Proposed topic for EuroSEAS 2024 laboratory: **“Critical Perspectives on Movement, Migration, and Mobilities in Southeast Asian Literatures”**

Convenor: Angelia Poon, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Email: angelia.poon@nie.edu.sg

Format: Laboratory participants will be invited to work on a paper related to the topic and to present and share their main ideas at the session. Each presentation will take about 15 mins. Presenters need not have written a complete paper by then but should have decided on main ideas for further development. During the laboratory, participants may have break-out sessions to share their work in smaller groups before all come together for the main discussion. The convener may provide a list of questions to prompt discussion and will also serve as a facilitator during this time. This proposed laboratory will be an opportunity to gather international scholars working on different areas of Southeast Asian literatures and cultural studies to collaborate and learn from each other. At the end of the laboratory session, participants will present their work to a larger audience and take questions in a Q and A session. The aim of the laboratory is to produce an edited collection of critical essays to add to the growing scholarship on comparative SEA studies in literature and culture.

Critical Perspectives on Movement, Migration, and Mobilities in Southeast Asian Literatures

This proposed laboratory considers the significance of movement, migration, and various mobilities as articulated in Southeast Asian literatures and related media forms such as film. Literary and cultural scholars from SEA and elsewhere are invited to explore how writers use forms of travel and circulation like migration, tourism, pilgrimages, labor flows etc. to inform and articulate particular subjectivities and group identities. Histories of movement and unequal mobilities are usually central to territorialized and deterritorialized forms of identity, and to the related notions of indigeneity, nationalism and minority cultures. Participants may examine literary and creative engagements with involuntary modes of travel or displacement such as exile, refugee crises, or the historical formation of diasporas that result from colonialism, war, political persecution or natural disasters.

Attempts to theorize non-landbased histories and narratives that problematize the nation-state, re-directing critical attention to the sea as the space and medium for connecting diverse peoples, cultures, languages, religions are welcome. Besides the movement of people, representations of the circulation of objects (e.g books, commodities) as well as flora and fauna could offer alternative perspectives that add to a more nuanced understanding of the multiple movements which help define the SEA region as an area of contact zones and ecological exchange. Participants are also invited to re-think metaphors of mobility and the symbolic significance of movement in literature in relation to possible conceptual frames like inter-Asia, Nanyang, the Malay World, postcolonialism, decoloniality, transnationalism, transculturalism, ecocriticism, feminism, diaspora, and cosmopolitanism, to name a few.

Some possible questions for the laboratory:

* How do various forms of travel, flow, and movement as depicted in SEA literatures contribute to a sense of nationalism, transnationalism or regionalism?
* What gets translated and/or transformed in the process of movement?
* What sorts of narrative and poetic strategies do SEA writers use to express flow, stasis, connectivity, fluidity, (im)mobility?
* What affective modalities are explored by SEA writers when human characters and/ or objects and commodities move across borders and spaces? What, conversely, are the sorts of immobilities which define such movement?
* What is the relationship between movement and cultural identities in Southeast Asia? How does travel and movement affect the axes of identity like gender, race, class, and sexuality?

List of possible participants:

Ann Ang, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Grace Chin, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Hannah Ho, Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Katrina Mohd Daud, Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Kelly Tze, Education University of Hong Kong

Vasugi Kailasam, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Nazry Barawi, University of Washington, USA

Lily Rose Tope, University of the Philippines

Fiona Lee Hsiao Yen, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Raymon D. Ritumban, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines

Howie Tam, Brandeis University, USA

Suradech Chotiudompant, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Chie Ikeya, Rutgers University, USA

Silvia Mayasari-Hoffert, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Germany

Chiang Cheng-Chai, University of California, Berkeley, USA