

# SOJOURN

## Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia

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Volume 32, Number 1

March 2017

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## *Editors' Note*

The five research articles and one research note in this issue of *SOJOURN* concern matters central to the journal's mission: migration, foreign labour and citizenship; heritage and commemoration; the state and violence; education and the arts; regional, national and sub-national identity. They also reflect *SOJOURN*'s fundamental commitment to the study of Southeast Asia in yet another way — through close engagement with geographical context.

Inga Gruß's ethnographic study of the national verification process covering Myanmar workers in Thailand takes us to Phang Nga and Ranong on the West Coast of Peninsular Thailand. Khoo Gaik Cheng's article on Penang hawker food, its sustainability and its heritage status richly evokes, not least through its references to specific dishes and its descriptions of the operations of hawker stalls, a sense of place. Equally vivid is Rommel Curaming's treatment of the commemoration on the storied island of Corregidor of the 1968 Jabidah Massacre of trainees whom the Philippine government had recruited for a planned campaign of subversion in the East Malaysian state of Sabah. And in their research note on the Isan Culture Revitalization and Maintenance Programme, John Draper and James Mitchell report on an effort to fortify awareness of the distinct identity of Northeast Thailand.

The two articles in this issue of *SOJOURN* on education have much the same effect. Terence Chong's survey of the evolving rationales for and approaches to education in the arts in post-colonial Singapore forces readers to consider the twists and turns to which educational institutions in the city-state, and their students, have been subject on the road to the prominent place that official Singapore accords to the arts today. And Filomeno Aguilar's comparison of the state of ASEAN history as a subject in the region's national education systems examines from a fresh and innovative angle the

long unresolved question of Southeast Asia as a salient geographical context in its own right, not least in the minds of — in this case, young — Southeast Asians themselves.

Another of *SOJOURN*'s fundamental commitments is to helping readers keep abreast of the often overwhelming literature in Southeast Asian studies as a whole and exposing them to critical perspectives on new scholarship. Book reviews play an extraordinarily important part in our effort to fulfil that commitment. The lasting value of reviews published in *SOJOURN* leave us grateful to reviewers and to contributors to our regular *SOJOURN* Symposium feature. While that feature is taking a break this time around, it will be back in July and November.

The reviews in this issue of the journal bring us Craig Lockard's and Baas Terwiel's thoughts on, respectively, James Mitchell, *Luk Thung: The Culture and Politics of Thailand's Most Popular Music* (2015), and Julia Cassaniti, *Living Buddhism: Mind, Self, and Emotion in a Thai Community* (2015). Lockard notes Mitchell's timely contribution to the study of the neglected subject of popular music in Southeast Asia and revisits the use of music to mobilize support for political campaigns and social movements in the region. Other new titles, including Chang Wen-Chin, *Beyond Borders: Stories of Yunnanese Chinese Migrants of Burma* (2014), and Erica Brindley, *Ancient China and the Yue: Perceptions and Identities on the Southern Frontier, c.400 BCE–50 CE* (2015), also enjoy thoughtful and rewarding consideration in reviews by, respectively, Hui Yew-Foong and William Meacham.

Michael Montesano

Benjamin Loh

Terence Chong

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