

March 12, 2012

National Library Singapore

PROPOSAL PAPER

TREASURES FROM THE NATIONAL LIBRARIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA : A PUBLICATION

Background

At the CONSAL meeting held in Medan in Apr 2011, the National Library of Singapore (NLS) proposed a project to document top ten documentary rare items in the National Library of each of the CONSAL member countries. NLS would like to follow-up on the above with a proposal and request of submission from member countries.

Project Proposal

The proposal is for each country to identify and submit a list of the top ten rare items published in early 19th century or earlier from its National Library collection. This will serve as an indication for the project to proceed with publishing, for the first time, *Treasures from the National Libraries of Southeast Asia* [working title]. The National Library of Singapore would also like to propose that the publication be released in conjunction with the IFLA 2013 Congress to be held in Singapore in 2013.

The proposed publication will not only unite important rare items sitting in this part of the region but offer an excellent insight into the early 19th century Southeast Asia – its people, identity, landscape, culture and religious beliefs, history and literature of the period at this important event, the first to be held in Southeast Asia, we think.

The hosting of this project, project funding, location of editorial/marketing control, and possible spin-offs such as travelling exhibition and virtually gallery could be discussed at the coming meeting in Bali.

Definition of a Rare Item

As the definition of the rareness of an item differs in each country, NLS proposes that each member country defines what is considered rare in the country. As an illustration, in Singapore, the National Library defines anything published in Singapore before 1945 as a rare item. This is because the history of publishing in Singapore is short, and most materials that were published before 1945 are out of print, and they are very difficult to find today.

Based on this definition, the National Library selected some 5,000 items in its collection, and accords them the Library's rare book collection.

Request for information

We would like to request that each CONSAL member countries provide the following details on the top ten documentary rare items **by 20 April 2012**. Kindly see Appendix 1 for submission.

For your support and assistance please.

Ngian Lek Choh

Director, National Library

Singapore

Appendix 1

TEN TOP DOCUMENTARY ITEMS

Name of Library : _____

Definition of Documentary Rare Item :

Proposed items (Please provide title, year of publication)	Images (Please provide front cover and selection of 3 significant pages)	Bibliographic citation (Author, physical description, language of item, pagination etc)	Has item been digitised? (Please indicate Yes or No)	Significance of item (Please summarise why item is significant and provide interesting captions)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				