

Contemporary Southeast Asia

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions for articles are invited. Articles should be on contemporary South-east Asian problems in the political, economic, social, and technological innovative fields. They should be between 4,500 and 5,500 words in length. The presentation should be readable and not too technical. Relevant citations, footnotes, and quotations should be at the minimum essential for scholarly analysis or description. Manuscripts, in typescript, double-spaced, and in two copies, should be submitted to:

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The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies was established as an autonomous organization in May 1968. It is a regional research centre for scholars and other specialists concerned with modern Southeast Asia. The Institute's research interest is focused on the many-faceted problems of development and modernization, and political and social change in Southeast Asia.

The Institute is governed by a twenty-four-member Board of Trustees on which are represented the University of Singapore and Nanyang University, appointees from the government, as well as representatives from a broad range of professional and civic organizations and groups. A ten-man Executive Committee oversees day-to-day operations; it is chaired by the Director, the Institute's chief academic and administrative officer.

The responsibility for all views expressed and for the accuracy of data and quotations presented in the articles rests with the individual authors alone. They should not be construed as reflecting in any way the views or policy of the Editorial Committee, the Regional Advisory Board, the sponsors of Contemporary Southeast Asia, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, or of the Singapore University Press.

Preface

The Southeast Asian lands and societies are bound by so many common and continuous strands and interests that the well-being of any one segment is intricately linked with the well-being of the rest of the region. Nobody within or outside Southeast Asia can hope to fully share in the opportunities or meaningfully participate in the life of the region without a proper understanding and appreciation of the region's complexities, and of its peoples and their aspirations. The impetus given to regionalism by the emergence of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other recent international developments only underscores the need for a regional exchange of ideas and experience. With this in mind, a group of Southeast Asian scholars, bankers, journalists, and professionals met recently in Singapore. The outcome of this meeting was the decision to inaugurate *Contemporary Southeast Asia* which, it was felt, would be of interest not only to scholars and other students of Southeast Asian affairs but, equally, if not more so, to the busy members of the professional and business communities, as well as senior government officers and other such decision-makers and opinion-formers.

As its name implies, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* would publish articles on problems of economic, political, and social development in Southeast Asia, that is, on matters of current and topical concern in the individual countries and the region as a whole. These would be written both by scholars and practitioners, but all cast in a format that makes them attractive and easily "digestible". It is realized that this is more easily said than done, but it might be worth attempting. If priority is placed on high quality materials presented in succinct form, deleting some of the academic apparatus of footnotes and bibliographies, and addressed directly to the subject matter in hand, it may be possible to create a readable and desirable journal.

To begin with, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* will be a quarterly, that is, there will be four regular issues in each full calendar year.

There will also be special supplementary numbers on selected themes. At a later date, it hopes to include a section tentatively to be entitled "Southeast Asian Perspectives", devoted to translation into English of significant articles in local and national languages of the region. These deserve a far wider circulation than that provided by the particular "vernaculars" concerned. Such a channel for greater dissemination of Southeast Asian viewpoints is critical, as Southeast Asian leaders and writers are increasingly expressing themselves in their national languages.

Contemporary Southeast Asia will function under the firm guidelines established by its Regional Advisory Board. It would, moreover, eschew the espousal of any particular sectarian interest or political platform, and instead conduct itself in a manner befitting scholarly endeavour. Likewise, the emphasis on regionalism and the regional character of *Contemporary Southeast Asia* should not be construed as a jingoistic or closed-door approach to things Southeast Asian. *Contemporary Southeast Asia* and its supporters are fully conscious that Southeast Asia is part and parcel of the wider international scene and that it is extremely important that relations and contacts between the region and the rest of the world be close and productive. Indeed, this will be reflected in the contributions to the journal, in that while many of them will be from within the region, others will be from outside, including those from Japan, Europe, Australasia, and North America.

Contemporary Southeast Asia is appropriate in time and perhaps unique in the sense that it is the only one of its kind wholly and exclusively devoted to contemporary problems of Southeast Asia, and run and managed by Southeast Asians in Southeast Asia. Having said this, however, we should be aware that journals cannot be sustained by their mere uniquenesses alone. The history of Southeast Asian publications, as in many other parts of the world, is replete with the bleaching bones of journals and periodicals, many highly original and unique in their own particular ways. In short, journals are highly demanding of resources and talent. Accordingly, in addition to building up the necessary infra-structure and other services necessary to sustain the day-to-day operations of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, the Regional Advisory Board is exploring a variety of avenues designed to ensure the longer term viability of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*. As a start, it is approaching a number of large

established business firms and other organizations in the individual countries of the region to act as “sponsors” to the journal, by contributing a sum of S\$5,000 each. Several cheques from donors in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand have already been received and, on behalf of the Regional Advisory Board, I would like to take the opportunity here of thanking all these donors for their prompt response and support. Additionally, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* looks forward to receiving similar donations from other wellwishers and friends. In the meantime, we are pleased to present the first issue of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, fully conscious of the harsh realities that, even with the best of goodwill and support, the final arbiters of the fate of *Contemporary Southeast Asia* will be its readers. After all, as the saying goes, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. All the same, we feel that the dish we are serving is not only timely but fit for all gourmet tables. Thus all that needs to be said in closing is *bon appétit!*

2 May 1979

Kernal Singh Sandhu,
Director, ISEAS

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