

Voices:

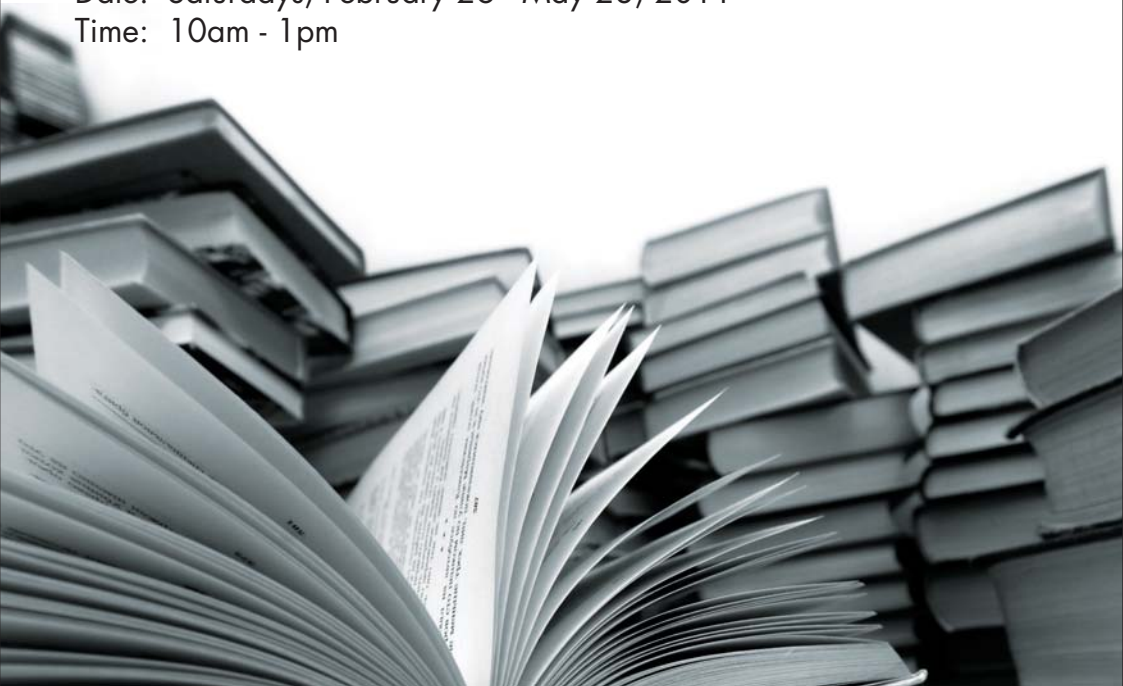
Public Intellectuals and Public Discourse in South and Southeast Asia

Centre for the Study of Communications and Culture Seminar Series

Culture, Media and Identity: Series I

Date: Saturdays, February 26 - May 28, 2011

Time: 10am - 1pm



The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus

Kuala Lumpur Teaching Centre,
Level 2, Chulan Tower, No. 3 Jalan Conlay,
50450 Kuala Lumpur

For further information and registration: agnes.selvaragi@nottingham.edu.my

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The Centre for the Study of Communications and Culture (CSCC) will be embarking on a series of projects, beginning in early 2011, to establish and maintain its role as a key centre of excellence in communications and cultural studies in the country and the region. Part of this initiative will lie with a seminar series under the general theme of **Culture, Media and Identity**. The series will be in three parts, each comprising six lectures or multimedia presentations by renowned scholars and cultural activists. The main aim of the series is to examine and evaluate the importance of culture and the media in the construction of identities in an increasingly globalised world. This, we believe, is important in a region comprising multiple cultures and at a time when greater cultural awareness, understanding and respect is needed but, unfortunately, has not been forthcoming.

The first series of presentations, titled **Voices: Public Intellectuals and Public Discourse in South and South-East Asia**, will provide critical engagements with contemporary issues related to the role(s) of public intellectuals and public discourses in often-authoritarian settings. This series will examine the various theoretical trajectories that the overall project could take, thus helping to formulate and guide the intellectual direction of the Centre.

The second series, scheduled after summer 2011, titled **Transformations: Media and Identity in Contemporary South-East Asia** will showcase and critically evaluate the works of young, independent cultural producers, mainly working in the medium of film. Often eschewing purely commercial considerations, these *Indies* have been at the forefront of redefining 'national' cinema and problematising the often taken-for-granted definitions of 'national culture' and 'national identity'.

Language and literature continue to play complex roles in societies, not least in post colonial societies where language and (local) literature - after their initial roles as weapons of resistance - have contributed to a sense of belonging, a sense of identity in these societies. The third series of presentations, titled **Language, Literature and Identity**, will examine these roles.

Postcolonial societies in the Asian region have produced notable intellectuals who have been at the forefront of articulating public opinion and public concerns. Renato Constantino in the Philippines, Sulak Sivaraksa in Thailand and, of course, the late Pramodya Ananta Toer in Indonesia all were intellectuals committed to questioning and challenging official discourses and strategies that they felt were of little benefit to many of society's marginalized and dispossessed. How they have done this, how successful they have been, and the responses of the public and also those who are meant to serve the public in these different societies, are questions that we believe are crucial and need to be addressed. Indeed, we believe it is only by doing so that we can begin to understand the complex interplay between intellectuals, intellectual institutions such as universities and, indeed, governments in serving cultures that have undergone immense suffering, often through no fault of their own, and are in the process of rebuilding.

In this first series, we introduce seven eminent speakers from the region who will address the issues - and indeed problems - of cultural diversity, conflict resolution, the role of the media and the state, and the changing parameters of public discourse and participation. Acknowledged public intellectuals themselves, they work in separate social and cultural environments and continue to engage with the core issues of the roles of intellectuals and institutions in postcolonial settings.

Saturday 10am - 1pm Programme

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| 26 February 2011 | <i>Public Intellectuals and Public Discourse - Examining the Parameters</i>
Farish A. Noor (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore) |
| 19 March 2011 | <i>Stories for the nation</i>
Amir Muhammad (Matahari Books, Malaysia) |
| 9 April 2011 | <i>Writhing in the Margins: Art, Protest and the Public Sphere</i>
Sharaad Kuttan (IACT, Malaysia) |
| 30 April 2011 | <i>Democracy Denied? Communication Rights in Thailand Post - Thaksin</i>
Ubonrat Siriyuvasak (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand) |
| 21 May 2011 | <i>Decolonising the Mind - The Problem with Nationalism</i>
Francis Loh Kok Wah (Universiti Sains Malaysia) |
| 28 May 2011 | <i>Public Intellectuals and the Marginalised</i>
Anjali Monteiro and K.P Jayasankar (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India) |



FARISH A. NOOR

Farish A. Noor is currently Senior Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore and Affiliated Professor at Universitas Muhamadiyah Surakarta (UMS), Indonesia. Author of *Islam Embedded: The Historical Development of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party PAS*, *The Other Malaysia*, *From Majapahit to Putrajaya* among others, he is both a political historian and a human rights activist.



AMIR MUHAMMAD

Amir Muhammad is a writer, publisher and movie-maker based in Petaling Jaya. He has been writing for the print media since the age of 14, and has a Law degree he does not use. His movies include the banned documentaries *Lelaki Komunis Terakhir* (The Last Communist) and *Apa Khabar Orang Kampung* (Village People Radio Show). He set up Matahari Books in 2007 to publish non-fiction books about Malaysia.

SHARAAD KUTTAN

Sharaad Kuttan is a senior lecturer at IACT College in Petaling Jaya. He is a columnist with The Malaysian Insider news portal and appears as a regular guest on a radio talk show, 'A Bit of Culture', on Bfm. He is co-editor of a collection of essays on cultural politics in Singapore, "Looking at Culture", and contributed a chapter to the edited volume "Elections and Democracy in Malaysia" (Penerbit UKM).



UBONRAT SIRIYUVASAK

Ubonrat Siriyuvusak is Emeritus Professor in media studies at the Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University. She was UNESCO Chair in Freedom of Expression, a joint project between UNESCO and Chulalongkorn University, in 2003-2004. Her research and social interests are in communication rights, media reform and popular culture. She is the author of *The Political Economy of Thai Radio and Television System and Its Impact on the Rights and Freedom of Expressions* (1999) (in Thai).





FRANCIS LOH KOK WAH

Francis Loh Kok Wah is Professor of Politics in Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang. A Penangite, he studied in St Xavier's Institution and received his PhD (Politics and Southeast Asian Studies) from Cornell University. His latest publications include *Southeast Asian Responses to Globalization: Restructuring Governance and Deepening Democracy* (co-editor, 2004), *Politik Baru di Malaysia* (2005), *Old vs New Politics in Malaysia* (2009) and *Building Bridges, Crossing Boundaries: Everyday Forms of Inter-Ethnic Peace Building in Malaysia* (editor, 2010) He is the Secretary of Aliran, a multi-ethnic Malaysian NGO advocating human rights and justice for all, and a member of the editorial collective of its *Aliran Monthly*. He served as an MPPP Councillor in 2008.



ANJALI MONTEIRO & K.P. JAYASANKAR

Anjali Monteiro and K.P. Jayasankar are Professors at the Centre for Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Both of them are involved in media production, teaching and research. Jointly they have won twenty-one national and international awards for their films, including the Prix Futura Berlin 1995 Asia Prize for Identity, Best Documentary Award at the Three Continents International Festival of Documentaries, Venezuela. Their work has also been screened widely, at film festivals, on Indian and overseas television networks and at Universities and institutions across the world. They are both recipients of the Howard Thomas Memorial Fellowship in Media Studies, and have been attached to Goldsmith's College, London, and the University of Western Sydney.

Series I (February - May 2011)

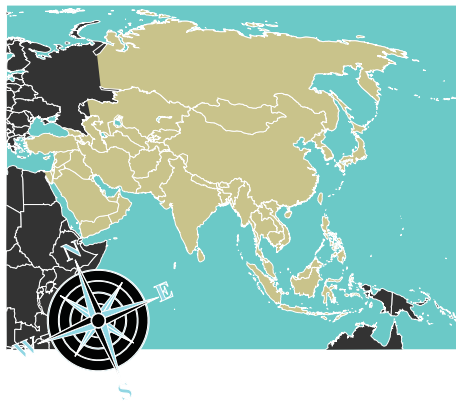
Voices: Public Intellectuals And Public Discourse In South And South-East Asia

Series II (October - December 2011)

Transformations: Media and Identity in Contemporary South-East Asia

Series III (February - May 2012)

Language, Literature and Identity



The Centre for the Study of Communications and Culture (CSCC) is located within the School of Modern Languages and Culture at the University of Nottingham (Malaysia Campus). Researchers at the Centre are dedicated to carrying out interdisciplinary research into the role and politics of communication and culture in this era of globalization; in line with the Centre's mission to operate as an international, regional and national centre of expertise for high-quality research. CSCC provides an intellectual network for researchers, postgraduate students and professionals in the fields of media, communication and culture.

The first of its kind in Malaysia, the Centre aims to bring together local and international scholars in a setting designed to produce results that will inform wider policies. The Centre was also established to fill a research void in the country and regionally in the area of communications and culture, especially at a

time when the promises of information and communication technologies (ICTs), digitalization and globalization need to be addressed side by side with their inherent impacts on local cultural practices.

The Centre also offers a range of postgraduate courses - the MA Cultural Studies, MSc Cultural Studies and Entrepreneurship, and research programmes at the doctoral level. The Centre is also linked to undergraduate programmes such as the BA (Hons) International Communications Studies and the BA (Hons) International Relations.

Together with the core activities of research, teaching and publishing, the Centre organizes lectures, seminars and events that are of interest to researchers, professionals and students.

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Flights to Paris will commence services on 14 Feb 2011 and flights to Christchurch will commence services on 1 April 2011. Flights are subjected to regulatory approvals.

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