

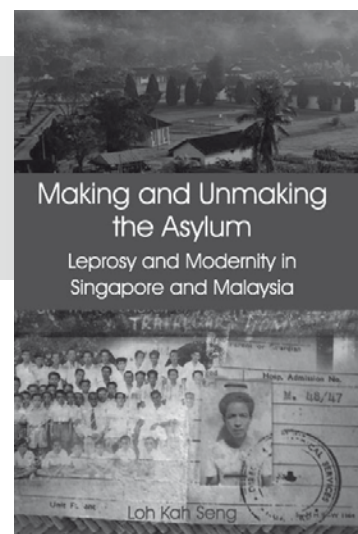


Dear friends:

BOOK LAUNCH OF

# Making and Unmaking the Asylum

## Leprosy and Modernity in Singapore and Malaysia



SIRD, Save Valley of Hope Solidarity Group and the Kuala Lumpur & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall Youth Section (KLSCAH-YOUTH) jointly invite you to the launching of *Making and Unmaking the Asylum: Leprosy and Modernity in Singapore and Malaysia*, a book by Loh Kah Seng.

The book will be launched by **YB Elizabeth Wong Keat Ping**, Selangor state Exco member for Tourism, Consumer Affairs and Environment.

**Date : 15<sup>th</sup> August 2009 (Saturday)**

**Time : 2.00 pm – 4.40 pm**

**Venue : The KL & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall**

No. 1, Jalan Maharajalela, 50150 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

This very special event also brings together representatives of the former residents of Valley of Hope in Sungai Buloh—the world's second largest leprosy settlement that was partially demolished in 2008 despite calls to preserve it as a heritage site—to share their life testimonies and thoughts resulting from state and public stigma against leprosy. The audience will include social activists and friends/families members who shared solidarity with the Valley of Hope.

*Making and Unmaking the Asylum* recounts the entangled histories of leprosy in colonial and postcolonial Malaya/Malaysia and Singapore—decades of heavy-handed biomedical policies and laws enacted in the name of modernity, science and development, interwoven with the personal accounts of those who were sent to the asylums. The leprosarium was a living hell for many. It is also no coincidence, Loh argues, that the majority of patients were poor and working-class.

Yet this book also richly demonstrates how patients resisted being victims—creating new families, forging friendships, working, joining unions, and actively engaging in their communal religious and cultural lives.

Having struggled to remake the asylums into homes, ex-sufferers in both countries have been evicted or moved again, their personal and collective histories erased, and their real homes exchanged for hospital wards.

### About the Author

Loh Kah Seng is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, Singapore. His doctoral thesis at the Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University examined the role of the 1961 Kampong Bukit Ho Swee fire in the making of modern Singapore. He has published on little-studied subjects in the urban social history of Singapore and Malaysia.

For further details please contact Ms Lee Siew Hwa at **03-7957 8342/8343** or **016-465 5107**; or Mr Chong Ton Sin at **016-379 7231**.

All are welcome. Please feel free to circulate this invitation.

2.00 pm	Guests arrive
2.10 pm	Guests are seated
2.10 – 2.40 pm	Video screening: <i>Valley of Hope</i>
2.40 – 3.00 pm	Introduction to <i>Making and Unmaking the Asylum</i> & a tale of solidarity by a representative of the Save Valley of Hope Solidarity Group, <b>Teoh Chee Keong</b>
3.00 – 3.15 pm	Book launch by <b>YB Elizabeth Wong</b> , Selangor state Exco member for Tourism, Consumer Affairs and Environment
3.15 – 3.50 pm	Discussion session with author, <b>Loh Kah Seng</b> and representative, <b>ex-resident</b> of Valley of Hope, <b>Lee Chor Seng</b>
3.50 – 4.20 pm	Discussion and Q&A
4.20 pm	Tea, chit-chat and book signing
4.40 pm	Ends