Study Group Seminars

Discussion of Nilanjana Sengupta’s Book on
“The Female Voice of Myanmar: Khin Myo Chit to Aung San Suu Kyi”

Date :  28 Oct 2015
Time :  16:00 - 17:30
Venue :  Asia Research Institute Seminar Room
        Tower Block Level 10, 469A Bukit Timah Road
        National University of Singapore @ BTC

CHAIRPERSON

Assoc Prof Maitrii Aung-Thwin, Department of History, National University of Singapore

ABSTRACT

A picture of Tara from the Mahayana tradition of Buddhism drawn by Aung San Suu Kyi in the 1980s was one of the
triggers for the book, The Female Voice of Myanmar: Khin Myo Chit to Aung San Suu Kyi (Cambridge University Press,
2015). Now with all eyes turned on Myanmar as the country prepares for its first openly-contested elections since
1990 in which the Suu Kyi-led NLD will play a vital role in the transition process, The Female Voice of Myanmar is a
timely publication which looks at a relatively less explored area – the female perspective in Myanmar.

The Female Voice of Myanmar delves into the lives and works of four of Myanmar’s remarkable women who set
aside their lives to answer the call of their country. It breaks new ground in exploring their writing, both published
and hitherto unexamined, some in English and much of it in Burmese.

Maitrii Aung-Thwin in conversation with the author, Nilanjana Sengupta, will take a closer look at the biographical
sketches of these four women – the nuances and occluded stories as well as attempt an objective understanding of
their contribution in the socio-political evolution of Myanmar. Also present will be Ma Thida who features
prominently as one of the voices in the book.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Nilanjana Sengupta, author of The Female Voice of Myanmar: Khin Myo Chit to Aung San Suu Kyi, (Cambridge
University Press, 2015) was Visiting Scholar at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. She has
also authored A Gentleman’s Word: The Legacy of Subhas Chandra Bose in Southeast Asia (ISEAS, Singapore, 2012).
Her research interests cover feminist awakening in Southeast Asia, cultural exchange and mobility in ASEAN
countries and questions of integration, identity and hybridity of borrowed cultures.

Ma Thida is one of Myanmar’s leading public intellectuals. She is a medical doctor, a writer, a human rights advocate
and former prisoner of conscience who now has an important role in helping societies and communities in Myanmar
play a part in the current reform process. She founded Pen Myanmar Centre in 2014, with a threefold mission to:
conduct a media watch on issues related to freedom of expression; organise public discussions about literature and
develop a culture of literature in Myanmar; and to make literature a part of the educational curriculum in the
country, promoting creative writing.

REGISTRATION

Admission is free. We would greatly appreciate if you RSVP to Ms Tay Minghua via email: minghua.tay@nus.edu.sg