

Recent Books from Singapore – March 2020

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Biography

No One Born Poor : Prisoner. Politician. Pioneer. / Veng Sereyvuth
Singapore: Write Editions, 2020
200p. ; 210x140mm.
9789811448065
\$ 28.00 / PB

In one of the most extraordinary stories ever told, **No One Born Poor** poignantly captures the inconceivable life of Veng Sereyvuth. From a village boy in Prey Veng in Cambodia, a cyclo driver, a prisoner and a refugee, to becoming a politician, a Cabinet Minister in the Cambodian Government and a pioneer in education today – all in the span of 30 years – this striking autobiography of Veng Sereyvuth is an epitome of the indefatigable human spirit. Set against the backdrop of Cambodia's tumultuous 1970s, when over two million of its people were killed, and the country's ensuing political and socio-economic developments, this book encapsulates a man's dauntless and determined belief in a better tomorrow – even in the face of death – amid the most horrific and haunting evils ever witnessed in the 20th century. It is profoundly painful, visceral, yet utterly triumphant. By baring his deepest emotions and boundless aspirations, Veng desires every reader to grasp the enduring truth that within each of us lies our greatest riches – the courage and conviction to imagine and create our future, regardless of what we may confront.

The Cambodians call this axiom the Angkor Spirit. In Veng's words, "The worlds within you, and the world beyond you, are exceedingly more glorious than you can ever imagine. Let no one tell you that you're born poor."

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688275>

Children Books

Izan goes to the Istana / Izan Sidek (Illustrator) Patrick Yee
Singapore: OPUS Editorial Pte Ltd., 2019

40p.

9789811433399

\$ 15.00 / PB

238gm.

Izan Goes To The Istana is a delightful story of a little boy who visits the Istana with his parents, gets separated from them and runs into President Halimah Yacob. Written by Izan Sidek, this illustrated children's book is based on the imaginary experience of the author in commemoration of the Istana's 150th birthday. Illustrated by award-winning Singapore artist Patrick Yee, it is designed to appeal to children of all ages with its simple telling in English of a slice of Singapore history at the close of the Bicentennial Year.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688276>

History

The Green Rail Corridor : A Biodiversity and Ecology
Overview / Ho Hua Chew, Anuj Jain & Alan Owyong
Singapore: Nature Society (Singapore), 2019

viii, 132p.

9789811430510

\$ 25.00 / PB

442gm.

A 139 pages book of description with plenty of photos including aerial view, maps and fauna record list to present an overview of the ecological and biodiversity importance of

the Rail Corridor along its main and branch line. Foreword by Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore, Mr. Tan Chuan-Jin
The book advocates a robust plan to maintain and possibly enhance the ecological connectivity of what is so far the longest green corridor in Singapore and a priceless natural and historical-cultural heritage.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=686858>

Sojourners to Settlers : Tamils in Southeast Asia and Singapore / (Set – 2 Books) / (Ed) Arun Mahizhman & Nalina Gopal

Singapore: Indian Heritage Centre & Institute of Policy Studies, 2019

xiv, 258p. ; xviii, 282p.

Includes Index ; Bibliography

9789811419669

\$ 150.00 / HB

3300gm.

Sojourners to Settlers – Tamils in Southeast Asia and Singapore is a 2-volume publication, co-published by the Indian Heritage Centre and the Institute of Policy Studies. The publication dwells on the pre-modern connections between Tamil regions and Southeast Asian polities as well as the lesser-known aspects of Tamil history and diversity in modern Singapore. It features 27 chapters by archaeologists, art historians, historians and researchers, with fresh research and insights on the history of Tamil presence in Southeast Asia and Singapore.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=686346>

Once Upon a Time in Little India / (Ed) Nalina Gopal
Singapore: Indian Heritage Centre, 2019

128p.

9789811414688

\$ 55.00 / PB

496gm.

(This catalogue is published to document the exhibition Once Upon a Time in Little India held at the Indian Heritage Centre from October 2016 – July 2017)

Across the world, the epithet “Little India” has come to connote an enclave or a microcosm with a concentration of Indian and South Asian communities. It is a locale that mirrors the cultural diversity of the migrant community; a focal point for immigrants in search of kinsmen and communal interaction; and a symbol of transnational identity and ethnic consciousness. Once Upon a Time in Little India tells the story of Singapore’s Little India through historical and contemporary lenses, and draws parallels with diasporic settlements across the globe. Recreating moments past and present, this exhibition presents an appealing and arresting mix of historical artefacts and contemporary art installations by Leading artist Kumari Nahappan, K.Rajagopal and Navin Rawanchaikul.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688277>

Literature

Poetry Moves : An Anthology of Poetry / (Ed) Esther Vincent (et al.)

Singapore: Ethos Books, 2020

208p.

Includes Index

9789811422829

1. Singapore poetry (English).

2. English poetry.

\$ 16.00 / PB

192gm.

This anthology collects over 100 poems from Singapore, Asia and around the world, and is aimed at the adolescent reader. It seeks to cultivate a love of poetry and an exploration of real-world issues through verse among teenage readers.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688278>

A Tree To Take Us Up To Heaven / Jordan Melic
Singapore: Math Paper Press (Books Actually), 2020
372p.
9789811450792
\$ 18.00 / PB
356gm.

Kueny isn't much of a worrier, except maybe when it comes to her father, the Custodian of a Thousand Generations, whose soul is hanging by a thread. But when her brother, Ah Ti, inherits the throne and smashes the Watercress Elixir that preserves her family's heavenly reign, her worries take on a whole new dimension.

Left with no choice, the siblings set out in search of a new home, embarking on a perilous journey that takes them through 14th century Majapahit and 19th century Malaya, where they encounter a dreamy prince who promises them the world, and end up in a sparkling city that will consume everything they know.

A mix of mythology, history and adventure—think Journey to the West meets Huckleberry Finn—Ah Ti and Kueny's story is about growing up and finding a place for oneself in the world. It is also a story of Singapore, different from the one commonly told—an attempt to capture a sense of the fullness of time contained in the land and its people.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688279>

Memorandum : A Sinophone Singaporean Short Story Reader
/ (Eds) Quah Sy Ren & Hee Wai Siam (Translation) Tan Dan
Feng

Singapore: Ethos Books, 2020

476p.

9789811418617

- 1. Singapore fiction (Chinese) – History and criticism – Translation into English.**
- 2. Short stories, Singapore (Chinese) – History and criticism – Translations into English.**

\$ 28.00 / PB

524gm.

Featuring new translations of previously untranslated Chinese short stories, Memorandum maps out seven decades of Sinophone Singaporean Literature. From bargirls to student activists, from trishaw men to tea merchants, this collection provides a glimpse into a world that has been previously invisible to Anglophone readers. Paired with critical essays, these stories showcase the richness and diversity of Singapore's Chinese community, but also its inherent interconnectedness with other cultures within Singapore.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688280>

Politics

Airconditioned Nation Revisited : Essays on Singapore Politics
/ Cherian George

Singapore: Ethos Books, 2020

320p. ; 150x220mm.

9789811448201

1. Political culture – Singapore.
2. Civil society – Singapore.
3. Singapore – Politics and government – 20th century.
4. Singapore – Politics and government – 21st century.

\$ 22.00 / PB

400gm.

Air-Conditioned Nation Revisited is an anthology of essays on Singapore politics by Cherian George. It draws upon his influential collection Singapore: The Air-Conditioned Nation (2000), on the country's politics of comfort and control, and from Singapore, Incomplete (2017), on its underdeveloped democracy. Updated for the impending transition to a new generation of leaders, this 20th anniversary edition of Air-Conditioned Nation offers critical reflections on continuity and change in Singapore's unique political culture.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688281>

Region, Nation and Homeland : Valorization and Adaptation in the Moro and Cordillera Resistance Discourse / Miriam Coronel Ferrer

Singapore: ISEAS Publishing (ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute), 2020

xiv, 242p.

Includes Index ; Bibliography

9789814843713

- 1. Mindanao Island (Philippines) – History – Autonomy and independence movements – Study and teaching.**
- 2. Cordillera Administrative Region (Philippines) – History – Autonomy and indigenous peoples’ movements – Study and teaching.**
- 3. Discourse analysis, Narrative – Philippines – Mindanao Island.**
- 4. Discourse analysis Narrative – Philippines – Cordillera Administrative Region.**
- 5. Ethnicity – Political aspects – Philippines.**

\$ 28.00 / PB

334gm.

Movements tell stories of oppression and liberation. They critique the power relations that exist. They offer alternative visions of the homeland they hope to build. This volume looks at the Moro and Cordillera movements as told in their own words. Within and among these movement organizations in the Philippines, their constructed identities and claims for demanding the right to self-determination differed and evolved over time. The author shows the significant intertextuality in the discourse of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which broke away from the Moro National Liberation Front. She traces the drift to heightened ethnonationalism in the case of the Cordillera Peoples’ Liberation Army when it split from the national democratic Cordillera People’s Democratic Front. She reflects on where these mobilizations are now, and the strands of discourses that have remained salient in current times.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688282>

The Vietnam-US Security Partnership and the Rule-Based International Order in the Age of Trump / Le Hong Hiep (Series Ed) Ooi Kee Beng
Singapore: ISEAS Publishing (ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute), 2020
34p.

ISSN: 0219-3213 ; 9789814881548

Trend in Southeast Asia, Issue 1, 2020

- 1. Vietnam – Military relations – United States.**
- 2. Unites States – Military relations – Vietnam.**
- 3. National security – Vietnam.**
- 4. National security – United States.**
- 5. International organization.**

\$ 9.00 / PB

74gm.

Vietnam-US relations have kept strengthening since bilateral normalization in 1995, including in the defence and strategic domains. This has turned the two countries into increasingly important security partners for each other.

The shared perception of the China threat, especially in the South China Sea, provided the strongest momentum towards bilateral strategic rapprochement in recent years despite the strategic uncertainties generated by the Trump administration. Such strategic dynamics also shaped Vietnam’s supportive view of the US-led regional and global orders.

In the short to medium term, challenges for bilateral relations include the further improvement of mutual trust and the building up of Vietnam’s capacity to participate in more substantive defence cooperation initiatives with the United States. In the long run, how to balance its strengthening ties with Washington and the troubling yet important relationship with Beijing remains a challenge for Hanoi.

Vietnam’s support for the US-led rules-based international order should remain persistent, but will vary depending on the shifting dynamics in Vietnam’s relations with China as well as Sino-US strategic competition.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688283>

Religion - Christianity

Sunday's Coming / Kenny Tan

Singapore: Kenny Tan, 2019

52p.

9789811439643

\$ 18.00 / PB

282gm.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=686893>

Religion – Islam

The Hand That Rock The Cradle : Nurturing Exclusivist

Interpretation of Islam in the Malaysian Home / Serina

Rahman (Series Ed) Ooi Kee Beng

Singapore: ISEAS Publishing (ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute),

2020

34p.

ISSN: 0219-3213 ; 9789814881562

Trend in Southeast Asia, Issue 2, 2020

1. Child rearing – Religious aspects – Islam – Malaysia.
2. Islamic fundamentalism – Malaysia.
3. Mothers – Religious life – Malaysia.
4. Women, Malay – Religious life – Malaysia.

\$ 9.00 / PB

92gm.

As an increasingly conservative wave of Islam engulfs the globe, literalist Salafi interpretations of the faith have become prevalent in Malaysia. While there are several Islamic schools of thought in the country, including those deemed “deviant”, the loudest voices are always the more extreme.

Over the past year, there has been increasing recognition of women’s roles as recruiters, financiers and influencers for radical Islamic groups. More women have been arrested for their support for and involvement in the Islamic State (IS), but much of the focus has been on their desire to marry a jihadi soldier or channel funds to the cause. In Malaysia, these

women (including returnees from IS) are seen to be followers, not decision-makers or active agents in extremist action. While Malay-Muslim women were both economically and socially active prior to colonization, patriarchal norms are now commonplace because of Islamic and Western conventions, as well as increasing conservatism in society. Women do have agency in the home, however, and exercise this power and centrality within the private sphere by wielding religion as a tool to exert influence over their spouse and children.

More attention needs to be paid to mothers as potential nurturers of extremist interpretations of Islam. Their actions in active support of non-violent extremism and intolerant exclusivity could have far-reaching effects given their unrivalled influence in the home. Their need to achieve social recognition through religion, coupled with increasing Salafi infiltration into mainstream Malaysian society and Islam, could be highly detrimental in multi-faith Malaysia. At the very least, these women may not report family members who intend to participate in terror; at the worst, they may encourage it and sanction jihadi theology and action.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=688284>
