic Places, Magic Times." |
| 3 February 2003 | Victoria Billing. "Myanmar, 1999-2002." |
| 11 March 2003 | Michael W. Charney. "Pre-colonial Myanmar Boats." |
| 8 May 2003 | Daw Khyne U Mar. Title TBA. |
| 18 June 2003 | Wendy Law-Yone. Title TBA. |

The October reception for the Britain-Burma Society will be held on 1 October 2003.

For updated information on seminars and other activities, see

<http://www.shwepla.net/Myanmar/index.htm>.

REMEMBERING WORLD WAR II IN BURMA: The Inauguration of Burma Campaign Society

In 1989, a unique organisation was formed by British and Japanese veterans from the Burma Campaign who wished to be reconciled over the enmities of 60 years ago. Members of The Burma Campaign Fellowship Group (BCFG) chose to wind up their association at their AGM last year, both because of their age and because they believe that they have successfully achieved their goal.

Out of BCFG arose a new organisation, the Burma Campaign Society (BCS). Some members wanted to build further on the achievements of BCFG, which was awarded both the Japanese Foreign Minister's Award, and a Japan Festival award for its work. Some believe they continue to have a responsibility for an annual memorial for their comrades who died in Burma, while others value the annual reunion. There is also a younger contingent who see the importance of a forum for the discussion not only of the Burma Campaign but also other aspects of Britain and Japan's encounter during the Second World War and of its aftermath. No bilateral forum exists for the non-recriminatory discussion of war-related issues and its lack is particularly felt by a number of young people in Japan who have an interest in the UK and the history of British-Japanese relations..

BCS is therefore primarily a historical study society which aims to explore and debate issues which concern Britain and Japan's encounter during the Second World War. It incorporates the name of Burma to recognise the fact that 95% of this encounter took place in Burma. The Society holds a discussion meeting each 'term' to explore further British and Japanese perspectives on significant events and attitudes of the Pacific War, as affected Britain. Additionally BCS arranges for veterans, British and Japanese, where possible, to meet with younger groups, at schools and universities, to talk about their wartime experiences. Every year BCS is also involved in the organisation of a cathedral service of Reconciliation and Forgiveness, involving a joint 'memorial' and an act of reconciliation between old enemies. The service, last year in Coventry Cathedral, will this year be held at Canterbury Cathedral on 17 August. BCS also plays a leading role in the campaign to make this nationally the theme of church services each year, on the Sunday following the 15th August. The Society also works to record accurate information about Britain and Japan's wartime encounter and it has started a website to bring together related archival material (www.burmacampaignsociety.org). Finally, another important task is to support the Friends of the Burma Campaign Memorial Library, at SOAS, and the collection of books, in English and Japanese, on the Burma Campaign, which are in the Memorial Library's bibliography, which have not yet been obtained.

For further information about The Burma Campaign Society, contact:

The Honorary Secretary,
The Burma Campaign Society,
19 Norland Square,
London W11 4PU
United Kingdom

Tel: 020 7221 6985

Fax: 020 7 792 1757,

Email: info@burmacampaignsociety.org.

A website is in the process of being set up at: www.burmacampaignsociety.org.

The BCS also produces a newsletter (issue number 2 was released in March 2003). For information on the newsletter and to send in information for inclusion, contact:

Mr. John White
25 Cadogan Place
London SW1X 9SA
United Kingdom

Tel/Fax. 020-7235-4034

“Relics and Relic Worship in the Early Buddhism of India and Burma”

The Second Annual Meeting of the International Academic Network on "Relics and Relic Worship in the Early Buddhism of India and Burma" took place in Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge from 17 - 19 March 2003. The network runs for five years with its existing, limited membership. It enjoys the support of the British Academy, the University of Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College and the Gonda Foundation of the Royal Netherlands Academy. The coordinators are Professor Karel van Kooij, Professor of Indian Art and Archaeology, University of Leiden and Dr Janice Stargardt, Director of the Cambridge Project on Ancient Civilization in South East Asia, Department of Geography and Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge. The general theme for this year's discussions was how to distinguish among relics, burials and deposits.

The following people presented papers:

Professor Karel van Kooij: "The Golden Mount in Bangkok: relics and burials," and "The Stupa as a Deposit-Box."

Ms Anna Slaczka, Ph.D. student, Centre for Non-Western Studies, University of Leiden: "Superstructure Deposits in Cambodia; Texts and Archaeology."

Professor Myneni Krishna Kumari, Head of the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, Andhra University, Vishakapatnam: "Archaeological Context of Small Stupas and Reliquaries; evidence from Andhra."

Mr Lance Cousins, President of the Pali Text Society: "Cetiya and Relic; the textual sources in the Pali Canon."

Dr Michael Willis, Keeper of the Indian Collections, Asia Department of the British Museum: "Decorations on the Ahichhatra Reliquary."

Dr Janice Stargardt: "Burials, Relics and Deposits in 3rd century Andhra and 4th - 5th century Burma."

Detailed discussions of these advanced research topics ensued both during and after the conference sessions as the network was largely residential in Sidney Sussex College. The feeling during the final planning meeting was that a publishable body of research has emerged from the two meetings of the network that have taken place so far.

Dr Julia Shaw, British Academy Post-doctoral Fellow at Merton College, Oxford became a member of the network this year. Much to our regret, Professor Susan Huntington, Dean of Graduate Studies of the University of Ohio at Columbus was unable to attend the meeting this year but will continue to contribute to the network.

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Living Bibliography of Myanmar/Burma Research

The *Living Bibliography of Myanmar/Burma Research* (formerly the *Living Bibliography of Burma Studies*) is an ongoing project conducted by Dr. Michael W. Charney in the Department of History at SOAS. The goal of this bibliography is to eventually include a comprehensive, annotated, and categorized listing of all published research on Burma. You will need adobe acrobat to read this pdf file.

<http://web.soas.ac.uk/burma/secondary.pdf>

(please note that this is a large file and will take several minutes to appear on your screen)

For more information, please contact Mike Charney at mc62@soas.ac.uk

Introduction to the Online Burma/Myanmar Library

<http://www.burmalibrary.org>

Librarian: David Arnott
Email: darnott@iprolink.ch

The Online Burma/Myanmar Library is a database which functions as an annotated, classified and hyperlinked index to full texts of individual Burma documents on the Internet. It also houses a growing collection of articles, conference papers, theses, books, reports, archives and directories on-site (e.g. the 17MB archive of the Burma Press Summary). The Librarian requests help from specialists to refine the structure and add content.

Need for the Library

The Internet currently holds more than 100,000 Burma-related documents, from short news items to complete books, scattered over more than 500 websites (not all of which have internal search functions) run by the UN system, governments, academic institutions, media sites, listserv archives, and other groups. The volume is growing rapidly as more and more organisations choose to publish on the Internet. Even using modern search engines it is difficult and time-consuming to research this widely-scattered material. There is clearly need for a central index.

Structure

This is what the Online Burma/Myanmar Library seeks to provide. Launched in October 2001, it is organised on a database (using MySQL software, in combination with PHP) into 60 top-level categories based on traditional library classifications, with a hierarchy of some 850 sub-categories. These hold approximately 4000 links (mostly annotated, with keywords and descriptions) to individual documents, and about 400 links to websites which in turn give access to another 100,000 or so documents. The database allows rapid searching in all or specific fields – description/keyword, date, language (we are building up our collection of non-English texts), title, author, source/publisher etc. It can also be browsed through the subject hierarchies. A third way of finding material is provided by a simple alphabetical list of the 900 categories and sub-categories. We are using the Greenstone digital library software to build the collection of documents housed on-site. This software allows full-text searching, though at present only the Burma Press Summary uses this feature fully (we would like to hear from people with experience of this software).

Building the Library

The Library's starting point historically was the Burma Peace Foundation's documentation of the human rights situation in Burma, and with the UN Burma material, this area still comprises about half the total number of items. This ratio is falling as the other sections -- Bibliographies/research, Economy, Geography, Health, History, Military, Politics and Government, Society and Culture, etc. -- are built up. We warmly invite specialists to provide various levels of input in their areas, from commenting on the structure, sending web addresses (URLs) of online items that should be added, emailing documents to be placed directly on the site, to editing whole sections or sub-sections. Editing can be done online from any computer with web access. Several scholars have already agreed to work on particular sections. We trust that more will offer their assistance and that these will include people from Burma so that the Library can develop sections in the different languages of Burma.

We are particularly keen to build up the section of bibliographies of individual Burma scholars. So far, we have only four, at:

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/show.php?cat=1327&lo=d&sl=0>

Please send more.

With regard to Burma-related documents in electronic form which are not on the Internet, the Library encourages owners (individuals, organisations, or academic institutions) to place them on their own websites and send the URLs to the Librarian, or send them to be placed directly on the Library site. Important documents which do not exist in electronic form, and which are not listed for digitisation by any library, will eventually be scanned and housed on the Library.

We would like to hear from librarians who are digitising collections which contain texts relating to Burma, especially if these will be on open access. Please tell us not only which documents have been digitised, with URLs, but also which are in line for digitising. If there is a need, the Library could maintain a page listing these, as a means of reducing duplication, and suggestions for prioritization. We urge digital librarians and the producers of online periodicals with mixed content to give each document an individual URL wherever possible, for direct access -- a public resource is enhanced if users can link directly to individual documents without having to go through the process of searching or browsing.

Enthusiastic Welcome

Since its launch in 2001, the Online Burma/Myanmar Library has received an enthusiastic welcome from a wide range of users, from senior Burma experts to student activists. The Asian Studies WWW Monitor gave the Library its highest rating (5 stars and "Scholarly usefulness: Essential"). The Librarian hopes that those involved in Burma research will welcome and use this new resource and help to develop its structure and content.

New Appointments

Alexandra Green (PhD, SOAS) has taken up her new position as curator of Asian Art at Denison University. Dr. Green is responsible for researching and publishing Denison's collection of Burmese and Chinese art. The bulk of the collection is Burmese material, which includes Buddha images, lacquerware, and hill textiles. The collection also includes Chinese material which largely consists of rubbings and Qing dynasty robes. It also has a few high-quality Thai Buddha images, and then bits and pieces from a variety of other South and Southeast Asian countries.

Dr. Green can be contacted at: greenar@denison.edu

CORRESPONDENCE

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