

Publishing Circumstances

All articles in *Publishing Circumstances*, some in more detail, are available on-line at "Trends in Books and Reading" section (<http://www2.accu.or.jp/02/02-02/02.html>) of APPREB Internet Website (<http://www.accu.or.jp/appreb>).

Australia

Sales and Profits

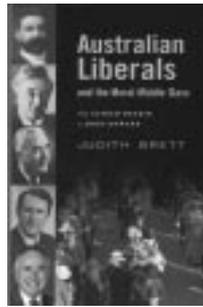
After a savage drop following the introduction of the Goods and Service Tax (GST) in 2000/2001, sales of books in Australia returned to their pre-GST level in 2001/2002, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). However, although sales increased by 24%, from 104.1 million to 129.5 million, the income from those sales rose only 6.3%, from \$1.26 billion to \$1.34 billion. Publisher profits fell from \$62.7 million to \$60.6 million, even though the number of titles published rose from 8,447 to 9,078. Whereas it was the smaller publishers which suffered most in the first year of the GST, it was the 20 largest publishers whose profits were worst affected in 2001/2002; their profits fell from 6% of total income in 2000/2001 to 3.4% in 2001/2002. Although general trade publishing accounted for 60% of the industry's income, profits in that sector were estimated to be less than 3%, whereas professional and reference publishing recorded profit of 11.4% on income of \$74.8 million (down from \$135.5 million in 2000/2001). Amidst the gloom, there were some encouraging figures: export sales grew by 14%, from \$162.5 million to \$186 million, and accounted for 12.6% of the industry's income, more than double the figure for 1994. There was also a small increase (3%) in the number of people employed in the publishing industry. Of the 5,138 people employed, about two-thirds are women; more than 20% are casual or part-time employees. Average salaries rose from \$46,100 to \$47,400, an increase of only 1%.

Bhutan

Learn to Read and Read to Learn

The theme for this year's national reading week was "learn to read and read to learn". Although the official period was slated from 22 to 28 September 2003, schools throughout the country had their own reading weeks planned for the year according to their convenience. However, most schools did observe the reading week during the above days.

Schools organized activities such as reading aloud, book talks, story-telling and story-writing in the week-long event.



A book recently published (Australia)

Organised by the Curriculum and Professional Support Division of the Ministry of Education and supported by UNICEF, the main objective of organizing this very important event for the past five years has been to promote and encourage reading amongst our students.

China

College Books from Mainland China on Legal Sale in Taiwan

Books using Mainland Chinese simplified characters may be sold legally in Taiwan at last. From now on, according to Taiwan's latest import regulations, mainland books are no longer regarded as "the underground press" as they have been for many years. This signals the start of a new era of publishing exchange.

Zhong Xiuxian, the spokesman of the Taiwan Information Bureau, announced that for the moment only books for junior college written in simplified Chinese characters may be on legal sale in Taiwan so as to avoid a great impact on Taiwan publishing. So the Taiwan authorities are taking this progressive step to open the way for mainland books in import exhibitions and sales. Since 8 July, publishers have to apply to Publishing Society and Publishing Association in accordance with the regulations. The application requires the endorsement of a professor who works in a Taiwan college, the book's copyright as provided by the mainland publishing house, and a guarantee that these books do not encroach on another person's copyright. Before selling, permit labels should be stuck on the copyright pages of the imported books.

Many people are worried about the situations that may arise. Publishers worry that simplified Chinese character books will flood the market at low prices, putting even more pressure on Taiwanese publishing, while importers are afraid that if the press also take part in the market, a fierce price war will take place. In the face of these questions, Zhong Xiuxian says if people want to know exactly how the new regulations will work, they must implement them first, and then receive them three months later.

Though only "the junior college book" is permitted to be made available to the public at present, for the Taiwanese publishers, there is very little difference between opening a small window and

opening a gate. It is reported that at present in Taiwan there are more than 50 mainland book importers, and more than 30 mainland book monopoly stores, while some booksellers have set up special branches on the mainland to select books. It is roughly estimated that mainland books are imported to the value of 300 to 500 million Tai Yuan.

Reporter Xu Kaichen thinks this "limited opening" apparently seems to have been drafted as "protective policy" in conformity with the request of Taiwanese publishers, but in fact, how will it work in practice, and how does it differentiate between "complex" and "simplified" character books? Time will tell. On the other hand, though booksellers and publishers have different points of view, disputes about copyright and sales can be expected after mainland books are formally admitted and imported into Taiwan for sale.

Indonesia

Books Aided by Program Pustaka I-IV

Organized by Yayasan Adikarya IKAPI in cooperation with the Ford Foundation, Program Pustaka, a yearly crash programme to assist book production in Indonesia, which started in August 1998, had subsidized 486 titles by 152 book publishers by September 2003. The Program Pustaka IV is different from the three previous ones for two reasons. One is that it is accompanied by the existence of the Regional Program Pustaka in three provinces, namely Riau, West Kalimantan, and South Sulawesi, of which the motivation is to stimulate the writing of manuscripts and their publishing in the regions outside Java. The other reason is that there is a new stipulation, determining that by subsidizing 80% of the production cost of the 1,500 copies of titles approved, Program Pustaka IV is entitled to get in return 300 copies, to be sent for free to various institutions such as regional libraries, university libraries, book clubs, and reading groups. This is a way of ensuring that the subsidized titles will reach those accustomed to reading books, and to promote them.

2002 Indonesian Copyright Law

At the end of July 2003, the Republic of Indonesia put into effect the Act No.19/2002 on the Copyright Law, replacing that of 1982, and its amendments of 1987 and 1997. There are various reasons for the promulgation of the new law. One of them is the diversity of Indonesia ethnically and culturally, and its richness in arts and literature with their develop-



"Children between Worlds"
book exhibition catalogue (Iran)

ment, which require the protection of the copyright for the intellectual property arising from such diversity. The other reason is the fact that Indonesia has become a signatory of various international conventions/agreements concerning intellectual property rights in general, and copyright especially, which call for further embodiment in the national system of the law. There are several new stipulations in this new law, for example one defining the data base as a creation protected by the law, or a temporary decision by the court to prevent more serious detriment to the copyright holder; penal threat on the transgression of the related right; penal threat and minimal penalty. An example of the penalty for the offence against article 2, clause 1 is minimally one month imprisonment and one million rupiahs fine, and maximally 5 years imprisonment and one milliard rupiahs fine. This is far heavier than the penalty imposed by the previous copyright law.

Iran

Book Exhibition "Children between Worlds"

"Children between Worlds", a book exhibition presented by the Munich International Youth Library, which consisted of a total number of 60 titles from 12 countries in 100 editions mainly from the German, English and French-speaking countries, was held from 18 September to 2 October 2003.

All the 60 titles presented an excellent selection of text and images for children and young adults. These books are intended to shape the dialogue between the cultures and intercultural relations. In this sense they all provide both reading pleasure and guidance for life.

Divided into 5 categories, they are not simply about clashes between cultures. What they truly are all about is the recognition of the unifying forces between humans. In this exhibition there was a catalogue consisting of the above 60 titles in Persian for the use of visitors. There was also a side exhibition of over 100 titles by German authors which have been translated into Persian and published by different publishers in Iran.

Afghani Publication Market

The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance announced that about 90% of the works available in Afghani bookstalls are written and printed in Iran.

"Development of Iranian publications is one of our main policies," said Mohammadreza Vasfi an official at this Ministry. According to Vasfi, Afghani people largely pay attention to books on computers, religious modernization, politics, novels, language teaching, and Persian literature.

"There is no regulation in the Afghani publication market; so, establishing an Afghani publication trade union is a must," said Vasfi. He said that his office has a plan to promote the development of cultural activities in Afghanistan to strengthen mutual cooperation in both countries.

Japan

Publishinglink—New Electronic Publishing Contents Distribution Company

Fifteen companies including Kodansya, Shinchosha, and Sony Corp. jointly established a new company "Publishinglink" in November 2003 which will distribute electronic publishing contents. It will start the service in spring in 2004.

To develop present publishing and promote electronic publication by the spread of the Internet, publishing companies who have contents need to take leading parts in the project as well as to provide users with safe circumstances.

The unique system of this company is to offer a rental service of electronic contents to member readers only for a certain period. It can also protect the right of authors, copyright holders and publishing companies.

After admission registration of membership and downloading a viewer software to a personal computer (PC), a member can choose a book to read from among a lot of works. There is also a special terminal just for reading developed by Sony using "electronic paper". Its size is 190 x 130 mm and the screen is 150 x 100 mm. Readers can use either a PC or a terminal.

The number of members is expected to be 30,000 for the first year, and 100,000 within 3 years.

Publishers Association for Cultural Exchange

Publishers Association for Cultural Exchange, Japan (PACE) celebrated its 50th anniversary in October 2003 and published a book "PACE: Fifty Years of Effort and Achievements" to commemorate its history. PACE was established in

1953 for the purpose of promoting the international exchange of the publication culture of Japan and foreign countries.

PACE has done various activities aiming at mutual understanding and goodwill promotion of Japanese publications by participating in international book fairs in many countries and holding domestic exhibitions of foreign books.

In particular, the participation in the Frankfurt book fair is one of the most important activities since 1961, and it has played an important role in introducing Japanese culture to the world through exhibitions of Japanese books. (<http://www.pace.or.jp/indexe.html>)

Kyrgyzstan

Chinese-Kyrgyz Dictionary

Aman Saspaev, the Kyrgyz professor, has issued a Chinese-Kyrgyz dictionary. It is the first edition of its kind. It contains 55 thousand words. The dictionary helps to translate both modern dialogues and scientific and literary heritage of China.

The department of the Eastern Philology of Bishkek Humanities University and the Center of Chinese language under the university have assisted in creating the new dictionary. Vladimir Lyu, the chief of the department and students of the Chinese Philology Department have participated in its creation. The book was introduced in Bishkek Humanities University. Currently, 500 copies would be given to other universities and colleges for the Eastern languages departments, Vladimir Lyu said.

The new edition of a Chinese-Kyrgyz dictionary can be considered as opportune. Chinese and Kyrgyz border influenced mutual collaboration of the two countries. Basically, collaboration between the countries is based on trade relations. Quite a few Chinese organizations and trade companies have found Kyrgyzstan a good place to work. Therefore, studying Chinese language became popular in colleges and universities. Flow of candidates for universities applying for Chinese Department increases every year, Vladimir Lyu says. Moreover, the number of people, who are willing to study Chinese in the Center under the Bishkek Humanities University constantly increases.

Lao PDR

Mobilising to Eradicate Illiteracy

In Lao PDR, the Government places great importance on education, especially the effort to eradicate illiteracy.

In 2002-03, although work in eradicating illiteracy has been very difficult,



A reading promotion in remote area (Lao PDR)



Children's Book Palace (Mongolia)



Witi Ihimaera (New Zealand)

Lao PDR has organised teaching and learning for people in each rural area by developing education and skill development to improve the living conditions of people.

Minister of Education, Phimmason Leuangkhamma said that in the fiscal year 2002–03, the Government helped 34,466 people aged over 15 in their efforts to eradicate illiteracy, and had organised extra assistance for 25,767 primary school students. "We would reduce the number of illiteracy people by 70% by further extending these programme," he explained.

In the fiscal year 2003–04, Lao PDR has plans to eradicate illiteracy for a further 50,000 people over 15, and 30,000 people will be helped to finish primary school.

Mongolia

Children's Book Palace

The provision in the Government Programme for 2000–04 that a "Children's Book Palace will be created" was realized.

A big section of the State Public Library has been converted into the "Children's Book Palace". It was officially opened by Nambur Enkhbayar, Prime Minister of Mongolia, who emphasized that the palace will play an important role in developing the intelligence of children so they can become highly educated citizens who will carry the future of Mongolia.

The Palace has 8 reading rooms in which all children up to the age of 16 can be served. Many reading rooms, such as "Much Know" for pre-school children, "Longing" for school children, and "Internet Reading" have been opened.

Child writers attended the opening ceremony and presented books that they wrote by themselves to the Palace.

D. Oyunbileg, Director of the Palace said that there are over 100,000 books in Mongolian as well as those published in English, German, Japanese and Korean.

Myanmar

Centenary of the First Myanmar Novel

The year 1904 saw the first novel in the local language with Myanmar as a background. The author was *James Hla Kyaw* of Mandalay, a trained lawyer educated under British colonial administration. The story is a romantic adventure

story set in the days of the Myanmar kings, which culminates after the final annexation of the country by the British in 1886. As 2003 coincided with the novel's centennial, Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association launched a book exhibition concentrating on illustrated book covers of Myanmar novels. The first novel of J. Hla Kyaw carried no cover illustration except the title in calligraphy, made out of zinc block, which was the practice in those early days. The Novel Books Cover Exhibition traced back the development of book illustrations during the last century and lasted for ten days encompassing Myanmar Writers' Day, which falls in 24 November 2003. It is noted that the novelist J. Hla Kyaw wrote this Myanmar novel inspired by reading *The Count of Monte Cristo* by the French author Alexandre Dumas (1845).

New Zealand

Witi Ihimaera to Receive Honorary Doctorate

Distinguished Maori novelist, short story writer, anthologist and librettist, Witi Ihimaera is to receive an honorary doctorate from Victoria University at the University's graduation ceremonies in May 2004. Born in 1944, Witi Ihimaera has the distinction of being both the first Maori writer to publish a book of short stories (*Pounamu Pounamu*, 1972) and the first to publish a novel (*Tangi*, 1973). He was a founder member of the Maori Writers and Artists Society, which spearheaded the Maori cultural renaissance in the 1960s, and was an inaugural member of the QE2 Arts Council of New Zealand (now Creative New Zealand) in the 1970s.

Conference on Creative Writing

It was standing room only at some of the sessions on the excellent programme at the recent Conference on Creative Writing in New Zealand held in Christchurch. In 2004 the English Department of the University of Canterbury will offer a complete creative writing course for the first time and this Conference served as a reminder of the excellence in creative writing within New Zealand. Guest speakers included such distinguished New Zealand writers as Owen Marshall on creative writing courses, Brian Turner on literary prizes,

Margaret Mahy on reading and multi-award winner Elizabeth Knox who posed the intriguing question "Why write?"

Pakistan

Knowledge at the Door-step

The National Reading Survey conducted by the National Book Foundation (NBF) in collaboration with UNESCO revealed that reading interest among the public is much higher than had been supposed. The actual problem was getting access to books they were interested in at affordable prices. NBF accordingly initiated an activity titled "Knowledge at the Door-step". It organizes book exhibitions in the rural areas for the convenience of the public. The results were tremendous during a recent exhibition held in collaboration with Sultana Foundation in the rural outskirts of Islamabad. It has encouraged NBF to expand the activity in other parts of the country on an experimental basis with a view to making it a permanent feature. It has also helped NBF to identify the areas of interest in reading with respect to the population living in rural areas. NBF is planning to initiate another programme to engage local authorship for the development of books based on the reading interest of the public in rural areas.

Papua New Guinea

2003 Book Fair

The 2003 Book Fair was held from 4 to 8 August with attendance of both national and international publishers. Some of the publishers traveled to larger provincial centers to market their publications.

The opening of 2003 National Book Week was held at Gerehu Secondary School in Port Moresby. The Director of the Institute of Continuing Education, Dr. Thomas Webster, gave the keynote address. Prominent Papua New Guinean, Sir Paulias Matane was the only Papua New Guinean author with a stall at the Book Fair. He has written a number of books that are now used in schools throughout the country as supplementary readers.

One of the projects in Curriculum Development Division (CDD) that is trying to address the national goals as expressed above is the Papua New Guinea School Journals Project. This project started operation with support



Korean booth at Frankfurt Book Fair 2003 (Germany)

from New Zealand Official Development Aid (NZODA) in 1995.

Philippines

Authorship and Creative Activities

To help maintain an efficient work force in the book industry, the National Book Development Board (NBDB) conducted capability-building activities through the Integrated Book Development Program. In Bicol Region, 40 budding authors were the beneficiaries of a creative and technical vocational writing seminar-workshop. Another 15 stakeholders from the academe were taught how to edit a book through a seminar-workshop conducted in partnership with the provincial government of Albay.

For the promotion of Filipino authorship, NBDB launched and conducted a manuscript fair. NBDB-registered authors were invited to submit their manuscripts, and a total of 31 were accepted for evaluation.

To protect the intellectual property rights of authors and publishers, the NBDB has inducted the new officers of the Philippine Reproduction Rights Organization (PRRO).

Opposition to the Proposed Textbook Policy

The Philippine Educational Publishers Association (PEPA) opposed the Proposed Textbook Policy of the Department of Education on the ground that it is violative, among others of the following: RA 8047 or the Book Publishing Industry Development Act; Intellectual Property Law; and Separation of Powers Doctrine.

Rep. of Korea

Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2005

Lee Jung Il, President of the Korean Publishers Association, and Fair Director Volker Neumann set the seal on 10 October at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2003, on the appearance of Korea as the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2005. After India in 1986 and Japan in 1990, in two years Korea will be the third Asian country to present its culture and literature on the international platform of the Frankfurt Book Fair.

The presentation of Korea as the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2005 will provide an opportunity for the Korean publishing industry to showcase itself to the rest of the world and to introduce high quality Korean works featuring traditional Korean culture in Germany, as well as in Europe, through 500 to 1,000 cultural events. To achieve this goal, the Organizing Committee for the Guest of Honour is to be established soon. The Frankfurt Book Fair 2005 will be held 19–24 October 2005.

Singapore

Roundtable Discussion on Digital Publishing

The Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) envisions that as Singapore gears up to be the Digital Living Lab, creating innovative infocomm products and services, it is also expected that 3,000 jobs will be created through collaborative industry projects by 2006. Besides developing infrastructure capabilities, the creation of interactive broadband multimedia content and digital publishing and distribution is a niche area identified by IDA. Education and the creative industries have been identified as areas where infocomm can be leveraged to create this interactive broadband multimedia content.

In this context, IDA and the Book Council jointly organised a roundtable meeting on 26 August 2003. Publishers and professionals from the book trade were invited to share their views on developing Singapore as a digital publishing hub. The meeting started with a presentation by Thomas Lim, Director of Digital Exchange Development, IDA. Mr. Lim shared IDA's insights and strategies on Singapore as a digital publishing hub. This was followed by a presentation by the Book Council which shared its vision for publishing and the book trade in Singapore and its plans and programmes. Opinions were then collected from those present and many publishers shared freely the challenges they faced and spoke on the need for networking and co-operation within the industry in order to develop publishing in Singapore. (For reference, <http://www.ida.gov.sg>)

Thailand

25th Anniversary of the Matchon Project: the Capital Mobilization for Distributing Good Books to Libraries

In order to celebrate its 25th anniversary, the Matchon Press initiated the Capital Mobilization for Distributing Good Books to Libraries Project in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Dr. Kowitz Vorapipatana Foundation, with the aim of providing benefit for society as well as to support the year of reading and learning promotion.

Since nowadays, there are a lot of students in Thailand who lack new and modern books for reading, the Matchon Press decided to be the intermediary agent in providing them with books which are the major materials for creating ideas and knowledge, accumulating experiences, and finally enhancing the love of the reading habit in Thai society.

The project was launched at the Matchon Co., Ltd. Building in the honorable presence of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra who presided over the opening ceremony. So far, 187 schools were selected and given a great number of good books for their libraries. The Matchon Press has set a target to distribute good books to libraries of 250 schools throughout the country within this year.

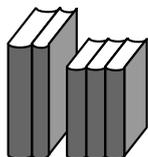
Viet Nam

Publishing Seminar

A seminar concerning publication scenes in Viet Nam was held in mid-October aiming to review the publishing activities during the past three quarters, in which, books for children, and about religious issues as well as auxiliary textbooks increased 170%. Meanwhile, most illustrated books for children are imported or translated, and not many are produced in Viet Nam. Because many titles were published before getting publication permission, it was hard to calculate the real quantity of books sold in the market.

Demands for proper, good amendments to the Publication Law are being made, especially for printing to keep up with the pace of modernisation. At present, there are about 500 printing shops in Viet Nam.

Two new publishing houses, Legislation Publishing House and Political Theory Publishing House, have just been established, bringing the total number of publishing houses in Viet Nam to 47. The sales target for 2004 would be an average of 4 book titles per person.



Outstanding New Books

Australia

Macquarie ABC Dictionary

With so many dictionaries available, a new one needs to differentiate itself from all the others. This one has several innovative features. Principally, it draws on the word map of regional differences compiled by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation with the help of its radio listeners. In several cases, the word map (which can be viewed at <http://www.abc.net.au/wordmap>) has revealed an astonishing variety of terms for the same item. The dictionary also gives special emphasis to political terms, not just defining them in the normal lexicographical way but also highlighting their specifically Australian usage and context. Another useful feature for inexperienced users of English is the clear indication of terms which may cause offence to certain groups of people.

Macquarie ABC Dictionary, Macquarie Library (Macquarie University, NSW 2109), 1,178 pages, A\$59.95 (approx. US\$36.00), ISBN: 0-876429-37 2

Bangladesh

Poverty in Bangladesh Building on Progress

This book has been published based on an in-depth country poverty assessment report carried out jointly by the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank with full participation of the Government.

Using very recent data for the most part, it presents an up-to-date portrait of Bangladesh.

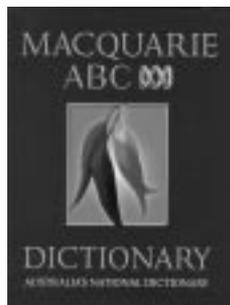
This unique book covers the important areas relating to poverty reduction strategy, growth in agriculture sector and micro-credit, developing human capital, utilization of resources and improving governance. It has been considered as a useful treasure of applied knowledge and research base for the Government policy makers, development professionals as well as intellectuals and development partners.

Poverty in Bangladesh: Building on Progress by Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, Dhaka, 2003, 114 pages, (<http://www.worldbank.org>)

China

Self-protection against SARS

This book provides information about SARS and suggests some concrete measures to protect oneself against it. It also briefly introduces several diseases, which are traditionally called "not typical



Macquarie ABC Dictionary (Australia)



Self-protection against SARS (China)

pneumonia" and are easily confused with SARS, such as viral pneumonia, chlamydial pneumonia, Eaton agent pneumonia and so on.

Fei Dian Xing Fei Yan Zi Wo Fang Fan by Deng Guohua, the People's Medical Publishing House (No. 3, 3 District, Fangzhuang, Fang Qun Yuan, Feng Tai, Beijing, 100078), 116 pages, RMB8.00 (approx. US\$1.00), ISBN: 7-117-05482-4/R

India

The Book Industry in India

Thirty leading professionals from various sections of the publishing industry come together for the first time in this significant volume to share their knowledge and expertise, as well as delightful anecdotes from their publishing careers.

The book gives insight into processes as diverse as editorial input and copy editing, book design, production processes, marketing, bookselling and retailing. It initiates and carries through a discussion on some of the core concerns of the Indian publishing industry.

The Book Industry in India—Context, Challenge and Strategy edited by Sukumar Das, 234 pages, ISBN: 819018660-4

Indonesia

Indonesia's Abundant Marine Biodiversity

With a foreword by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnaputri, this book, authored by Ir. Rokhmin Dahuri MS, the present Minister of Matters involving the seas and fishery, has a very comprehensive scope, covering various aspects such as biology, biotechnology, ecology, technique, socio-economy, culture, organization, and public policy.

Written in a semi-popular style, it is the first book of its kind on Indonesia's marine biodiversity. It is a very significant work, for Indonesia is the richest country in the world in terms of its marine resources.

As for why it has not been able to make use of these resources to overcome the economic crisis, the author says that it is because the Indonesian nation has not considered the great potential and strategic value of marine biodiversity as a way to achieve development and prosperity for the people.



Abundant Marine Biodiversity (Indonesia)



The Legend of the Young Archer (Iran)

Keanekaragaman Hayati Laut, Aset Pembangunan Berkelanjutan Indonesia (Marine Biodiversity, Assets for Indonesia's Sustainable Development) by Prof. Dr. Ir. Rokhmin Dahuri MS, Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, (JI Palmerah Selatan, 24-26, Lt. 6, Jakarta, 10270), 220 x 140 mm, 412 pages, approx. US \$11.00, ISBN: 979-22-0283-8

Iran

The Legend of the Young Archer

This story is about a very skilled archer called Toofan who lived in a remote country long, long time ago. All children wished to be like him when they grew up. A young boy called Ra'd wanted to compete with him, so he went to a master of archery to get training. It took him a long time to learn the skill, but what happened during the competition make up the theme of this legend. Some parts of this story have been inspired by a Chinese legend.

This book has been selected by the Munich International Youth Library at The White Ravens 2002 (A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature).

The Legend of the Young Archer by Hamid Reza Shahabadi, illustrated by Parviz Eqbali, translated by Mahmood Mohaqeq, The Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children & Young Adults, 2002, 230 x 160 mm, ISBN: 964-432-860-4

Japan

Wall of Stupidity

This book, which sold more than 2,000,000 copies in 8 months, was recorded as the only million-seller in 2003.

The wall in the title means the attitude of ignoring what man does not want to know, what man cannot understand and what makes man troublesome. The author, a prominent anatomist, says everyone has built some "wall" for him/herself. It may also be explained as the results of one's wisdom to survive.

It has sold so well because readers can understand the contents in their own ways. Also, the title is simple and straightforward, and the paperback format is handy to read and inexpensive.

Baka no Kabe by Yoro Takeshi, Shinchosya Co. (71 Yaraicho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162-0805), 2003, 182 x 103 mm, 204 pages, 680 yen (approx. US\$6.20), ISBN: 4-10-610003-7



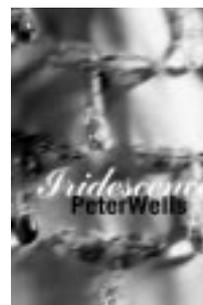
Update Magazine (Lao PDR)



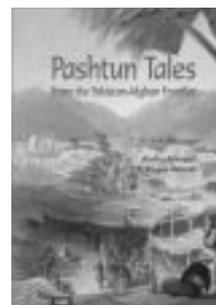
25 Volumes of Collected Works (Mongolia)



Myanmar Sports to Conquer (Myanmar)



Iridescence (New Zealand)



Pashtun Tales (Pakistan)

Kyrgyzstan

Daughters of the Kyrgyz Land

This new book is dedicated to the highest and most important roles of women in the public and political life of Kyrgyzstan. Outstanding women of the Soviet epoch and sovereign republic are the heroines of the book.

The author shows the character of Kyrgyz women through personal histories of famous women of Kyrgyzstan starting with mythical ones (Queen Tomiris and Umai-ene), some from the pre-Revolutionary and Soviet period (Kurmandgan Datka, Jarkynaiym, Urkuya Salieva, Tursun Osmonova), outstanding women of the twentieth century (Kulipa Konduchalova, Bubusara Beishinalieva, Dinara Asanova) and also women of sovereign Kyrgyzstan (Mairam Akaeva, Jamal Tashibekova, Sharipa Sadybakasova).

Docheri Zemli Kyrgyzskoi Ocherki o Jenshinah Kyrgyzstana by Kulbubu Bekturganova, 2003, 180 pages, 100 x 200 mm, 83.20 som (approx. US\$4.00)

Lao PDR

The Update Magazine

The *Update* contains business information of many varieties, as well as stories on entertainment, travel, education, health and beauty and sports.

This monthly magazine has a circulation of 3,000 and its readers include companies, business units, schools, organisations and government offices, and it is even on sale in the book shops.

Because the magazine was written in Lao and English, more students have been buying it in order to improve their English as well as update their general knowledge on topics of interest.

Update Magazine published by Mekoxab Company (111 Thadeua Road, Ban Paxai, Sisattanak, Vientiane), 2003, 297 x 210 mm, 30 pages, 16,500 kips (approx. US\$1.70)

Mongolia

25 Volumes of Collected Works

Dr. Lodon Tudev, a hero of labour, state prized writer, and honoured figure of culture, has had his 25 volumes "Collected Works" independently published for the first time in the modern literary world

of Mongolia, compiling the creations written during his lifetime of 5 decades.

Those 25 volumes consist of the best writings of the famous writer, covering all types and genres including novels, long stories, poems, stories, essays, scenarios, science fiction, research and children's literature.

N. Bagabandi, President of Mongolia, Prime Minister N. Enkhbayar and well-known people in the fields of society, politics and art highly valued these "Collected Works" as a valuable contribution to the intelligentsia of Mongolia.

25 Volumes of Collected Works by Lodon Tudev, Uria Publishing Company (Ulaanbaatar), 2002, 145 x 201 mm, 500 pages per one volume, US\$150.00, ISBN: 99929-78-01-5 to 99929-78-25-2)

Myanmar

Myanmar Sports to Conquer

This book is an addition to the comparatively few biographies on feminine achievements in the local literary scene. It is the life of a sports woman, Daw (Ms.) Mi Mi Khin, who started her illustrious career in her teens and is now the most awarded person in the field of competitive sports, such as golf, tennis and badminton. At the same time, her special interest is in the traditional sports and she is the present chairperson of the Federation of Myanmar Traditional Sports. Her life has been full of community service and contributions towards the community's social needs. Her bent on sports does not deter her from pursuing of other performing arts such as music and dancing.

Mi Mi Khin—Myanmar Sports to Conquer by Aung Chain Bwar, Mahar Skrekyarwalar Media, 2003, 130 x 200 mm, 257 pages, 600 Kyat

New Zealand

Iridescence

Peter Wells has carved out a name for himself as one of New Zealand's most significant writers. His autobiographical volume *Long Loop Home* won its category in the Montana New Zealand Book Awards a couple of years back and his fiction has always garnered serious attention and complimentary reviews.

In *Iridescence* he has taken a signifi-

cant leap forward as a novelist. This is a monumental book in every sense. It is a compelling story encompassing twenty years of early New Zealand history leavened with a long flashback to a 19th century trial in London.

Not a lot of fiction has been set in Victorian Napier, a coastal city best known in New Zealand for its rebirth as an art deco city after devastating earthquakes. But Wells is an excellent storyteller and he weaves together this story of secrets and scandal in a graceful and fulfilling way.

His evocations of early Napier are particularly satisfying, with his skills as a natural historian shining through. His portraits of London theatre life are also extremely pleasing. His characters are well drawn and highly believable—particularly the iridescent actress, Fanny Clinton.

Iridescence by Peter Wells, Vintage (Random House New Zealand, Private Bag 102950, North Shore Mail Centre, Auckland), 2003, 450 pages, US\$21.00, ISBN: 1-86941-583-3

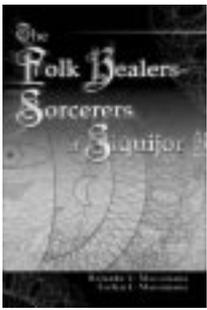
Pakistan

Pashtun Tales

This book was written by Aiesha Ahmad, working as a consultant for the World Health Organization, and Roger Boase, an honorary Research Fellow, Queen Mary College, University of London.

Pashtun make up nearly half the population of Afghanistan and are the second largest ethnic group in Pakistan. Substantial communities also live in Iran, Tajikistan and the United Arab Emirates. Traditionally a nomadic people, today they number approximately 25 million and are divided into 60 tribes.

These oral tales were collected in the tribal areas on the Pakistan-Afghan frontier, a region described as the last free place on earth. With their blend of wit, fantasy, comedy, and romance, they reflect the Pashtun code of honour and way of life that are now seriously threatened by social changes and recent political events. Most of them, such as the epic tale of Hazrat Ali, have never been recorded before, and might otherwise have been lost forever. Some are recognizable as universal types, such as a version of Androcles and the Lion and of the tale that provided Shakespeare with the plot of *King Lear*.



Folkhealers—Sorcerers of Siquijor (Philippines)



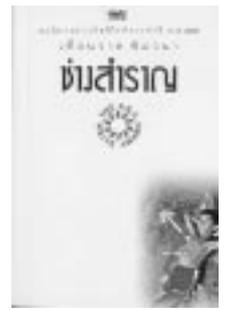
Frontline of Korea History (Rep. of Korea)



The Voice of God (Solomon Islands)



Samoan Women: Widening Choices (Samoa)



It's So Funny (Thailand)

Pashtun Tales—From Pakistan Afghan Frontier by Aiesha Ahmad and Roger Boase, Al-Saqi (publisher), 2003, 220 x 143 mm, 380 pages, US\$22.95, ISBN: 0863564380

Philippines

Folkhealers—Sorcerers of Siquijor

A five-year ethnographic study of *Isla del Fuego*, the present day Siquijor Island in central Philippines, this book describes its medicine men's *pangalap* ritual, which is their yearly quest for herbal medicines in the island's indigenous ethnopharmacological resources. These include cures for common illnesses as well as for ailments believed to be caused by sorcery. An important ritual activity in which medicine men from the neighboring islands of the Visayas and from the island of Mindanao participate, the annual *pangalap* precedes the medicine men's practice of any form of folk healing and sorcery during the ensuing year.

Woven around the *pangalap* as its central theme, the book details the medicine men's ethno-medical beliefs and practices regarding healing and illness. Performed for seven Fridays before Good Friday of the Roman Catholic Lenten season, the *pangalap* shows how the medicine men's folk-magical beliefs and traditional healing practices have become syncretized and inextricably intertwined with contemporary Christian rites and belief systems as they adjust to a changing world. It also mentions other instances when such syncretization is apparently at work in their folk medical practices and experiences.

Folkhealers—Sorcerers of Siquijor by Prof. R.V. Mascuñana and Prof. E. F. Mascuñana, Rex Book Store, Inc., 2003, 125 x 175 mm, 124 pages, approx. US\$10.50

Rep. of Korea

Frontline of Korean History

This book is a compilation of e-mails exchanged between two historians living in Norway and Korea respectively. Their correspondence began with exchange of casual greetings after the Russian-born professor Park, Roh Ja transferred to the Department of Korean Studies, Oslo University, Norway but with time passing by, developed into a platform for discussions and debates.

This book begins with the argument that the current geopolitical situation of modern Korea is not different from that of the Joseon Dynasty. The Korean peninsula is still struggling to find a way-out amid competitions among the superpowers surrounding it. Prof. Park develops his arguments as "an individualistic progressive" and Prof. Heo, Dong Hyun as "a sound conservative".

Reading their arguments, a reader can develop his own opinions and, at the same time, be confronted with totally new questions.

Uri Yeoksa Choejeonseon by Park, Roh Ja and Heo, Dong Hyun, Purun Yeoksa (publisher), 2003, 380 pages, 182 x 257 mm, 1,300 won (approx. US\$11.00), ISBN: 8987787753

Singapore

Souls the Gods Had Forsaken: From a "Slave Farm" in China to a "Death House" in Singapore

Set in China, Singapore and Britain from the mid-20s to the immediate post-war period, the story revolves around the lives of three women. It's a remarkable story that opens your eyes as it chronicles the harsh lives of Singapore's immigrants in Chinatown and of the sorry state of females in China who, if not subjected to infanticide, were abandoned in 'slave farms' to be reared for slavery and prostitution. Feeling at times sad and at other times astounded over the content, *Souls the Gods had Forsaken*, provides an illumination of Singapore's history.

Souls the Gods Had Forsaken: From a "Slave Farm" in China to a "Death House" in Singapore by Ralph Modder, Horizon Books (Singapore), 2003, 260 pages, SGD16.50 (approx. US\$10.00), ISBN: 9810455682

South Pacific

Fata'abu: The Voice of God

This novel, based on historical events in Solomon Islands, tells the story of a strong people, mindful of their roles in society. Set in a past era, the action encompasses tribal celebrations and disagreements. Rich in cultural description, this novel provides an enjoyable way to learn about Solomon Islands' material culture as well as its ceremonies and customs. Author Sam Lidimani

Alasia has contributed to education and politics in Solomon Islands. He has written historical work as well as creative work. Artist Charles Manata's fine illustrations bring a visual element to Alasia's rich text.

Fata'abu: The Voice of God by Sam Lidimani Alasia, the Solomon Islands Writers' Association, the Institute for Solomon Islands Studies, the University of the South Pacific Centre in Solomon Islands, and the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific (USP) (PO Box 1168, Suva, Fiji), 2003, 147 x 210 mm, 161 pages, \$20, ISBN: 982-02-0359-7

Samoan Women: Widening Choices

Educators, a statistician, NGO workers, a doctor, a lawyer, government workers, and consultants discuss formal and informal aspects of education, employment, health, law, and religion. The writers are university women who address challenges for women in the new millennium, widening horizons while retaining the best of Samoan traditions. As well as reviewing historical information, this volume presents new, rich data on Samoan society by its most up-and-coming workforce: its women.

Samoan Women: Widening Choices edited by Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, the Samoan Association for Women Graduates and the Institute of Pacific Studies, USP, 147 x 210 mm, 161 pages, \$22, ISBN: 982-02-0360-0

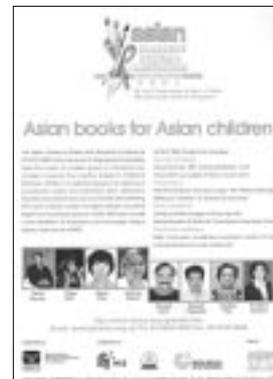
Thailand

It's So Funny

This book received the S. E. A. Write Award for Fiction, 2003. It was written in Thai language and is easy to understand. Its style is the kind that can be called "simple but beautiful!"

This book reflects many lives of people who live in Khun Mae Thong Chan row house community. The author created a little boy named Kampol Changsamran who was abandoned by his own parents and brought up by the people in that community, and uses this boy as the main character in the story, letting him witness all the events that happen in the community. Her reason is that, from the perspective of a child like Kampol, everything is new, so he can easily make an ordinary thing become special.

GATHERINGS



Asian Children's Writers and Illustrators Conference (ACWIC) 2003 brochure (Singapore)

| Date | Title | Country (City) Organisers | Content |
|------------------------|--|--|--|
| 2003 Oct. 16 -19 | Lire en Fete | New Caledonia (Poindimie) | This is an annual festival of reading. In 2003 it was held well outside the capital city of Noumea. Local and foreign writers engaged in discussions about children's literature, orality versus text, publishing, vernacular languages, identity, memory and literary creation. |
| Nov. 20 -21 | Asian Children's Writers and Illustrators Conference (ACWIC) 2003 | Singapore National Book Development Council of Singapore and others | ACWIC was more compact in 2003, with established keynote speakers to inspire and experienced workshop leaders to teach. There were manuscript critiques and illustration exhibitions. http://www.nbdcs.org.sg/acwic.htm |
| 2004 Jan. 16 -18 | Book Fair | India (Gurgaon) | Organized by the Federation of Publishers' and Booksellers' Association in India in collaboration with 14 schools in Gurgaon Progressive School Council, it aims inculcating and renewing book reading habit among children. Gurgaon is a fast developing city close to Delhi. e-mail: fpbai@vsnl.net |
| Jan. 25 -29 | The 8th National Children's Cultural Festival | Lao (Khammouane Province) Children's Cultural Centre | The Festival is organized yearly in different provinces. The main purposes are to promote culture and the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child with the slogan "Reserving civilized Lao culture and building a world fit for children." Around 200 children will be participating in activities such as meeting training, camping, drawing, games and study tours. |
| Feb. 14 -22 | New Delhi World Book Fair | India (New Delhi) | Organized by National Book Trust, India and others, the 16th international book fair covers a number of activities of publishing and reading. e-mail: nbtindia@ndb.vsnl.net.in |
| Mar. 26 -Apr. 6 | Bangkok International Book Fair 2004 | Thailand (Bangkok) | Organized by Publishers and Booksellers Association of Thailand (PUBAT), the 2004 fair promotes Korea as the Country of the Year with the slogan "Open a Book: Open the World." http://www.bangkokibf.com |
| Apr. 22 -25 | Tokyo International Book Fair (TIBF) 2004 | Japan (Tokyo) Reed Exhibitions Japan Ltd. | TIBF is the gateway to the world's second largest publishing market, Japan. It includes many kinds of events with 6 specialized fairs. http://www.reedexpo.co.jp/tibf |
| June 4-9 | Seoul International Book Fair 2004 | Rep. of Korea (Seoul) | Organized by Korean Publishers Association (KPA) and others, this annual book fair invites participants from home and abroad. http://www.sibf.co.kr , e-mail: moon@kpa21.or.kr |
| July 21 -26 | Hong Kong Book Fair 2004 | China (Hong Kong) | This annual book fair includes books, printed materials, printing services, and multimedia education products. http://www.hkbookfair.com |
| Sep. 2-6 | Beijing International Book Fair | China (Beijing) | Organized by China National Publications Import Export (Group) Corporation (CNPIEC), the fair includes books, print materials since 2000, multimedia publishing, publications related to entertainment and audiovisual products, and e-books. http://www.bibf.net |

(continued from p. 19)

Chang Sam Ran by Dueanwad Phimwana, Samanchon Publishing House (Bangkok), 2002, 124 x 182 mm, 232 pages, 170 Baht (approx. US\$ 4.25), ISBN: 974-7607-51-4

Uzbekistan

A Moan of Djaikhun

This book, which confined to the 85th birthday anniversary of a flaming singer of the ancient land of Khorezm, a famous poet and a playwright, a talented journalist and a public man of his epoch, Egam Rakhimov, contains verses, poems, dramas, stories and correspondence of the poet written in different years. Though the poet lived only 59 years, he

left the huge literary heritage to the issues and the fancy of the poetry. Special events dedicated to the life and creative work of Egam Rakhimov have been recently held in Khorezm. He is always remembered and honored: there is a school, a street and a makhallya (district in town) given his name.

A Moan of Djaikhun by Egam Rakhimov, "Sharc" publishing house, 2003

Viet Nam

The Yellow Lotus

The author of this book, special documentalist on the late President Ho Chi Minh and a war veteran with 7 shrapnel

fragments inside his body, depicts a period of Vietnamese history via the President's life story, together with the foundation of national independence. With his simple, attractive way of telling a story, Son Tung impresses readers of all ages, bringing an educative aspect to his novel.

Bong Sen Vang by Son Tung, Vietnam Writers' Association Publishing House, 435 pages, 130 x 190 mm, VND39 000 (approx. US\$2.50)



The Yellow Lotus (Viet Nam)