



## The Nalanda-Sriwijaya Lecture Series

### The Buddhist-Hindu Divide in Premodern Southeast Asia

Date: Thursday, 23 April 2009

Time: 4.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Venue: Seminar Room II, ISEAS



### About the Lecture



Indian Buddhism began as a reaction against various aspects of pre-existing Indian religions. In Southeast Asia, Buddhism and Hinduism arrived more or less simultaneously, both as imported beliefs. Some observers believe that Hinduism influenced Southeast Asian Buddhism, based on the appearance of similar artistic motifs and even Hindu deities in Southeast Asian Buddhist contexts. As with most questions, it is impossible to arrive at a single characterization or explanation which covers all of premodern Southeast Asia at all times.

Exploration of Buddhist remains in various parts of the region reveals a spectrum of relationships. This investigation pursues some of these relationships and concludes that Buddhist societies in Southeast Asia deserve much greater recognition as progenitors of new Buddhist thought rather than simply as reflections of Buddhist ideas from North, South, or East Asia.

### About the Speaker



**Professor John Miksic** is Associate Professor in the Southeast Asian Studies program, National University of Singapore. Born 1946 in Rochester, New York, Dr Miksic studied at Dartmouth (B.A.), Ohio University (M.A.) and Cornell University (PhD). As a student he joined archaeological expeditions to northern Canada and Honduras, but over the last 40 years he has been based in Southeast Asia, conducting archaeological and historical investigations in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Burma and Cambodia.

## About the Speaker

He has conducted excavations at 15 sites in Singapore, bringing to light details of 14th-century life here. He is now engaged in organizing exhibitions for the 40th anniversary of the Southeast Asian Ceramic Society, and the link between Singapore and Bengkulu, jointly organized by the national archives of Singapore and Indonesia. He is a widely-published author with key works including: *Archaeological research on the "Forbidden Hill" of Singapore : excavations at Fort Canning* (1985); *Borobudur : golden tales of the Buddhas* (1990); *Old Javanese Gold* (1990); *Earthenware in Southeast Asia* (2003); *Early Singapore 1300s-1819: Evidence in maps, texts and artefacts* (ed. with Cheryl-Ann Low (2004); and *Historical Dictionary of Ancient Southeast Asia* (2007).

His most recent publication is a translation of Denys Lombard's "Jardins a Java" (*Gardens in Java*), issued by the National Centre for Archaeological Research in Jakarta. Items in press include book chapters on Buddhism in Srivijaya, and a book on 25 years of Singaporean archaeology, to be published by the National Heritage Board.

## About the Lecture Series

The Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies is pleased to announce a lecture series which will examine the ways in which Asian polities and societies have interacted with each other through time, including the diverse aspects of Buddhism in Asia. The lectures will be held at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and will be open to the public. All interested parties are invited to attend.

The first lecture in this series will be given by Professor John Miksic of the Southeast Asian Studies Program, National University of Singapore, one of the world's most eminent archaeologists of both island and mainland Southeast Asia.