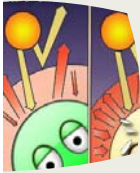




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SEAGA *focus*

AN E-NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN GEOGRAPHY ASSOCIATION

A report on the 2008 Southeast Asian Geography Association Conference

Transformations and Embodiments in Southeast Asian Geographies: Changing Environments, People and Cultural groups, Institutions and Landscapes

SEAMEO INNOTECH, Quezon City, Philippines 3-6 June 2008

The 9th Southeast Asian Geography Association Conference was hosted in Quezon City, Manila by the Philippine Geographical Society and the University of Philippines. The theme was on "Transformations and Embodiments in Southeast Asian Geographies: Changing Environments, People and Cultural Groups, Institutions and Landscapes". It was attended by more than 150 delegates from over 22 countries. 16

papers in 6 plenary sessions, more than 90 papers in 28 panel sessions, 2 workshops and 1 roundtable discussion sessions were presented. These presentations were made by Geographers, Historians, Anthropologists, Economists, and other scholars from Social Sciences, as well as policy makers, entrepreneurs and teachers. This meeting, like the eight before, provided a platform for researchers on various aspects of Southeast Asia, from within or outside the region to share

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Southeast Asian Geography Association

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their research findings in geography or related areas. The international character of the conference has been unmistakable as there is strong interests from fellow geographers from so many countries outside Southeast Asia.



The conference started with the opening remarks from Professor Emerlinda Roman who emphasized the importance of Geography as a way to regard our changing world. The subsequent plenary sessions shared the similar theme of considering the future of Geography for the Southeast Asian region. Issues including, but not limited to, agrarian change, natural hazards and disaster, environmental change, urbanization, sustainability, land-use planning were discussed over the four days. As Geography cannot be considered complete without fieldwork, the conference also offered delegates the opportunity to learn about Metro Manila and its surrounding through 4 fieldtrip

options of Metro Manila, Taal Volcano, Mt Pinatubo, and Subic Bay.

The conference also afforded an opportunity for geographers to connect with each other and through the network enhance cooperation in joint research, student fieldwork or even staff exchange.

In addition, SEAGA conferences have become regular meeting events for the IGU regional network for Southeast Asia, Australasia and South-west Pacific (SEAASWP) since 2006. At this conference, a special roundtable session for SEAASWP was held on the second day whereby the role of SEAASWP and SEAGA in supporting scholar work in Southeast Asia was discussed. The conference ended on 6 June with a closing plenary on discussing the futures of Southeast Asian Geographies followed by closing remarks from Prof Meliton Juanico, chairperson of the Department of Geography, UP Diliman.

Reported by
Chang Chew Hung
Secretary SEAGA Ex-Co

Organised by:



SEAGA
Southeast Asian Geography Association



Reflections of a participant on the SEAGA-GTA Fieldtrip cum Conference 2008, Philippines

Written by Ms Cheng Ai Hoon, N2 cluster

The theme of the conference provides a large framework for discussing issues such as climate change, responding to threats from natural hazards, urbanization, rising costs and food shortages, migration, globalization and cultural change.

The conference coincides with the 100th anniversary of the University of Philippines. It was commendable that the undergraduate students took challenge of managing and running the conference secretariat, with months of preparation to make the conference a success.

Teachers have definitely benefited from this fieldtrip cum conference experience.

The first day started with the keynote addresses and ended with a conference Gala

dinner/ Fellowship Night that saw delegates from various countries presenting a performance that would showcase the culture of their country. Our delegation was informed only ten minutes before the dinner to put up an item. Teachers from Singapore, who hardly knew each other at that point, came together to put up a beautiful rendition of 'Singapura'. The result was not bad at all, with just one rehearsal. We sang with gusto in Accapella style.

As there were concurrent sessions, every participant had different experiences depending on the session they picked. For me, the session on Teaching the Mekong on Day 2 was interesting as it discussed the cross-cultural peer-based learning in the Mekong,

through experiential learning and role playing exercise.

But the conference wasn't just about attending sessions. We had the opportunity to visit landscapes in Philippines that are undergoing rapid transformation such as Mt Pinatubo, the Subic Bay Freeport Zone and Metro Manila.

The Mt Pinatubo Field Trip was physically challenging to most of us. The 2 hour trek was extended to 6 hours as the original track was closed after the 1991 eruption. However the breathtaking view of the 2.5 km crater lake was worth the trek.

The trip to Payatas (landfill) was an eye opener to most of us as we saw communities of people living by the landfill and children playing with contentment. Mattresses that are soiled beyond imagination are still being recycled. Although most of the people are friendly and even greeted us cheerfully, one cannot help but feel that we were rude to intrude as we snapped away pictures of the rubbish, collected and piled up even to the roof top of the house. Just outside the Payatas, was a wall painting depicting the future of Payatas, with beautiful landscaping and bright buildings of schools and community hoping for a better environment. We sincerely hope that it will be a reality in the very near future. Singaporeans are really a fortunate lot. Teachers have definitely benefited from this field trip cum conference experience, this has reinforced the importance of field-trip in Geography Education.

SEAGA-GTA FIELD TRIP 2008



International Forum 2009



Cities and Climate Change – Society and Policy Responses

14 February 2009

CLC & SEAGA proudly bring you this International Forum on an issue that is challenging national and local governments all over the world with the occurrence as well as ever more frequent recurrence of natural hazards that are destroying homes and lives of people practically everywhere. Organised in response to popular demand by key members of the SEAGA network, this forum brings together scholars, policy makers, entrepreneurs and concerned citizens to debate state and society responses to climate change and its implications particularly for populations living in cities.

In its continuing mission to provide a platform for researchers on various aspects of Southeast Asia, from within or outside the region to share their research and work in geography, the humanities, social sciences and related areas, the programme of the forum will include discussion of adaptation and mitigation measures as well as governance and public policy in response to climate change. These issues are relevant to scholars and policy makers alike so we invite teachers, educators, professionals and practitioners to join us in debating our 'ground-up' as well as policy responses to climate change. We have invited distinguished and expert speakers to share their public as well as private sector or market experiences in addressing the issues that citizens like you and I must face up to in climate change proofing our cities.

Speakers (confirmed)

Professor Euston Quah (Head of Economics, Nanyang Technological University)

Associate Professor Matthias Roth (National University of Singapore)

Mr Edwin Khew (Nominated Member of Parliament)

Dr Paul Barter (Lee Kuan School of Public Policy)

Speakers (invited and to be confirmed)

Mr Andrew Tan (Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Liveable Cities)

Professor Frauke Kraas (Chair, Geography, University of Cologne)

Associate Professor Wong Poh Poh (IPCC Member, National University of Singapore)

Professor Phil Hirsch, Director, University of Sydney

Who should attend

School teachers and educators in all fields including Natural and Social Sciences and particularly Economics, Social Studies, Geography, History and Humanities

Professionals and practitioners working on cities, their planning and development

Teachers and management in International Schools

Scholars and researchers from Institutes of higher learning with an interest in climate change issues.

Businesses with an interest in cities and climate change issues.

Registration

Registration fee is **\$100** per person. The registration package includes a tea break, lunch, and a forum kit. An administrative charge of \$50 will be charged for cancellation/ withdrawal of registration on and after 11th January 2009.

Please find out more at <http://www.seaga.co.nr/>

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Editors:
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